Docket No. 21749.003 TRADEMARK

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE TRADEMARK TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

In The Matter of Application Serial No. 76/295,724
Filed: August 6, 2001
For the Mark **BLUEMAN**
Published in the Official Gazette of August 20, 2002

01-21-2004
U.S. Patent & TMOfc/TM Mail Rcpt Dt. #22

BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS, INC.,

Opposer,

v.

ERICH TARMANN,

Applicant.

Opposition No. 154,055

Box TTAB - NO FEE
Commissioner of Trademarks
2900 Crystal Drive
Arlington, VA 22202-3514

OPPOSER'S NOTICE OF RELIANCE
PURSUANT TO TRADEMARK RULE 2.122(e)

Pursuant to Trademark Rule 2.122(e), Opposer hereby gives notice of its reliance upon the articles and broadcasts listed below and enclosed herewith as Exhibit A. These printed publications and broadcasts are offered to show that Opposer's mark BLUE MAN

"Express Mail" Mailing Label Number EV324480684 US
I hereby certify that this paper or fee is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post office to Addressee" service under 37 C.F.R. 1.10 on the date indicated above and is addressed to the Commissioner for Trademarks, 2900 Crystal Drive, Arlington, Virginia 22202-3514 on
Jan. 21, 2004 (Date of Deposit) Carolyn Kalmus (Print name)
Carolyn Kalmus (Signature)

21749/003/619510.1

GROUP, used in connection with entertainment services and related merchandise, have been the subject of numerous articles and broadcasts in publicly circulated media.

Name of Publication	Date	Starting Page #
Nighttimes.com	10/23/03	
List of Television and Radio Coverage	2000-2003	
Pollstar – The Concert Hotwire	8/4/03	Cover
Travelocity	3–4/2001	Cover
Rolling Stone	4/01	Cover
Sunday Calendar	3/4/01	Cover
Art News	4/92	Cover
Entertainment Design	10/00	Cover
CMJ New Music Report	5/26/03	Cover
The Improper Bostonian	5/1/02	Cover
Gadfly	7-8/00	Cover
What's On – The Las Vegas Guide	3/21/00	Cover
Showbiz Weekly	3/12/00	Cover
Neon – The Las Vegas Guide to Entertainment	2/25/00	Cover
Photo Insider	3-4/01	Cover
Where Chicago	5/99	Cover
Where Boston	12/00	Cover
Panorama – The Official Guide to Boston	11/13/00	Cover
CVC Report	5/1/03	Cover
2002 Theater Directory	2002	Cover
Earborne	2/00	Cover
Panorama – The Official Guide to Boston	6/11/01	Cover
Chicago Tribune	12/28/01	Section 7 C
Heartland Magazine	3/29/02	Cover
The Star Newspaper's Firstlook	2/28/02	Cover
What's On – The Las Vegas Guide	4/3/01	Cover
Las Vegas Weekly	3/2/00	Cover
Fairfield County Advocate	4/1/93	Cover
Chicago Sun-Times Showcase	4/21/02	Cover
The Calvin Spark	Summer 2001	Cover
DVD Works	6/01	Cover
Time	7/24/00	
The New York Times	4/30/00	5, 10
Los Angeles Times – Sunday	3/4/01	Cover, 4-6, 76-78

Calendar		
Fortune Small Business	3/03	50-56
CMJ New Music Report	5/26/03	8-9
The New York Times	11/17/91	
AdAge	10/8/01	
The New York Times	10/12/01	
The New York Times	9/16/01	
People	8/19/02	72-73
The New York Times	9/6/02	E1, 22
Entertainment Design	7/02	
Time		
Los Angeles Times	3/5/00	
The Wall Street Journal	1/14/02	
London Sunday Times	3/02	
People	6/8/92	103, 109-110
Hits	5/25/01	62
Entertainment Design	12/02	
Entertainment Design	10/00	40-43, 64-67
CMJ New Music Monthly	7/00	76-78
Gadfly	7-8/00	8-11
Trump Style		
Reason	3/01	
Daily Variety	3/31/00	
Entertainment Weekly	4/4/03	
Entertainment Weekly	3/9/01	24
In Style	5/01	
Wall Street Journal Europe	2/16/01	23, 26
Adweek – Eastern Edition	11/20/00	
Shoot		12
PR Weekly	3/18/02	
Billboard	7/5/03	
Advertising Age	2/19/01	
Explore!	2/01	35
Adweek – Eastern Edition	1/1/01	
America West Airlines Magazine	8/01	14-16
Travelage West	12/11/00	41, 44
New Music Monthly	6/03	
Rolling Stone	9/5/02	
Billboard	6/28/03	5, 69
DVD Works	6/01	Cover, 4, 6
S&VC	7/00	78-82
Las Vegas Review-Journal	11/15/02	4, 8

Las Vegas Life	2/00	15
Las Vegas Review-Journal	3/24/00	
Las Vegas Sun	2/24/00	1E-2E
Neon – The Las Vegas Guide to Entertainment		
Las Vegas Weekly	3/2/00	Cover, 14-18
Las Vegas Review-Journal	12/31/00	
Las Vegas Review-Journal	12/31/00	30A-32A
Tour Guide Magazine	8/17/01	31
Showbiz Weekly	3/5/00	
What's On – The Las Vegas Guide	2/15/02	144-145
Diversion	3/00	
What's On – The Las Vegas Guide	2/8/00	70
24/7 Magazine	3/00	
What's On – The Las Vegas Guide	3/21/00	Cover, 72-73
Las Vegas City Life	3/23/00	
e-Vegas Exchange	3/21/00	
Showbiz Weekly	3/19/00	
The Vegan	3/00	
National Airlines Flyer	3/00	20-22
Today in Las Vegas	3/23/00	Cover
Las Vegas Weekly	3/23/00	
Showbiz Weekly	3/26/00	
Earborne	2/00	
Las Vegas Weekly	11/28/01	
Las Vegas Weekly	7/11/02	
What's On – The Las Vegas Guide	8/21/01	38
Travel Weekly Las Vegas	5/20/02	1, 10
What's On – The Las Vegas Guide	4/3/01	Cover, 108-109
Showbiz Weekly		
Las Vegas Sun	7/20/01	
Las Vegas Israelite	2/9/01	
Las Vegas Review-Journal	3/24/00	27
NPR News	3/30/00	
CityLife	4/20/00	
Las Vegas	4/00	
Hot Ticket		Cover
Las Vegas Review-Journal		
Showbiz Weekly	4/16/00	
Variety	9/9/02	
MR	9/02	
San Francisco Examiner	11/12/00	

Chicago Tribune	5/30/00	5-3
Los Angeles Times (National Edition)	7/29/01	76, 83
Casino Entertainment Travel Weekly	9/23/02	
The Denver Post	8/7/02	1F, 5F
American Spa	5/02	74
Almanac	1/30/02	
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette	12/9/01	
Messenger	11/1/01	
Auto Inc.	11/01	
Press-Enterprise	10/5/01	
DNR	8/20/01	100-102
USAE	8/28/01	
Antelope Valley Press	8/31/01	
Daily Breeze	8/12/01	
Tennis	6/01	
Salt Lake City Magazine	6/01	175
Hooked on the Outdoors	6/01	30
Antelope Valley Press	6/8/01	
The Dallas Morning News	2001	1G, 7G-9G
Antelope Valley Press	6/22/01	
Courier-Post	8/12/01	1, 3F
Daily News	11/12/01	
Savannah Magazine	5/03	19-21
Brandweek	9/22/03	
Travel Weekly	8/5/02	68
Honolulu Star-Bulletin	4/28/02	
Incentive	2/03	30-34
Travel Weekly	2/4/02	
Going Places (North Central Division)	5/03	
Bride's Magazine	4/02	
Meeting News	3/17/03	
Beaver County Times	3/30/03	
American Cemetery	2/03	28-34
STAN (Scottish Travel Agents News)	2/17/03	2/3
Creative – The Magazine of Promotion and Marketing	12/02	
Time	1/13/03	16
Children's Business	12/02	
Picture Framing Magazine	9/02	114-115

New York Magazine	3/25/02	
Explore!	2/01	28-34
The Star-Ledger	9/29/00	28
On & Off	11/25/02	
In New York	11/02	
Coyote Press	5/00	14
Record	1/17/03	
The New York Times	4/23/02	
The New York Times	7/31/02	
Official City Guide	12/6/01	68
EmpireFUN	Spring 2002	
Democrat and Chronicle	7/2/03	
Agenda New York	2/03	140
Record	11/27/02	
Star-News	12/19/01	
The Art Magazine Wolgan Misool		
Good Times	6/3/03	
The Boston Globe	3/15/01	
Panorama	11/13/00	Cover, 24-25, 28
Danvers Herald	3/1/01	
Boston Magazine	3/01	
Where Boston	12/00	Cover, 14-15
The UMASS-Lowell Connector	3/00	
Panorama	6/11/01	Cover, 32-33
Daily Item	6/25/01	
Agenda Boston	1/02	108
Sunday Republican	5/11/03	7H, 8H
Aberdeen Press & Journal	6/14/03	2/4
Times Herald Record	9/1/02	
County Down Spectator – Bangor	1/31/02	2/4-4/4
Southern Daily Echo (Southampton)	11/24/01	2/5-3/5
Chicago Tribune	12/28/01	
Sunday Sun-Times	6/10/01	
Sunday Sun-Times	6/10/01	
Chicago Sun-Times	10/4/01	
Chicago Tribune Magazine	1/6/02	Section 10
Sunday Sun-Times	3/2/03	8A
The Star Newspaper's Firstlook	2/28/02	Cover, 16-18
The Post-Crescent	8/3/02	E1-E3
New Castle News	10/12/02	
Chicago Sun-Times	4/21/02	

Heartland Magazine	3/29/02	Cover
Group Tour	6/02	
Cherokeean Herald	5/7/03	
This Week in Chicago	8/11/01	
Telegraph	8/9/01	B1, B3
Calvin Spark	2001	Cover, 17-19
Vidette Times	6/3/01	
Portsmouth Herald	6/5/01	
The Times	6/3/01	F1-F2
Chicago Tribune	2/18/01	
Chicago Tribune	1/9/00	Section 7, p. 9
City Talk	5/4/01	
Chicago Tribune	10/14/97	
Democrat and Chronicle	10/31/03	
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette	7/15/03	
Chicago Sun-Times	7/21/03	
Dayton Daily News	10/28/03	E5
The Post and Courier Charleston.net	11/13/03	
Calgary Herald	9/30/03	
Fort Worth Star Telegram	8/13/03	
The Cincinnati Post	7/28/03	
The Salt Lake Tribune	8/5/03	
NewsOK	11/17/03	
Ocean City Sentinel	9/4/03	
Sunday Gazette	8/31/03	
University Wire	10/24/03	
Buffalo News	10/30/03	
PalmBeachPost.com	8/22/03	8E
Lancaster Online	10/31/03	4
Dayton Daily News	10/24/03	
Norwich Bulletin	7/16/03	
Nighttimes.com	10/23/03	
The Des Moines Register	10/17/03	
The New York Times	5/22/03	
The Times	5/31/03	D1, D4
Billboard	5/3/03	
The Dallas Morning News	8/10/03	1G, 4G
Daily Herald (Bartlett/ Hanover Park/ Streamwood)	11/3/00	
Philadelphia Inquirer	7/28/03	
Norwich Bulletin		

Beaver County Times	7/11/03	
Crosswinds Weekly	7/31/03	
The Record	5/16/03	
Observer-Reporter	7/11/03	
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette	7/11/03	
La Presse	7/11/03	
CMJ	6/03	
The Plain Dealer	7/24/03	
The Aquarian Weekly	5/21/03	Cover, 12
The Courier-Post South Jersey Scene	7/25/03	Cover, 14-15
Go!	10/16/03	2-3
River Cities' Reader	10/8/03	Cover, 9
New Haven Register	7/11/03	Section W
The Times	5/23/03	40
Daily News	5/6/03	
Mercury	7/24/03	
Women Who Rock	7/03	
Hour	7/3/03	
Sunday Tribune Review	7/6/03	
Meadville Tribune	7/10/03	
Journal Inquirer	7/14/03	
Metro	7/25/03	
Finger Lakes Sunday Times	8/31/03	
Saratogian	8/29/03	
The Denver Post	5/23/03	
The News-Journal	8/22/03	12D
Saratogian	9/1/03	
Philadelphia Inquirer	7/25/03	
South Florida Sun	8/17/03	1D, 11D
Metroland	8/28/03	
Times Square Electronic Billboard Advertisement		
Metro-North Schedule Advertisement	4/11/99	
Lincoln Center Stagebill	7/91	
The Performing Garage Advertisement	5/89	
Funeral for the 80's Advertisement	5/88	
Darmstader Echo	11/1/03	M3
Frankfurter Neue Presse	11/4/03	KUS1
Musicals	10/1/03	30

Eklinger Zeitung	10/4/03	
Deutsche Welle	10/7/03	
Wochen Spiegel	10/8/03	9
B.Z.	10/22/03	16
Potsdamer Neueste Nachrichten	10/22/03	30
Neue Oz Osnabrucker Zeitung	10/22/03	
Oranienburger Generalanzeiger	10/22/03	
Der Tages Spiegel	10/22/03	11
Bild	10/22/03	3
Siegener Zeitung	10/22/03	24
Neues Deutschland	10/23/03	19
Magdeburger Volksstimme	10/23/03	
Mindener Tageblatt	10/23/03	22
Hamburger Morgenpost	10/23/03	22
Recklinghaufer Zeitung	10/24/03	
Dewezet	10/24/03	10
Frankischer Tag	10/24/03	W4
Wilhelmshavener Zeitung	10/24/03	11
Norddeutsche Neueste Nachrichten	10/24/03	8
Delmenhorster Kreisblatt	10/24/03	6
Ostsee Zeitung	10/24/03	23
Schweriner Volkszeitung	10/24/03	8
Platzierung	10/29/03	20
Berliner Wochenblatt	10/29/03	3
Kultur Pur Berlin	9/1/03	3, 12, 107
Toursistik Aktuell	9/8/03	42
Die Welt	9/8/03	
Platzierung	9/15/03	3
Travel Talk	9/15/03	16
Musicals	8/03	
Platzierung	8/26/03	
Platzierung	7/3/03	
Neues Deutschland	7/3/03	
Platzierung	7/7/03	
Postdamer Neueste Nachrichten	7/15/03	
Der Tages Spiegel	7/15/03	
Berliner Morgenpost	7/16/03	
Bild	7/16/03	
New Business	7/21/03	14
Out	5/1/03	3/3
Stereoplay	4/02	131
Video	2/03	127

DVD Mjuzik Markt	6/20/03	14
Yam!	7/30/03	
Jewish Chronicle	8/22/03	51
Oxford Times	8/22/03	6
Prisma Ost	8/26/03	
Stereoplay	10/1/03	150
DNAsix	10/1/03	71
Billboard	10/18/03	27
Hi Fi News	12/1/03	79
Fliegen & Sparen	2/03	64
Group Travel Organizer	9/1/03	40
The Week	8/1/03	
Philadelphia City Paper	8/7/03	
Greenwich Time	8/3/03	
The San Diego Union Tribune	8/8/03	E1
Atlantic City Weekly	8/14/03	
Town News (Paramus – River Edge – Oradell)	8/20/03	
Staten Island Sunday	8/24/03	
Shout	4/02	25, 78
CMJ New Music Report	4/7/03	
Family Fun	2/99	
Dramatics	4/99	Cover, 26-27
Orange County Register	7/11/99	
Billboard	11/20/99	
Las Vegas Sun	12/17/99	
Variety	10/12/98	39
Mix	12/98	169, 185-186
New York City Visions	1996	
The New York Times Magazine	6/30/96	Crossword puzzle, section 6
American Way	2/15/94	
Child	4/94	
GQ	1/93	
Creem	1/93	
Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts Magazine	Spring/Summer 1993	
American Holiday & Life	Fall 1993	
The New York Times	12/5/93	Arts & Leisure Section
Italian Tribune News	1/23/92	
OCS News	2/24/92	

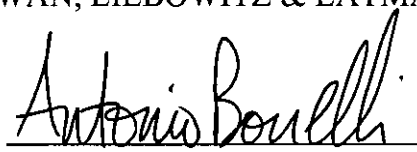
Mainichi Weekly	4/4/92	
Cosmopolitan	4/92	
Wiener	8/97	
Esquire	6/92	218
Vogue	11/92	
Expedition Kunstwelt	Winter 1992	
Ilta Sanomat	1993	
Winds	2/93	
Switch	3/93	
Segundo Caderno	5/7/93	
Daily-Novoye Russkoye Slovo		
Rzeczpospolita	1993	
Art Nexus	1986	
El Globo	1/8/95	
Caderno 2	2/9/95	
U.S. Frontline	10/96	
Divadelni Noviny	10/1/96	
Escenario	8/96	
Skylines	1997	58
Persian Heritage	Summer 1997	
Blue Wings	12/97	92
Guides Gallimard	1/7/98	
Io Donna		
Member's Greek Edition		47
Fenomenen	11/93	16-17
Lo Mejor	Summer 1998	
The Nation	1/20/92	
Time	1/20/92	
Esquire	2/92	
Variety	1/6/92	
TV Guide	1/15/92	
Daily News	2/24/92	
Playboy	3/92	
New York Newsday	5/28/92	
People	6/8/92	108-110
BusinessWeek	7/20/92	
Daily News	11/17/92	
The Village Voice	1/15/91	
The New York Times	1/25/91	
American Way Magazine	3/15/91	
Vanity Fair	4/91	
The New York Times	6/4/91	

New York Magazine	11/91	
The New Yorker	11/25/91	
The New Yorker	6/22/92	
Theater Week	11/25/91	Cover
New York Magazine	12/9/91	
WQXR	12/13/91	
New York Post	12/26/91	
Sunday Star-Ledger	12/29/91	
Jazzthetik501		59
Details	11/88	
The Village Voice	5/30/89	
New York Magazine	9/25/89	
Bomb	Summer 1990	18-20
Show Business	10/10/90	
Greatest Hits – The Simpsons		
Intel Commercial – Paint U.S.		
Intel Commercial – Keys U.S.		
Intel Commercial – Pentium U.S.		
Intel Commercial – Treadmill		
Intel Commercial – Tubes		
Intel Commercial – Bulbs		
Intel Commercial – Raising 4		
Intel Commercial – Raising 4		
Intel Commercial – Raising 4		
MTV Funeral for the 80's		
Las Vegas Recoupment Party		
NBC – A Closer Look	1991	
CBS Ch. 2 News	11/5/91	
Regis & Cathy Lee		
Entertainment Tonight	11/93	
CBS Sunday Morning		
Tonight Show	11/97	
E! News Weekend	3/00	
Grammy Awards	3/01	
The Tonight Show with Jay Leno	6/1/92	
The Tonight Show with Jay Leno	9/21/92	
The Tonight Show with Jay Leno	11/8/93	
The Tonight Show with Jay Leno	5/20/94	
The Tonight Show with Jay Leno	11/13/97	
The Tonight Show with Jay Leno	12/99	
The Tonight Show with Jay Leno	6/28/00	
The Tonight Show with Jay Leno	4/22/03	

KVBC-TV (NBC) News at Four – Las Vegas	2/21/01	
KYVU-TV (FOX) Mornings on Two – San Francisco	2/21/01	
KBWB-TV (WB) Tech Now – San Francisco	2/24/01	
"Extra" National Syndicate	2/15/01	
CNBC "Business Wrap"	2/16/01	
NBC "Early Today"	2/19/01	
KNTV-TV (IND) San Jose	2/19/01	
KGW-TV (IND) Portland	2/19/01	
Grammy Awards	2001	
Drew Carey Show	11/29/01	
Today Show	12/22/02	
Tonight Show	6/13/03	
Tonight Show	8/8/03	
Tonight Show	9/22/03	
"Las Vegas" Television Show	1/6/04	

Dated: New York, New York
January 21, 2004

COWAN, LIEBOWITZ & LATMAN, P.C.

By 

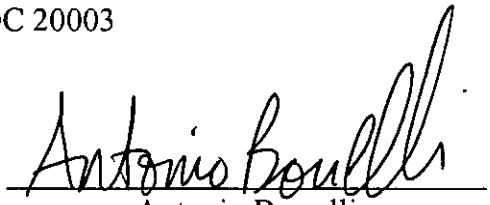
Robert W. Clarida
Antonio Borrelli
1133 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10036-6799
(212) 790-9200

Attorneys for Opposer

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that a copy of the foregoing OPPOSER'S NOTICE OF RELIANCE PURSUANT TO TRADEMARK RULE 2.122(e) was served on Applicant on January 21, 2004 by mailing a copy thereof via first-class mail, postage prepaid, addressed as follows:

Lawrence Harbin, Esq.
McIntyre, Harbin & King LLP
500 Ninth Street SE
Washington, DC 20003



Antonio Borrelli

Docket No. 21740.003 TRADEMARK

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE TRADEMARK TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

In The Matter of Application Serial No. 76/295,724
Filed: August 6, 2001
For the Mark **BLUEMAN**
Published in the Official Gazette of August 20, 2002

BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS, INC.,	:	
Opposer,	:	
v.	:	Opposition No. 154,055
ERICH TARMANN,	:	
Applicant.	:	

Box TTAB - NO FEE
Commissioner of Trademarks
2900 Crystal Drive
Arlington, VA 22202-3514

OPPOSER'S NOTICE OF RELIANCE ON OPPOSER'S REGISTRATIONS PURSUANT TO TRADEMARK RULE 2.122(d)(2)

Pursuant to Trademark Rule 2.122(d)(2), Opposer hereby gives notice of its reliance upon the following registrations owned by Opposer:

Mark	Reg. No.	Reg. Date
BLUE MAN GROUP	2,438,222	3/27/01
BLUE MAN GROUP	2,450,660	5/15/01
BLUE MAN GROUP	2,617,550	9/10/02

A certified copy of each of the above-referenced registrations, which have been prepared and issued by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, showing both the current status of and current title of each registration is attached as Exhibit A.

Dated: New York, New York
January 21, 2004

COWAN, LIEBOWITZ & LATMAN, P.C.

By Antonio Borrelli

Robert W. Clarida
Antonio Borrelli
1133 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10036-6799
(212) 790-9200

Attorneys for Opposer

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that a copy of the foregoing OPPOSER'S NOTICE OF RELIANCE ON OPPOSER'S REGISTRATIONS PURSUANT TO TRADEMARK RULE 2.122(d)(2) was served on Applicant on January 21, 2004 by mailing a copy thereof via first-class mail, postage prepaid, addressed as follows:

Lawrence Harbin, Esq.
McIntyre, Harbin & King LLP
500 Ninth Street SE
Washington, DC 20003

Antonio Borrelli

Blue Man Group's clever guises buried the true message just under the surface that rock music, throughout its history, present and future, is a great catalyst for bringing people together. In a sense, this rock concert was more a celebration of music and its power and potential to unite the disconnected aspects of humanity. All our staffers in attendance agreed the Blue Man organization is brilliance incarnate, and puts on the most engaging and thrilling live performance we've ever seen in our lives. Ever.

—Nighttimes.com/October 23, 2003

BLUE MAN GROUP

VEGAS PLUS FEEDER MARKETS

March 2000-November 2003

Blue Man Group
Television & Radio Coverage 2000-2003

Show Title	Network/Channel	Date
Vegas	**NBC**	**2/4/04**
Cold Pizza	**ESPN**	**12/17/03**
U-Pick Live	**Nickelodeon**	**12/11/03**
Entertainment Tonight	**National Syndicated TV**	**12/4/03**
KTLA Morning News First Edition	KTLA CH 5 (WB) Los Angeles	11/10/03
News 4 New York at 11:00	WNBC CH 4 (NBC) New York	10/23/03
CNN Headline News	**CNN**	**9/24/03**
KCAL 9 News at 12:00 Noon	KCAL CH 9 (IND) Los Angeles	9/23/03
CNN Headline News	**CNN**	**9/23/03**
CBS Early Show	**CBS**	**9/23/03**
Good Day New York	WNYW CH 5 (FOX) New York	9/23/03
News at Ten	KTLA CH 5 (WB) Los Angeles	9/22/03
Fox 11 News	KTTV CH 11 (FOX) Los Angeles	9/22/03
The Tonight Show with Jay Leno (APPEARANCE)	**NBC**	**9/22/03**
Business Class	**Travel Channel**	**8/10/03**
The Tonight Show with Jay Leno (APPEARANCE)	**NBC**	**8/8/03**
The Late Late Show with Craig Kilborn	**CBS**	**8/8/03**
Jimmy Kimmel Live	**ABC**	**8/8/03**
UPN News 13	KCOP CH 13 (UPN) Los Angeles	8/6/03
KTLA Morning News	KTLA CH 5 (WB) Los Angeles	8/5/03
Mark and Brian Show	KLOS FM 95.5 (ABC) Los Angeles	7/28/03
TV Guide Entertainment Programming	**TV Guide Channel**	**7/10/03**
Last Call with Carson Daly (APPEARANCE)	**NBC**	**7/4/03**
The Tom Green Show (APPEARANCE)	**MTV**	**7/2/03**
Best Damn Sports Show Period	**Fox Sports Network**	**7/2/03**
Fox Midday News	WNYW CH 5 (FOX) New York	7/2/03
TV Guide Entertainment Programming	TV Guide Channel Los Angeles	7/2/03
Extra (T3)	**NBC**	**7/1/03**
Access Hollywood (T3)	**National**	**7/1/03**
E! News Live (T3)	**E!**	**7/1/03**
TV Guide Entertainment Programming	TV Guide Channel Los Angeles	7/1/03
Channel 4 News Nightside	KNBC CH4 (NBC) Los Angeles	6/30/03
Eyewitness News Tonight	KABC CH 7 (ABC) Los Angeles	6/30/03
UPN News 13	KCOP CH13 (UPN) Los Angeles	6/30/03
TV Guide Entertainment Programming	TV Guide Channel Los Angeles	6/30/03
E! News Weekend	**E!**	**6/28/03**
News from CNN	**CNN National**	**6/28/03**
E! News Weekend	**E!**	**6/28/03**
The Late Late Show with Craig Kilborn (APPEARANCE)	**CBS National**	**6/17/03**
TV Guide Entertainment Programming	TV Guide Channel Los Angeles	6/13/03
News 4 New York	WNBC CH 4 (NBC) New York	6/13/03
Access Hollywood	**National Syndicated TV**	**6/8/03**
Call For Help (repeat)	**Tech TV**	**6/6/03**
Eyewitness News Tonight	KABC CH 7 (ABC) Los Angeles	5/28/03
Kevin and Bean Show	KROQ FM 106.7 (IND) Los Angeles	5/27/03
KTLA Morning News	KTLA CH 5 (WB) Los Angeles	5/23/03
Last Call with Carson Daly	**NBC**	**5/22/03**
KTLA Morning News	KTLA CH 5 (WB) Los Angeles	5/22/03
KTLA Morning News	KTLA CH 5 (WB) Los Angeles	5/21/03
TV Guide Entertainment Programming	TV Guide Channel Los Angeles	5/21/03
Mancow's Morning Madhouse	**National Syndicated Radio**	**5/21/03**
KTLA Morning News	KTLA CH 5 (WB) Los Angeles	5/20/03
KTLA Morning News	KTLA CH 5 (WB) Los Angeles	5/19/03
Fox & Friends	**Fox News Channel**	**5/16/03**
Eyewitness News	KABC CH 7 (ABC) Los Angeles	5/11/03
Big Boy in The Morning	KPWR FM 105.9 (IND) Los Angeles	4/28/03
Action News Team	KCBS CH 2 (CBS) Los Angeles	4/28/03

Blue Man Group
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Show Title	Network/Channel	Date
Call For Help	**Tech TV**	**4/28/03**
Mancow's Morning Madhouse	**National Syndicated Radio**	**4/28/03**
News	WABC CH 7 (ABC) New York	4/25/03
Big Boy in The Morning	KPWR FM 105.9 (IND) Los Angeles	4/25/03
Action News Team	KCBS CH 2 (CBS) Los Angeles	4/25/03
TV Guide Entertainment Programming	TV Guide Channel Los Angeles	4/24/03
Kevin and Bean Show	KROQ FM 106.7 (IND) Los Angeles	4/24/03
Rick Dees In The Morning	KIIS FM 102.7 (IND) Los Angeles	4/23/03
The Wayne Brady Show (APPEARANCE)	**National Syndicated TV**	**4/23/03**
News 4 New York at 11	WNBC CH4 (NBC) New York	4/22/03
The Tonight Show (APPEARANCE)	**NBC**	**4/22/03**
CBS Early Show	**CBS**	**4/22/03**
Today	**NBC**	**4/22/03**
TV Guide Entertainment Programming	TV Guide Channel Los Angeles	4/22/03
Kevin and Bean Show	KROQ FM 106.7 (IND) Los Angeles	4/22/03
TV Guide Entertainment Programming	TV Guide Channel Los Angeles	4/21/03
E! News Weekend	**E!**	**4/19/03**
E! News Live	**E!**	**4/18/03**
TV Guide Entertainment Programming	TV Guide Channel Los Angeles	4/18/03
Kevin and Bean Show	KROQ FM 106.7 (IND) Los Angeles	4/17/03
TV Guide Entertainment Programming	TV Guide Channel Los Angeles	4/14/03
Fox News at 6	WNYW CH 5 (FOX) New York	3/24/03
Mark and Brian Show	KLOS FM 95.5 (ABC) Los Angeles	3/18/03
Rick Dees In The Morning	KIIS FM 102.7 (IND) Los Angeles	3/5/03
Mark and Brian Show	KLOS FM 95.5 (ABC) Los Angeles	2/24/03
Fresh Gear	**Tech TV**	**2/19/03**
Great Chefs of The World	**Discovery**	**1/30/03**
Great Chefs of The World	**Discovery**	**1/20/03**
Mark and Brian Show	KLOS FM 95.5 (ABC) Los Angeles	1/10/03
Mark and Brian Show	KLOS FM 95.5 (ABC) Los Angeles	1/9/03
Channel 11 News at Ten	WPIX CH 11 (WB) New York	12/27/02
The Screen Savers	**Tech TV**	**12/27/02**
Sportscenter	**ESPN**	**12/26/02**
Eyewitness News Tonight	KABC CH 7 (ABC) Los Angeles	12/24/02
Channel 4 News at Five	KNBC CH 4 (NBC) Los Angeles	12/23/02
Eyewitness News at Five	KABC CH 7 (ABC) Los Angeles	12/23/02
Today (character bit)	**NBC**	**12/22/02**
Access Hollywood (Syndicated TV)	**National**	**11/17/02**
Fox & Friends	**Fox News Channel**	**11/15/02**
CNET Radio Morning Show	**CNET Radio Network**	**11/12/02**
7 Eyewitness News	KABC CH 7 (ABC) Los Angeles	11/12/02
Angel	**WB**	**10/20/02**
Celebrity Justice (Syndicated TV)	**National**	**9/19/02**
9 News at 4	KCAL CH 9 (IND) Los Angeles	9/19/02
Mark and Brian Show	KLOS 95.5 (ABC) Los Angeles	9/19/02
The Screen Savers	**Tech TV**	**9/17/02**
Continental Airlines Journeys	**In-Flight Video**	**Sept-Oct/02**
Much Music USA	**Much Music Channel**	**9/11/02**
Fox News Live	**Fox News Channel**	**9/11/02**
7 Eyewitness News	KABC CH 7 (ABC) Los Angeles	9/10/02
E! Wild On	**E!**	**9/3/02**
Extra	**NBC**	**8/23/02**
CNN Music Room	**CNN**	**8/15/02**
Eyewitness News Tonight	KABC CH 7 (ABC) Los Angeles	8/12/02
Mark and Brian Show	KLOS 95.5 (ABC) Los Angeles	8/12/02
Sports Extra	WNYW CH 5 (FOX) New York	8/4/02
Good Day LA	KTTV CH 11 (FOX) Los Angeles	7/17/02

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Show Title	Network/Channel	Date
Mancow's Morning Madhouse (Syndicated Radio)	**National**	**7/10/02**
TV Guide Entertainment Programming	**TV Guide Channel**	**7/10/02**
Audio File	**Tech TV**	**7/4/02**
KTLA Morning News	KTLA CH 5 (WB) Los Angeles	7/1/02
TV Guide Entertainment Programming	TV Guide Channel-Los Angeles	6/18/02
7 Eyewitness News 7:00 am	KABC CH 7 (ABC) Los Angeles	5/8/02
News Morning Drive Time	WCBS-AM 880 (CBS) New York	4/30/02
WB11 Morning News	WPIX CH 11 (WB) New York	4/29/02
Just Shoot Me	**NBC**	**4/25/02**
Kevin and Bean Show	KROQ FM 106.7 Los Angeles	4/1/02
Close Up	NY1	1/17/02
KCBS 2 News at 6 pm	KCBS CH 2 (CBS) Los Angeles	1/13/02
KTLA Morning News	KTLA CH 5 (WB) Los Angeles	1/11/02
KTLA Morning News	KTLA CH 5 (WB) Los Angeles	1/10/02
KTLA Morning News	KTLA CH 5 (WB) Los Angeles	1/9/02
KTLA Morning News	KTLA CH 5 (WB) Los Angeles	1/8/02
KTLA Morning News	KTLA CH 5 (WB) Los Angeles	1/7/02
The Tonight Show "New Year's Eve Special" (APPEARANCE)	**NBC**	**12/31/01**
Entertainment Tonight "Olde Lang Syne" (APPEARANCE)	**CBS**	**12/27/01**
UPN 9 News	WWOR CH 9 (UPN) NY	12/7/01
E! News Daily	**E!**	**11/15/01**
The Drew Carey Show (Live TV Special)	**ABC**	**11/14/01**
Extra	**NBC**	**11/14/01**
TV Guide Entertainment Programming	TV Guide Channel-LA	11/14/01
7 Eyewitness News 7:00 am	KABC CH 7 (ABC) Los Angeles	11/13/01
Dave Matthews Video "Everyday"	**MTV**	**11/11/01**
Live with Regis and Kelly "Spin to Win"	**ABC**	**11/5/01**
I Love NY TV Campaign	**National Broadcast and Cable**	**11/01-1/02**
LVCVA Sinatra Campaign	**National Broadcast and Cable**	**11/01-1/02**
Live with Regis and Kelly	**ABC**	**10/29/01**
Mancow's Morning Madhouse (Syndicated Radio)	**National**	**10/25/01**
Rick Dees in the Morning	KIIS-FM 102.7 Los Angeles	10/25/01
The Daily Show with Jon Stewart	**Comedy Central**	**10/16/01**
Charlotte Open Call	NY1	8/6/01
America Show (Vegas! Edition)	**Hallmark Channel**	**7/16/01**
Audio File	**Tech TV**	**7/6/01**
Declaration of Independence July 4th Special (APPEARANCE)	**ABC**	**7/4/01**
CNN WorldBeat Wango Tango	**CNN**	**6/24/01**
LA Wango Tango Coverage	KABC CH 7 (ABC) Los Angeles	6/16/01
LA Wango Tango Coverage	KCBS CH 2 (CBS) Los Angeles	6/16/01
LA Wango Tango Coverage	**E!**	**6/16/01**
LA Wango Tango Coverage	**CNN**	**6/16/01**
Bill Handel in the Morning	KFI AM 640 (MRN) Los Angeles	5/22/01
CNET Radio Morning Show	**CNET Radio Network**	**5/22/01**
CNET Radio PM Drive	**CNET Radio Network**	**5/21/01**
The Simpson's	**FOX**	**5/20/01**
CBS Sunday Morning	**CBS**	**5/20/01**
7 Eyewitness News	KABC CH 7 (ABC) Los Angeles	5/15/01
Action News Team	KCBS CH 2 (CBS) Los Angeles	5/15/01
News	WABC CH 7 (ABC) New York	5/15/01
Channel 4 News at Six	KNBC CH 4 (NBC) Los Angeles	5/14/01
CNN Headline News	**CNN**	**4/29/01**
World Beat	**CNN**	**4/29/01**
WB 11 Morning News	WPIX CH 11 (WB) New York	4/24/01
Channel 11 News at Ten	WPIX CH 11 (WB) New York	4/23/01
CNET Radio Early PM	**CNET Radio Network Nat'l Radio**	**4/23/01**
CNET Radio Morning Show	**CNET Radio Network Nat'l Radio**	**4/23/01**

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Show Title	Network/Channel	Date
Big Boy in The Morning	KPWR 105.9 (IND) Los Angeles	2/26/01
E! News Daily	**E!**	**2/23/01**
The Steve Harvey Show	KKBT FM 1330 (IND) Los Angeles	2/22/01
Mark and Brian Show	KLOS FM 95.5 (ABC) Los Angeles	2/22/01
Sam Rubin Show	KLSX FM 97.1 (IND) Los Angeles	2/22/01
KNX 1070 Newsradio	KNX AM 1070 (CBS) Los Angeles	2/22/01
KTLA Morning News	KTLA CH 5 (WB) Los Angeles	2/22/01
Good Day LA	KTTV CH 11 (FOX) Los Angeles	2/22/01
World News Now	**ABC**	**2/22/01**
All News Channel	**All News Channel Cable**	**2/22/01**
E! News Daily	**E!**	**2/22/01**
Fox News Live	**Fox News Channel**	**2/22/01**
First Business	**Syndicated TV**	**2/22/01**
News Radio 88	WCBS AM 880 (CBS) New York	2/22/01
Channel 2 News at 5:00	WCBS CH 2 (CBS) New York	2/21/01
Grammy Awards Arrivals	KCBS CH 2 (CBS) Los Angeles	2/21/01
CBS 2 News at 11:00	KCBS CH 2 (CBS) Los Angeles	2/21/01
Karel & Andrew	KFI AM 640 (MRN) Los Angeles	2/21/01
Big Boy In The Morning	KPWR FM 105.9 (IND) Los Angeles	2/21/01
The Late Show with Craig Kilborn	**CBS**	**2/21/01**
43rd Annual Grammy Awards (APPEARANCE)	**CBS**	**2/21/01**
Biz Buzz	**CNN**	**2/21/01**
E! News: The Grammy's	**E!**	**2/21/01**
Fox News Live	**Fox News Channel**	**2/21/01**
Grammy Awards Pre Show	**MTV**	**2/21/01**
News Radio 88	WCBS AM 880 (CBS) New York	2/21/01
MTV News	**MTV**	**2/20/01**
Entertainment Tonight	**CBS**	**2/20/01**
Channel 2 News at 5:00	WCBS CH 2 (CBS) New York	2/20/01
MTV News	**MTV**	**2/19/01**
MTV News	**MTV**	**2/16/01**
E! News Daily	**E!**	**2/15/01**
Blue Man Group & Cristina Casanas	**Univision 41**	**2/4/01**
Extra	**NBC**	**1/25-28/01**
Live with Regis "Live in Vegas" (APPEARANCE)	**ABC**	**1/25/01**
CNN World Beat (Repeat)	**CNN**	**12/31/00**
CNN WorldBeat:Charlie Brown Christmas	**CNN**	**12/25/00**
CNN WorldBeat Show (Feature story)	**CNN**	**11/26/00**
Jeopardy	**ABC**	**9/20/00**
The Practice (audio of Rods & Cones used)	**ABC**	**8/20-27/00**
The Tonight Show with Jay Leno (Repeat)	**NBC**	**8/2/00**
Channel 7 Eyewitness News	WABC CH 7 New York	7/31/00
Fox 5 News	WNYW CH 5 (FOX) New York	7/31/00
FYE!	**E!**	**7/10/00**
Eyewitness News	KABC CH 7 Los Angeles	6/30/00
The Tonight Show with Jay Leno (APPEARANCE)	**NBC**	**6/28/00**
Auditions in Los Angeles	KCBS CH 2 Los Angeles	6/5/00
United Airlines In-Flight Video	**NBC**	**May-00**
"Access Hollywood"	**NBC**	**4/14/00**
E! Entertainment News	**E!**	**3/4/00**
Frankie Muniz "CBS Early Show"	**CBS**	**2/29/00**
NY Knicks halftime w/ Blue Man Group	**TBS**	**2/25/00**
NY Knicks halftime w/ Blue Man Group	**CNN (play of the day)**	**2/25/00**
CNN/Showbiz	**CNN**	**1/29/00**

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Show Title	Network/Channel	Date
Eyewitness News	KLAS CH 8 (CBS) Las Vegas	11/24/03
4 San Antonio Living	WOAI CH 4 (NBC) San Antonio	11/14/03
4 San Antonio Living	WOAI CH 4 (NBC) San Antonio	11/13/03
News Channel 8 Today	WFLA CH 8 (NBC) Tampa/St.Petersburg	11/13/03
4 San Antonio Living	WOAI CH 4 (NBC) San Antonio	11/12/03
5 San Antonio Living	WOAI CH 4 (NBC) San Antonio	11/11/03
News 2 Chicago	WBBM CH 2 (CBS) Chicago	11/11/03
Channel 6 News Ten at 10	WOWT CH 6 (NBC) Omaha	11/10/03
News 3 Sunrise	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	11/10/03
News 3 At Sunrise	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	11/9/03
Newscenter 5 Tonight	WCVB CH 5 (ABC) Boston	11/7/03
4 San Antonio Living	WOAI CH 4 (NBC) San Antonio	11/7/03
Fox 18 News at Ten	WCCB CH 18 (FOX) Charlotte	11/6/03
Live 5 Newshour	WCSC CH 5 (CBS) Charleston	11/6/03
4 San Antonio Living	WOAI CH 4 (NBC) San Antonio	11/6/03
Live 5 News Nightwatch	WCSC CH 5 (CBS) Charleston	11/6/03
News 3 Nightside	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	11/3/03
NewsSource 13 At 11:00	WORK CH 13 (ABC) Rochester	10/30/03
4 San Antonio Living	WOAI CH 4 (NBC) San Antonio	10/30/03
5 San Antonio Living	WOAI CH 4 (NBC) San Antonio	10/29/03
Fox 17 News At Ten	WXMI CH 17 (FOX) Grand Rapids/Kalamazoo	10/24/03
Fox 59 News	WXIN CH 59 (FOX) Indianapolis	10/24/03
Morning News On RTV 6	WRTV CH 6 (ABC) Indianapolis	10/24/03
Fox News At 5:00	WFLD CH 32 (FOX) Chicago	10/24/03
The Morning Edition	WJZ CH 13 (CBS) Baltimore	10/24/03
Morning News On RTV 6	WRTV CH 6 (ABC) Indianapolis	10/24/03
Channel 3 News at 11 PM	WKYC CH 3 (NBC) Cleveland/Akron	10/23/03
Eyewitness News at 11	WPRI Ch 12 (CBS) Providence/New Bedford	10/23/03
Today in St.Louis	KSDK CH 5 (NBC) St.Louis	10/22/03
5 At Ten	KSDK CH 5 (NBC) St.Louis	10/21/03
4 At Ten	KMOV CH 4 (CBS) St. Louis	10/21/03
21 Eyewitness News This Morning	WHP CH 21 (CBS) Harrisburg/Lancaster	10/10/03
News Channel 8 at Ten	KCCI CH 8 (CBS) Des Moines/Ames	10/8/03
Good Evening Sacramento	KMAX CH 31 (UPN) Sacramento	10/6/03
KOIN 6 News at 5	KOIN CH 6 (CBS) Portland, OR	10/4/03
News Channel 8 at 11:00	WFLA CH 8 (NBC) Tampa/St.Petersburg	10/3/03
AM Northwest	KATU CH 2 (ABC) Portland, OR	10/3/03
Mornings Live On Q	KCPQ CH 13 (FOX) Seattle/Tacoma	10/3/03
Fox 6 News In The Morning	XETV CH 6 (FOX) San Diego	9/25/03
Deco Drive	WSVN CH 7 (FOX) Miami/Ft.Lauderdale	9/23/03
Show Me St. Louis	KSDK CH 5 (NBC) St.Louis	9/23/03
Local 8 At Noon	KFMB CH 8 (CBS) San Diego	9/23/03
KCAL 9 News at 12:00 Noon	KCAL CH 9 (IND) Los Angeles	9/23/03
7 News at Noon	WSVN CH 7 (FOX) Miami/Ft.Lauderdale	9/23/03
Good Day Orlando	WOFL CH 35 (FOX) Orlando	9/23/03
Good Day Dallas	KDFW CH 4 (FOX) Dallas/Fort Worth	9/23/03
Today in Florida	WSVN CH 7 (FOX) Miami/Ft.Lauderdale	9/23/03
Fox 10 News Arizona Morning	KSAZ CH 10 (FOX) Phoenix	9/23/03
WB2Day	KWGN CH 2 (WB) Denver	9/23/03
Good Day Oregon Early Edition	KPTV (FOX) Portland, OR	9/23/03
Local 8 At 6:00 AM	KFMB CH 8 (CBS) San Diego	9/23/03
Fox 6 News In The Morning	XETV CH 6 (FOX) San Diego	9/23/03
Newsline 9	KWTV CH 9 (CBS) Oklahoma City	9/23/03
Newscenter Four Daybreak	KRON CH4 (IND) San Francisco	9/23/03
Wake Up!	WSJV CH 28 (FOX) South Bend	9/23/03
News 9 Daybreak	WMUR (ABC) Boston	9/23/03
5 News at 5 AM	KOCO CH 5 (ABC) Oklahoma City	9/23/03

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Show Title	Network/Channel	Date
Local 6 First News	WKMG CH 6 (CBS) Orlando	9/23/03
Newscenter 5 Eyeopener	WCVB CH 5 (ABC) Boston	9/23/03
Eyewitness News at 5	KTRK CH 13 (ABC) Houston	9/23/03
News Channel 7 Daybreak	WSPA CH 7 (CBS) Spartanburg/Greenville	9/23/03
ABC 7 News	WLS CH 7 (Chicago)	9/23/03
Fox 10 News at 5 AM	KSAZ CH 10 (FOX) Phoenix	9/23/03
The Daybreak Report	WTMJ CH 4 (NBC) Milwaukee	9/23/03
Good Day Tampa Bay	WTVT CH 13 (FOX) Tampa/St.Petersburg	9/23/03
Channel 3 News at 11 PM	WKYC CH 3 (NBC) Cleveland/Akron	9/22/03
Fox 25 Sports	KOKH CH 25 (FOX) Oklahoma City	9/22/03
Newsline 9	KWTV CH 9 (CBS) Oklahoma City	9/22/03
DFW Today	KXAS CH 5 (NBC) Dallas	9/22/03
Newsline 9	KWTV CH 9 (CBS) Oklahoma City	9/21/03
KRON 4 Morning News	KRON CH4 (IND) San Francisco	9/17/03
Newsline 9	KWTV CH9 (CBS) Oklahoma City	9/16/03
News 8 at 5:30	WOOD CH 8 (NBC) Grand Rapids	9/11/03
Fox 59 News	WXIN CH 59 (FOX) Indianapolis	9/10/03
NBC 7/39 First News at 4:30	KNSD CH 39 (NBC) San Diego	9/8/03
WBZ 4 News	WBZ CH 4 (CBS) Boston	9/4/03
New England Midday	NECN Boston	9/2/03
Eyewitness News at 6:30	KLAS CH 8 (CBS) Las Vegas	8/30/03
Eyewitness News at 11:00	KLAS CH 8 (CBS) Las Vegas	8/29/03
WAVY News 10 Today	WAVY Ch 10 (NBC) Norfolk/Newport News	8/29/03
Fox 2 News Midday	KTVI CH 2 (FOX) St. Louis	8/29/03
Fox 2 News In The Morning	KTVI CH 2 (FOX) St. Louis	8/29/03
WAVY News 10 Today	WAVY Ch 10 (NBC) Norfolk/Newport News	8/21/03
WAVY News 10 Today	WAVY Ch 10 (NBC) Norfolk/Newport News	8/19/03
10 News Daybreak	WTSP CH 10 (CBS) Tampa/St.Petersburg	8/19/03
Deco Drive	WSVN CH 7 (FOX) Miami/Ft. Lauderdale	8/18/03
Fox 26 News 7:00 AM	KRIV CH 26 (FOX) Houston	8/15/03
WB 39 News at Nine	KHWB CH 39 (WB) Houston	8/14/03
4 San Antonio Living	WOAI CH 4 (NBC) San Antonio	8/13/03
11 News Early Show	KTVT CH 11 (CBS) Dallas/Fort Worth	8/13/03
Good Day Dallas	KDFW CH 4 (FOX) Dallas/Fort Worth	8/12/03
News at 9:00	KDAF CH 33 (WB) Dallas/Fort Worth	8/12/03
11 News at Five	KTVT CH 11 (CBS) Dallas/Fort Worth	8/12/03
News 2 Chicago	WBBM CH 2 (CBS) Chicago	8/11/03
Fox 10 News @ 5AM	KSAZ CH 10 (FOX) Phoenix	8/11/03
News 2 Chicago	WBBM CH 2 (CBS) Chicago	8/10/03
Fox 10 News @Five	KSAZ CH 10 (FOX) Phoenix	8/10/03
NBC 7/39 This Weekend	KNSD CH 39 (NBC) San Diego	8/9/03
KUSI Morning News	KUSI CH 51 (IND) San Diego	8/9/03
10 News This Weekend	KGTV CH 10 (ABC) San Diego	8/9/03
10 News Weekend Edition	KGTV CH 10 (ABC) San Diego	8/9/03
Fox 10 News @ 6 AM	KSAZ CH 10 (FOX) Phoenix	8/8/03
Fox 10 News Arizona Morning	KSAZ CH 10 (FOX) Phoenix	8/8/03
KUSI News at Noon	KUSI CH 51 (IND) San Diego	8/8/03
Fox 13 News AM	KSTU CH 13 (FOX) Salt Lake City	8/8/03
12 News At Eleven	KPNX CH 12 (NBC) Phoenix	8/8/03
10 News Early Edition	KGTV CH 10 (ABC) San Diego	8/8/03
12 News Today	KPNX CH 12 (NBC) Phoenix	8/8/03
News5 Morning News	KPHO CH 5 (CBS) Phoenix	8/8/03
KUSI News at Noon	KUSI CH 51 (IND) San Diego	8/7/03
Fox 10 News Arizona Morning	KSAZ CH 10 (FOX) Phoenix	8/7/03
11 News This Morning at 6	KHOU CH 11 (CBS) Houston	8/7/03
Fox 10 News @ 6 AM	KSAZ CH 10 (FOX) Phoenix	8/7/03
News 2 Newsbreak	WBBM CH 2 (CBS) Chicago	8/6/03

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Show Title	Network/Channel	Date
Fox 10 News Arizona Morning	KSAZ CH 10 (FOX) Phoenix	8/6/03
Fox 10 News @ 6 AM	KSAZ CH 10 (FOX) Phoenix	8/6/03
News 2 Chicago	WBBM CH 2 (CBS) Chicago	8/6/03
News 8 At Six	KHNL CH 13 (NBC) Honolulu	8/5/03
News 2 Chicago	WBBM CH 2 (CBS) Chicago	8/5/03
ChicagoLand News at 9	CLTV (IND) Chicago	8/5/03
WGN Morning News	WGN CH 9 (WB) Chicago	8/5/03
Fox 10 News Arizona Morning	KSAZ CH 10 (FOX) Phoenix	8/5/03
News 4 Utah at 10:00	KTVX CH 4 (ABC) Salt Lake City	8/4/03
Fox News in the Morning	WFLD CH 32 (FOX) Chicago	8/4/03
Fox 13 News AM	KSTU CH 13 (FOX) Salt Lake City	8/4/03
Fox 10 News Arizona Morning	KSAZ CH 10 (FOX) Phoenix	8/4/03
2 News This Morning	KUTV CH 2 (CBS) Salt Lake City	8/4/03
News 2 Chicago	WBBM CH 2 (CBS) Chicago	8/4/03
News 2 Chicago	WBBM CH 2 (CBS) Chicago	8/3/03
Action 7 News This Morning	KOAT CH 7 (ABC) Albuquerque	8/2/03
Action 7 News Live at Noon	KOAT CH 7 (ABC) Albuquerque	8/1/03
2 News This Morning	KUTV CH 2 (CBS) Salt Lake City	8/1/03
Today in St. Louis	KSDK CH 5 (NBC) St. Louis	8/1/03
Fox 2 News at 5:30 AM	KTVI CH 2 (FOX) St. Louis	8/1/03
Action 7 News Live This Morning	KOAT CH 7 (ABC) Albuquerque	8/1/03
4 at Ten	KMOV CH 4 (CBS) St. Louis	7/31/03
News Channel 8 at Ten	KCCI CH 8 (CBS) Des Moines	7/31/03
5 at Ten	KSDK CH 5 (NBC) St. Louis	7/31/03
Fox 2 News at 5 PM	KTVI CH 2 (FOX) St. Louis	7/31/03
First 4:00 News	WTMJ CH 4 (NBC) Milwaukee	7/30/03
Morning on Two	KTVU CH 2 (FOX) San Francisco	7/29/03
Mark and Brian Show	KLOS FM 95.5 (ABC) Los Angeles	7/28/03
Fox 2 News in the Morning	KTVI CH 2 (FOX) St. Louis	7/28/03
Channel 9 News at Noon	WCPO CH 9 (ABC) Cincinnati	7/26/03
WB 17 News at 10	WPHL CH 17 (WB) Philadelphia	7/25/03
10	WCAU CH 10 (NBC) Philadelphia	7/25/03
Good Day Philadelphia	WTXF CH 29 (FOX) Philadelphia	7/25/03
Eyewitness News at 5 AM	WBNS CH 10 (CBS) Columbus, OH	7/18/03
News 2 Houston at 4:00	KPRC CH 2 (NBC) Houston	7/16/03
KREM 2 News Early Show	KREM CH2 (CBS) Spokane	7/15/03
KREM 2 News at 6	KREM CH2 (CBS) Spokane	7/14/03
KOMO News Four	KOMO CH 4 (ABC) Seattle	7/14/03
KOMO News Four Live on the Weekend	KOMO CH 4 (ABC) Seattle	7/13/03
KOMO News Four	KOMO CH 4 (ABC) Seattle	7/12/03
Fox 45 Morning News	WBFF CH 45 (FOX) Baltimore	7/7/03
News 4 Utah at 5:00	KTVX CH 4 (ABC) Salt Lake City	7/7/03
NBC 5 News at 5:00	WMAQ CH5 (NBC) Chicago	7/2/03
Good Day Philadelphia	WTXF CH 29 (FOX) Philadelphia	6/30/03
10 News at 6:00	WTSP CH 10 (CBS) Tampa	6/27/03
NBC 26 News	WGBA CH 26 (NBC) Green Bay	6/13/03
7 News at 11:00	WHDH CH 7 (NBC) Boston	6/13/03
Newscenter 5 Tonight	WCVB CH 5 (ABC) Boston	6/13/03
WBZ 4 News	WBZ CH 4 (CBS) Boston	6/13/03
Channel 3 News at 11pm	WKYC CH 3 (NBC) Cleveland/Akron	6/13/03
NBC 7/39 News at 11pm	KNSD CH 39 (NBC) San Diego	6/13/03
NBC 13 News Today	WVTM CH 13 (NBC) Birmingham	6/13/03
Newscenter 5 Eyeopener	WCVB CH 5 (ABC) Boston	6/13/03
3 Action News at Sunrise	WSTM CH 3 (NBC) Syracuse	6/13/03
Connecticut News	WVIT CH 30 (NBC) Hartford/New Haven	6/13/03
News 4 Tonight	WYFF CH 4 (NBC) Greenville	6/13/03
Fox 2 News In The Morning	KTVI CH 2 (FOX) St Louis	6/11/03

Blue Man Group
Feeder Market Television Coverage 2000-2003

Show Title	Network/Channel	Date
Rise and Shine	WJZ CH 13 (CBS) Baltimore	6/6/03
Evening Drive Time	KGO AM 810 (ABC) San Francisco	6/6/03
7 News Sunday Morning	KMGH CH 7 (ABC) Denver	5/25/03
7 News at 5	KMGH CH 7 (ABC) Denver	5/24/03
15 News Today	WMTV CH 15 (NBC) Madison	5/21/03
Fox 13 News AM	KSTU CH 13 (FOX) Salt Lake City	5/13/03
9 News	KUSA CH 9 (NBC) Denver	5/12/03
KUSI Morning News	KUSI CH 51 (IND) San Diego	5/9/03
News 8 Midday	WFAA CH 8 (ABC) Dallas	4/30/03
1080 News	WTIC AM 1080 (CBS) Hartford	4/29/03
Eyewitness News at 5pm	WBNS CH10 (CBS) Columbus,OH	4/25/03
WB2Day	KWGN CH 2 (WB) Denver	4/24/03
12 News Today	KPNX CH 12 (NBC) Phoenix	4/24/03
The Daybreak Report	WTMJ CH 4 (NBC) Milwaukee	4/23/03
News 3 Sunrise	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	4/23/03
NBC 6 News at 10	KCEN CH 6 (NBC) Waco	4/22/03
The Morning Mix	WMBD CH 31 (CBS) Peoria	4/22/03
News 3 Nightside	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	4/22/03
2 News Today	KJRH CH 2 (NBC) Tulsa	4/22/03
NBC 26 News	WGBA CH 26 (NBC) Green Bay	4/22/03
News Center 16	WNDU CH 16 (NBC) South Bend	4/22/03
Fox 5 News at Ten	KVVU CH5 (FOX) Las Vegas	4/22/03
WGN Morning News	WGN CH 9 (WB) Chicago	4/22/03
7 News at 11&4;30	WHDH CH 7 (NBC) Boston	4/22/03
Fox 2 News Morning & Noon	WJBK CH 2 (FOX) Detroit	4/22/03
Fox 59 News	WXIN CH 59 (FOX) Indianapolis	4/22/03
NBC 7/39 News at 11 pm	KNSD CH 39 (NBC) San Diego	4/22/03
NBC 13 News Today	WVTM CH 13 (NBC) Birmingham	4/22/03
Good Morning Jacksonville Sunrise	WTLV CH 12 (NBC) Jacksonville	4/22/03
News 3 at Sunrise	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	4/20/03
Eyewitness News at 6	KLAS CH 8 (CBS) Las Vegas	4/18/03
News 3 Sunrise	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	4/18/03
News 3 at Six	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	4/17/03
Eyewitness News at 4	KLAS CH 8 (CBS) Las Vegas	4/17/03
News 3 Nightside	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	4/17/03
Eyewitness News This Morning	KLAS CH 8 (CBS) Las Vegas	4/16/03
WGN Morning News	WGN CH 9 (WB) Chicago	4/15/03
Eyewitness News	KLAS CH 8 (CBS) Las Vegas	4/15/03
Good Morning Tucson	KGUN CH 9 (ABC) Tucson	4/15/03
TV Guide Entertainment Programming	TV Guide Channel Los Angeles	4/14/03
News 3 at Six	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	4/14/03
Fox 29 News at Nine	KABB CH 29 (FOX) San Antonio	4/13/03
Fox News at 6	WNYW CH 5 (FOX) New York	3/24/03
Fox 32 News	WFLD CH 32 (FOX) Chicago	2/22/03
Metromix	CLTV (IND) Chicago	2/21/03
WGN News at Noon	WGN CH 9 (WB) Chicago	2/21/03
ABC 7 News	WLS CH 7 (ABC) Chicago	2/21/03
ABC 7 News	WLS CH 7 (ABC) Chicago	2/20/03
ABC 7 News	WLS CH 7 (ABC) Chicago	2/19/03
Fox 59 News	WXIN CH 59 (FOX) Indianapolis	1/22/03
Local 8 Weekend	KFMB CH 8 (CBS) San Diego	1/12/03
KUSI News at Ten	KUSI CH 51 (IND) San Diego	1/12/03
KARE 11 News	KARE CH 11 (NBC) Minneapolis	1/12/03
KUSI News at Six & Ten	KUSI CH 51 (IND) San Diego	12/25/02
NBC 5 News at 6:00	WMAQ CH 5 (NBC) Chicago	12/25/02
ABC 7 News	WLS CH 7 (ABC) Chicago	12/25/02
Eyewitness News at 11:00	KLAS CH 8 (CBS) Las Vegas	12/24/02

Blue Man Group
Feeder Market Television Coverage 2000-2003

Show Title	Network/Channel	Date
CBS Southwest News at 5:30	KRQE CH 13 (CBS) Albuquerque	12/23/02
CBS Southwest News Ten at 10 & 5:30	KRQE CH 13 (CBS) Albuquerque	12/22/02
CBS Southwest News Ten at 10	KRQE CH 13 (CBS) Albuquerque	12/20/02
Eyewitness News This Morning	KLAS CH 8 (CBS) Las Vegas	12/6/02
News 3 Sunrise	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	12/6/02
News 3 (At Six & Nightside)	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	12/5/02
Eyewitness News at 11:00	KLAS CH 8 (CBS) Las Vegas	12/5/02
WGN Morning News	WGN CH 9 (IND) Chicago	12/5/02
Fox 5 News At Ten	KVVU CH 5 (FOX) Las Vegas	11/7/02
Today in New England	WHDH CH 7 (NBC) Boston	11/5/02
7 News At Noob	WHDH CH 7 (NBC) Boston	11/5/02
ABC 7 News	WLS CH 7 (ABC) Chicago	10/31/02
Evening Magazine	KING CH 5 (NBC) Seattle	10/22/02
Evening Magazine	KING CH 5 (NBC) Seattle	10/21/02
ABC 7 News Sunday	KGO CH 7 (ABC) San Francisco	10/6/02
Mornings On Two	KTVU CH 2 (FOX) San Francisco	10/4/02
News 3 Nightside	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	9/11/02
WGN Morning News	WGN CH 9 (IND) Chicago	9/10/02
Fox News at Noon	WFLD CH 32 (FOX) Chicago	9/6/02
Fox News in the Morning	WFLD CH 32 (FOX) Chicago	9/6/02
News 40 This Morning	WGGB CH 40 (ABC) Springfield, MA	9/6/02
ABC 7 News	WLS CH 7 (ABC) Chicago	9/4/02
Eyewitness News This Morning	KLAS CH 8 (CBS) Las Vegas	8/20/02
Good Day Arizona	KTVK CH 3 (IND) Phoenix	8/20/02
Eyewitness News	KLAS CH 8 (CBS) Las Vegas	8/19/02
KOMO News Four	KOMO CH 4 (ABC) Seattle	8/19/02
KING Five News	KING CH 5 (NBC) Seattle	8/19/02
News at Ten	KCPQ CH 13 (FOX) Seattle	8/19/02
Morning Live on Q	KCPQ CH 13 (FOX) Seattle	8/19/02
Northwest News	Northwest Cable News Seattle	8/19/02
KOMO News Four	KOMO CH 4 (ABC) Seattle	8/18/02
NBC 5 News	WMAQ CH5 (NBC) Chicago	8/18/02
KRON 4 Morning News	KRON CH 4 (IND) San Francisco	8/15/02
Evening Drive Time	KGO AM 810 (ABC) San Francisco	8/14/02
KRON 4 Morning News	KRON CH 4 (IND) San Francisco	8/7/02
WGN Morning News	WGN CH 9 (IND) Chicago	8/2/02
News 10 Today	WCAU CH 10 (NBC) Philadelphia	7/29/02
News 10 Today	WCAU CH 10 (NBC) Philadelphia	7/26/02
Mornings Live on Q	KCPQ CH 13 (FOX) Seattle	7/12/02
ABC 7 News	WLS CH 7 (ABC) Chicago	7/11/02
NBC 5 News	WMAQ CH5 (NBC) Chicago	7/10/02
CLTV News	CLTV CH 51 (IND) Chicago	7/9/02
News 2 Chicago	WBBM CH 2 (CBS) Chicago	7/9/02
Fox News at 6:00	WFLD CH 32 (FOX) Chicago	7/9/02
Fox News at Noon	WFLD CH 32 (FOX) Chicago	7/9/02
WGN Morning News	WGN CH 9 (IND) Chicago	7/9/02
NBC 5 News	WMAQ CH5 (NBC) Chicago	7/9/02
ABC 7 News	WLS CH 7 (ABC) Chicago	7/9/02
ABC 7 News	WLS CH 7 (ABC) Chicago	7/5/02
NBC 5 News	WMAQ CH5 (NBC) Chicago	7/5/02
Newscenter 5 Midday	WCVB CH 5 (ABC) Boston	6/25/02
Eyewitness News at 6:00	KLAS CH 8 (CBS) Las Vegas	6/3/02
Good Morning Las Vegas	KTNV CH 13 (ABC) Las Vegas	6/3/02
News 3 Sunrise	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	6/2/02
News 3 Sunrise	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	5/31/02
News 3 Nightside	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	5/30/02
News Channel 6 at 6	KTAL CH 6 (NBC) Shreveport	5/29/02

Blue Man Group
Feeder Market Television Coverage 2000-2003

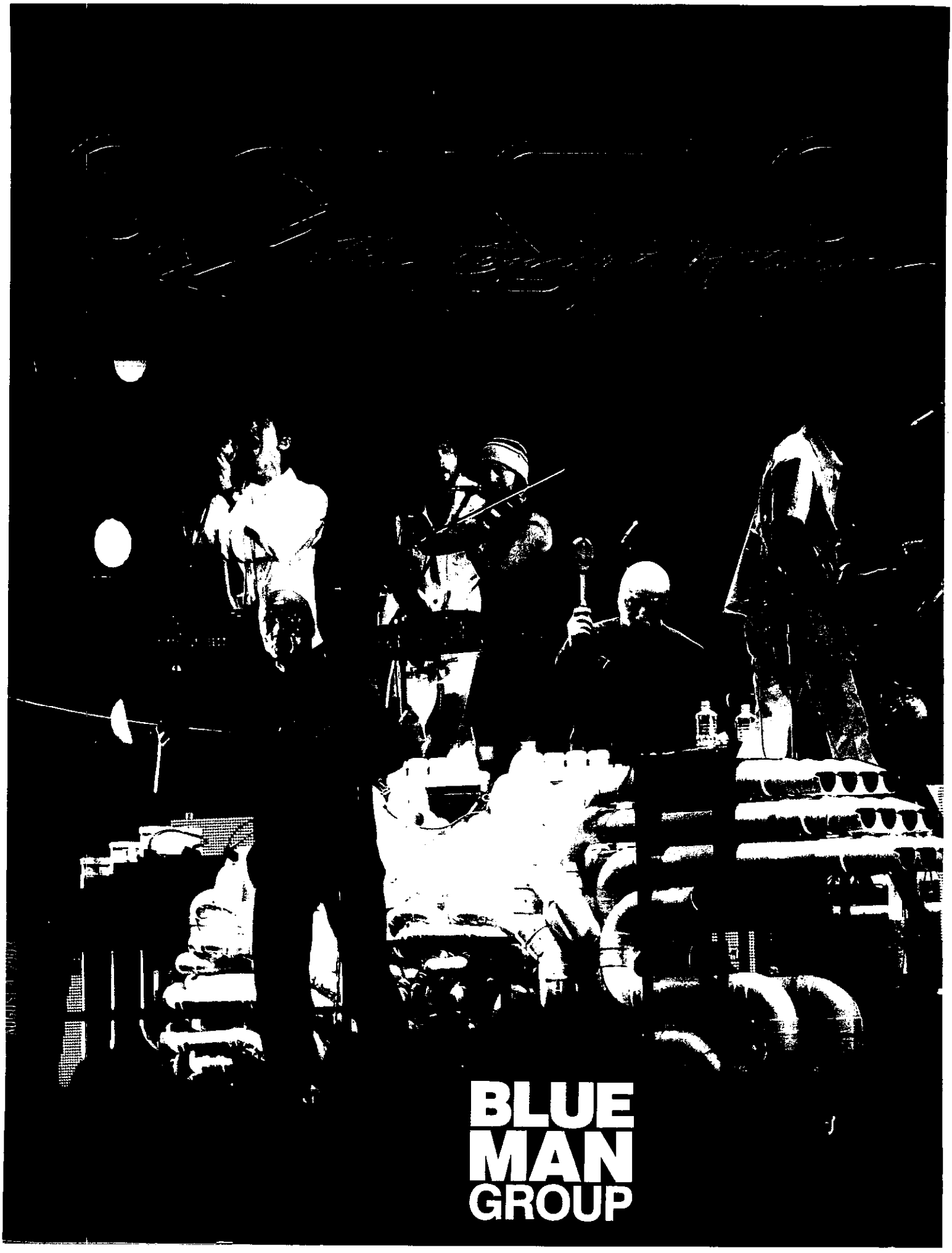
Show Title	Network/Channel	Date
NBC 5 News	WMAQ CH5 (NBC) Chicago	5/7/02
Local First News at 11 pm	WDIV CH 4 (NBC) Detroit	4/30/02
KRON 4 Morning News	KRON CH 4 (IND) San Francisco	4/12/02
ABC 6 News	WLNE CH 6 (ABC) Providence	3/30/02
KRON 4 Morning News	KRON CH 4 (IND) San Francisco	3/28/02
Close Up	NY1	1/17/02
Mornings On Two	KTVU CH 2 (FOX) San Francisco	1/15/02
Newschannel 12 at 5:00	WXII CH 12 (NBC) Greensboro	1/15/02
Local First News at 5 pm	WDIV CH 4 (NBC) Detroit	1/15/02
Channel 7 News at 10:00 pm	KATV CH 7 (ABC) Little Rock	1/15/02
San Francisco Open Call	KTVU CH 2 (FOX) San Francisco	1/15/02
Channel 5 Eyewitness News at Five	KPIX CH 5 (CBS) San Francisco	1/14/02
WBZ 4 News	WBZ CH 4 (CBS) Boston	1/14/02
San Francisco Open Call	KPIX CH 5 (CBS) San Francisco	1/14/02
Fox News at 9:00	WFLD CH 32 (FOX) Chicago	1/10/02
New England Midday	NECN Cable Boston	12/26/01
WGN Morning News	WGN CH 9 (IND) Chicago	12/25/01
FOX 8 10:00 News	WGHP CH 8 (FOX) Greensboro	12/17/01
12 News Tonight	WKRC CH 12 (CBS) Chicago	12/14/01
WGN Morning News	WGN CH 9 (IND) Chicago	12/11/01
Chicago Tonight	WTTW CH 11 (PBS) Chicago	12/10/01
CLTV News	CLTV CH 51 (IND) Chicago	12/10/01
Fox News at Noon	WFLD CH 32 (FOX) Chicago	12/10/01
NBC 5 News	WMAQ CH5 (NBC) Chicago	12/10/01
Newsradio 780	WBBM 780 (CBS) Chicago	12/10/01
ABC 7 News	WLS CH 7 (ABC) Chicago	12/10/01
ABC 7 News	WLS CH 7 (ABC) Chicago	12/10/01
News 9 at 5:00	WMUR CH 9 (ABC) Manchester	11/14/01
Live at Five	WPTY CH 24 (ABC) Memphis	11/13/01
Action News	WPVI CH 6 (ABC) Philadelphia	11/13/01
Eyewitness News at 4:00	KLAS CH 8 (CBS) Las Vegas	11/9/01
Suite Home Chicago	WMAQ CH5 (NBC) Chicago	10/5/01
Charlotte Open Call	WCCB (FOX)	8/6/01
Charlotte Open Call	NY1	8/6/01
Eyewitness News at 8:30	KLAS CH 8 (CBS) Las Vegas	5/20/01
Bay Sunday	KPIX CH 5 (CBS) San Francisco	5/20/01
Newschannel 5 Midday Report	WTVF CH 5 (CBS) Nashville	5/18/01
News Channel 8	WROC CH 8 (CBS) Rochester	5/16/01
Fox 18 News at Ten	WCCB CH 18 (FOX) Charlotte	5/15/01
Eyewitness News Today	WTTE CH 28 (FOX) Columbus	5/15/01
News 4 This Morning	KCNC CH 4 (CBS) Denver	5/15/01
7 News 6:00 AM	KMGH CH 7 (ABC) Denver	5/15/01
News 3 at 5:00	WWMT CH 3 (CBS) Grand Rapids	5/15/01
13 Morning News	WZZM CH 13 (ABC) Grand Rapids	5/15/01
5 Eyewitness News: Live at Five	WFRV CH 5 (CBS) Green Bay	5/15/01
Eyewitness News This Morning	WFSB CH 3 (CBS) Hartford	5/15/01
Eyewitness News at 5:00	KTRK CH 13 (ABC) Houston	5/15/01
Newschannel 19 at 5:00	WHNT CH 19 (CBS) Huntsville	5/15/01
Morning News	WNYT CH 13 (NBC) Albany/Troy	5/15/01
Noon News	WRGB CH 6 (CBS) Albany/Troy	5/15/01
News at Ten	WXXA CH 23 (FOX) Albany/Troy	5/15/01
Action 7 News Live This Morning	KOAT CH 7 (ABC) Albuquerque	5/15/01
Newscenter Eye Opener	WCVB CH 5 (ABC) Boston	5/15/01
Good Morning Western New York	WKBW CH 7 (ABC) Buffalo	5/15/01
Newschannel 3 at Noon	WREG CH 3 (CBS) Memphis	5/15/01
Eyewitness News	KSTC CH 45 (IND) Minneapolis	5/15/01
WCCO 4 News	WCCO CH 4 (CBS) Minneapolis	5/15/01

Blue Man Group
Feeder Market Television Coverage 2000-2003

Show Title	Network/Channel	Date
KPHO 5 Morning News	KPHO CH 5 (CBS) Phoenix	5/15/01
ABC 11 Eyewitness News	WTVD CH 11 (ABC) Raleigh/Dunham	5/15/01
News 6 at Noon	WTVR CH 6 (CBS) Richmond	5/15/01
2 News at Noon	KUTV CH 2 (CBS) Salt Lake City	5/15/01
9 News Daybreak	WIXT CH 9 (ABC) Syracuse	5/15/01
28 Tampa Bay News	WFTS CH 28 (ABC) Tampa	5/15/01
Fox 29 Morning News	WFLX CH 29 (FOX) West Palm Bh.	5/15/01
Noon News	WKBN CH 27 (CBS) Youngstown	5/15/01
Eyewitness News Nightbeat	WBRE CH 28 (NBC) Wilkes-Barre	5/14/01
Prime Time News	KQCA CH 58 (WB) Sacramento	5/14/01
Eyewitness at 10:00	KOAA CH 5/30 (NBC) Colorado Springs	5/14/01
News 3 at Nine	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	5/12/01
News 3 Nightside	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	5/11/01
Newsradio 779	WBBM-AM 780 (CBS) Chicago	4/30/01
Cityline	WCVB CH 5 (ABC) Boston	4/29/01
Channel 3 Reports	KCRA CH 3 (NBC) Sacramento	4/26/01
Channel 3 Reports	KCRA CH 3 (NBC) Sacramento	4/25/01
News 13 Inside Las Vegas	KTNV CH 13 (ABC) Las Vegas	4/23/01
Good Morning Las Vegas	KTNV CH 13 (ABC) Las Vegas	4/23/01
News 13 Inside Las Vegas	KTNV CH 13 (ABC) Las Vegas	4/22/01
Newscenter 40 Nightsdie	WMGM CH 40 (NBC) Atlantic City	4/21/01
Eyewitness News at 4:00	KLAS CH 8 (CBS) Las Vegas	4/20/01
BMG at Illinois vs. Iowa big 10 game news clips	WGN AM News CH 2	3/11/01
NBC 5 News Today	WMAQ CH 5 (NBC) Chicago	2/25/01
News 2 Chicago	WBBM CH 2 (CBS) Chicago	2/24/01
Tech Now!	KBWB CH 20 (WB) San Francisco	2/24/01
BMG at Theatre Fever (Chicago)	WGN AM News CH 2	2/23-24/01
WGN Morning News	WGN CH 9 (IND) Chicago	2/23/01
WGN News At Noon	WGN CH 9 (IND) Chicago	2/23/01
WBZ 4 News	WBZ CH 4 (CBS) Boston	2/22/01
CLTV News	CLTV CH 51 (IND) Chicago	2/22/01
News 2 Chicago	WBBM CH 2 (CBS) Chicago	2/22/01
Fox News in The Morning	WFLD CH 32 (FOX) Chicago	2/22/01
Fox News At Noon	WFLD CH 32 (FOX) Chicago	2/22/01
WGN Morning News	WGN CH 9 (IND) Chicago	2/22/01
Newschannel 5 Midday	WEWS CH 5 (ABC) Chicago	2/22/01
Eight is News At Noon	WJW CH 8 (FOX) Cleveland	2/22/01
Channel 19 News In The Morning	WOIO CH 19 (CBS) Cleveland	2/22/01
Morning Connect	Texas Cable News Network Dallas/Ft Wth	2/22/01
Colorado's Morning News	KOA AM 850 (ABC) Denver	2/22/01
Eyewitness News	KLAS CH 8 (CBS) Las Vegas	2/22/01
Good Day Orlando	WOFL (FOX) Orlando/Daytona	2/22/01
Fox 35 News at 10:00	WOFL (FOX) Orlando/Daytona	2/22/01
Good Day Sacramento	KMAX CH 31 (UPN) Sacramento	2/22/01
Fox 6 News in the Morning	XETV CH 6 (FOX) San Diego	2/22/01
Mornings On Two	KTVU CH 2 (FOX) San Francisco	2/22/01
4 At Five	KMOV CH 4 (CBS) St. Louis	2/21/01
Mornings On Two	KTVU CH 2 (FOX) San Francisco	2/21/01
Eyewitness News	KLAS CH 8 (CBS) Las Vegas	2/21/01
WBZ 4 News	WBZ CH 4 (CBS) Boston	2/21/01
CLTV News	CLTV CH 51 (IND) Chicago	2/21/01
News 2 Chicago	WBBM CH 2 (CBS) Chicago	2/21/01
Fox News at Noon	WFLD CH 32 (FOX) Chicago	2/21/01
WGN Morning News	WGN CH 9 (IND) Chicago	2/21/01
News 3 Sunrise	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	2/21/01
Eyewitness News At Four	KABC CH 7 (ABC) Las Vegas	2/21/01
CBS 4 News At 5:00	WFOR CH 4 (CBS) Miami/Ft Lauderdale	2/21/01

Blue Man Group
Feeder Market Television Coverage 2000-2003

Show Title	Network/Channel	Date
Eyewitness News	KLAS CH 8 (CBS) Las Vegas	2/20/01
News at Four	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	2/20/01
News 3 Nightside	KVBC CH 3 (NBC) Las Vegas	2/20/01
Eyewitness News	KYW CH 3 (CBS) Philadelphia	2/20/01
Channel 5 Eyewitness Noon News	KPIX CH 5 (CBS) San Francisco	2/20/01
Grammy Award Nomination Coverage	News 2 Chicago	1/4/01
Grammy Award Nomination Coverage	FOX News at 5:00	1/4/01
Grammy Award Nomination Coverage	ABC News 5:00 & 6:00	1/3/01
Grammy Award Nomination Coverage	News 2 Chicago	1/3/01
ABC Las Vegas	KABC Las Vegas	11/28/00
Preventivo y Lanzamiento Mexico	Televisa , Mexico City, Mexico	Nov-00
11 pm Newscast	Las Vegas CH 3	10/13/00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PENTUM POP

A moment on the nuclear brink. Soviet-style. Page 3 • Coldplay is hardly chilly. Page 7
Knight toasts MOCA's eloquent feat. Page 9 • USC goes digital in a big way. Page 10

SUNDAY Calendar

BRAVE BLUE WORLD

Blue Man Group has ballooned from Manhattan sidewalks to sold-out venues in four cities. How did the performance artists go commercial yet retain their soul?

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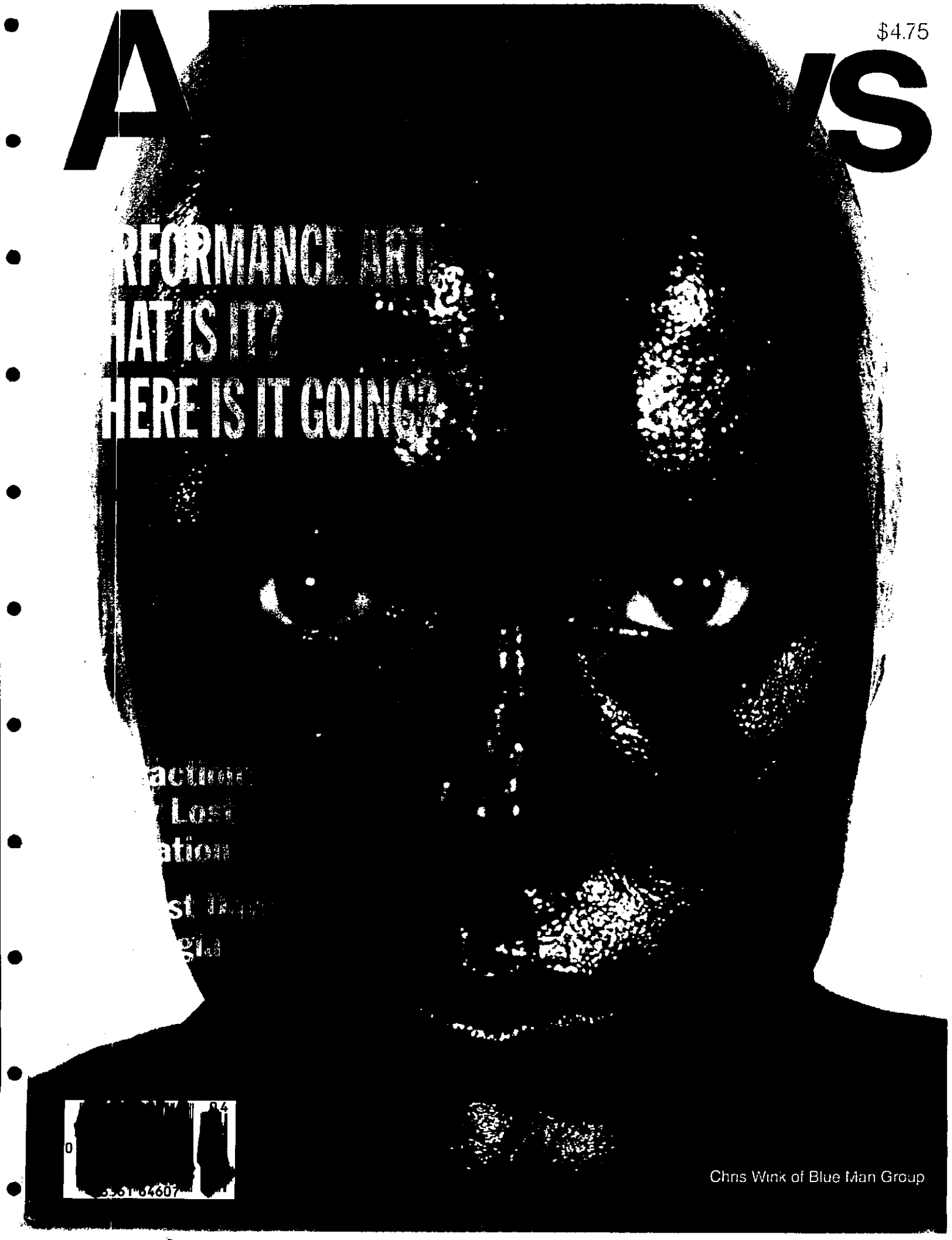
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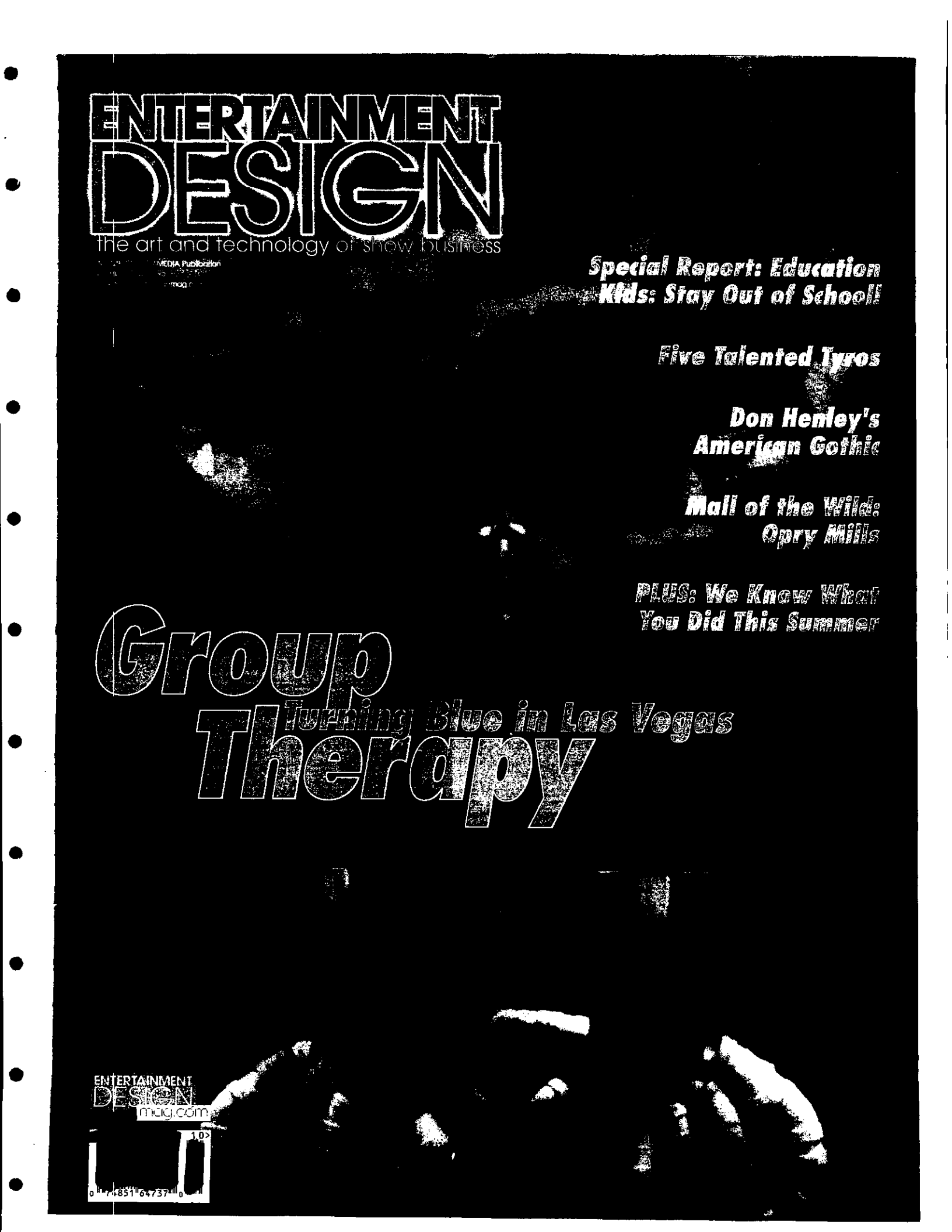

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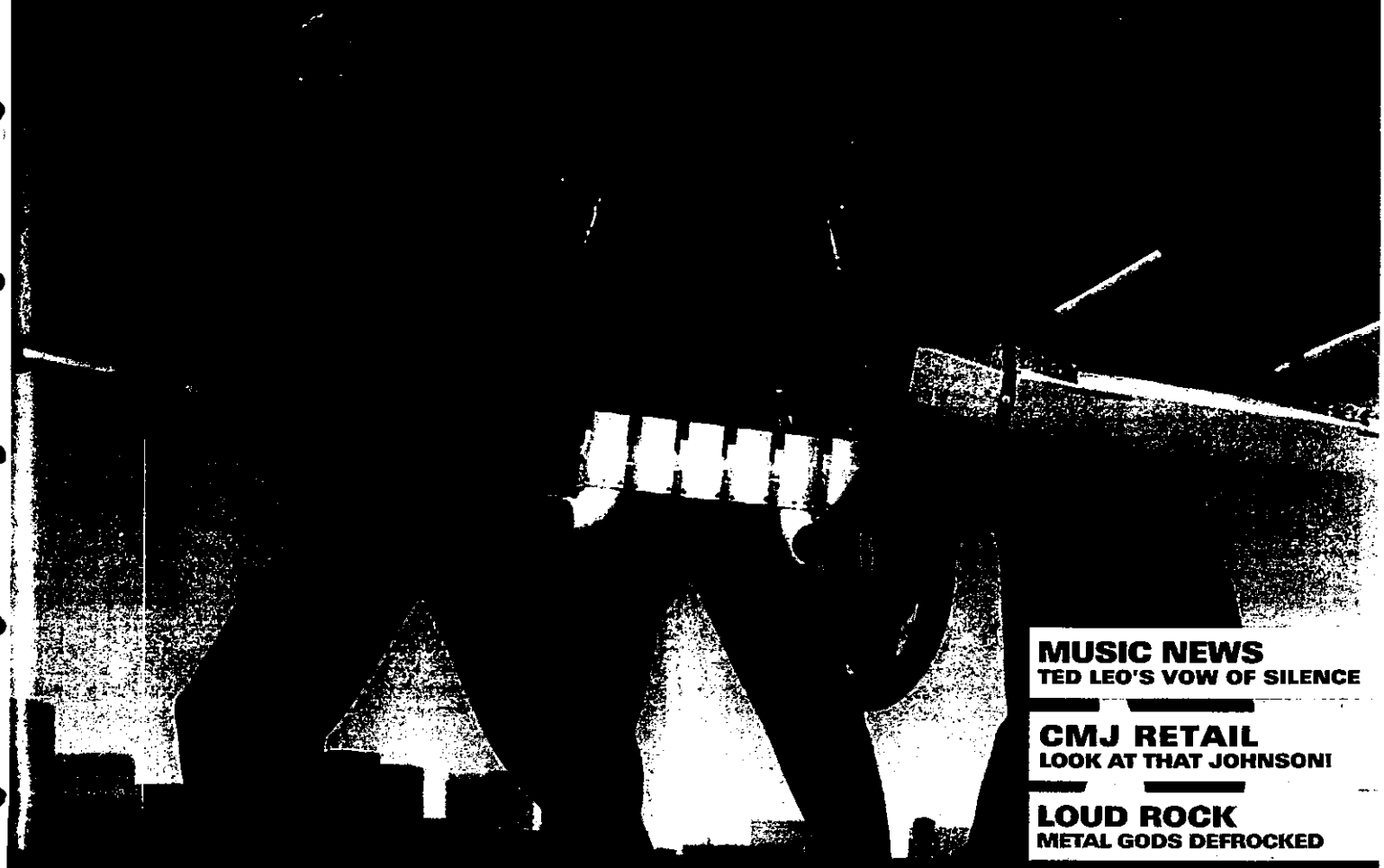

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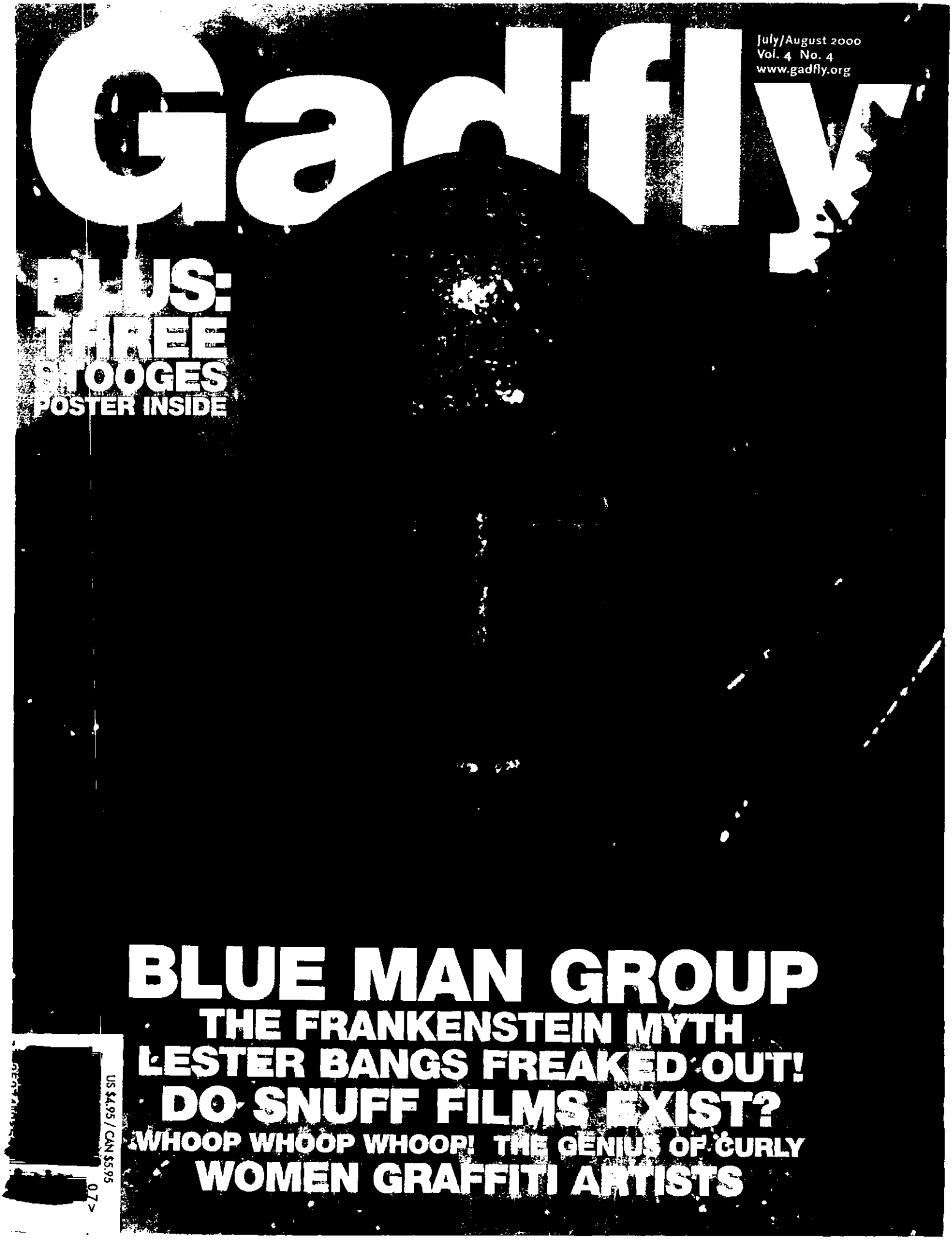

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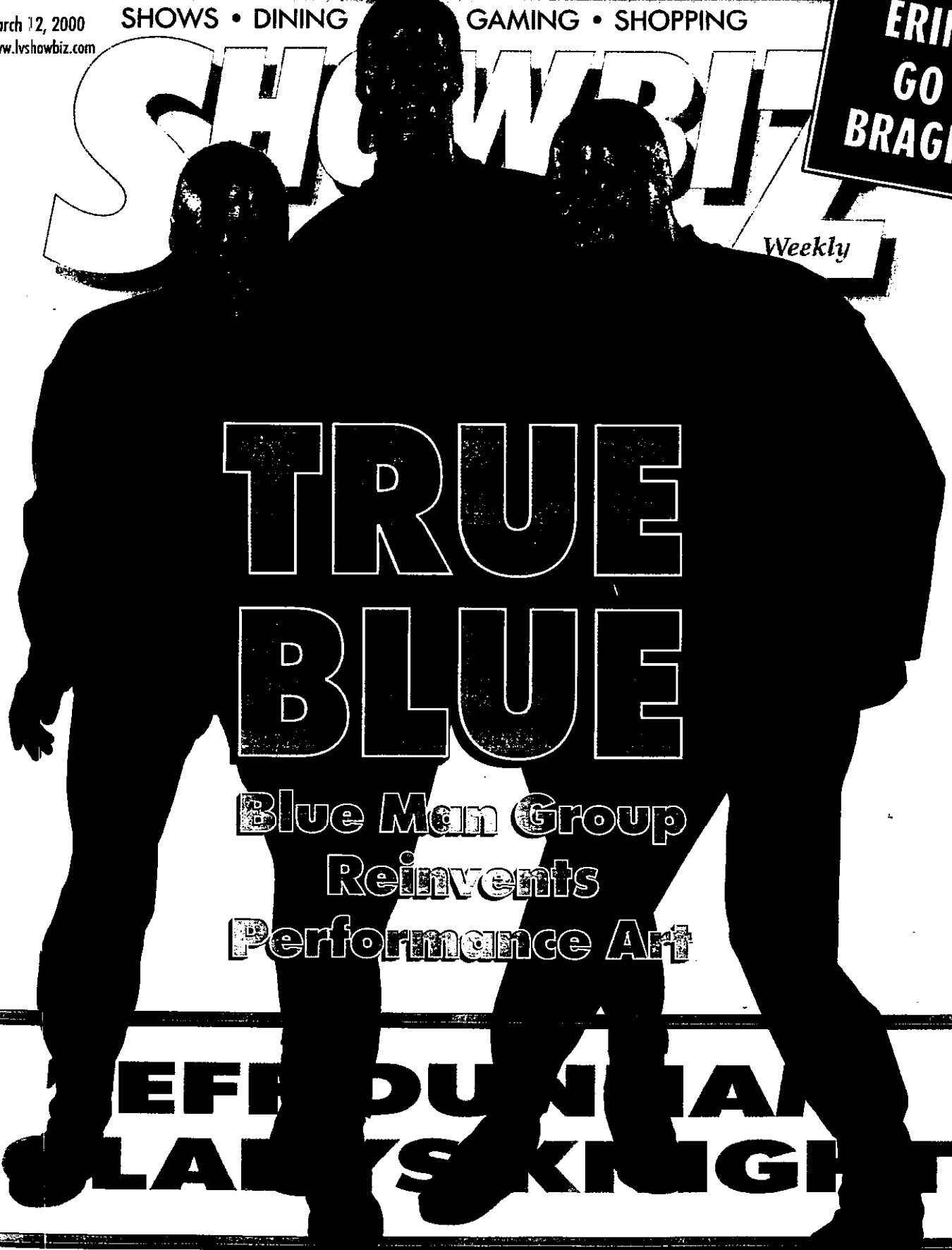

TRUE BLUE

Blue Man Group Reinvents Performance Art

JEFF DUNHAM

LADY KNIGHT

'Lord of the Dance' Kicks Up Its Heels For St. Pat[illegible] Day

THE LAS VEGAS GUIDE TO ENTERTAINMENT

WAY OFF-BROADWAY

The avant-garde Blue Man Group's new Luxor show is not your father's Las Vegas revue ... Page 3

VOLUME 23

photo insider

MARCH|APRIL 2001

James Porto
(MULTIPLE-IMAGE MASTER)

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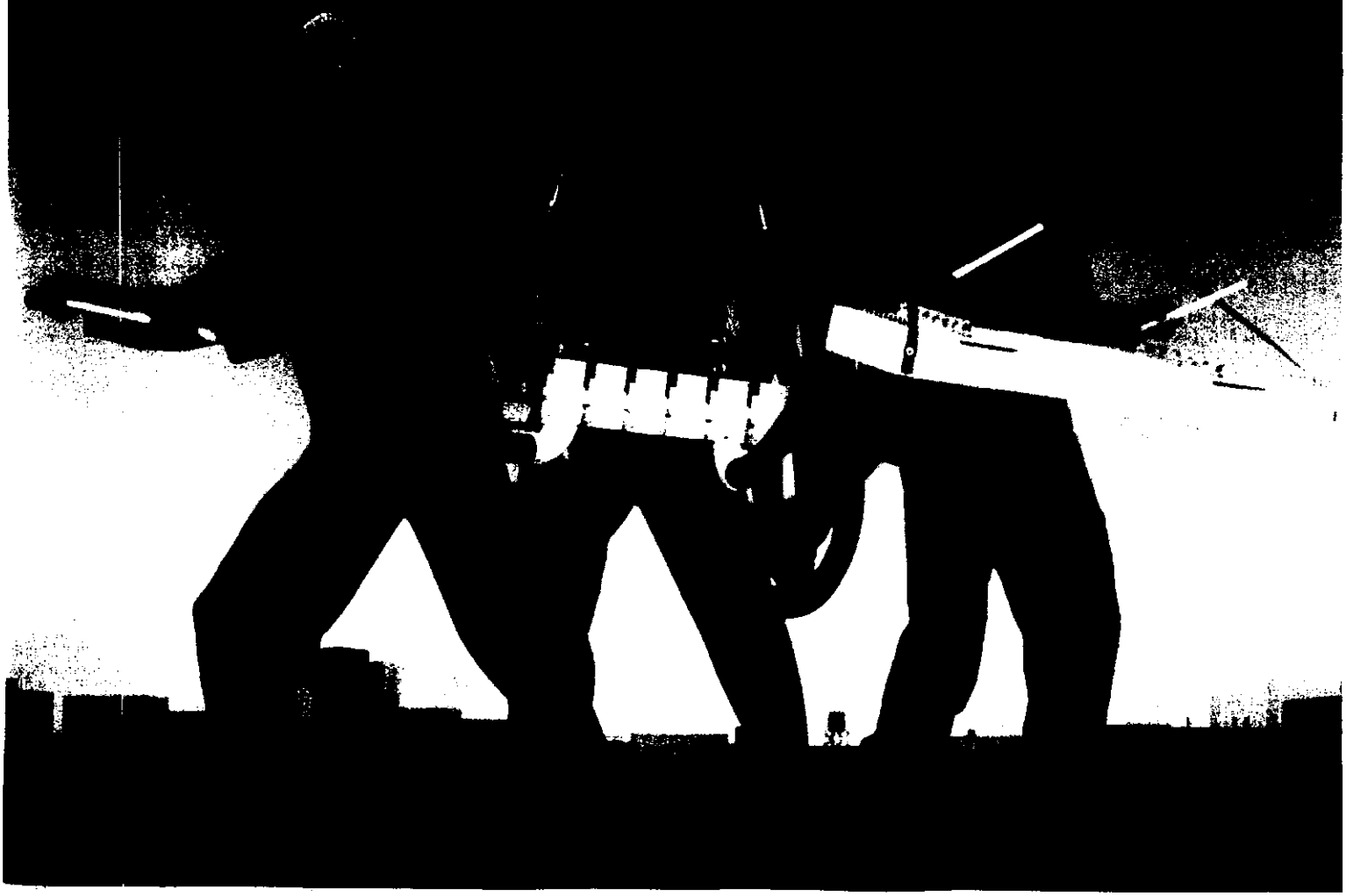

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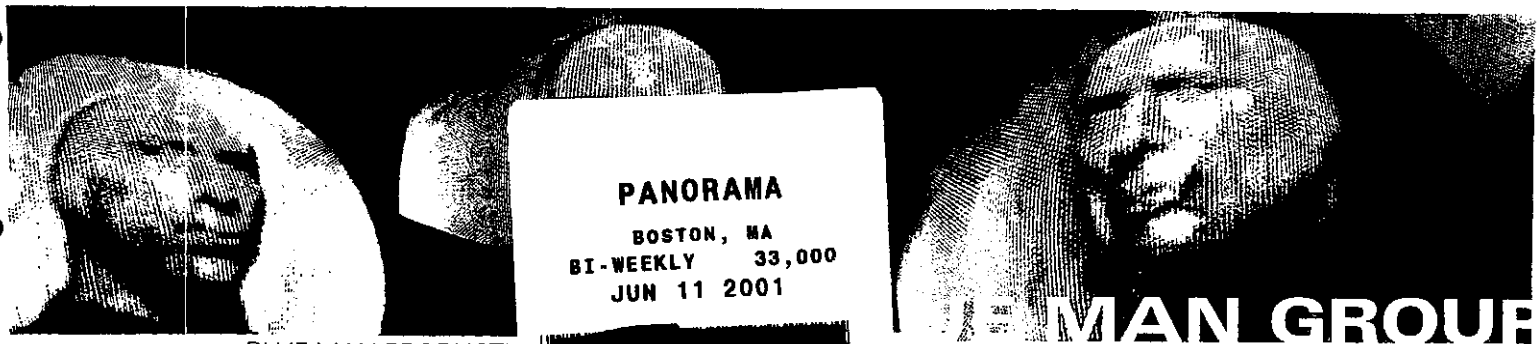

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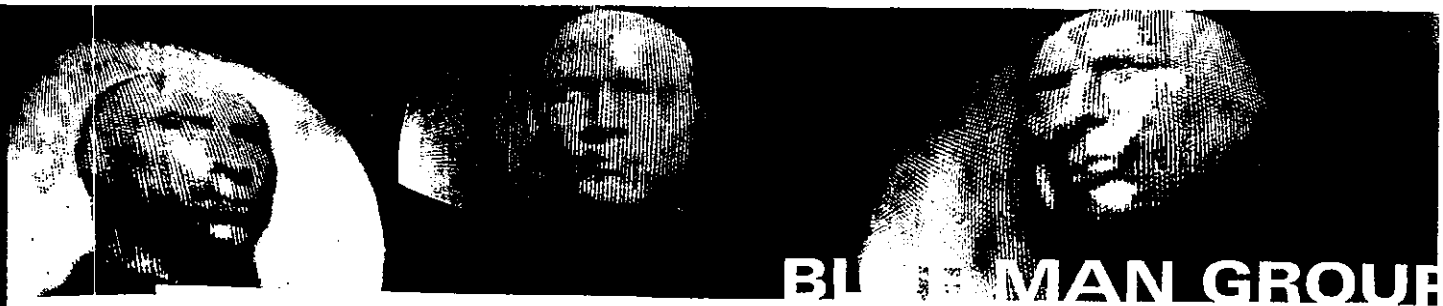

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Chicago Tribune ★ SECTION 7
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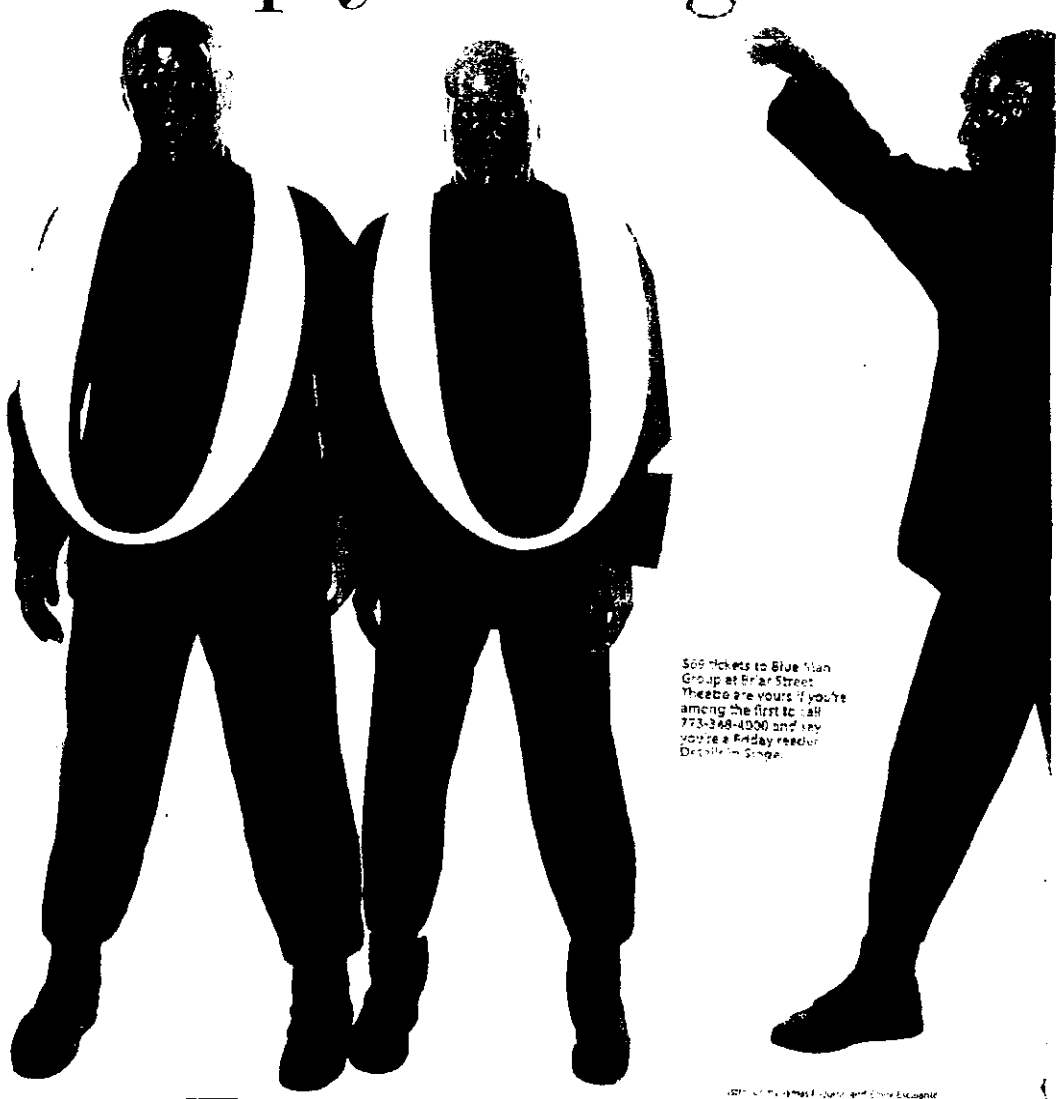
FRIDAY

YOUR WEEK GUIDE TO ENTERTAINMENT

We'll help you ring in



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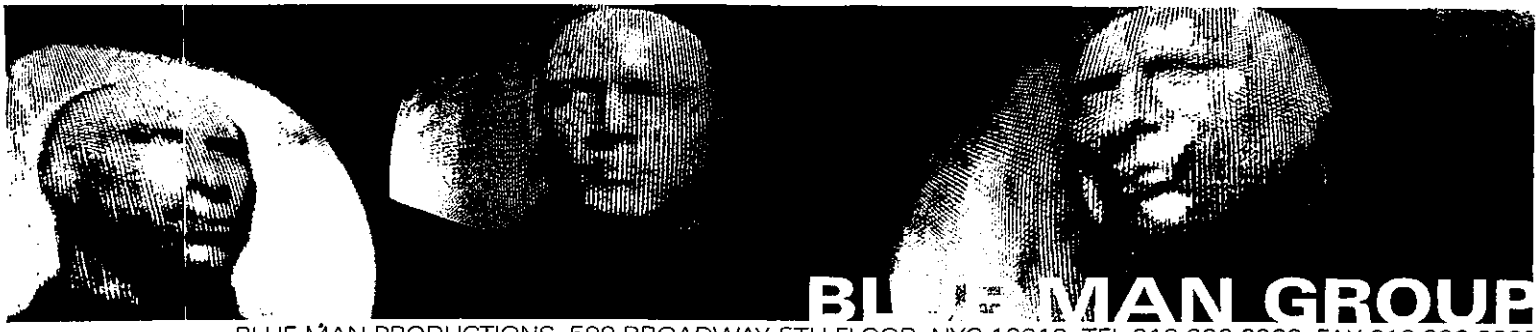

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MARCH 29, 2002

Men in BLUE

Tom Galassi, center, is a member of Blue Man Group

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DINING: JACK DESMOND'S DISHES UP IRISH. PAGE 6

Thursday, February 28 2002
THE STAR NEWSPAPERS

Firstlook

What's Ahead This Weekend

THE WEEK'S HOT FLICKS

The Star's movie reviews. Pages 17, 20.

Kevin Costner stars in "Dragonfly" (above); also reviewed are "Queen of the Damned" and "Big Fat Liar."

Firstlook's Myra Eder goes backstage at

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Behind the blue

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What's on

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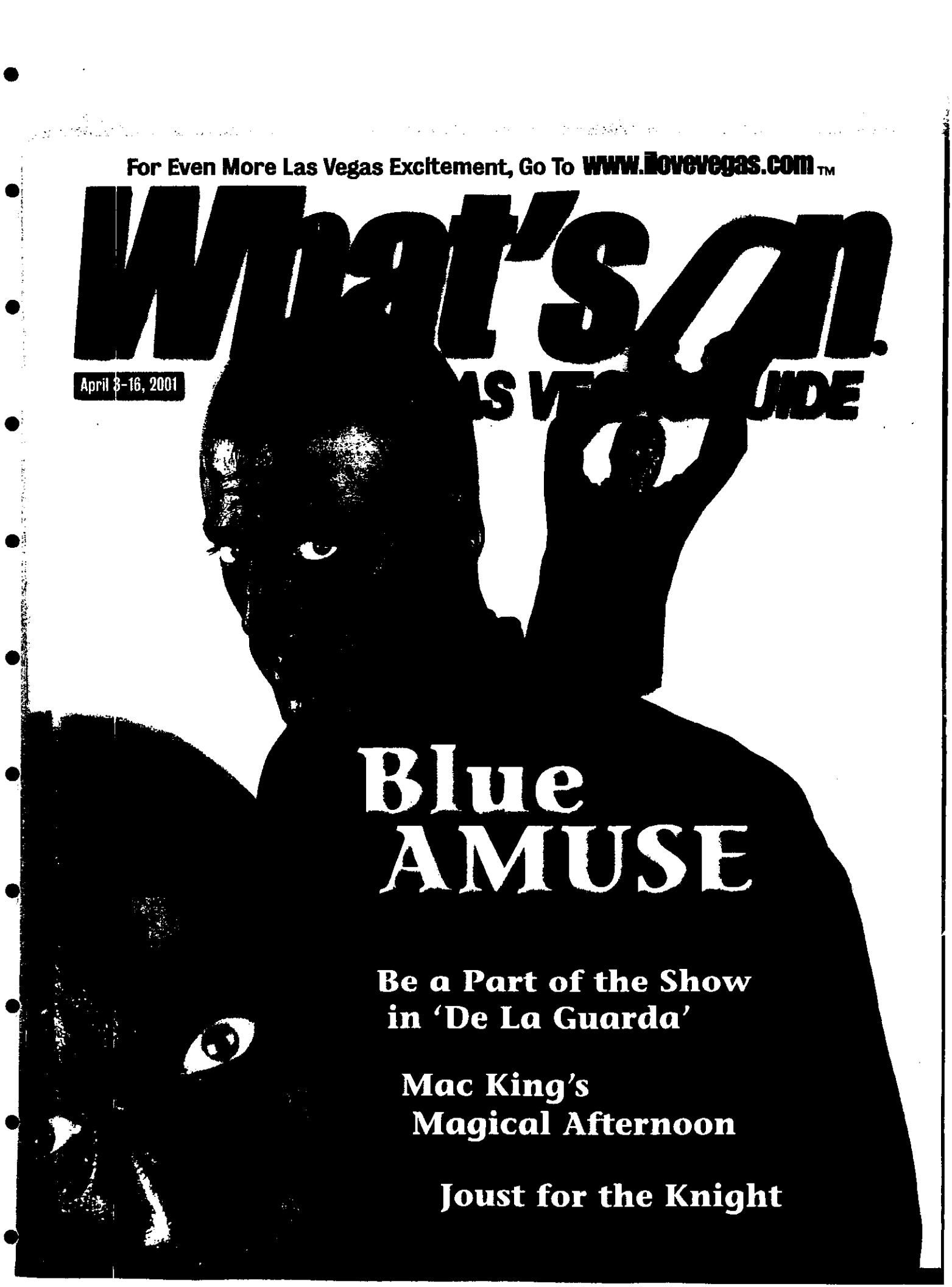

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FREE

MARCH 2-8, 2000 VOLUME 10, ISSUE 9

BLUE traveler

The new face of Strip entertainment

By Rob Bhatt

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Advocate

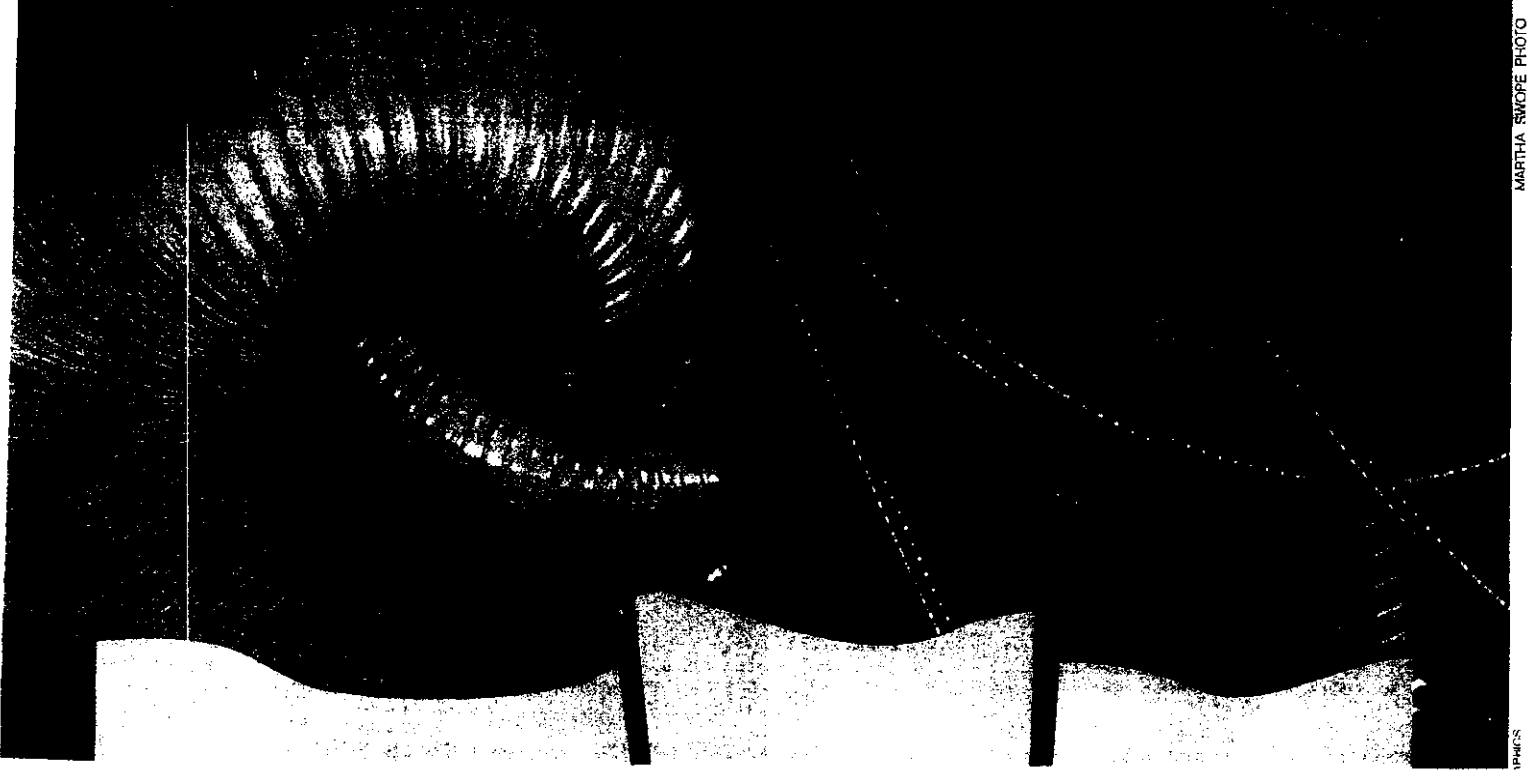
FAIRFIELD COUNTY'S NEWS & ARTS WEEKLY APRIL 3, 1998 - APRIL 7, 1998

COMPLETE CLASSIFIEDS SECTION

Blues Brothers

The Blue Man Group discovers it's alive—with bright paint and plenty of tubes

PAGE 6



MARTHA SWOPE PHOTO

a Lynch mob
Page 4D

Page 14D

Page 6

Chicago Sun-Times
Showcase

SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 2002

NEW DINE-AMICS

KEITH HALE / SUN-TIMES

WANT A PINT? Need to confess? Have a story to tell? What better setting than a real Irish pub—and they don't get any more authentic then Gov'nor's Pub where castmembers of "Flanagan's Wake" share a pint and a tale.

Bread & circus merge as today's eateries supper for their art

BY SARA FIEDELHOLTZ
staff reporter

Dining out is no longer just about eating: It's about being entertained. Celebrity chefs, well-dressed waitstaff, perfectly selected music, detailed lighting, hand-selected decor, innovative menus and highly styled patrons all contribute to a theatrical dining experience.

MORE FOOD FOR THOUGHT
PAGE 8D

Imagine, for a moment, dinner theater in its truest form. We took actors from recent or current Chicago productions to a few local restaurants to see what would happen. Sit back and enjoy the show.

RICH HEIN / SUN-TIMES

AT TRU, THE DINING EXPERIENCE begins with the synchronized choreography of the waitstaff filling the water goblets. Each course is served with progressively more razzle-dazzle. No theatrical group could feel more at home amongst the restaurant's decor of Yves Klein's Venus Bleue bust then the Blue Man Group. In true blue fashion, the group makes eating Tru's signature caviar staircase, "fish & chips" tuna, hamachi and salmon tartar served in a dish surrounded by a live fighting fish, and Blu Sapphire martini's just part of the act.

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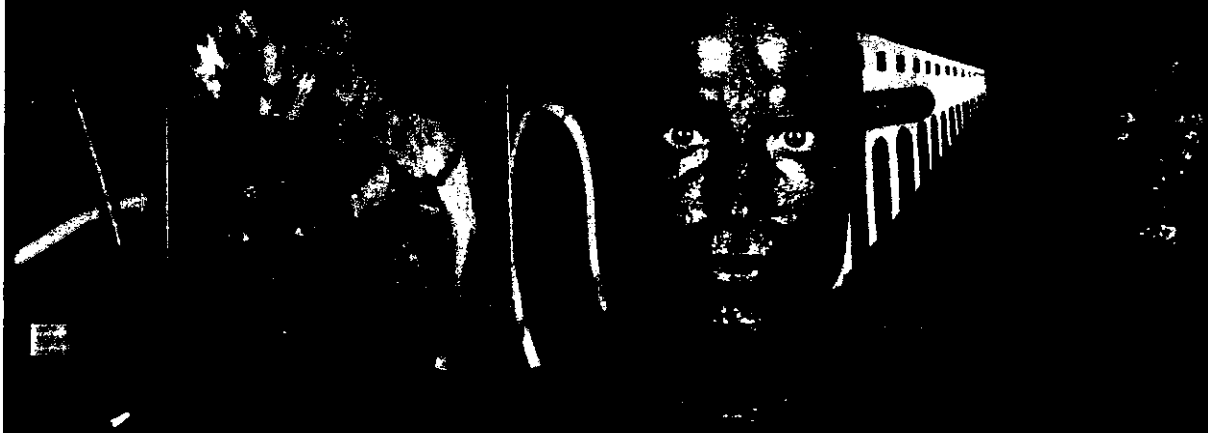
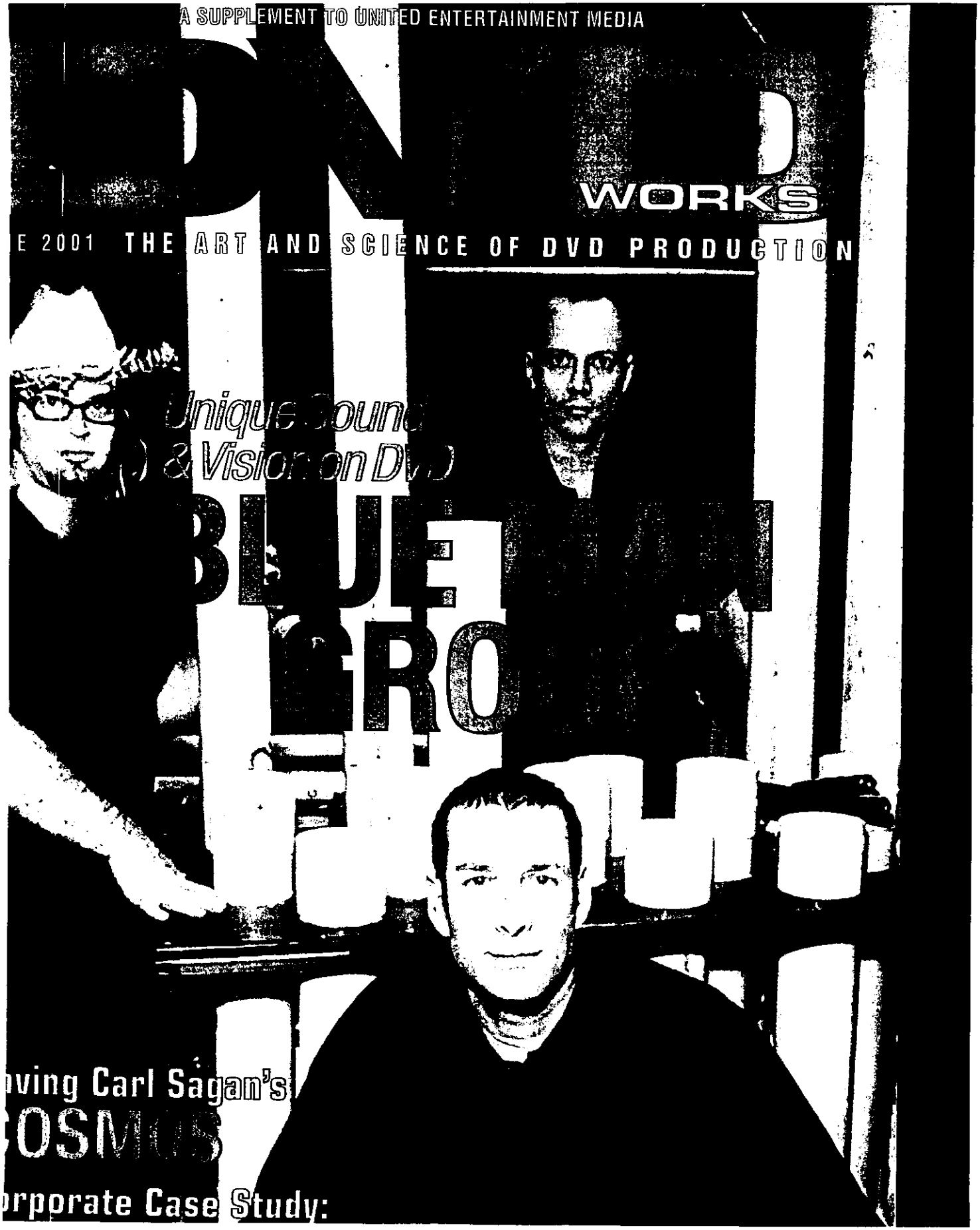


WHAT CONNECTION DOES THE

HAVE TO CALVIN COLLEGE?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BLUE MAN GROUP

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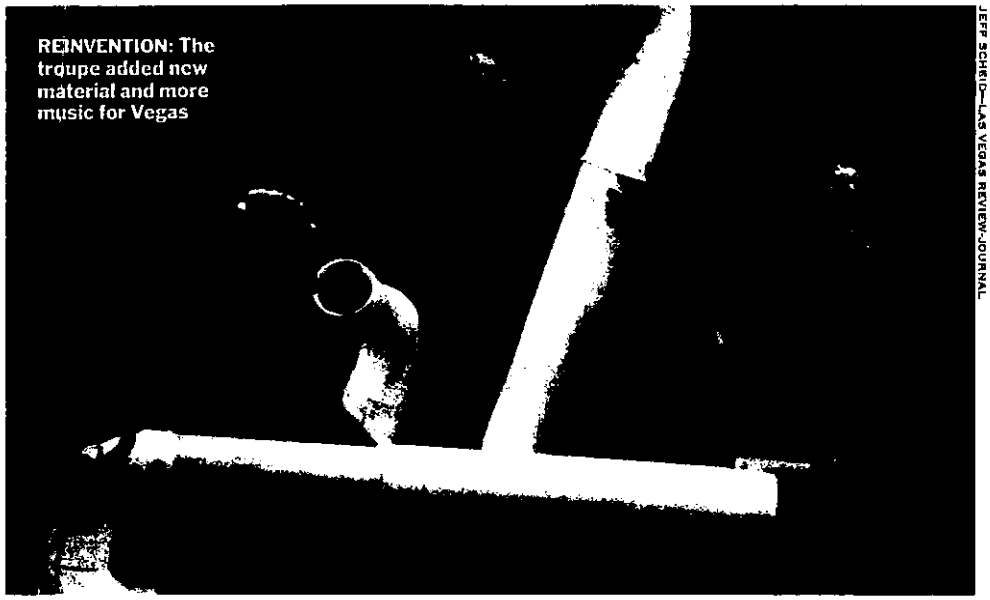


REINVENTION: The troupe added new material and more music for Vegas

JEFF SCHEID—LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Pipe Dreams on the Strip

Blue Man Group arrives, and Vegas gets a little bit hipper

By **RICHARD ZOGLIN** LAS VEGAS

THE THREE BULLET-HEADED BLUE MEN with the deadpan insouciance of Buster Keaton have changed hardly at all. They still do the trademark bits from their quirky, eight-year-old off-Broadway show: tubes of paint are poured onto a drum, and the resulting splashes form instant abstract art; an audience member is dragged onstage to join the Blue Men in a Twinkie banquet, which gets icky when the cream filling bursts out of their stomachs. But the stage at the Luxor Hotel, where Blue Man Group has been playing since March, is four times the size of the troupe's entire *theater* in New York City, and the show has become Vegas-big as well. A third of the material is new—neon figures come to life onstage in one Western-themed bit—and the pipes-and-percussion music is a more prominent part of the show. The crowd reaction is bigger too—wild and happy, like a rock concert. Buddy Hackett never had it so good.

Theater in Las Vegas, of course, has been a lot more than Buddy Hackett for some time now. Cirque du Soleil—with two shows, *O* and *Mystère*, drawing sellout crowds—has introduced a whole new audience to its lyrical mix of circus and performance art. *Notre Dame de Paris*, imported earlier this year to the new Paris (the Vegas hotel) from the old Paris (the French city) is an ambitious *Les Miz*–style opera that retells —drearily—the famed Hunchback tale. Even the town's hottest headliner, musical impressionist Danny Gans, devotes less time to the usual Vegas icons (Sinatra, Tony Bennett) than to relatively obscure (to the high rollers in the crowd, anyway) rock-era performers like Boz Scaggs and Aaron Neville.

Yet Blue Man Group is a milestone, probably the closest thing to avant-garde theater ever to make it in Vegas. The three original creators, Chris Wink, Phil Stanton and Matt Goldman, spent the first couple of months appearing in the show themselves (a whole cadre of new Blue Men have taken over in the group's three other companies), and seem unfazed by their encounter with the schlock-entertainment capital. It was Penn and Teller years ago who first suggested that the Blues take their show to Vegas. But they didn't seriously consider it until they began developing new material that needed a larger stage. "Vegas is a place that reinvents itself every six years," says Wink. "We like the idea of being part of the next reinvention."

Not that they're reinventing the game of Vegas marketing. Blue Man billboards are all over town, and the troupe gave away tickets to cabdrivers and hotel employees to help kick-start the buzz. It worked: the show is doing better than 90% of capacity, and surveys reveal that more than 20% of those who attend are locals—who don't come to the Strip for just any washed-up Motown act.

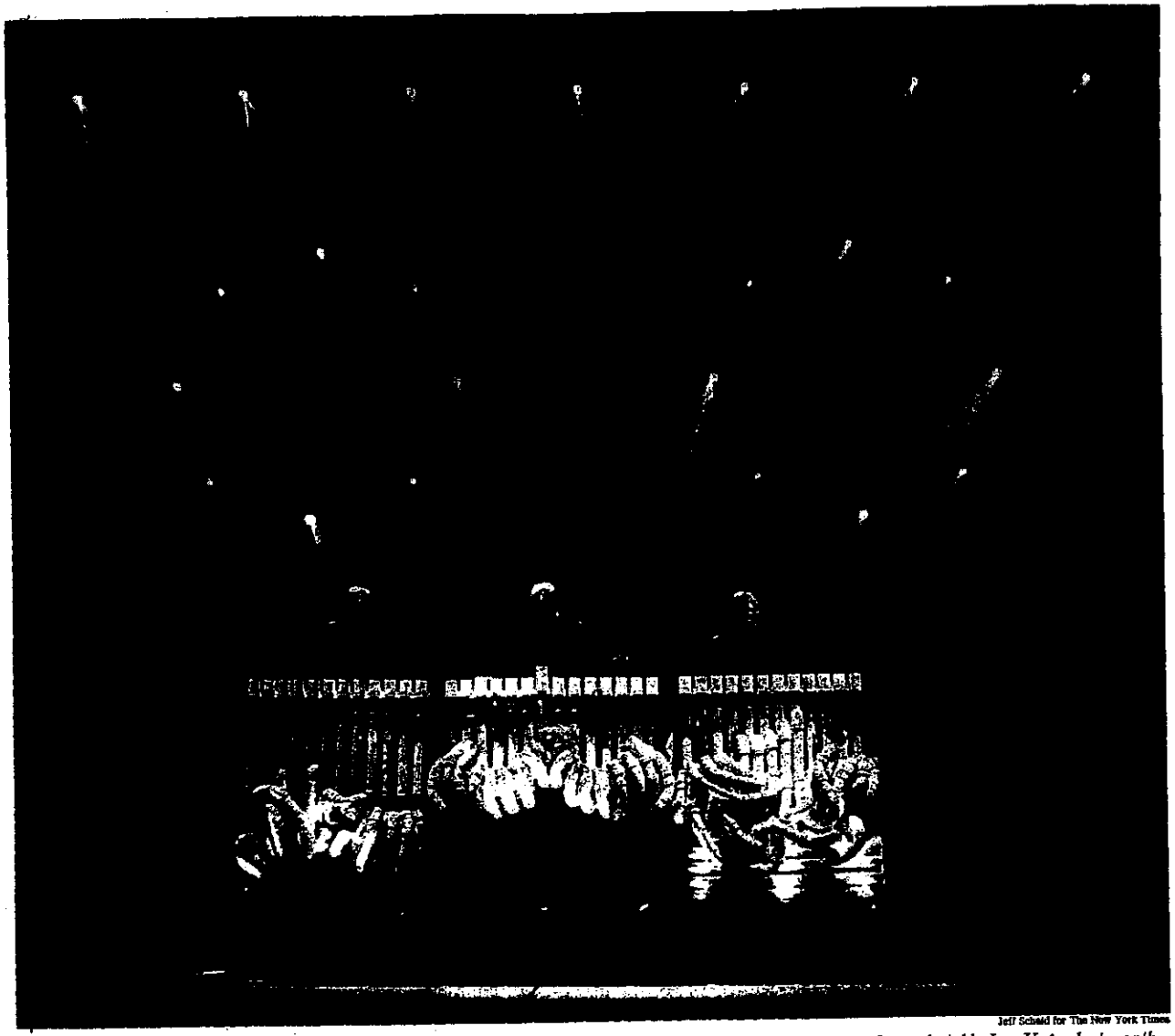
The arrival of Blue Man has prompted another performance troupe with a hit off-Broadway show, De La Guarda, to announce a Vegas run. Yet more traditional theater—the kind that depends on words as well as pictures—isn't making much headway. This is a town, after all, where the first words in reply to any request for directions are always "You go through the casino ..." and where a show with an intermission is harder to find than a slot machine that doesn't eat your money. Barry Weissler, the Broadway producer whose musical *Chicago* spent more than a year at the Mandalay Bay, says hotel staff had to be stationed at the exits during the intermission to make sure the audience didn't wander off to the crap tables. "They thought the show was over," he says.

Gauging how well shows are doing in this hype-addled town is not easy. (For reliable figures on who's filling the house, local reporters have resorted to asking the fire department.) Some suspect that many shows are sagging, partly because of the recent boom in theme-park hotels and gourmet restaurants. "If you're going to blow $200," says Mike Weatherford, who covers shows for the Las Vegas *Review-Journal*, "you can spend the same money on a 2-hr. meal as a 90-min. show."

The Blue Men, of course, have got this covered. They serve Twinkies. ■

JOAN MARCUS

WET AND WILD: Cirque du Soleil's *O* is a sold-out spectacle



Jeff Schaid for The New York Times

Phil Stanton, left, Chris Wink and Matt Goldman of Blue Man Group in the premiere of their new show at the Luxor hotel in Las Vegas last month.

Blue Man Joins the Vegas Collection

By VICKI GOLDBERG

LAS VEGAS

THANK God the Twinkie strike was so brief. Never mind all those people with the shakes from involuntary withdrawal; Blue Man's show was in trouble. One of the group's best acts is the one with the Twinkies, the electric saw and Andrew Wyeth's "Christina's World." The situation was approaching crisis levels. At least Cap'n Crunch, which Blue Man used as a percussion instrument, wasn't having any trouble with the Teamsters union.

Blue Man Group is the three-man performance troupe, the bald, blue-headed guys who, though unspeaking (and occasionally unspeakable), have been wreaking havoc on contemporary art in the intervals between playing their own music on plumbing pipes at the Astor Place Theater in Manhattan since 1991.

Before that they did their thing in living rooms and in Central Park, once conducting a "Funeral for the 80's" for the late, great postmodern and deconstructionist theories of art. "Surprisingly," they write on their Web site (www.blueman.com), "the funeral worked. The next day, artists all over the world agreed to stop making art based on these misguided concepts."

Vicki Goldberg reported on the Blue Man Group in Arts & Leisure in 1991, when it opened in New York in "Tubes."

In a city with (virtually) everything, why not a hip New York performance group?

The original Blue Men, Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink, were street performers who established their own Club Nowhere on a sidewalk outside the Copacabana in the late 1980's. By now, Blue Man has effected a corporate merger with himself. Thirty other Blue Men have joined the troupe, plus two in training. On Third Street in the East Village, Blue Man has an enormous rehearsal and performance theater, plus a recording studio (its first CD, "Audio," came out last year).

"Blue Man: Tubes," the New York show, is still going strong. In 1995 it opened in Boston; it's going strong there, too. In 1997 it was Chicago, where, yes, it's still going strong. Last month, Messrs. Goldman, Stanton and Wink opened in "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" in Las Vegas, with a five-year contract. Long-term thinkers, they hope to go on and on.

Las Vegas may seem like an unlikely site for hip and irreverent performers up from the sidewalks of New York. But there's Blue Man, drumming up trade at the Luxor, the pyramid in the American desert that is the second-largest hotel in the country. The Luxor's lobby space amounts to 29 million cubic feet, enough to shelter nine Boeing 747's stacked on top of one another, if you had a mind to stack up 747's, and heaven only knows how many mummies. Here, huge Egyptian goddesses with distinctly 21st-century features guard the entrance to the sacred precinct of the casino. Beyond *that* is the Blue Man store, the theater and a ladies' room, where sprightly recorded voices sing, "bathroom, bathroom, bathroom" and once again, "bathroom."

Blue Man's first show sent up the art scene, with paintings made by splashing paint randomly off drums, a fish analyzed in the thorny terms of art criticism: in-jokes for the downtown New York crowd. If the art scene has outgrown the references, the audience finds Blue Man so funny it doesn't matter. But will it play in Peoria? Or Las Vegas?

Well, yes. Blue Man has cut down the art references for the Luxor show and replaced them with music and spectacle, but they still make a couple of paintings every evening, which sell out in their store.

The Las Vegas production was the third time I had seen the show (which has a kind of cult following that comes back five and six times, as if ranking Blue Man somewhere between the "Rocky Horror Picture Show" and "Star Wars") and every time, the audience, including me, laughed itself silly at the sneakily

Continued on Page 10

Joining the Vegas Collection

Continued From Page 5

wise and eminently timeless, determinedly deadpan glee of the art riffs.

In addition to the polyvinyl-chloride-pipe instrument Blue Man whomped up long ago, which rather resembles a xylophone attached to a plumber's model of the intestinal system, the group has devised enough clever new PVC-pipe instruments to put the pipe industry on the charts. They say they are playing tribal rock, "with kind of a spaghetti western theme," as Chris Wink put it in a recent interview, like "the Magnificent Seven, the people who drift into town." The show rocks, pulsates and percusses with the aid of a 16-piece band in fluorescent devil gear. They make compelling jump-up-and-down music, and by the end a lot of the rock concert habitués in the audience were doing just that.

The group is still heavily invested in art, more on the Web than in Vegas. Its site includes an updated history of modern art that reveals important new information for art historians: it was Blue Man who pushed Yves Klein out the window for his famous flying-through-the-air photo; Blue Man who wielded most of the paint cans in Jackson Pollock's studio; Blue Man whose spiral painting inspired Robert Smithson's jetty.

Las Vegas itself has recently embraced art in its very own Las Vegas way: as entertainment. (Art is heading in that direction as fast as it can in museums and galleries; Vegas just has higher-octane fuel.) At Caesars Palace, people concentrate on the slots under busts of the Roman emperors, and classical Venuses fill all the niches in the shopping arcade except the ones with Elmer Fudd and Wile E. Coyote. Cirque du Soleil's "O," the under-and-over water fantasia at the Bellagio, is a revue composed of acrobatic acts in the costumes, settings and disguise of art theater, staged in a tank.

The main attraction at the Bellagio, where the meeting rooms are named Cézanne, Degas, Renoir and van Gogh, is Steve Wynn's $300 million art collection. The big sign in front of the Bellagio reads "Now Appearing: Van Gogh, Monet, Cézanne and Picasso." They do appear, in a manner of speaking, in two windowless rooms lined with deep black fabric, each painting relentlessly lit by spotlights to the point where textures seem flattened out and one or two might as well have been airbrushed. Please welcome Vincent van Gogh, star of stage and screen!

In the kingdom of stars, spectacle reigns. (All right, it reigns everywhere, but in Vegas it's the emperor.) Blue Man came out here when he felt ready for the big time. Up to now, he has been playing in theaters that hold 300 to 600 people; at Luxor, there are 1,250 seats at $55 or $65 a ticket, less than some other Vegas shows. The trick, as Matt Goldman said, "was to make a show big enough for an arena that would still seem small and intimate," as it did in the vest-pocket theaters they have been playing in. (Though Las Vegas's notion of intimacy is an escort service.) So a giant screen sometimes duplicates the action at Luxor, or Blue Man and the band loom large only as projected shadows behind cloth.

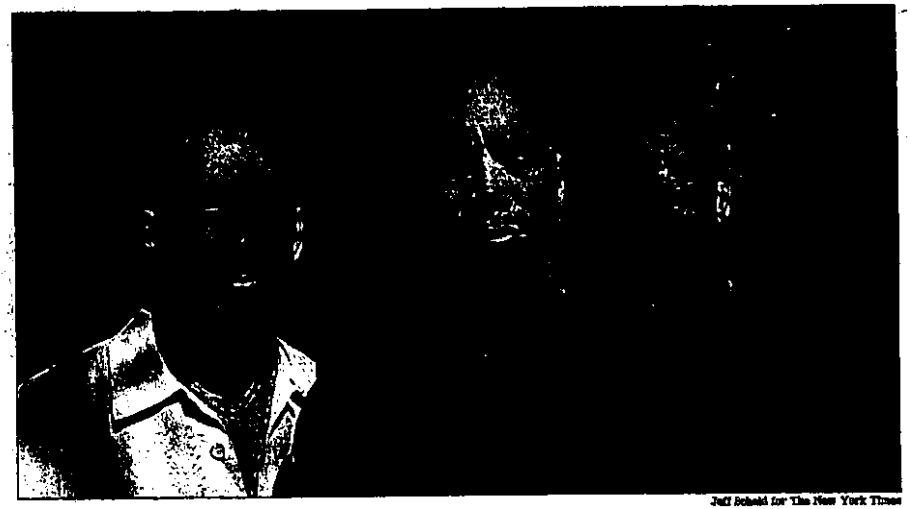
In a much larger space at the Luxor, Blue Man keeps the audience involved.

I confess I missed the close encounter of the first kind, but the special effects in this $7 million production were as fetching as special effects onstage have any right to be in the era of "The Matrix" and "Toy Story": clumsy, bent-kneed statues suddenly swayed and bobbed up and down in the staccato glare of precisely timed strobe lights; neon stick figures did a disjointed shuffle against a black backdrop, then imperceptibly stepped out of the backdrop to accompany the band as fluidly as any majorette.

The real ingenuity of this production lies in Blue Man's ability to connect to a large audience and keep it participating in the show. Electronic message boards with streaming messages warm things up before the performance begins: "O.K., now everybody make that noise they used to make on the Arsenio Hall show." Everybody does. "O.K.," the sign says, "that's enough."

All three Blue Men periodically sprint up the theater aisles or climb through the rows of spectators on chair arms and backs. Twice they bring someone up onstage to join the antics; once they carry a lighted tube over to a man on an aisle, open his mouth wide, shine a light at his throat and project an entire endoscopy onto a screen. At the end of the performance the night I was there, when miles of paper, oceans of sound and storms of flashing light rained down, lots of people were on their feet dancing, waving, shouting. Rock came to the Las Vegas tribe.

If Blue Man seemed an unlikely choice for Las Vegas, it must be pointed out that everything in Las Vegas is unlikely, and the city has changed so much in recent years that it's unlikelier than ever. Though even today there are some things that are as close to eternal as a town built on roulette wheels could hope for: the airport still has slot machines; the casinos still play a repetitive, purling tinkle, kind of like Philip Glass on a hurdy-gurdy but punctuated now and then by the chunk-chunk-chunk of coins bouncing out of the slots. The cocktail waitresses in the casino still wear perilously little and an ad for the "Midnight Fantasy" show pictures a pair of bare legs in high-altitude heels and promises "a place where there is truth in the statement that less is more." But things ain't what they used to be.



Jeff Schaid for The New York Times

Phil Stanton, left, Chris Wink and Matt Goldman, the first Blue Men, before the Luxor in Las Vegas.

Vegas has become the very emblem of the contemporary, computer-induced preference for the virtual over the real, the special effect over the natural, fantasy and the fantastic over the everyday. It has welded the lust for escape to the lust for sex and money. The Strip is a new entity: the city as simulacrum, a global fun house cum theme park, with the Eiffel Tower rising directly across from a lagoon in Italy and Egypt connected by a walkway to Mandalay.

The promise of instant travel that was initiated by the railroad and furthered by photography, film, the automobile and the airplane is here translated into an amusement park, the current version of the 19th-century world's fairs that brought Polynesian and African villagers to the West and instructed them to act like Polynesians and Africans for the edification of the paying customers. Today, Las Vegas obeys the basic rules of political correctness. Only the monuments have been transported this time, and they have been converted into giant toys, as if to say that everyone on the premises is part of the game, and anyone can win.

The city is a nutty mix of entertainments and intrusions, where people scream on the roller coaster directly above a restaurant at New York New York, and a taxi driver's radio proclaims Darwin totally, scientifically wrong. It is the fastest-growing city in the United States; almost 50,000 people move here every year. The school system has a good reputation, the climate and prices are right, the state has no income tax.

LAS VEGAS itself, of course, has become a major tourist attraction; the Chamber of Commerce says there are 32 million visitors a year. Chris Wink says: "Las Vegas is like touring. The tour comes to you every three and a half days, when the entire population of Vegas changes."

In the mid-1980's, 99 percent of visitors to Las Vegas came to gamble, but by the mid-1990's only 87 percent did. Maybe they came for the waters, but if so they were misinformed.

They came for conventions — 2,600 conventions in 1994, 3,800 in 1999 — and for entertainment. Spending on entertainment, shopping and dining rose more than twice as fast as gambling revenues between the mid-1980's and the mid-1990's. No wonder Spago, Chinois and Le Cirque have opened branches. That's not chopped liver. That's foie gras and lobster bisque for the new rich, the filthy rich, the expense-account crowd and aging boomers with the mad, mad urge to pay more than they have to.

In the citadel of kitsch they can now get culture too, on multiple levels, from a genuine Rubens to ersatz Michelangelos, from the silicone breasts at the Folies-Bergère to Blue Man's authentic plumbing pipes and marshmallow sculpture: the world's greatest (and probably only) work of art crafted from marshmallows lobbed from a distance into a Blue Man's mouth. □

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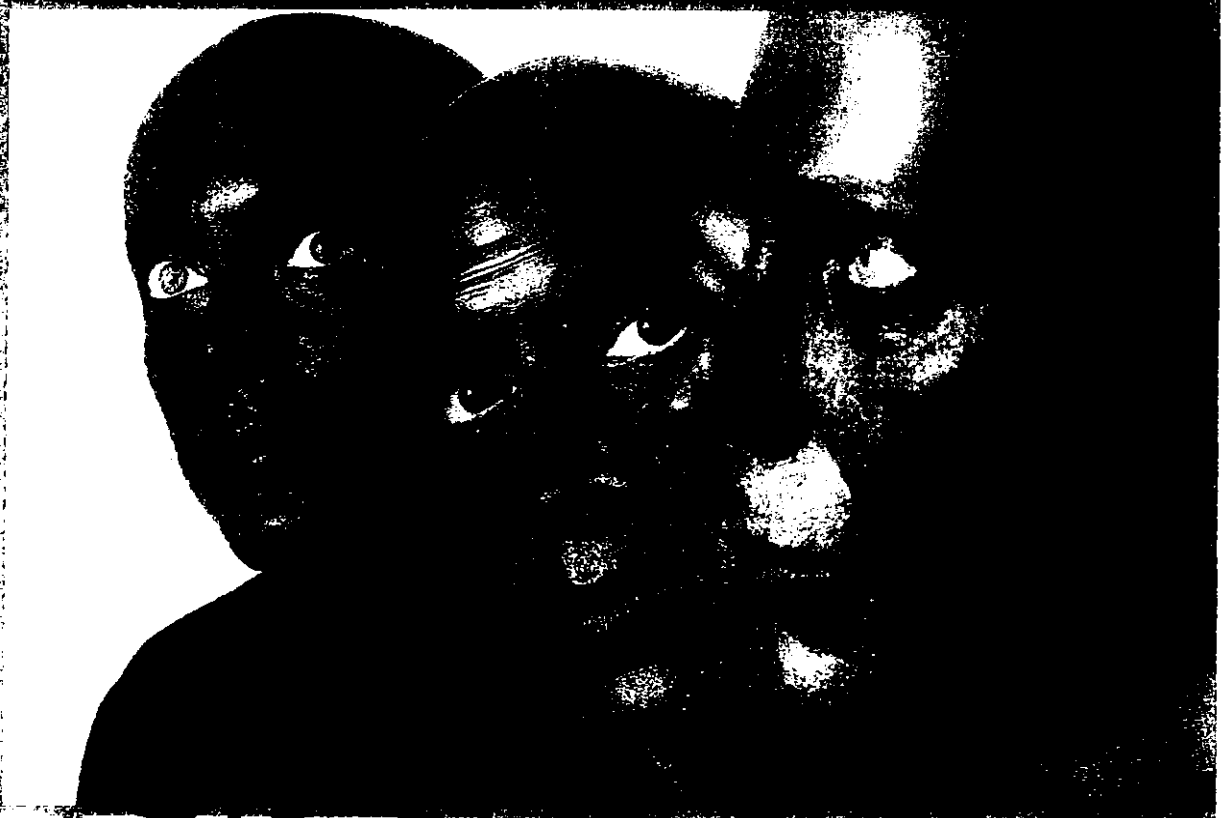
Los Angeles Times MARCH 4, 2001

Movies: A moment on the nuclear brink, Soviet-style. Page 3 • Pop: Coldplay is hardly chilly. Page 7
Perspectives: Knight toasts MOCA's eloquent feat. Page 9 • Movies: USC goes digital in a big way. Page 10

SUNDAY

Calendar



BRAVE BLUE WORLD

Blue Man Group has ballooned from Manhattan sidewalks to sold-out venues in four cities. How did the performance artists go commercial yet retain their soul? By Mimi Avins. Page 4

[illegible] / Los Angeles Times

Blue Man's men: Matt Goldman, top, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink began with guerilla theater skits.

TRUE BLUE TO AN ARTISTIC VISION

From the start, Blue Man Group thought hard about what it was and what it wasn't. That's how the founders have come so far without selling out.

By MIMI AVINS

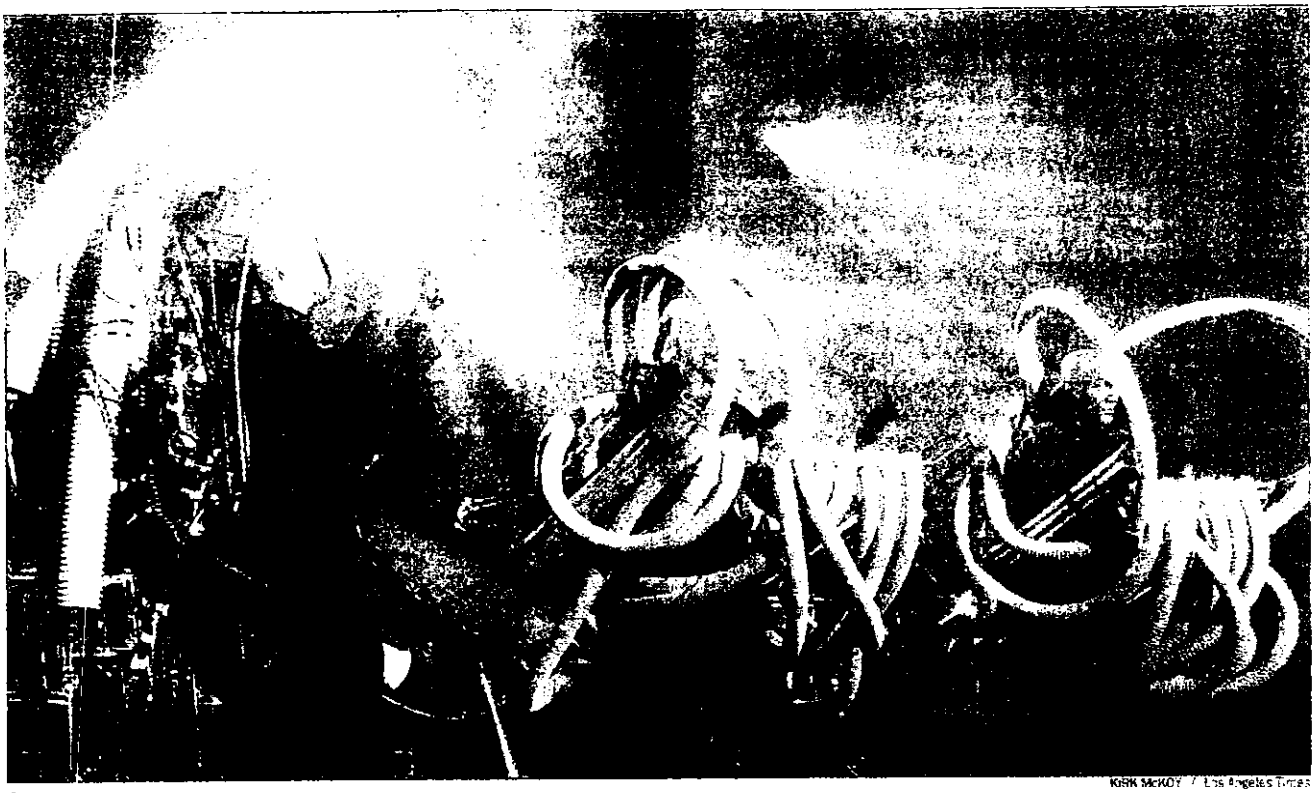
Dustin Hoffman assured his then-12-year-old son, one New York evening in 1993, that going to see Blue Man Group would be fun. Photos on the marquee of the NoHo theater were compelling enough—an alienoid creature staring out through big, curious eyes. Passersby who didn't know any more than the Hoffmans about what an evening of music and comedy offered by a trio of bald, blue men might be, would look and wonder: Who is Blue Man, why is he here and what does he want?

Hoffman, father and son, decided to find out. They descended into a tiny cave of a theater where three performance artists had fashioned an unlikely off-Broadway hit out of splattering paint, homemade percussion instruments, Hostess Twinkies and a smorgasbord of notions that explore and satirize the significance of art and technology.

"Jake didn't want to go," Hoffman remembers. "He was afraid he was going to get hit with Chekhov or something. It turned out to be like an acid trip in first grade that happens when the teacher leaves the room."

After the 90-minute show, the Hoffmans went backstage to meet the Blue Men—Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink. Once they'd removed their makeup and latex skullcaps, the performers engaged their L.A. visitors in a rambling four-hour discussion of the problem that has intrigued them from the beginning: How do you achieve global commercial domination and not lose your soul?

The question hadn't exactly been verbalized 13 years ago, when three friends in their late 20s first covered their heads with blue paint and staged guerrilla theater skits on Manhattan sidewalks. But Blue Man Group was just a goof then, the kernel of an idea that would later pop bigger, tastier and louder than Goldman, Stanton and Wink ever imagined. Today Blue Man Group Productions is a thriving theatrical con-



KIRK McKOY / Los Angeles Times

Blue Man Group performs during February's Grammy Awards show at Staples Center. The televised appearance meant an audience of more than 55 million.

glomerate with a staff of 473, companies performing in New York, Boston, Chicago and Las Vegas, and an annual operating budget of $28 million.

So the dilemma of maintaining artistic integrity that they considered with Hoffman nearly eight years ago in the dank catacombs beneath the Astor Place Theater, is more relevant than ever. They aren't earnest young hopefuls anymore. Last month, they performed for the Grammy Awards TV audience, estimated at more than 55 million.

How the indigo triumvirate went from the fringes of New York's underground art scene to a 1,200-seat showroom at the Luxor in Las Vegas, a Grammy nomination for best pop instrumental album and national exposure via a clever batch of TV commercials for Intel is a remarkable story. Not just because the founders journeyed from obscurity to fame. The miracle is that they got there without sacrificing their vision.

Their achievement is all the more impressive, since Blue Man Group could have gone wrong more times than a Blue Man has fingers and toes. The three original Blues (there are now 33, including a female Blue Man in Boston) never lost sight of how important it was that their creation—this baby, wise man, alien, everyman—not turn into a philistine.

"By definition, an actor has to have a job to practice his craft," Hoffman says. "These guys had somehow beaten that hurdle. Picasso expressed what they did. At one point, he said, 'If they took away all my paints, I'd use pastels, if they took away my pastels, I'd use crayons, if they took away my crayons, I'd use a pencil. If they put me in a cell, and stripped me of everything, I'd spit on my finger and draw on the wall.' And that's what I thought Blue Man Group had accomplished. 'You can't stop me' seemed to be the subtext of what they were doing. 'I can stand in the middle of the street and cover myself with paint and I will perform.' "

BLANCHE MACKEY

Looking for an L.A. outlet, Blue Man Group wound up in Las Vegas.

The first public Blue Men sighting occurred in 1988. Nine men and women who'd met at informal salon gatherings put on blueface and staged a funeral for the '80s in Central Park, to annihilate such annoyances as yuppies, cocaine and postmodern architecture. They solemnly threw artifacts of the period into a coffin that served as an anti-time capsule.

Goldman and Wink, now 39 and 40, had been best buddies since junior high school. When they met Stanton, now 41, after college, they discovered they all yearned to be the art world's Ben & Jerry.

If you were a software producer with an MBA (as Goldman was) or a drummer and aspiring actor (as Stanton was) and found yourself in conversation with someone who also devoured high and low culture as voraciously as peanuts, you'd revel in the company of a kindred spirit. So with Wink—a drummer who paid the

Please turn the page

"We've been battling snobbery in others and in ourselves from the beginning. People thought off-Broadway wasn't ready for the avant-garde [and that] Vegas wasn't ready for something cool."

CHRIS WINK
of the Blue Men Group, which sees its Intel ads, below, as its second film

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rent by submitting articles for a Japanese magazine and then took a job as a waiter for a catering company—they pondered how they could pursue their diverse interests and still make a living.

"It was the mid-'80s, and we wanted to figure out what our generation's voice was going to be," Wink says. "'Rambo' and 'thirtysomething' didn't work for us. Reagan was president, and there was no music scene. Art had become about celebrities. We looked all over the world and the century for inspiration—at Kodo drummers, the Bauhaus, '60s happenings, the Abstract Expressionists, Pink Floyd, punk rock and the comedy of Buster Keaton and the Marx Brothers. We were interested in performance art and science. We'd ask, 'What is it about art that seems both promising and pretentious?'"

The decision to be blue, not chartreuse, was the only accidental element of Blue Man's genesis. Everything else was analyzed ad nauseam, from how many Blue Men there should be ("three puts you where community and isolation meet," the founders decided) to what instruments they should play (they wanted to fulfill John Lennon's prediction that new inventions would eventually supplant guitars and keyboards).

At first, Blue Man was conceived as a painting come to life. A lot of performance art was tediously talky then—psychotherapy in the presence of an audience. Sometimes early Blue Man spoke. Sometimes he didn't.

"When Blue Man stopped talking, we noticed that suddenly our personalities went away, and this other character showed up who was more profound," Wink says. "Not speaking almost felt like a form of rebellion."

If he didn't speak or sing or dance, what was Blue Man doing onstage? He was challenging the audience to accept that art isn't

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MCD

The initial Blue Men, nine men and women, hold a funeral for the '80s.

Photos by DIEGO ZUBEL

Performers cavort in "Villa Villa." Says a producer, it's for those looking for "a more visceral . . . more active experience."

THE RULES DON'T MATTER WITH THIS TROUPE EITHER

Argentina's De La Guarda stresses the primal and leaves the meaning up to its youthful audience.

By ROBERT BURNS

LAS VEGAS—A show from Argentina by way of New York is putting a new spin on this city's reputation for being over the top.

To a large degree, De La Guarda's "Villa Villa," at the Rio Resort in Las Vegas and at the Daryl Roth Theatre in New York, takes place over your head. Using rock-climbing ropes, actors fly from one side of the warehouse-like space to the other, occasionally dropping into an audience that is standing, dancing or being forcibly moved.

"We thought, in a way, like we were the audience," says Pichon Baldinu, who launched the De La Guarda troupe in 1993 with Diqui James and composer Gaby Kerpel. "We wanted a show where you can feel you are really involved, where there's no place without action, without moving. It's really a party where people can forget that they came to see a theater piece and they can feel free and can talk, move, shout."

De La Guarda is not only pushing the boundaries of Las Vegas entertainment, but also traditional theater—and that's exactly the intent.

"Villa Villa" has been likened to a cross between Cirque du Soleil and a mosh pit. It has no plot or discernible dialogue. Is the man on the platform who's yelling in an undecipherable language a dictator or a spurned lover? Two girls run back and forth across a wall. Are they chasing each other or is it some representation of the urban rat race?

"It's not really important to fix a meaning," Baldinu says.

Indeed, the audience comes up with its own interpretations.

"I like very much when I hear different stories about the same part of the show," James, 35, says in a phone interview from Buenos Aires. "I like when they really believe in that story."

And then there's the music, both recorded and live, which ranges from subdued rain-forest sounds to chants, drumming and dance music. One New York reviewer suggested earplugs.

"We tried to get the tribal aspect of the human being," says Kerpel, 36. "That's why we have a lot of percussion and voices. On the other hand, the parts that pay like are played by the performers; this aspect of the music is very primal."

Elements are also taken from Argentine folk music. "Actually, it's very close to African music," Kerpel says by phone from Buenos Aires.

All of this makes De La Guarda (the name is a take on "guardian angel" in Spanish, a little hard to explain if your

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Blue Man: Keeping True to Their Mission Despite Success

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necessarily elitist, humor doesn't have to be verbal, music need not be melodic, and entertainment can be nonlinear. Perhaps the sound of Cap'n Crunch being munched is a language. Maybe music should be seen and heard.

"In the '80s and early '90s," Wink says, "performance art wasn't accessible. We gave the audience a childlike stupidness they didn't expect."

Blue Man Group secured spots in shows that were the performance art equivalent of comedy open-mike nights. No money changed hands, but the trio was given the stage for 10 or 20 minutes, often after the monologuist and before the dance troupe. New York's experimental Wooster Theater Group offered the three a chance to do an hour of material. Then they participated in a performance art festival at Lincoln Center that sold out 1,250-seat Alice Tully Hall.

By then, Stanton had also signed on with Glorious Food, the catering company that nourished the social life of New York's highest caste, and the three used their conventional jobs to support their performances. After they received a three-minute standing ovation at Lincoln Center, Blue Man Group received an offer of financing from a pair of producers for a show off-Broadway. Although they parted company with those investors after three years, the Blue Men acknowledge the leap of faith their backers took.

"We opened late in 1991, and there was no 'Stomp,' no 'De La Guarda,' nothing even like 'Bring in Da Noise, Bring in Da Funk,'" Stanton says. "There were only plays with couches in the middle of the stage and standard musicals. Nothing like us had yet had a commercial run."

Ever self-aware, the Blue Men pinpoint consenting to accept outside financing as the moment they lost their innocence. They were careful to maintain the rights to their material and to put a time limit on their Faustian contract. The alternative would have been navigating the grant system, but they considered the requisite networking and groveling demeaning. Above all, they rejected the anti-establishment canon that finds nobility in obscurity.

When the off-Broadway show first opened, Goldman would occasionally hang out in front of the theater. He has the ingratiating manner of a happy family's baby brother and when someone would stop, look at the poster, then walk away, he'd go after them and inquire why they hadn't bought a ticket. Then he'd try to talk them into coming to a performance. "You can bring anything you want with you, anything that helps you relax," he'd say suggestively.

Recruiting audience members one at a time had obvious limitations, so the Blue Men accepted every opportunity for publicity. "We'd stay bald and blue for 19 hours if we could get a camera crew from a terrible British TV show to cover us. We weren't discriminating," Goldman says. "We didn't feel we could be, because the theater was half-empty, and we were killing ourselves, still creating the show while we were doing it."

Their efforts gradually paid off, and within six months, positive word had spread. One long, dizzying day early in 1992, Blue Man Group appeared on "Live With Regis and Kathie Lee" in the morning and as themselves on "The Charlie Rose Show" at night. When they performed part of their act, Gifford reacted like a narrow-minded Connecticut housewife. But Philbin dug them, even if, like most people, he stumbled over himself trying to define what they did.

"I firmly believe that the reason people would come to the show six or eight times is they'd try to describe it to their friends and they couldn't, so they'd just bring them," Goldman says.

Reviewing Blue Man Group Las Vegas last year, Los Angeles Times theater critic Michael Phillips called it "a postmodern vaudeville routine, Ernie Kovacs' old Nairobi Trio act brought up to date." There are bits of Jerzy Kosinski's Chauncey Gardiner and Forrest Gump in Blue Man, and Wink acknowledges vaudeville as an influence. "In the beginning, we asked ourselves, 'If you don't have a plot, how do you structure an evening?' Vaudeville didn't have plots either. They just knew you had to have a good beginning and a great finale. And you needed to do things that the audience couldn't do. That's why they juggled."

The Blue Men invented a new specialty—catching food in their mouths. They transformed lobbing marshmallows and gum balls into a wild tribal ritual. Flying foodstuffs date to Wink and Stanton's days as Glorious Food waiters.

In the wee hours after an elabo-

rate party, when the tired staff was surrounded by once edible debris, food fights frequently erupted. Stanton, who seems the quietest and most serious of the trio, helped establish the projectile properties of cream cheese. Food was the perfect medium for Blue Man. Wink says, "Blue Man sees Jell-O and toothpaste gel and says to himself, 'Wow. Now we're onto something.' "

That's what audiences were saying too, and as selling tickets became less of a struggle, "no" returned to Blue Man's vocabulary. "We got more specific about what we'd do to get attention," Wink says, "not to be divas about it, but to protect the sanctity of the character." They've been guests on "The Tonight Show" 10 times since 1992, and the way they developed special, brief bits for those appearances turned out to be the perfect training for their Grammy number.

Once the show was a hit, a focus on keeping Blue Man pure became as important a survival skill as filling the theater had once been. "We realized we had something very special with the Blue character—special in here," Goldman says, thumping his fist on his heart. "We wanted him to be around for decades, not for months or even years."

So when the offers came in—for HBO and Showtime specials and feature films, for Blue Men on Ice and Blue Man theme park rides—the answer was "no." A record company called and asked, "Can the Blue Men rap?" A Japanese promoter wanted to mount an international tour. Commercials for blue M&M's, Tic Tacs, antacids and Life Savers were suggested. Blue Man Group could have been the symbol of the American Express Blue card.

"Any time someone came out with something blue," Goldman says, "there'd be some genius in an advertising agency who'd say, 'Oh, my God. I've got it! Let's get Blue Man Group.' "

Some suitors thought they'd win over the group by pointing out that its 15 minutes of fame were ticking away so the three had better grab what they could. No scenario could have been less appealing, and their conversation with Hoffman reinforced their thinking.

"One of the aspects of their talent was that they really found their own authentic voice," Hoffman says. "Nothing kills originality faster than packaging it. What they were being offered was to repeat what they'd done, and by repeating it, they'd be killing it. So I warned them, and said, 'Look, you've got something that everyone wants and that they give away: it's that you can make your own decisions. You can be creative; you can make mistakes. Realize that that's precious.' "

One decision was always clear: "Blue Man Group was never meant to be one little show," Goldman says.

As demand for tickets continually increased, the original little show—in a theater of 299 seats—went from eight to nine to 10 performances a week. Even that expansion wasn't enough to support the future the founders envisioned.

> "When Blue Man stopped talking, we noticed that suddenly our personalities went away, and this other character showed up who was more profound. Not speaking [was like] rebellion."
>
> CHRIS WINK, *Blue Man Group*

The plan to open outside New York was borne of necessity. It wasn't that the success of the first show made opening in a second city possible. Revenues from a Boston company were needed to sustain more growth, and all growth supported Blue Man Group's autonomy.

For the first three years off-Broadway, Goldman, Stanton and Wink performed every show—1,285 in a row—with no understudies providing relief if fatigue or the flu struck. To open in Boston in 1995, they had to let someone else be Blue. "We had talked a lot about how the Blue character required subjugating the individual ego," says Wink, the most loquacious triplet, who could be depended on to intellectualize Velcro. "Now we had to put our money where our mouths were."

New Blue Men couldn't be trained unless the character's philosophy was articulated. The orientation for Blue Man boot camp begins with 30 hours of videotape on which the trio deconstruct Blue Man drumming, acting and attitude. Recruits spend hours practicing their skills, being coached and critiqued. Each prospective Blue Man must trail the show's crew members, to understand the challenges of their jobs. "We wanted to be one organization with a common goal," Stanton explains. "It's not like the Blue Men are performers and the crew is less important." After six months of training, a prospective Blue Man rotates into one of the shows.

Now three full-time casting experts search for potential Blue Men on college campuses, at drummers' trade shows and theater festivals. Some accomplished percussionists haven't been able to do Blue Man drumming, which has a visual as well as an aural component. Not all actors can master drumming, or catching food in their mouths. Finding people with the right physical proportions who understand the Zen aspect of Blueness is tricky. Instructions to Blue Man might be: "Don't just stand there—do nothing!" How hard is that? Hard.

The guys behind Blue Man's blank facade are as savvy as he is guileless. They deliberately keep control of every aspect of their growth, and as the ranks of Blue Men have swelled, the founders have had more time to devote to running the production company and shepherding new ventures.

Several years ago, they scouted for a location in Los Angeles. "People would say, 'We can boast the longest run in L.A.: 46 weeks,' " Goldman says. "For us, it's too much work, too expensive, involves so much of us to open in a new city that if we don't plant roots for several years, it doesn't make sense. We drove all around Los Angeles, trying to find the theater district, and we found it in Las Vegas."

They talk about launching a Blue Man Group touring company, and their five-year contract with the Luxor includes a clause that would let them perform in Los Angeles 12 weeks a year.

At any point, the founders could have chosen to be only performers, to hire managers, agents and a chief financial officer for their production company. Instead, they transformed themselves into artist-businessmen. They spent nearly a year formalizing a company manual and value statement, trying to figure out what sort of corporate structure would best nurture creativity. "We saw running the business as an artistic endeavor. We felt it was as important to have things go right in the office or backstage as onstage," Goldman says.

There is a chief financial officer of Blue Man Productions, but he came up through the ranks, in what the founders describe as a collective fueled by cooperation and collaboration. A creative development department investigates Blue Man Group opportunities on the Internet (they have a Web site, *www.blueman.com*), in software, CD-ROMs and music.

They're always developing new material at a vast rehearsal hall in the East Village the company has owned since 1997. With no specific venue in mind, they began creating segments for a show that could only be done in a space larger than their theaters in New York, Boston and Chicago. When Mandalay Resort Group, owner of the Luxor, approached them, offering a gigantic showroom, they saw their chance to open up the show and work with a bigger band. "The idea that Las Vegas was a huge challenge made it exciting," Stanton says. "When people said we wouldn't be viewed the same way if we went to Vegas, part of me wanted to say, 'Let's just do what they say we can't do.' "

Playing off-Broadway, training armies of Blue Men, opening in Las Vegas, doing commercials for Intel and marketing a music CD have all been cited as evidence of Blue Man Group selling out. The criticism doesn't faze them. They wrote the Intel spots themselves,

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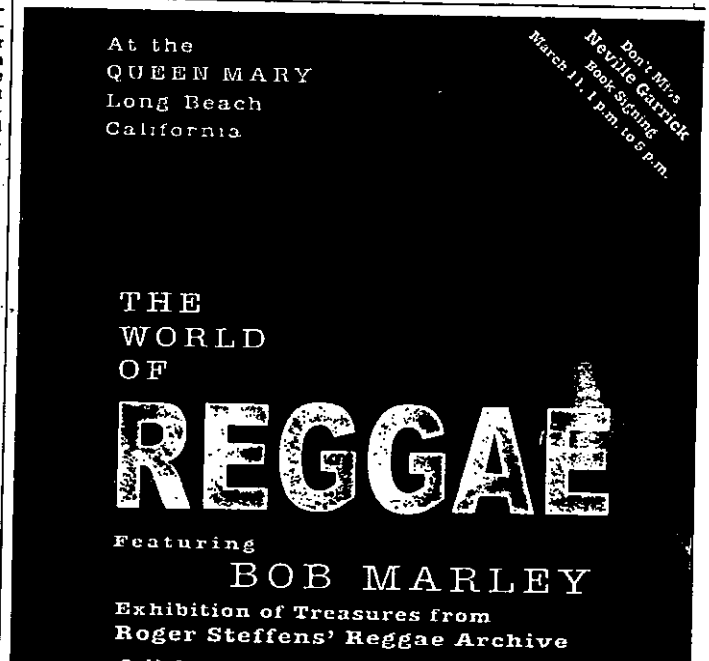

Blue Man

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and saw them as chances to make little 30-second films, practice for an eventual Blue Man Group movie. Besides, they didn't feel they were hawking a product. Intel is a brand, a good fit because Blue Man Group sees itself as a brand too. The Las Vegas show recouped an initial $7-million investment before its first anniversary, and as the town increasingly attracts sophisticated travelers who wouldn't have been caught dead there five years ago, Blue Man Group's 12 shows a week consistently sell out.

"We've been battling snobbery in others and in ourselves from the beginning," Wink says. "People thought off-Broadway wasn't ready for the avant-garde. And people thought Vegas wasn't ready for something cool."

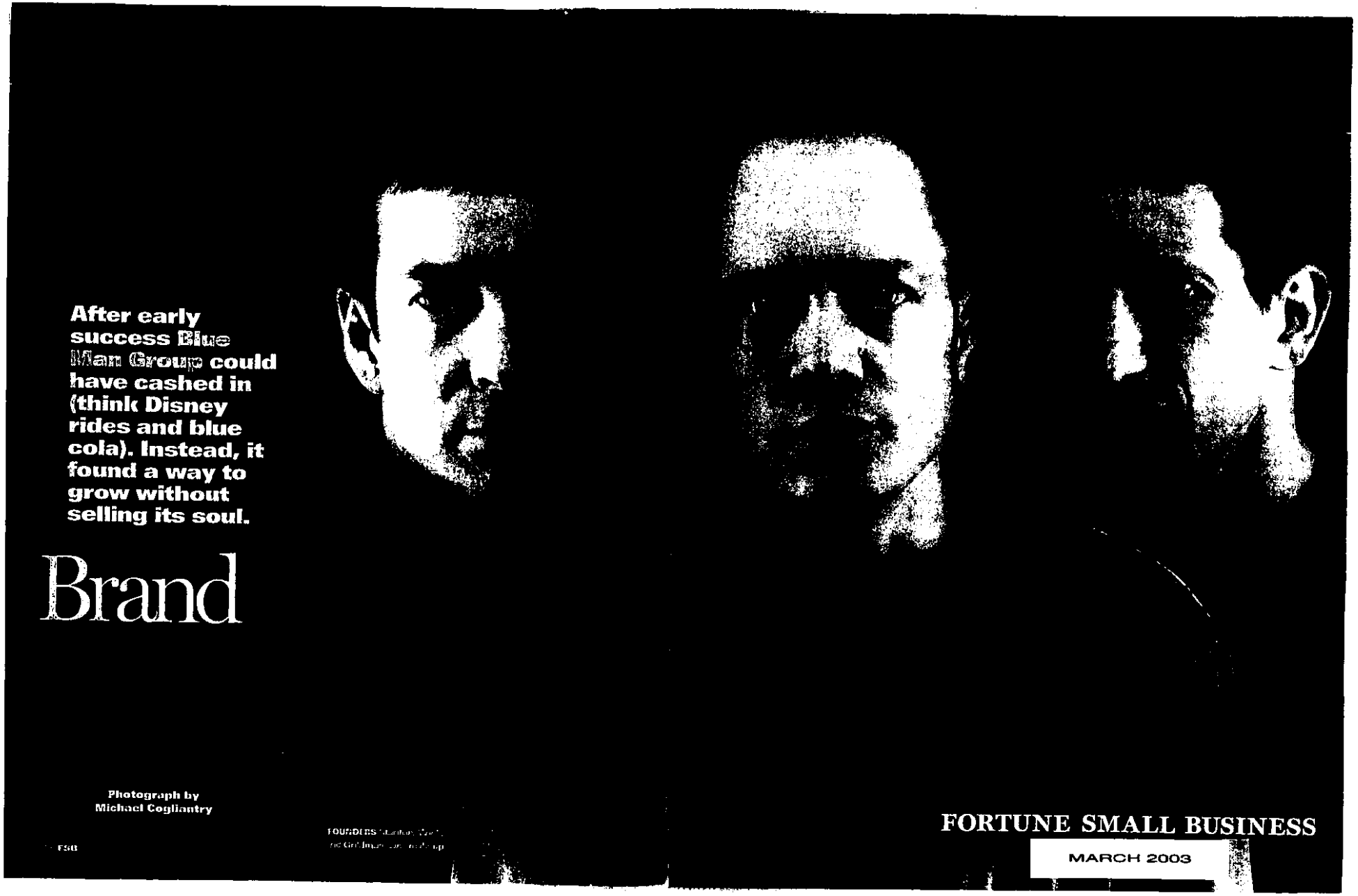
Blue Man Group is cool, fun, original and obviously, unstoppable. But is it art?

Wink asks, "What's the difference between art and a Twinkie? Blue Man spurts colors, and it becomes art or waste, depending on where it lands. If, by art, you mean something simple and available to everybody that's not a big deal, then yes, we're art. But if you mean is it important and elitist, we'd rather be known as comedians."

Artists might fear selling out more than Blue Man Group does. Indulging each other's contrarian natures, the founders have chosen to do whatever they thought they could accomplish well. The fact that commercialism wasn't their highest value wound up working for them, in a strange sort of way.

Hoffman, who hasn't seen them perform since they met in New York, isn't aware of how Blue Man Group has grown. "You mean they've been able to franchise themselves and not alter the essence of what they were about?" he asks. "That's amazing. They just might be the only ones to do that." □

LOS ANGELES



After early success Blue Man Group could have cashed in (think Disney rides and blue cola). Instead, it found a way to grow without selling its soul.

Brand

Photograph by Michael Cogliantry

FOUNDERS

FORTUNE SMALL BUSINESS
MARCH 2003

WHEN CHRIS WINK TALKS ABOUT the challenges facing his organization, he doesn't quote from *Who Moved My Cheese?* but rather from the Detroit rock duo the White Stripes. He points to the song "Little Room," whose lyrics run in full: "Well, you're in your little room, and you're working on something good. But if it's really good, you're gonna need a bigger room. And when you're in the bigger room, you might not know what to do. You might have to think of how you got started, sitting in your little room."

Sometimes the best management ideas are found in the unlikeliest places, and that lesson comes up often in the business that Wink and partners Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton founded in 1988, Blue Man Group. Aside from their appearance in some Intel ads, you might not know what Blue Man Group is, but plenty of people do: Its unique style of performance art is now permanently established in four U.S. cities, its first CD just went gold, and it's about to release a second this spring. The three founders manage more than 500 employees, and while they politely decline to give any financials, Blue Man Group performers put on 38 shows a week for more than 20,000 people paying $43 to $88 a ticket. So by one rough estimate, if every show sells out, that's about $1.4 million in revenue every week from the performances alone.

For the benefit of those who haven't seen a Blue Man show, this might be time for a primer. It's nothing like traditional theater. There's no obvious plot. The three performers are slathered in brilliant blue greasepaint and never speak. Instead they do things like twirl a canvas while spitting paint on it, creating a small work of art. Sometimes they play music by drumming on homemade instruments built from PVC pipe. They make rhythmic noises by chomping on Cap'n Crunch cereal, and in a bit involving Twinkies they split one in half with a jigsaw. It's hard to describe, but the most important thing is this—it's fun.

Of course, if you are familiar with Blue Man, you might be puzzled to be reading about it here. As entertaining as the shows are, why would a business magazine care? In fact, Blue Man is a powerful case study in how to grow a brand without losing focus. We've all heard stories about companies that start off like a rocket—then crash and burn because they didn't stay in control of their original vision. Fifteen years after bursting onto the cultural scene, Blue Man has managed to avoid that fate, largely by making smart choices and turning down opportunities that a lot of entrepreneurs might have jumped at.

To hear exactly how they did it, I came to New York City to meet Wink, Stanton, and Goldman. Not surprisingly, they don't use words like "branding," but while we talk, it becomes clear that they've thought a lot about how to define their enterprise, stretch it, and reach a larger audience without losing the things that made Blue Man Group special when they were starting out, a problem any growing business deals with. Nobody mentions Tom Peters or Peter Drucker, but at times they do cite Penn & Teller and Francis Ford Coppola. It is pretty much what I'd hoped for.

Like the founders of Hewlett-Packard, who started a company without any idea of what they would make, the creators of Blue Man Group began by tinkering. Instead of a garage, they shared a Manhattan apartment with no furniture. All three were in their mid-20s. Wink and Stanton worked for a catering company, and Goldman, Wink's childhood friend, was a software designer. In 1988 they put on bald wigs, painted themselves blue, and held a "funeral for the '80s." With friends (also blue) they carried a coffin of objects representing the worst aspects of the

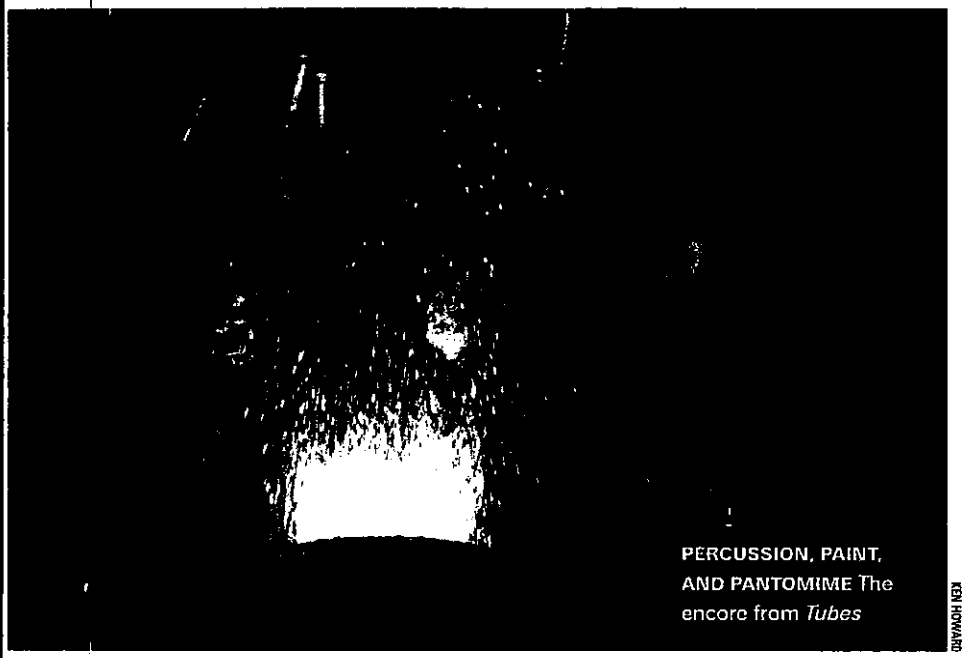
FOUNDERS Stanton, Wink, and Goldman avec makeup

Big World

There are now 38 Blue Man Group performers (thousands more have tried out), which has allowed the three founders to expand their show into a mini-empire. Here's what it looks like.

decade—such as a yuppie effigy and a Rambo doll—into New York City's Central Park and burned them in a barrel. MTV recorded the event for posterity. They've never quite known how to answer the oft-asked question "Why blue?" but it seemed to work. Soon after, with a notable lack of formal training in music or acting, the trio started staging small performances. Just three years later they had an off-Broadway hit called *Tubes* and were spitting paint on *The Tonight Show* and *Live! With Regis & Kathie Lee.*

Their first real breakthrough didn't come until several years later, when they belatedly saw the wisdom of advice they received from noted business philosopher Penn Jilette, half of the irreverent Penn & Teller comedy-magic duo.



PERCUSSION, PAINT, AND PANTOMIME The encore from *Tubes*

KEN HOWARD

"He saw the show in, like, the first month," says Goldman, who has a recurring grin that suggests he just got away with something. Jilette is a big man, and to recreate the moment, Goldman stands and looms over me, waving his hands. "He said, 'Oh, my God! You guys can do what Teller and I can never do! You can clone yourselves!' And we said, 'No, you don't get it, we're more like a band.' I actually thought he was, like ..." he searches momentarily and finally settles on, "a wackhead."

So they continued on, three friends, doing their show. Six days a week, three years without a break, more than 1,200 consecutive performances. There was one understudy, to satisfy the group's financial backers, but while he'd studied the show, he never so much as rehearsed it. The three began to feel like prisoners of their success. They weren't creating new material, just performing *Tubes* over and over. Finally Stanton cut his hand one day while fooling around with a router. The understudy stepped in—and it worked.

"It was a catalytic event," Goldman says. Blue Man Group wasn't a cult of personality. The founders could oversee the show without necessarily being *in* the show. That allowed them to take time off at last, but, more important, it gave them time to think about how to expand on what they'd started.

All along they'd had opportunities. After their initial success they were offered product endorsements and a bigger theater on Broadway. Disney talked of not just a movie but a related theme ride. Wink, Stanton, and Goldman rejected almost all of it. There was a conscious effort, they say, not to grab the quick payoff and risk becoming the next *Cats*. As Goldman puts it, they knew they wanted to create with the Blue Man character over decades, and they also knew that a steep growth curve—he holds his arm at about an 80-degree angle—"can come down on this kind of slope"—he tilts his arm so that it looks like an Enron stock chart.

Instead, they decided in 1995 to start a second show in Boston. The early rehearsals were fine, but the production ran into problems soon after opening. Wink, Stanton, and Goldman were alternating with new Blue Man performers, shuttling between New York and Boston, and the more they stepped away, the more flaws they noticed. The music, for example, had never been formally scored—it was only discussed in terms of the emotion it was supposed to evoke. One tune, "Tension Song," was meant to convey fright, but the founders discovered that "tension" can mean different things to different musicians, especially when there's no sheet music to refer to. Trying to solve all the problems, they found themselves in another prison: the prison of meetings.

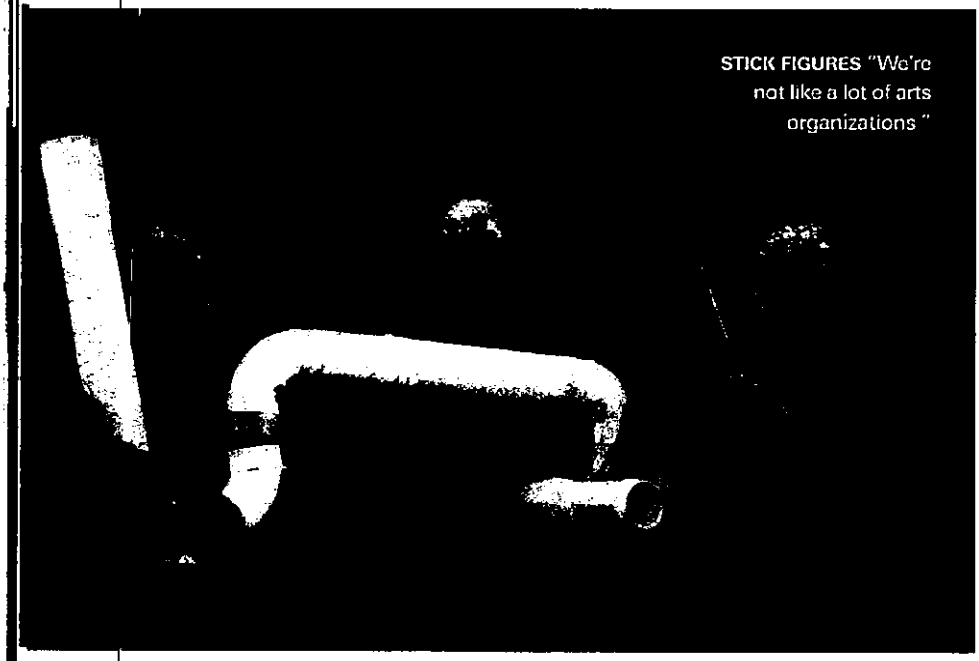
So they did what a lot of businesses never get around to—they wrote a detailed, 132-page operating manual. Based on notes taken over a year, the document came into being when the three founders locked themselves in an apartment with one of their creative directors, Michael Quinn, and a tape recorder. The journal is an edited transcript of the tapes they made.

Basically, it tells the story of the show step by step, but from the point of view of the Blue Men. Some explanations are straightforward—"The Blue Men are not aliens"—and others are more subtle, with references to everything from *Being There* to George Bernard Shaw to the caves of Lascaux. It's a nontraditional set of instructions, but writing it down forced the founders to articulate ideas that had always simply been understood among them. It also taught them not just about their brand but also about a basic concept of management. Goldman cites Francis Ford Coppola's theory that what makes the difference between a good movie and a bad movie is getting everyone involved to make the *same* movie.

These days Blue Man regularly holds open calls in cities across North America, and over the years thousands of people have auditioned to join a club that currently has just 38 members (counting the original three). Certain physical attributes are important, such as height and build,

but other than that it's wide open. One of the current Blue Men is African American, and for a few years there was a Blue Man in Boston who was actually a woman. The most important factor is not just memorizing a set of movements but truly understanding the character, which was only defined and recorded during the period when the manual was born. Looking back, Goldman says, "Everything in our project lives either before that moment or after that moment."

In 1997 they launched a third show in Chicago, which opened without the problems they had encountered in Boston. And it was at this point that the three finally started thinking about marketing. Early on, Blue Man ran almost no ads. Its philosophy was to create great shows and hope word would spread. (A few television appearances helped—Blue Man is a favorite of Jay Leno's, and the founders have appeared on *The Tonight Show* 11 times.) But with their shows now running more independently, the founders could afford to look outward. They started slow, running a few clever print spots to help promote the Chicago show, but their most aggressive foray into advertising was actually in someone else's ads—Intel's.



STICK FIGURES "We're not like a lot of arts organizations."

KEN HOWARD

They had turned down offers to tout credit cards, soft drinks, breath mints, a line of paints—almost any campaign that relied on the color blue—and they did the same when Intel first came calling. "We weren't like, 'Oh, we want to do it, but let's negotiate,' " Goldman emphasizes. "We said, 'No, we don't want to do it.' They said, 'What would it take?' "

That gave them pause.

They thought it over and went back to Intel with some key terms. First, the ads had to say "Blue Man Group," and the three founders had to be actively involved, working with the ad agency on ideas and committing only after the storyboards were approved. (Of the seven commercials that eventually aired, five were based on ideas that originated with Blue Man Group; none of the ad agency's original ideas made the cut.)

Two series of TV spots were produced, each a clever 23-second skit in which the Blue Men interacted with an Intel logo. In one spot a Blue Man covers himself in paint and slides down a wall to create the third stripe in the Pentium III logo. They come across as ads almost as much for Blue Man as for the chipmaker.

It's worth noting that the three founders have not only managed their growth better than most creative groups, but they've managed it better than most businesses of any kind. "We're not like a lot of arts organizations," Stanton says. "What takes place while you're gone is just as important as what's on stage—the management of it, the business of it. It's not like we were ..."

Wink jumps in, "crazy artists, with some manager taking care of us ..."

"And then later we realized, 'Oh, we better get into this *business* thing,' " Stanton resumes.

Blue Man Group definitely operates in a "bigger room" these days, yet the founders make a concerted effort to stay in touch with their original, little-room vision. All decisions are still made by unanimous agreement. (In fact, they still share a single office.) And they know that every step toward a larger audience brings with it the problem of potential overexposure. While they're a long way from Disney-level ubiquity, there's no question that Blue Man's core audience has always liked the show's nonmainstream status.

Wink compares the struggle not to betray their vision to that of a recovering alcoholic who at any moment could make one wrong move and wreck years of careful discipline. The trick is to avoid the safe path of repeating themselves—but without straying too far and losing focus. It's the same "Preserve the Core/Stimulate Progress" yin-yang that James B. Collins and Jerry I. Porras describe in *Built to Last*.

For example, the group is putting out its second CD this spring, *The Complex*, which features actual lyrics—a pretty big departure for the until-now silent Blue Man. It could put off some purists among the group's fans, but with singing by artists like Dave Matthews and others, it's also likely to attract new ones. Some of the material on that CD will be the centerpiece of the first-ever Blue Man tour, scheduled to start winding through 35 cities this April.

The founders still occasionally put the blue paint on—they'll do their 12th *Tonight Show* appearance that same month—but they won't be performing in the tour. Instead, it will feature a rotating set of senior Blue Men, as well as a lot of video elements and what Wink calls "flying jellyfish." And the group is carefully exploring new shows in Berlin, London, and Tokyo.

With each new project, though, they confront the same decisions they've faced since the beginning. As Wink says, "We're gonna have to go through each idea and say, 'Okay, that's all good and well, that's a nice thought—but is it Blue Man?' " □

CMJ New Music Report

CMJ 25

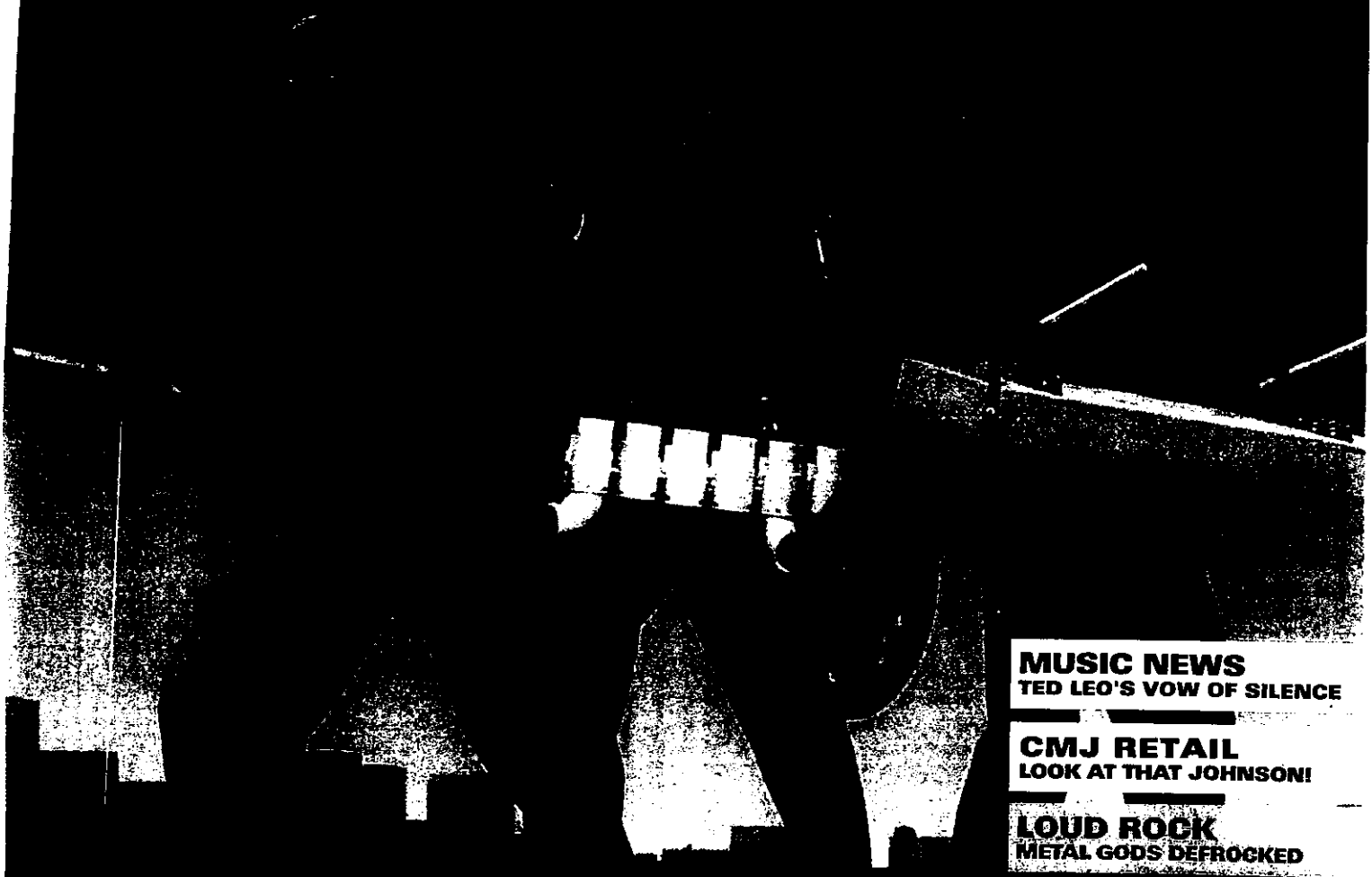
Issue No. 815 • May 26, 2003 • www.cmj.com

SPOTLIGHT

GARAGE A TROIS

REVIEWED: GRANDADDY, RED HOT VALENTINES, ALKALINE TRIO, WILDCHILD... PLUS MORE!

BLUE MAN GROUP BRAVE BLUE WORLD



MUSIC NEWS
TED LEO'S VOW OF SILENCE

CMJ RETAIL
LOOK AT THAT JOHNSON!

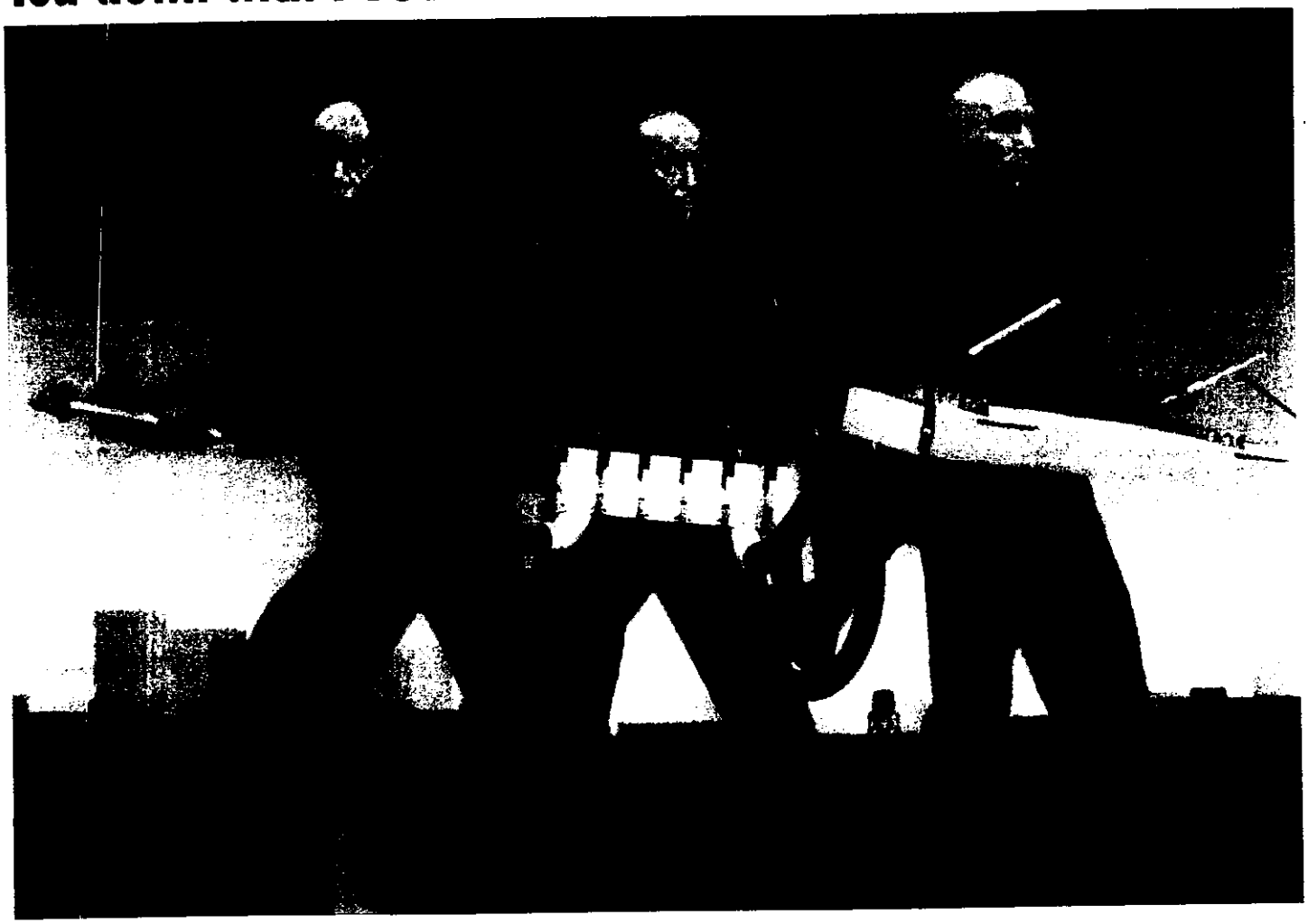
LOUD ROCK
METAL GODS DEFROCKED

RADIO 200: **WHITE STRIPES** STILL ROCKIN' NO. 1, **YEAH YEAH YEAHS** MOST ADDED

BLUE EXPLOSION!!!!

The Blue Man Group performs a cross-country Blue d'État. You down with PVC?

Story by **Christopher R. Weingarten** Additional reporting by **Tom Mallon**



Three enraged Ramones fans, brandishing sticks, used their blunt implements to furiously BAM BAM *BAM* on the door of WESU/Middleton, Connecticut. They had enough... and were going to make their point to the program director of the Wesleyan University station.

"I didn't want to play the songs all the way through," says DJ Chris Wink, speaking of his tenure transmitting live to a campus of 2,000 students, back in the days when "new wave" was the enveloping appellation du jour. "I was just gonna play a *bunch* of Ramones songs. As a DJ, it would be an art form. I got through 10 songs and then these three guys show up banging on the door with *sticks*! They thought I was unbelievably stupid for taking really short songs and making a medley. Maybe they had a point. I had a shorter attention span than a Ramones song!"

Wink, apparently still determined to gleefully distort the preconceptions of pop culture, can still be heard splattering off College Radio antennas, co-conducting a dogpiled pummel of thwappy tubes and mangled membranophones with decades-spanning confreres Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton. Like a volcanic torrent of blue goo ejaculating from the top of a jerry-rigged drum, the triad, known collectively as the Blue Man Group, recently slapped a greasepaint-coated cobalt palm across the airwaves, thanks to its PVC-core endeavor *The Complex* (Lava). From being anti-high-art high-art artists at NYC's Astor Place Theatre, to unleashing a colossal Las Vegas Dadaist Marx Brothers extravaganza, to their ubiquitous Intel ads, to a Gold-selling West-Africa-meets-East-Village exercise in tube-whackery, the Blue Brothers have performed a cultural Blue d'État — making performance art populist, making avant-garde theatre marketable and making polyvinyl chloride rock like a fuggin' Fender.

An ivory tangle of tubes — like a colorless model of the large intestine — sits center-stage inside a converted movie theater in Manhattan's Lower East Side. Three T-shirt-and-blue-jean-clad percussionists meticulously swat the open ends — like performing a root canal on the busted teeth of a giant shark — all spanking out an exact replica of the Giorgio Moroder proto-techno synth gurgle from "I Feel Love." Ten-or-so musicians stay perched behind them, bashing Vistalite drum kits, strumming guitars, hammering keyboards and occasionally whacking the strings of an overturned piano (all strings tuned to the same

note, natch) with a giant rubber mallet. *BLANG!!*

The Blue Man Group is preparing for its first-ever tour of rock venues, a trek — with all the drums, vertical pianos, tubes, LED towers, 3-D live-wire jellyfish, under-stage lighting, guitars, doo-dads, geegaws and buckets upon buckets o' blue paint — that will take five (hell, maybe six) trucks and five buses to transport from city-to-city. "We did the first record with Virgin and they were like, 'You guys gotta pay your dues, get out and play the clubs!'" says artistic director **Michael "Puck" Quinn**. "We were like, 'Are you nuts? To get them bald and blue takes 12 people!'"

All that theatre background has got the Blue Men eyeing some epic shit: the trio is working with production designer **Marc Brickman** (**Pink Floyd, Nine Inch Nails**) to bring elephantine, LED-scrollin', epileptic-light-flashin' insanity to 2,000-to-4,000-seat venues. The group's massive band of drummer-after-drummer-after-drummer (isn't the guitar dated yet?) even found room for pals **Tracy Bonham** and **Venus Hum** to add extra layers of vocal ooze and violin squiggle to the already heart-stoppingly loud ensemble, which punctuates its rockinest moments by walloping a six-foot bass drum.

"That is so far the biggest head that we've been able to get," says Quinn, pointing to the biggest fucking drum you've ever seen. "We've been making our own stuff here. We'll make our own frames and we'll make our own bodies and all that, but the head is the problem. We just can't make heads. We'd make a 50-foot drum if we could, if we could get a head for it.

"There's this word, *synesthesia*, that's about hearing color or seeing sound — the crossover of senses. So we really are into that and we really like the idea of a musical instrument that 'feels.' We want our music to be visceral; we want it to be resonating in your chest cavity," Quinn says, adding a guttural rumble for emphasis. "That's pretty exciting."

Tons of handmade instruments — the Piano Smasher, the Drumbone, the Tubulum, the Drumulum — are the main ingredients for banging out rhapsodies in Blue. Most notable, however, are the Air Poles: long and sproingy fiberglass rods that, when properly whipped and swooshed about, make a sexy swish much like the scritch-scritch-scritch of a turntablist. Plus, they're pretty dangerous!

"I have this thing about Air Poles that freaks me out," Quinn says. "I'm just worried that somebody's gonna take it in the face one time."

If I Sing A Song, Will You Sing Along?

"We went out to dinner with Dave and everyone loves him in Seattle. What's it like to be him? He's sitting there and strangers feel comfortable coming up and entering his airspace and talking to him," Wink says about Mr. **Dave Matthews**, vocalist on "Sing Along," *Complex*'s polyrhythmic, tube-thumping lead single. "'Sing Along' is about that feeling of being alone and wanting to connect. There's something about him that really works as the everyman. It's not like he's some kind of weirdo. He's just like, 'No, I'm just a regular guy. And it's part of my regularness that is actually making me feel a little strange.' What about the people that fit in just fine and they wonder what it is the hell they are fitting into?"

The original boys in blue — Goldman, Stanton, Wink — sit in blocky chairs, clad in five o'clock shadow, turtleneck and rolled-sleeves respectively. Their short skull-cappable hair and everydude look, to the casual observer, may seem contrary to the group's freaknik cobalt-coated exterior and the troupe's austere obsession with urban isolation and chaotic info-overload. But hey, that's the rub. They *are* men. They are *not* Devo. They continually sell out shows 'cause a little Blue blood runs through all our veins.

"If you look into the Blue Man's eyes, you don't see a fucking freako machine, what you see is very human. That's what people connect to." — Chris Wink

"If you look into the Blue Man's eyes, you don't see a fucking freako machine, what you see is very human. That's what people connect to. They're amused by the strangeness and they're intrigued by the scariness, but ultimately they connect to the human side. At the end of the day, underneath the exterior — which you have to look past — there's an everyman," says Wink, as Goldman loudly sucks an orange. "I think underneath the Blue Man is a Dave Matthews, more than a robot or an incredibly obtuse artistry that's superior-than-thou. That's who *we* are. *We're* more like Dave than we are like some obnoxious art student."

The Blue Man Main Office is a cozy Manhattan space teeming with library-chic receptionists, clinical wall clocks displaying three time zones spanning four concurrent live shows, a pair of seemingly narcoleptic dachshunds mewing like cats, and an endless supply of tantalizing oranges, grapes, blueberries, watermelons, green and red peppers, carrots, papaya, broccoli and strawberries. The bevy of produce is some of the fruits of the group's labor since it first worked blue in 1987. Invading Astor Place in 1991, conquering Vegas in 2000 and now taking on rock, the Blue crew thrives on situations where its product isn't the most easily embraced.

We walked [into Vegas, and it was] like, 'Look, you guys can do your little New Yorky crazy shit back there, but that's not gonna fly here on the strip,'" says Wink. "So here we are again in the rock world and, yeah, it's like right out of the gate. 'I'm sorry, I had you all in my head as this sort-of theatre/commercial thing, and now you say you have a regular album... and that's making me have to actually recategorize my neurons, which is actually inconvenient for me.'"

"Meanwhile," chimes in Goldman, "we've always been writing fuckin' crazy, rockin', get-your-blood-goin' music. But because it's [theatre], it's something different."

Since they are unquestionably theatre types, is this latest musical focus just the manifestation of a bunch of clandestine rock-star fantasies? Hardly... considering the original three Blue Men will be performing on approximately *zero* dates on the summer-long tour.

"It is so not about me or Chris or Phil or any of the people that play the character," says Goldman between bites of yellow pepper (Stanton, throughout the interview, remained only slightly less silent than his pop-eyed, blue-visaged alter-ego). "When the Blue Men are performing up there, it *is* me. It's *us*. We write, we direct, we perform, we build, we sweat. We love performing, but it's not like we gotta get out there for it to be our juice. The second part is... we wrote all this music and I literally wrote myself out of the show! I just can't play the parts. It's just such a fuckin' hard show."

"The [*Chicago Tempo*] called the Blue Man Group the 'anti-rock-star.' And that really seemed to fit," Goldman says. "At the Grammys — that was in front of 35,000 live people and whatever the propaganda is on how many tens of millions were watching — that's a heightened experience. The whole auditorium, every last person, got up on their feet. I'll have that forever. And for a guy who's not really that good a musician, I have a lot of those 'rock moments.'" **NMR**

BLUE MAN GROUP

Arts & Leisure

High Tech Meets Goo With Blue Man Group

By VICKI GOLDBERG

The New York Times
Sunday, November 17, 1991

BLUE MAN MAKES AN ABstract painting on stage by pouring paint onto drums, drumming the hell out of it and catching the cascading spatters on canvas. Then he goes to an art show and deconstructs a fish.

Blue Man is the performance group that opens in "Tubes" at the Astor Place Theater tonight: three men with bald, cobalt-blue heads, outsiders who know just enough about the current culture to make hash of it in a hurry. The three blue men — Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink — think of themselves on stage as a single entity that happens to have three bodies. Since Blue Man neither talks nor shows emotion, he expresses himself through art and music, which definitely reveal that something's been pent up a long time and needs to get *out*.

The fountains of paint, the food that spurts from the performers' jackets and is avidly glubbed up, the marshmallows and balls of paint they catch in their mouths and spit out as art, bring an element of untrammeled infantile sensuality, the pre-verbal joy of goo and finger painting, to the theater. With original music, deadpan sophistication and the biggest mess since the cafeteria scene in "Animal House," Blue Man reduces the late 20th century to a post-modern romp in a lunatic nursery school.

■

Some of Blue Man's techniques are dazzlingly simple. They simultaneously flip through three stacks of posters too fast for the audience to read all the messages at once; these run from such tidbits as "A weekday edition of The New York Times contains more information than the average person was likely to come across in a lifetime in 17th-century England" to "Once again you have chosen the wrong poster to read. While the people next to you read useful information, you are stuck with the equivalent of junk mail, as usual."

Blue Man is also fascinated by areas where art and science intersect. A running electronic display of their thoughts about contemporary art, in this case a fish pretending to be a trompe l'oeil painting, reads as if Jenny Holzer had invaded their unconscious, and a woman's recorded voice gives an anesthetized tour of fractal geometry, which she thinks resembles paisley ties.

"Tubes," a slightly expanded version of their piece at La Mama and Lincoln Center earlier this year, mixes high technology, popular culture and gunk. The theater bristles with industrial food-processing tubes, some of which whisper subversive messages to the audience. Is this art or merely cartoon high jinks in search of respectability on stage?

In his review of the La Mama show in the Times in January, Stephen Holden described Blue Man as a "deliriously antic blend of music, painting and clowning" that produces "an amusing spoof of art criticism." Samuel Lipman, publisher of The New Criterion, has labeled their performances "failed art"; Blue Man nonetheless once auctioned their paintings when it made the difference between eating and not.

"Tubes" is first and foremost an entertainment. But buried among the ooze and flying paint, the absurd and sardonic messages that whizz by electronically, is a sharp exposition of the tangled issues facing the information era. Stuart Ewen, author of "All Consuming Images," and professor of media studies at CUNY, admires the group's ability to present serious ideas in a form a child would find engaging: "It is rare that one goes to the circus and comes away filled with ideas."

Mr. Goldman, Mr. Stanton and Mr. Wink, all "pretty much 30," say they created Blue Man because they saw "people doing the 60's" but were too young to do it themselves, and "the only thing that happened in the 80's was that everyone got a VCR," so they had to map out their own intellectual landscape.

Mr. Wink, who plays with words like a jazz musician soloing and frequently speaks for the trio, says they were looking for "this wonderful bistro salon scene, where all the beat poets would have congregated ... the heir to Warhol's Factory, the heir to the Algonquin Round Table, the Left Bank, all would fuse together. Scientists would surely be meeting regularly with people interested in New Wave, and the John Cages and Joseph Beuyses would be lecturing weekly." Naturally, they were somewhat disappointed.

So about four years ago, they began to hold informal Sunday salons with like-minded friends, and in that atmosphere Blue Man was born. Mr. Wink went blue first, others soon followed. Mr. Stanton insists that blue has no symbolic meaning but transcends race and sex and could be any religion, putting Blue Man beyond the reach of styles and categories.

In Central Park in 1988, with other blue friends, the three of them staged a slightly premature funeral for the disappointing 80's, burying post-modern architecture, yuppie TV and deconstruction, though they weren't too sure what that was. Once, outside the Copacabana, where people were queued up restlessly to get in, Blue Man set up Club Nowhere with stanchions, a velvet swag and a section of sidewalk where anyone could enter and dance for free without bothering about music. The three-man group was born. They have been blue-manning full time since last December and touring with other performance artists under the aegis of P.S. 122.

The salon idea had been a response to a yearning for community and communication, a theme that crops up repeatedly in

BLUE MAN GROUP

"Tubes." Blue Man badly wants to be friends with the audience and invites spectators to come up on the stage to share a feast (the cuisine is Twinkie Light), stand in for paint brushes, or serve as musical instruments in the first known instance of a trio set to the words "ouch, ow, ooaah, wah-wah-wah."

Blue Man also wades into the audience more than once, and in the ecstatic finale dances on the armrests of the spectators' seats while rolls of paper stream down on everyone and strobe lights cut the action into slivers. After the show, Blue Man hangs out in the lobby and presses blue kisses onto programs offered up for autographs.

The three men say they "blesh" and want to "blesh" with the spectators — an awkward word combining blend and mesh from Theodore Sturgeon's "More Than Human," a science fiction classic about limited beings with singular talents who combine into something far better. All three write the show and music, build props and manage details, but each brings special skills to the endeavor.

Matt Goldman, the group's "facilitator and quality control," has an M.B.A.; he was an independent software producer for seven years. He and Mr. Wink have been close friends since the age of 12, when both found themselves outsiders at the Fieldston School in New York. Today they share an apartment on the Upper West Side of Manhattan that doubles as Blue Man headquarters and has taken on some of his attributes. The living room is heaped with boxes, files, a broken mirror, an exercise machine, a washtub overflowing with wires, canvases, paint rollers, electrical gizmos and a bathroom scale. Half a window is obscured by something that looks like Styrofoam with the D.T.'s but turns out to be a leftover experiment with shaving cream.

Phil Stanton, who had worked with a children's theater group in Savannah, met Mr. Wink in 1986 at Glorious Food in New York, where both were waiters. (Today they mishandle 60 pounds of bananas and 30 gallons of Jell-O at every performance.) Mr. Stanton is the group's hands-on man who figures out how to make their antic impulses operative with simple tools like insect sprayers and garden hose fittings.

Chris Wink, who has imbibed large doses of art history, was an articles synopsizer for a Japanese magazine, reading science and art and trend magazines all day and drumming in post-punk bands by night. He was, he recalls, preparing to be an idea man, the kind who produces ideas in double time but never makes anything happen.

■

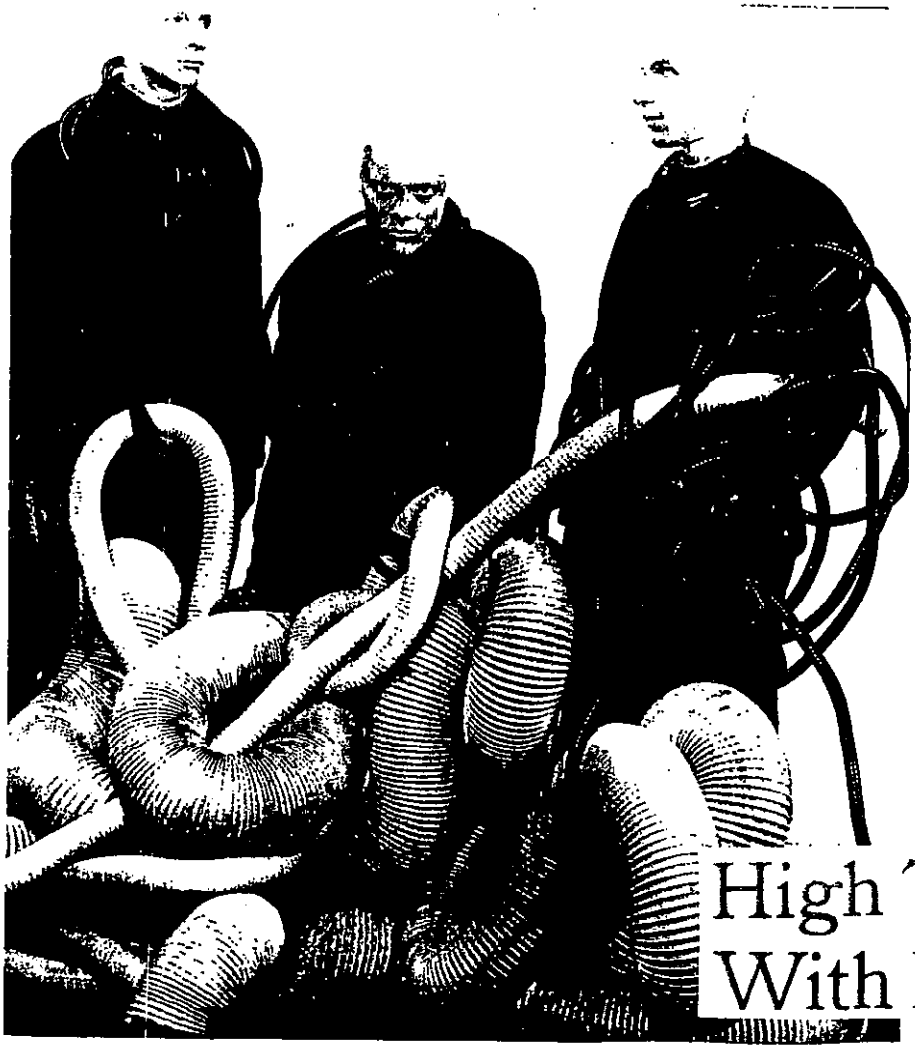
Each revs up the others' minds, cutting books into thirds and passing the portions around with their notes. They built their own drums and keyboard instruments that look a bit like demented pipe organs but are made of plastic plumbing pipes and produce ripe tones when struck with rubber flip-flops.

Their band is not exactly the Boston Pops either: Ian Pai plays their homemade drums; Larry Heinemann plays a lap steel guitar and a talking drum; and Brian Dewan plays an electric zither he made himself. At one point, Blue Man makes music with the crunches promised in every box of Cap'n Crunch.

Asked about influences, they mention a slew, from Dada's sense of humor to the passion of Abstract Expressionism; from Penn and Teller, who caution people not to be fooled too easily, to punk rock — "for us, Pollock is like the punk version of 'God Save the Queen' "; from Oskar Schlemmer's attempt to make a painting out of the Bauhaus stage to happenings, which they read somewhere were characteristically American, having begun with the Boston Tea Party.

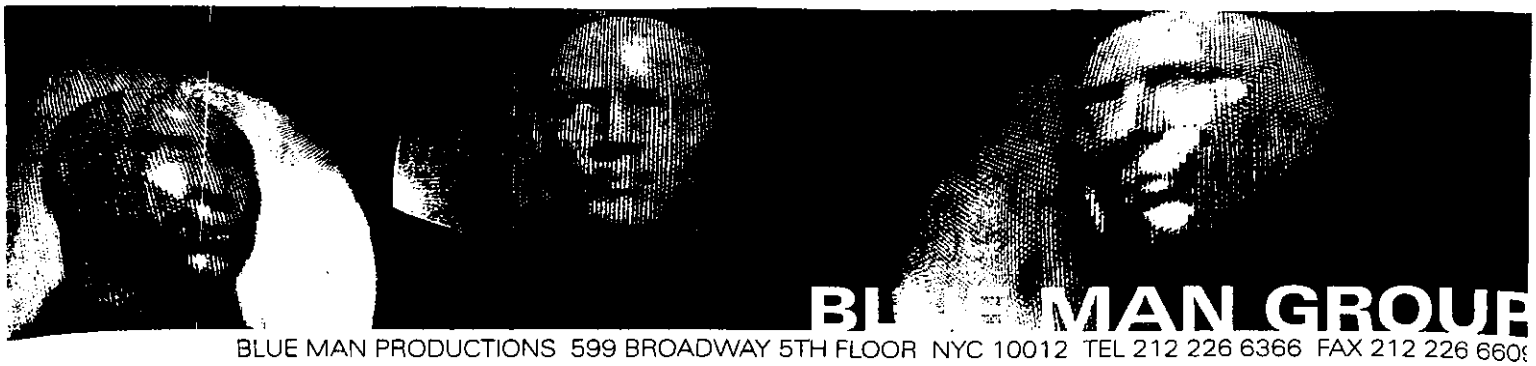
Their simple approach to complex ideas illustrates their happy, populist belief that creativity is not some mysterious godlike gift but everyone's right — that when Blue Man spits paint, he may not produce very good art, but he does make a painting. We are all artists, says Mr. Wink. "Why don't we all be famous at once? Maybe it's like a time share," not of Warhol stars but of a collective: "If we get 20 people we can be famous for an hour and a half."

Tonight Blue Man claims his hour and 15 on stage. □



Is this art or merely cartoon high jinks in search of respectability on stage?

High Tech Meets Goo With Blue Man Group



BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 660

AdAge

OCTOBER 08 2001

The 2001 roster of Marketing 100s

A year of successful brand stories—and the people behind them

CHRIS WINK

Blue Man Group

Once, there were only three. Now Chris Wink, 40, one of three Blue Man Group founders, manages an empire of 34 blue men, one blue woman, four shows (in New York, Boston, Chicago and Las Vegas) and a staff of 400. It's a lucrative empire, too—the newest Blue Man Group show in Las Vegas' Luxor hotel grossed more than $3 million a month as guests shelled out $75 each.

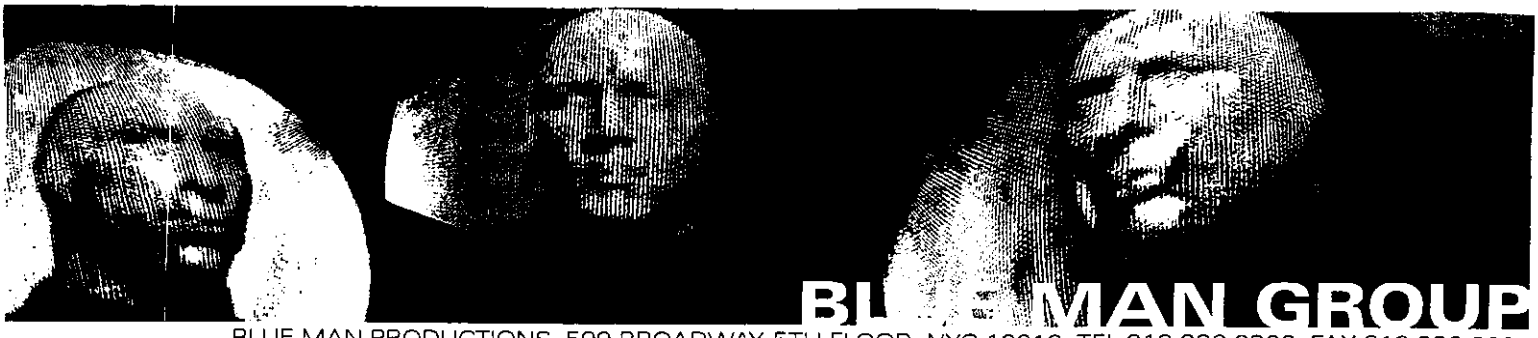
The saga begins back in 1987, when Mr. Wink and two friends donned blue paint and protested pop culture through offbeat performances in the streets of Manhattan. The guys took baby steps toward popularity and built people's awareness of the show through grassroots marketing and satirical print and radio advertising.

A year ago, Blue Man Group said yes to appearing in a series of prime-time Intel Pentium III commercials, which brought them into America's living rooms. In February, when Intel launched the upgraded Pentium 4, the computer-chip maker again called on the blue men to carry out what Intel calls one of its most successful campaigns ever.

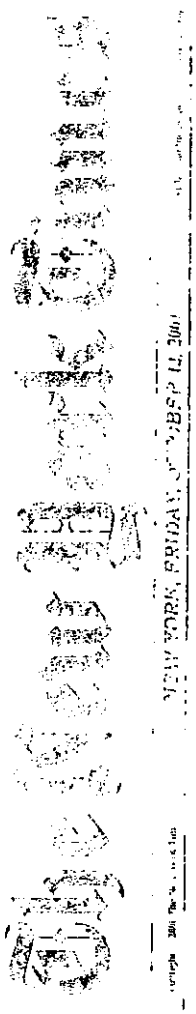
"From a brand standpoint, we felt they were a very good fit," says John Travis, director of Intel worldwide consumer promotions and TV advertising strategy. "Intel stands for technological innovation and Blue Man Group is considered extremely innovative and creative in the theater community."

Next marketing challenge for the group? Not to have the public notoriety as "the guys from the Intel commercial."

—ABBEY KLAASSEN



BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 6609



"Blue Man Group," above; "Stomp," bowling and "Dr. La Guardia" are long-running Off Broadway shows that struggled after Sept. 11 but are now starting to rebound.

NEW YORK TIMES
NEW YORK, NY
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Entertaining

Rhapsody In Blue And White

A combination with heavenly overtones.

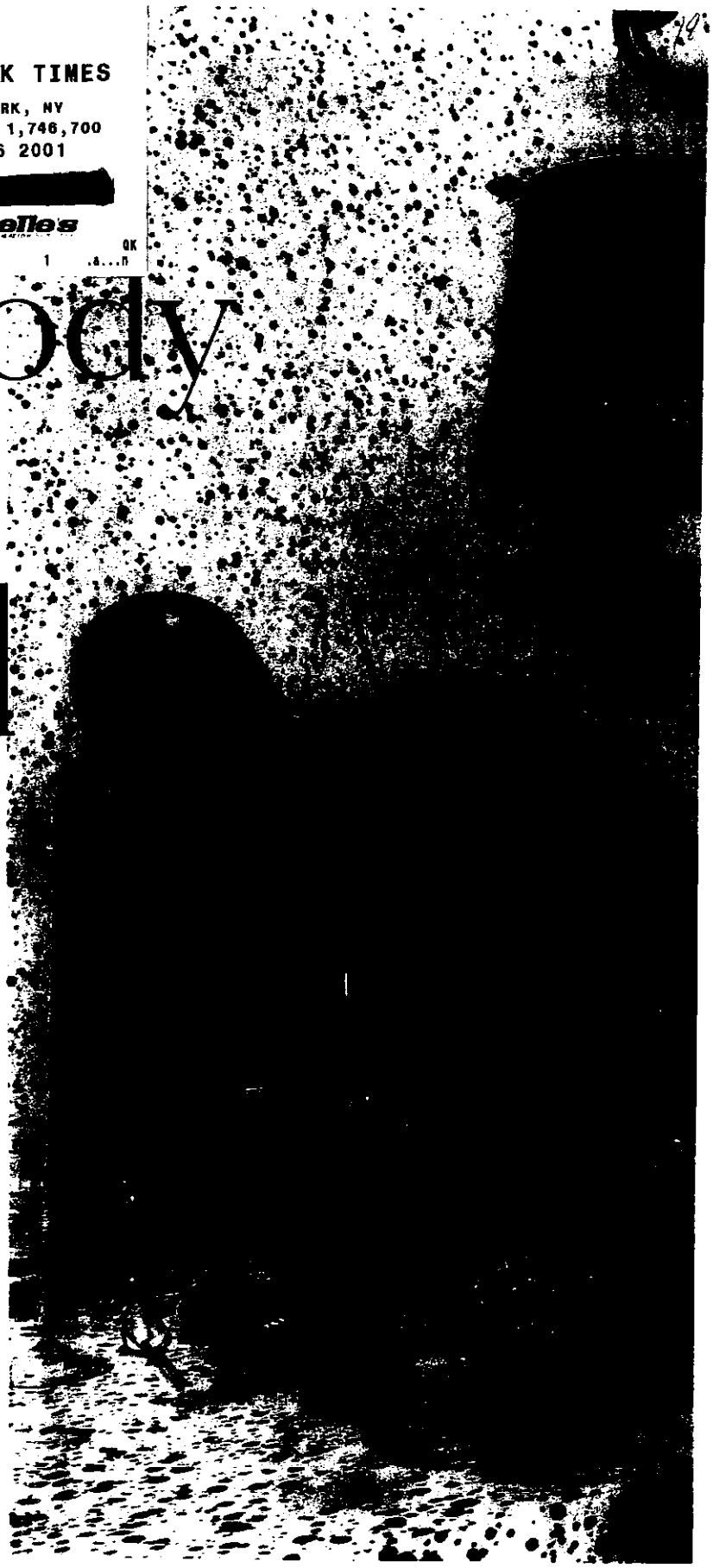
By William Norwich

According to a vast unscientific poll, blue is the most popular color in the world. And when it is contrasted with white — as in the English countryside on a crystal afternoon, unmarried clouds ripening in a cornflower sky — then the world's favorite hue is even more dazzling.

The serene combination of ornamental blue and white was begotten when Persian cobalt was imported into China in the 14th century and was used to decorate Chinese porcelain. By the 17th century, "Chinamania" spread to Europe. In England at Hampton Court palace, Queen Mary was mad about blue and white. In America during the Colonial and Federal periods, Chi-

Blue icons: Anne Slater and Blue Man Group. Slater's bowl: Pearl River Mart. Stemware: Hoffman Gampetro. Blue flutes: Ralph Lauren Home. Candlesticks: Kentshire Antiques at Bergdorf Goodman. Billiard lamp: Newel Art Galleries. Teapot: Tiffany & Company. Fabric and wallpaper: Hinson & Company. Set: Composition Workshop.

Photographs by Martha Camarillo
Set design by Barbara Turk



Blue Angel Cake served on an antique cake dish from Flying Cranes Antiques. Glass plate: Hoffman Gampetro. Flatware: Calvin Klein Home. Teacup: Kam Man. Flowers: Sebastian Li. Assistants: Carrie Gjermundsen and Lisa Portnoff.

nese export porcelain was the Louis Vuitton of its day.

In the 19th century, the artist James Whistler and his Pre-Raphaelite pal Dante Gabriel Rossetti flamed the interest in the aesthetics of blue and white as part of a new religion of beauty that revered the obscure. Whistler and Rossetti scoured the junk shops of Paris and London for the china and extolled its virtues to the point of hyperbole, prompting the satirical artist George Du Maurier to lampoon them in an irreverent sketch that showed an earnest aesthete promising to "live up to" a piece of blue and white.

More recently, blue and white has been read all over — from the planes of Pan Am to the Smurfs to Yankees uniforms. In 1974, Harry Hinson, the interior-design guru, introduced his popular blue-and-white fabric and wallpaper pattern, Spatter, which you can see in the homage above. The print — which, in the interest of full disclosure, also comes in brown and white — dates back to Colonial times, when spatter was an element in decorative pottery.

Albert Hadley, the dean of American interior designers, recently sought the virtues of Spatter for a job, and the decorator Jeffrey Bilhuber is chomping at the bit to use it. For Bilhuber, Spatter represents "clean, scrubbed American design and clarity." But in the past decade or so, as beige minimalism has been the rage, something as colorful and lively as Spatter has, well, sputtered with the trendy set.

Anne Slater, the New York social figure, was very clear from an early age that the heavenly colors blue and white would suit her all her days. She bought her first pair of blue prescription glasses at Lugene's in Philadelphia when she was just a young college student with serious platinum blond hair. And then, one fine day at the late, lamented Colony restaurant in New York, her future husband, Denny Slater, and the maître d', Sirio Maccione, came bearing a frothy, specially concocted drink the color of her glasses. Her nickname being Mouse, they called it a Blue Mouse and insisted that she drink to the bottom. There she found her marquise-cut engagement diamond from Harry Winston, "10 carats bigger than my fingernails." She recalls that she wore them very long back then.

Anne Slater returned to Lugene's and bought 35 more pairs of the spectacles that cast such an intoxicating spell. The splurge was absolutely necessary. The lenses are made of cobalt, and the saturated blue frames are made of Lucite, which is flammable, and her eyeglasses would soon be banned. Luckily, her prescription hasn't changed. "It wouldn't dare, darling," she purrs.

As you might imagine, the Blue Man Group, the seriously silly performance ensemble with productions in New York, Chicago, Boston and Las Vegas, has a similar affection for the color. Color Theory 101: Why is Blue Man blue? They are not known for speaking, so it falls upon a spokesman for the group to explain: "Other colors had baggage attached to them. Red men would have meant one thing. Yellow men just wouldn't work. Green men, black men. Blue was a cool color that didn't have a lot of claims on it."

Where blue and white cannot claim a natural stake is in cooking. "There are no blue foods," says Hank Thomashevski, the private caterer who devised the recipes below. "Even blueberries turn purple. So I played with the idea of blue and white." For cooks who like to season with fashion, color is a show stopper these days, he explains. "For dinner parties, people especially want first courses that are very colorful and complement their china. So we do a lot of pretty soups."

Blue-Potato Soup

3 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 medium onion, coarsely chopped
1½ pounds blue potatoes, peeled and quartered
6 cups good chicken or vegetable stock
1 bay leaf
1 cup milk or light cream
½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
Salt to taste.

1. Melt the butter in a 3-quart saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion and sauté until translucent, about 8 minutes. Add the potatoes, stock and bay leaf and heat to boiling over medium-high heat. Cover and simmer until the potatoes are tender, about 25 minutes. Remove the bay leaf.

2. In batches, carefully purée the mixture in a blender or food processor. (Do not overblend or potatoes will get gluey.) Place in a clean saucepan and stir in the milk or cream. Season with nutmeg, pepper and salt.

Yield: About 9 cups.

NOTE: To serve cold, chill the soup for at least 2 hours before adding the milk or cream.

Blue Angel Cake

1¾ cups egg whites (about 12 large eggs)
2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
¾ teaspoon vanilla
1½ cups sugar
1 cup sifted cake flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon cream of tartar
1 quart whipping cream
¼ cup sugar
3 tablespoons blue Curaçao.

1. Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. In a large bowl, bring the egg whites to room temperature. In a small bowl, combine 1 tablespoon water, the lemon juice and vanilla; set aside. Sift into another bowl ½ cup sugar, the flour and salt.

2. With an electric mixer, whip the egg whites for 1 minute. Add the water mixture and cream of tartar. Whip at high speed until the egg whites are fluffy. Gradually beat in the remaining sugar, beating until the mixture holds a stiff, mounded peak. (Do not overbeat; the mixture should not look dry.)

3. Sift half the flour mixture over the whites and fold in with a wide rubber spatula. Repeat with the remaining flour mixture.

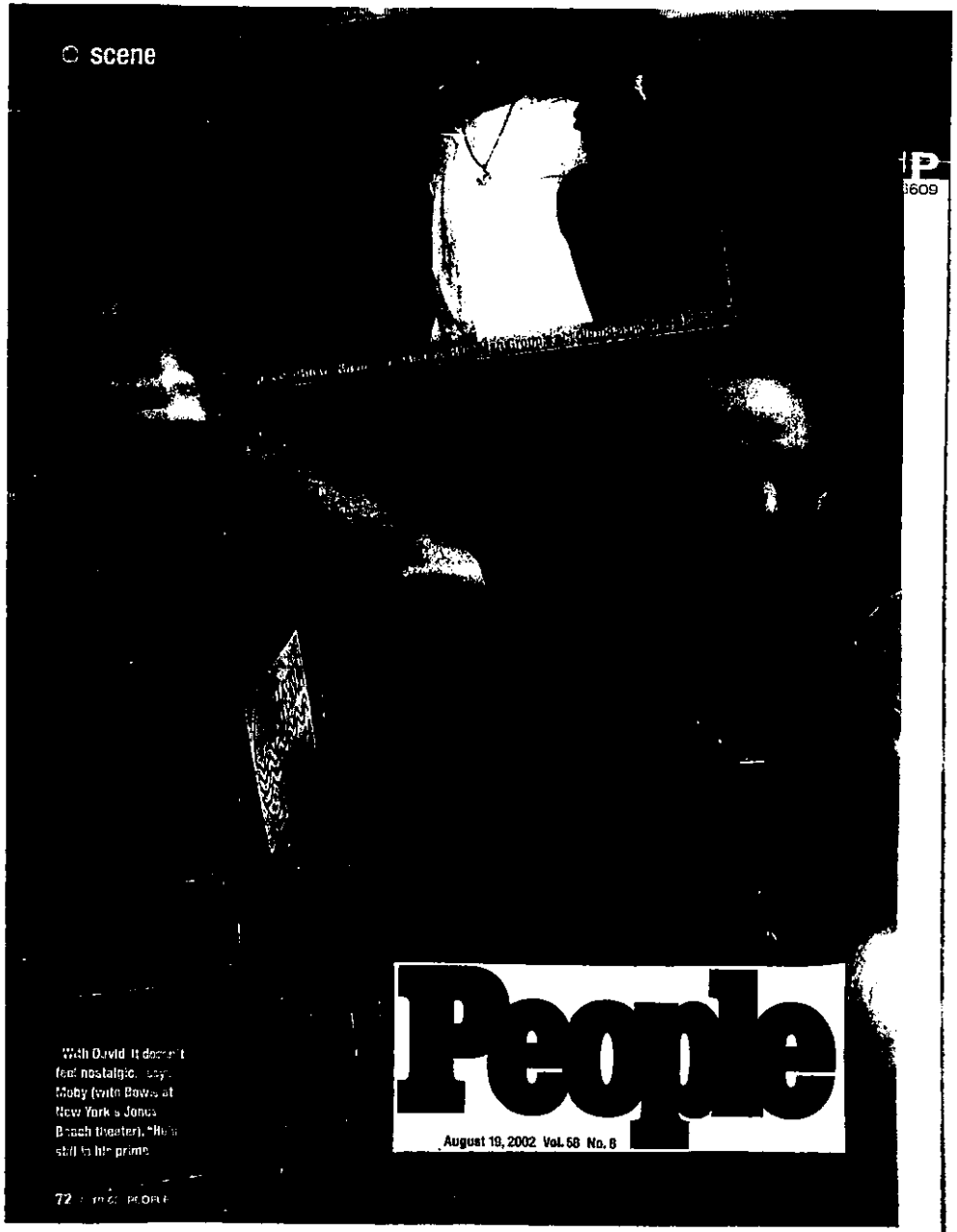
4. Spoon the batter into a 10-inch tube pan with a detachable bottom and smooth the top. Bake until the top is golden and springs back, 40 to 45 minutes.

5. Cool the cake upside down for about an hour, centering it over a large bottle. Run a knife around the cake edges, inner and outer, and, holding the tube, remove the cake. Run a knife between the cake and the bottom of the pan and invert the cake onto a cutting board. Using a large serrated knife, cut the cake horizontally into thirds.

6. Using an electric mixer, whip the cream at high speed until thickened. Gradually whip in sugar. When soft mounds begin to form, beat in the Curaçao until the icing is firm.

7. Assemble the cake on a serving dish, spreading the icing between the layers, then over the sides and top. Chill until ready to serve.

Yield: 10 servings. ■



People

August 19, 2002 Vol. 58 No. 8

With David it doesn't feel nostalgic, says Moby (with Bowie at New York's Jones Beach theater). "He's still in his prime."

A cool front moves in as Moby and David Bowie go on tour

Sitting in his trailer before his July 31 set in Holmdel, N.J., David Bowie, 55, is more Mr. Mom than Major Tom. On area[2], his summer tour with Moby, Bowie is pleased that many of the gigs are within commuting range, so he can usually get back to Alexandria, 2, his daughter with former supermodel Iman, 47, who now runs a cosmetics line. "My baby's too important," he says. "She wakes up and comes and finds us and yells, 'Milk!' And she switches on one of my keyboards and does abstract music."

Which brings us to another electronic keyboard lover. Techno pop pioneer Moby invited Bowie, his friend and "favorite rock performer of all time," (the pair live near each other in downtown Manhattan and have hung out together), to join his 12 city area[2] festival, which ends Aug. 16. The eclectic bill includes Blue Man Group and rapper Busta Rhymes. "Being at a cocktail party and trying to talk to three or four people, I'll be very nervous," says Moby, 36. "But in front of 20,000 people I'm comfortable. Don't know what kind of pathology that's indicative of. A degree of masochism?" It's a topic he can always discuss with groupies. "There are," he says, "women who want to have sex with you, and others who just want to talk to you. I tend to fall in the latter category."

Few have more devoted fans than Bowie, though. "Busta said, 'David Bowie, I never missed one of your shows. I never *been* to one of your shows, so I never missed one of your shows.'" As for other graying rockers on tour this year such as Paul McCartney, The Who and the Rolling Stones, Bowie says cheerfully, "Don't worry. We'll all be dropping like flies shortly." •

The New York Times

CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

Television's Special Day of Pain and Solidarity

'Seven Days,' Page 23; art shows

Television's Special Day of Pain a[illegible]

Top, CNN; above, Virginia Sherwood/ABC

[illegible] on Sept. [illegible] 2001 from the CNN documentary "America Remembers." [illegible] in "Report From Ground Zero" on ABC.

By CARYN JAMES

IN tribute to the victims of the 9/11 attacks, Blue Man Group has created an eloquent video. The usually explosive performance artists do not appear in it; there are no blue-painted heads in sight. Instead, pieces of white paper drift down in front of a pure black background as percussive music plays. All these papers were found in Brooklyn, where they floated across the river from the World Trade Center, and as they gently tumble from the top to the bottom of the screen some become legible: a sheet with scorched edges, filled with Japanese calligraphy; a letter that begins "Dear Recruiter," a cover sheet that says "Exhibit 13."

At other times a cascade of falling papers suggests birds or snowflakes or bodies. This video is everything the gargantuan television coverage coming in the next days is not: it is poetic, imagistic and simple; it draws viewers in, inviting us to reflect rather than telling us what to think; it is three and a half minutes long. (Called "Exhibit 13," the work will be played on the little-known music-video channel muchmusic usa, available on digital cable systems around the country.)

The 9/11 anniversary programming, which has already begun, will steadily increase until Wednesday, when ABC, CBS and NBC join the cable news channels in devoting all day to live coverage and all of prime time to

'Seven Days,' Pa[illegible] commemorating Sept. [illegible]

more reports and interviews. There is [illegible] within this onslaught. But just as [illegible] medium through which most [illegible] attacks, now television is [illegible] offers — or rather demands [illegible] a day of [illegible] [illegible] provides a [illegible] the last year, what [illegible] ism, national [illegible]

Executives from all the [illegible] had to devote the day to news [illegible] could fathom running something as [illegible] opera. And which network would have [illegible] only one to resist? The networks are [illegible] money (there will be few if any commercials [illegible] cases those details are still being worked out) [illegible] one knows who will watch or in what numbers.

"The massive amount of programming is [illegible] way of marking the day rather than pleasing [illegible] audience," said Andrew Heyward, the president [illegible] News. "Just as the events of Sept. 11 brought [illegible] business as usual, it's important as [illegible] business as usual and mark the occasion [illegible]

Paul E. Friedman, executive vice [illegible]

Continued on Pa[illegible]

BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 6609

Continued From Weekend Page 1

News, said: "I don't think we seriously discussed the possibility of not doing the whole day. To do anything else would have been inappropriate. This is the biggest story of our time."

Some of Wednesday's attention is clearly necessary, notably the live coverage of the memorial ceremonies at ground zero. The documentaries and taped reports, though, continue what television has already been doing. There is such an emphasis on human-interest stories and eyewitness accounts, it's as if the whole country has been engaged in a year of televised talk therapy.

But if television is a way of trying to make sense of events, its greatest revelation may be how little we know. A straightforward ABC special "Report From Ground Zero" (based on the book by Dennis Smith) presents firsthand accounts of firefighters and police officers, in a litany of still-stunned confusion and grief. We hear firefighters who were sure they were going to die. One says of his lost colleagues, "They're not there anymore, and I don't understand why," a sentiment that echoes through many of these programs.

It's not as if television hasn't tried, sometimes desperately, to understand. In an ABC report scheduled for Wednesday night, Barbara Walters visits a therapy group of widows and their adolescent children. The cameras have followed these people for months; they knew they were being discreetly observed. Yet there is still a creepy voyeurism involved, no matter how complicitous the subjects.

In one of the most heartbreaking scenes in any of the year's reports, here we see a widowed mother and her little girls at a dance recital trying to resume normal life, only to have "God Bless America" played at the end as a tribute. As the girls stand on stage, one sobs uncontrollably. Only a rough cut of the report was available in advance, but regardless of how the piece may be edited, its fundamental tone is there: emotion too raw, too private to be exposed on a television screen. What does this undeniably moving report tell us except how little we penetrate others' thoughts, even if we eavesdrop on their therapy?

The eyewitness accounts that have become so familiar sound different when they come from a child, as they do in a sensitive "National Geographic Explorer" called "Growing Up at Ground Zero," on MSNBC. The program follows fourth graders in a school near the World Trade Center. One girl remembers that as the school was evacuated, "I thought that the world was going to end."

Another girl who seems about 10, with a serious face and haunted eyes, says, "I looked at the twin towers, and I saw, like, people falling out and stuff." A school psychologist says that children in the area reported seeing an unusual number of birds in the sky that day, or "birds on fire." What they saw, he says, was bodies falling.

As these children look calmly and directly into the camera and talk, long after the event, it seems a healthy and cathartic thing for them to do. The role assumed by the camera matters, which is why this special feels less insidious than the Walters report. Viewers aren't positioned as voyeurs here, but as a welcomed audience with whom the children can share stories that are important for them to tell. Yet the report falls apart at the end, when the children return to their old school five months later and the program never raises the fraught issue of air quality.

Too many programs take the easy sentimental route, extolling the strength of heroes and wallowing in tears, while avoiding tough issues. Going soft in order to get access is nothing new, of course, but the terror attacks and the burst of patriotism that followed have left television journalism with a diffident tone, even now. A PBS "Frontline" report, "Campaign Against Terror" gets firsthand accounts of the decision to mount the antiterror campaign from Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, the national security adviser Condoleezza Rice and others inside the Bush administration. But while a few reporters are on hand to give analysis, the entire program feels as if it could have been made by the White House publicity machine.

The networks promise some tougher reports on the 11th, as they examine how safe the country is. The ABC investigative reporter Brian Ross sent a small amount of radioactive material through the mail to Europe, carried it by train to Turkey, then shipped it to Staten Island and brought it to the Brooklyn Bridge; the same material can be used to make a dirty bomb, and should not have slipped through the government's security system. ABC also promises a piece about how badly the search for Osama bin Laden has gone.

NBC will offer Tom Brokaw's interview with air traffic controllers about how all air travel in the country stopped on Sept. 11. CBS will have Scott Pelley's taped interview with President Bush about the events of that day and about the future. None of these were available in advance.

One report that was available turned out to be strangely gripping even though it sounds familiar. On ABC a Charles Gibson report takes us through the day with the Bush administration, based on interviews with people who were there, including Vice President Dick Cheney and the White House chief of staff, Andrew H. Card Jr. Unlike the "Frontline" report, it is tautly made and adds the valuable perspective of outsiders, some of them unlikely. A little boy in the class that President Bush was reading to in Florida when he got word of the attacks says, "His face was red, and I seen that he had tears in his eyes so I knew that something bad had really, really happened."

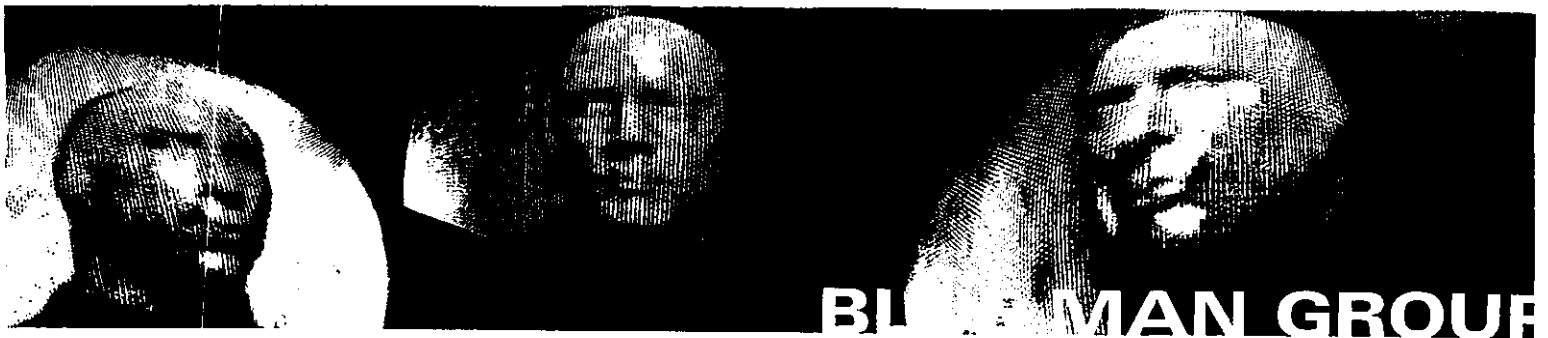
There are insightful documentaries in the mix, like "America Rebuilds" on PBS. (Though you have to wonder about the originality of all these filmmakers who can't come up with a fresh title, as if they were handed a few words to choose from — "rebuild," "America," "remember" — and told, "Put them together any way you want.") This one, with Kevin Spacey as narrator, focuses on the excavation at ground zero by New York City's Department of Design and Construction. Mr. Spacey says "cadaver dogs" sniffed through the rubble for three weeks. He adds, "This grim routine repeated itself daily at ground zero, both demolition site and mass grave." The program includes the harrowing information that a retaining wall holding back the Hudson River at the site began to buckle before it was reinforced.

Look hard enough and you can find filmmaking around the fringes, important additions to mainstream coverage. On Showtime, "Local 40," a short work by Deena Lombardi in a package by New York University film students, focuses on iron workers at ground zero. They complain about the politicians and engineers — some of the same people depicted heroically in "America Rebuilds" — who breeze in and grab the credit from the men doing the grunt work.

But even the finest programs leave the question of who will watch. CNN will repeat "America Remembers," an effective and sharply edited special it first presented a few weeks ago, in which its reporters relive Sept. 11 and the coverage. As one unimaginable event follows another, it becomes horrific to experience those moments all over again: when the second plane hit and we knew it wasn't an accident; when word came that the Pentagon had been struck and it seemed the attacks might continue to roll out in some apocalyptic tide.

CBS will repeat "9/11," by Jules and Gedeon Naudet, who were with firefighters at the World Trade Center and kept filming to create this viscerally powerful work. HBO will repeat its affecting "In Memoriam," with Rudolph W. Giuliani as its central presence. These are dazzlingly made, powerful and hard to watch.

In the face of so much that is weighty, NBC's decision to present a concert on Wednesday night seems like a brilliant idea. "The Concert for America," with Mr. Brokaw as host and Laura Bush as honorary chairwoman, will be taped at the Kennedy Center on Monday and is scheduled to include Plácido Domingo, Aretha Franklin and other performers from the worlds of gospel, country, opera and pop. To tough it out with documentaries or to be comforted with music? A soothing concert may be what people want at the end of a day when television will make a mood of sad remembrance inescapable.



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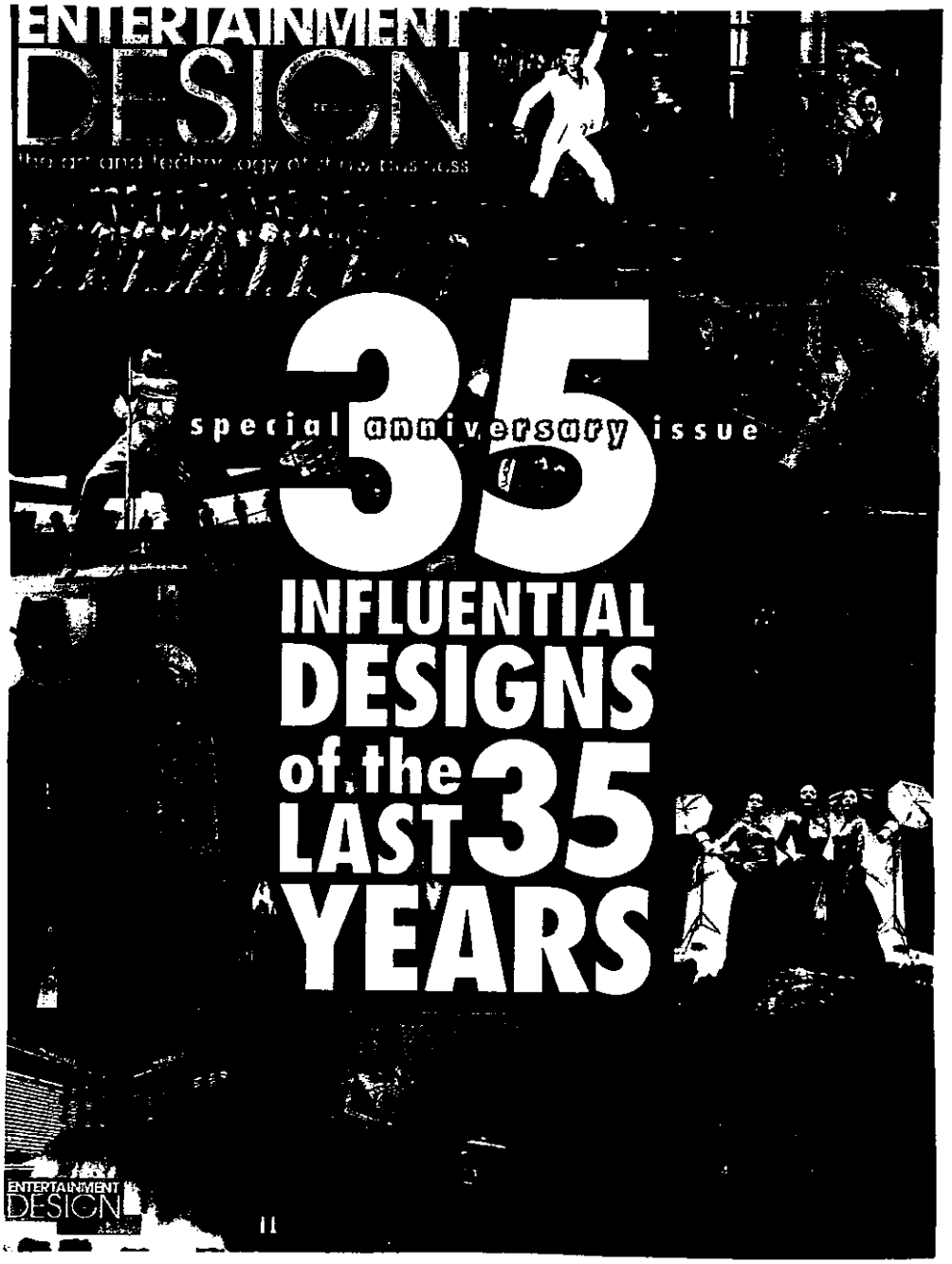

THEATRE: A Chorus Line

influences

Entertainment Design Picks 35 Designs That Have Had a Significant Impact on the Way We Work and Live

A CHORUS LINE

Do you need to ask? The first collaboration on our list between director Michael Bennett and his dream team (Robin Wagner, Theoni V. Aldredge, Tharon Musser) appeared to be an act of stunning simplicity—the hardest thing to achieve in the theatre. Bennett and his authors pulled their show—in which a group of Broadway gypsies spill their guts at an audition—out of taped sessions with real chorus dancers. His designers created a stripped, spare look that became a theatrical icon—the line of dancers, in their work clothes, standing—nervously, expectantly, defiantly—in a black void that summed up every empty Broadway theatre that ever was. There were other brilliant touches—the mirrors that descended for one dancer's angry solo, the gleaming gold tuxedos for the finale, the Mondrian light patterns on the floor. Otts Munderloh's sound design played a crucial role too—as the lead character, the director, Zach, existed only as a Godlike voice. And lest we forget—the automated lighting console made its debut with this show; this is where modern performance lighting begins.

ALL IN THE FAMILY

The groundbreaking content is what everyone recalls, but *All in the Family* also had a major impact on television production techniques. Designed by Don Roberts (who also did *Archie Bunker's Place* and *Good Times*), the show revived the live-audience model of 50s shows like *I Love Lucy*, and was the first sitcom to record this theatrical presentation style on videotape, which helped give the very timely debates between Archie Bunker and his liberal son-in-law a you-are-there quality. Creator Norman Lear's preference for a flat, "up" lighting style also became the standard—a more regrettable development, some would argue. Archie and Edith's armchairs, the ordinariness of which is itself iconic, are on view at the Smithsonian Institution.

TV: All in the Family

APOCALYPSE NOW

Francis Ford Coppola's hallucinatory cinematic portrait of the Vietnam War is the one that caught on, a simultaneously bad and beautiful acid trip shot by Vittorio Storaro and designed by Dean Tavoularis, both channeling Bosch. And to an unprecedented and, many think, unsurpassed degree, Walter Murch's multilayered sound design contributed just as much to a film as its images; in fact, the term sound design was pretty much coined by *Apocalypse Now*, just as production design was by *Gone With the Wind*. The movie was the first wide release with a Dolby Stereo 70mm soundtrack and discrete stereo-surround channels, which meant that signature audio components like Wagner, the Doors, and an infinite variety of helicopter sounds enveloped the viewer in the aural equivalent of 3D. But the technology Murch employed never became an excuse for mere volume; switching according to design between mono, stereo, and six-track, he made every rotor whirl count.

THEATRE: Blue Man Group

FILM: Apocalypse Now

BLADE RUNNER

Ridley Scott's futuristic noir thriller was a box-office flop, but it became a seminal cyberpunk text, and its portrait of a rainy, polluted, humanity- and replicant-clogged LA, circa 2019, heavily influenced urban nightmare cinemascapes from *Brazil* to *Batman* to *Seven* (and, some would argue, looks ever closer to reality). Lawrence G. Paull's production design, with a big assist from "visual futurist" Syd Mead and cinematographer Jordan Cronenweth, sees the neon-lit future, and its name is Tokyo. Giant LED screens fill the skyline of a city where it's always night, with fog diffusing artificial light in the trademarked Ridley Scott style.

BLUE MAN GROUP

Who would have thought that three downtown dudes with cobalt blue heads would take over the world? Blue Man Group founders Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton, and Chris Wink are well on their way, having created an entirely new performance experience combining their own brand of live music, a sophisticated use of video and projection technology, and the latest in surround-sound techniques. Following permanent and touring versions of their hit show, *Tubes*, the trio has taken Sin City by storm, with an even more amazing production, *Blue Man Group: Live At Luxor*. They can be credited for putting performance art on the map and for successfully translating "downtown" art into a successful Las Vegas spectacle, opening the door for other "avant gardists" to zoom to headliner status.

TIME

BLUE MAN GROUP

Breaking the Jell-O Mold

Blue Man Group is, yes, a group of men who are really blue, and their bizarre "art playground" is a sensation

By RICHARD ZOGLIN

The three bullet-headed, blue-colored actors move about the stage in eerie, wordless unison. They bang away at kettledrums while squeezing tubes of paint onto the drumheads, creating volcanic eruptions of color. They stuff handfuls of Cap'n Crunch cereal into their mouths, then join in a symphony of amplified chomping. They entice an audience member onstage for a banquet of Twinkies; suddenly cream filling spurts out of their chests. By the end of the evening, with strobe lights flashing and electronic music pulsing, the audience is engulfed by a tidal wave of crepe paper streaming from the balcony.

Don't try to understand it. Nothing Blue Man Group does makes much conventional sense. The troupe's 80-minute theater piece, called *Tubes,* is a potpourri of physical stunts, visual gags, art commentary, audience participation and all-out sensory assault. In the '60s it might have been called a happening; today the preferred term is performance art. Whatever, it is the most talked-about off-Broadway show of the season—and the most bracingly original.

Explaining Blue Man Group is no easy task. Take the Blue Men themselves. They are expressionless and robotic, yet oddly childlike and endlessly creative: a tripartite Buster Keaton, dropped in from Saturn. Some of the bits are overtly satirical (a dead fish on a canvas is the subject for a high-toned art critique, which scrolls by on an electronic message board). Others are raucously playful. One of the Blues tosses what appears to be marshmallows across the stage to a comrade, who catches them with his mouth and stuffs them inside like a huge wad of bubble gum. An audience member is hauled up onstage, dressed in a white jumpsuit and helmet, and taken backstage, where a video camera shows him getting suspended by his feet, splashed with blue paint and bounced against a canvas. He reappears onstage with his head encased in a mold of orange Jell-O. (It's a bit of Blue Man trickery: the fellow manhandled backstage is actually a pretaped double. The Jell-O, however, is real.)

"We are trying to create an art playground," says Chris Wink, one of the three 30-year-old New Yorkers who formed Blue Man Group in 1988. Their backgrounds are as unexpected as the show. Wink, who used to write synopses of articles for a Japanese magazine, dubs himself a "disillusioned futurist." Phil Stanton was a drummer and an aspiring actor who met Wink when they worked together for a catering company. Matt Goldman, a high school friend of Wink's, got an M.B.A. and worked as a computer-software producer before joining the group.

They began doing their Blue Man act on the sidewalks of New York City, once setting up shop opposite the Copacabana nightclub and enticing the overflow crowd to their own alternative "Club Nowhere." Later they moved indoors to various performance spaces in Manhattan. They created *Tubes* (named for the industrial tubing that snakes along the theater walls, hangs from the ceiling and laps up onstage) in early 1991 for the La MaMa experimental theater, then restaged it at the Astor Place Theater in November.

The group is getting offers to take its blue humor overseas (since most of it is wordless, the language barrier is minimal). For the time being, though, they have settled in for what is shaping up as an extended run. "Up until now, we were always building the props and wrapping the wires right up to the last minute," says Wink. "This is the first time we've had a chance to work on our craft."

It is still a labor-intensive show. The three arrive at the theater at noon to help prepare the props for the evening show. A fresh Jell-O mold is delivered every day, and 1,500 ft. of recycled crepe paper is wound onto rollers for each performance. The blue makeup takes nearly two hours to apply; the actors do it themselves. Once the show is over, they hang around for another couple of hours, helping clean up the nightly mess.

The group members wax philosophical about their chosen color ("Blue has an emotional complexity: a severe quality, but also a softness"); their alienation from the '80s ("We felt like outsiders, but we were steeped in the culture"); and their desire to "blesh" with the audience (the word, a combination of *blend* and *mesh,* comes from Theodore Sturgeon's sci-fi novel *More Than Human*). But their show is refreshingly free of intellectual cant and artistic pretension. One can hunt for precursors—the populist subversiveness of Penn and Teller; the visual inventiveness of Squat Theater—but the troupe seems to have sprung, well, out of the blue. "This is a celebration of the act of creation," says Wink. For the audience, it's just a celebration. ■

MARTHA SWOPE

FRANK NICELOTTA FOR TIME

Tubes and Twinkies: Stanton, Wink and Goldman, in natural color and after the two-hour makeup job that has turned them into off-Broadway stars

BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 212 226 660

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WEEKLY
JAN 30 2002

K674 Burrelle's GK

Beyond Elvis:

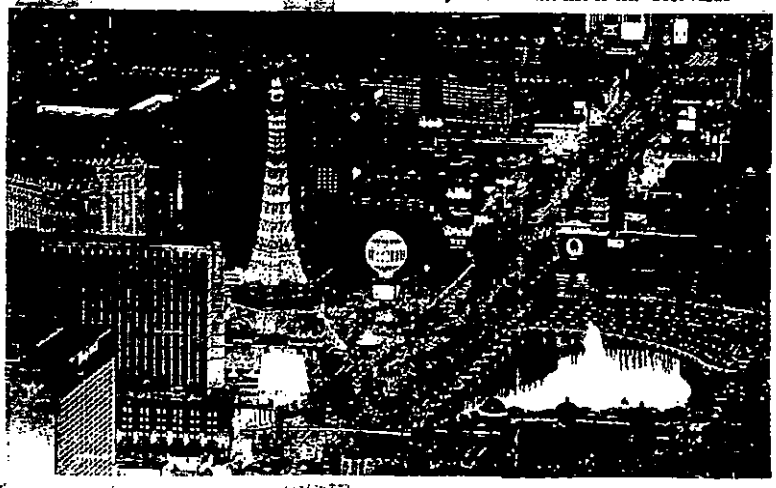
Why Newlyweds Escape to

Las Vegas

BY MARGARET LITTMAN

From Sheryl Crow to Nicolas Cage, there is a long history of folks trying to leave Las Vegas. And as a respectable adult trying to plan a respectable wedding and honeymoon, you may think that you and your intended-to-be ought to fall into that category. Sure, there are lots of reasons for skepticism—low-budget, Elvis-adorned weddings, quickie marriage licenses, and teenage brides come to mind. And, also true, more than 100,000 couples get hitched here every year. But a recent renaissance has made Las Vegas a perfectly legitimate and literally fun place to honeymoon. There are lots of reasons Vegas should be more than just a mirage on your itinerary.

High-rolling Las Vegas, a town where too much is never enough, has emerged as a hot honeyoon spot based on some old-fashioned virtues: sun, fun and a plain ol' good deal.



The Nevada city's location means honeymooners are virtually guaranteed of finding blue skies and warm temps. The city averages 294 days of sunshine a year with a January average high of 56 degrees, warming to a balmy 76 by April. And reaching the primo pools of Las Vegas is a snap compared to the 12-hour plane flights, passports, and customs lines that stand between exhausted newlyweds and many exotic tropic locales. If the two of you have been torn between choosing a vacation filled with tents and stars or one with lavish hotels and big-name entertainment, Las Vegas could be the first, for compromise of your young married lives.

The new face of Las Vegas may be best summed up in the spectacular Bellagio resort, a $1.6-billion extravaganza that opened in 1998 that boasts an eight-acre lake, a lavish botanical garden overflowing with tulips and roses (Martha Stewart decorated its holiday tree one year), and a romantic Mediterranean courtyard. But the city's Broadway-style shows, upscale restaurants, spas and hotel suites are just one part of the package. Las Vegas' geographic proximity also makes it the perfect starting point for touring the Grand Canyon, Zion National Park, and other natural wonders of the West.

Las Vegas consistently tops the list of ten "best value" destinations for honeymooners and ranks among the top three (after Jamaica and Hawaii) as a "best destination" wedding location, according to surveys conducted by Modern Bride magazine.

P 110

The City Sights

For most of this decade, Las Vegas has been reinventing itself, pushing out the slickedback boozers slumped at the blackjack table and ushering in the kind of clientele that flocks to New York and other entertainment meccas across the country. New hotels, resorts, and public transportation have made it a better vacation destination, says Kevin Baggier, senior research analyst for the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority.

Unlike some traditional honeymoon destinations, Las Vegas welcomes a wide cross-section of visitors, from conventioneers to families to gamblers. As a result, advance planning is crucial to a good Nevada honeymoon. If you end up in town during a big convention, not only will you pay more for hotel rooms, but you'll have more trouble getting tickets to the shows and attractions you want to see, not to mention making your way onto the casino floor.

If you are thinking of skipping the Vegas shows because the risque history comes to mind, relax. Las Vegas has such a wide cross-section of entertainment, you could bring your grandma (but why would you want to do that on your honeymoon?). Recent choices have included Cirque du Soleil's 'O,' B.B. King, The Blue Man Group, a Hawaiian luau, Tony Bennett, and more comedy clubs and karaoke bars than you can count.

A Place to Call Your Own

Las Vegas consistently ranks among the top "value destinations," meaning your vacation dollar goes further here. The average room rate is $62, compared with the national average of about $75. Due to the high number of conventions and other business in the city, room rates change dramatically, usually day-to-day, sometimes even hour-by-hour. But you'll want to consider factors beyond price when selecting the best hotel for your honeymoon.

Where you stay depends on what you've decided you want to do (outside of the honeymoon suite, of course). The first decision to make is whether you want to be on or off "the Strip," the spectacularly lit line of hotels and casinos in the center city. If you envision doing a lot of gambling and show-watching, and you crave the glamour of the big hotels and their amenities (like pools, jacuzzis, room-service), try three of the best-known strip hotels:

- The Luxor Hotel (800) 288-1000
- MGM Grand (800) 929-1111
- The Mirage (800) 627-6667

Off the strip:

- The Marriott Courtyard (800) 321-2211
- The Residence Inn (800) 331-3131

Downtown, try:

- Holiday Inn Boardwalk Hotel Casino (800) 228-1175
- The Four Queens (800) 634-6045

Along with the Vegas stereotype of the teen brides and Elvis weddings, visitors often conjure visions of incredibly cheap food stacked high at hotel buffet tables. The legendary all-you-can-eat-for-$5 buffets do exist, but taking advantage of them is not very practical. Unless you're willing to eat at absurd hours of the day, like 4:30 for dinner, you must contend with long lines and elbow-to-elbow dining. It's best to venture out for food.

Touring

The biggest surprise about Las Vegas is the full selection of diversions that don't involve showgirls or nickel slots. Professional hockey games, college football games, pool halls, magic shows, tennis courts and pools also keep guests busy. If you and your honey have a taste for kitsch, the Las Vegas Mini Gran Prix Family Fun Center offers Go-Karts, super stock cars, plus an arcade (888-259-7223). Or take in the Liberace Museum, which displays Liberace's miniature piano collection (702-798-5595). For a dollop of high culture, try the Las Vegas Art Museum (702-360-8000).

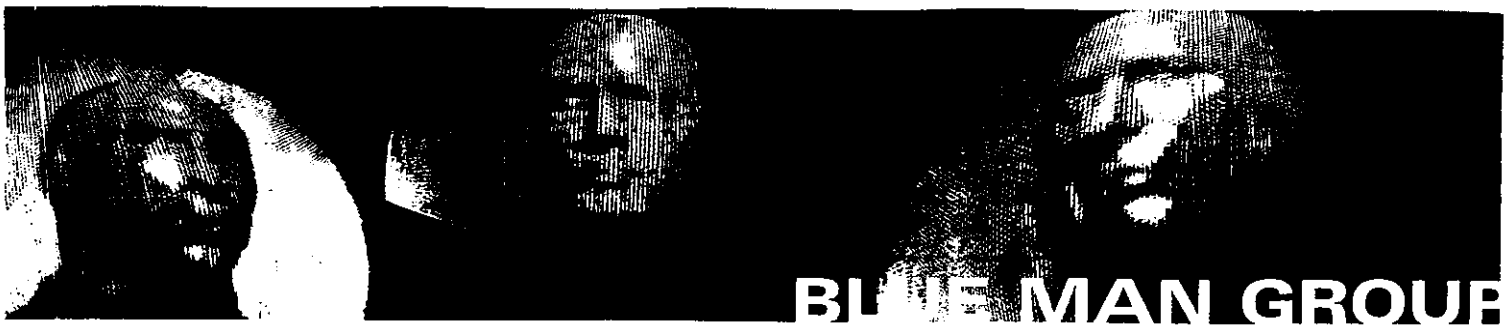
Outside of the city, Las Vegas becomes a gateway to some of the West's most beautiful resources: the Grand Canyon, Hoover Dam, Bryce Canyon, Zion National Park and Lake Mead. Lesser known are:

- Pahranagat National Wildlife Refuge, a 5,000-plus acre oasis (702) 646-3401
- Bonnie Springs/Old Nevada, an old western mining town (702) 382-1212

To see the sights, try:

- By air – Helicopter trips from Las Vegas Airlines (702) 647-3056 and Sierra Nevada Airways (702) 736-6770
- On water – Waterborne Black Canyon River Raft Tours on the Colorado River (800) 696-RAFT or Lake Mead Cruises (702) 293-6180
- On horseback – Mount Charleston Riding Stables (702) 872-7009 or Pioneer Territory Wagon Tours (702) 727-8332

Even if you're not a gambler, you might want to try the tables once. If ever you have a chance to get lucky, it's on your honeymoon.



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PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

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Deals abound in Sin City

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By Ed Bark
The Dallas Morning News

Las Vegas doesn't have to be "Lost Wages," too. Here are 10 worthwhile pursuits that are free of charge or very penny-wise:

1. Outdoor "Buccaneer Bay" battle at Treasure Island hotel. Arrive a half-hour early to secure a prime vantage point on the bridge bisecting the two life-size ships (free).

2. M&M and Coca-Cola stores. Located side by side next to the MGM Grand. Only downside: no free samples. You're free to browse, though.

3. Elvis-A-Rama, Liberace and Casino Legends museums. With easily obtained coupons, this trifecta will cost a couple just $27.90. You'll also receive a pair of cute, collectible Elvis teddy bears.

4. Fremont Street Experience. Face-lifted downtown is brightened by state-of-the-art overhead light shows (free).

5. New Venetian hotel's canal-lined, gondola-friendly interior is both soothing and breathtaking (free).

6. Bellagio hotel's outdoor fountain show. Better by night than by day (free).

7. Blue Man Group photo op. Show up in the Luxor hotel's theater lobby right after one of the one-hour, 20-minute shows to have a cool picture taken with one of them (free).

8. Plastic casino coin cups collection. Take one home with you for each casino visited. First though, play one of the slot machines at least once (25 cents or less per cup).

9. Three-quarter-pound "mega-dog" at the Westward Ho. Hey, it's Vegas. Go ahead and have one if you dare (99 cents).

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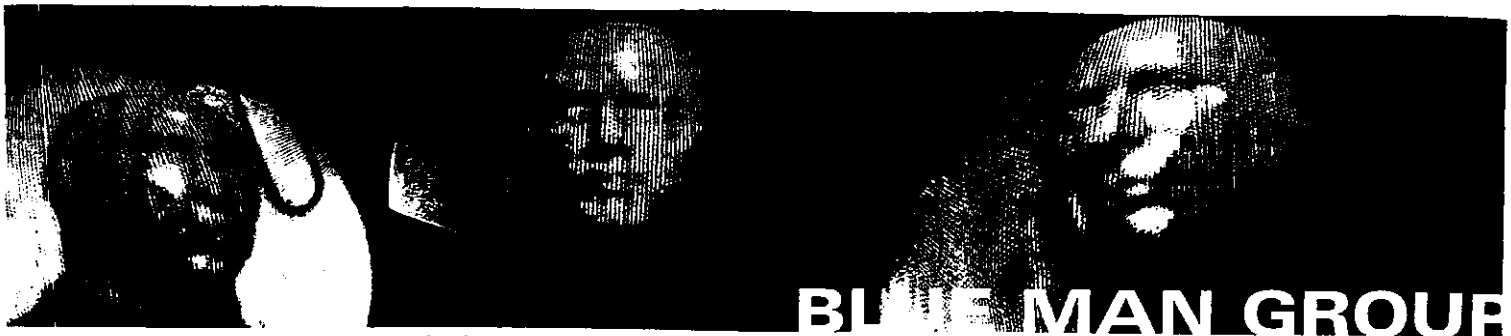

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Travels by Carol

Las Vegas – *Want Some Entertainment*

(c) 3755

Las Vegas has developed an unprecedented collection of entertainment, dining options and retail choices. From Siegfried & Roy and Cirque de Soleil, to award-winning cuisine from Wolfgang Puck and Emeril Lagasse, not to mention ultra-shopping venues like Gucci and Versace.

The Venetian Resort Hotel & Casino, a 3,036-suite resort is one of the city's finest upscale properties, bringing a new emphasis on luxury to this desert resort city over the past two years. From the furnishings and detailed refinements of the 700 square foot suites (the largest standard hotel rooms in the world), to the ultra-exclusive, 65,000 square foot Canyon Ranch Spa Club, and the 15 restaurants comprising the finest and probably largest collection of four and five-star owner-operated restaurants in the industry. It's all topped off by some 500,000 square feet of high-end retail stores positioned under a perpetually sunny, man-made sky along the resort's 1,200-foot-long Grand Canal, which looks as if it was plucked from 16th century Venice.

The New York New York Hotel & Casino brings the "Big Apple" out west with its fine dining and entertainment. The international hit Michael Flatley's Lord of the Dance, performs at the 1,000-seat Broadway Theater on Tuesday through Sunday.

The seventh ESPN Zone, the sports-themed dining and entertainment complex recently opened its doors in the hotel. The center will have everything that a sports enthusiast could want. Guests of the Studio Grill, the dining component of the ESPN Zone, feast on classic American fare in an electric sports atmosphere, while the Screening Room offers customers the chance to take in an event with multi-game viewing on giant screens. The Sports Arena challenges fans with more than 10,000 square feet of interactive and competitive attractions featuring several games developed exclusively for ESPN Zone.

Daredevils can try their luck on the hotel's roller coaster, the Manhattan Express. With heights of 203 feet, drops of 144 feet and speeds up to 67 mph, riders experience the force of negative G's, like a barrel roll in a fighter jet.

Carol A. Ebbitt
Travel Consultant

At the Bellagio, the Cirque de Soleil has created a show beyond circus and beyond theater with O. This magical aquatic event features a cast of 81 international artists performing in, on and above a 1.5 million gallon pool of water. The water theme continues at the Fountains of Bellagio, the most ambitious water features ever conceived in Las Vegas. More than a thousand fountains perform a choreographed symphony to music. Spanning more than 1,000 feet and soaring as high as 240 feet in the air, these are definitely Vegas must-sees.

Those who shop at the Bellagio will find some of the finest designers, like Giorgio Armani, to choose from. The Lobby and Conservatory Shops have designer gifts and cosmetics, including collections from Oggetti, Steven Lagos, Judith Leiber, Etro and Barry Kieselstein-Cord. The Pool Promenade Shops have the best swim and designer apparel and men's fashions, shoes and accessories from Italy and America.

The Aladdin Resort & Casino aims to take guests off the Strip and into a world of wonder and mystery. They can catch a major concert tour or top recording artist in the completely renovated, 7,000-seat Theater for the Performing Arts or an exotic production in Aladdin's 1,200-seat theater. Guests can also take in a performance at the intimate Blue Note Jazz Club.

The Aladdin offers the most shopping options of any Las Vegas Strip resort: In addition to several stores inside the hotel itself, Aladdin guests also have access to Desert Passage, which features more than 130 shops in a desert adventure setting as visitors follow ancient trade routes from the coast of Spain across Northern Africa onto the Arabian Sea.

Every 90 minutes each evening at the Treasure Island Hotel & Casino, cannon and musket fire are exchanged in a dramatic pyrotechnic battle between the pirate ship Hispaniola and the British frigate H.M.S. Britannia in the middle of Buccaneer Bay. If this theatrical experience is not enough to keep you entertained, then don't miss Cirque de Soleil's Mystere. The international cast of 72 acrobats, gymnasts, dancers, singers, musicians and clowns from 15 countries is performance art without boundaries.

Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino has assembled a renowned team of [illegible] actors, singers, dancers and [illegible] to form Storm, a combination live concert event, Broadway theater experience and Las Vegas dance spectacular. The 12,000-seat Mandalay Bay Events Center hosts huge events from championship boxing to concerts. The House of Blues is an intimate venue to catch top-name music acts. The Shark Reef attraction holds almost two million gallons of seawater and is home to almost 100 different species of animals, including sharks, fish, reptiles, jellyfish and rays. It takes visitors through an ancient temple that has been claimed by the sea and a sunken galleon ship where sharks lurk.

At Caesars Palace, the casino is not the only place where you will find live action. At the La Piazza Lounge live bands play top 40 tunes every night and at the Forum and Terrazza Lounges you'll find jazz quartets and trios swing the night away. Skilled pianist entertain guests at the Galleria Bar and Café Lago, while top bands play dance music at Cleopatra's Barge Nightclub. The barge is replica of the huge ship that once sailed the Nile in ancient Egypt. Caesars Magical Empire presents grand-scale illusions, mystery and fine dining amidst surroundings reminiscent of Caesar's ancient world.

Shopping at Caesars will unveil treasures in two distinctive shopping areas, The Forum Shops at Caesars and The Appian Way. The Forum Shops has more than 100 merchants, including high-profile names like Gucci, Bernini, Versace and Guess, and eateries like Spago and The Palm. The Appian Way harbors some of the finest boutiques and salons of the world, set in corridors of imported marble and classic statues like Michelangelo's David.

The Luxor Hotel & Casino features groundbreaking entertainment including the Blue Man Group, known for its award-winning, multi-sensory productions that combine theater, music, art, science and vaudeville, which take place in the Luxor Theater. The Pharoah's Pavilion host's attraction, games, a museum and shows. The Luxor's nightclub is a global music experience that has been rated as one of the top nightclubs in the world by GQ Magazine.

Guests shopping at Luxor will be transported to an ancient Egyptian bazaar at the Giza Galleria. Here they will find everything from finely crafted authentic Egyptian vases to fine clothing, children's gifts, bath and body products and much more.

A vacation to Las Ve[illegible] entertaining. For more [illegible] us at T[illegible]

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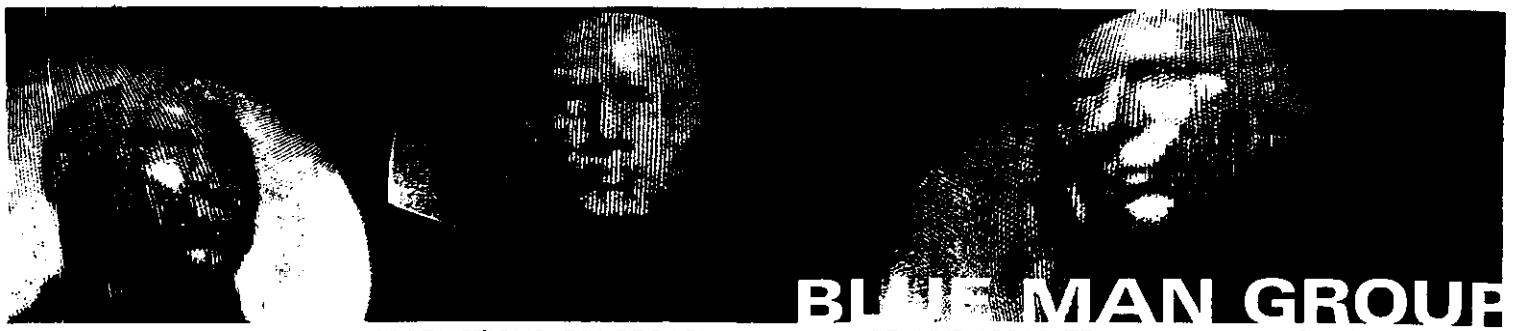

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From thrilling roller coasters and white tigers to wax museums and gondola rides, Las Vegas has attractions for all ages and interests. Pictured here is the Stratosphere's High Roller, the world's highest roller coaster.

Las Vegas News Bureau Photo

Casino owners learned in the '50s that big-name entertainment draws big crowds. The philosophy is still paying off today. Some star attractions during NACE are Wayne Newton at the Stardust Resort and Casino (800/634-6757), the Commodores at the Las Vegas Hilton (800/732-7117), and Roy Ayers at the Fiesta Casino Hotel (800/731-7333).

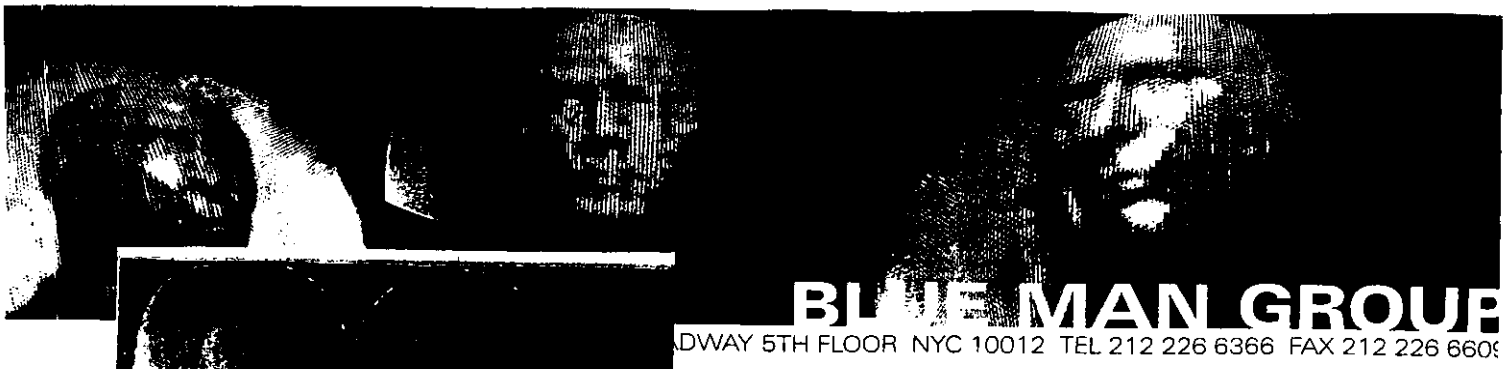
There is also an extensive list of specialty shows that play throughout the week. These include the Blue Man Group, made famous by their commercials for Intel, at the Luxor Hotel and Casino (800/288-1000); two different shows by Cirque Du Soleil: Mystere at Treasure Island at the Mirage (800/944-7444), and "O" at Bellagio (888/987-6667); and the obligatory Siegfried and Roy, also at the Mirage. Get a full listing of entertainment options at www.vegasfreedom.com, the official Web site of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitior's Authority.

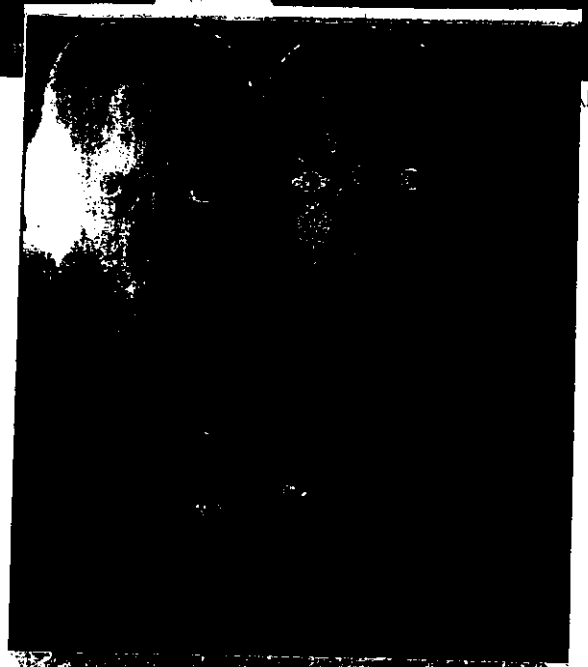
Please call the individual hotel for prices and showtimes.

Back to Nature

Explore the desert in an ATV, take in unexpected waterfalls and bubbling hot springs on a scenic rafting tour, hit the trail on horseback or SCUBA dive in Lake Mead. There's plenty to do in the area that doesn't include gambling. For a good selection of tours, go to www.smartpages.com/cityguides/nv/vegas/tours.jhtml.

On your own, drive to Red Rock Canyon, only 20 minutes from downtown, to view red cliffs rising from the desert floor and lush springs providing an oasis of life in the desert. You can also see Valley of Fire State Park, where scenic landscapes of canyons and rock formations, petroglyphs and the remains of ancient Native American civilization await you. Of course, Lake Mead is a perfect destination for boating, swimming, fishing and watching the wildlife.





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Blue Man Group fans can have their photos taken for free with one of the band members in the Luxor hotel's theater lobby.

Fun in Las Vegas doesn't have to cost

ENTERTAINMENT: There are plenty of things to take in that are free.

BY ED BARK
DALLAS MORNING NEWS

Las Vegas doesn't have to be "Lost Wages," too. Here are 10 worthwhile pursuits that are free of charge or very penny-wise:

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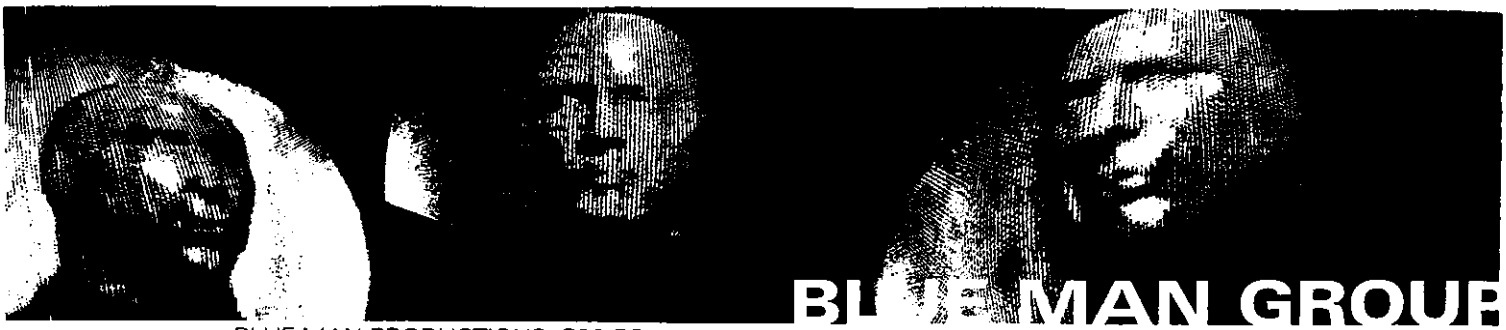

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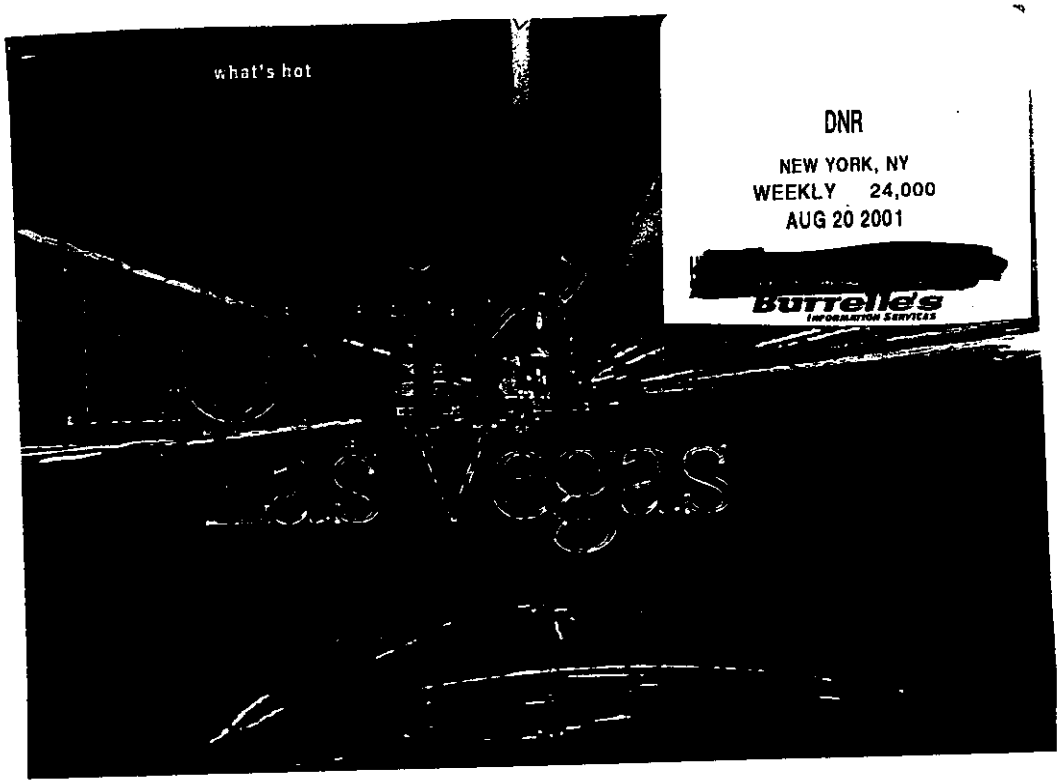

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INFORMATION SERVICES

Where to go and what to do before, during and after MAGIC 3155

By HOPE WINSBOROUGH

Poor Atlantic City. It must be hard to live in the iconic shadow of the one and only Las Vegas. When it comes to distilling all that's wonderful and weird about the U.S. of A., Vegas is an ultra-sensory tribute to everything from glitz to camp, class to tack.

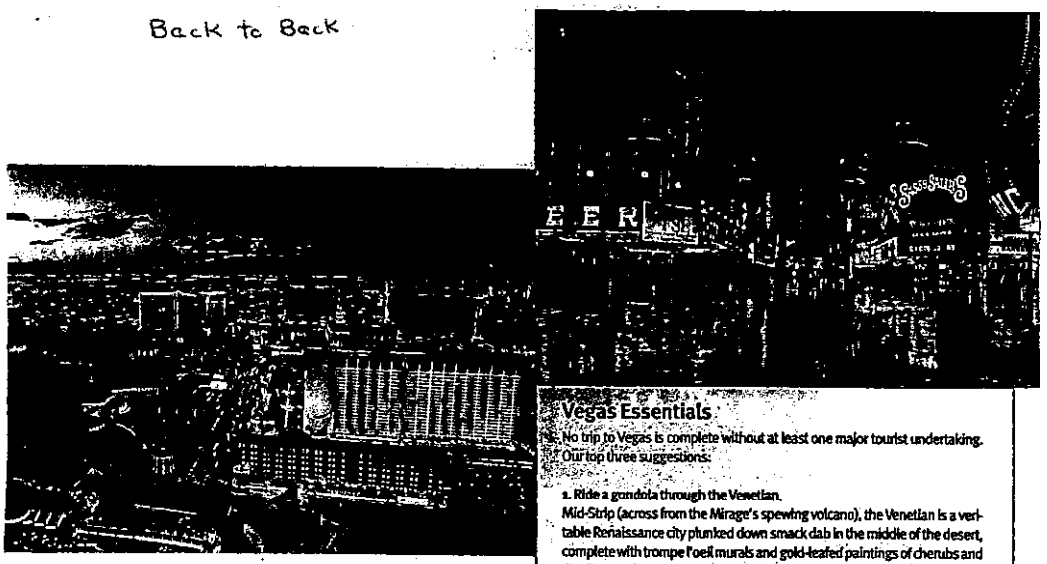
And that's true now more than ever. In addition to 24-hour gaming and all-you-can-eat shrimp buffets, these days Vegas offers hip boutiques, fine art, top-notch restaurants and world-class recreation. When the Bellagio swung open its $1.6 billion doors in 1998, the Strip dazzled anew — thanks to hotel impresario Steve Wynn's clever combo of chefs, shops and shows. Several high-stakes players then jumped into the ring, and over the past few years a host of changes, additions and revamps mean there's a whole lot more of Las Vegas to love.

Open 24/7

No longer the land of has-beens rehashing "Feelings," Vegas stages regularly score top-name headliners and shows. For maximum value in terms of time and money, check out:

CIRQUE DU SOLIEL'S "MYSTERE" (at Treasure Island, 702-796-9999) and "O" (Bellagio, 702-693-7111). Mystere concentrates on a ballet of contortionists' feats (to a fantastic live score), while O features a waterborne stage, hovering mirrors and flying pirate ships. (Note: Tickets are sold out for O Aug. 26–30, but Mystere tix are still available; buy them online at Showvegas.com). "BLUE MAN GROUP" (Luxor, 702-262-4400) offers a spectacular and inventive theatrical experience featuring characters decked in blue full face paint (beware — audience members are recruited to perform at random). "THE RAT PACK IS BACK" (Sahara, 702-737-2515) is a nostalgic recreation of the Congo Room circa 1961. This throwback show features a mock "Dino" hoisting a martini glass big enough to house a bluegill. "Frank" croons to beat the band while finding time to crack, "The towels in my room are so big and fluffy I could barely shut my suitcase." (*Partridge Family* fans note: One of the show's producers is David Cassidy.) And for pure Vegas kitsch there's always WAYNE NEWTON at the Stardust (702-732-6325). Nifty show souvenirs — such as a Wayne Newton mouse pad — can be picked up afterward.

Back to Back



In the new Las Vegas, "chefs are the new showgirls that lubricate the fun," says *Los Angeles* magazine. From Wolfgang Puck's **Postrio** (702-796-1110) and Emeril Legasse's **Delmonico Steakhouse** (702-414-3737), both at The Venetian, and Charlie Palmer's **Aureole** (702-632-7401) at Mandalay Bay (which features a $1.2 million glass-enclosed wine tower "is an attraction in itself," says one reviewer), four- and five-star restaurants are major Vegas attractions. At **Prime** (702-693-7223) at The Bellagio, New York chef Jean-George Vongerichten whips up an idealized version of a Las Vegas steakhouse with colossal martini glasses and a view of the hotel's lagoon. At **Napa** (702-247-7962), chef Jean-Louis Palladin's exquisite restaurant located one floor above the slot machines of the Rio hotel, the wine cellar houses some of the world's most coveted wines. **The Picasso** (702-693-7223) also at the Bellagio is often called the city's most beautiful restaurant, with multi-course tasting menus paired dish by dish with wines by the glass.

One of the best Vegas restaurants that's not on the strip or in a hotel is **Rosemary's** (West Sahara Promenade; 702-869-2251). Chef Michael Jordan (whose mentor was Emeril) pretty much tops every celebrity cook in town with an array of tasty dishes that are big on flavor with lots of ingredients. **Lotus of Siam** (702-735-3033) is considered by many — including *Gourmet* magazine — to be the best Thai restaurant in America, even. There's a big buffet out in front, but it's best to bypass that and order off the menu. At **Big Mama's Rib Shack** (2230 W. Bonanza Rd., 702- 597-1616), you get good, honest soul food — Southern cooking gleaned from recipes developed by Big Mama herself, the late Emma Sue McWhorter. Her son Dargin runs the place now, but there's a picture of the great lady over the counter. Try the barbecue sandwich on a bun.

There are two **Original House of Pancakes** establishments, part of a smallish chain that offers some of the best (and biggest) breakfast fare for mere pennies (okay, $3). The best sandwich shop in town, according to locals, is **Capriotti's** (on East Sunset, 702-898-4904). There's a limited seating area, and most of this business is take-out. Try the Bobbie, which one fan describes as "Thanksgiving on a roll."

If you're into desserts, save room. **Coyote Café** (702-891-7349) at the MGM Grand Hotel serves the "undisputed king of desserts" — the Venezuelan chocolate spoonbread, a dense, moist chocolate square drizzled with vanilla Anglaise and topped with creamy vanilla ice cream. Prime's Valrhona chocolate cake "may be the richest possible foodstuff on earth." True decadence, however, can also be found at Krispy Kreme in the Rainbow Springs Wal-Mart Center. It's the chain's largest establishment at over 3,000 square feet.

Sweating It Out

If you'd rather get physical than fiscal, try kicking back at **Aqua Sulis**, a state-of-the-art spa tucked into the Regent Las Vegas on the northwest side of town. The menu of body treatments includes plenty of New-Agey options like a cavitosonic meditation chamber (complete with negative-ion air and sound-vibration meditation headphones), color therapy treatment (with before and after shots of your aura; $95), and the take-no-prisoners Russian Massage ($125). 877-869-8777; Regentlasvegas.com.

For a mere $25, you can visit Canyon Ranch — the **Canyon Ranch SpaClub**, at The Venetian, that is. This Vegas incarnation of the Arizona-based spa has 50 treatment rooms and offers nearly 100 spa services. But it's more than a day spa; there's an amazing fitness facility with spinning classes, boxercise, yoga and a climbing wall. *Condé Nast Traveler* recently named it one of the top 10 resort spas in the U.S., and it's a great way to get rid of post-show stress.

If what you need, however, is an escape from fluorescent lighting, cruise 20 minutes west to **Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area**. It's a great place to bike, hike, rock climb or just cruise the one-way, 13-mile scenic drive through the canyons. For more information (including maps), call 702-363-1921. Or schedule some tee time. **The Desert Inn** (the Rat Pack's old digs and former lair of Howard Hughes) boasts the only golf course on the Strip, but Las Vegas has 26 public or semi-private courses and 11 private courses. It's best to

Vegas Essentials

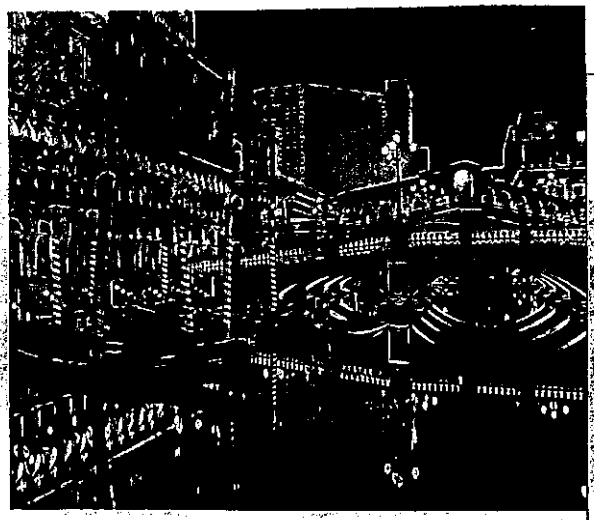
No trip to Vegas is complete without at least one major tourist undertaking. Our top three suggestions:

1. Ride a gondola through the Venetian.
Mid-Strip (across from the Mirage's spewing volcano), the Venetian is a veritable Renaissance city plunked down smack dab in the middle of the desert, complete with trompe l'oeil murals and gold-leafed paintings of cherubs and the like. For $10 per person, you get a ride complete with singing gondolier along a shallow waterway through the Grand Canal Shoppes. (Note: Nonwaxy actress Sophia Loren christened the first gondola when the suite-only super-hotel opened on the former Sands Hotel site.)

2. Visit the Liberace Museum.
Hands down, the best-spent $6.95 you'll lose in Vegas. Located in three small buildings a quick cab or limousine ride away from the Strip, the museum is a virtual lovefest for the rhinestone-studded, fur-draped flamboyant pianist — including a pair of sequined hot pants, 15 antique pianos and "The World's Largest Rhinestone." 1775 E. Tropicana; open Mon.-Sat., 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sundays; 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.; 702-798-5595.

3. Fuel the economy.
The shopping avenues of luxe hotel-malls like Via Bellagio (Giorgio Armani, Gucci, Prada, Chanel, Hermès), Venetian's Grand Canal Shoppes (Donna Karan, Jimmy Choo, Movado) and the Forum Shops (Virgin, Versace, Fendi) at Caesar's Palace are the new Rodeo Drives of the desert. But don't let all the high-falutin' retailers distract you from true merchandise meccas like M&Ms World. Located right on the strip (at the Showcase Mall, next door to the Coke store and close to MGM Grand), this candy HQ offers four floors of licensed products — including custom color M&Ms and M&M-shaped CD holders.

Photos by Chuck Szymanski/International Stock



call Las Vegas Preferred Tee-Times in advance (888-368-7833) to schedule. Those who can't play Shadow Creek (that means you) should try **PRIMM VALLEY** (between $95–120 per round; 679-5510), where Tom Fazio designed the Lakes Course with the same general layout. Or try **LAS VEGAS GOLF CLUB**, still a bargain after a recent price hike ($16.75 per round; 702-646-3003).

Night Crawling

It's a crime to hole up in your room in Vegas, what with all the diversions clamoring for your attention. Here, a few theme-crawls for your consideration:

THE HOLLYWOOD-IN-VEGAS CRAWL

Back in the 1940s when Benjamin "Bugsy" Siegel opened the Fabulous Flamingo (where every staff member — even the janitors — wore tuxedos) in the middle of nowhere, it kick-started the phenomenon that is modern Vegas. Today the Flamingo Hilton (on the Strip) stands on the site of its predecessor, and its casino is a great place to warm up for the evening ahead. Next stop, The Riviera, one of the casinos featured in the 1960 thriller *Ocean's Eleven*.

In the wake of the Strip's recent glitzification, the Riviera has seen better days, but inside the Le Bistro Lounge you'll get an earful of classic Vegas tunes and one-liners. While the Riviera Hotel & Casino played the role of the fictional Tangiers casino in 1995's *Casino*, the Peppermill Inn (also on the Strip) played itself. This restaurant's dim Fireside Lounge is so kitsch it's cool (reportedly De Niro spent plenty of off-screen time in the joint during filming). Another cinematic classic, *Showgirls* (1995), was researched and filmed at Cheetahs, a rather genial topless bar that seems to have a hard time being even remotely campy. Although 1996's *Swingers* features a scene where the main characters (played by Vince Vaughn and Jon Favreau) walk into the Stardust, all the indoor scenes were shot in the (pretty seedy) Fremont. Built in 1956, the Fremont's block-long neon sign lights up downtown's Fremont Street Experience, a five-block section of the street covered with a high canopy that projects computer-programmed light-and-sound shows. Also downtown, longtime Vegas female impersonator Kenny Kerr presents his "Women of Hollywood" drag show, which pays tribute to Barbra, Cher and Marilyn.

THE LAST RESORT CRAWL

There's no lack of nightlife at the Strip's happening hot spots. Rum Jungle at Mandalay Bay, a swanky new nightlife destination, has walls of fire and water and a fiber-optic illuminated glass bar (stocked with 100 exotic types of rum). You also got your go-go dancers shaking in the middle of the catwalk and your soulful Latino and Caribbean dance music (don't plan on arriving before 11 p.m.). Very young, very loud. (702-632-7408).

Sure it's pretentious (a bouncer gives you the once-over before you're "in"), but the Voodoo Lounge atop the Rio hotel not only offers a great view of the strip, but its cocktails are showy as well. Try the Dambala it's Absolut Citron, Midori, Chambord and fruit juices. Ugh. (702-252-7800).

At Baby's Nightclub at the Hard Rock Hotel, the crowd is reputedly "so hip it hurts." The decor has been called a "sexy nod to James Bond's living room," decked out with a life-size aquarium and disco room, and house DJ Punkler sho-nuff keeps it funky, spinning deep lounge, house and jungle (702-693-5000). Although it's a officially a restaurant, Drai's (Barbary Coast) is a big after-hours spot for locals and Hollywood types alike, maybe due to its LA roots. The candle-lit lounge screams snooty jungle lair (think overstuffed leopard skin couches), but it's a great place to sip a strong martini and people watch; Drew Barrymore reportedly hangs here when she's in town (702-737-7111).

THE GROOVE-TILL-YOU-PUKE CRAWL

Vegas isn't just for the silver-haired lounge lizard anymore. It's for the pink-, blue- and green-haired, too. International superstars like the Crystal Method hail from Vegas, remember, and likewise progressive dance sounds from techno to retro are all the rave ... we mean, rage. Start off with This is Hardcore at Champagnes Cafe (South Maryland Parkway). Around 11-ish on Monday nights, an eclectic host of club crawlers and coeds flock to Champagnes to get into the vibe spun by Bargain DJ Collective. It's a jeans-and-T-shirt crowd, but the music is more than average: everything from hip-hop and mixes of old funky R&B to funk, Brit-pop (Blur, Stone Roses) and vintage rock (Jimi Hendrix, the Rolling Stones, Joan Jett, David Bowie, Talking Heads).

If it's Tuesday, it must be time for Eden at Studio 54 in the MGM Grand. Stroll the lion-printed carpet into this homage to its NYC-circa-'80s namesake (with framed photos of regulars like Liza, Andy and Truman on the wall) and you can't help but wonder if any patrons would have made it past the velvet rope back in the days.

Cap off your crawl like a true high-roller by doing some Speed. The ride departs from the NASCAR cafe at the Sahara. Electromagnetic force accelerates the coaster to top speeds almost instantly, slingshoting the coaster over its first hill and into a steep drop that takes passengers 25 feet below the surface (through an underground tunnel) and then propels them back above ground, through a loop. Voted the number-one roller coaster in Las Vegas, Speed reaches maximum velocity around 70 mph. (Sun.-Thurs., 11 a.m.-midnight; Fri.-Sat., 11 a.m.-1 a.m.) Or head over to Stratosphere Tower, where the Big Shot rockets you up the tower's spindle under a force of 4Gs, followed by a seat-float before free-falling back to your launch pad. Nice view, too, if a bit blurry. ■

Hot Vegas Nights: Aug. 26–30

It's the last week of the last month of summer. In case you need a reason to celebrate. For starters, music-wise, why not follow the "when in Rome" adage and check out the Boston Grill and Bar (call it "The Boston" if you don't want to be pegged a tourist) in north Vegas (702-368-0750), a top showcase for local bands such as PIMP, Joynt Chiefs and Epstein's Mother. Below is a listing of scheduled Vegas concerts as of presstime. (NOTE: If you plan to stick around until Sept. 1 and you have any connections at all, you might try scoring Madonna tix.)

Aug. 24–26
Gordon Lightfoot
Showroom, Orleans
702-365-7075

Aug. 24–26
Loverboy
Showroom, Suncoast
702-636-7111

Aug. 26
The Monkees Reunion Tour
Mandalay Beach (at Mandalay Bay)
877-632-7400

Aug. 30 and 31
Bobby "Blue" Bland
Blue Note Las Vegas, Las Vegas Boulevard
Two shows nightly, 8 p.m. and 10:30 p.m.
702-862-8307

Aug. 31
Destiny's Child, Eve, Dream and 3LW
Mandalay Bay Events Center
877-632-7400

Aug. 31
Air Supply
The Showroom, Orleans
702-365-7075

Aug. 31
Willie Nelson
Texas Station
702-631-1000

Aug. 31
Dwight Yoakum
Las Vegas Hilton
702-732-5755

Check out House of Blues at HOB.com for more concerts/dates.

Las Vegas: The Legendary Land of Entertainment in the Desert

Las Vegas marquees are the envy of the world. The entertainment scene sizzles with an unequaled choice of spectacular production shows, comedy, magic, illusion, superstars and Broadway.

Las Vegas shows booked for indefinite runs include:

•"EFX "at the MGM Grand Hotel & Casino is a spectacular adventure highlighted by music, dance, visual effects and pyrotechnics starring Rick Springfield.

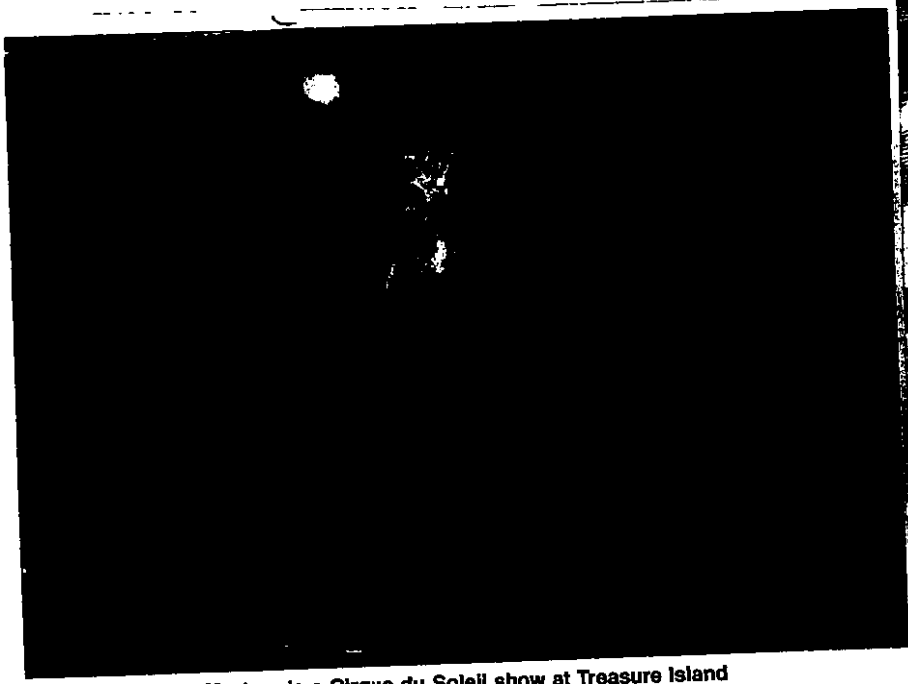
•Siegfried and Roy fight a mechanical dragon several stories high on the stage of The Mirage Hotel-Casino, where live elephants, roaring lions and exotic white tigers disappear with a wave of the hand.

•Cirque du Soleil, the new-wave French-Canadian circus, uses 70 international acrobats, clowns, comedians, actors, singers, musicians and trapeze artists to excite audiences with its production of "Mystere " at Treasure Island. Cirque du Soleil performers at the Bellagio resort enthrall show-goers in a water-based show called "O," one of the most elaborate and intricate productions in the history of entertainment.

•"Blue Man Group," the off-Broadway, Grammy-nominated sensation, delights audiences with a multimedia performance of music and comedy at Luxor Las Vegas.

• "De La Guarda," the highly acclaimed spectacle, combines elements

Please turn to page B14



Mystere is a Cirque du Soleil show at Treasure Island

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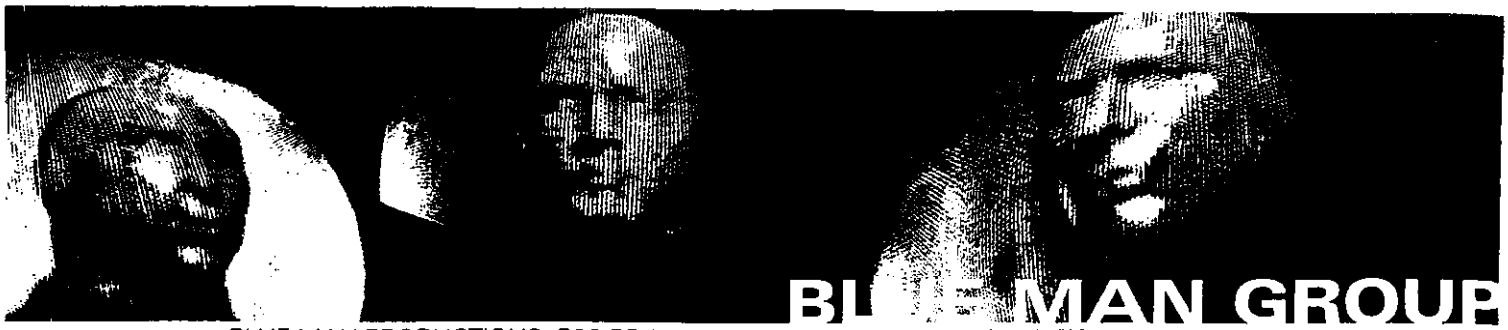

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It's show time in Vegas

By ED BARK 3755
The Dallas Morning News

LAS VEGAS — Ready, set, go - to 15 stage shows in 4½ days plus an all-you-can-endure buffet of extra-added enticements.

But we start deep in the heart of the Casino Legends Hall of Fame Gambling Museum, where the old Sin City" is resting comfortably.

Housed within the venerable Tropicana Hotel, it's aglow with yesteryear's chips, dice, posters, pictures and cans of showgirl-approved Aqua Net hair spray. There's even a suitably giant-size oil painting of Phil M. Robin, "Father of Nevada Gaming."

All hail to him. But listen to what Frank Sinatra is saying in the museum's continuously running clip from his 1960 "Rat Pack" classic, "Ocean's Seven."

"Mission: To liberate millions of dollars," Frank tells the boys. Targets: the casino cash registers of the Sands, Sahara, Riviera, Desert Inn and Flamingo.

After hearing this, a visitor can pivot left to confront the present: a "Vegas Lasted in Las Vegas" video exhibit. Bam-boom, there goes the Sands, leveled Nov. 26, 1996, and replaced three years later by the splendorous, canal-lined Venetian Hotel and Casino.

The Desert Inn still stands, but was closed last summer and recently was mouthfaged as the mock "Red Dragon Casino" for the purposes of Jackie Chan's "Rush Hour II" film.

Danny Ocean's three other big hits" are oldies but not necessarily goodies in a remarkably reconfigured Las Vegas Strip that has seen 11 superstar showplaces opened in just the past dozen years.

So viva lost Vegas, even if many of its facts are still hanging on, including Wayne Newton. The well-worn downward Ho's intestine-testing 99-cent "3/4-pound mega-dog" assuredly remains on the endangered species list, although. Meanwhile, Starbucks coffee shops are multiplying faster than gambling debts. And the new big-theme hotels tend to be theme parks unto themselves, with free, family-friendly outdoor attractions such as Treasure Island's "Buccaneer Bay" battleship battle and Bellagio's multicolored dancing fountains.

Be assured, however, that the big showrooms still go on, from the poor cousin of town's Sahara and Riviera hotels all the way to the spanking new Mandalay Bay at the opposite end of the shimmering Las Vegas Boulevard, aka "The Strip."

Any trip down the Strip will convince motorists, passengers and pedestrians that Vegas is one big redevelopment district.

As is evident during our maiden 3½-mile voyage from the Stardust to Luxor, where Blue Man Group has been packing them in for the past year. Impatient drivers — guilty as charged — soon will learn to master alternative routes or go hoarse from primal screaming.

Oh, well, Blue Man Group is sensational and well worth any frustrations en route. It's not every show where audiences are given streams of white crepe paper and encouraged to "decorate yourselves" before the entertainment begins.

The Luxor's state-of-the-art theater typifies how times are changing in Vegas. All ticket-holders have assigned seats, meaning there's no need to slip a maitre d' a 10-spot for a prime vantage point.

It's essentially the same pristine environment at Treasure Island (Cirque du Soleil's eye-popping "Mystere"), Mandalay Bay (the not-so-perfect "Storm"), The Mirage (pricey impressionist Danny Gans) and ace magician Lance Burton's namesake theater within the Monte Carlo hotel. These are all swank, newly constructed temples without old-school amenities such as cheap jumbo shrimp cocktails drowning in thick, blood-red cocktail sauce. Patrons instead are enticed to dine finely at eateries such as Andre's French Restaurant, Aureole or Wolfgang Puck's Postrio.

But you can still swallow the Stardust's orange-glazed, oven-roasted chicken special, nicely presented with dollops of dressing and gravy, for a measly $3.95 with a coupon available in What's On and other easily obtained magazines. This is the Vegas of yore, still kicking and punching for your entertainment dollar while trying to keep up appearances. Economical buffets are still in the cards, too. So load up. Buses always welcome.

The dividing line between upper crust and Wonder Bread is Spring Mountain Road. Bisecting Las Vegas Boulevard, it separates the tony Treasure Island hotel from a collection of grizzled vets, beginning with the New Frontier, running through the Stardust and Circus Circus and ending with the Sahara and its fun "Rat Pack Is Back" attraction in the Congo Room.

From the Sahara, it's just a five-minute drive to a refurbished downtown, where a two-block main drag is covered with a canopy of 2 million lights brightening nights with brief but impressive shows ranging from "Heartbeat of a Planet" to "Dancing in the Street."

The only continuous "name" entertainment downtown is at the still-slick Golden Nugget, home of David Brenner's "real life" comedy act.

Tempting but fabled meanie Don Rickles beckons from the Stardust's Wayne Newton Theater, where Wayne is returning from vacation on the following night.

Both troupers draw packed houses. Drinks are served to showgoers shoehorned around small, candlelighted tables. Full orchestras are tuxedo-clad, as, of course, are the stars of the shows. For better or worse, this is your grandpop's dressed-and-pressed Vegas. But with that territory comes performances that perhaps belong in mothballs.

Rickles comes off startlingly crude and demonstrably dated. His ethnic humor is without an ounce of nuance.

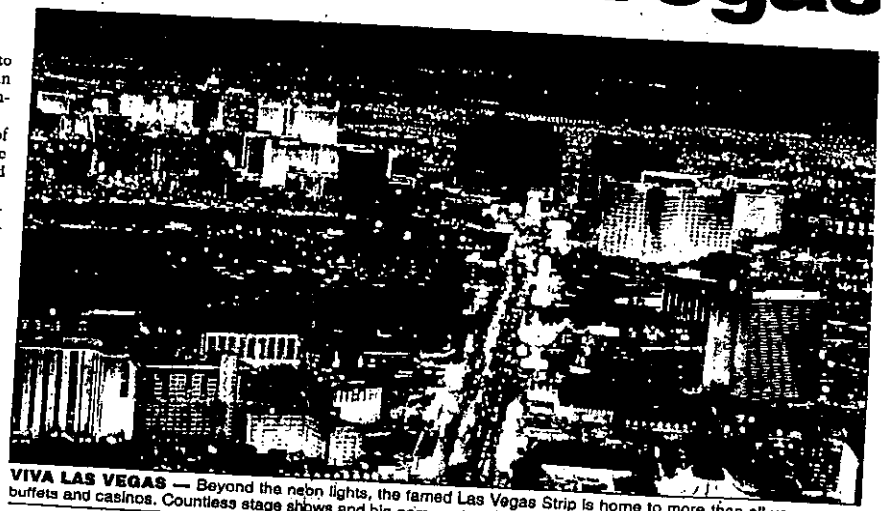
Newton, 59, is none-too-subtly introduced as "Mr. Excitement. The Midnight Idol. The Legend!" It's soon apparent, however, that a lifetime of full-blown performances has left his voice rawer than a sushi bar. He tries to compensate by bantering constantly and kissing multitudes of grateful female audience members. Accompanying vocalists camouflage some of his inability to hit the high notes he once took to the bank.

The spirit is willing, and his showmanship is still in full bloom. It's barely enough to make the Wayne Newton experience worth a $49.95 ticket, one drink included.

Meanwhile, on the topless-showgirl front, well, Vegas still has them. Not in abundance and certainly not at the posh palaces. But the "Cats" of Vegas, the Riviera's long-running "Splash" show, is still a go-go with gah-gah. And Harrah's slinky late-night attraction, "Skintight," offers a handful of male patrons the opportunity to go onstage for an up-close-and-personal viewing experience.

In elemental ways, Vegas can still be the same old story. Gamble, lose, get slump-shouldered, go home.

Enjoy whatever rides you take, even if they include slow-motioning down the Strip while signal lights keep landing on red. Vegas can be good for [illegible]



VIVA LAS VEGAS — Beyond the neon lights, the famed Las Vegas Strip is home to more than all-you-can-eat buffets and casinos. Countless stage shows and big-name entertainers make Vegas a top vacation destination.

If you go ...

RESOURCES: Call the Las Vegas Convention and Visitor Authority at (702) 892-7575 or visit www.vegasfreedom.com.

Biweekly editions of What's On magazine, free in most hotels, list attractions and have discount coupons. The magazine's Web site, www.ilovevegas.com, also is useful, as is www.vegas.com.

The respected Las Vegas Advisor newsletter provides monthly updates on deals in the city. Membership (12 issues plus benefits) is $50 per year. Contact: (702) 252-0655; www.lasvegasadvisor.com.

"The Unofficial Guide to Las Vegas 2001" (Hungry Minds, $16.99) contains a section that explains the major games in Las Vegas and offers no-nonsense advice.

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An Amazing Discovery

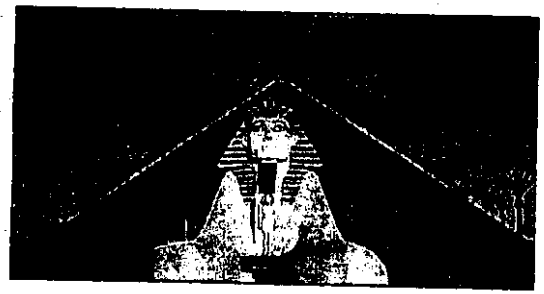
By Jonathan Carter 3755

"Can you see anything?" my assistant asked as we flew into of Las Vegas.

"Yes, wonderful things," I replied.

Like a beacon rising 350 feet into the night sky was the powerful beam of Luxor Resort & Casino.

We were greeted by an awe-inspiring, life-sized replica of the Great Temple of Ramses II, rising into the expansive atrium. It was more than we could have imagined and was just a glimpse of what we were to experience during our stay at Luxor.



After checking in, the concierge suggested we check out Luxor's music and dance production, Midnight Fantasy. This performance is comprised of a series of vignettes that lead through the erotic world of dreams-come-true

Pumped up by the energy from Midnight Fantasy, we decided to keep up the pulse-pounding pace on the dance floor at "RA – The Global Music Experience," Recently voted "one of the top 3 nightclubs in the world," by GQ magazine.

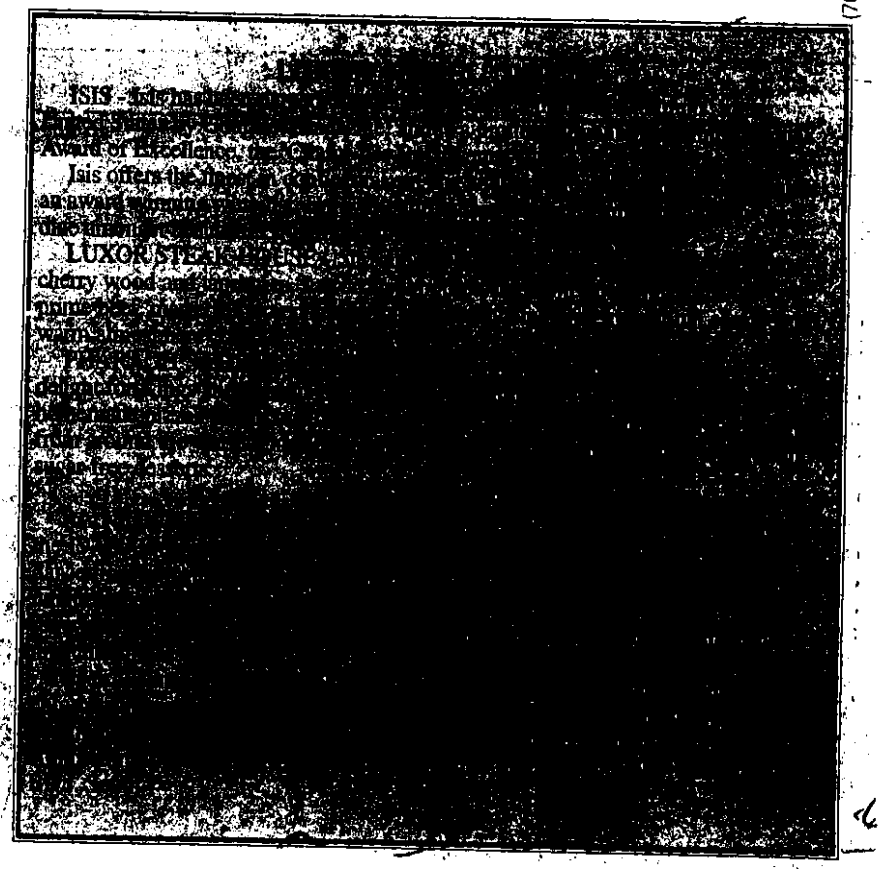
Exhausted from a high-energy evening, we were carried up to our chambers in an inclinator along the angled interior of the pyramid to one of the resort's newly remodeled guestrooms.

The next morning I explored the indulgences of the Oasis Spa. The staff treated me like royalty. The facility featured a full range of amenities including aromatic steam baths and showers, hot and warm whirlpools and a dry sauna.

Refreshed from our morning experiences, we regrouped in the early afternoon to consider which of Luxor's seven restaurants we would dine for lunch and dinner. We were overwhelmed by the extensive and varied choices available to us.

Following a superb dinner, we proceeded to the Luxor Theater for an out-of-this-world performance. The "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" plays two shows nightly to sold-out audiences, and it was easy to see why.

That afternoon, as we flew back home, we reminisced about our stay at Luxor and all of the treasures we discovered within the pyramid, looking forward to our return to the jewel in the Las Vegas desert.



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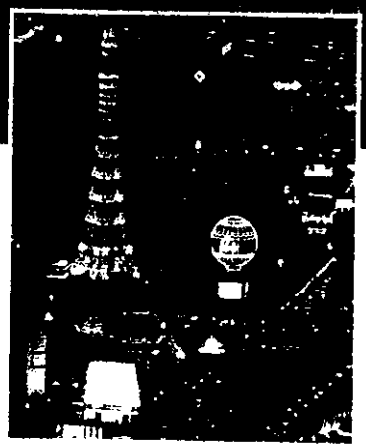
Be free to discover the world in LAS VEGAS



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Walk down the street—all around you are lights, glitter and glamour. Look up. Ah, there's the Eiffel Tower—you're in Paris! But wait. Across the road is a beautiful lake lined with Italian cypresses. The waters begin to rise up and dance—to music! Shake your head. You must be seeing things. Turn around and there's one of the open-air markets along the ancient spice route. Is it Tangier? Perhaps Bombay or Marrakech? Turn again and you're standing in front of one of the great pyramids of Egypt with the sphinx staring right at you. Now, hold on a minute. It's 2001 and time travel is still only a fantasy. So where in the world are you? Then it hits. There's only one place on earth where you'd have the freedom to experience all this in one place—you're in Las Vegas!

Las Vegas has been dazzling visitors for 60 years. But never more than now. The recent infusion of new hotels, shopping, entertainment and restaurants—combined with the amazing array of world-famous resorts already here—creates an extraordinary playground found nowhere else on earth.

P

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show staged 90 feet above a pedestrian-only street. And just when you think you've been entertained by everything on earth—you can head for outer space, "the final frontier," at the Las Vegas Hilton's Star Trek: The Experience—a dream come true for Trekkies and just plain fun for everyone else.

A Global Taste Test

Let's not forget nearly everyone's favorite pastime—dining. Throughout Las Vegas visitors can sample cuisine from all corners of the culinary world. New Orleans' own Commander's Palace, winner of the prestigious James Beard Foundation Outstanding Restaurant Award, can be found at the Aladdin; another taste of the Big Easy comes at Emeril Lagasse's New Orleans Fish House at the MGM Grand. Red Square at Mandalay Bay presents perestroika-inspired Russian specialties, including 100 kinds of vodka!

Celebrity chefs from around the world have convened in Las Vegas to present their cutting-edge cuisines. Rio has Jean-Louis Palladin's masterful French cuisine at Napa; progressive American cooking is the specialty of Chef Charlie Palmer's Aureole at Mandalay Bay. The world of fine art—and food—comes into play at Bellagio's Picasso, featuring a fusion cuisine from the south of France and Spain and original Picasso artwork throughout the restaurant. At Mirage's Renoir the original works of art from French impressionist Pierre-Auguste Renoir are complemented by the innovative, contemporary French cuisine. These artistic establishments are especially stellar this year—both Picasso and Renoir have been honored as 2001 recipients of Mobil's prestigious Five-Star rating.

In Las Vegas, "fast" food soars to new heights in the bargain-priced but very impressive buffets all over town. Mandalay Bay's Bay Side Buffet has sweeping views of the resort's 11-acre tropical lagoon; the Spice Market Buffet at the Aladdin features traditional dishes from exotic points around the globe. Le Village Buffet at Paris presents cuisine from five French provinces.

An International Pastime

The world stocks Las Vegas' shops with its very finest wares. From toys at FAO Schwarz to baubles at Tiffany & Co., there's something to suit every taste. Each shopping experience seems more fantastic than the next. At Caesars Palace, a Roman-motif shopping center is graced by high arched ceilings painted and lighted to create a perfect sky at dusk. The sky's the limit, too, at the shops at the Venetian, where all cobbled walkways lead to the Grand Canal—complete with gondolas and gondoliers singing songs of love. Along Via Bellagio you'll find the perfect Prada pants, Chanel coat and Hermès handbag. International aplomb is evident at Las Vegas' latest addition to the shopping scene—Desert Passage at the new

Tour the World Without Leaving the World

Begin your walk around the world at any one of the city's incredible hotels. Always wanted to experience Europe? Stroll under the Arc de Triomphe and ride to the top of the Eiffel Tower at Paris, or discover a northern Italian lake at Bellagio. Visit Venice's Bridge of Sighs and ride a gondola through the canals at the all-suite Venetian, tour the wonders of ancient Rome at Caesars Palace or sample the lifestyle of the Riviera at Monte Carlo. If the days of Egyptian pharaohs intrigue you, head to Luxor, where a virtual manifestation of legendary archaeologist Howard Carter will guide you through a replica of Tutankhamen's Tomb. The myths of Arabia are brought to life at the new Aladdin; the grand past of tropical Asia can be found at Mandalay Bay. South America more to your liking? Then head to Rio, where it's Carnivale every day. To stay a bit closer to home, sample the style of classic Las Vegas at the Flamingo Hilton, with its lush gardens and art deco decor. There are no borders to the elegance found at the Four Seasons, a quiet oasis of personal and attentive service and winner of the AAA Five Diamond Award.

Expect the Unexpected

You're free to choose from the worldly array of entertainment Las Vegas has to offer. Impressionist Danny Gans at the Mirage introduces you to hundreds of personalities from all over the world. The power illusionists Siegfried & Roy's whirlwind of magic is astounding.

Cirque du Soleil's "Mystere" is a world filled with brilliant colors and strange creatures on a journey to the edge of human potential, while "O" is Cirque du Soleil's venture into aquatic theater and pays tribute to theater through the ages. In residence at Luxor is one of the world's most unique theatrical productions—the critically acclaimed Blue Man Group. On this wild journey, three enigmatic bald and blue characters take the audience through a multi-sensory experience that combines theater, percussive music, art, science and vaudeville into a form of entertainment that is like nothing else.

Stage spectaculars are commonplace in Las Vegas—don't miss MGM Grand's "EFX Alive" starring Rick Springfield and the "Tournament of Kings" at Excalibur. Bally's "Jubilee" is a variety show in the grand Las Vegas tradition of song, dance, comedy, magic and most of all—showgirls.

There's always the international star power of classic crooners, hip contemporary artists, and the distinctive styles of legendary jazz artists like Gato Barbieri, Cleo Laine and John Dankworth. When it's the lights of Las Vegas you crave, there's no brighter place than the Fremont Street Experience—a sensational four-block-long light and sound

Las Vegas High Roller Fantasy Sweepstakes

Dine in world-class restaurants, shop in the finest boutiques, relax in luxurious accommodations and sit in the best seats in the house at the hottest show in town.

This fantasy could really come true if you're the winner of the "Las Vegas High Roller Fantasy Sweepstakes!" sponsored by the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority.

WHAT DOES MY FANTASY INCLUDE?
One three-day, two-night "High Roller Fantasy!" prize package will be given away each week for eight consecutive weeks beginning July 3, 2001. Each package includes luxurious accommodations for two, a personal concierge, limousine service, VIP show tickets, shopping gift certificates, fine dining options, spa packages and more.

HOW CAN I BE A HIGH ROLLER?
To qualify for the promotion, contestants must be 21 years old and book travel during the months of May, June and July 2001 for trips to Las Vegas to be taken during July or August 2001. To enter, travelers must mail itineraries, including hotel and airline information (if flying), to: "Las Vegas High Roller Fantasy Sweepstakes!" P.O. Box 6044, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413.

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY TO WIN. To qualify without purchase, contestants may mail a 3" x 5" postcard with name, address, phone number, e-mail address (if applicable) and age to "Las Vegas High Roller Fantasy Sweepstakes!", P.O. Box 6044, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413. Entries are limited to one entry per person and must be postmarked by July 20, 2001 and received by July 27, 2001.

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The execution and fulfillment of the Las Vegas High Roller Fantasy Sweepstakes is the sole responsibility of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority.

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Aladdin. Browse through 130 shops as you walk along the ancient spice route and stop in markets you might find in Marrakech, Bombay or Tangier. And though you might be stopping into Hugo Boss, the Museum Company and Tommy Bahama—you'll feel as if you've sailed across the seas to get there. Perhaps it was aboard the 155-foot-long freighter docked at the North African waterfront you've just walked past!

NO PASSPORT NECESSARY

More of Las Vegas' wonderful worlds are found outside. After a night of dining and entertainment, a day at one of the city's international panoply of pools is in order. For a taste of the tropics, stay at the Tropicana or Mandalay Bay. If it's sophistication you crave, head for Bellagio or the Venetian. For world travelers who want the cachet of cool, the place to be seen is at the Hard Rock Hotel's sexy sand-bottom pool. Many of the hotel spas even offer poolside services, where your body can be gently kneaded and polished to perfection.

A WORLD OF WONDERS

One visit to Las Vegas and you'll be won over—this city is truly a wonder of the modern world. It's a place that fires the imagination, exceeds expectations and fulfills dreams. It's a place that sets you free to discover the unexpected. What else in the world could you want?

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This is a Custom Marketing Group program produced in conjunction with the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority.

Viva Las Vegas!

Our lively neighbors to the south are only an eight-hour drive away through Joshua trees and red sandstone. For those who prefer flying, the trip is less than an hour. While in Vegas, check out the irreverent and highly acclaimed Blue Man Group—Live at Luxor, or purchase a luxury condo with exclusive views that only the Las Vegas Strip can offer.

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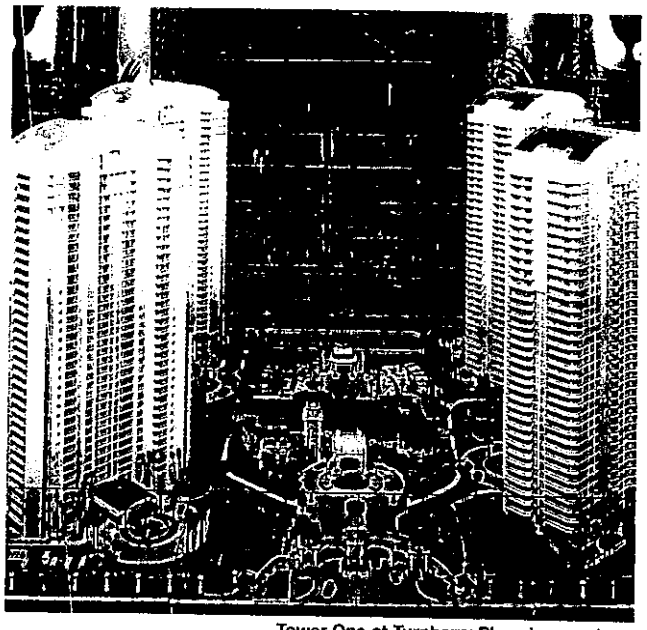


Tower One at Turnberry Place is complete.

Turnberry Place

Imagine the lights, luxurious dining, glitz, and glamour of Las Vegas' infamous Strip. Now imagine seeing the entire extravaganza from the privacy of your patio. Turnberry Place, a $600 million luxury high-rise community, located a block off the Strip, offers the best of both worlds: all the excitement of a metropolitan city with the privacy and protection of a gated community.

They say the kitchen is the heart of the home, but Turnberry's heart has a pampering beat. The Stirling Club is destined to become the most luxurious private club in Las Vegas, if not the country. The Stirling Club offers residents of Turnberry Place casual and formal dining, a 30,000-square-foot European-style spa with wet and dry massage salons, a beauty salon, Jacuzzis, saunas and steam baths, a Pilates studio, hyperbolic chamber, plunge pools, and fitness center. Members can boogey in the lounge that boasts a discotheque, caviar bar, and champagne room. Afterward, guests can swim in the pool with private cabanas or shop at a gourmet food mart. The world class amenities include personalized monogrammed linens at the dinner table. The Stirling Club hosts cooking demonstrations, art exhibits, wine tastings, and fashion shows.

When complete, Turnberry Place will consist of four forty-story residential towers and the private 70,000-square-foot Stirling Club. Priced from $450,000 to more than $4.5 million, Turnberry Place offers lavish two-, three-, and four-bedroom residences ranging in size from 1,550 to more than 8,000 square feet.

Turnberry Place is located at 2777 Paradise Road. For more information, call (702) 732-9797, (800) 616-2120, or take a virtual tour at www.turnberry-place.com.

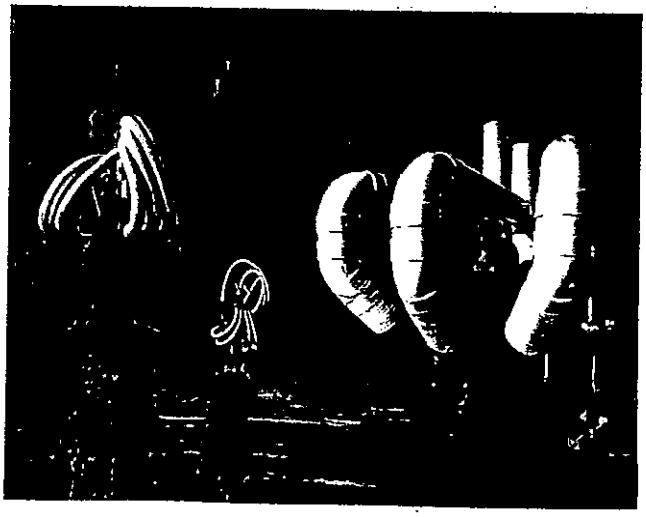
Blue Man Group—Live at Luxor

Think hip, think weird, think exhilarating and intrepid, think manic, confrontational, and hysterically funny. The show is receiving rave reviews from Las Vegas and national press and playing to standing ovations in the state-of-the-art 1,200-seat Luxor Theater in Las Vegas. If you think you've seen the Strip, think again, this is as fresh as it gets.

Chris Wink, creator and original performer of the Blue Man Group, says, "Vegas is a place that reinvents itself every six years. We like the idea of being part of the next reinvention." The Live at Luxor show is a hybrid of new material as well as 'signature' pieces from current productions in New York, Boston, and Chicago. The enormous stage at Luxor Theater allows the Blue Man Group to expand the scope of their work that now includes a three-story-high Drum Wall, an arsenal of new musical instruments, and a gigantic "live wire" desert landscape complete with roadside diner and tumbleweed.

The show takes the audience through a multi-sensory experience that combines theater, art, science, and vaudeville into an incomparable form of entertainment that defies categorization. Don't be surprised if props include Twinkies, boxes of Cap'n Crunch as percussion instruments, plumbing pipes, and paint. Their debut CD *Audio* was nominated for a Grammy Award and is self-described as "tribal rock with kind of a spaghetti western theme." "Drums pulsate with the aid of a sixteen-piece band in fluorescent devil gear," writes Vicki Goldberg of *The New York Times*. Erin Auerbach of the *Las Vegas Weekly* raves about the show, "Spectacular in every sense of the word . . . intelligent, engaging, and tremendous fun . . . the most unique experience on the Strip." The Blue Man Group creates a couple of paintings for each show using paint flying off drums and onto canvas that immediately sell in the store after the performance.

For show times and ticket information, call the Luxor Theater at (702) 262-4400 or visit the Web site at www.bluemangroup.com. The Luxor Theater is located at 3900 Las Vegas Boulevard South, Las Vegas, Nevada 89119.



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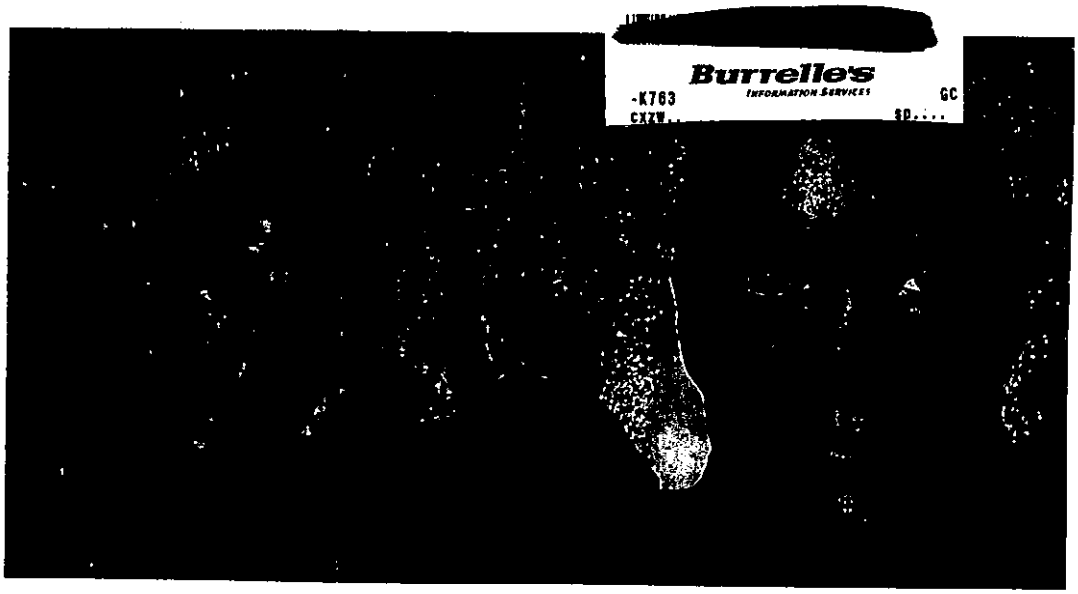
HOOKED ON THE OUTDOORS
BOZEMAN, MT
BI-MONTHLY
JUN-JUL 2001

Burrelle's INFORMATION SERVICES

BLUE MAN GROUP



BY MARK MILLER

The moments just before opening were tense. The people in the first six rows were handed rain ponchos (why, no one seemed to know). I was sitting in the seventh row. The lights went out. All was quiet. A few seconds later, powerful drumming broke the silence. The stage lights came on and there, on stage, were three bald men, their hands and faces covered in shiny blue latex: the Blue Man Group.

The Blue Men stood on a platform, behind a pair of enormous drums, 10 feet tall by two feet wide. One Man pounded; the others looked about curiously. Paint was poured into a drum, creating thunderous explosions of glowing-yellow liquid lofting high into the lights above. The Blue Men looked back and forth at one another, seemingly bewildered by the spectacle. Then more paint was poured in, and red and purple and green shot into the air. The beat and tempo increased. One Blue Man poured in a whole bottle of paint into another drum. The drummer glanced at the perpetrator, then down at the paint-filled drum and then at the third Blue Man. He put on a welding mask. The others followed suit. The paint detonated into the air with deep thuds from the muffled drum, and the 1,200 people in the sold out Luxor Theater in downtown Las Vegas went nuts.

Then, an electronic sign high above the stage flashed a message: "If you could see sound, it would look something like this." In an effort to create this sight of sound, the Blue Man Group has developed an odd and exhilarating form of performance art. Their shows have no obvious plot or direction. At any point, the Blue Man Group might be engaged in catching and stuffing thirty marshmallows into each other's mouths; dragging an audience member onstage for a Twinkie picnic; or harassing latecomers by posting their pictures on a large screen with a sign flashing "Late Arrival." Their stage props include Jell-O molds, Capt'n Crunch cereal, paint pellets, giant flash cards, slingshots and strange instruments of their own creation, such as Tubuloms, Sword Poles and Drumbones. The result is a show, both intelligent and outrageous, that breaks down the walls between audience and performer.

Blue Man began in the late 80s, when founders Phil Stanton, Chris Wink and Matt Goodman performed on the streets of lower Manhattan, engaging much curiosity and, eventually, fans. They opened a show in a Greenwich Village theater, and a dozen years later the performances are still selling out. Ten appearances on the Tonight Show made them famous, but it has been the series of Intel commercials that has made them icons of unconventional creativity.

"IF YOU COULD SEE SOUND, IT WOULD LOOK SOMETHING LIKE THIS."

Today, there are 33 Blue Men and one Blue Woman, performing simultaneously in New York, Boston, Chicago and Las Vegas. They have to train at least six months before they can perform on stage. None of the performers ever speak (instead they allow their music to talk for them). Nowhere is this music more intense than at the group's newest venue in Las Vegas. Here they have created grandeur in a city that is hip to it. The extensive stage allows for an 11-piece backup band, complete with glowing skeleton suits; the surround-sound resonates intense vibrations through the theater; the Giant Drum Wall absolutely thumps and the neon Electric Desert set is truly psychedelic.

The Blue Men, in their effort to create unique music, first create unique instruments. The Drumbone, for example, is made entirely of PVC piping. All three Blue Men play it at once, two sliding the pipes back and forth and one drumming on them. The Backpack Tubulom, which makes an intense, vibrating sound, similar to a Digeridu, is perhaps the world's only instrument that launches rockets as it is played.

The invention of new instruments and sounds has led to the Blue Man Group's first CD, the Grammy-nominated "Audio." Giant drums combined with PVC instruments from the show create percussion sounds with acute rhythms and beats, intense and fierce at times, and tribal in a Blue Man sort of way.

But for optimal clarity, the Blue Man Group must be seen and heard together. That night in Vegas, completely dry in the seventh row, their music vibrated through me. The performance was intellectual, hilarious and unique. As the lights came back on, I thought, sound is quite a sight to behold.

Visit www.blueman.com for more information.

PHOTO BY JAMES PORTO/COURTESY BLUE MAN GROUP

BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 6609

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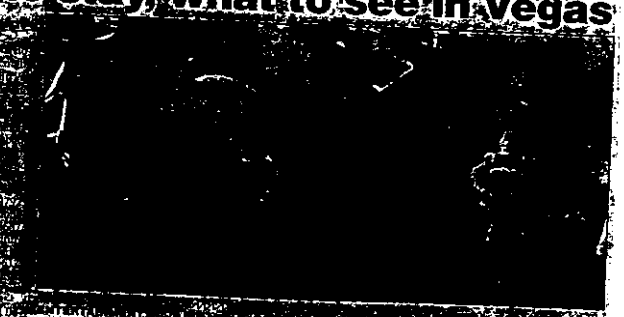
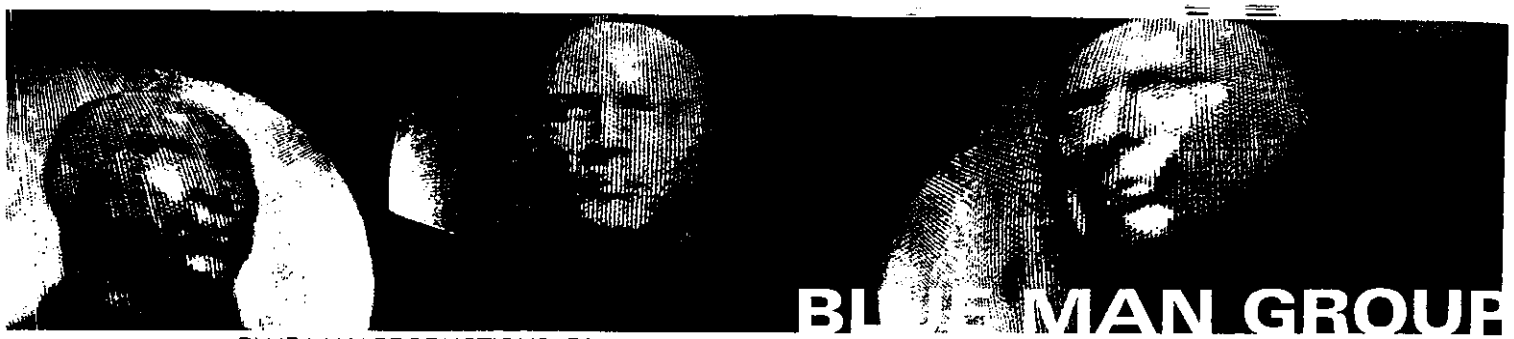
Where to stay, what to see in Vegas





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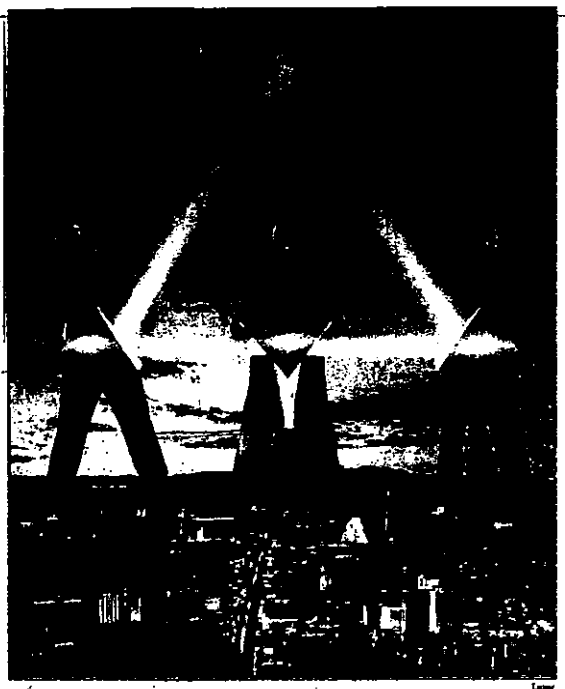


Blue Man Group plays music on invented instruments and draws audience members into its act.

# of Las Vegas

Marathon of 15 shows spotlights changes in neon city

Stories by ED BARK
Staff Writer

LAS VEGAS — Ready, set, go — to 15 stage shows in 4½ days plus an all-you-can-endure buffet of extra-added enticements.

But we start deep in the heart of the Casino Legends Hall of Fame Gambling Museum, where the old "Sin City" is resting comfortably.

Housed within the venerable Tropicana Hotel, it's aglow with yesteryear's chips, dice, costumes, posters, pictures and cans of showgirl-approved Aqua Net hairspray. There's even a suitably giant-size oil painting of Phil M. Tobin, "Father of Nevada Gaming."

All hail to him. But listen to what Frank Sinatra is saying in the museum's continuously running clip from his 1960 "Rat Pack" classic, *Ocean's Eleven*.

Ed Bark rates the shows. 7G

"Mission: To liberate millions of dollars," Frank tells the boys. Targets: the casino cash registers of the Sands, Sahara, Riviera, Desert Inn and Flamingo.

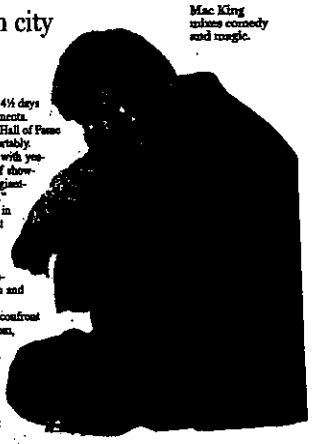
How quaint. After hearing this, a visitor can pivot left to confront the present: a "Blasted in Las Vegas" video exhibit. Ka-boom, there goes the Sands, leveled Nov. 26, 1996, and replaced three years later by the splendorous, canal-lined Venetian Hotel and Casino.

The Desert Inn still stands, but was closed last summer and lately is camouflaged as the mock "Red Dragon Casino" for the purposes of Jackie Chan's *Rush Hour II* film.

Danny Ocean's three other big "hits" are oldies but not

See SHOWS Page 7G

Mac King mixes comedy and magic.



Harrah's

Shows remain heart of Las Vegas

Continued from Page 1C

accessorily goodies in a resolutely unconfigured Vegas Strip that has room 11 super-size showplaces opened in just the past dozen years. Ergo, a new *Ocean's Eleven* movie with George Clooney, Julia Roberts, Brad Pitt and Matt Damon knows enough to rob the scenery rich. Scheduled for a Christmas release, the film's heists will be aimed at three of the city's latter-day glamour posers: The Mirage (vintage 1989), Treasure Island (1993) and Bellagio (1998).

So viva lost Vegas, even if many artifacts are still hanging on, including Wayne Newton. The well-worn Westward Ho's intestine-testing 99-cent, "¼-pound mega-dog" naturally is on the endangered species list, though. Memorybilia, Starbucks coffee shops are multiplying faster than gambling debts. And the new big-cheese hotels tend to be theme parks as well, with free, family-friendly outdoor attractions such as Treasure Island's "Buccaneer Bay" battleship fight and Bellagio's multicolored dancing fountains.

Be warned, however, that the big stage shows still go on, from the poor side of town's Sahara and Riviera hotels all the way to the sparkling new Mandalay Bay at the opposite end of shimmering Las Vegas Boulevard, a.k.a. "The Strip."

On a mid-May visit to this head-rocking dizzyhead, yours truly packs in the aforementioned 15 shows plus three museums and four sports book bets. Add innumerable free attractions, a trip to refurbished downtown Vegas and even an irresistible jaunt to Terrible's Casino on Paradise Road, where the lunchtime buffet proved — edible. It's enough to make one scream, "Entertain me no more!" But that was then.

Any trip down the Strip will convince motorists, passengers and pedestrians that Vegas is one big rat-fight district. Prepare to be stopped in traffic for seeming eternities in a land of bumper-to-bumper gridlock and hotels mammoth enough to be lots farther away than they look.

This is evident during our mini-

Monte Carlo

Sleight-of-hand Illusionist Lance Burton interacts well with his audiences.

ca three-mile voyage from the Stardust to the Luxor, where Blue Man Group has been packing them in for the past year. Impatient drivers — guilty as charged — soon will learn to master alternative routes or go hoarse from primal screaming.

Parking is free, but most hotel parking lots are vast at best. Remember the *Seinfeld* episode where Jerry, George and Kramer spent the entire half-hour trying to find their car? That could be your fate unless you take specific notice on what ZIP code your auto is in. Then there's the long, winding road to and through the casino to the inevitably far-away showroom. Signs are posted, but it's easy to get cranked up and tempting to empty your pockets of any spare change. Are we having fun yet?

Oh, well, Blue Man Group is sensational and well worth any frustrations en route. It's not every show where audiences are given streams of white crepe paper and encouraged to "decorate yourselves" before the entertainment begins.

The Luxor's state-of-the-art theater typifies how times are changing in Vegas. All ticket-holders have assigned seats, meaning there's no need to slip a smiley d' a 10-spot for a prime vantage point. The nicely padded arena seats are tracked and equipped with drink holders, but you'll have to buy your beverages outside the theater. No

See STARS Page 8G

15 LAS VEGAS SHOWS RATED

Here's Ed Bark's validated look at 15 huge- and small-scale offers to entertain you in Las Vegas. His ratings are based on [illegible] and money spent. A rating of one chip would signify a complete bust; 10 hits the jackpot.

SHOW	HOTEL	TICKETS	COMMENT	RATING
Splendors of Las Vegas	Tropicana (702-738-2411)	Free	Affable trainer Joe Rothwell sings it with cockatoos, macaws, parrots and a condor. Passable 15-minute presentation is light as a feather, falling short of "The Ultimate Avian Experience!" Then again, the price is right.	5
Blue Man Group	Luxor (702-262-4400)	$59.50 and $69.50	Spectacularly staged and inventive, with the three equally blue silent patrons performing smashed hosts with marshmallows, white crepe paper and even Cap'n Crunch. Audience members are plucked at random; be ready to be out-found.	10
Gotham Up	Flamingo (702-733-3333)	$11.50 per couple with discount coupon	Forty-three years from its origins at Dallas' Adolphus Hotel, it's still slugging along as Vegas' "only topless showroom show." Burlesque of R-rated jokes, pantomimes and bared essentials is 90 percent concealment, sometimes funny and certainly cheap.	5
Danny Gans	The Mirage (702-796-9999)	$74.25 to $99	"Man of many voices" is the reigning hottest ticket in town. Yes, he's an impressive impressionist. But don't expect much more than a highly structured presentation with scant time for improvisation or audience interaction.	8
Don Rickles	Stardust (702-732-6325)	$49.95	Foiled "Merchant of Venom" just turned 75, meaning he's old enough to have insulted your grandmother — no doubt with the same jokes. "Mr. Warmth" is an acquired taste who's getting harder to swallow than peanut butter in the Mojave. You can see that one, Don. Ya hockey puck.	4
EFX Alive	MGM Grand (702-891-7777)	$55 and $75 ($40 ages 6-12)	Sometimes cranky, but occasionally quite marvelous, this long-running extravaganza stars former teen heartthrob Rick Springfield. Pluses include a 3-D segment, an "intergalactic Circus of Wonders" and the star's willingness to interact with the crowd.	7
The Ring in Concert	Nan Frazier (702-794-8241)	$17.95	Bare-bones daytime show featuring Elvis Presley impersonator Johnny Edwards on a dingy stage in a depressingly appointed "nightclub." Tip: Save eight bucks and visit the nearby, very cool Elvis-A-Rama museum instead. Treat ya very much.	3
Lance Burton: Master Magician	Monte Carlo (702-730-7160)	$54.95 and $58.95	Low-key Lance is still an intimate sleight-of-hand illusionist but has enough big production tricks to fill any gee-whiz expectations. Interacts well with audiences and always brings him onstage. Added attraction: comic juggler Michael Goodson.	8 ½
The Blue Man Comedy Magic Show	Harrah's (702-369-5111)	$74.95	Boat bargain-priced daytime show. Most's dull comic delivery and amount of eye-popping tricks are a perfect silhouette cleaner. Includes his usual ruse for hiccups and repeated use of Pig Newtons as stage props.	5 ½
Mystere	Treasure Island (702-796-9999)	$80	Cirque du Soleil makes Barnum & Bailey look like a flea circus. Phenomenal in every way. Known chops astounding with comedy, dazzle, camaraderie, lighting and acts that leave your jaw in a suspended state of "Wow." Worth every penny.	10
The Rat Pack Is Back	Sahara (702-737-2515)	$34.95	Frank, Dino, Sammy and even Joey hold forth in the Congo Room, circa Dec. 12, 1961. The drinking, smoking, joking, sexism and singing are as they were then. Ring-a-ding-ding!	9
Splendor	Harrah's (702-369-5111)	$39.95. Two-for-one tickets available with coupon.	Stylish, upbeat medley featuring former Playboy playmate Cynthia Brimhall and dancer Shannon O'Keefe. Several well-executed male dancers are also on display. Show is what it is, and as such isn't bad.	7 ½
Splash	Riviera (702-794-9433)	$42.40 and $51.50	The $360's newest-thing "slaps of the year," but not bitsy. Title no longer applies; a solid toe-tapping dirt has replaced the pool of H2O. Much is dated, but featured skaters are first-rate, and wacky jugglers and a contortionist are crowd-pleasers. Still, it seems a bit ready.	6 ½
Storm	Mandalay Bay (702-632-7580)	$55 and $65	Big-stage production strives to be a "force of nature" but is too forced. Built around "up-tempo" dance music, it rewards the senses. Some visuals dazzle, but Storm rarely rocks the house. It lends the tongue in sculpted locks, though. You could store the total body fat in a thimble.	6
Wayne Newton	Stardust (702-732-6325)	$49.95	He aims mightily to please, but Wayne's ravaged voice is barely a shadow of his incandescent zenith. Rises to the occasion on just one song, the low-key "I've Lost Everything I Could Cry." A grand entrance and even grander exit make no apologies for his diminished powers.	6 ½

Staff Graphic

Stars shine in Las Vegas

Continued from Page 70

smoking, please. Don't expect any booths or bistro, either.

It's essentially the same pristine environment at Treasure Island (Cirque du Soleil's eye-popping *Mystere*), Mandalay Bay (the not-so-perfect *Storm*), The Mirage (pricey impressionist Danny Gans) and ace magician Lance Burton's namesake theater within the Monte Carlo hotel. These are all swank, newly constructed temples without old-school amenities such as cheap jumbo shrimp cocktails drowning in thick, blood-red cocktail sauce. Patrons instead are enticed to dine finely at eateries such as Andre's French Restaurant, Aureole or Wolfgang Puck's Postrio.

But you can still swallow the Stardust's orange-glazed, oven-roasted chicken special, nicely presented with dollops of dressing and gravy, for a measly $3.95 with a coupon available in *What's On* and other easily obtained magazines. This is the Vegas of yore, still kicking and punching for your entertainment dollar while trying to keep up appearances. Economical buffets are still in the cards, too. So head up. Buses always welcome.

The dividing line between upper crust and Wonder Bread is Spring Mountain Road. Bisecting Las Vegas Boulevard, it separates the tony Treasure Island hotel from a collection of grizzled vets, beginning with the New Frontier, running through the Stardust and Circus Circus and ending with the Sahara and its fun "Rat Pack Is Back" attraction in the Congo Room. This is the throwback show where a smock "Dino" hoists a martini glass big enough to house a bluegill. And that "Frank" is really somethin', baby. He croons to beat the band while also finding time to crack, "The towels in my room are so big and fluffy I could barely shut my suitcase."

From the Sahara, it's just a five-minute drive to a refurbished downtown, where a two-block main drag is covered with a canopy of 2 million lights brightening nights with brief but impressive shows ranging from "Heartbeat of a Planet" to "Dancing in the Street."

The area is heavily patrolled by bicycle cops, making it safe for tourists to take a look at Vegas' poorest, unpretentious relatives. The only continuous "name" entertainment downtown is at the still sleek Golden Nugget, home of David Brenner's "real life" comedy act.

Tempting, but fabled mounts Don Rickles beckons from the Stardust's Wayne Newton Theater, where Wayne is returning from vacation on the following night. What a one-two punch.

Both troupers draw packed houses. Drinks are served to showgoers shoehorned around small, candlelighted tables. Full orchestras are tuxedo-clad, as, of course, are the stars of the shows. For better or worse, this is your grandpop's dressed-and-pressed Vegas. But with that territory comes performances that perhaps belong in mothballs.

Mr. Rickles comes off startlingly crude and demonstrably dated. His ethnic humor is without an ounce of nuance. A young Asian man essentially had to relight World War II before the comedian is finished with him. He ends the

See VARIETY Page 76

IF YOU GO

Resources

The Las Vegas Convention and Visitor Authority's Web site is www.vegasfreedom.com. Or call 702-892-7575.

Biweekly editions of *What's On* magazine, free in most hotels, list attractions and have discount coupons. The magazine's Web site, www.thevegas.com, also is useful, as is www.vegas.com.

The respected *Las Vegas Advisor* newsletter provides monthly updates on deals in the city. Membership (12 issues plus bonus) is $50 per year. Contact: 702-252-0655; www.lasvegasadvisor.com.

The Unofficial Guide to Las Vegas 2001 (Hungry Minds, $16.99) contains a section that explains the major games in Las Vegas and offers no-nonsense advice.

Summer, with temperatures usually in the 100s, generates bargain vacation packages. Check newspaper ads and online.

Getting around

It's best to rent a car if you're staying three days or more. Hotel parking is free, but some of the lots are the size of small towns.

Pressed Las Vegas Boulevard — "the Strip" — now stretches more than three miles, and it's often choked with traffic. Allow plenty of time, especially if you're en route to a nighttime show at a major hotel. In these cases, bypass Las Vegas Boulevard by taking Paradise Road, which runs parallel. Then turn onto the connecting street closest to the hotel you're heading for. *What's On* contains an easy-to-read map.

What to wear

You'll be walking a lot, so wear comfortable shoes. Shorts, sneakers and sunscreen are standard equipment in summer.

Variety is key to popularity of Vegas acts

Continued from Page 8G

show by singing "I Am Who I Am" after sappily praising all mothers as goddesses.

Mr. Newton, 59, is none-too-subtly introduced as "Mr. Excitement. The Midnight Idol. The Legend!" It's soon apparent, however, that a lifetime of full-blown performances has left his voice rawer than a sushi bar. He tries to compensate by bantering constantly and kissing multitudes of grateful female audience members. Accompanying vocalists camouflage some of his inability to hit the high notes he once took to the bank.

The spirit is willing, and his showmanship is still in full bloom. It's barely enough to make the Wayne Newton experience worth a $49.95 ticket, one drink included. On the way out, a "Wayne Collectables" [sic] stand includes a mouse pad with his likeness. You don't want to go there.

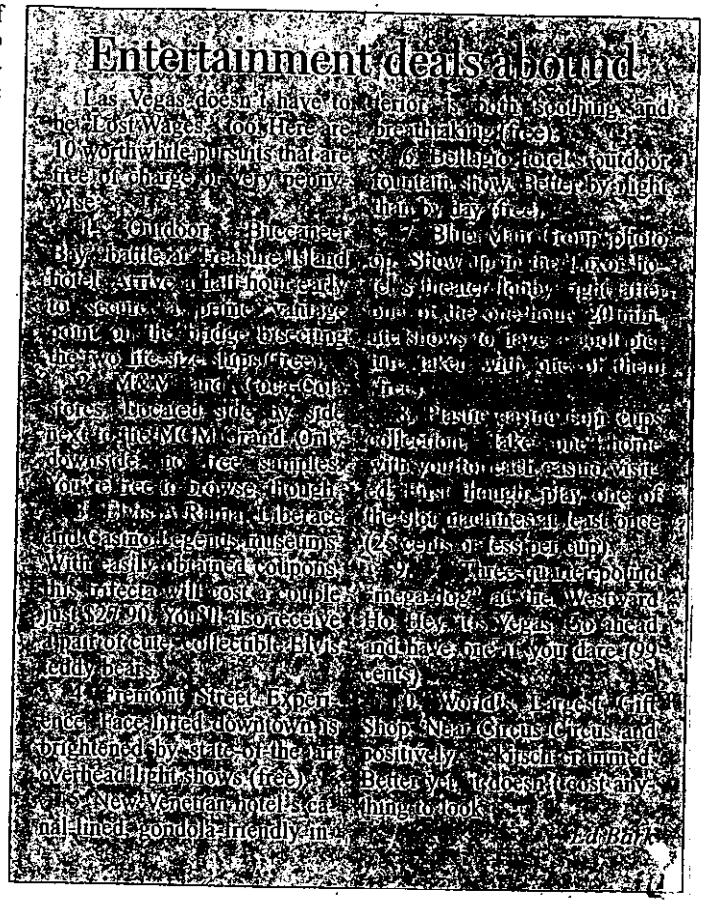
Meanwhile, on the topless-showgirl front ... well, Vegas still has them. Not in abundance and certainly not at the posh palaces. But the *Cats* of Vegas, the Riviera's long-running *Splash* show, is still a go-go with gah-gah. And Harrah's slinky late-night attraction, *Skintight*, offers a handful of male patrons the opportunity to go onstage for an up-close-and-personal viewing experience. Yours truly attended for the articles, er, for this article.

As summer dawns, Vegas hotel prices will be dipping while temperatures rise to triple digits. Consider the staggering air-conditioning bill at the MGM Grand while you ponder a first-time trip or a return visit.

In elemental ways, Vegas can still be the same old story. Gamble, lose, get slump-shouldered, go home. But the city's new and ever-changing terrain is ripe for expeditions that have nothing to do with dice, cards, chips or even a cut-rate steak-and-eggs breakfast that somehow always tastes like a million bucks at a suitably wee hour.

Enjoy whatever rides you take, even if they include slow-motioning down the Strip while signal lights keep landing on red. Vegas can be good for anger-management, too.

Ed Bark is television critic of The Dallas Morning News. *Contact him by e-mail at ebark@dallasnews.com.*



Entertainment deals abound

Las Vegas doesn't have to be "Lost Wages," too. Here are 10 worthwhile pursuits that are free of charge or very penny-wise:

1. Outdoor "Buccaneer Bay" battle at Treasure Island hotel. Arrive a half-hour early to secure a prime vantage point on the bridge bisecting the two life-size ships (free).

2. M&M and Coca-Cola stores. Located side by side next to the MGM Grand. Only downside: no free samples. You're free to browse, though.

3. Elvis A Rama, Liberace and Casino Legends museums. With easily obtained coupons, this trifecta will cost a couple just $27.90. You'll also receive a pair of cute, collectible Elvis teddy bears.

4. Fremont Street Experience. Face-lifted downtown is brightened by state-of-the-art overhead light shows (free).

5. New Venetian hotel's canal-lined gondola-friendly interior is both soothing and breathtaking (free).

6. Bellagio hotel's outdoor fountain show. Better by night than by day (free).

7. Blue Man Group photo op. Show up in the Luxor hotel's theater lobby right after one of the one-hour 20-minute shows to have a cool picture taken with one of them (free).

8. Plastic casino cup cups collection. Take one home with you for each casino visited. First though, play one of the slot machines at least once (25 cents or less per cup).

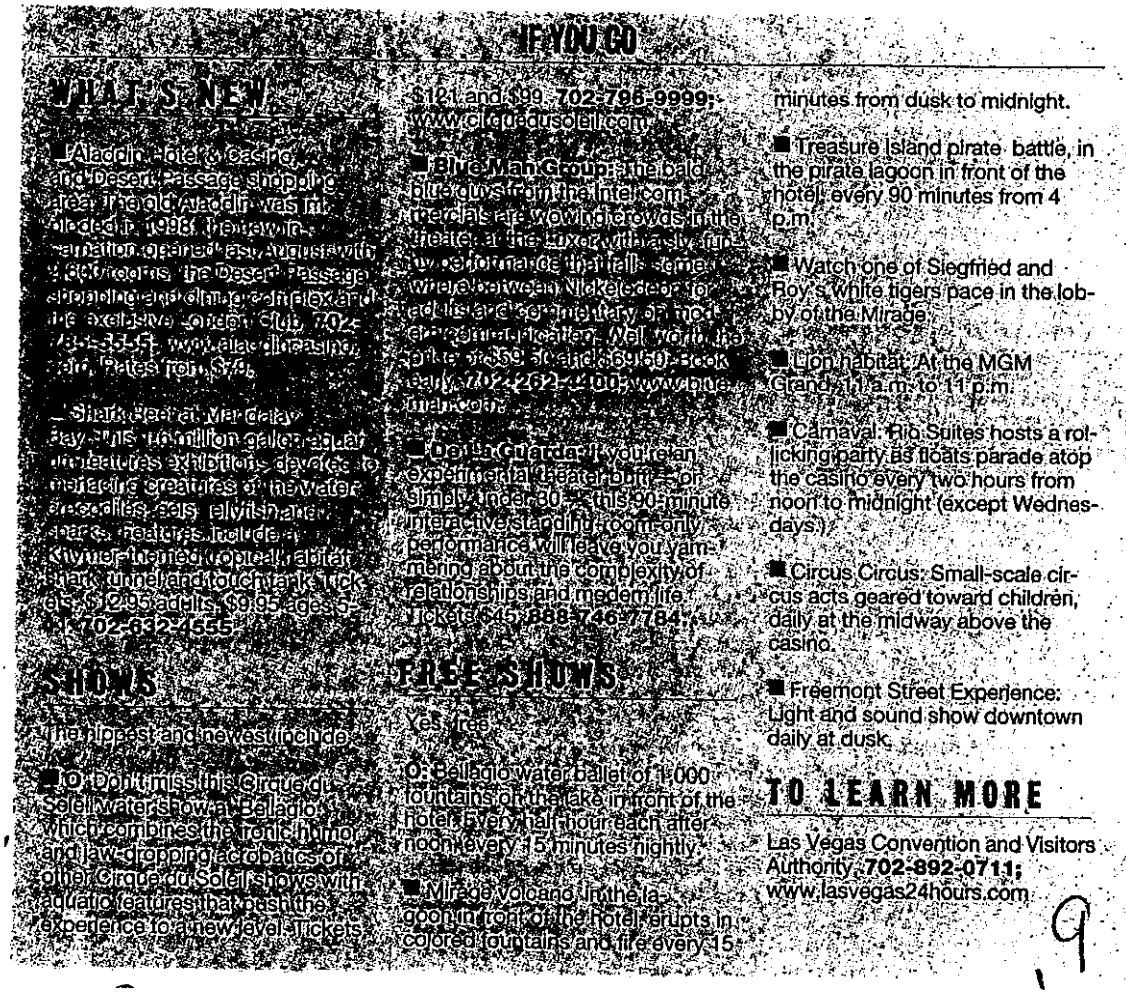
9. Three-quarter-pound "mega-dog" at the Westward Ho. Hey, it's Vegas. Go ahead and have one if you dare (99 cents).

10. World's Largest Gift Shop. Near Circus Circus and positively kitsch crammed. Better yet, it doesn't cost anything to look.

Ed Bark

BLUE MAN GROUP

VEL



WHAT'S NEW

■ Aladdin hotel & casino and Desert Passage shopping area. The old Aladdin was imploded in 1998. The new incarnation opened last August with 2,600 rooms, the Desert Passage shopping and dining complex and its exclusive London Club, 702-785-5555, www.aladdincasino.com. Rates from $74.

■ Shark Reef at Mandalay Bay. This 10-million-gallon aquatic attraction exhibits dozens of menacing creatures of the water: crocodiles, seals, jellyfish and sharks. Features include a Skyline-themed tropical habitat, shark tunnel and touch tank. Tickets: $12.95 adults, $9.95 ages 5-12. 702-632-4555.

SHOWS

The hippest and newest include:

■ Don't miss this Cirque du Soleil water show at Bellagio, which combines the ironic humor and jaw-dropping acrobatics of other Cirque du Soleil shows with aquatic features that push the experience to a new level. Tickets: $121 and $99. 702-796-9999; www.cirquedusoleil.com.

■ Blue Man Group: The bald blue guys from the Internet-media-art world are now the crowds in the theater at the Luxor with a sly, fun performance that falls somewhere between Nickelodeon for teens and a documentary on modern communication. Well worth the price: $59 and $64.50. Book early. 702-262-4400; www.blueman.com.

■ Do La Guerda: If you like an experimental theater buff or simply under-30, this 90-minute interactive standup comedy performance will leave you yammering about the complexity of relationships and modern life. Ticket: 545-888-746-7784.

FREE SHOWS

Yes, free.

■ Bellagio water ballet of 1,000 fountains on the lake in front of the hotel every half hour each afternoon every 15 minutes nightly.

■ Mirage volcano. In the lagoon in front of the hotel erupts in colored fountains and fire every 15 minutes from dusk to midnight.

■ Treasure Island pirate battle, in the pirate lagoon in front of the hotel, every 90 minutes from 4 p.m.

■ Watch one of Siegfried and Roy's white tigers pace in the lobby of the Mirage.

■ Lion habitat. At the MGM Grand, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.

■ Carnaval. Rio Suites hosts a rollicking party as floats parade atop the casino every two hours from noon to midnight (except Wednesdays).

■ Circus Circus. Small-scale circus acts geared toward children, daily at the midway above the casino.

■ Freemont Street Experience. Light and sound show downtown daily at dusk.

IF YOU GO

TO LEARN MORE

Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, 702-892-0711; www.lasvegas24hours.com

9

BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 660

ANTELOPE VALLEY PRESS
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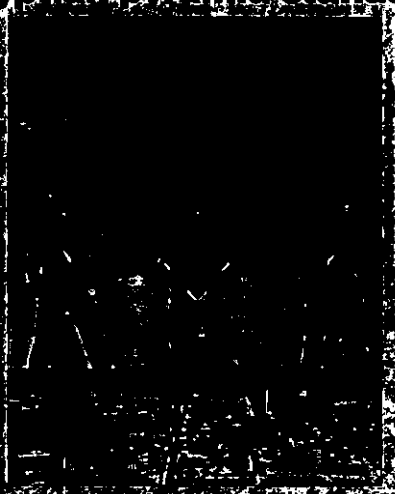
Burrelles

Luxor: Egyptian pyramid stands out along the Strip



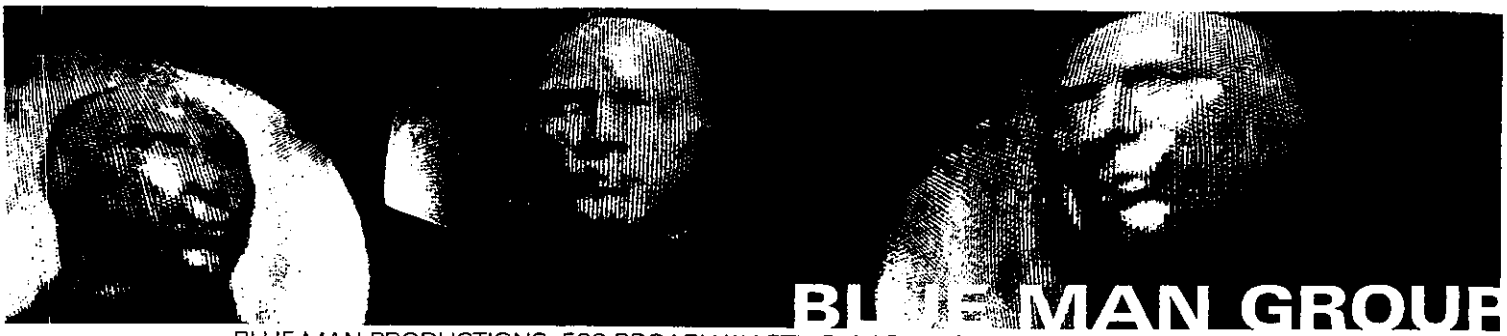
Fun Facts

Dining

Attractions

Gaming

Shopping



COURIER-POST
CHERRY HILL, NJ
SUNDAY 98,403
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Burrelle's
INFORMATION SERVICES

Really BIG shows

3755 DMG

Forget the showgirls. To be really entertained in Las Vegas, check out one of these entertainment extravaganzas

By CHUCK DARROW
Courier-Post Staff

Las Vegas gave the world the mega-resort. And the Las Vegas mega-resort gave the world the mega-show.

It wasn't that long ago that Vegas casino production shows were primarily sequin-and-feather affairs marked by leggy chorus girls strutting and preening to pop melodies. That changed about a dozen years ago.

It was casino developer Steve Wynn who forever altered Vegas' show business landscape, says Joe Delaney, who, for the past 34 years, has been an entertainment columnist for the Las Vegas *Sun*. "He realized that these shows would be costly, but that people would pay to see them."

Wynn was right with his assessment. Las Vegas visitors so far have shown little reluctance to pay admission prices that are generally unknown outside of Broadway; the $121 top ticket price for the water extravaganza called *O* even tops that for the *The Producers*, New York's first $100 ticket.

Wynn broke the mold when he opened the Mirage in 1989 and installed in the casino's theater the German magic team, Siegfreid & Roy.

The pair ushered in a new era of entertainment with a spectacular, high-tech presentation that reportedly cost $25 million to stage.

JIM PORTO
The Blue Man Group perform their unique show at Luxor Las Vegas.

From there, upping the show business ante has become part and parcel of Vegas' explosive growth as a tourist destination.

Wynn, who sold his Vegas-based casino empire to the MGM corporation a couple of years ago, struck again in the early 1990s when he brought *Cirque du Soleil*, a New Age circus presentation, to his Treasure Island casino.

And he raised the bar even higher in 1998, when his posh Bellagio hotel-casino opened with *O*, a *Cirque*-produced show that reportedly cost $100 million, as its main attraction.

As Wynn's spectaculars proved to be a success, other gaming companies jumped on the bandwagon. One of the first non-Wynn properties to go this route was the MGM Grand, when in 1995, it introduced *EFX Alive*, a special effects-laden program. According to the show business trade paper *Variety*, *EFX* cost $45 million to develop and produce.

Of course, Atlantic City's productions have historically been modestly staged variety-type shows that bear little resemblance to Vegas' high-tech, envelope-pushing spectacles.

Atlantic City productions have traditionally cost in the low-to-mid six figures, according to several casino entertainment executives there. That has kept ticket prices in the $15-$25 range.

One exception, though, is *Whisper*, which runs through Aug. 30 at the Tropicana. It cost several million dollars to stage and had a top ticket price of $55 when the show opened in May.

According to Delaney, a 1938 graduate of Camden's Woodrow Wilson High School who teaches a one-of-a-kind course in hotel entertainment at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas, the role of Las Vegas production shows has evolved. In the old days, show tickets were, more often than not, "comped," that is, given away to gamblers as a lure to get

See SHOWS, Page 3F

CourierPostonline.com
Check our Web site for this related link:
http://lasvegas.about.com/cs/shows/index.ht

Shows/Vegas producers attract audiences with elaborate presentations

Continued from Page 1

them inside a specific property.

Today, however, free tickets to the top shows are few and far between. Cash sales have made many of the productions reliable revenue generators in their own right.

As for what the future holds, Delaney suggests whatever new look is in store will probably be the brainchild of an old hand.

"We'll have to see what Wynn does when he reopens the Desert Inn," he says of the tycoon's next project. "It will probably be another water spectacular."

Below is a look at four of Las Vegas' most popular presentations:

EFX Alive
Where: MGM Grand, 3799 Las Vegas Blvd. South
When: 7:30 and 10:30 p.m. Tuesday, Friday and Saturday; 7:30 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday.
Tickets: $75, $55 and $40 (children ages 5-12).
Phone: (877) 880-0880
Web: www.mgmgrand.com.

This multi-media revue (pronounced "effects") currently stars '80s popster Rick Springfield. It's divided into four set pieces saluting Merlin the Magician, P.T. Barnum, Houdini and author H.G. Welles.

The original score is functional, if not memorable, but then again *EFX* is all about the staging, the best of which occurs during the Merlin and Welles segments.

The former boasts a worth-the-price-of-admission battle to the death between a pair of mechanical, fire-breathing dragons. The latter, which salutes Welles' pioneering sci-fi novel, *The Time Machine*, employs both a replica of the time machine from the 1960 movie of the same name, and a marvelous 3-D film that takes the audience on a journey through the centuries.

Unfortunately, the night the show was reviewed, Springfield was battling laryngitis and was replaced by an understudy. Because *EFX* is not built around Springfield's music, it probably didn't matter that much.

While this is a first-rate show, it doesn't quite measure up to the hype. The Houdini sequence was just an excuse for some basic, Magic 101 illusions, and the Barnum piece, while enjoyable, didn't come close to the other two in "Wow!" factor.

Web: www.bellagiolasvegas.com; www.cirquedusoleil.com.

It's hard to argue any show is worth $121 a ticket, but if one is, it's *O*, whose staging — in a theater that recalls the elegant opera houses of Europe built at a cost upwards of $40 million — far exceeds anything that has come before it.

The proof of this is that, despite its steep admission fee, *O* plays to 100 percent capacity audiences.

O, which features a cast of 81, is mostly performed in a 1.5 million gallon tank of water built into the stage. But regularly during the course of the show, the water magically disappears and, in a blink of an eye, the cast is performing on a stage. Another blink, and some of the cast members are on stage, while others are in a smaller pool area.

In addition to the wondrous staging, there is an original score of New Age-y, other-worldly music, and costumes that are as eye-popping as they are inventive.

The featured performers are standard *Cirque* players — contortionists, acrobats, aerialists and the like. They are uniformly excellent, but tend to be upstaged by the production elements. However, the two unidentified silent comedians who perform the "pre-show" and appear in skits throughout the program are tears-in-the-eyes hilarious.

Like all *Cirque* endeavors, *O* has an almost impenetrable storyline dealing, apparently, with things like life, death and redemption. Whatever. The bottom line is that it's a singular show business accomplishment.

Tournament of Kings
Where: Excalibur, 3850 Las Vegas Blvd. South.
When: 6 and 8:30 p.m. daily.
Tickets: $39.95 (includes dinner)
Phone: (800) 937-7777.
Web: www.excaliburcasino.com.

Tournament of Kings, staged at the Camelot-themed Excalibur, is wonderful family fare.

Presented in a sawdust-covered, oval arena ringed by tiers of seats, the show recreates a Medieval sporting event in which European royalty compete in a series of contests on horseback.

There's also a story, as the noble participants are called upon to engage in mortal combat with the evil knight Mordred and his minions. The performers are the same ones seen in the recent hit film, *A Knight's Tale*.

The audience is divided into rooting sections and are encouraged to be as noisy and enthusiastic as it can. But what really makes this something out of the ordinary is the meal that is included.

The action is supposed to be taking place in 1142 A.D., before the invention of eating utensils. So, the broiled chicken, baked potato boat and broccoli must be consumed with one's fingers — a fun and freeing experience for patrons of any age.

This, and the pomp, pageantry and pyrotechnics of the show combine to make this a winner.

√√√√√√
Blue Man Group Live at Luxor
Where: Luxor Las Vegas, 3900 Las Vegas Blvd.
When: 7 and 10 p.m. nightly.
Tickets: $76.45.
Phone: (800) 557-7428.
Web: www.blueman.com; www.luxor.com.

Blue Man Group — so named because the principals boast Day-Glo blue heads, faces and hands (it's latex, not paint) — may be the most unusual production in show

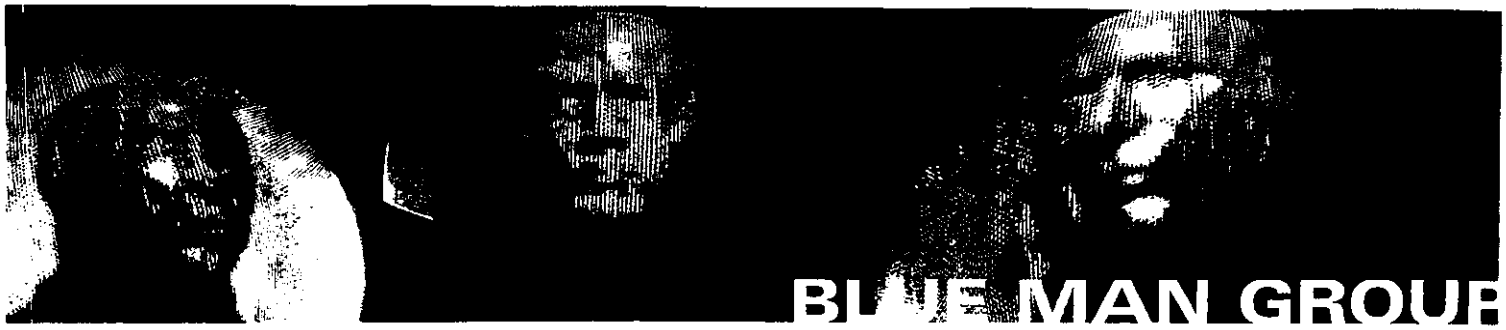
scribe this surreal, multi-media carnival of mirth and madness. For instance, to say that one segment finds the trio spending the better part of 10 minutes opening cellophane packages of Twinkies probably doesn't sound like much. But the reality is it's a masterpiece of goofiness.

The same holds for any other number of bits, including one that is based on the eating (and regurgitation) of Cap'n Crunch cereal, and another that pays comical tribute to the Jefferson Airplane's psychedelic anthem, "White Rabbit."

The show ends with the audience being buried in an avalanche of white crepe paper; a fitting end to an enjoyably bizarre production. Throughout, the energy level never flags, which gives the program an appealing hard-rock concert vibe.

And speaking of rock music, the on-stage antics are accompanied by original, guitar-driven sounds from an eight-piece band whose members are clad in glow-in-the-dark costumes that seem inspired by children's author Maurice Sendek's whimsical monsters.

It's hard to conjure another show anywhere that is such exhilarating fun; Blue Man Group is another not-to-be-missed Vegas extravaganza.



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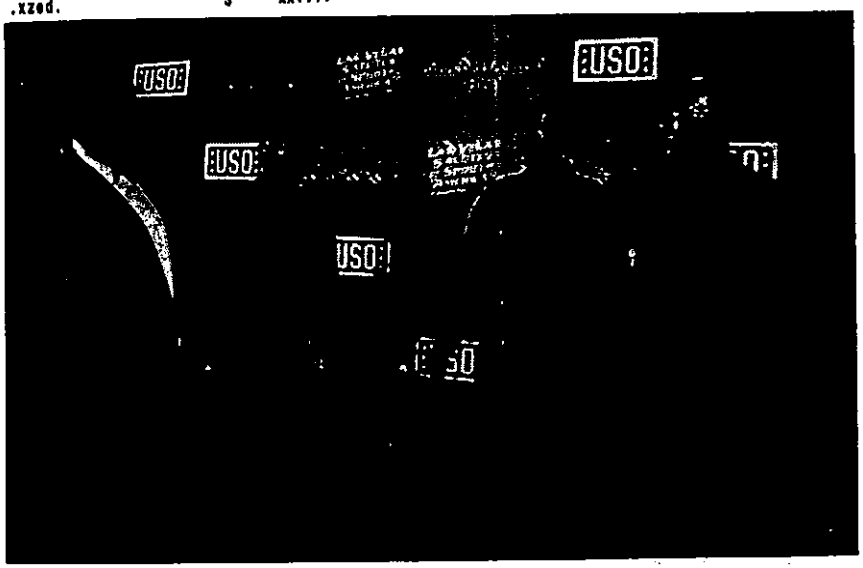


AP Photo

Close encounter

3755

Wayne Newton (left) jokes with members of Blue Man Group before a USO benefit concert Sunday at the Mandalay Bay Hotel and Resort in Las Vegas.

SAVANNAH MAGAZINE

The wildly successful Blue Man Group has shows in New York, Boston, Chicago and Las Vegas.

Playing the "Blues"

BY **RICH WITTISH**

FOR MUCH OF THE PAST 15 years, Phil Stanton has been very blue.

But in his case, that's not such a bad — or sad — thing.

Forty-three-year-old Stanton — who grew up in Savannah and returns two or three times each year to see his parents, Cameron and Billye Marie Stanton — is one of the originators of the wildly successful performance-art troupe known as Blue Man Group.

The Blue Men have never taken the stage here, but you might have seen them cavorting in a handful of television commercials that appeared a few years ago — three mute, lanky, wide-eyed, bald-and-blue-headed fellows involved in some wacky antics promoting Intel Pentium computers.

Stanton and two friends — Matt Goldman and Chris Wink — started Blue Man Group in New York City in the late 1980s by giving free performances on the street and in other venues. Today, Blue Man has evolved into what would pass for an industry in Savannah — an organization of 350 people, with headquarters on Broadway in Manhattan.

Now, there are 30 Blue Men, and their avant-garde performances fill theaters in the Big Apple, Boston, Chicago and Las Vegas — the last in a 1,200-seat room at the Luxor resort hotel and casino. Blue Man Group also has appeared on "The Tonight Show" eight times and has produced a compact disc, "Audio," that was nominated for a Grammy award.

Another CD, called "The Complex," was expected to be introduced this March or April, and a traveling show based on the Blue Men experience was scheduled to debut during April 25-26 at the Coachella music festival in Palm Springs, Calif.

The last-mentioned endeavors are the latest steps in the evolution of Blue Man Group, a progression that has been occurring steadily since the concept started to take form toward the end of the '80s.

"We had a character idea ... ," said Stanton of those early days. "We added to his experiences, and it grew — it still continues to grow gradually."

That's somewhat akin to Stanton's own development as an actor, musician and innovator — a process that's been influenced by his days in Savannah.

Stanton was born and spent his early youth in Texas, then moved here with his family when he was 8 years old. His father was an Assembly of God minister, and, while attending church, Phil gave an indication of what his future would hold.

"I grew up singing and playing instruments in church," he said during an interview in January while on a short visit that brought he and his wife, Jennifer, to Savannah from their home in New York. "I tried the trumpet, the piano and the guitar. But I never was good enough, because I wasn't disciplined enough to practice."

Stanton attended Jacob G. Smith Elementary School, Myers Middle School and Jenkins High School; graduated from Jenkins in 1977; worked for a year at White's Hardware in downtown Savannah; then took courses at what was then known as Armstrong State College, with the intention of becoming a jet pilot.

"I studied math, because I wanted to fly jets," he said. "Theater was one of the farthest things from my mind."

Stanton worked for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers during summer and Christmas breaks.

"I was in the geology section – we traveled around Georgia and the Carolinas, drilling holes in the ground," he said.

After a year and a half at Armstrong (now Armstrong Atlantic State University), Stanton veered in a new direction — northwest, and into theater arts.

"I decided to go to Evangel University in Springfield, Missouri — a liberal arts college of the Assembly of God," he said. "I went there to be a music major — I felt like I was going into the ministry like my older brother, David (who's currently the pastor of Radiant Life Christian Fellowship, an Assembly of God church on Skidaway Road).

"I got into theater to explore other ways to make an impact on people," said Stanton, reflecting on a feeling he had then that his life's work was going to involve being "in front of people."

He "started doing things in the drama department" at Evangel and graduated in 1983 with a double major in Biblical studies and theater.

Stanton returned to Savannah and stayed until January 1986, working as a waiter and with the Savannah Little Theater as a member of the organization's children's theater troupe and its mini-rep company. He recalls having parts in Little Theater productions of "Annie," "Camelot" and the "Importance of Being Earnest" and waiting tables at a dessert cabaret located at Waters Avenue and Eisenhower Drive and at the restaurant at the Mulberry Inn.

He took the job at the Mulberry in preparation for his next big move — in January 1986 to New York City, to study acting in a "more serious" way.

"It took me a while to figure out how to stay warm," he said of his first days in Manhattan, and he wound up waiting tables — first in a hotel, then in an executive dining room and then for the Glorious Food catering company.

The first person he met at Glorious Food was Chris Wink, who was to become a fellow Blue Man.

"We quickly became good friends," said Stanton. "We realized we had a lot of the same interests in music."

Phil Stanton (above), one of the originators of the Blue Man Group, grew up in Savannah. The group's "Tubes" performance has been running for more than a decade.

Wink introduced Stanton to his longtime buddy, Matt Goldman, and the three were soon staging "happenings" that evolved into the Blue Man Group performances. In 1990 they created a show at the LaMama experimental theater in New York's East Village, and that led, a year later, to the opening of "Tubes," the Blue Man show staged at the off-Broadway Astor Place Theater that's still running today.

In "Tubes," the Blue Men drummed on PVC pipe, stuffed Cap'n Crunch cereal

doing the tossing, Stanton caught paintballs in his mouth and squirted their contents onto a canvas to create works of art.

TIME magazine hailed "Tubes" as "a potpourri of physical stunts, visual gags, art commentary, audience participation and all-out sensory assault."

While Blue Man Group performances always have been aimed at entertaining their audiences, for Stanton, "the whole thing is about community."

The Blue Man, he said, "is borne out of the human need to be with other people."

Reviewers have speculated that the cobalt blue character is an alien, and that might be so, said Stanton, but he's not from "the mother ship."

"He's an alien from inside part of us — very human, an abstract alien," Stanton said. "He's come for a reason, and it's to remind us of the need to be together with other people."

And that's where Stanton's youth in Savannah comes into play.

"I felt like the experiences I had growing up in church were really powerful," he said. "I've tried to capture that we're trying to capture about the Pentecostal experience — but in a secular way."

> "The Blue Man," Stanton said, "is borne out of the human need to be with other people."

Producing a sense of community "has always been our major focus," Stanton said. "That, and also this idea — to try to break down the walls that we create to get by, to get through our days."

Another link with Savannah involves Stanton's talent for creating musical instruments and props used in the Blue Man shows.

His father, in addition to being a minister, was a builder and "kind of an architect," Stanton said.

"He had 10 or 12 churches around

And, said Stanton, during his stint as a salesman at White's Hardware, he learned "a lot about tools and metal working."

The success of "Tubes" in New York City inspired Stanton and his pals to open shows at The Charles Playhouse in Boston in 1995 and at The Briar St. Theatre in Chicago in 1997. Those endeavors are still going strong.

In March 2000, they opened "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" in Las Vegas, with Stanton performing in the new show for the first couple months of its run.

For the past year and a half, however, he hasn't appeared on the stage much. Instead he's been busy with the Group's new CD and with the traveling show.

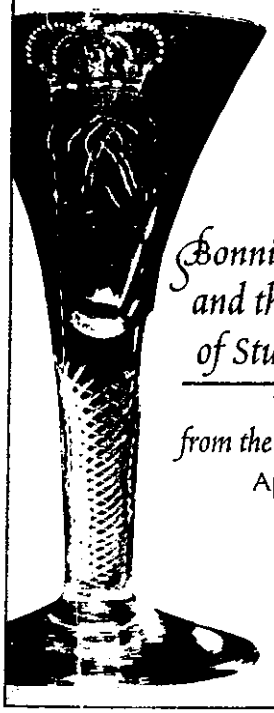
And he and his cohorts have also been thinking past those undertakings.

"We're looking at opening a show in Berlin, and we'd love to take a show to Japan," he said.

Whatever transpires, one thing is likely — in his heart, Phil Stanton will always be blue. ■

TELFAIR ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

March – April Exhibitions



Jewels of Time:
Watches from the Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute
March 9 – May 25

Bonnie Prince Charlie and the Royal House of Stuart, 1688-1788:
Works of Art from the Drambuie Collection
April 2–June 1

121 Barnard Street / 232.1177

TELFAIR MUSEUM of ART

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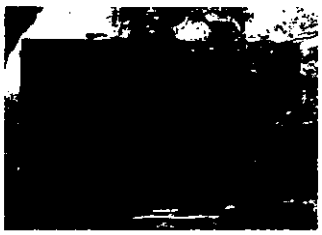

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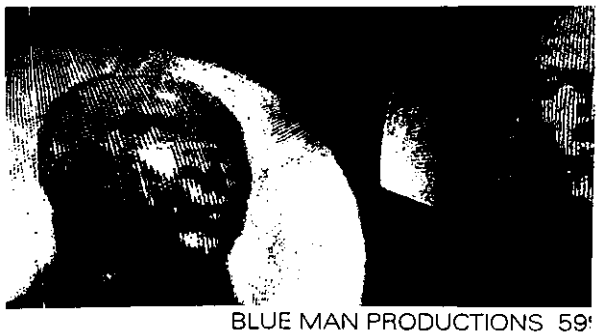

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Vegas Sweeps Up Rat Pack Wannabees

They would have been horrified at Las Vegas' unsuccessful trial as a softer, "family" destination, but surely Sin City's move back to its roots would definitely have Frank, Sammy, Joey and Dean high-fiving each other.

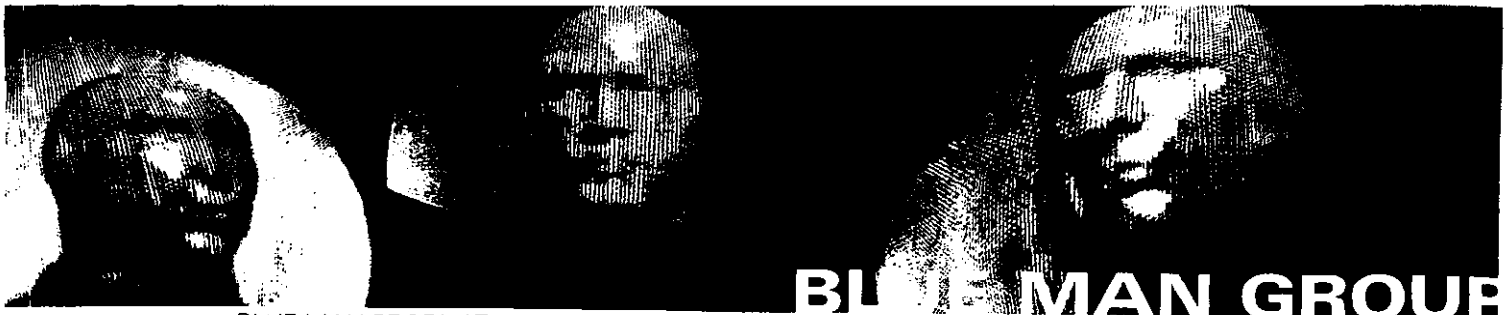
Besides changing its image back to its risque heritage with the "Only in Vegas" ad campaign, the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority has also been looking to lure a younger generation to the town with younger-skewing musical acts and hotels and casinos like the Hard Rock.

Gearing up for the city's centennial anniversary in 2005, longtime partner Clear Channel Entertainment just finished the first of many upcoming promotions it created for the tawdry town with a Vegas Summer Sweeps. The contest lured guys with a chance to be squired around town for the weekend with hostess Brooke Burke (of E! *Wild On* fame and frequent *Maxim* magazine cover girl).

Twelve winners and their guests were treated to a three-day getaway to Vegas to travel with Burke by limo and dine at Prana, watch a performance and meet Blue Man Group, and hang out and dance at some of the hotter clubs, including the Voodoo Lounge at the Rio, Risque at Paris, Tabu at the MGM and Rain at the Palms.

Drawing 6,000 registrants, Clear Channel promoted the sweeps for eight weeks via radio ads in 11 major markets and at its various concert venues. —*C.B.*

Program: Vegas Summer Party Sweepstakes
Marketer: Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, Las Vegas
Agencies: Clear Channel Entertainment, New York; R&R Partners, Las Vegas
Key players: LVCVA: Terry Jicinsky, svp-mktg; **CCE:** Bruce Eskowitz, pres-national sales/mktg; **R&R:** Rob Dondero, evp



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LAS VEGAS SPOTLIGHT

VEGAS NUGGETS

America West Vacations upped its travel agent commission to 13% on all packages from Seattle to Las Vegas from Sept. 5 to Dec. 22.

The increased pay applies to all individual and group bookings made by Sept. 30.

The new commission structure does not apply to packages using published air. The pay on published air is 5%, while commission on the land portion is 13%.

Agents can book the packages through the GDSs or at the operator's travel agent Web site, www.avtravelagents.com. For more information, call (800) 356-6611.

Funjet Vacations is offering a $25 per person discount on charter air and hotel vacations to Las Vegas when travelers pay for their vacation in full.

The discount is available exclusively through travel agents.

The offer is valid for vacations booked and fully paid for 48 or more days prior to departure.

In order to qualify, travelers must vacation in Las Vegas between Sept. 1 and Nov. 23 or between Nov. 30 and Dec. 25.

The offer is not valid for air-only, land-only or scheduled air bookings.

Blue Man Group at the Luxor is the top Las Vegas show so far in 2002, according to the Reservation Co., a provider for Las Vegas show tickets.

Rounding out the top five, in order are: "Michael Flatley's Lord of the Dance" at New York-New York; Danny Gans at the Mirage; "EFX Alive," starring Rick Springfield, at the MGM Grand; and "Jubilee" at Bally's.

Tickets for Las Vegas shows can be purchased by contacting the Reservation Co. at (800) 230-3727 or via its Web site, at www.thereservationcompany.com.

Next time clients are visiting Las Vegas, you might want to suggest they visit the Las Vegas Post Office and Courthouse.

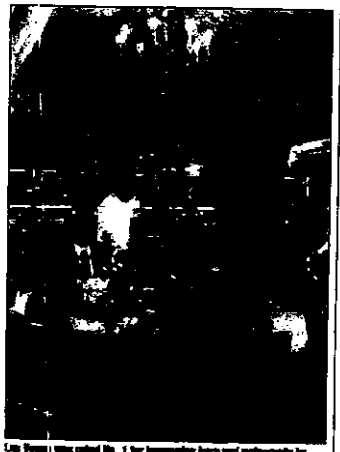
Seriously.

The post office and courthouse have been listed in the State Register of Historic Places by the Board of Museums and History, and the city said it plans to turn the building into a museum and cultural center.

The post office and courthouse, built in 1933, is considered one of the city's best preserved and most important pieces of Depression-era architecture.

The building also was the site of the 1950 Kefauver hearings into organized crime, which brought national attention to Nevada's gambling laws.

Get out The Nevada Commission on Tourism's Adventure Guide is available.


Las Vegas was voted No. 1 for happening bars and restaurants by Travel & Leisure. Above, the Italian restaurant in Rumi's Las Vegas.

So far for 2002, Blue Man Group at the Luxor is tops for Las Vegas entertainment, according to the Reservation Co., a provider of tickets for Vegas shows.

The pocket-size guide includes information about, among other activities, hiking, biking, climbing, snow sports, wild-horse watching, whitewater rafting and kayaking, hang gliding and parasailing, hot-air ballooning and sandboarding.

To order the guide, call (800) NEVADA-8 or visit www.travelnevada.com/adventure.

Agents, tell your twenty-something clients about this one: Las Vegas was ranked the best city in the U.S. for happening bars and restaurants by Travel & Leisure magazine.

Travel & Leisure and America Online surveyed more than 100,000 AOL members, asking them to rank cities on a scale of one to five.

Southwest Airlines is offering a $19 fare from Los Angeles to Las Vegas for travel beginning Sept. 3.

The sale is in effect through Jan. 10; tickets are nonrefundable.

Fares require a roundtrip purchase with an overnight stay. Tickets must be purchased at least seven days before departure.

For information, call Southwest Airlines at (800) 435-9792.

America West, the No. 2 carrier at McCarran Airport, was set to launch service between Las Vegas and Fresno and Santa Barbara, Calif., on Aug. 1.

America West contracted with Mesa Air Group, a commuter carrier, for the service.

The airline also will start service between Las Vegas and Washington (Dulles) on Dec. 26.

Also on Aug. 1, Las Vegas-based National Airlines was set to return to Washington with daily nonstop service to Reagan National.

The carrier will add nonstop, roundtrip service to Dulles Airport at the end of August.

McCarran Airport reported a 5.4% decline in passenger traffic year over year for June to 3 million, a slight drop from the 3.2 million in 2001.

For the first six months of 2002, traffic at McCarran was down 6.7% from 2001's 18.5 million passengers.

In other McCarran news, within two weeks last month, two passengers waiting for flights hit jackpots totaling nearly $4 million.

And that's a lot of overpriced water.

It looks as if Station Casinos is expanding again.

The Las Vegas-based gaming company has agreed to pay $65 million for 73 acres of land in a master-planned community to be located just north of the city, Station officials said.

The company said it expects to close on the property, which is on Charleston Boulevard at the Interstate 215 interchange, during the second quarter of next year.

Plans for the property include a locals-oriented entertainment complex and casino, said Frank J. Fertitta III, Station's chairman and chief executive officer.

In the Las Vegas area, the company owns and operates eight casino properties and owns a 50% interest in two other casino properties.

The Hard Rock Hotel said it is thinking about creating a permanent memorial to John Entwistle, the bass player of the band the Who, who died in the hotel June 27.

National Airlines is relaunching Washington service.

Hard Rock officials said they are waiting to speak to Entwistle's former band members before they make any decisions on the memorial.

No, you're not a prude ... we didn't know this award existed either.

The Chicken Ranch, located about an hour's drive from Las Vegas, was selected Brothel of the Year by a Nevada-based organization of brothel clients.

The Pahrump, Nev.-based ranch is one of 33 legal and licensed brothels in Nevada. Brothels are not legal in Clark County, which includes the city of Las Vegas.

The award is presented to the Nevada brothel that is judged "the most outstanding in terms of the overall quality of its operation and personnel."

And the answer is no — the product is not commissionable.

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HONOLULU, HI
SUNDAY 80,000
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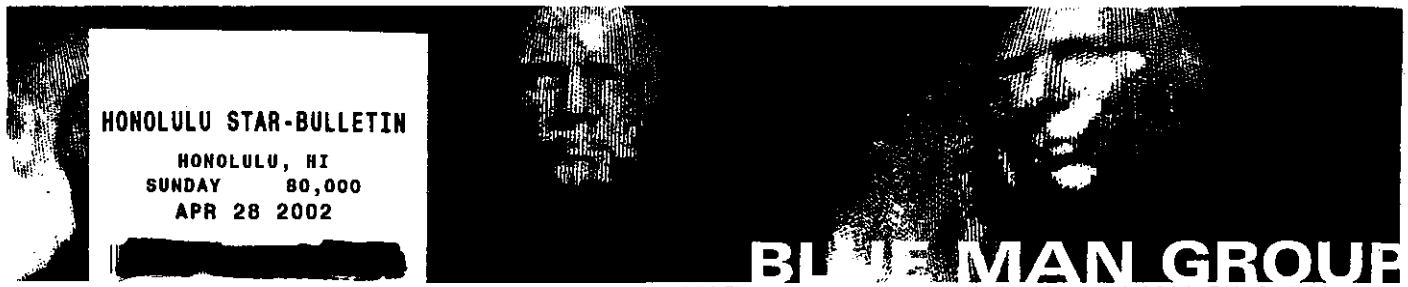

Burrelle's

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Solo visitors find plenty to do in Vegas

Tuning a fine ear to talk of the town

Houston Chronicle

3755L

LAS VEGAS >> It's not only people-watching that's prime in Las Vegas. Eavesdropping is a trip, too — and an open window to the color of the city.

>> Older gentleman with cane chatting with a friend at the Mirage: "We found a dollar blackjack table over at Imperial Palace, but I won't play with a woman dealer. You watch it. You play with a woman, you come out lower than she does every time."

>> At the Paris Resort's Lenotre sweets shop, two women are contemplating the chocolate when the saleswoman walks up: "Le chocolat?" she asks the two ladies from Michigan, "You like it beet-air?" Blank stares and 30 seconds of silence until the friend squeals, "Bitter! She means bitter!"

>> At the Mandalay Bay Sharks show that features a number of critters, including reptiles, a Texas woman taps on the glass of one exhibit: "Oh, my god, it's a big ol' lizard! Bob, come here. It's a big ol' lizard!"

>> In a taxi headed for the Las Vegas Hilton, the dispatcher is heard making an announcement over the radio: "Be advised that a guy called to say he'd left his Marlboro Lights in a cab. Doesn't know which one. Customer said it had his money, his ID and his check-cashing cards." She sounds professional until she cackles and says, "Yep, those are gone!"

By Renee Klentz
Houston Chronicle

LAS VEGAS >> Ready? Here are the Top 10 reasons Las Vegas is a good solo destination:

(10) It costs half as much to go alone (bigger bankroll for the tables, baby).

(9) No one will kvetch if you want to go to the Liberace Museum. Or get lost shopping at the Aladdin's Desert Passage.

(8) If you're a woman, the sidewalk guys don't even try to hand you those little cards with photos of naked ladies.

(7) If you're a man, they will.

(6) You can take a nap at 2 p.m. or try your luck in the casino at 2 a.m.; you listen only to the ticking of your own body clock.

(5) Truth be told, gambling is a solitary pursuit. Most couples split up at the casinos, one heading for the slots, say, one for the craps table. If you're not going to see your significant other for six hours at a time anyway ... you see where we're headed with this one.

(4) Vegas' colorful taxi drivers provide some of the best entertainment in town, and they rarely chat up couples.

(3) Vegas is the buffet capital of the world. No need to feel uncomfortable eating alone in restaurants because no one's watching you. They're all too busy piling bland boiled shrimp and prime rib on their plates.

(2) You want safe? You want brightly lit? Can't get brighter than Vegas, where it's daylight at 3 a.m. on the Strip.

And the No. 1 reason to go to Las Vegas on your own:

(1) If you lose big, no one need ever know. Win big, and you DON'T HAVE TO SHARE.

Even as a passenger on the plane, you feel the city's pull, the neon charge. Everyone's chatty; there's a buzz in the air. It helps that $4 Bloody Marys have fueled the flight — and it's 10 a.m. Some have been playing poker in their seats. Most are with companions. But not everyone.

So what if Sin City isn't the first place you think of when contemplating getting away on your own. Vegas has a lot to offer the soloist, including — especially if you don't gamble — a lot of bang for the traveling buck. Statistics compiled by the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority reveal that about 11 percent, or one tourist in 10, visit Vegas alone. Most are in town on business, but not all. Some have discovered that in Vegas, one is a lucky number.

The city offers the anonymity and 24-hour energy of New York and the "everyone's a pal" sensibilities of New Orleans at Mardi Gras. Throw in a little Branson (to say nothing of Venice, medieval England, ancient Rome and the pharaoh's Egypt) and it's the Tea Cup Ride for grown-ups, Disneyworld with an R rating. Cheap eats and world-class restaurants; beautiful hotels, spas and pools; spectacular spectaculars; shopping to die for; primo people-watching.

Outside of getting married by Elvis, there isn't much a lone traveler misses out on.

Old Vegas and new coexist in this fantasy land. Sinatra and Elvis are everywhere. Magic acts are big — Siegfried and Roy, Lance Burton, Penn and Teller are in the top echelon of a crowded category. Stars who've lost luster elsewhere shine brightly in Vegas: Charo, Rick Springfield, Tony Orlando, Wayne Newton, Rich Little. But new Vegas is represented by state-of-the-art production shows such as those of Cirque du Soleil, Blue Man Group and "Lord of the Dance," and venues such as Hard Rock and House of Blues are bringing in performers such as Ani DiFranco, Busta Rhymes and Mary J. Blige.

What's On, a city guide, keeps up with it all as a magazine and a Web site (www.ilovevegas.com). That's its job, one it's performed since 1954 and through the city's incredible growth of the last decade. The magazine's recently announced annual Visitor's Choice Awards reported, among many other things, that the fountain show at the Bellagio was voted the favorite attraction; Cirque du Soleil's "O" at the Bellagio was the top production show; Mandalay Bay has the best hotel pool; and Voo Doo Lounge at the Rio is top lounge.

The awards didn't name a Best Place to Go All by Your Lonesome, but What's On editor in chief Stacey Hertz has a couple of suggestions.

"I really enjoy the Light at the Bellagio," she says from her Las Vegas office. "It's a brand-new club. They have tons of security. The bartenders are friendly."

You probably wouldn't want to take a romantic gondola ride on the Venetian's canals by yourself, but you might enjoy the thrills of Star Trek: The Experience at the Hilton, Race for Atlantis at Caesars or the Manhattan Express roller coaster at New York New York.

If you prefer art to action, take in masterpieces by Picasso, Monet and others from the Hermitage at the Guggenheim at the Venetian, or the gallery of Fine Art Bellagio.

INCENTIVE
NEW YORK, NY
MONTHLY 40,050
FEBRUARY 2003

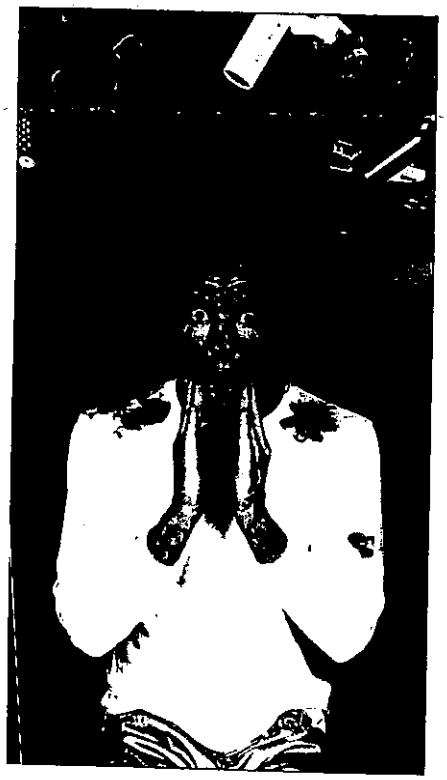
3755 P 32

Burrelle's
INFORMATION SERVICES

CENTER STAGE

NIGHTLY SHOWS IN LAS VEGAS AND LAKE TAHOE MAKE NEVADA A SHOE-IN FOR ENTERTAINMENT CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

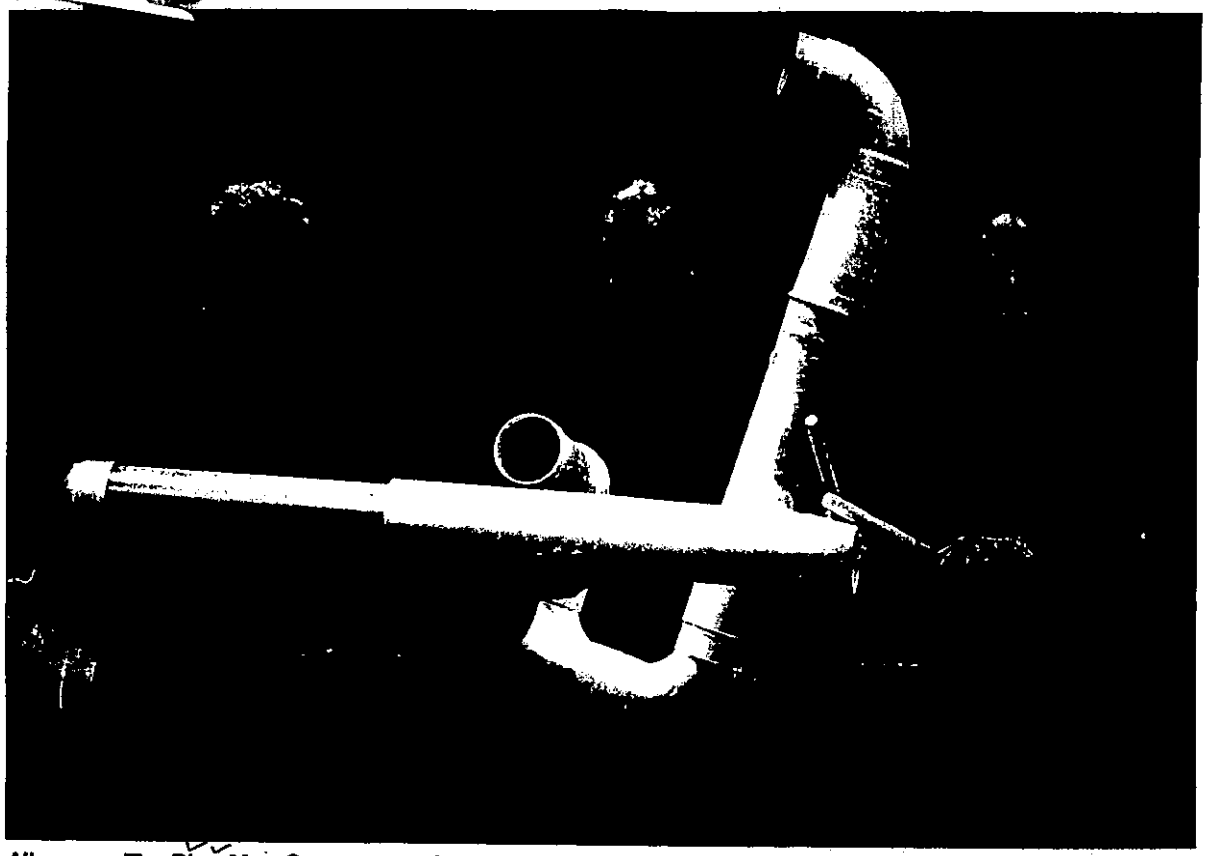
BY JEANIE CASISON



Photos: Courtesy of MGM Mirage/Harrah's Lake Tahoe/Caesars Palace, Las Vegas

Near, far, wherever you are, take note in March when the singer Celine Dion begins a three-year stint in *A New Day* at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas. The show, produced by Franco Dragone, creator of *Mystere*, *O* and *Quidam*, has generated a lot of buzz not only for its famous diva, but for the grand scale of the project, which includes a new 4,000-seat theater, fashioned after the Colosseum in Rome and custom built for the engagement. As of press time, the production has generated $1.5 million from group sales, and purchases are only expected to increase after its debut. Good stuff, considering the only thing that planners really have to go on is their belief in the Canadian chanteuse's showmanship.

As entertainment options expand, Nevada may be experiencing its own reversal of fortune. Companies once averse to the gaming getaway now consider the destination a top incentive pick. "In the past five years, entertainment has experienced a boom, not just in quantity but also in quality," says Francine McKanna,



All access: The Blue Man Group, one of many acts in Nevada, offers incentive groups an entertaining experience with high trophy value.

Photo: Courtesy of Luxor Las Vegas

senior vice president of destination services for PGI, an interactive events and communication agency headquartered in Washington, D.C.

Others agree. "The perception in the past was that Nevada was more of a gaming destination, not a place for serious meetings or incentives. There is a lot more being offered than just losing money," says Moon Civetz, general manager of USA Hosts, a destination management company in Las Vegas.

The wide range of high-quality entertainment has people talking. "Everyone is excited about the Celine Dion show. She appeals to the masses. Also there is a lot of talk about the two new Cirque du Soleil shows opening as well as the production of *Mama Mia* at the Mandalay Bay," McKanna says.

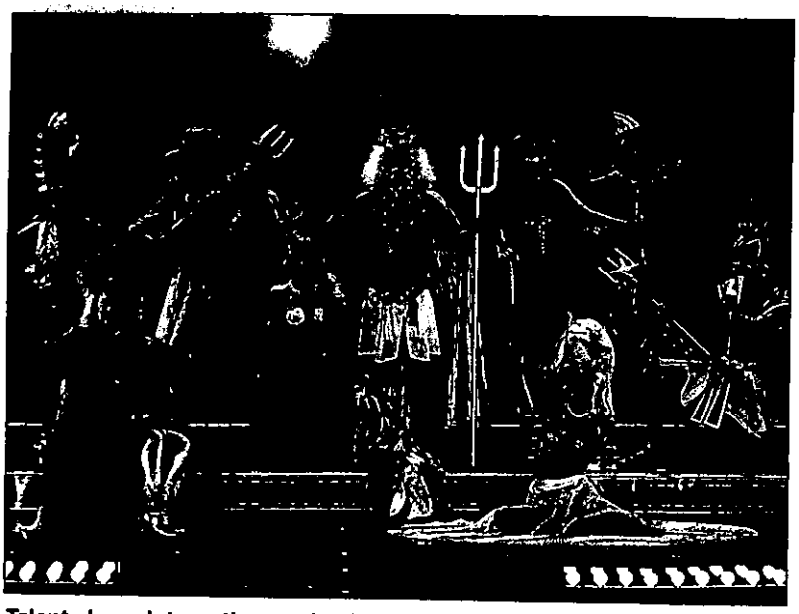
Entertainment explosion

On any given week, ambitious visitors to Las Vegas can take their pick from a litany of shows. There's O at the Bellagio Hotel & Casino, *Lord of the Dance* at New York New York Hotel & Casino and good old Wayne Newton at the StarDust Resort & Casino. Not to mention the abundant nightlife that awaits afterwards at such popular venues as Studio 54.

In Lake Tahoe, Harrah's, Harvey's and Caesars attract the likes of Willie Nelson and Credence Clearwater Revival. Or companies can simply choose to create their own customized event with their choice of novelty acts, headliners or popular local bands.

How can groups take advantage of all this entertainment? The most obvious answer: Go to a show. For many attendees, the trophy value of attending a performance they would otherwise never see in their hometown is high. "For some, just going to a show is the incentive. There are hotels and casinos around the world, but nowhere else offers the same entertainment value," says Chris Coaley, director of entertainment for the MGM Grand.

But the greatest advantage may not be so apparent, as it occurs behind the scenes—access. Destination management companies and hotels are an integral resource when it comes to securing tickets, designing an event or adding those special touches. "The key is all about advanced planning. The more the planner understands a



Talent show: Interactive productions are all the rage, like this *Masquerade* performance at Harrah's Lake Tahoe.

company's goals, the greater the ability to put a plan in motion. While many shows are sold out every single night, we have the ability to get VIP seating," says Pam Berman, assistant vice president of hotel sales for the MGM Mirage.

Easy access is perhaps the greatest draw of the Celine Dion show. "In the past, what we have seen is that groups were considered an afterthought instead of the first thought," says Heidi Okada, director or sales for the Caesars Palace Colosseum. "But we made the show accessible to groups a year and a half out, so they didn't have to wait last-minute to check on availability."

Variety hour

Given the diversity, it's no wonder that Nevada attracts incentive groups year in and year out. While high-profile performers will always have a captive audience, companies should know that there are other alternatives that can complement their programs.

Meet and greets, whether with notable personalities, production cast members or look-alikes, continue to be a favorite among corporate groups. "We've invited Gladys Knight and Charo to receptions to mingle and take pictures with guests," McKanna says when describing available options.

In addition to handshakes and autographs, another way to win the hearts of incentive attendees is to incorporate them into the act. To ensure her clients don't get lost in the crowd at the Luxor's *Blue Man Group*, McKanna has been known to provide the show staffers with company and attendee names for use in the pre-show entertainment.

After taking an insurance group to O at the Bellagio, USA Hosts' Civetz played off the show theme throughout the company's stay. Signage and verbal mentions such as "O, you succeeded," and "O, you are superstars," reinforced the attendees' achievements while staying true to the theme. At Harrah's Lake Tahoe, the cast members from the property's interactive theme events *Space Odyssey* and *Moulin Rouge* mingled with incentive winners from Foothill Securities and Ford Motor Company during two recent programs.

Promotional extras such as videos, show programs and room gifts like CDs or posters can be thrown into the incentive marketing mix as well. At the MGM Grand, comedian Carrot Top filmed several friendly welcome videos for select groups, which aired at the front desk during arrivals and appeared in some of the group's own marketing.

When budgets and patience permit, private concerts are perhaps the *piece de resistance* for any program. "Buying out a show is extremely expensive. But we've had several clients take advantage of the large ballrooms and book entertainers directly. Two years ago we used Cher for a Gillette program," McKanna says.

The Elvis Rolodex and other advice

Contrary to popular belief, performers can call in sick. While it's rare for an entertainer to cancel, it does happen on occasion. Then it's time for Plan B—*pronto*! To avoid disappointment like one group of doctors experienced when impersonator Danny Gans felt under the weather, have a contingency plan in place.

When working with novelty acts such as Michael Jackson or Rat Pack look-alikes, avoid disaster by working with a talent representative. "If something happens, then you have a backup. If Elvis doesn't show, then you can call the rep and chances are they will have a Rolodex filled with Elvis replacements," McKanna says.

Virtually anything can be done as far as entertainment goes. But remember: No matter what industry, companies across the board are looking for something that is "politically correct, not offensive, clean and just pure entertainment," McKanna advises. On that note, get on with your show. ■

Photo: Courtesy of Harrah's/Harvey's Lake Tahoe/Opposite: Corbis Images

BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 6609

TRAVEL WEEKLY
SECAUCUS, NJ
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Burrelles

A scene from Cirque du Soleil's "O," a popular — but expensive — show at Bellagio, with tickets costing $121.

Shows provide agents a ticket to commission

3155 p. 134

BY PAUL FELT

LAS VEGAS — Travel agents can score their clients prime seats to most of the hottest shows in Las Vegas and earn 9% commission to boot from entertainment ticket consolidator Keith Prowse International.

"The hottest shows," according to Kevin Streit, managing director of the company's Las Vegas office, "would be 'O' [a Cirque du Soleil production] at Bellagio; 'EFX' [starring '80s pop star Rick Springfield] at MGM; 'Blue Man Group' at Luxor; Siegfried & Roy at the Mirage, as well as Michael Flatley's 'Lord of the Dance' at New York-New York.

"We're usually guaranteed the first 10 rows," he added.

Especially popular shows like "Blue Man Group" often sell out a week before the show date, Streit cautioned, but agents will be advised if they're not going to get good seats for the show and date requested.

Keith Prowse consolidates tickets to most shows, but some must be booked directly, including Siegfried & Roy and the Cirque du Soleil productions "O" and "Mystère," which plays at Treasure Island.

"Tony and Tina's Wedding" was scheduled to open at the Rio Suites Casino on Feb. 1. Tickets for the show are $103 for VIP seats and $89 for standard adult seats.

Keith Prowse consolidates tickets to most shows.

A huge off-Broadway hit, the Italian-American wedding comedy involves audience members as guests of the wedding reception.

"I expect that show to be very popular," Streit said.

While "Blue Man Group" and "Tony and Tina's Wedding" were established hits in New York before heading west, tourists still will find shows that are unabashedly, quintessentially Vegas.

"Shows like 'Jubilee' at Bally's provide the extravaganza — girls, costumes — that old Las Vegas was noted for," according to Frank Curhan, leisure travel specialist with Preferred Travel Services in Las Vegas and past president of the South Nevada ASTA chapter. Tickets for 'Jubilee' cost $69.

In fact, a number of shows have been playing for years and are still doing well.

They include "Splash" at the

(Continued on Page 36)

By Stephen M. Wheeler

DESERT magic

Las Vegas is far more than mere illusion.

GOING PLACES (NORTH CENTRAL DIVISION)
WILLIAMSPORT, PA
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MAY-JUN 2003
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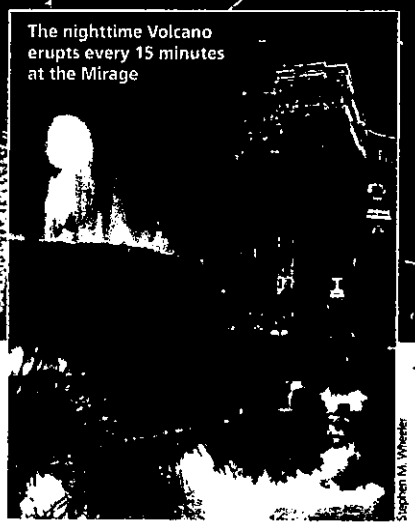


The nighttime Volcano erupts every 15 minutes at the Mirage

Stephen M. Wheeler

3755 P515

You wouldn't think that much could thrive in the Nevada desert. But the oasis of Las Vegas beckons to visitors with an uncanny display of shows and spectacular resorts that have blossomed like, well, magic.

The skyline of Vegas reflects the skylines of Paris, Venice and New York City; there is the circus big top, giant cowboys, a giant lion, castles and the great pyramid. Water fountains dance at the Bellagio Hotel while a volcano erupts and spews fire and lava at the Mirage. Crowds line the street for the Sea Battle at Treasure Island.

Seeking a supernatural thrill? From York, New York, to the Adventuredome Theme Park at Circus Circus, daring and dazzling feats are accomplished routinely. Nothing stimulates the imagination like Las Vegas.

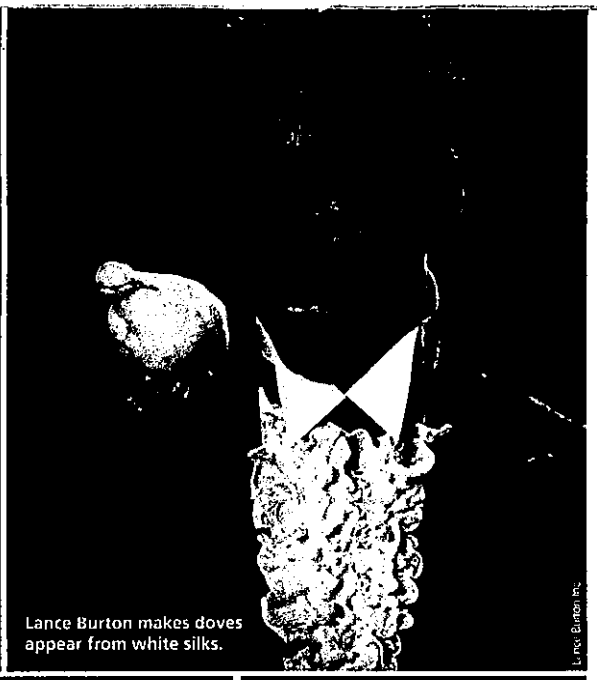
Resort Magic

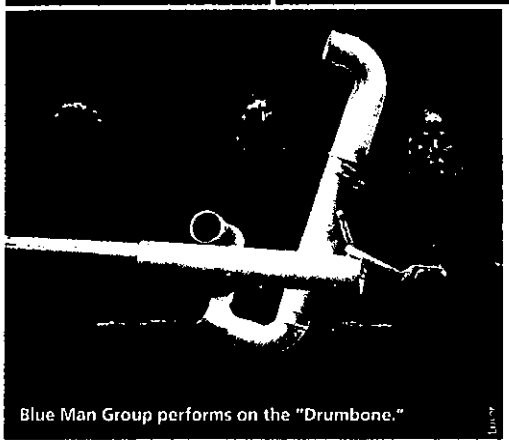
Paying homage to the ancient city of the same name, the Luxor resort is easily identified by the obelisk and Sphinx that stand guard outside the 36-story-tall Great Pyramid. A pyramid in the desert? What's so mystical about that, you may ask? Nothing, until you realize this is Las Vegas, not Egypt. Upon entering the Luxor, you face the largest open atrium-hotel in the world. The Pharaoh's Pavilion features the mystery of King Tut's tomb. Explore the burial, annex and ante chambers of the boy king's tomb, beacon light shines so brightly into the sky from the apex of the Luxor's Great Pyramid that it can be seen by astronauts in space.

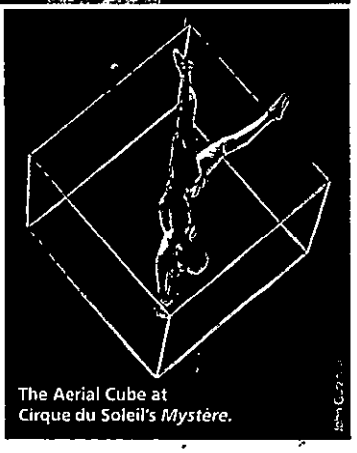
More romantic charm envelopes a leisurely ride in the gondolas of Venice. As you travel through the re-created city of Venice inside the resort, your guide will serenade you with beautiful Italian operatic song. Or ride the gondola outside the resort, and wave at the passersby on The Strip.

Mystical Shows

Like a childhood fantasy dream, *Mystère* is an exceptional Cirque du Soleil production that leaves the crowds awed and bewildered. Starting with two babies born to the world, the story of *Mystère* follows the journey of life itself, ethereal


Lance Burton makes doves appear from white silks.


Blue Man Group performs on the "Drumbone."


The Aerial Cube at Cirque du Soleil's *Mystère*.

vibrant score, *Mystère* presents traditional circus acts in non-traditional ways. Color, light and sound all contribute to a full sensory drama, intermitted only by the antics of several zany characters—Cirque du Soleil's version of clowns. Truly from another world, *Mystère* casts a spell-binding trance on the audience and is easily one of the best shows in Vegas.

At the other end of this magical spectrum is Blue Man Group. As characters visiting from some imaginary world, Blue Man Group is a trio of blue men who use pantomime to discover the wonders of humanity. And what a comic discovery it is. What happens when you pour brightly colored paints into a large drum and beat it rhythmically under a black light? Sensory overload. Pulsing music, bright vivid lights and toilet paper—lots on the Vegas strip. As one of the blue men learns, what is bizarre and perhaps even repulsive to one individual may, in fact, be art to another.

Prestidigitation and Illusion

Master Magician Lance Burton is a throwback to the Golden Age of magic. Yes, he has the big tricks, such as making a Corvette disappear and reappear, then driving off into the sky with it. But it is the smaller tricks, the up-close-and-personal sleight-of-hand tricks that win the audience's approval. Burton routinely uses members of the audience for assistance with card and coin tricks. He takes great care to invite children to the stage to participate in some familiar and favorite tricks, such as the canary in the cage. And Burton will even go to great

performed. If seeing is believing, then you've got to see that one. Burton also makes use of animals, including the rabbit, doves and his own breed of white ducks. "They're much harder to train than white tigers," Burton quips.

Of course he's poking fun at the famous Siegfried and Roy.

Dubbed Magicians of the Century, Siegfried and Roy present a show that many describe as an epic. With a cast of thousands—well, dozens and dozens—elaborate sets, ornate costumes, spectacular lighting and special effects, this show exemplifies the production of Broadway and the showmanship of Las Vegas. With monumental tricks—including one with a 20-foot-tall mechanized dragon—Siegfried and Roy know that the real stars of their show are their beloved Royal White Tigers of Nevada and White Lions of Timbavati.

The crowds roar their approval as Roy performs a metamorphosis with a white lion; later, he appears with a white tiger, which then runs freely across the stage. Siegfried, performing a bit of traditional magic, invites a member of the audience on stage for a smaller trick or two. Unbeknownst to the daring participant, a tiger is slowly lowered on a platform behind her—quite shocking when she finally turns around.

Perhaps Siegfried and Roy's greatest trick doesn't take place in their show at all. The white tiger is an endangered species and has come close to extinction. Siegfried and Roy have dedicated their lives to the preservation of these animals. By breeding orange Bengal tigers that carry the white recessive gene, Siegfried and Roy have dramatically contributed to the slow but steady re-emergence of the white tiger species. You can walk among these tigers—as well as lions, elephants and even dolphins—in a zoo-like setting at Siegfried and Roy's Secret Garden and Dolphin Habitat at the Mirage. It is far more entertaining to see these big cats appear versus disappear.

The magicians, the shows and the resorts themselves easily charm visitors to the Las Vegas desert. Of course, I haven't mentioned the multitude of casinos where you could potentially win BIG

HONEYMOON
file

LAS VEGAS

3755

PUTTING ON THE GLITZ

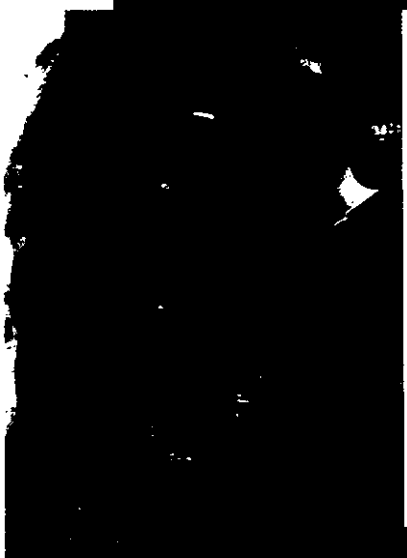
Move over, Liberace. Oh, there'll always be room in Vegas for Mr. Showmanship (who could resist those fur capes?), but today sophistication is giving kitsch a run for its money. Elvis impersonators are competing for arena space with cutting-edge acts like Blue Man Group, while all-you-can-eat buffets vie with a cadre of celebrity chefs for visitors' palates. These days, it's easier to find a Fendi boutique than a pair of fuzzy dice, and at the ever-growing array of high-end resorts, you'll see more topless bods in the men's spa than on the showroom stage.

That's not to suggest that The Strip has lost its over-the-top giddiness. Far from it. Las Vegas loves to take tried-and-true classics to new heights. Gaming? Make a splash at the new Palms Casino Resort. At a mere 447 rooms, the self-proclaimed "boutique resort" has introduced poolside blackjack. Golf? Give it a fantasy spin. With 2,500 imported palm trees, 100,000 tropical plants, and an island full of lava rock, the Bali Hai Golf Club does the South Pacific to a tee.

This Tahitian-themed compound is also where you'll find Cili, an Asian-American dual-menu venue created by Wolfgang Puck. (He now has five thriving dining rooms here.) Quark's Bar and Restaurant at the Las Vegas Hilton may have gone where no theme restaurant had gone before—Cheese Borgers, anyone?—but the town recently kicked the notion of concept dining up a notch. At the Venetian hotel's WB Stage 16 restaurant, you can sit in one of four faux film sets, which combine retro Hollywood with a fab view of The Strip. (Try the Batman room, framed by facades of skyscrapers lit up against a night sky.)

If strolling past chatty Roman statues to browse through Gucci and Judith Leiber at the Forum Shops at Caesars Palace feels a bit been-there-done-that,

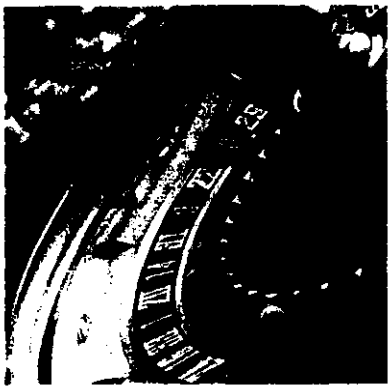
- **Blue Man Group** (yup, they're really blue) pound on made-up instruments, cause weird and wordless hilarity, and in general make a big ol' mess. Now, *that's* entertainment. Luxor. 702-262-4400.
- During **EFX Alive,** Rick Springfield sings "Jessie's Girl" amid a dazzling display of special effects. What more could a couple want? MGM Grand. 702-891-7777.
- **O** is the punnish title of this watery Cirque du Soleil extravaganza (eau is French for "water"—get it?) which features aqua-athletics, surreal costumes, and mind-bending sets. Bellagio. 702-796-9999.
- After more than 5,000 live performances, **Siegfried & Roy** (and their white tigers) still rule the magic scene with a peerless combination of corn and glitz. Mirage. 702-792-7777.
- Elvis and the Rat Pack are history; thank goodness we still have **Wayne Newton,** the reigning king of the Vegas lounge scene. Stardust. 702-732-6325.



Rhinestones, romance, and ritzy resorts. Roll the dice for a dose of glamour.

Can you say "jackpot"? Shows, slots, and shopping action: Put it all together

BRIDE'S MAGAZINE
NEW YORK, NY
BI-MONTHLY 400,000
APR-MAY 2002



palace. When shoppers' fatigue sets in, relieve your sore feet with Endless Energy Pedicures at the Canyon Ranch SpaClub at the Venetian. Worried that your cerebellums might be headed for a permanent vacation? The Venetian has a cure for that, as well: Two branches of the world-famous Guggenheim Museum opened at the resort last fall. Don't worry, it's not too highbrow—one of the first exhibits brought in was "The Art of the Motorcycle." After all, this is still Las Vegas. —EDIE JAROLIM

Editor's note: Rates throughout this story are year-round. Expect significant increases on weekends and during conventions.

RESORT ROULETTE

The sprawling Italian-villa-style **Bellagio** helped usher in a newer, more tasteful era with its understated architecture (well, by Vegas standards), internationally acclaimed restaurants like Le Cirque and Olives, and arcade of high-end shops that include Tiffany, Hermès, and Prada. But that doesn't mean the Bellagio has forgotten its roots: A 100,000-square-foot casino proffers everything from minibaccarat to *sic bo*, an ancient Chinese dice game. Between rolls, stand on the shores of Lake Bellagio and catch the rainbow-hued waters dancing to "Fly Me to the Moon." Doubles from $159; 888-987-6667 or bellagio.com.

Strolling Roman centurians (think Joey's Vegas gig on *Friends*), a replica of Michelangelo's *David*, and Cleopatra's Barge nightclub all help make **Caesars Palace** a kitsch classic. But this resort's amenities surpass the promise of its shiny exterior. Splash around the marble pools in the Garden of the Gods, pedal a virtual-reality bike at the spa, or nibble a Deconstructed Ahi Roll—sushi with the tuna outside—at Euro-Pacific 808 (Hawaii's area code, get it?). If airy digs with a dual-entry shower sound

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continued from page 878

at Aladdin Resort & Casino, shops from Aveda to Z Gallerie line a sultan's dream of a marketplace. Retail burnout? Get a henna tattoo, have your fortune read, or watch a thunderstorm staged every half hour at Merchants Harbor (umbrellas optional).

Spa sybarism is taken to the limit, too. The Passion Body Dip at the Green Valley Ranch spa tops off chocolate and caramel body glazes with a milk wash and strawberry skin soother. At the Palms Casino Resort, you can be exfoliated via piña colada "cocktail" or brown-sugar scrub-down. Can the Krispy Kreme facial be far behind?

Las Vegas has always been in its element after dark, so classy newcomers like *Blue Man Group*, Blue Note jazz club, and Studio 54 mingle easily with the old-guard magicians and lounge acts. The hottest names—Britney, Garth, Madonna—turn up in Vegas, and Celine Dion just settled in for a three-year gig at Caesars Palace. But for all its transformations, this town remains loyal to its chosen ones: the Rat Pack, Elvis, and honeymooners like you. —EDIE JAROLIM

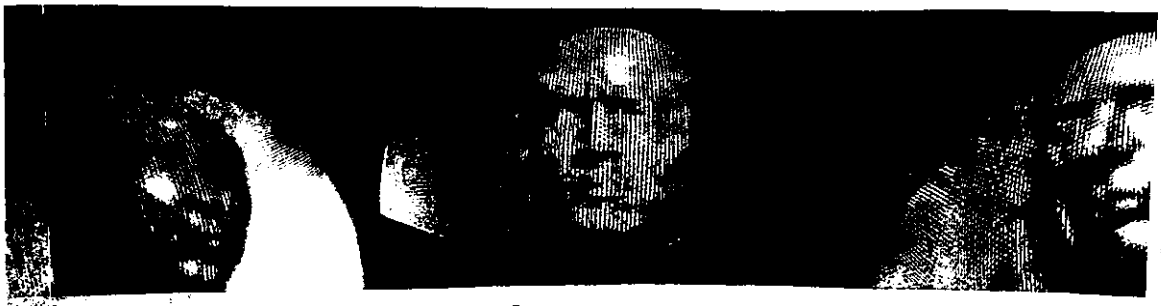
YOUR LUCKY NIGHT

No need to play resort roulette. We've got the goods on Vegas's best hotels. *Editor's note: Room rates throughout this story are year-round. Expect slight increases during holiday seasons.*

If a genie were to grant your wish for 1,001 nights at the **Aladdin Resort & Casino,** filling them would be as easy as saying "Shazzam!" You'd check out the acts at the Blue Note, dance from room to room at the Curve nightclub, and ogle the Strip from the pool deck. As for those days, sample the spa menu, browse the Desert Passage shops, or graze the afternoon away at the Spice Market buffet. Doubles from $69; 877-333-9474 or aladdincasino.com.

Get in the swim at **The Bellagio.** The splashy palazzo-inspired resort is fronted by an eight-acre *(Continued on page 882)*

THIS PAGE: TOMAS BARBUDO/PANORAMIC IMAGES. OPPOSITE: GREG PROBST/PANORAMIC IMAGES



MEETING
NEW YO
20-TIMES/YE
MAR 17 20

You Can Theme It, It Can Be Realized In Las Vegas

3755 p.34

Fred Gebhart

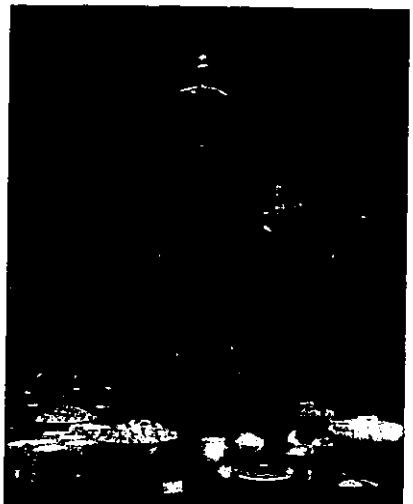
Keep attendees in a meeting after they've seen Las Vegas, try creating a [illegible] event that outshines Vegas itself. "Everything in Las Vegas is larger [illegible] life," said Cheryl Fish, vice presi[illegible] of MGM Mirage Events. "In a [illegible] is built on themes and produc[illegible] values, your event has to go over [illegible]."

That's just what Dell Computers did [illegible] during the Comdex computer [illegible] Attendees entering the Grand [illegible] came face to face with a 30-[illegible] Computer screen set into a [illegible] that framed company presi[illegible] Dell — a standard corpo[illegible]tation setup. At the end of [illegible], the gigantic screen and air [illegible] away to reveal a wild Italian [illegible] in the other half of the [illegible] attendees hadn't suspected [illegible] Mimes, jugglers and other [illegible] the crowd entertained as [illegible] buffet tables, each highlight[illegible] Dell computer product.

[illegible] to Las Vegas expecting [illegible] they also expect to play," [illegible] wow factor is what atten[illegible] and associate with your company after they've gone home."

Fortunately, almost anything is possible in Las Vegas if the price is right. A cocktail reception with Kenny G or Jay Leno? It can be arranged. A private island getaway with private yachts and "Survivor" cast members? Special events producer Baskow & Associates has made it happen.

Company president Jaki Baskow already has taken over the Brooklyn Bridge at the Las Vegas casino-hotel New York-New York, and the entire Fremont Street Experience in downtown Las Vegas.



Want an elaborate Italian festival? Las Vegas can give it to you.

"Some groups have done all the bells and whistles in town in terms of props and décor," said Baskow. "They're looking for new venues. Las Vegas is the one place where they can get it all, including an island in the desert."

Out-of-town event producers are just as upbeat about working in Las Vegas.

"Even Los Angeles and San Francisco don't get the caliber of headline show that you can find every night in Las Vegas," said Sharp Events client services director Jamie Handelman. "I don't think there's a city in the world with as much imagination, as much flexibility, or as many theme possibilities as Las Vegas."

Handelman noted that Las Vegas' concentration of talent and space also helps keep prices reasonable. Even groups that are too small to buy out an entire performance of "O," "Mystere" or Blue Man Group can capitalize on the mystique with a pre-show reception

CONTINUED ON PAGE [illegible]

[illegible]gas Is A Group's Themed Event Bonanza

FROM PAGE 34

[illegible] themes and performers. [illegible]rd to go wrong with tradi[illegible] A theme based on the [illegible] movie "Viva Las Vegas" [illegible]uested, Fish said. When [illegible]oulin Rouge" opened, [illegible]duced Moulin Rich, a [illegible]-look takeoff with liv[illegible]med actresses wearing [illegible]nd furniture draped in [illegible]cense to Kill," a James [illegible]ed License to Party, a [illegible]y fantasy.

[illegible]ction houses, includ[illegible] Events and Baskow [illegible]us on traditional ho[illegible]ues but are eager to [illegible]obvious. Smaller pro[illegible] niche events and ex[illegible]clusive venues.

"Casinos can't set up gaming tables in a ballroom or special event because of legal restrictions," said Garnet Taucer, president of Casino Creations, which specializes in gambling themes. "But we can because we don't use real money. We can bring real games into almost any special event you can dream up."

Activity Planners, another local company, produces hotel-based events, but its specialty is unique residences off the Strip. "Hotels here do events that no other city in the world would even dream of," said sales and marketing director Stephanie Tirrell. "That's what we have to be able to top."

One of her favorite venues is a [illegible] 25 feet underground less than 10 minutes from the Strip. The landmark residence comes complete with museum quality antiques and window murals that simulate the changing day [illegible] evening sky. Planners can bring 200 [illegible] receptions or 160 for a plated meal.

Larger groups are jumping at a [illegible] room Gothic inspired mansion on [illegible]rise Mountain, just outside Las Vegas. The property can be set up to ev[illegible] say, "The Munsters" or the Play[illegible] Mansion, said Tirrell, with space [illegible] 700 indoors and 3,000 on 15 acres [illegible] landscaped grounds.

"We don't even try to pretend [illegible] this is real life," Tirrell said. "Whom [illegible]tendees come to Las Vegas, they [illegible] a lot more than reality. Our job [illegible] help planners go over the top."

Contact Fred Gebhart at [illegible]

A diva's 'New Day'

AS VEGAS OPENS ITS ARMS 'O CELINE DION'S BIG SHOW

3755

Tony Hicks
Knight Ridder Newspapers

eline Dion's new Las Vegas w, "A New Day," is billed as a sation in a city that routinely xes the sensational fairly aver- . Yet there are some important ngs going on behind Las Vegas z.

Dion's three-year run officially gan Tuesday night — a pre- ere at least two years in the king. Caesars Palace built a 00-seat theater just for the nadian singer, who turns 35 on nday.

She'll perform 200 nights a year what by all accounts is a manding show, helmed by ned Cirque du Soleil director anco Dragone. It will feature a zzling array of special effects. ncers, costume changes, circus- e tricks and some music thrown , just for the heck of it.

"I don't think it's a good idea to mpare this show to others," says tistic director Pavel Brun.

He's right, but not just about the eer spectacle. "A New Day" eaks new ground for reasons aving nothing to do with singing dancing.

Three years ago, Dion was one f the top-selling singers on the lanet when she decided to take a reak from show business to rest nd raise a family. To stage her omeback, she becomes the first ig-name singer to pack it up for egas near the peak of her record- elling power.

Elvis was at the end of a long un of bad movies when he howed up in the late 1960s. Wayne Newton and Tom Jones vere never as big outside of town. The rest were either at the end of heir careers or just stopped by for a brief spate of shows or a regular our stop.

Pop stars almost always release a record, then hit the road. Dion, the best-selling female singer in the United States the past decade, will instead bank on the world's willingness to come to her.

So far, so good; the first few months of shows are nearly all sold out.

But once the new-car smell wears off "A New Day," you can bet lots of other big-name singers will be paying attention to Dion's numbers and her ability to sustain the buzz.

"I think if her show is successful, and there's little doubt it will be, you may very well see other artists trying the same thing," says Gary Bongiovanni, the editor of industry magazine Pollstar.

One Vegas entertainment insider, who asked to remain anonymous, says big names such as Michael Jackson and Jerry Seinfeld are already sniffing around.

Meanwhile, the city once associated with lounge lizards and next-stop-retirement nostalgia acts has lured a foundation of big-draw entertainment — Siegfried and Roy, Cirque du Soleil, Penn and Teller, to name a few — and regularly draws frontline pop and rock music concert tours.

For long-term performers, Vegas makes sense. The city's tourist population turns over every three days or so, according to the visitors bureau, constantly bringing a fresh audience. Long-term performers can reap big profits without expensive touring costs. A theater can either be built or molded around a particular show, rather than the other way around.

And finally, a long run in Las Vegas can give an artist the home life generally missing on the road.

"For her it makes a lot of sense," Bongiovanni says. "She day. It's not a bad life. She'll probably make more money than touring, without the touring overhead."

Reports have estimated that Dion will earn from $45 million to $100 million during her Vegas run. And there are ancillary financial benefits on top of that. It's no coincidence, for example, that Dion's new album, "One Heart," landed in stores Tuesday.

Dion's niche as an adult-contemporary artist, meanwhile, will benefit from a city catering to adults with money to drop on air fare, hotel, gambling and at least one show (Dion's) for which a ticket runs from $87.50 to $200.

"Las Vegas is really the only city you could do this in," says Mike Weatherford, a Las Vegas Review Journal writer who's covered the show's development. "That's a huge international market where they're banking on people coming in from Canada and Europe."

The expectations are high, despite a sour economy and a wa making people reluctant to trave Filling a room built for 4,100 people, five nights a week, could be a immense task.

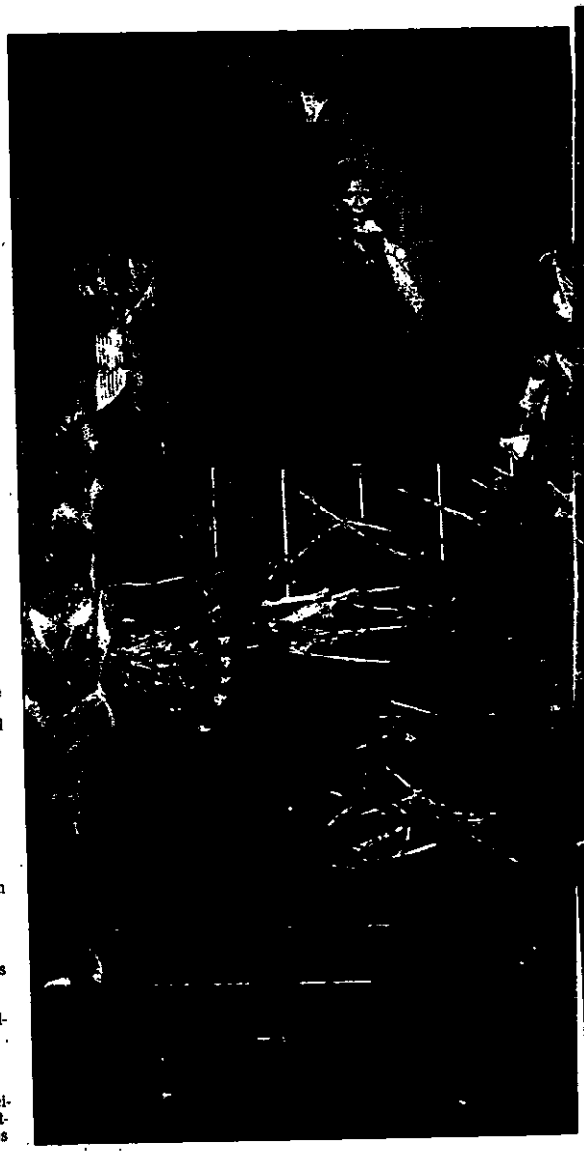
"The show has generated an enormous amount of media atten tion globally," says Rob Powers, the vice president of public relations for the Las Vegas Conventi and Visitors Authority. "There's been a tremendous buzz in the a We've definitely been affected b the languishing economy, but there's lots of reasons for optimism with this show. People wil plan their vacation around this show."

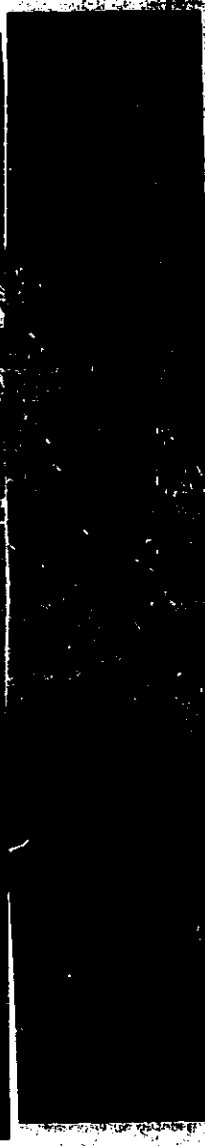
Which is exactly why officials from other shows welcome Dion "People in town are excited; I going," says Lee Ann Groff, the company manager of "Blue Man Group" at Tarkor. "It's brin ing a bigger spender to town. Ar additional successful show only gives more people the incentive come to Las Vegas. It helps eve one else."

The show's upfront costs are said to be around $40 million, p up by Chrysler and A&C Live, according to the Los Angeles Times. [illegible] Dion's ability to bring people i the casino.

[illegible] Brun [illegible] "The show will be flexible, c of necessity," says Brun, who h worked with Dragone on Cirqu du Soleil and Bellagio's "O," among others. "Two hundred shows a year is a tough schedu She's never sang more than 11 120 shows a year, and never m than three nights in a row. But she's in shape, on a hard-core men.

"I admire her," Brun adds. could have easily just taken it the rest of her career. She inv the trouble herself. Franco ca a tough case. He demands you guts and your blood, and she's responded."





AP

CELINE DION sings "The Power of Love" during the opening of the "A New D y" show on Tuesday at the Colosseum at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas.

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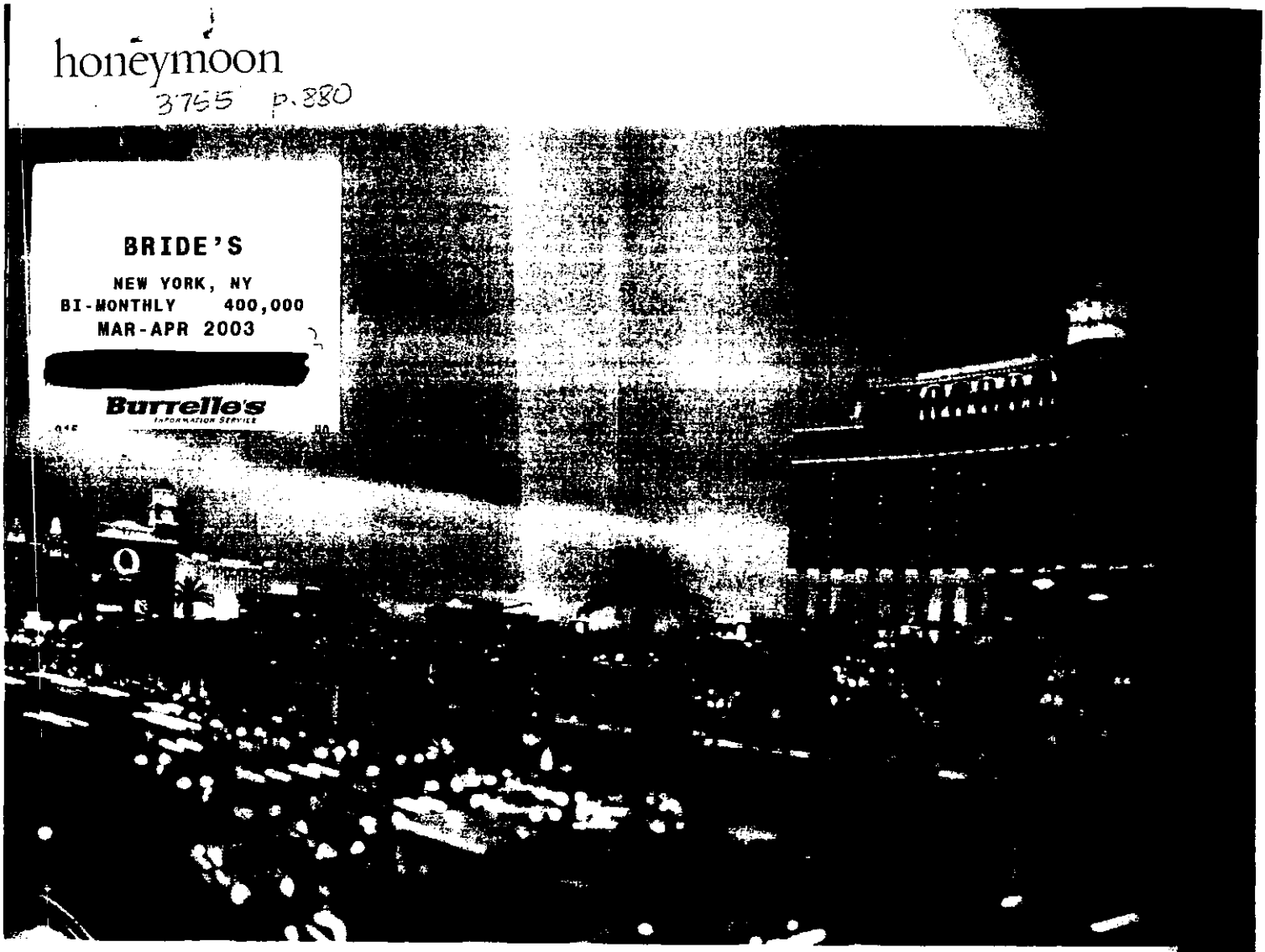


las vegas

Bright lights, Sin City: Orange you glad you're honeymooning in Vegas?

Whoever said "All that glitters is not gold," hasn't been to Las Vegas lately. Sure, Sin City still flashes plenty of bling-bling, but these days the tinsel and feathers gift-wrap genuine resort treasures. Sumptuous spas, posh boutiques, and eateries as divine as their namesakes in Beverly Hills and Manhattan all flourish within the make-believe minicities that call Vegas home.

Once upon a time, the city's cuisine was synonymous with mondo buffets and $.99 all-you-can-eat pancake houses. Today, world-class restaurants with world-renowned names like Commander's Palace, Olives, and Spago rule. Of course, since this is Vegas, it isn't enough for eateries just to lay on fabulous chow; spectacular settings and theatrics are de rigueur, too. At the Mirage resort's Renoir restaurant and the Bellagio's Picasso, millions of dollars' of original art compete with the chefs' culinary prowess. Order a bottle of bubbly at Aureole at the Mandalay Bay Resort and it'll be retrieved by a body-suited, wine-rack-rappelling "wine angel." And Paris Las Vegas gives you the chance to dine on duck *à l'orange* and lobster thermidor from a perch on the Eiffel Tower—or at least its half-scale replica.

Nor are Vegas's high-end stores content to let their brand-names speak for themselves. That's literally true at the Forum Shops at Caesars Palace, where Roman statues orate while you browse Abercrombie & Fitch, Fendi, and Gucci. At Desert Passage *(Continued on page 880)*

No Money, No Problem

Three ways to have fun in Vegas—without cashing in your chips.

Brazil for Bupkis At Rio Hotel Las Vegas, exotically costumed actors dance on floats in the free Masquerade Show in the Sky. Hang out long enough and you might even catch some Carnival beads.

Feline Freebies Unlike Siegfried & Roy's white Siberian tigers, Goldie, Metro, and the other big cats in the MGM Grand's Lion Habitat never have to perform on stage. Maybe they belong to a better union.

Muchas Gratis Disco downtown at the Fremont Street Experience show, featuring two million lightbulbs and a 540,000-watt sound system. Now *that's* entertainment.

STUART WESTMORLAND/DANITA DELIMONT

Las Vegas at a Glance

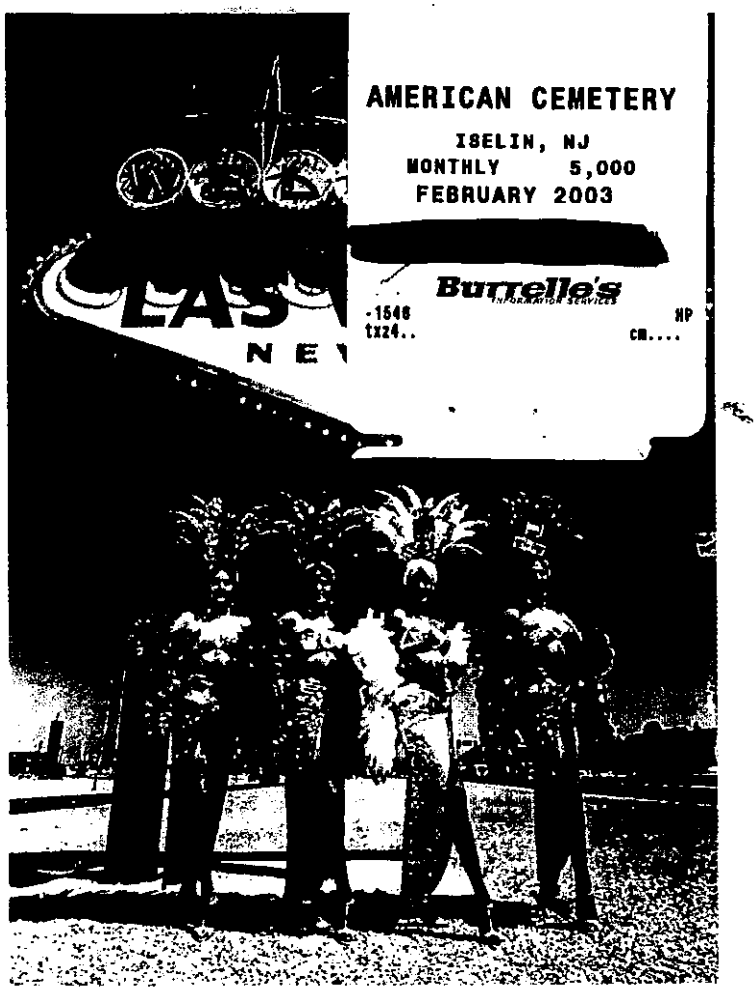
3755 .N3

This year's International Cemetery & Funeral Association Annual Convention and Exposition rolls into Las Vegas on March 10-13. The headquarters hotel for this year's event is the Las Vegas Hilton, which was the Las Vegas performing base of Elvis Presley in the 1970s, and now is the home of the Star Trek Experience.

What can be said about Las Vegas that the average traveler doesn't already know? The city, which boasts 18 of the 20 largest hotels in the United States and has an inventory of more than 126,000 hotel rooms, has played host to over 3,800 conventions and more than 4 million convention delegates in the past year alone.

Those of you who have visited Las Vegas recently know all the glitz, glamour and entertainment it has to offer, while those of you who haven't paid a visit recently are in for some spectacular surprises.

An era of elegance and theme hotels initially began with the opening of Las Vegas Strip megaresorts such as Caesars Palace, Circus Circus and The Mirage, followed in the 1990s by Excalibur, Luxor, Treasure Island, Stratosphere, MGM Grand, Bellagio, Mandalay Bay, the Venetian, Paris Las Vegas and the Aladdin Resort & Casino. The new resorts emphasize unique themes, size, elegance, fine dining, golf, spas and shopping. And with the new resorts came a shift in the marketing Las Vegas, from a glitz and glamour capital to a family destination.



Entertainment

What is the most popular aspect of the Las Vegas experience, is it the shows or the gaming? The answer is... well, call it a draw.

There is little doubt that the Las Vegas marquees are the envy of the world.

The world's tallest, brightest and most elaborate signs announce the ultimate in entertainment choices ranging from close encounters with superstars to multi-million-dollar spectacular production shows. With nightclubs and hotel lounges in abundance, it's possible to be entertained until dawn.

Las Vegas production shows include:

• Siegfried and Roy fight a mechanical dragon several stories high on the stage of The Mirage Hotel-Casino, where live elephants, roaring lions and exotic white tigers disappear with a wave of the hand.

• Cirque du Soleil, the new-wave Canadian circus, uses 70 international acrobats, clowns, comedians, actors, singers, musicians and trapeze artists to excite audiences with its production of "Mystere" at Treasure Island.

• "O," performed at Bellagio, is Cirque du Soleil's first venture into aquatic theatre. It features a cast of 81 artists, performing in, on and above water. The production tells the tale of theatre through the ages and frees guests to lose themselves in a world without limits.

• "Blue Man Group," the off-Broadway sensation, delights audiences with a multimedia performance of music and comedy at Luxor Las Vegas.

• Family musical and comedy act The Scintas entertain audiences in the Scintas Showroom at the Rio All-Suite Hotel and Casino.

• "La Femme" brings the legendary French "Crazy Horse" revue to the MGM Grand. Lighting effects and sensual choreography combine to create one of Las Vegas' hottest shows.

• "Jubilee!," the multi-million-dollar production show at Bally's Las

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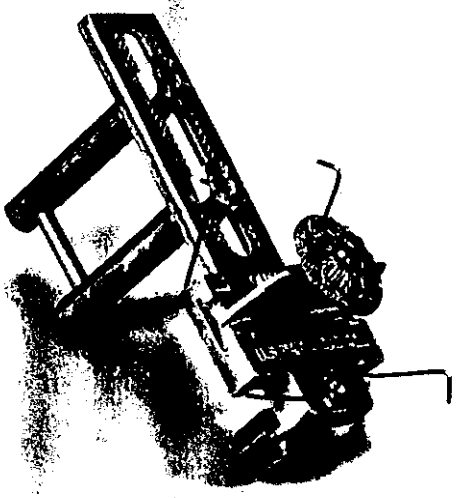

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Vegas, is a parade of beautiful showgirls, dancers and special effects which include the nightly sinking of the Titanic on stage.

• "The Folies Bergere" is a multi-million-dollar production at the Tropicana, where French Can Can dancers have dazzled audiences for more than four decades.

• Master magician Lance Burton mystifies Monte Carlo audiences.

• Danny Gans, a man of many voices and impersonations, performs at The Mirage in the 1,200-seat Danny Gans Theater.

• Wayne Newton, a Las Vegas entertainment icon with multiple vocal and instrumental talents, entertains at the Stardust Hotel-Casino on the Strip in the Wayne Newton Theater.

• "Legends in Concert," featuring superstar impersonators, is a popular, long-running show at Imperial Palace Hotel-Casino.

• "La Cage," "Crazy Girls" and "Splash" perform in three separate theaters at the Riviera Hotel.

Gaming

Las Vegas resorts offer an electronic version of virtually every type of casino game. Slot machines linked to statewide networks pay progressive jackpots in the millions. The jackpot grows each time coins drop into any of the more than 700 networked machines located in scores of casinos throughout Nevada. The statewide slot machine network, known as Megabucks, paid a record jackpot of more than $34.9 million in January 2000.

Clark County's casinos (Clark County includes Las Vegas, Laughlin, Mesquite, Primm and Jean) took in $7.63 billion in gross gaming revenue in 2001, with Las Vegas casinos accounting for $6 billion in 2001.

Here is some food for thought: according to the 2001 Las Vegas Visitor Profile Study, 86 percent of visitors said that they gambled during their stay. The average gambling budget per trip was $607.27 per visitor in 2001, as the average visitor gambled 3.8 hours per day.

Dining

Once known for its all-you-can-eat buffets, Las Vegas has transformed itself into a culinary destination. Dining options

include cuisine from every part of the world, with price tags that vary as much as menus.

Historically, major hotel-casinos featured "gourmet rooms" designed to cater to high rollers' tastes. Each restaurant created an ambience designed to transport diners to a world far away from the action of the casinos. In the 1990s, however, high-end eateries became the rage and Las Vegas hotels recruited some of the top chefs in the world to open and run restaurants inside their properties.

Las Vegas is now home to two restaurants that have earned the AAA Five-Diamond rating: Picasso at Bellagio and Renoir at The Mirage. Celebrity chefs and Food TV icons continue to make waves-and history-in Las Vegas, including: Wolfgang Puck (Spago and Chinois at the Forum Shops at Caesars, Postrio at the Venetian, Lupo at Mandalay Bay and Cili at Bali Hai Golf Course), Emeril Lagasse (Emeril's New Orleans Fish House at MGM Grand and Delmonico Steakhouse at the Venetian) and Susan Feniger and Mary Sue Milliken-of the Food Network Series "Too Hot Tamales" (Border Grill at both Mandalay Bay and Green Valley Ranch Resort).

Other notable chefs include Julian Serrano (Picasso at Bellagio), Charlie Palmer (Aureole at Mandalay Bay and Charlie Palmer Steakhouse at The Four Seasons), André Rochat (Andre's in downtown Las Vegas and at the Monte Carlo and Alizé at the Palms), Joachim Splichal (Pinot Brasserie at the Venetian), Jean-Marie Josselin (8-0-8 at Caesars Palace), Sirio Maccione (Le Cirque at Bellagio), Nobu Matsuhisa (Nobu at Hard Rock Hotel), Mark Miller (Coyote Café at the MGM Grand), Maurizio Mazzon (Il Fornaio at the New York-New York and Canaletto at the Venetian), Gian Paulo "Zeffirino" Belloni (Zeffirino Ristorante at the Venetian), Jean-Georges Vongerichten (Prime at Bellagio), and James Beard Award winning chefs Piero Selvaggio (Valentino at the Venetian) and Alessandro Stratta (Renoir at The Mirage).

All-You-Can-Eat

In the early 1940s, the first buffet opened at the original El Rancho Vegas Hotel, the first hotel on the Las Vegas Strip. Beldon Katleman, the hotel's owner, initiated the "Midnight Chuck Wagon Buffet — all you can eat for a dollar," in an effort to keep patrons in the property during late-night hours. His idea of treating guests to an elaborate array of food for a small price was copied again and again and the Las Vegas buffet earned its place in the city's history.

Buffets are still popular in Las Vegas, as more than 80 percent of visitors to Las Vegas indulge in buffets. Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner, the average buffet features about 45 food selections per meal including salads, fruits, roast beef, baked ham, roast turkey, vegetables and a variety of desserts. Many buffets have specialized menus, ranging from seafood and steak to ethnic or exotic delights. The popularity of this form of dining is clearly evident, as virtually every resort in southern Nevada, including Laughlin, Jean/Primm and Mesquite, offers its own unique buffet.

24-Hour Dining

In the 24-hour culture that is Las Vegas, it is no surprise

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that 24-hour cafés abound in nearly every hotel and casino in the area. Cafés offer casual dining at modest prices. Menus include choices for breakfast, lunch, dinner and a variety of desserts and many offer breakfast 'round-the-clock.'

Entertainment Dining

Dining and entertainment go hand-in-hand at several locations throughout southern Nevada. Dinner theatre options include King Arthur's Tournament, where guests are transported to the feasts of the Renaissance while watching a knightly battle.

Theme Restaurants

Las Vegas also has a bevy of themed restaurants. Trekkies can enjoy a meal among their favorite characters at Quark's at Star Trek: The Experience. Music connoisseurs can nosh on gourmet hamburgers while soaking up the unique atmosphere and music memorabilia at the Hard Rock Cafe. Planet Hollywood serves up the best Hollywood fare, while NASCAR Cafe and ESPNZone are must-sees for sports enthusiasts. Finally, the Harley-Davidson Café serves up chow for Hog aficionados.

Shopping

Shopping continues to be a popular activity for U.S. travelers. In Las Vegas, more than half of the 35 million visitors who visit Las Vegas each year spent time shopping, according to the Las Vegas Visitor Profile Study. Those 18 million shoppers spend an average of $182.60 per trip, with international shoppers averaging $252, the study reports.

In recent years, Las Vegas has become home to numerous unique shopping venues. Everything from colorful souvenir shops to haute couture boutiques can be found in retail centers along the Las Vegas Strip and surrounding areas.

Desert Passage at the Aladdin Resort Casino — At 475,000 square feet, is the newest world-class retail and restaurant complex to open on the Las Vegas Strip. The mall surrounds the Aladdin Resort & Casino and offers more than 130 retailers, such as Tommy Bahama, Steve Madden, Aveda, Royal Seblangor and numerous restaurants, such as Commander's Palace, Blue Note Jazz Club, Lombardi's and Josef's Brasserie.

The Forum Shops At Caesars — Opened in 1992 with more than 526,000 square feet of retail space; a planned expansion to the Forum Shops will add another 200,000 square feet. Popular stores include Louis Vuitton, Escada, Gucci, Guess, Christian Dior, NikeTown, Virgin Records Megastore, Fendi, Polo/Ralph Lauren and Hugo Boss, as well as restaurants such as Wolfgang Puck's Spago and The Palm steakhouse.

Grand Canal Shoppes at the Venetian — Cobblestone walkways line The Grand Canal Shoppes, 500,000 square feet of unique retail space within the Venetian Resort-Hotel-Casino. This indoor shopping area features an authentic re-

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production of Venice's Grand Canal (complete with gondolas) and a replica of St. Mark's Square, which serves as the centerpiece of the mall area. Among the 74 shops, restaurants and attractions are Burberry, Jimmy Choo, Davidoff, In Celebration of Golf and Mikimoto, as well as restaurants such as the Delmonico Steakhouse, Lutece and Pinot Brasserie.

Le Boulevard at Paris Las Vegas — Paris Las Vegas features upscale French retail shopping, located within the resort's famed Le Boulevard district. Le Boulevard features a wide array of authentic French boutiques, such as Le Cave, where you can sample premier French wines and private labels; Les Enfants, a purveyor of French children's toys and games; Cartier Lunettes designer eyewear; La Paradis fine jewelry and crystal; and La Boutique by Yokohama de Paris.

Via Bellagio — In late 1998, one of the most opulent, high-scale resorts in the world came to Las Vegas when Bellagio opened on the Strip. In keeping with Bellagio's luxurious setting, Via Bellagio offers exquisite fashion and jewelry collections from Gucci, Hermes, Giorgio Armani, Prada, Chanel, Tiffany & Co., Moschino and Fred Leighton.

The Fashion Show — Offers the world's most exceptional lineup of anchor stores, with Neiman-Marcus, Saks Fifth Avenue, Bloomingdale's Home, Lord & Taylor, Macy's, Dillard's, Robinson-May Co. and Nordstrom all under one roof. In keeping with its name, the new Fashion Show includes an elevated runway for staging events such as fashion shows and special promotions.

The Boulevard Mall — One of Nevada's largest shopping centers with 1.13 million square feet of retail space, features anchors J.C. Penney, Sears, Dillard's and Macy's. The Boulevard Mall also offers specialty shops such as Sanrio Surprises, American Eagle Outfitters, The Gap, The Disney Store, Yankee Candle Co., Charlotte Russe and a Footlocker Triplex.

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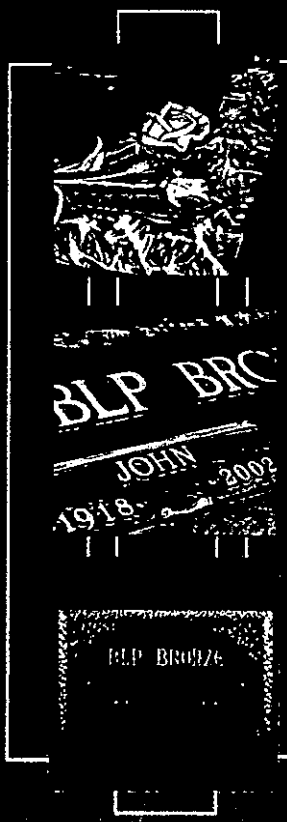

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Belz Factory Outlet World — Located on the southern end of the Strip, Belz Factory Outlet offers exceptional bargains on a wide variety of famous brand-name merchandise priced 20 to 70 percent below retail. Stores include Off 5th Saks Fifth Ave., Reebok, Spiegel, Levi's, Waterford/Wedgewood, Lenox, Danskin, Nine West, The Greg Norman Collection and Fila. Belz is a short cab ride from the Strip and is served by a Citizens Area Transit (CAT) bus.

Galleria at Sunset — The Galleria Mall is located at Sunset Road and Stephanie Street in Henderson, Nev., about 12 miles east of Las Vegas. Galleria At Sunset tenants include J.C. Penney, Robinsons-May Co., Dillard's, Mervyn's California, Ann Taylor, Cache, Champs Sports, Victoria's Secret, Eddie Bauer, The Disney Store and a 600-seat food court. The mall has a Southwest theme with three waterfalls highlighted by windows etched with suns, pinwheels, horses and other figures. *AC*

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Entertainment Capital Of The World

Las Vegas has been associated with glamourous entertainment for decades, and earned its designation as the Entertainment Capital of the World long ago. Today, visitors are still dazzled by sequin-clad showgirls and sophisticated lounge acts, but also enjoy an unparalleled variety of production shows, comedy revues, magic acts, superstar concert headliners and travelling Broadway performances. With nightclubs and hotel lounges in abundance, it's easily possible to be entertained until dawn.

Las Vegas production shows include:

- "O," performed at Bellagio, is Cirque du Soleil's first venture into aquatic theatre. It features a cast of 81 artists, performing in, on and above water. The production tells the tale of theatre through the ages and frees guests to lose themselves in a world without limits.
- "Blue Man Group", the off-Broadway sensation, delights audiences with a multimedia performance of music and comedy at Luxor Las Vegas.
- "Jubilee!", the multimillion-dollar production show at Bally's Las Vegas, is a parade of beautiful showgirls, dancers and special effects which include the nightly sinking of the Titanic on stage.

Las Vegas' showrooms offer a close glimpse of superstars with seating to accommodate several hundred to more than 1,000 guests. Far from the days when the Rat Pack and Elvis were playing to sold-out intimate crowds, Las Vegas now includes venues that can accommodate crowds well into the tens of thousands.

- Home to the annual FOX Billboard Awards and numerous other televised awards shows, the MGM Grand Garden Arena is a 17, 157-seat special events arena that can accommodate concerts, sporting events and awards shows. Performers such as Bette Midler, Janet Jackson, Elton John, Neil Diamond and Madonna have graced the stage of the arena.
- Performers as versatile as the destination itself have played to capacity crowds at the 12,000-seat Mandalay Bay Events Centre. The Three Tenors, Ricky Martin, Andrea Bocelli and the Eagles and just some of the artists who have brought their talents to the Las Vegas Strip. World championship boxing and other sporting events are also held at the Events Centre.
- With a capacity of 1,400, The Joint at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino has played host to legendary acts such as Aerosmith, Blondie, Lenny Kravitz and No Doubt.

SHOPPING GOES VEGAS

Las Vegas is fast becoming a major shopping destination in America, and certainly the most exciting! The Gaming Capital of the World has long been known for its glitz, glamour and world class entertainment and dining, but it is now chasing the accolade of Shopping Capital of USA, offering retail therapy experiences unrivalled elsewhere.

Vegas Malls are unlike any other in the world, and the expansion to the luxurious Fashion Show Mall will be no exception. A multi faceted expansion programme will double its size to nearly 1.9 million square feet and provide 8 anchor stores including, Dillards, Nordstroms, Neiman Marcus, Macy's and Saks Fifth Avenue. The Las Vegas magic will be provided by "The Great Hall", a unique area to stage fashion shows and events on an elevated runway and stage. State-of-the-art technology will provide an experience unparallel anywhere else in the country.

"The Cloud" a unique 400 footlong canopy will be constructed and suspended 180 feet above the 72,000 square foot plaza on the Las Vegas Strip. It will provide Las Vegas style spectacular visual entertainment and excitement.

"Even men like shopping in Las Vegas as the Malls are exciting destinations in themselves" says Stella Clery-Ackland, UK Representative for the city, and self professed shopaholic! "Where else in the world can you take a gondola ride to select your Jimmy Choos, visit ancient Rome to choose your Levi's and explore the Sahara to find your Ralph Lauren?"

NEON TO NATURE

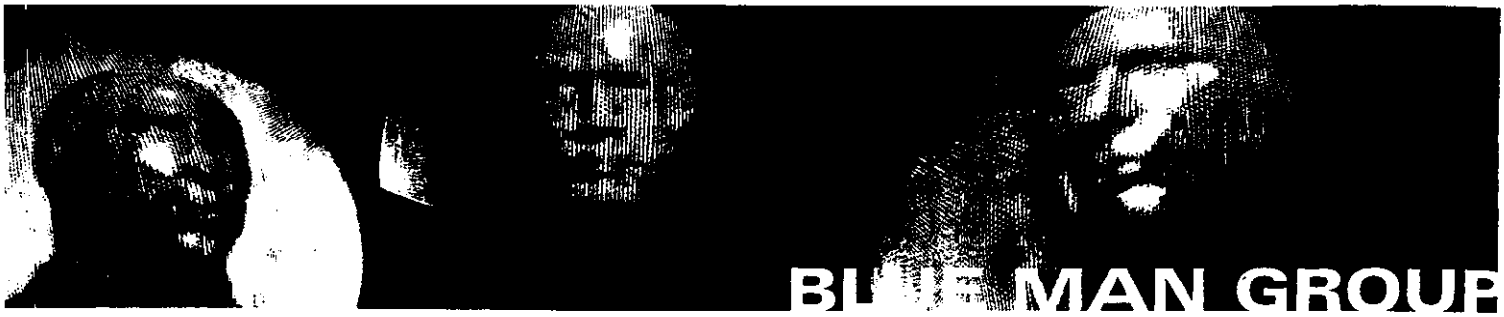
Many travellers are drawn to the lights and excitement of Las Vegas but too few are aware of the wonders of Mother Nature that surround them. Rugged mountains, red rock canyons and deep desert valleys offer stunning scenery and a myriad of outdoor recreational opportunities. The region's favourable climate makes outdoor activity an attractive option almost year-round.

Natural attractions in the surrounding area include:

The Grand Canyon in western Arizona lies approximately 300 miles, a one-hour flight from Las Vegas. Over millions of years, the Colorado River carved this natural wonder that is one mile deep and 277 miles long. Sightseeing air tours of the Grand Canyon depart Las Vegas daily for half-day, full-day and overnight excursions.

Red Rock Canyon is just 15 miles west of Las Vegas. It is a scenic area of rock formations and desert with a 3,000-foot (910-metre) escarpment produced by a thrust fault. Open to the public year-round, Red Rock Canyon has a Bureau of Land Management visitors centre and is home to ferai horses, wild burros, bighorn sheep, coyotes and a variety of desert plant life.

Valley of Fire State Park, only 55 miles (88 kilometres) northwest of Las



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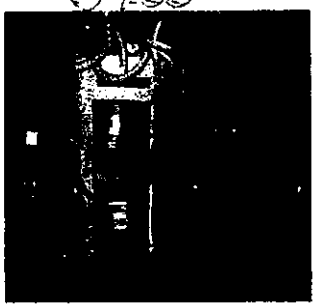

Blue Man Group Places Listening Booths At Virgin Megastores

Blue Man Group in conjunction with Virgin Entertainment Group, North America, has created a custom DVD booth that will showcase the 5.1 surround sound mix of its Grammy nominated debut album, AUDIO. The booth marks the first custom artist listening experience in a major music retail store, a step that demonstrates Virgin Entertainment's commitment to think outside the box of traditional retail promotions.

The booth is 8' H and 7'W and resembles a giant PVC tube, like those Blue Man Group uses in its hit shows. The booth makes its debut in the Virgin Megastore, Las Vegas. The overall look of the booth parallels Blue Man's world of tubes, black lights and modern art. The booth design and the sound system provided by Bose create an intimate surround sound experience. In addition to the audio, a plasma TV screen will showcase slides from Blue Man Group's Las Vegas show. 2

THE 10 BEST 10 BEST LISTS

We've just weathered another busy season of year-end rankings, from movies and minutiae to the biggest news stories of the year. Having trouble sorting through the clutter? Here are our picks:

1

Chicago *Tribune*: Top 10 Trent Lott Apologies. Pulling in at No. 3: "I don't accept those policies of the past at all . . . I'm the son of a sharecropper myself"

2

Fineman P.R.: Top 10 P.R. Blunders. Martha Stewart's mess got nosed out by Abercrombie & Fitch, for its marketing of thong underwear to preteen girls, which prompted boycotts by profamily groups

3

NASCAR: Top 10 Best Paint Schemes. Proof that even motorheads try to color-coordinate. Robby Gordon's black-and-orange Chevy was praised for "ingenious use of his sponsor's logo"

4

New York *Times*: Top 10 Movies. With no fewer than four lists, one each from four critics, 28 films can say they made the Top 10. Only quadruple winner: *Talk to Her*

5

***Tatler*: Britain's 10 Most Eligible Bachelors.** The London society magazine tapped Prince Harry. His older brother William didn't make the list because he no longer lives in the city

6

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY: Top 10 Celebrity Excuses. "Crack is cheap. I make too much money to use crack." Whitney Houston, on why crack is not among the drugs she has admitted using, snagged No. 3

7

***Booklist*: Top 10 Science Reference Sources.** The compilers pleaded there were so many contenders they had to limit the list to the 500s of the Dewey decimal system

8

***Investor's Business Daily*: Top 10 News Events of 2002.** Corporate scandals, at a surprisingly low No. 7, were outranked by the D.C. snipers

9

Las Vegas *Review-Journal*: Top 10 Shows on the Strip. Gladys Knight, at the Flamingo, edged out *Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor*

10

AskMen.com: Top 10 Ring Tones for Your Cellular Phone. *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, at No. 10, won praise because, unlike many of the standard high-pitched cell tunes, it "won't scare the bejeezus out of you when your phone rings" —*By Julie Rawe*

MEDIA WATCH

Flashbacks in Black and White

THE U.S. CONGRESS ISN'T LIKELY to approve reparations for black people—not this Congress, anyway—but, just now, pop culture has fallen in love with the idea. In movies, the critically laureled *Far from Heaven* has a restless '50s housewife fall in love with her noble black gardener. On Broadway, the musical *Hairspray* is wowing 'em with its perky parable of interracial love set at a teen dance party in 1962 Baltimore. On TV, NBC's *American Dreams* makes Dick Clark's *Bandstand* a focus for the conflicted feelings whites in Philadelphia had for blacks circa 1963.

DAVID LEE—FOCUS FEATURES

Sharing a smile in *Far from Heaven*

PAUL KOLNIK

Discovering tolerance in *Hairspray*

Confrontation in *American Dreams*

The show-biz community's idea of reparation is, guess what, mere nostalgia. It revives not the centuries of slavery and abuse but a more recent era of liberal piety, when some suburban whites discovered race shame. It reminds the mass audience that 40 years ago black people were saints—not only for the atrocities they endured but also for the grace with which they bore them.

As history lesson or homily, this is unobjectionable. But as drama, the Manichaean tussle of good vs. stupid is too often a recipe for stock characters, lazy thinking, easy exits from thorny issues. It also dodges a question many blacks posed: Who says we have to be the stalwart ones? Why can't we be as selfish, superficial, even prejudiced as everyone else? Equality in mediocrity: an American ideal that anyone can attain.

It's axiomatic that the first generation of insurgent minorities—blacks, women, gays—felt obliged to prove their similarities to the oppressive majority: that they were as white, manly and straight as Joe Sixpack. It was the next generation that got to celebrate their differences. They felt free to be who they were, and that was cool too.

But so much mid-cult drama is stuck in Phase One. And that's because the new race parables (whose main creators happen to be white) are not about the black struggle. They are fables of reassurance for white folks: your parents, who dared to be tolerant.

A good movie might be made about the feelings of an African-American gardener pressured from both sides of the racial divide when a white woman becomes attracted to him; but *Far from Heaven* isn't it. Similarly, the blacks in *Hairspray* and *American Dreams* are mostly props for their white neighbors' learning curve. An orphan child or stray puppy would serve the sa

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BREAKING NEWS

WSA® Catch the Excitement February 8-11

SHOE SHOW EXPANDS

February WSA Show Will Include Mandalay Bay Convention Center

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The new Mandalay Bay Convention Center, shown above, will now house part of WSA's February trade market.

Tickets to the WSA Shoe Party (starring Sheryl Crow, at right) are available at www.wsashow.com

On the heels of a successful August market where an additional 75,000 square feet was utilized for exhibitor space, WSA has announced plans for further expansion at another new facility. The largest footwear show in the U.S., WSA will add exhibit space at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center to its current venue at The Sands Expo for February 2003.

WSA will be one of the first major trade shows to occupy approximately 575,000 square feet of new exhibit space, currently under construction, adjacent to the Mandalay Bay Resort. The facility is located at the south end of the Las Vegas strip.

WSA currently has a contract for exhibit space at the Sands Expo through August 2005. Dates for additional space at Mandalay Bay have been tentatively booked from August 2003 through 2010.

WSA will no longer be exhibiting at the Las Vegas Convention Center due to unavailability of space.

The move, according to Chris Aiken, executive director for WSA, will allow the non-profit organization the potential to expand the amount of exhibit space for future shows. "We're very excited by the opportunities that Mandalay Bay offers," he said.

Other benefits of moving the show to Mandalay Bay include: easier move-in and move out procedures due to better designed freight landing, and proximity to a range of hotels and the Las Vegas airport.

Find the answers to your WSA questions by logging on to website

Log on to WSA's website www.wsashow.com

- Contact exhibitors from the last WSA show
- Book hotel and travel arrangements for February 8-11
- Pre-register for the next WSA show
- Order tickets for Sheryl Crow, performing at the February 8 Shoe Party
- Check out the Spring 2003 Trend Report

POP/ROCK SINGER SHERYL CROW TO ENTERTAIN FOOTWEAR INDUSTRY

This February, WSA attendees will once again have the opportunity to party with superstar entertainment at what has become a must-do event, the WSA Shoe Party. Renowned recording artist, Sheryl Crow, will offer her own unique brand of rock and roll on the opening night of the World Shoe Association trade market, February 8, 2003.

Coming off an international tour in Europe, Japan and the US (including performances with the Rolling Stones), Crow will energize the footwear industry with songs from her hit CD's: *Tuesday Night Music Club, Sheryl Crow, The Globe Sessions* and her latest *C'mon C'mon* which she recorded with such recording artists as Don Henley, Emmylou Harris, Dixie Chick Natalie Maines, Liz Phair and Lenny Kravitz.

The three-time Grammy nominee is best known for her mega hits *"All I Wanna Do", "A Change Would Do You Good", "Leaving Las Vegas", "If It Makes You Happy"* and *"Every Day is a Winding Road"*.

As with previous WSA Shoe Parties, Crow will undoubtedly be entertaining a full house on February 8, 2003.

Entertainment for past Shoe Parties has included Stevie Nicks, The Temptations, Tom Jones, Chicago, comedian Jay Leno, Glenn Frey of the Eagles, Crosby, Stills, & Nash and most recently comedy super star Robin Williams. Other WSA Shoe Parties have utilized existing Vegas hotel shows including Cirque Du Soleil's Mystere at Treasure Island, O at the Bellagio, Hilton's Starlight Express and Blue Man Group at the Luxor Hotel.

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WCAF Las Vegas THE

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Go for the show, stay for the fun!

With the 2003 West Coast Art & Frame Show and the National Conference just around the corner from January 15-18, visitors would do well to consider the show an opportunity to combine business with a vacation. With more than 250 booths and almost 70 educational seminars, the trade show and education will offer plenty of reasons to travel to the desert city. But with daytime temperatures typically around 60 degrees or above in January, Las Vegas itself makes a great place for a mid-winter getaway.

In the past conventioneers in Las Vegas had one primary off-hours activity—gambling—along with catching a casino lounge act here or there. Today, the options seem endless. Las Vegas has become an all-around vacation destination. Gambling is still a big draw, but with all the other attractions show attendees can now spend their entire stay without popping so much as a nickel into a slot machine.

Photo courtesy of David Heald and the Venetian

Dining and shopping at the Shops at the Venetian is just the beginning of the many things to see and do around Las Vegas.

Las Vegas is one of the easiest and most affordable destination cities in the U.S. Airline, hotel, meal, and rental car prices are significantly less expensive than in any other sizable U.S. city or resort area. The WCAF show has also arranged special low rates, and visitors can also find a host of other travel bargains through the Internet.

This year's host hotel, the Las Vegas Hilton, offers more than 3,000 rooms, 10 restaurants, spa, heated pool, tennis courts, and jogging track as well as concerts and night club acts throughout the year. The hotel is also home to Star Trek: The Experience, which lets visitors interact with live actors and battle aliens in a motion-simulator re-creation of the Starship Enterprise.

Even if you never venture beyond the city limits, there are hundreds of things to see and do in town. Beyond the Hilton, there are dozens of the largest, most exciting casinos in the

Outside Las Vegas

If you can manage a day or two before or after the show, and you're looking for a change of pace or just some different surroundings, there are also some very interesting places to explore just outside Las Vegas.

One of the most famous is the **Hoover Dam**. You can take the Discovery Tour of the famous national historic landmark, which includes two films about the dam and Western reclamation projects, an exhibit gallery, an observation deck, and the guided walking tour to the dam's prime features.

Hoover Dam backs up the Colorado River at **Lake Mead**. With 700 miles of shoreline, the lake offers some outstanding water recreation. You can rent houseboats, fishing boats, or deck cruisers at five marina areas a short drive from town. Or you can go on a cruise, from a paddlewheeler to a dinner cruise.

Feeling more energetic? Perhaps you'd like to spend a day at the **Las Vegas Ski and Snowboard Resort** at Lee Canyon. Las Vegas may be warm, but the mountains rise over 10,000 feet northwest of town, with some excellent slopes of powdery snow a short drive away.

Or perhaps you'd like to explore some of the desert beauty on foot. Half an hour northeast of town, you'll find **Valley of Fire State Park**, a striking landscape of giant red-rock boulders, rugged canyons, and huge formations. The park offers trails of varying lengths through a fascinating landscape. There's also plenty of the eerie scenery you can see from your car and roadside overlooks. Closer to town, on the western edge of the city, lies **Red Rock Canyon**. This park offers a scenic natural setting for hiking and sightseeing.

Willing to spend a few more days? If you can, you may feel inclined to visit a variety of notable national parks within a day's drive of Las Vegas. These include Arizona's **Grand Canyon**, California's **Death Valley** and **East Mojave Scenic Area**, and southern Utah's **Zion** and **Bryce National Parks.** For the truly adventurous, there are also dozens of local and regional guided bus trips, plane and helicopter flights, backcountry jeep tours, or white-water raft and canoe trips leaving from Las Vegas. Ask the concierge at the Hilton or any other hotel to give you a rundown on the possibilities.

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world. But there are many other attractions, including special shows and numerous sightseeing attractions and rides all over town. Some are free to passersby on the street. Others include tourist-style attractions in the casinos.

If you're interested in relaxing during the off hours, there are almost three dozen spas in Las Vegas, including those at casino hotels as well as at resorts and health clubs. Or try a round or two of golf at the more than 50 golf courses in the area, including those designed by the biggest names in the sport.

All the activities in and around Las Vegas add up to some great fun for show attendees. Especially if you live in another part of the country, the West Coast Art & Frame Show and the National Conference will allow you to combine business with a mini-vacation to explore a part of the country you may not have had the chance to see. But even if you have only a few hours, you'll find no shortage of things to do.

For more information on the trade show, call 732-536-5160 ext 256. For information on the conference, call 732-536-5160 ext 235.

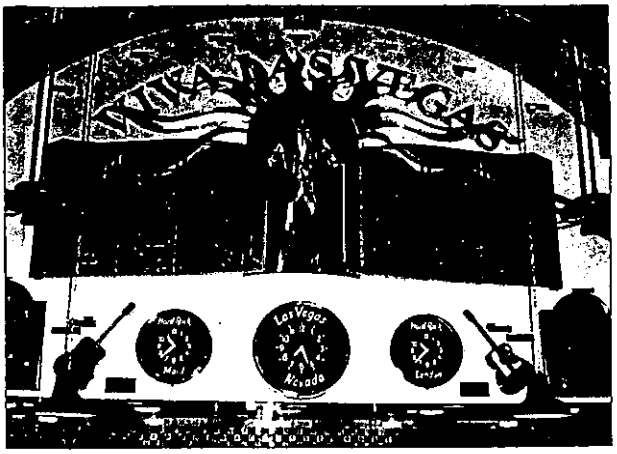

Photo courtesy of The Hard Rock Cafe And The Las Vegas Tourist Board

What would a trip to Las Vegas be without an Elvis show? The Viva Las Vegas Show at The Hard Rock Cafe is just one of many that you can find all over town.

Fun on the Strip—and Beyond

After you've spent some quality casino time and been entertained by top-line entertainment, it's time to take in some other attractions and amusements around town. And there are plenty of selections, so if you don't find something you like, keep looking. Following is sampling of fun-filled things to see and do:

Laugh the evening away at a **Comedy Club.** Visit Catch a Rising Star in the Excalibur. Take in the Improv at Harrah's. Visit Second City in the Flamingo. Enjoy Laugh Trax at the Palace Station. Be amused at the Comedy Zone in Casino Royale or see Rita Rudner at New York-New York.

Catch a **Magic Act.** Watch Siegfried & Roy at the Mirage. Visit Caesars Magical Empire. See Melinda, First Lady of Magic, at the Venetian.

Fill an evening with **Music or a Concert.** There are plenty of the Vegas standards—tribute shows to Elvis, the Beatles, Stevie Wonder, the Rat Pack, and Rock 'n Roll Legends. The oldies live on in Vegas. But so do new headliners.

From circus acts at Circus Circus and Cirque du Soleil's Mystere at Treasure Island to the Blue Man Group at the Luxor and Lord of the Dance at New York-New York, there are dozens of **Specialty Acts** all over town.

Be a high roller and ride a **Roller Coaster.** Strap in for the Manhattan Express at New York-New York, which twists, loops, and dives around the resort's perimeter. Or travel up to the Stratosphere Tower's two thrill rides, the High Roller Coaster and the Big Shot. Or try the NASCAR Café's Speed-The Ride, Vegas' fastest coaster. The Café also is the home of the Las Vegas Cyber Speedway.

Looking for something else? Watch pirates battle the British Navy in the **Buccaneer Bay Sea Battle**, held in front of Treasure Island.

Go shopping at Caesars Forum Shops, then go for a **Cinema Ride**, which offers six 3-D simulator thrill rides, including a roller coaster, spacecraft, submarine, haunted graveyard, and ski ride.

Take a guided educational tour through the **Dolphin Habitat/Secret Garden** at the Mirage.

Every evening at dusk, you can watch a light show in downtown Las Vegas called the **Fremont Street Experience**, which features 2.1 million lights and half a million watts of sound and music.

Take the elevator ride to the top of the **Eiffel Tower** at the Paris Las Vegas, where the observation deck offers a spectacular view of the valley.

Enjoy a dinner show complete with live **Medieval-Style Jousting** at the Excalibur.

Watch as more than a thousand fountains outside the Bellagio create the Dancing Waters, a ballet of water that moves to the music.

Visit the **Guggenheim Las Vegas** at the Venetian, which features exhibitions ranging from contemporary painting and sculpture to architecture and design.

Become immersed in the two films daily at the **Imax Theater** at the Luxor or go on a Race for Atlantis at the Imax at Caesars Palace.

Explore more than 200 antique, classic, and special interest automobiles in the **Imperial Palace's Auto Collection.**

Go on a motion simulator ride called **In Search of the Obelisk** at the Luxor, which will take you through an ancient, newly discovered pyramid.

See the African lions and cubs at the **Lion Habitat** at the MGM Grand or visit the **White Tiger Habitat** at the Mirage, which features Siegfried & Toy's exotic white tigers.

Be transported to an undersea ocean at the **Shark Reef** at Mandalay Bay, where more than 2,000 animals representing 100 species swim in 1.6 million gallons of water.

Head to the Southern Nevada **Zoological-Botanical Park** to see exotic and native wildlife, botanical displays, and unique desert ecotours.

Take in the laser light and water spectacular in **Mystic Falls Park** at Sam's Town.

Watch the regular nightly **Volcano Eruptions** in front of the Mirage, complete with spewing smoke and fire 100 feet high.

Take five different adventure rides showing on two screens in the 3-D **Theaters of Sensation** at the Venetian, including a virtual gondola ride, a mysterious Venetian carnival, and time travel to King Tut's Tomb.

CHASIN' THE BLUES
AWAY II: Blue Man Group.

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NEW YORK

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Forever Young

he Fantasticks is gone, and you're not seeing *The Producers* until 2007. What to do till then? lon't waste your time and money on tourist shows. These champs were built for New Yorkers, nd they're as good today as the day they opened. By Logan Hill

HE PLAY	THE THING
he Lion ing	Four years later, *The Lion King* remains a magic spectacle. The best kids' show of a generation or more, Julie Taymor's production also packs enough downtown wit, whimsy, and stunning stage play to please even the most jaded critics, which it certainly did in 1998, when it won eight Tonys. Now and forever? Probably. Just don't call it the next *Cats*. (New Amsterdam Theatre; 212-307-4747.)
abaret	Alan Cumming. Natasha Richardson. Jennifer Jason Leigh. Some of this generation's hottest talents have spent quality time in this decadent Weimar wonder, now starring Molly Ringwald and Raúl Esparza. From the revival's seedy setting—Studio 54—to its tiny audience cocktail tables and nasty edge, the production is an inspired mix of grit and grace other producers can only hope to emulate. (Studio 54; 212-239-6200.)
ent	As any *Rent*-head waiting for standby tickets for the twentieth time will tell you, to see *Rent* for its historical value (brilliant author dies on the eve of the show's premiere) is to miss the point entirely. As Jonathan Larson wrote, "There's only now / There's only here / Give in to love / Or live in fear / No day but today." (Nederlander Theatre; 212-307-4100.)
ontact	Director-choreographer Susan Stroman has given us some ecstatic and indelible images, including the sex-starved septuagenarians dancing with walkers in *The Producers*. But here she created a work wholly her own, an insouciant dance-theater event that includes a suicidal adman's fantasy that dizzily connects her restless choreography to a joyously kinetic vision of New York nightlife. (Vivian Beaumont Theater; 212-239-6200.)
lue Man roup	With a Grammy nomination, a Las Vegas show, and an army of touring blue men in their wake, the blue boys have grown from downtown oddities to international celebrities. Their show, which made performance art safe for the general public, has thrived because it actually *improves* every year, with the best sound design found anywhere downtown and a surprisingly strong musical score. (Astor Place Theatre; 212-254-4370.)

iPiS
·P·A·i·N·T·

A larger-than-life gumball machine with gumballs the size of chicken eggs sits off to the side of the stage. And in the center of the stage sits a crazy woven network of white xylophone-like PVC tubes.

"Talk into the tube!"

It's 6:30 p.m. in New York City when the house doors of the Astor Place Theater fly open. From the cramped theater lobby pour well-dressed guests, tickets in hand, in search of their assigned seats inside. Not wanting to be seen on the stage, you walk quickly down the steep stairs from the stage to the compact recesses below.

Down here the atmosphere is buzzing. Props are being placed. Musicians are getting into costume. And tonight's three Blue Men apply the last smears of thick cobalt-blue grease paint to their foreheads, necks and chins.

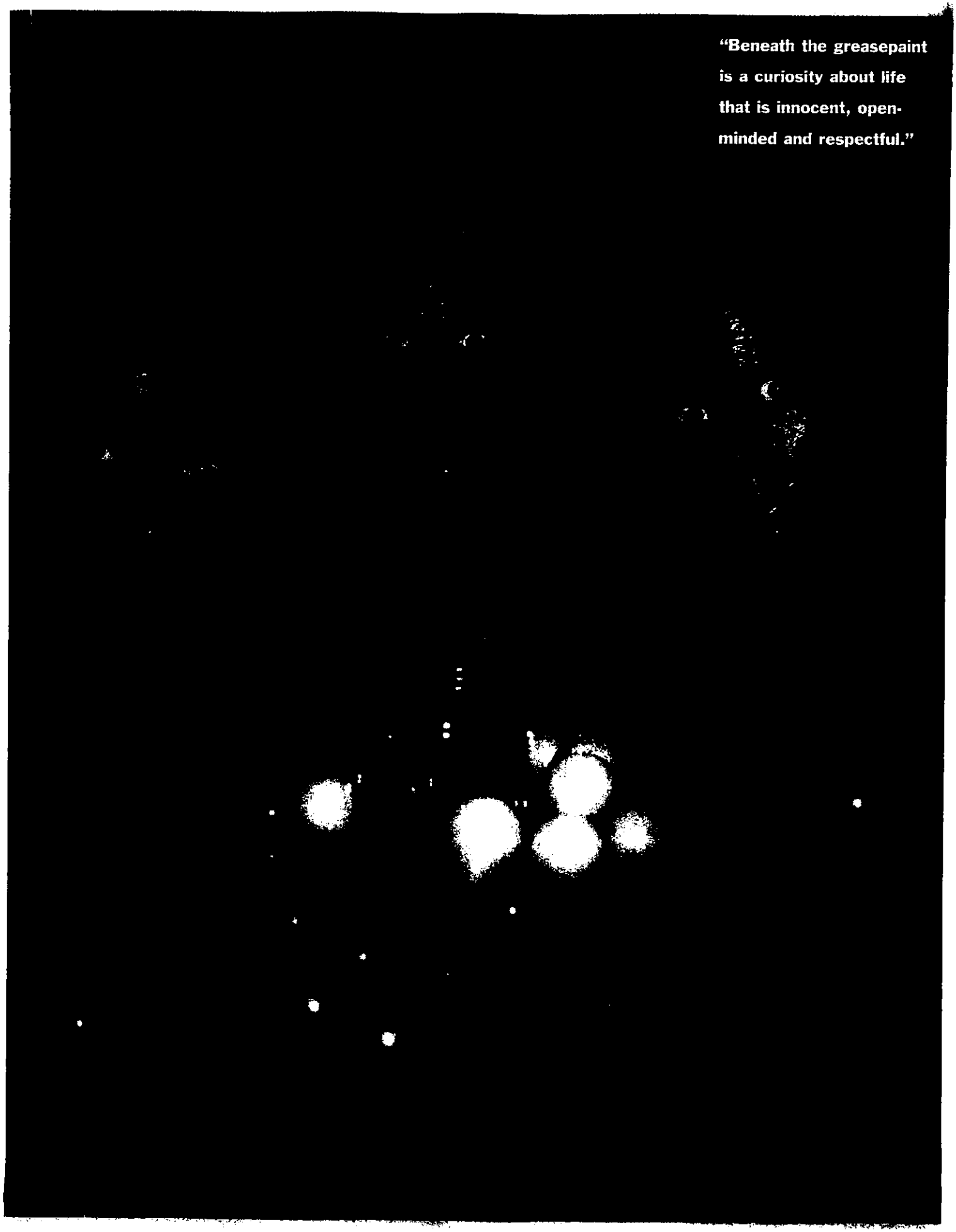
You walk past several rows of shelves containing bottles of luminous paint, boxes of Cap'n Crunch cereal, Twinkies and stacks of cardboard boxes. At the top of the stack sleeps a cat named Baby.

Karen Rockower stands on a short stack of boxes beside Baby. Hanging from the ceiling above her are the open ends of 50 or more twists of plastic tubing. Karen explains that the other ends of the tubes are placed all over the theater, from the lobby to the balcony and to the main floor. It's a way to surprise the audience upstairs and get them ready for the show.

She grins at you and suddenly grabs one of the tubes and yells into it as loud as she can: "Hey! Talk into the tube!!!" A few moments later, a man's timid voice responds. "Uh.....hello?" he says. "Who are you?"
"I'm Karen!" she quickly responds. "I'm with the Blue Man Group! Welcome to the show!!!"

Bright paint. Big drums. Before each performance, three soon-to-be Blue Men don bald caps, and paint their heads and faces a bright cobalt blue. Then, for nearly two hours, they speechlessly

ALL PHOTOS EXCLUSIVELY FOR EXPLORE! BY STEVE MANN


"Beneath the greasepaint
is a curiosity about life
that is innocent, open-
minded and respectful."

The *PVC Instrument* is the centerpiece of the Blue Man Group's show. At first glance, it looks like a xylophone got into a losing game of paint ball.

present their poncho-wearing audience to percussive rhythms, tossed marshmallows, a feast of Twinkies, splashing paint, and a lesson in art history. Each show is loud and messy, but mostly it's very blue and very fun.

Hours before the Blue Men arrive, you stand in the Astor Place Theater lobby and inspect a series of tubes that hang above you. Within moments, production manager Lori Weaver walks up and welcomes you to the theater. She leads you through the theater doors and down toward the stage. Lori tells you to watch your step as you head up through the labyrinth of the stage and then downstairs to the dressing rooms. She explains that in order to pull off each performance a small army of artists, musicians, prop managers, lighting designers and cleaning people is required.

The tools of a Blue Man's trade are as commonplace as a hardware store.

Everything you see is big, plastic and odd in this setting. But it is as ordinary as anything you might find in the plumbing section of a hardware store. Large plastic canisters pose as drums. An oversize gumball machine with gumballs the size of chicken eggs sits off to the side of the stage. And a crazy woven network of white xylophone-like plastic tubes rests in the center of the stage.

Above the stage more objects hang: a massive, gold-

eafed picture frame, heavy tage lights, more tubes and oils, weird musical instruients and an old-looking, wo-foot-long fish. All this, but till no sign of any Blue Men.

lumble beginnings, xalted moments.

n the case of the Blue Man roup, making art has taken lifetime of friendship. Matt oldman and Chris Wink, wo-thirds of the original Blue lan Group, have been iends since they were 12 nd in school. Phil Stanton, ie last third of the trio, met hris in 1986 while they were orking for a restaurant in lew York called Glorious ood (Today, the restaurant till makes a 30-pound Jell-O old for each performance).

It wasn't until 1988 when ie three friends "discovred" the Blue Men during a erformance in New York's entral Park. For this show, ie three dressed in black lothing and painted their eads and hands blue. They idn't speak, but communicatd to their audience through ody language, music and suggestion. They acted clueless, yet curious, like aliens from another planet.

Originally, they wanted their show to make fun of the art world of New York. Sort of a sarcastic, but gentle, slap in the face of its snobbery. But as the years went by, their show became more developed. The show now was about more than simply art. Music became important, too. But bringing the audience together as short-term friends became even more important to them.

While the Blue Man Group started in New York City, Phil Stanton's background was certainly not in the city. He was raised in Georgia as the son of an Assemblies of God minister. His early experiences taught him lessons he would remember and use later on.

"My father not only preached in churches; he also designed them and built them. From him I inherited a love for building things and hardware—from pipe fittings to screws and fasteners." Today, Phil is the one who designs and builds their one-of-a-kind instruments.

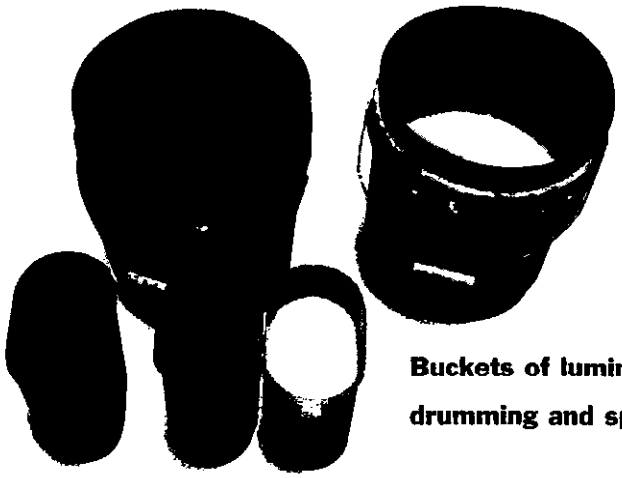
What Matt, Chris and Phil have in common is a different way of looking at the world. According to Phil, "Growing up in school we all felt like you were either expected to get into the science group, or the group that liked to read, write poetry and learn about art. Our interests were always much broader than that."

When the three started the Blue Man Group, they tried to bring all these subjects together into one thing because "it all seemed so separate."

So they use their perform-

Originally, they wanted their show to make fun of the art world of New York. Sort of a sarcastic, but gentle, slap in the face of its snobbery.

ALL PHOTOS EXCLUSIVELY FOR EXPLORE! BY STEVE MANN



Buckets of luminous paint await drumming and splashing.

nce as a way of drawing heir *eclectic* interests ogether.

The Blue Men say that ach show is a work of art, a noment of unity between sci- nce, entertainment, music nd art. "We want to take eople to what we called an exalted moment,'" explains hil. "We want to see how lose we can get the audience o one of these experiences ogether without using drugs r alcohol," he says. "From arly on with Blue Man roup we were in search of hese moments because we elt like there were very few pportunities for these expe- iences left today."

he Nature of Blue

Underneath the stage you sit n a folding chair with the hree Blue Men who will be erforming tonight. Without heir cobalt blue greasepaint, hey look normal enough. hey have hair, ears and they alk like everyday people.

Tonight's Blue Men are eter, John and Michael. Nothing has prepared them or being blue. In their role, they can only gesture with their bodies, their eyes and their music.

But the Blue Men joke that it's not so difficult to be like them. "There is a Blue Man in everyone," explains Blue Man Peter. "It's the DNA we all have in common. Beneath the greasepaint is a curiosity about life that is innocent, open-minded and respectful."

Phil says, "We think of the Blue Man as a clown combined with a superhero. Very innocent like a child, yet strong and visionary like a superhero."

"The Blue Man is inquisitive," continues Phil. "He wants to understand what makes our culture and society work. So he tries to be a part of what he sees going on. When the Blue Men find boxes of Cap'n Crunch cereal during the performance, they are trying to figure out what it's all about. Strangely, as

"A Blue Man is innocent like a child, yet strong and visionary like a superhero."

they chow down on it, they discover it's a musical instrument, not a cereal."

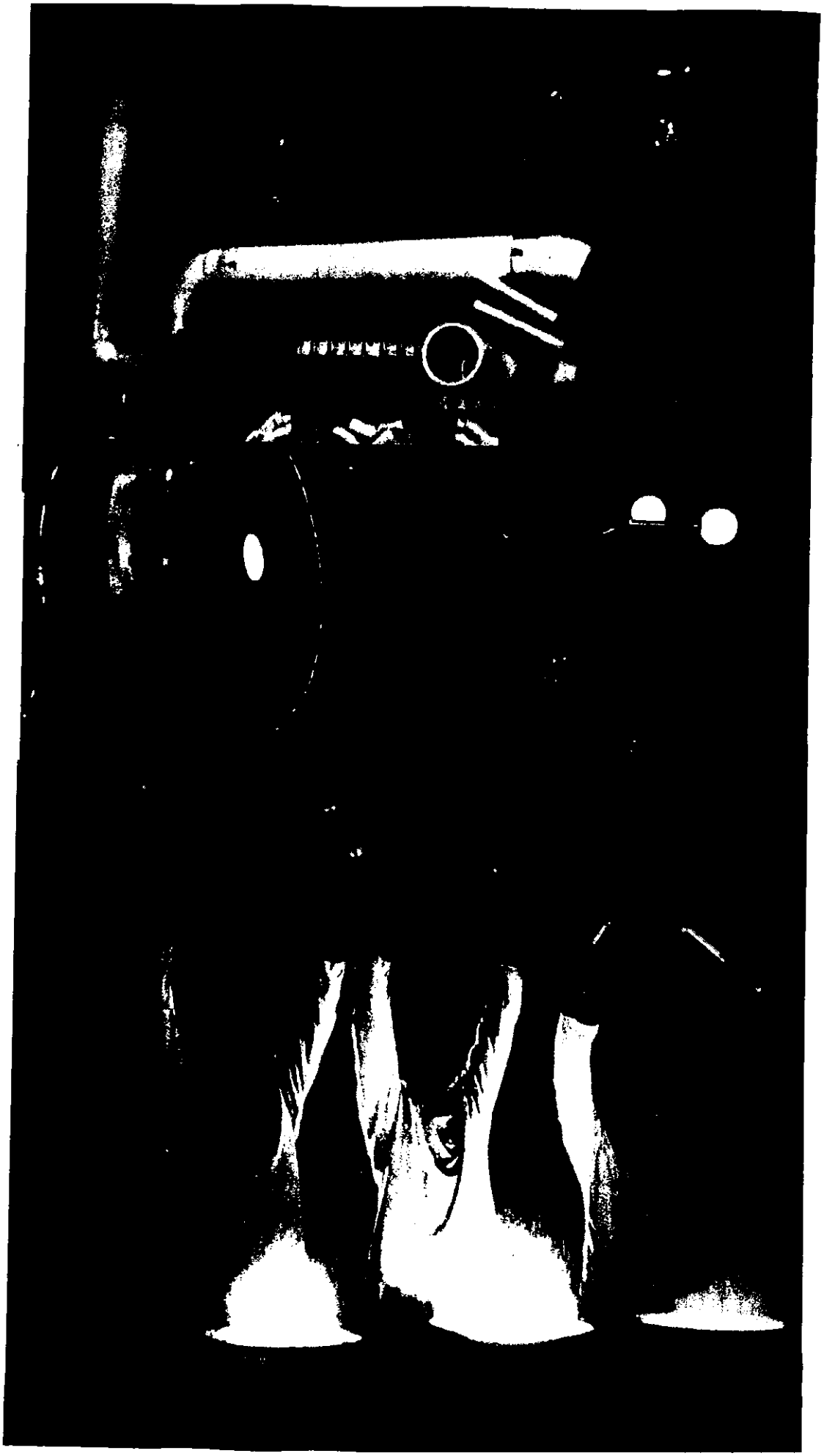
To a Blue Man, nothing is old, and everything is fascinating. Even mistakes. "Mistakes are good," states Pete. "When they do happen, the Blue Men use them as learning experiences. Sometimes an accident is the thing that makes a Blue Man's whole evening work."

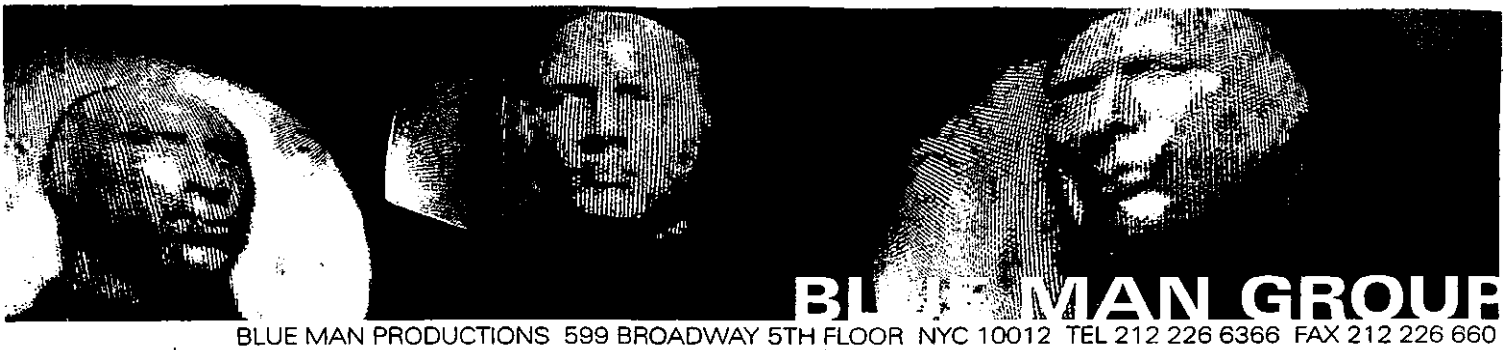
Be original

"In the beginning we were forever trying to be original. Whenever an idea came to the table, we would ask if anyone had ever seen it before. If you set your sights to be original you can, and it will be your own voice," says Blue Man Phil.

It's hard to imagine that the Blue Man Group is anything but original. But in their pursuit of novelty, they have also struck chords of truth, celebration and creativity.

As with any live performance by any artist, the content of Blue Man shows is unpredictable. For that reason, Explore! cannot fully endorse live performances.





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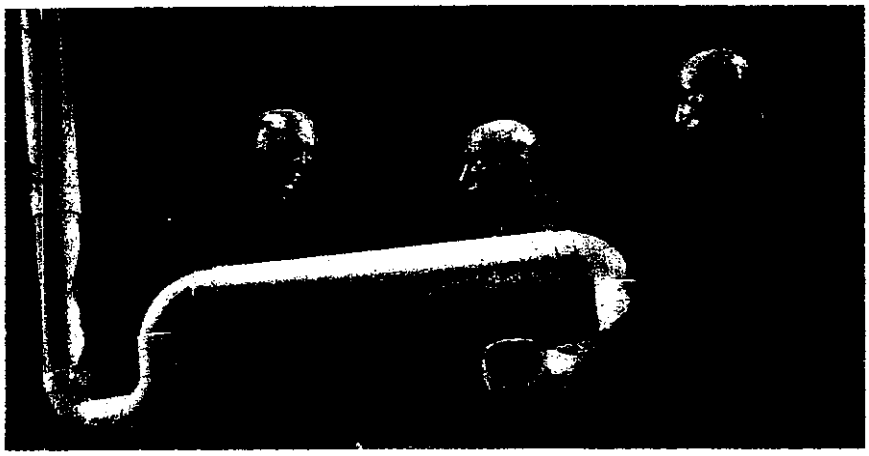
THE STAR-LEDGER SEPTEMBER 29, 2000

Interaction's the thing



"Blue Man Group" proves that a show that communicates physically and visually instead of verbally can connect with an audience raised on MTV. "De La Guarda" (right) occurs around and above the audience, with cast members swooping down and around in harnesses.

New theater trend breaks down third wall and lets everybody get into the act

"The Donkey Show" is a disco version of "Midsummer Night's Dream," stripping Shakespeare's comedy bare and reducing the story to a dance party.

BY STUART MILLER
FOR THE STAR-LEDGER

NEW YORK — Michelle Sweet died on stage last week. She passed peacefully in her sleep at age 60, her husband at her side, as visions of their youthful skydiving adventures floated overhead.

Sweet is not a fictional character, an actor or a playwright producing an autobiographical work. She is a 34-year-old business consultant whose life was, briefly, center stage at the Jane Street Theater in the West Village.

The show is "Lifegame." The concept is simple and the effect is shockingly innovative. A pre-selected volunteer (see accompanying story) is interviewed on stage by a member of Improbable Theater, a British improv group. The group then acts out scenes from the subject's life, employing techniques from puppetry to musical numbers and improv games. Some scenarios are played for laughs, others for emotional truth, some for both.

"It was beautiful and very touching," Sweet said of watching the group's interpretation of her death. The whole show was an amazing experience.

The show, which opened yesterday, is different every night, changing with each subject.

"Everybody has a story, but this is not about 15 minutes of fame," says "Lifegame" producer David Stone, 34. "It's about storytelling. If theater didn't exist, this would be a good way to invent it."

While "Lifegame" is a unique experience, it also belongs to a vital trend within the last year or two, a recent wave of shows called "hybrid," "event" or "alternative" theater that break down theatrical convention and reach out to the audience. This sprawling genre has produced diverse hits like currently running "De La Guarda" and "The Donkey Show." These shows attract young audiences, often people who don't attend traditional theater yet who return here numerous times.

"Many younger people find the notion of off-Broadway or Broadway plays daunting," producer Stone says, but, if it's "a cool sounding event," they'll check it out.

"Whether the shows are interactive or not, there's a kind of freedom, a feeling free to invent something," says "De La Guarda" producer Daryl Roth. "Is it theater or performance art? Sometimes it's a hybrid. We're pushing the envelope, and that's what's attracting younger audiences."

Reaching young audiences by breaking tradition is nothing new, says Ben Mordecai, 55, producer of the more traditional August Wilson play "Jitney" at the off-Broadway Union Square Theater, as well as the ground-breaking 1993 Pulitzer-Prize winning drama "Angels In America"), pointing out that 1968's "Hair" seemed radical in its day.

"Each generation has their plays," he says, then the concepts "creep into the mainstream."

Still, today's producers are aware that from the VCR to cable television to the Internet, entertainment's relationship to today's audience has permanently shifted.

"This is a conscious effort," says Jordan Roth, 24, Daryl Roth's son and producer of "Donkey Show" and the Broadway production of "Rocky Horror Picture Show" that opens Nov. 15 at Circle in the Square. "Theater specifically and entertainment in general is moving toward allowing audiences in in a major way. Each show attacks the issue in a different way, but we're all questioning why the audience has to sit in the dark and hold their hands."

The movement dates back to the late 1980s with "Tamara" and "Tony & Tina's Wedding." "Tamara" had no audience/cast interaction (patrons were observers choosing a cast member to follow as they moved from room to room). But Daryl Roth says by setting it in an armory, it paved the way for alternative venues that bring cast and crowd together. "Tony & Tina" went further, sweeping audiences into the action (audience members got treated like

[See PLAY, page 44]

PLAYS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28

Everybody wants to get into the act

invited guests, even dancing with actors at the wedding "reception").

"It was about finding ways to engage the audience and break down the third wall," says "Tony & Tina" producer Joe Corcoran, 40. (The show also spawned numerous rip-offs like "Grandma Sylvia's Funeral.")

"Blue Man Group" was next, moving boundaries between popular theater and performance art, proving a show that communicated physically and visually instead of verbally could connect easily with an audience raised on MTV.

Other shows on the periphery of the trend have included "Stomp" and the since closed "Hedwig & The Angry Inch" and "Bombitty of Errors." Of the newest shows, "De La Guarda" seems kin to "Blue Man," with linear text and dialogue replaced by spectacle. "De La Guarda," at the Daryl Roth Theater (a converted bank with no seats), occurs around and above the audience, with cast members swooping down and around in harnesses. The audience is participated upon as the cast occasionally lifts, gropes or dances with spectators.

"There's a lot of spontaneity," says cast member Trevor Exter, a musician by trade, who has "never been much into traditional theater." The acrobatics and an ambience both comic and menacing leave audiences awestruck, creating a communal bond.

By contrast, "The Donkey Show" is a disco version of "Midsummer Night's Dream," stripping Shakespeare's comedy bare, reducing the story to a dance party where drinking seems integral to enjoyment. Props include a giant coke spoon. Characters sing over old disco hits, and dialogue is diminished to lines like "You are so yucky."

Much of the audience — which surrounds the actors on the dance floor at El Flamingo, a club in Chelsea — doesn't seem to care, boogying down to "Carwash" and "We Are Family," writhing with the Chippendales-style dancers, and reveling in the cheesy but well-staged production.

"I've never been to theater that was quite so involving for the audience," said Marty Zinkel, 22, of Philadelphia.

But the show illustrates the perils of bending theater's conventions too far. Some in the audience were dismissive — "It was self-indulgent karaoke," said Jason Korfine, 33, of Manhasset. "Shakespeare would have been pissed," said Brad Harmon of New York.

While Zinkel and his friends mostly enjoyed themselves, they didn't realize what they were seeing.

"People were mostly just there to dance," Zinkel said. "I tried thinking of the show's theme — I thought it was about popular drugs through the years. The last one was Ecstasy, so everybody loved each other."

Upon being told he'd seen a disco-ized "Midsummer Night," Zinkel looked surprised. "Oh, I thought I heard Oberon's name once. Which one was supposed to be Puck?"

While "Donkey" thrives on disco's artifice, "Lifegame" connects with audiences by mixing theater's emotional power with a touch of reality.

"The audience feels closer to it because it's about a regular person's experience, and it only happens that one night," producer Stone says.

Given the current appetite for reality programming like this summer's "Survivor" television series, the show is timely. Despite the spare props, jokiness and the semi-formal structure of the show, participant Sweet said it was "more emotionally real" than television's contrivances.

There remains, however, a layer of theatricality. Sweet acknowledges holding back. "I did not want to cry on stage. If I felt it getting emotional, I stopped at a certain point."

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on &OFF
Issue #5
Nov 25 - Dec 8, 2002

on second thought

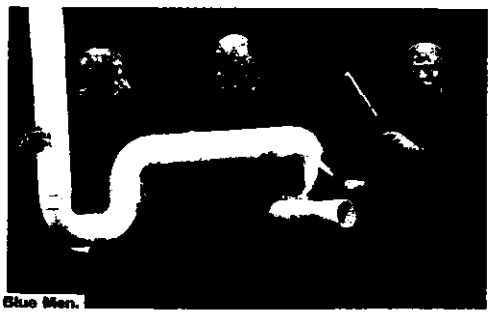
Blue Man Group: Tubes

Astor Place Theater
434 Lafayette Street • 212-387-9415

Anyone who has seen their Intel commercial or their numerous appearances on late-night television will recognize Blue Man Group by sight. But if you haven't yet caught *Tubes*, their long-running show at Astor Place Theater, get your tickets now and prepare to laugh until you're blue in the face. Be warned: you may explode—the theater itself looks like it has "busted a gut" with miles of tubes dangling about like the exploded innards of a post-industrial apacolyptic nightmare!

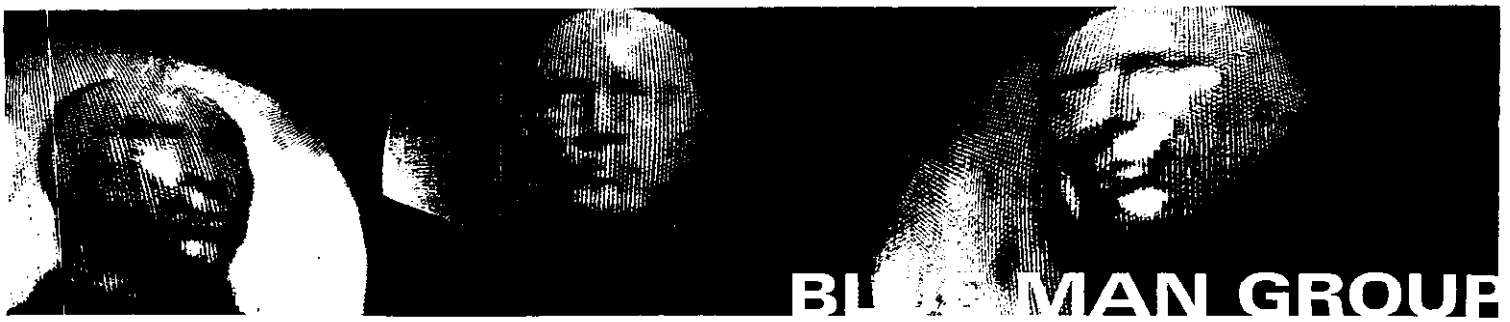
Blue Man Group: Tubes is New York City's premiere performance experience. The critically exclaimed show opened in 1991, and in the past 11 years has given birth to concurrently running productions in Chicago, Boston and most recently Las Vegas. The show also spawned several "unique performance event" knock-offs such as *Stomp*, *De La Guarda* and *The Donkey Show*, but none match the wit and whimsy and pure performance pleasures of *Blue Man Group: Tubes*.

Basically, if American consumerist-kitsch threw up a masterpiece of contemporary pop performance art, it would be *Blue Man Group: Tubes*. The piece is a ritualis-


Blue Men.

tic assault on the senses—a spectacular splash of color and sound. With wary, wide-eyed expressions of bemused curiosity, the quirky trio of indigo-domed visual raconteurs weave together a seamless 90 minutes of skillful sketchery. Their shenanigans involving paint, percussion, PVC and empty-calorie, mass-produced food items boggle the mind (I still can't fathom their feat of marshmallow sculpting).

Ratty sweat-suits aside (one would think the company could afford their men coveralls after all these years), the show is pitch perfect, beat-utiful, and, in every sense of the word, totally tubular. Let's hope Blue Man Group beats their ever encroaching neighbors NYU and Starbucks in the race to take over the world.— *Arthur Lynn*



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IN new york

NOV.02

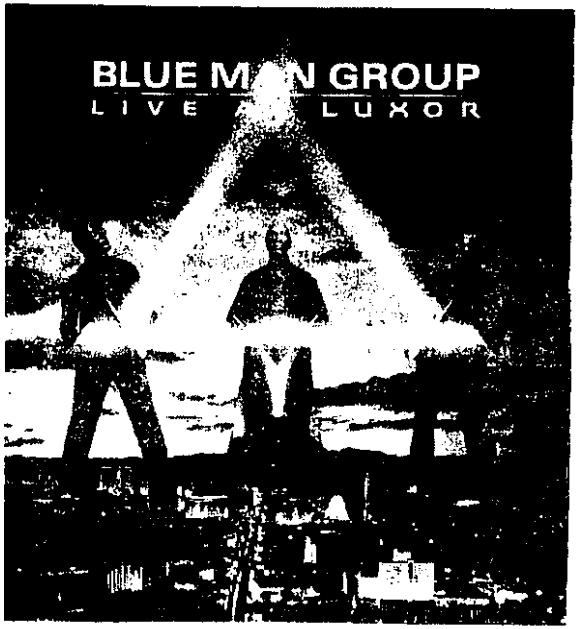
Blue Humor

For the past 11 years, three men morph into bald, blue beings and take the stage for a performance of ***Blue Man Group: Tubes*** (Astor Place Theater, 254-4370). This trio of bizarre, bullet-headed, expressionless creatures silently gobble up and regurgitate ridiculous amounts of junk food, bang on drums while spewing paint, turn a giant plumbing pipe into a musical instrument, and pelt the audience with crepe paper. What does it take to be a member of this freaky brotherhood? "All you need is an average height and rhythm," answers cast member Wes Day, grinning as he slaps on

copious amounts of cobalt-colored greasepaint. (An "iron stomach" is likely another prerequisite). And what about the audience's reaction? "Some people think we're aliens, or robots, or monsters," says BMG's Peter Starrett. "We're whatever they want us to be."

Turn to "Personal Concierge: Life of the City" (p. 66) or go to www.in-newyork mag.com for additional theater venues.

I'M BLUE



Blue Man wows audiences in NY

By Rebekah Mae
Coyote Press

Twinkies?

Munching Captain Crunch?

Spiting paint balls?

Drumming on garbage cans and splattering paint?

A multimedia reflection of our most intimate thoughts? Strange. Funny.

Maybe?

Maybe, too, you'll be the one who these three bald, glistening skull-capped weirdoes will call on stage to share a Twinkie meal.

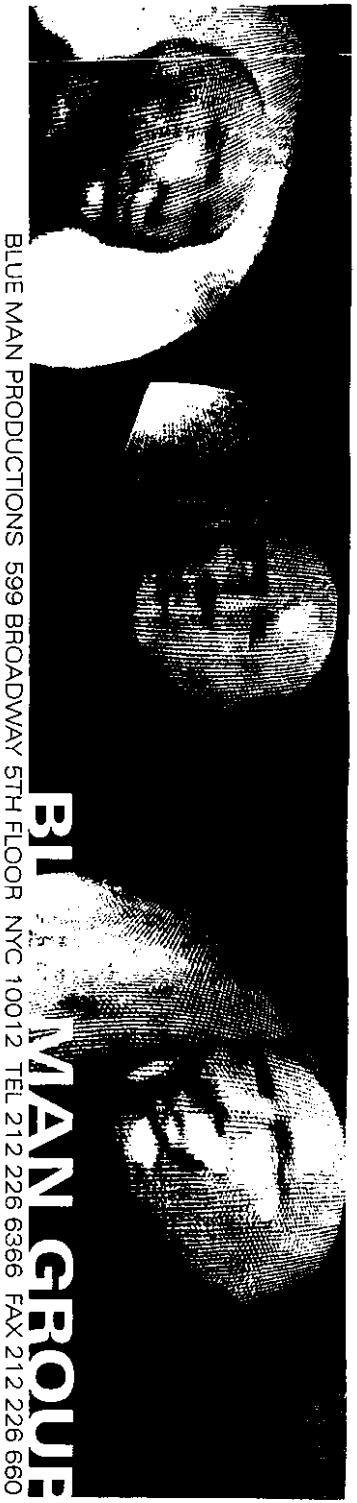
(Duh! Why didn't I think of that, munching on Captain Crunch to Rock-n-Roll, I could have made millions.)

While I caught the show on Broadway, this experience can be yours now at the Luxor hotel-casino in Las Vegas.

The off-Broadway production will be playing for an indefinite run at the Luxor Theatre. Tickets are a bit on the costly side at $71.50 and $60.50 each.

This unusual production combines music, comedy, visual stimulation and interactive multi-media.

A percussion of drums follows the three luminous blue -painted men in antics only the strange inner-child in each of us may have thought of.



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Singing the off-Broadway blues

By Michael Kuchwara
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — It opened Dec. 18 with a splashy Tommy Tune revue: the $12 million Little Shubert, off-Broadway's newest theater, a 499-seat playhouse with good sightlines, ample leg room and more than enough bathrooms.

Today, the Little Shubert on West 42nd Street sits dark, awaiting its next tenant after Tune and company abruptly closed in less than a month. The show was the victim of mixed reviews (including a pan in the powerful *New York Times*) and disappointing business.

The Promenade, another premier off-Broadway theater, also is empty. "My Old Lady," a new play by Israel Horovitz, folded there in December after an abbreviated, unprofitable run.

While Broadway has produced such recent high-profile hits as "Hairspray," "Movin' Out" and "La Boheme," commercial off-Broadway remains mired in gloom. The troubles have persisted for several seasons, aggravated by the Sept. 11 attacks, rising ticket prices, thin profit margins and a string of expensive financial failures.

"It's very dicey," says Chase Mishkin, one of the producers of "Tommy Tune: White Tie and Tails."

"We're in a tough business. ... You have to sell x-number of seats to meet the weekly nut. You don't have enough seats off-Broadway to do that."

The flops this season include "Thunder Knocking on the Door" and "Little Ham." They followed several other costly musical duds from the previous year, including "Reefer Madness" and "Summer of '42."

Only a few shows, most notably "Adult Entertainment," a comedy by Elaine May, and "The Exonerated," a docudrama about death-row inmates featuring a rotating cast of stars, have demonstrated much staying power this season.

Tommy Tune tripped.

"I think off-Broadway has become too expensive to the public," says Ben Sprecher, one of the producers of "Adult Entertainment" — which has a top ticket price of $65. He blames rapidly rising production costs, which jack up the break-even point for shows, requiring ticket-price hikes.

The differences between Broadway and off-Broadway are blurring, and off-Broadway tickets aren't the bargain they used to be. Tune's show, which featured a 16-piece orchestra, had a $75 top ticket, the same price Broadway patrons pay to see Paul Newman in the mostly sold-out revival of "Our Town."

A few off-Broadway productions, such as "Debbie Does Dallas" and "Tuesdays With Morrie," have sizable discounts and some participate in the "Season of Saving" winter sales that nearly two dozen Broadway shows also offer.

"There hasn't been a breakout off-Broadway success in years," says David Stone, producer of "The Vagina Monologues," which may have been its last big hit. Eve Ensler's play, which opened in October 1999, will finally close Jan. 26.

"What I have always looked for (in producing) off-Broadway was something you would never find on Broadway or an important play that isn't going to fill a 1,000-seat theater but can fill a 400 or 500-seat theater for a limited run," Stone said.

"But the days of plays like 'Driving Miss Daisy' ... being done off-Broadway are gone, at least for the moment. Right now, people would rather take a chance on a play like that on Broadway." Risks are greater on Broadway, but then so are the financial rewards.

Much of off-Broadway's visibility has been usurped by nonprofit off-Broadway theaters, such as Manhattan Theatre Club, the Public Theater and New York Theatre Workshop.

Hits like "Far Away" at NYTW and Manhattan Class Company's production of Neil LaBute's "The Mercy Seat" have dominated the season. Nonprofits also have the cushion of subscription audiences, people in seats to offset any bad reviews.

And when nonprofit off-Broadway theaters have hits these days, they are more likely to move to Broadway, such as MTC's "Proof" and "The Tale of the Allergist's Wife" and the Public's "Take Me Out," a drama about a gay baseball player that opens at the Walter Kerr Theatre in February.

Like Broadway, off-Broadway has tried to lure stars, with some success. Edward Norton and Catherine Keener made the revival of "Burn This" a hot ticket, but when they left after three months, business collapsed.

In the end, though, Sprecher said, productions have to be matched to the right theater. "Adult Entertainment," which deals with a group of porn actors who decide to make their own X-rated film, is playing at the Variety Arts, a theater below 14th Street on the fringes of the East Village.

"It's smart, funny and substantive and yet it is about a very purient subject. It was right for downtown," he said.

But there are those few off-Broadway shows that seem to churn on forever. Although "The Fantasticks" closed a year ago, such venerable productions as "Blue Man Group," "Stomp" and "De La Guarda" have kept on going.

Maybe that's why the Little Shubert already has a new tenant, "The Mandrake Root," a play written by and starring Lynn Redgrave. Preview performances begin March 8 for a March 23 opening.

NEW YORK TIMES
NEW YORK, NY
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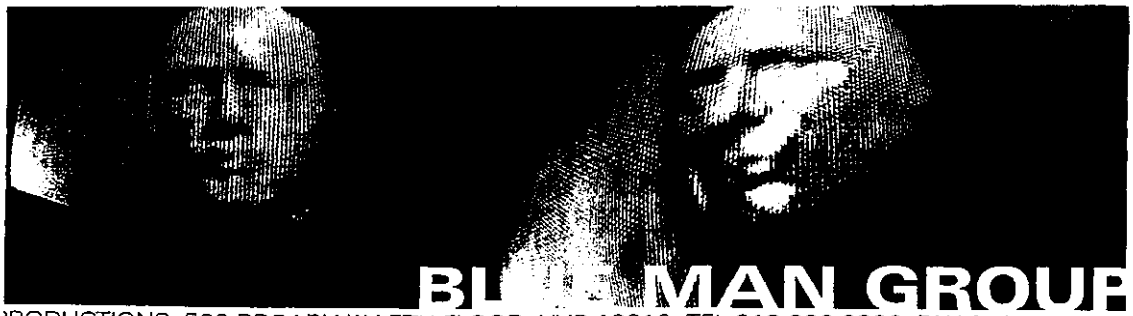
Burrelle's



PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 660

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

3753

3 DARK TALES AT THE 45 BLEECKER THEATER PHOTO: SHEILA BURNETT

When it comes to talent, ingenuity and, sometimes, sheer genius, entertainment offerings in downtown Manhattan remain unrivaled. Here are just a few highlights of the current season.

"3 Dark Tales," a tragic-comedy in three movements, uses two clothes rails and a wardrobe to tell the poignant story of three office workers whose lives (though they don't yet know it) are closely linked. The show, which won raves at the Edinburgh Festival, weaves Keatonesque slapstick, dance numbers and music into an unusual and memorable theater experience. At the **45 Bleecker Theater** through June 9, 2002. For tickets, call TicketMaster at 212-307-4100.

"The Guys" is a two-character drama about a fire captain who lost eight men in the World Trade Center collapse and the editor who helps him write the eulogies he must deliver. Based on a true story, the show is being performed by a revolving cast of visiting stars that have included Bill Murray, Anthony LaPaglia and Susan Sarandon, as well as the talented resident acting company at Lower Manhattan's **Flea Theater** (41 White Street bet. Broadway and Church Sts.). For tickets, call Smarttix at 212-206-1515.

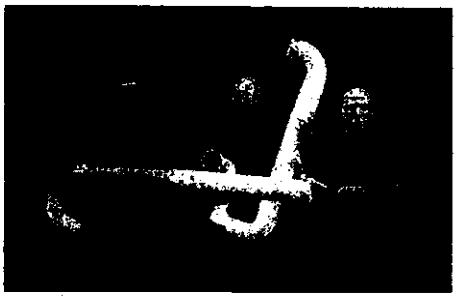
In June, De La Guarda will celebrate its fourth year at the **Daryl Roth Theatre** (20 Union Square East at 15th St., www.dlgsite.com), but time hasn't diminished the intensity of this high-flying show. The production continues to play to capacity crowds, shattering theatrical clichés and literally bursting through the ceiling (hot tip: wear a raincoat). Performances are Tuesday through Thursday at 8 pm; Friday at 8 pm and 10:30 pm; Saturday at 7 pm and 10 pm; and Sunday at 7 pm. For tickets, call Telecharge at (212) 239-6200.

Astor Place Theater (434 Lafayette Street; 212-254-4370), located on Colonnade Row, is now owned by the wildly entertaining Blue Man Group, who has called the theater home for more than a decade. Blue Man Group's music has earned global recognition with a Grammy nomination last year and a Grammy Awards telecast performance. The blue men are currently hard at work on their second album in their East Village Recording Studio.

"The Complete Works Of William Shakespeare (Abridged)" is a two-hour comic deconstruction of the Bard's works that has garnered praise on both sides of the Atlantic. At the **Century Center for the Performing Arts** (111 East 15th St.) through Sunday, May 26. For tickets, call Tele-Charge at 212-239-6200.

The **Aquila Theatre Company** will present Shakespeare's Comedy of Errors in an open-ended run at a Village theater venue to be announced shortly. This tale of twins and mistaken identity, in a zany Turkish setting reminiscent of "Indiana Jones," is a fast-paced romp that showcases the Aquila's distinctive physical and visual style. For information and performance schedule, call the Aquila Theatre Company at 212-992-9642.

The Seventh Annual Lower East Side Festival of the Arts returns May 24-26, featuring a score of stars and performing arts organizations. Events include cabaret performances, salsa, jazz and merengue music, food and craft vendors and a block-long carnival. For information, call 212-254-1109.



BLUE MAN GROUP, DAZZLING AUDIENCES FOR A DECADE, AT ASTOR PLACE THEATER.

Using larger-than-life puppets and costumes, "Ruandi" tells the story of a slave on a Cuban sugar plantation who must travel through a magical forest to gain his freedom. The award-winning show, suitable for families, will be performed on Saturday, April 27 and May 4 at 2 p.m. and Sunday April 28 and May 5 at 11 a.m. at the LaTea Theatre. Performances are in Spanish (with English synopsis available). For further information, call 917-348-4515.

HT Chen & Dancers (70 Mulberry Street; 212-349-0126; www.htchendance.org.) Shanghai-born Chen Hsueh-Tung melds ballet and modern dance with traditional Chinese dance, creating one of this country's most acclaimed small modern dance companies. In its jewel-like theater, **Newsteps**, a dance series for emerging choreographers, runs April 25-27, 8 p.m. Tickets are $12; for reservations, call 212-349-0126. HT Chen & Dancers begin their New York season May 9-12 and May 16-19.

TRIBECA'S FLEA THEATER PHOTO: DAVID CORIO

At the South Street Seaport's **Shooting Star Theater** (40 Peck Slip, 2 blocks above Fulton St.), catch a free performance of "Forgotten Treasure," three interactive folk tales geared for children. Performances are at 11 a.m. on Saturday, April 27 and Sunday, April 28. For reservations, call 212-791-STAR.

The New York Times

NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, JULY 31, 2002

$1 beyond the greater New York metropo

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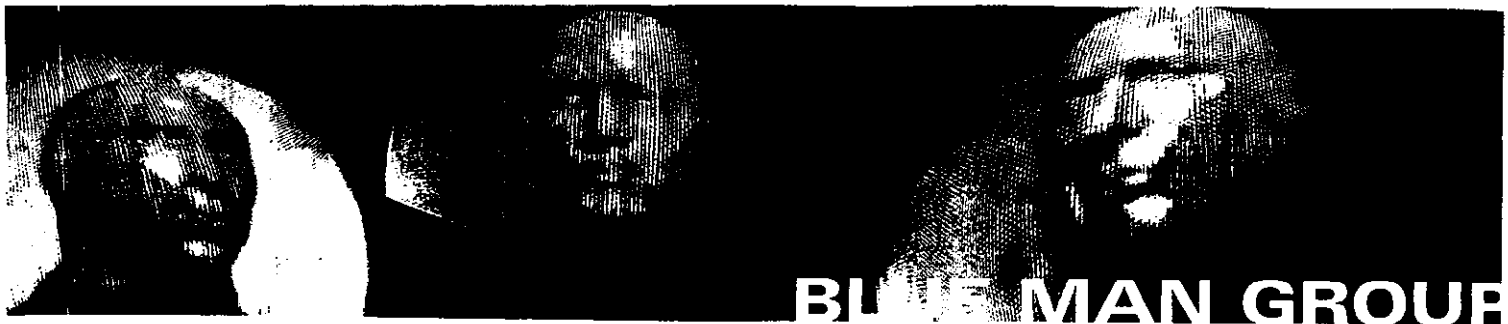
The Arts

The New York Times

Footlights

Out of the Blue

They make a mess. They make music. They are the Blue Man Group, those bald blue characters who have been making a lot of people happy for a lot of years with their show "Tubes" at the Astor Place Theater. With its splattering paint, food fights and deluge of paper, "Tubes" has tended to make adults feel like children again and children feel right at home. So little wonder that Blue Man Group's "Tubes" has been chosen to open Broadway Theater Thursdays, an August series at the Children's Museum of Manhattan, at 212 West 83rd Street. Three special "Tubes" performances are scheduled at the museum tomorrow, at 2 p.m., 2:30 and 3. Tickets are free with museum admission and may be picked up, first come first served, beginning at 11 a.m.



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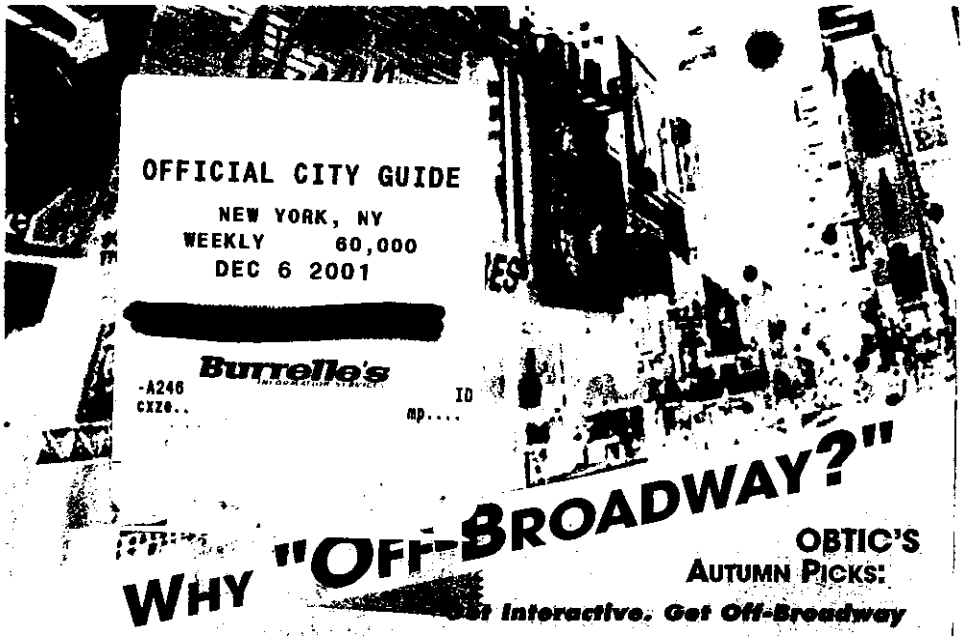


WHY "OFF-BROADWAY?"

OBTIC'S AUTUMN PICKS:

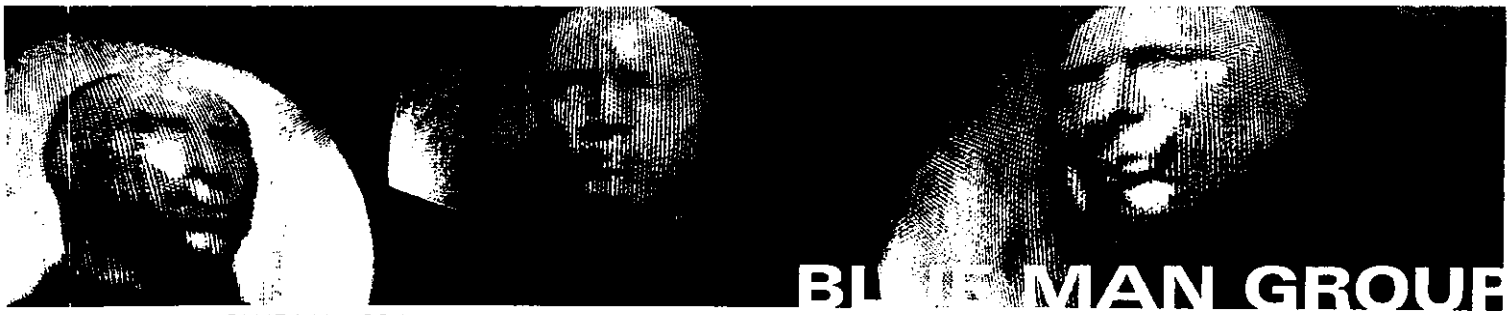
Get Interactive. Get Off-Broadway

It's hard to talk about Off-Broadway's signature "interactive" shows without first talking about ***Tony 'n Tina's Wedding***, the granddaddy of them all. *Tony 'n Tina's Wedding* is the second longest running play in Off-Broadway history, and New York's longest running comedy now playing on or Off-Broadway. Tony & Tina first got hitched back in February 1988, and have been doing it every weekend for ecstatic audiences ever since. More than 100 tons of pasta has been consumed by the wedding guests and 60,000 bottles of champagne have been popped to toast the happy couple! The evening begins with the wedding ceremony at St. Luke's Church *(308 West 46th St)*, and is followed by a reception at Vinnie Black's Coliseum *(Edison Hotel, 221 West 46th St)*. You're invited to join this jubilant Italian family in celebration of Tony 'n Tina's enduring—and hilarious—love.

A Minute's Walk From Times Square!!!
OFF BROADWAY
THEATER INFORMATION CENTER
We Provide
• Off Broadway Production Fliers
• Reviews & News Features for Each Show
• Our Free Off-Broadway Newsletter
• Theater Locations & Directions
• Parking Information
• Local Restaurants & Hotspots
• Handicap Access Information
• A Welcoming Knowledgeable Staff
• Subscription Information for Off-Broadway Resident Theaters
• Long, Everyday Hours to Accomodate Your Busy Theatergoer's Schedule!
So drop in. Stop Off.
Discover Off-Broadway.
251 West 45th Street
Bet. Broadway & 8th Ave.
Call 212-575-1423 for Info.

Off-Broadway is also the home to ***Blue Man Group***, the now world-famous trio of bald, blue men wreaking multi-media havoc at the Astor Place Theater. The Blue Man Group experience defies categorization; the show is at once funny, intelligent, and visually stunning. What began in the late eighties as three good friends creating a series of "happenings" before an audience has become a 350-person organization with companies in Boston, Chicago, and Las Vegas—not to mention its ten year, top-selling run here in New York City. *Blue Man Group* was the first winner of the of the Drama Desk Award for "Unique Theatrical Production." Other winners of this award have since included *Stomp* and *De La Guarda*, pieces following in the Off-Broadway tradition of spectacle, music, and interactivity. So come enjoy this masterpiece of sights and sounds, and hold your breath for a climax you will never forget!

For theatres, showtimes, and tickets, see our Off-Broadway Listings on pp. 72-80.



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EmpireFLY - Spring 2002

Big Kids, Big Apple, Big Fun

By Katherine McCarthy

Gotta see a show

No trip to New York is complete without a show, where the size and quality will wow you. We headed off-Broadway, and caught **Blue Man Group** at the Astor Place Theater. We cheerfully donned headbands of recycled crepe paper - which bore an eerie resemblance to toilet paper - and I worried just a little that we were in the first row of people who hadn't been issued a poncho.

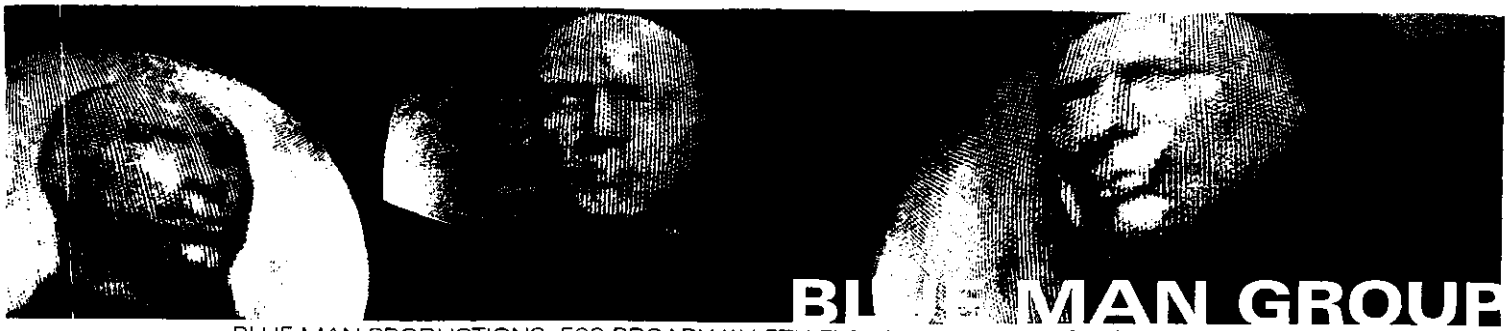
Once the show started, though, w laughed and laughed, at the paint-wielding blue-faced performers who uttered not word, poked good-humored fun at fast-fooc modern art, the information age, and hip pies-turned-bankers. Oh, and they mad pretty great music on PVC pipes.

Originally just three guys doing stree

(continued on next page

theater, there are now 50 blue men, although only three perform at any given time in their New York, Boston, Chicago and Las Vegas shows.

Fitzgerald said it's wise to buy tickets a month in advance, through Ticketmaster or by calling the box office directly at 212-254-4370. Their Web site, www.blueman.com, provides information and some Blue Man sound.



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DEMOCRAT AND CHRONICLE
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NEWSMAKERS

The Associated Press

Arnold Schwarzenegger greets The Blue Man Group at the world premiere Monday in Los Angeles of *Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines*. Jack Garner's review is on PAGE **1C.**

Entertainers & Musicians

Blue Man Group's now legendary bald and blue characters take the audience multi-sensory experience that combines theater, percussive music, art, science and

AGENDA NEW YORK
NEW YORK, NY
4-TIMES/YEAR 11,000
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There's nothing like a little entertainment to help guests get into a celebratory spirit.

MUSIC IS WHAT TURNS A MEETING into a party. It's one of those major ingredients that make a special event special. Because it has a powerful and immediate effect on people, it is important that it be right—that it fit the mood, the setting, the theme and, of course, the guests.

The same principle of "fit" applies to other forms of entertainment. Fortune tellers, palm readers, magicians, jugglers, can all add a touch of the extraordinary to a function and help to make it memorable. A great speaker can do the same. The trick is to find the right performers for your affair.

Choosing the Right Entertainment

You have to know your guests and why they are attending your event to make the right choice of entertainment. Entertainment, used in a broad sense, can be a central issue of an event, or a peripheral one. If you are holding a conference or convention, the speakers you choose command center stage. Make sure they can captivate an audience (when at all possible), they have adequate props and A/V equipment, equipment is checked out beforehand, and the pace and sequence of speakers and breaks hold the attention of the audience. Celebrities have special appeal and their guest appearance will help draw the crowd you want. Production companies and entertainment or talent agents, as well as speakers bureaus can be helpful in finding the right people. (Of course, connections can't hurt either!)

Most of the production and talent companies surveyed agree that lead time is important, particularly for known entertainers or popular bands in high demand.

Of course, the possibilities are almost endless for the types of entertainment from which to choose—musicians, magicians, fortune tellers, graphologists, face painters, jugglers. All of these resources offer event planners unique and exciting ways to turn an ordinary cocktail party, fund-raising dinner or showroom opening into a very special event—one not normally perceived to lend itself to this kind of treatment.

Another way to weave entertainment into your affair is to hold your event around a theater production or concert. The major theaters and concert halls have group-sales representatives who can arrange for you to sell blocks of tickets for fund-raising or other special-event purposes. Be sure to book very early, though, since popular tickets sell out far in advance.

Hiring a Professional

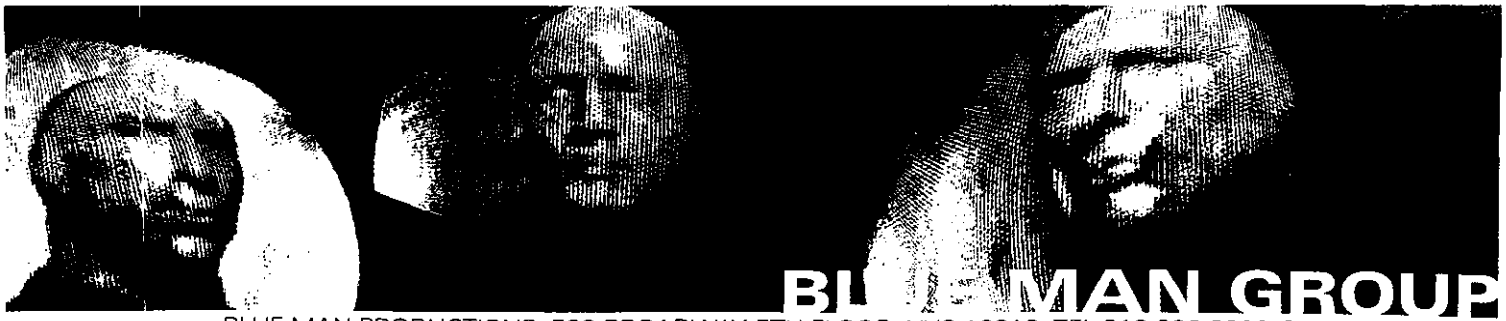
When you select a professional entertainer, know with whom you are dealing. Bad performances can spell disaster and spoil an entire event. If you are hiring a band or an orchestra, for instance, make sure the leader knows why you are holding the event, who the guests are, where the event is to be held and for how long, and exactly what you expect him to do. Go over the type of music to be played, listen to tapes he has made and follow up on references.

Go over breaks and the pacing of the event. Don't leave the entertainer out of the loop of professionals involved in shaping the function. Entertainment can go a long way toward meeting the objectives of an event—don't treat it as an afterthought.

Be sure to get a contract and familiarize yourself with the responsibilities and requirements of the players involved. Celebrities, in particular, may demand special treatment in terms of accommodations, transportation, food, etc. Make sure you are prepared to provide for their needs if you're hiring them.

If your guests are having a particularly grand time and dancing up a storm, you might want to have the band play on beyond the specified hour. Check in advance—both with the orchestra and the site—to make sure this is possible. Don't forget to ask about overtime charges for both too.

A final word—make sure you are allowed to bring into a site the type of entertainment you have in mind before all arrangements are in place. There are rules and regulations imposed by government agencies, individual properties and unions, which may put a damper on your plans, if you don't confront them in advance. ■



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Burrelles

RB PE

Some of New York's best found off Broadway

3755

By Michael Kuchwara
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Looking to check out promising performers before they become stars?

Then go to Manhattan Theatre Club's tiny Stage II where "Gone Home," a new play by John Corwin is in preview performances.

Its leading man is Josh Hamilton, a young actor with solid stage credentials and the potential to make it big. Last seen on Broadway in one of the replacement casts of "Proof," Hamilton portrays a young writer in "Gone Home," who does just that — he returns to his hometown, a place he abandoned years earlier.

"Gone Home" opens Dec. 17. Tickets through CityTix (212) 581-1212.

■

Off-Broadway ticket availability and capsule reviews of selected shows as of Nov. 27. Unless otherwise noted, tickets are available at the theaters' box offices for the shows listed.

— "A Man of No Importance." Roger Rees stars as a middle-aged Irish bus conductor who decided to put on an amateur production of Oscar Wilde's "Salome." A lovely and heartfelt new musical by Terrence McNally, Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty, the team responsible for "Ragtime." Mitzi Newhouse at Lincoln Center. Telecharge. Closes Dec. 29.

— "Adult Entertainment." Danny Aiello and Jeannie Berlin star in a new comedy by Elaine May about the porn industry. Now in previews. Opens Dec. 11. Variety Arts. Telecharge.

— "Betty Rules." A musical about an all-girl rock group. Zipper. Telecharge.

— "Blue Man Group." They paint each other. They paint the audience. They unroll toilet paper. Foreign tourists love this long-running new vaudeville show. Astor Place. Ticketmaster.

— "Blue Orange." A play by Joe Penhall about mental illness and racism. Atlantic Theater Company. Telecharge.

— Book of Days." The New York premiere of a Lanford Wilson play about the death of a prominent resident of a small Midwestern town. Signature Theatre Company. (212) 244-7529. Closes Dec. 8.

— "Boston Marriage." Kate Burton and Martha Plimpton star in a new play by David Mamet about the relationship between two women. Public Theater. Telecharge. Closes Dec. 22.

— "Burn This." A revival of Lanford Wilson's play about an unlikely romance. A Signature Theatre Company production. Elisabeth Shue and Peter Sarsgaard are the new leads. Union Square. Ticketmaster.

— "Crowns." A play by Regina Taylor about the hats women wear to church. Now in previews. Opens Dec. 3. Second Stage. (212) 246-4422.

— "De La Guarda." They jump from the ceiling into the audience. They spray the audience with water. They perform acrobatic tricks. Another new vaudeville show. A warning: Theatergoers stand for the entire 70-minute extravaganza. Daryl Roth Theatre. Telecharge.

— "Debbie Does Dallas." A stage version of the celebrated adult film about a hardworking cheerleader — but with a lot less exposed skin. Jane Street. Telecharge.

— "Far Away." Caryl Churchill's jolting fable about the fine line between the normal and the fantastic. New York Theatre Workshop. Kathleen Chalfant replaces Frances McDormand Dec. 27. Telecharge. Closes Jan. 18. Difficult.

— "Forbidden Broadway." The 20th-anniversary version of off-Broadway's most devilishly clever and comic musical revue. Douglas Fairbanks. Telecharge.

— "I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change." The mildest of musical revues about relationships between men and women. Westside Theatre Upstairs. Telecharge.

— "Jolson & Company." Stephen Mo Hanan portrays the legendary entertainer Al Jolson in this new musical. Century Center. Telecharge.

— "Love, Janis." The life and times of rock icon Janis Joplin. Village Theater. Ticketmaster. Closes Jan. 5.

— Menopause. The Musical." Women and their change of life — in song. Playhouse 91. Telecharge.

— "My Old Lady." Israel Horovitz's meandering but well-act play about a middle-aged man who inherits a Paris apartment and its tenants. Telecharge. Closes Jan. 5.

— "Naked Boys Singing!" Male actors take their clothes off and sing. There's more to see than there is to hear. Actors Playhouse. Telecharge.

— "Stomp." A noisy yet effective celebration of percussion in this long-running new vaudeville revue. Orpheum. Ticketmaster.

— "Temporary Help." A new thriller starring Chad Allen, Margaret Colin and Robert Cuccioli. Women's Project Theatre. Telecharge.

— "The Donkey Show." "Saturday Night Fever" meets William Shakespeare. A lively disco version of "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Wear your dancing shoes. Club El Flamingo. Ticketmaster.

— "The Exonerated." A look at capital punishment and those wrongly accused. 45 Bleecker Theater. Ticketmaster.

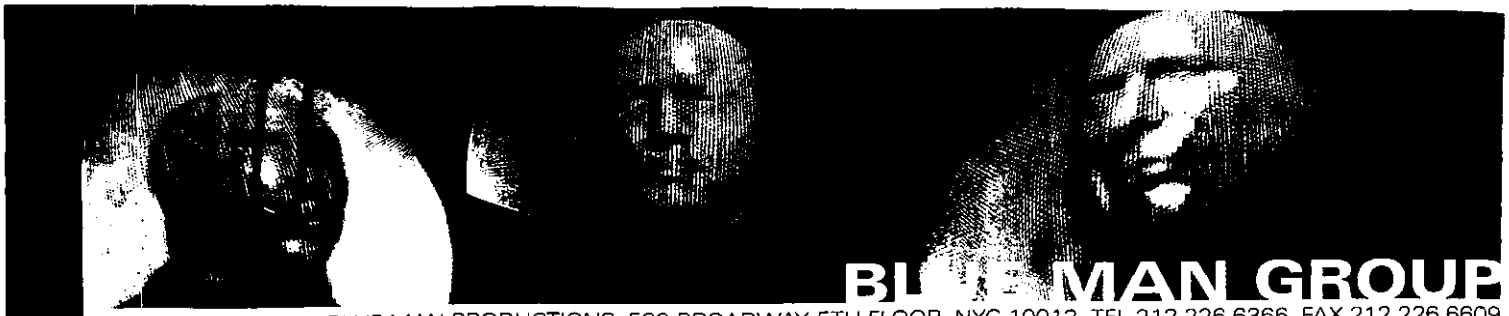
— The Fourth Sister." Janusz Glowacki's play about three sisters in modern-day Russia who dream of coming to America. Vineyard. (212) 353-0303. Closes Dec. 8.

— "The Fourth Wall." A.R. Gurney's comedy set in suburbia. With Sandy Duncan and Charles Kimbrough. Closes Dec. 22.

— "The General From America." Corin Redgrave portrays America's most famous traitor in a musty historical drama by Richard Nelson. Theatre for a New Audience. Lucille Lortel. Telecharge.

— "The Vagina Monologues." The cast changes every few weeks, but Eve Ensler's play about how women think and feel about their most private parts remains as insightful as ever. Westside Theatre Downstairs. Telecharge. Closes Jan. 5.

— "The Water Coolers." A new musical revue about life in everyday corporate America. Dillons. Telecharge.



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STAR-NEWS
NORTH SYRACUSE, NY
WEEKLY 7,200
DEC 19 2001

Burrelle's

Freedom packages look to bolster city tourism

3755

By Katherine McCarthy

If you've been moved by New York City Mayor Rudolph Guiliani's entreaties to visit New York City, you'll never find a better deal than with the NYC Freedom Packages offered by a special program called Paint the Town Red, White and Blue.

For as little as $157, you can spend a night in a New York hotel, see a Broadway show, have dinner, make a donation to the Twin Towers Fund, park at a discounted rate and get additional discounts all over town.

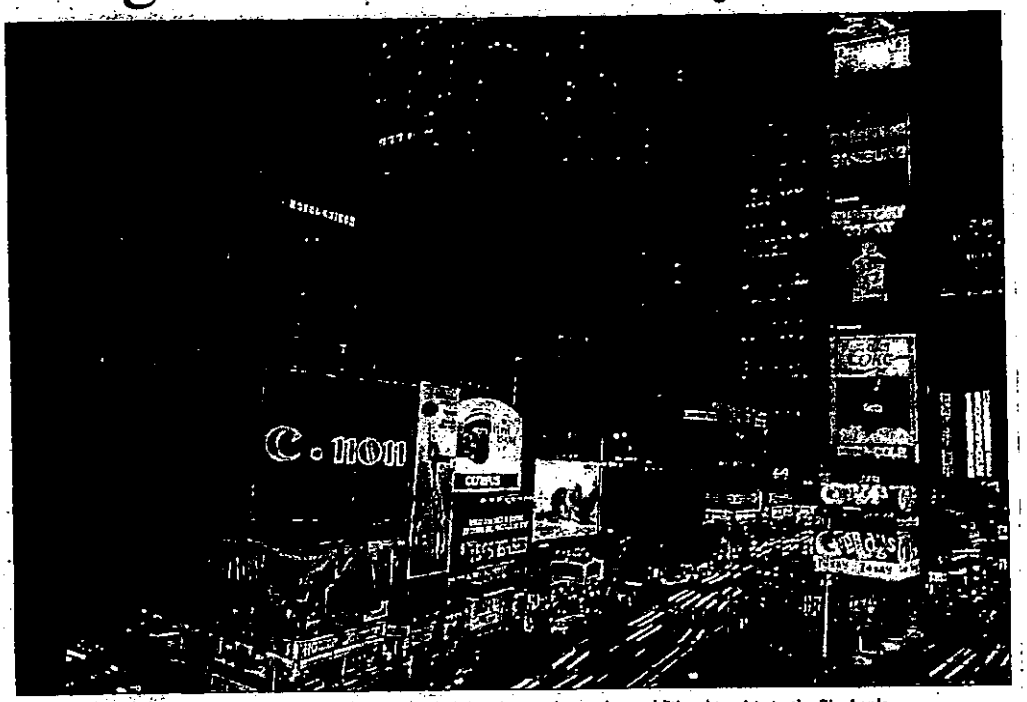
Paint the Town Red, White and Blue is a new version of NYC & Company's popular Paint The Town Red program, which has drawn visitors to New York in the slower months of January and February.

NYC & Company Communications Manager Amy Solomonson said New York City lost $581 million in potential tourist spending between Sept. 11 and Nov. 25.

Offering the Paint the Town program two months earlier than in past years seems to have turned that around. Since Nov. 5, when the program became available, more than 6,000 people have booked it. That was even before the television commercials featuring celebrities like Cindy Crawford, Derek Jeter and Blue Man Group started airing on Nov. 19.

"We're getting a sense that people are comfortable traveling closer to home, Solomonson said. "We're focusing our advertising on the northeast corridor, which is the source of half our domestic business."

Solomonson said the New York packages are a first for the Big Apple, which traditionally has seen enough tourism business that hotels, restaurants and other entities haven't needed to create packages to lure visitors.



New York City's bright lights could shine even brighter as NYC Freedom packages draw additional tourists to the Big Apple.

Solomonson said visitors won't do better than these packages.

"They're the best savings you'll see," she said. "It's the chance of a lifetime."

There are actually two components to the program. First, 350 a la carte offers provide discounts at hotels, restaurants, shows and attractions.

Second, the NYC Freedom Packages allow visitors to choose one-, two- or four-night accommodations, along with a Broadway show, dining, and parking packages that include the 350 discounts. The Freedom Packages are available in a variety of price ranges.

NYC & Company is the city's official tourism marketing agency. For more information about Paint the Town Red, White and Blue, and NYC Freedom Packages, check out www.nycvisit.com, or call 1-800-NYC-GUIDE. Information is also available at iloveny.com.

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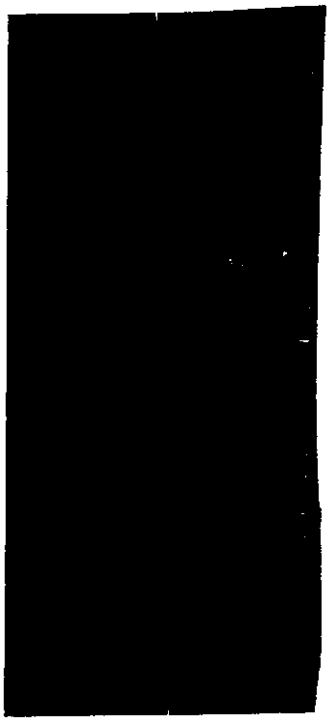
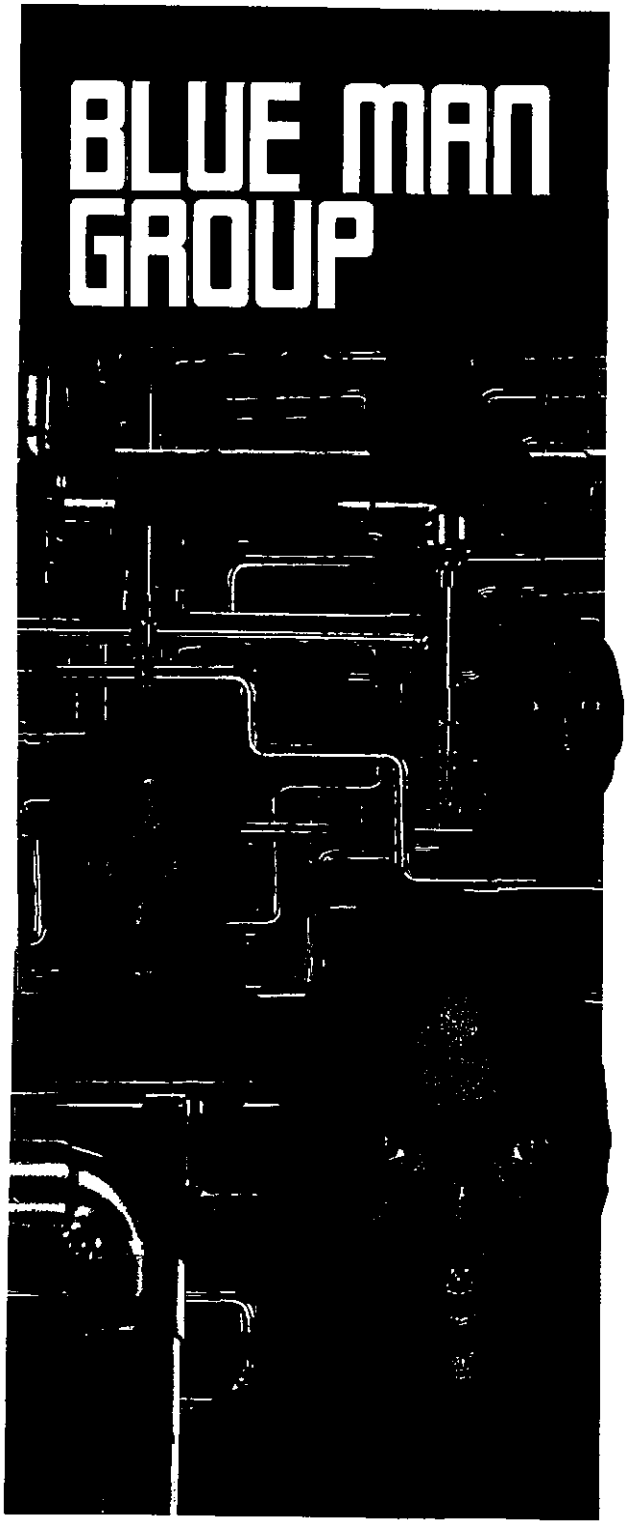




그들만의 신명나는 푸른 반역

정인심 | 미술사

블루 멘 그룹은 1980년대 말 모더니즘의 제도화에 저항하고자 결성한 퍼포먼스 그룹이다. 액션페인팅을 비롯한 추상미술적 요소와 연극적인 몸짓 자신들이 직접 작곡한 실험음악, 미디어적 요소 등을 다채롭게 결합하여 독특한 자신들만의 실험적 무언극을 선보여 온 이들은 현재 랩버를 보강하(뉴욕 각지에서 활발히 활동중이다.

일종을 파괴적 화장하고 신명나게 무대를 누비는 블루 멘 그룹은 1 말 뉴욕 화단에 갑인바람이 불던 시절 태동하여, 웨스턴 파크나 맨해 못것을 누비며 1988년에는 미술하는 장례식 《Funeral for the 80s 행위예술을 공연하면서 처처히 음명대를 연주 시작했다. 머리는 식 운동에 파괴적 몸짓을 하고 악기는 주로 캔이나 플라스틱 통을 이주된 그들의 모습은 갤러리나 박물관의 시장을 끌었다. 당시 뉴욕 술관 앞에서 세 명의 블루 멘의 일종의 퍼포먼스로 위치나 및 시각 동 식 동작을 보며 다음을 예측하며 그 이유를 대중화하는 관식에 대한 인 례를 위배하는 재즈 연주단.

블루 멘 그룹이 본격적인 활동을 시작한 1988년에 맨은 모더니즘 의 고도로 제도화된 사회에 대한 갤러리와 박물관의 보수적 경향으 화나이 들 때, 맥켄으며 주먹 쥐 작으로 예술의 자유를 부르짖던 그 조차 점차 작가들에게 친절한 명성을 위해 주식 복하고 정치권의 미 한 불이해를 비판한 뿐이었다. 이렇게 멤버 부정확다 정해에서 재즈 작단으로 이동에 대한 지원금이 행가을 일종의 부인 등으로 보이 주 성한 듯이 블루 멘 그룹인 것이다.

80년대 말 보수적 뉴욕 화단에 던진 도전장

초창기부터 이 그룹을 이끌어 오는 매니 골드먼(Matt Goldman)과 윙 크(Chris Wink), 펜 스탠턴(Phil Stanton)은 컬럼비아 대학의 연주 학한 이 그룹의 결성멤버이자 현재에 세 개의 LOFT 공연이나 동시 공연사장이다. 세 명이 함께 작업을 하기 전에 골드먼은 MBA과정 를 졸업하고 주식브로커로 일을 하면서 정통 행위을 했고, 윙 크는 일본에서 영어 가르치는 일을 했으며, 스탠턴은 그림을 배우는 한편에 지방행 예술가라는 이름으로 보급 미술로 전업에 대한 지원하는 이들은 펜 로 이후 더욱 음명해졌지만, 처음는 초창기의 멤버들로 블루 멘 그 명칭하에서 아니 20년을 이끌어 오면서 여러 도시에서 공연하는 활

"초창기부터 파란색 메이크업을 하고 그냥 거리를 보면서 저희를 보는 사람들의 반응을 보고 싶었지요. 특히 1980년대 말 검열 바람으로 비평계가 떠들썩했던 당시 예술이 무엇인지 그 경계를 정의하고 싶어했을 뿐입니다."

속에는 현실이 스며 있다. 예를 들면, "《뉴욕 타임스》지는 17세기 영국의 평범한 시민들이 평생 동안 알고 있는 정보보다는 더 많은 정보를 담고 있답니다. 그런데, 여러분은 또 한 번 잘못된 포스터를 보고 있습니다. 여러분 앞에 있는 사람들은 유용한 정보를 읽고 있는데 한마디로 당신은 늘 잠동사니 매일만 받을 뿐입니다"라는 정보 통신사회에서의 우리가 접하는 정보의 양과 정보의 포로가 된 우리 모습을 우회적으로 비판하는 글귀들이 포스터 외에도 전광판에 끊임없이 쓰이고 지워지고 있는 것이다.

블루 맨 그룹은 유명 작가의 유명한 양식이나 작품 내용을 도용하면서 포스트 모던 작가들이 하는 고유성을 반복적으로 지우고 있다. 블루 맨은 패러디의 패러디라는 전략으로 그들을 유희적으로 재조명하고 싶어하는 것이다. 모더니즘 작가들의 작품을 블루 맨이 재해석하는 것도 원작과 원작의 일회성, 그리고 거장의 개별성을 되새기 보려는 의도를 담고 있다. 블루 맨 그룹의 웹사이트를 방문하면 블루 맨이 밀레, 고흐, 드가 등 모더니즘 거장들의 원작과 자신들이 컴퓨터로 조작한 이미지를 병치시키는 방법으로 일종의 소설식 내러티브를 만들어 내는 것을 볼 수 있다.

예술의 경계를 시험하는 파란 뉴요커

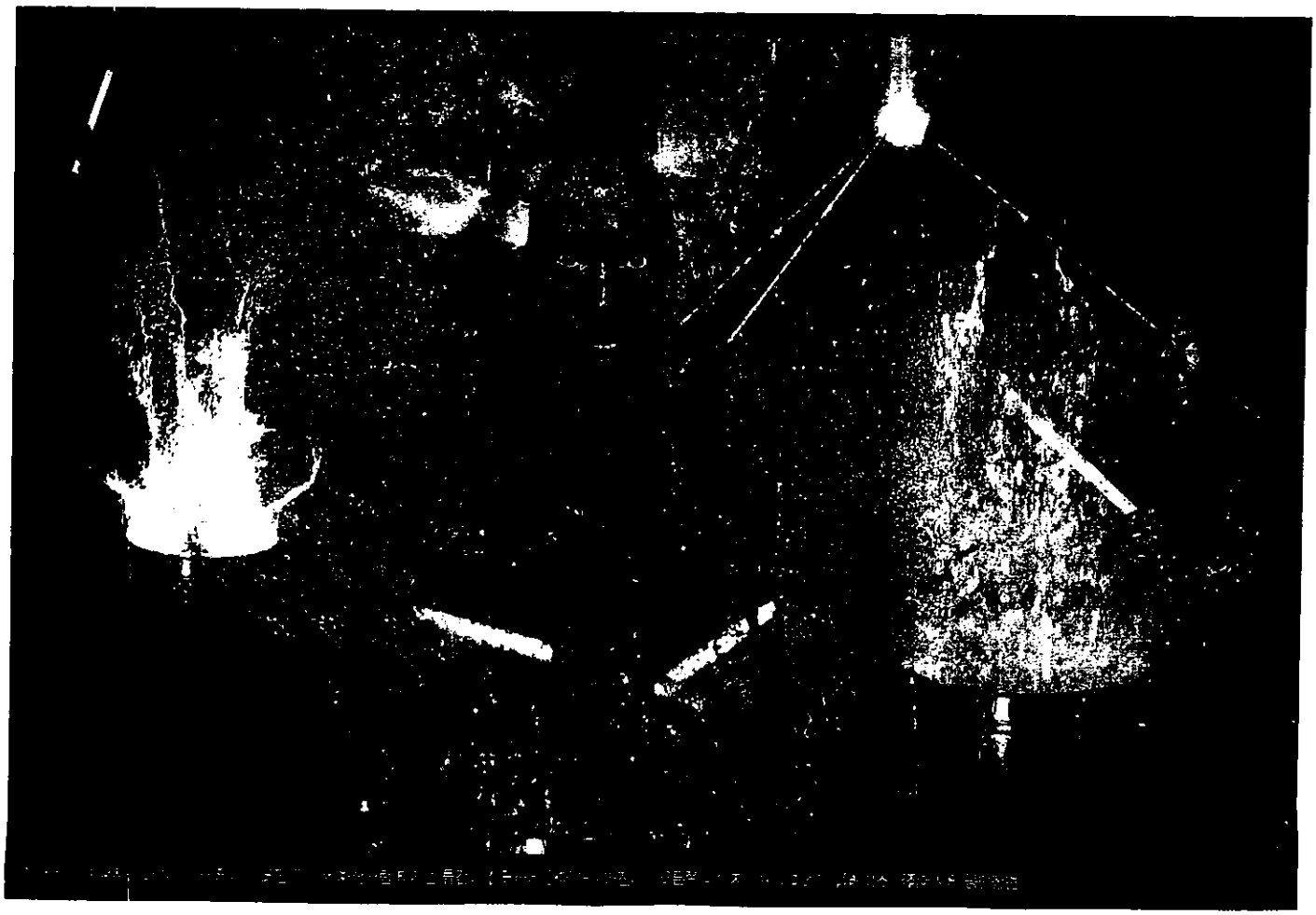
필자가 오프 브로드웨이 공연인 블루 맨 그룹의 공연을 처음 본 것은 5년 전 뉴욕에서였는데 당시엔 그들이 공연 중에 만들어 내는 우리의 현 문화에 대한 농담이나 조롱과 같은 코미디적 발언을 이해하기가 쉽지 않았다. 블루 맨에서 보내준 뉴욕 아스터 플레이스 극장(Astor Place Theater)에서의 최근 공연을 다시 보고 그들을 만나 인터뷰를 가졌다.

정: 블루 맨 그룹의 형성 과정에 대해서 말해 본다면?

불: 저희는 거리미술가로 시작했지만 처음부터 사람들에게 어떤 광대와 같은 이미지를 주고 싶지는 않았어요. 초창기부터 파란색 메이크업을 하고 그냥 거리를 보면서 저희를 보는 사람들의 반응을 보고 싶었지요. 특히 1980년대 말 검열 바람으로 비평계가 떠들썩했던 당시 예술이 무엇인지 그 경계를 정의하고 싶어했을 뿐입니다. 저희는 함께 작업하면서 예술에 대해 말보다는 음악과 연극, 미술, 혹은 무술 등의 여러 요소를 선별해서 혼용하고자 했고, 반응이 좋아 여러 도시를 돌면서 공연하고 있습니다.

정: 블루 맨 그룹의 공연에서 추상미술과 폴록의 드리핑적 요소를 작품에 수용하는 특별한 이유라도?

불: 저희는 뉴욕 출신으로 저희의 성장배경은 다른 미국인들과 많이 다르다고 생각합니다. 뉴욕은 인구의 이동이 심하고 시간을 두고 전통으로 물어설 만하면 늘 새로운 것이 진입해 옛것을 무너뜨립니다. 저희는 뉴욕에서 성장했지만, 여기에 속하지 못했지요. 물론 어디에도 속하지 못했지만요. 어떤 점에서 그것이 원동력이 되었지만, 10대에는 전통의 부재 속에서 늘 이것저것을 찾으면서 생활했지요. 자신이 태어나고 성장한 도시에 대한 상실감을 작품 속에 넣고 싶었어요. 저희는 현재도 저희가 뉴욕에 속하기보다는 우리가 함께 작업하는 공연에 속해 있다고 생각합니다. 우리가 설정한 상징적



룹의 공연을 실제로 관람하거나 공연하고 있다.

세 명의 블루 맨이 1980년대 말 'Nowhere'라는 클럽을 주 무대로 소규모 극단 중심의 공연을 시작했으나, 이제는 미국 전역을 중심으로 1995년에는 보스턴에서, 1997년에는 시카고에서, 2000년 3월에는 라스베가스의 특수 극장에서 공연해 대대적인 성공을 기록했다. 초기의 창립멤버 외에 약 30명의 블루 맨 그룹이 가세했으며, 미술과 음악 등에도 각자 외부의 도움을 받기나 공동 실험에 참조하는 약 50명의 공연가가 거대하여 공연이 진행되고 있다.

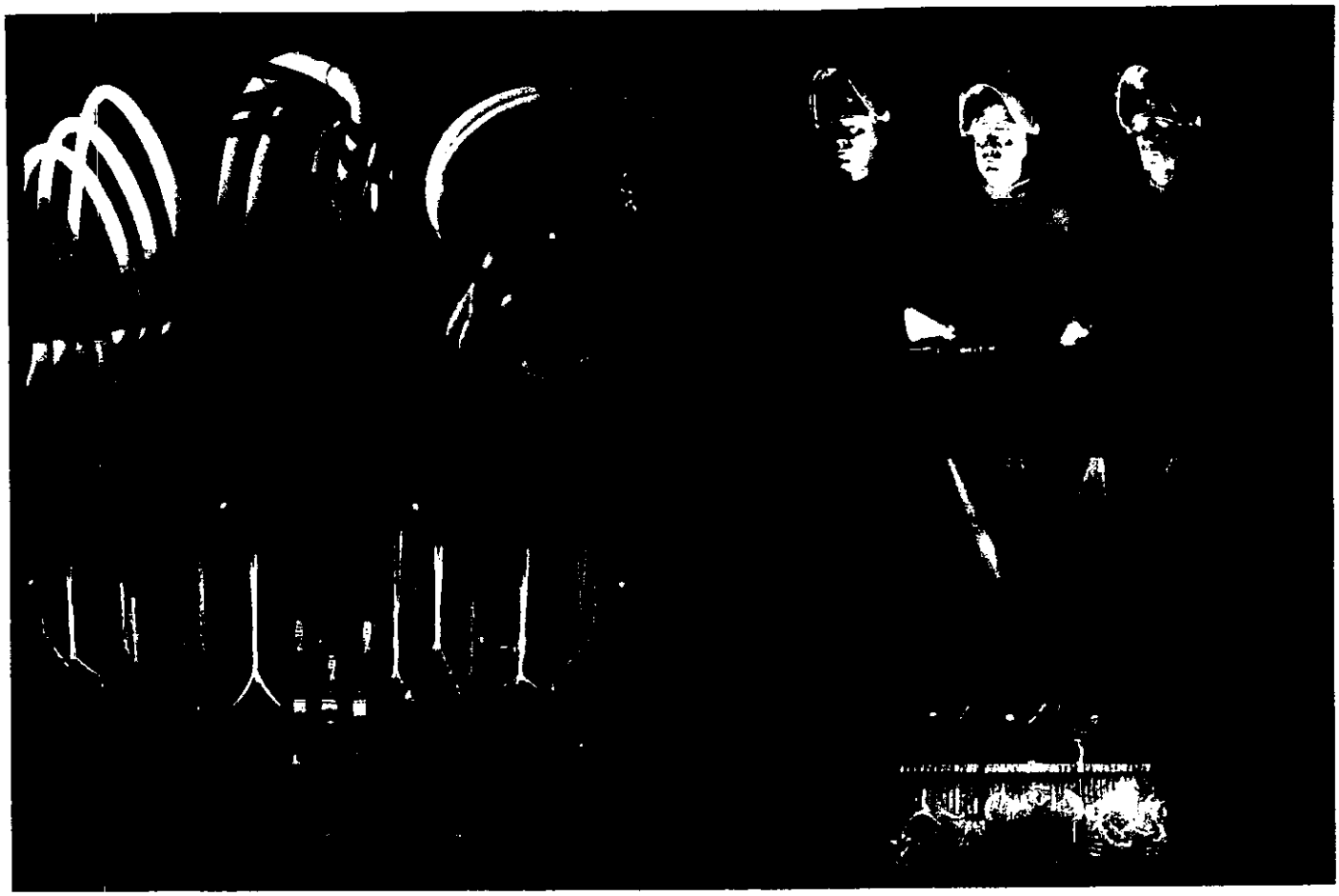
5년 이상 관객들의 인기를 얻고 있는 블루 맨 튜브(Blue Man Tubes)는 물감을 드럼 위에 쏟아 추상적인 혼합을 자아내면서 색과 음향의 액션 페인팅을 연상시키는데, 신나게 울리퍼지는 드럼 소리, 블루 맨의 퍼포먼스 위로 쏟아지는 세련된 조명은 이들의 무대를 더욱 현기차게 만드는 요소다. 튜브는 무대의 천장이나 벽으로 향해 있는 튜브를 연상시킨다. 드럼의 표면 위에 자위스럽게 쏟아지는 물감 때문에 무대는 물감이 용솟음치듯 뿜어 나가는 화산으로 변한다. 입 속으로 흘러들어오는 물감을 시민인을 정신없이 쑤시 넣더니 곧 요동으로 뿜는다. 말은 삼간 채, 액션회화 스타일로 나오는 진행된 관중의 반응을 유도하는 일종의 키퍼니케이션과 같은 메세지로 볼 수 있다. 80분 정도 진행되는 이 공연은 헤프닝이나 행위예술이라고 할 수 있겠지만, 블루 맨 그룹이 의도하는 것은 어떤 카테고리적 예술 장르이기보다는 보다 형식으로 미술과 연극, 음악과 미디어적인 요소를 다양하게 소화시키 보려는 새로운 실험적이라 할 수 있다.

뉴 웨이브 무지이나 존 케이지나 펄튀 플레스 등의 현대 실험음악을 실험한 듯한 그룹의 음악은 초창기 그룹의 관심을 부었던 이러한 분명에서 벗어나 10년 이상 짧은 정휘으로 자신들만의 음악적 방향을 설정한 듯이 보인다. 이들이 독창적으로 네세우는 PVC 악기는 튜브 길이에 따라 다른 소리가 나므로 이를 튜블룸(Tubulum)이나 항가리의 고유 악기인 짐발롬(Cimbalom)과 혼합해 사용하고 있다. 이외에도 그룹은 현 주이나 일본, 중국의 북과 같은 타악기에도 깊은 관심을 두고 있다. 이들이 곧이 미술관이나 갤러리와 같은 미술공간을 마다하고 연극적 요소가 농후한 극단이나 대중의 위락 도시인 라스베가스 같은 상업도시를 선호하는 까닭은 자신들이 대세우는 음악성이나 그룹이 보는 미술사의 관점(www.blueman.com에 수록되어 있다)에서 미술 이야기를 대중의 영역으로 세미있게 끌어들이고 싶기 때문이다.

흔히 라스베가스를 가보지 않으면 미국을 이해할 수 없다는 이야기가 있지만, 필자가 제일 가보고 싶지 않은 도시가 라스베가스이기 때문에 이러한 에기를 이끌어 나가는 자체가 자가당착일 수도 있겠는데, 신도시를 메운 이집트 양식의 건물이나 역사적으로 유명한 도시들을 인공의 조각으로 모던한 페스티쉬라는 생각이 든다. 시대적으로 축적된 건축 양식이나 미학적 맥락이 없는 상태에서 라스베가스의 도시 건물은 심세계적으로 유명한 건축물들을 모방하고 혼성적으로 융합시키는 잡동사니 도시다운 인성을 준다. 이 도시에서 그룹이 음악이나 드럼, 원초적 요소, 물감을 이러저리 뿌리면서 만들어 내는 실험적인 모리핑이나 이브 클라인과 대지미술가였던 로버트 스미스슨을 모방하는 대중 전통이 없는 미국 사회에서 오는 허탈감이나 축적된 전통이 없기에 의존할 수밖에 없는 혼성적인 요소가 있다고 해도 과언은 아닐 것이다. 페이스 드럼의 우상적 소리와 물감에서 쏟아지는 추상미술적인 요소는 인류적인 몸짓과 실험음악(자신들이 직접 작곡했다)과 이우러져 관객들이 함께 참여하는 공동의 장으로 변한다.

대중 속으로 들어 온 추상미술과 실험음악

누이 튜브 공연에서는 그룹이 유희하게 내뱉는 '아우치, 아우, 우아~' 같은 소리와 함께 관객가 뛰치자마자 관객들은 그 관객을 함께 즐길 수 있도록 초대한다. 잠시 후에는 분수와 함께 히피 문화에 대한 향수들이 스케치북 위에 쓰이면, 부인들을 보고 있는 관객들은 이를 위에 되고 그을 통해 그룹과 소통하게 된다. 그러니 놀귀가 마뀌는 순간 무적 빠르기 때문에 인지가 쉬지 않은데, 이들이 이런 식의 정보 범람으로 관객을 정신없게 만드는 과정



인 장소인 공인장에 속하면서 10년 넘게 불세없이 함께 작업해 온 게 놀랍지 않으세요? 함께 작업하면서 세 명의 멤버가 결혼, 생활을 하고 나름대로 예술성을 추구하고 있습니다. 초창기에는 몽환으로 작업하고 펜더바임과 같은 연주을 실험하면서 환상만을 대중적인 이미지가 없다고 생각했는데, 이러한 전통을 기반으로 장르를 제머있고 유희적으로 이용하고 있다는 생각이 들어 초창기의 작새로 10년 이상을 지속 발전해 왔다는 이유가 있다고 생각합니다.

정: 개인 작업이 아닌 공동 작업을 강조하시는데 특별한 이유라도 있는지?

블: 지희가 공동 작업을 추구하는 한 가지 이유는 이렇습니다. 1980년대 말 재즈 힙스, 소니앙 슈나벨, 에릭 피슬 등이 한창 유명하니 시절, 모두 방송매체 등을 이용해서 자신들이 얼마나 훌륭한 천재인지를 실질적에 이니이 없었지요. 한 개인의 능력을 실현해서 이제는 예술성보다는 개인의 유명세를 중시한다고 느꼈습니다. 지희는 그러한 작세적는 거리를 두고 집단의 공동체적인 작업으로 대체하고 있었던 것이지요.

정: 특별히 파란색을 이용한 이유라도 있는지?

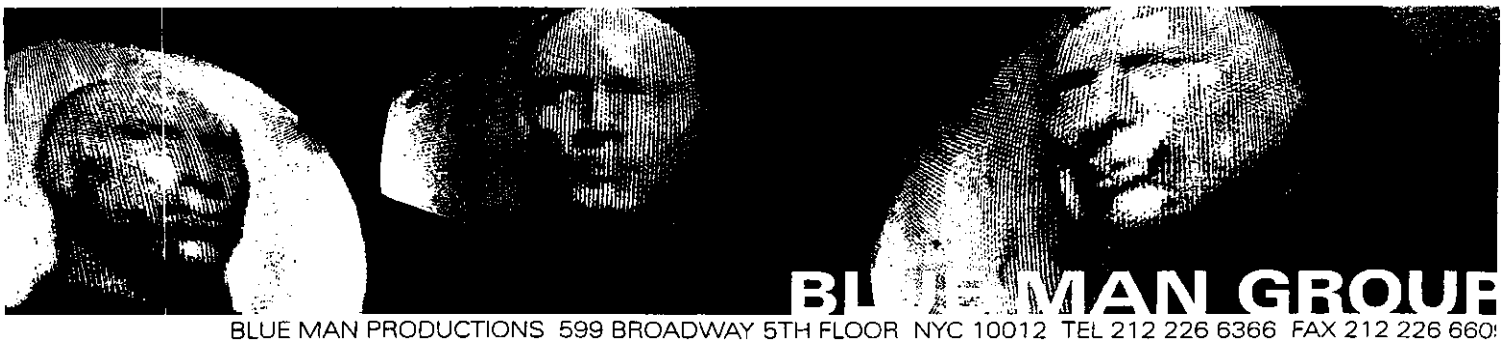
블: 처음에는 이런 색을 생각한 적도 있습니다. 이브 클라인의 작품을 개인적으로 좋아하는데, 왜 신비로운 파란색을 많이 쓰는지요? 클라인의 레즈넘이 지희 행위예술에 많은 영향을 끼쳤다고 생각해요. 또 리빈 스키의 작세론을 생각해 보면 작세에 어떤 상징적인 이미지가 부여되어 있다고 생각했는데… 모두 파란색을 좋아한다는 점도 일조했지요. 초창기는 너무 위세인 감고, 노란색은 너무 광대 같고, 파란색은 거리감을 조성하면서도 친근감을 준다고 생각했습니다. 물감용 파란색 물감은 미국에서 두 시간 넘게 걸려 찾아보는 작업이 하고 있지요. 손에는 수술용 장갑을 끼고 머리에는 고무줄로 묶은 후에 파란색을 바릅니다.

정: 특별히 펜더바임과 같은 부엌들을 작품 속에 끌어들인 이유는 무엇인가?

블: 1980년대 말 당시 행위예술을 생각해 보세요. 작가 자신의 정체성이나 뭐가 해서 무대 위는 일종의 보호막으로 지배했어요. 보수적는 무대 위로 올라와서 자신에 대한 에기만 주절주절 하면서 한 개인의 정체성이 무엇인지, 정치적으로 옳바른 방인이 무엇인지를 관객에게 강압없이 주입시키려 했지요. 한마디로 거의 심리치료를 인상시키는 부대있어요. 지희는 이러한 언어를 삼가고 가능한 한 예술매체로 관객들과 소통하는 작업을 방출로 삼았어요. 개념성을 제기하는 듯한 동일한 우리의 보습과 공동체적인 요소는 관객들과 오히려 친근감을 조성했지요. 회원화된 보습으로를 중심으로 하는 정체성이라는 주제보다는 여러 매체를 실험적으로 다룬면서 부엌으로 해석의 폭을 더 넓히고 싶었어요. 지희는 이게 바로 예술의 자유라고 생각했습니다. ◘

인터뷰 후기

인터뷰는 진행하면서 처음으로 3시간 넘게 진행 인터뷰를 할 수 있었다. 펜더바임 전시 장면에서 부엌이 워낙 강한 표징을 지녀 작가적인 시각의 보습을 보고 싶었다. 지희와는 같은 동네에 모불처럼 옮 적이는 점은점이, 인간 복제를 일상적기는 느낌 제 불수 없이 음식한 원로 표정이 외모, 희곡에 현 및 공연을 준비하는 과정은 모든점로 지금을 요하는 준비된 작업이라고 느낄은 점점하다. 피란색을 일관에 따르로, 그 이유는 음식가 입체적 (공일로적적 점근) 파란색 고무모자를 쓰고 두 시간 동안 얼굴이 목 주변에 파란색을 바르는 작업을 한다. 모든 일 등 초점으로 보이는 펜로의 그림에 같은 음식일을 매일 준비해야 한다. 이러한 작품을 두더운 우리에서 보는 공동 작업이지에 인공공인 부드러는 모두 펜을 지도하는 것을 조화해 하루에 한 및 공연을 준비하다. 리점은 그러면서 지금과 예술을 요하는 준비된 작업이라고 한다. 또한 이번 인터뷰는 통해 아이린 메(Ian Dai)와 제이콥로스 블루 맨 그룹과 그 가족들과 함께 작업해 오고 있다는 사실을 알았다. 끝으로 인터뷰에 응해 준 블루 맨 멤버들과 일 준비해 준 모든 분들에 감사의 말을 전한다. (I would like to thank Scott McLean for his generous assistance and arrangement, and the Blue Men and Ian Dai for their time and interview with me.)



BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 660

The Blue Man Group

Tracy Bonham
Venus Hum
Hammerstein Ballroom

Finally! Sixteen years after their founding, after numerous awards (Obie, Drama Desk and Lucille Lortel), the producing of their shows in major cities around the country (New York, Boston, Chicago and Las Vegas) and the release of two music CD's (1999's "Audio" and 2003's "The Complex") - - The Blue Man Group is touring. Chris Wink, Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton had the sold-out Hammerstein Ballroom abuzz with anticipation as the faithful, the newly initiated, the curious and a handful of skeptics awaited the first full-blown rock show mounted by the percussive geniuses.

Tracy Bonham (who appears on "The Complex") started the evening off with a short set highlighted by her hit "Mother Mother." Unfortunately, her other originals weren't nearly as strong. Her cover songs, though ambitious, should have been better chosen. Covering Led Zeppelin was definitely a stretch. Next up was Venus Hum, led by singer Annette Strean (who also appears on "The Complex"). Venus Hum's music and Strean's breathy vocals are reminiscent of a more rocking Kate Bush and/or Biork.

Following a short, often hilarious intermission, which was highlighted by the dueling message boards on the right and left side of the stage, the Blue Man Group and their band appeared. Combining rock show theatrics with a multi-media backdrop, the band and the group roared through a 1 1/2 hour set that both amazed and delighted the crowd. Adopting their personas as "outsiders" and "aliens," the performance featured the PVC tube drums, primal drums and Hungarian Cimbalom (that the group is famous for) combined with a healthy dose of rock n' roll supplied by their first-rate backup band.

The show was highlighted by the Jefferson Airplane's "White rabbit" sung by Tracy Bonham, "Your Attention," "Piano Smasher," "The Current" and "I Feel Love" featuring Venus Hum (Strean sang her heart out on this one, while wearing a multicolored flashing neon mini dress). The encores were positively enthralling. The Who's "Won't Get Fooled Again" (with stellar vocals and electric violin supplied by Bonham) was everything a rock anthem should be. The final and most thought-provoking song of the evening was "Exhibit 13." "Exhibit 13" was not only visually stunning, but an emotionally intense "piece." For more information on this song go to www.exhibit13.com.

For more information on the Blue Man Group - - their history, regular performance schedule in NY, Boston, Chicago and Las Vegas "The Complex" tour info and much

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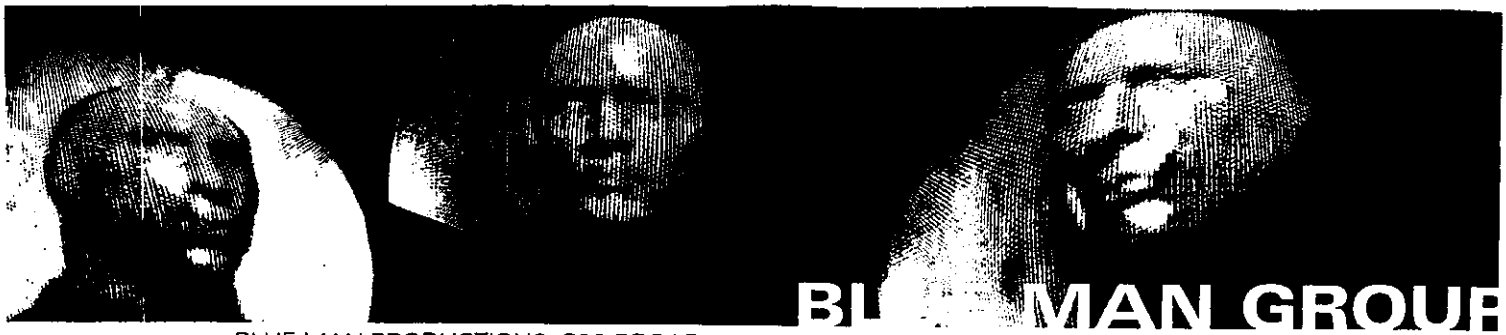

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Boston Globe Mar. 15, 2001

Me and the Blue Men

By Shoshanna L. Pucci
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

I have wanted to see "Blue Man Group" for a long time. It was difficult, however, to persuade my husband, David, that it was worth $53 a ticket when all I could explain about the show was, "These three blue guys use pipes to play music, do funny stuff with food, comment on post-modern technology and art, and a lot of people really like it."

When a friend told me she had seen "Blue Man" for free by ushering, I knew this was my chance. I called and found openings that weekend. The house manager instructed us to show up, wearing all black, an hour before the show and be prepared to stay 20 minutes afterward to clean up. I thought we would have to cancel our commitment after we ransacked David's closet only to discover he didn't own black pants or shoes. Dark colors would do just fine, the house manager reassured me over the phone.

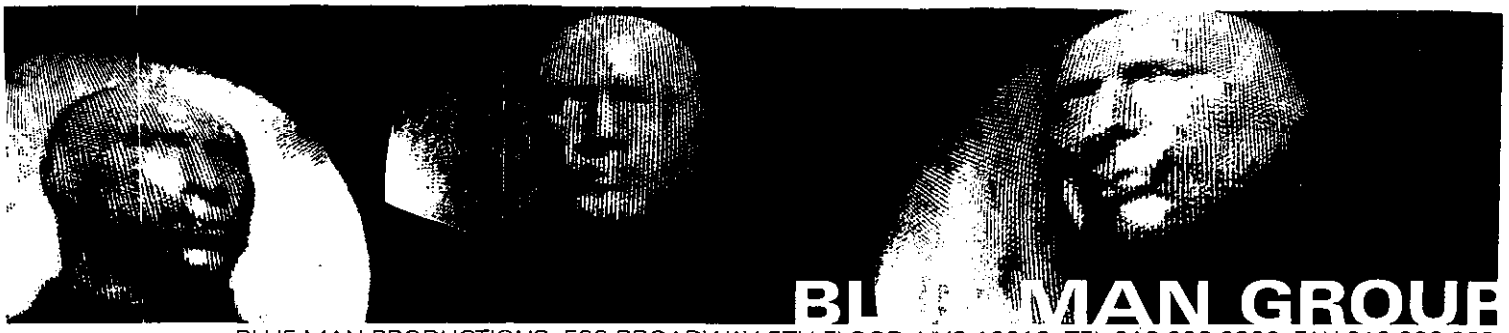
We dutifully showed up an hour early and met with the 10 other ushers in the upstairs lobby. We were immediately issued Blue Man Group stickers, which I found a bit disconcerting. Here I was among those officially designated in charge, and I couldn't even point to the bathrooms. Our hourlong Ushering 101 crash course took care of my apprehension and questions. We learned the layout of the auditorium, how to read the tickets and, thankfully, the location of all the restrooms. We were relieved to find out that during this rock concert-like performance, the audience would be encouraged to bring food and, yes, even beer to their seats — one less reason for me to be an uptight usher. The coveted rows at the front were overlaid with plastic ponchos to protect fans from the bits of junk food that tend to come flying off the stage. A couple of audience members were a taken aback by the need for precautions, but most were pretty excited to be in the line of fire.

As I accompanied one couple, a man asked me, "So are you guys all theater students in the area?" I think I disappointed his romantic vision of our starving, struggling lives when I told him I am a middle school teacher in Concord and my husband an officer at Hanscom Air Force Base. Oh well.

Two minutes before the show, the house managers accompanied us to our seats. No poncho seats were available that night, but we did have a great view. As the show ended, thousands of sheets of what looked like toilet paper dropped from the ceiling and were passed from the back of the theater to the front. It looked like a nightmare for the ushering squad. However, the house managers had the clean-up process down to an art. As the audience left, we divided into teams and were issued trash bags. We cut and stuffed the paper with great efficiency.

While we were putting away the last bag, I looked up and was rewarded by the next best thing to backstage passes: One of the Blue Men — who remain mute throughout the show — walked by and casually said, "Hey guys, thanks for helping us out."

To volunteer, call 617-426-6912.



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PANORAMA

THE OFFICIAL GUIDE TO BOSTON

TRUE

Blue Man Group Celebrates its Fifth Anniversary in the Hub

Also in this issue:

Rockin' and Rollin': Cars and Guitars at the ICA and MFA

The Lights Fantastic: Boston Shines for the Holidays

PANORAMA

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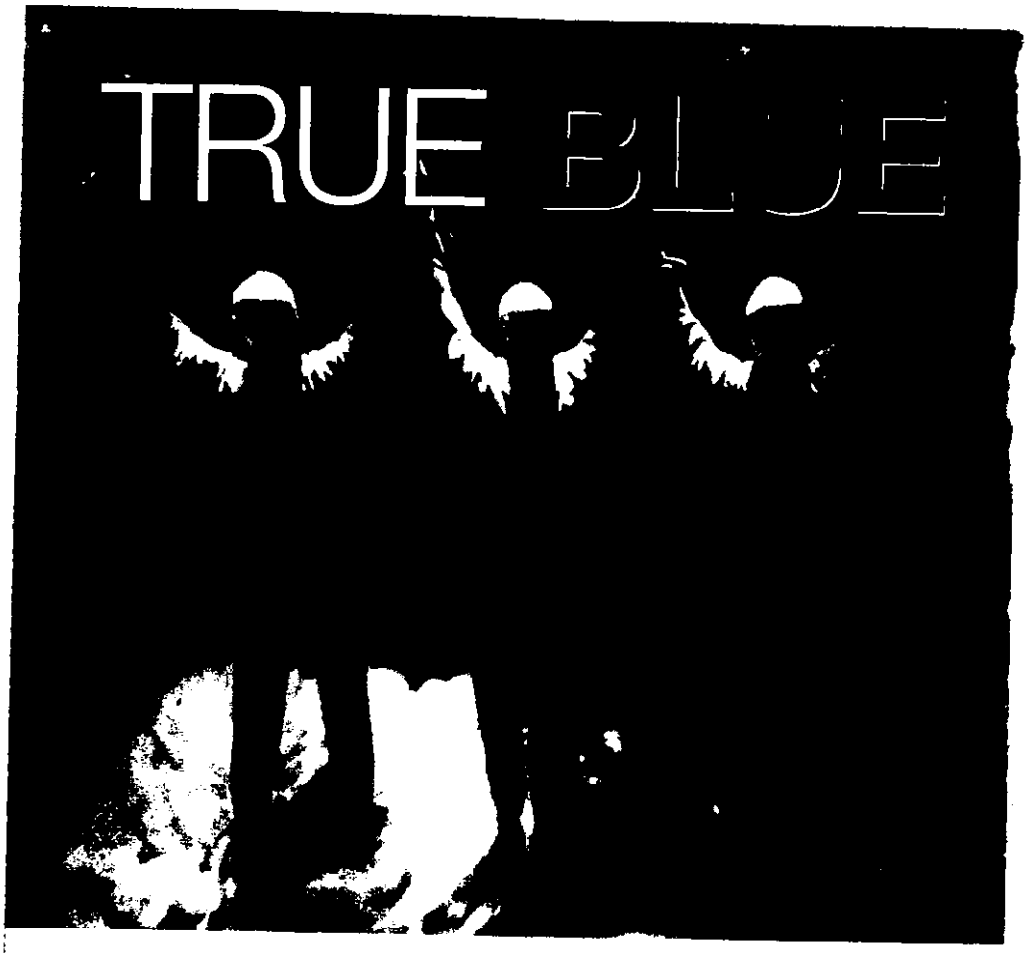


From the silly to the sarcastic to the über-subversive, Blue Man Group celebrates five years of redefining theatre in the Hub

by Christopher Wallenberg

SOMETHING BOLD, SOMETHING BLUE –Blue Man Group has become a local institution at the Charles Playhouse on Warrenton Street in the Theatre District

Three skullcapped mutes coated from head to toe in bright cobalt blue paint, resembling futuristic pseudo-alien creatures, emerge onto a stage in a darkened theatre. Puzzled by the strange planet they've found, they proceed to enlighten the bewildered audience with childlike antics that include creating music from plastic tubes, spewing banana guts from their innards, snatching tossed marshmallows with their mouths, and banging on drumfulls of glow-in-the-dark paint which spray their jet black clothing in a fountain of colors. Is this some Warholian pop artist's dreamland? A giddy Romper Room gone mad? Try commercial theatre in our cynical, sardonic and utterly irreverent times. Known by the moniker Blue Man Group, this interactive, quasi-performance art is helping to ambush our concept of modern art at the end of the millennium. And this fall, the outfit celebrates its fifth anniversary in Boston.

From the silly to the sarcastic to the über-subversive, Blue Man Group's show, "Tubes," is a self-proclaimed "reaction against the avant-garde [and] the self-conscious attempt to be experimental." Blue Man Group also has a few things to say about the rampant pretension in the art world. And their iconography smacks of pop culture: Twinkies, Cap'n Crunch, marshmallows and a backing band that resembles a Day-Glo Marilyn Manson.

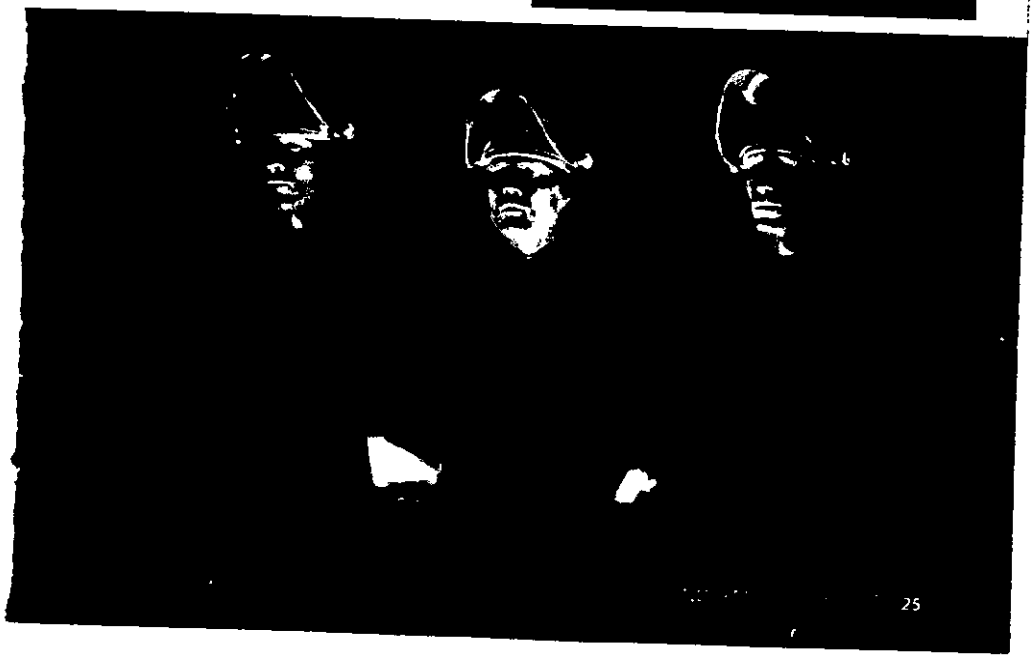
The brainchild of three longtime friends, Chris Wink, Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton, Blue Man Group emerged from impromptu sidewalk appearances around New York City that they dubbed "Club Nowhere." The three friends would perform in full blue getup in front of nightclubs, stringing a velvet rope around their "stage" in a cheeky, self-mocking tone.

Blue Man Group's Do-It-Yourself aesthetic may have seemed a tad more iconoclastic when it first premiered in these different incarnations around Greenwich Village in the late '80s, eventually finding a permanent home at the Astor Place Theatre in 1991. Since then, it has garnered Obie and Drama Desk awards, as well as the Lucille Lortel Award for Best Off-Broadway Show. Moreover, it has nurtured a Rocky Horror-ish cult following at Boston's Charles Playhouse and in New York. The group has also tackled America's heartland with a third production of "Tubes" debuting in Chicago in 1997 and its largest production, "Live at the Luxor," opening in The City of Sin, Las Vegas, last March.

Yet Blue Man Group still remains true to its guerrilla-art origins. The show brims with humor, acumen and manic energy, as the group's thoughts—displayed on electronic message boards—are juxtaposed against their dumbfounded expressions. Whether spoofing the inflated airs of the modern art world or commenting on runaway technology, Blue Man Group manages to be both contemplative and droll.

Co-founder Chris Wink insists that Blue Man's message isn't one of anarchy or an anti-technology manifesto à la the Unabomber. "You notice we don't take those electronic signs and just smash them. But we make a song out of them. We put them to use in a way that isn't its normal intention, but

(cont. on page 28)



STARE FACTOR Music and mayhem are always in order when Blue Man Group takes the stage

TRUE **BLUE**

(cont. from page 25)

it's kind of tribal...The alienating and isolating forces of the modern world are not really technology's fault. It's the way we use it that's at fault."

From discussing fractal theory to spitting gumballs full of paint onto a canvas to sucking Christina right off her painted world via a vacuum cleaner hose (here, the group is spoofing contemporary artist Andrew Wyeth's famous painting, *Christina's World*), Wink maintains that the parodies aren't meant to be disparaging. "There's a ratio in our show of satire and respect, and love and celebration, for theatre and art...We make fun of *parts* of the art world, not art itself. We poke fun at the commodification, the over-intellectualization [of art]."

Wink relates this to the primal or tribal essence of our being, explaining that we need to return to our base instincts as humans. Blue Man dogma declares that, somewhere along the way, either the emotional component of art was lost or people have dismissed the importance of the visceral. "I mean, how far have we come where you can see some art and you just don't know what the hell it is?"

That would never have happened to the caveman, he insists. So the group drafted a scene where it would create something on stage, then throw it at a canvas to determine if it was art or kitsch.

"If it landed on the canvas, it was art. If it landed on the floor, it was waste. It was a semi-sincere, simultaneous look at what is art and what is pop culture—and kind of wanting a little more out of both," says Wink.

Pop culture isn't the only thing the group shares its kindred spirit with. Avant-garde shock artists like Karen Finley and her ilk have had a marked influence on Blue Man, yet Wink is also careful to draw a line between himself and those more radical performers. "What makes Karen Finley's work interesting is that she's a really powerful performer. And the shocking part is kind of irrelevant. It just gets her going," says Wink, who used to work the doors at performance art spaces around New York. "But for a lot of [shock art], I feel there's a narcissistic, desperate, look-at-me quality to it."

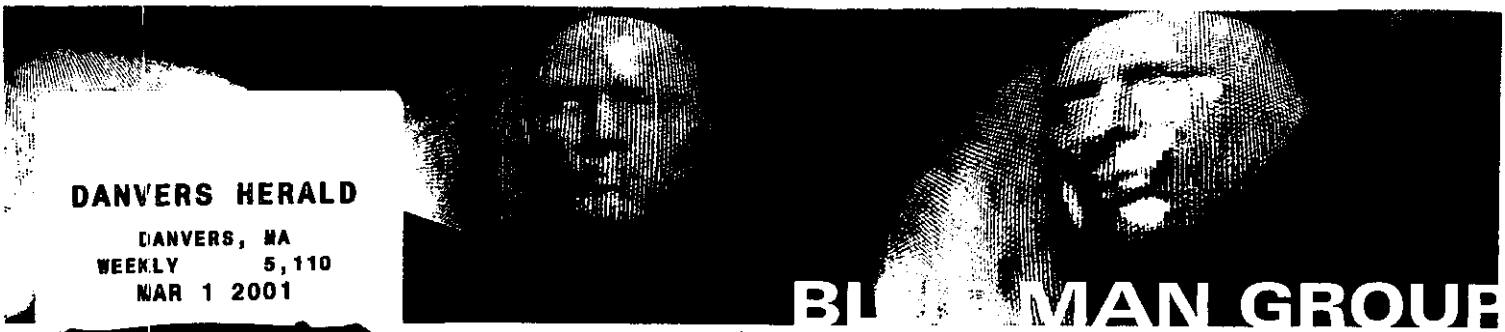
Yet he quickly asserts his admiration for artists who relentlessly push the envelope—then lick the stamp. "I think we have equal parts rolling-our-eyes disdain and respect for the trickster who's out there just trying to shake things up. They're easy to write off...but thank God they're out there."

So why blue? Wink maintains the choice of electric, cobalt blue—a seeming porthole into the abyss—was an impromptu decision made on the fly. "It was just one of those things...You put it on to see if you like it. It stuck," Wink says flatly. "I could say we thought of this and we thought of that...After the fact, we kept finding out reasons why it was good."

Besides the obvious color-of-the-sky, color-of-the-inner-flame analogy, Wink refers to the '60s French artist Yves Klein, who was obsessed with the austerity of blue and who rolled blue-painted women across a canvas to the minimalist strains of a one-note symphony. After discovering Klein, the group shoehorned a salvo to him into the show. In the scene, an audience member is wrapped in a white sheet, suspended upside down, dipped in paint and bounced off a canvas to create a painting from the body imprint.

The show's climactic toilet paper orgy with its barrage of blaring rave music, flickering strobe lights, spinning neon PVC piping and creeping Blue Men achieves a poetic transcendence at its crescendo, as the audience is engulfed in a Silly-String-like stream of intertwined paper. To be immersed in the fusillade of sound, light and rollicking fun that is Blue Man Group is to invariably melt into the canvas on which the Blue Man works, to mix with the palette the Blue Man utilizes to create this inventive work of performance art. Yet Blue Man Group still appeals to the visceral, primal beast lurking inside us. It is the Blue Man's hope we can all discover that animal within.

Refer to listing in Currently, page 52.



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ODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 660

Blue Man Group receives

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By Kimberly Bolduc

I have seen many Broadway shows including "Les Miserables" and "Jekyll and Hyde," but nothing was more exciting and involved than what I saw recently at the Charles Playhouse, when my aunt treated my entire family to "Blue Man Group: Tubes." I had no idea what to expect, except for what I had seen of them on commercials.

The theatre was very small and intimate. Everyone was forced to tie tissue paper around their heads. Red, electrical, moving message boards (similar to the one in the DHS cafeteria) directed the audience to sing "Happy Birthday" and to congratulate people on various accomplishments, an interesting and comedic way, I thought, to set the mood for the show.

Throughout the night, the three blue men drummed, painted, acted, and interacted with the audience. It would be next to impossible to not laugh. The actors were incredible. With no verbal lines, the Blue Men were able to convey their feelings through expressions alone. The audience could tell exactly what they were thinking. They each had their own personality. The entire time they kept a straight face, even when the crowd was in pain from laughter.

There was also a three-member band in all glow-in-the-dark clothing. A few people were brought up on stage to help with the act. The audience was a huge part of the show. At one point they actually got the whole crowd singing "White Rabbit" by Jefferson Airplane. There was a lot of reading and many attacks on human weakness involved.

One of my favorite parts was when they had everyone pick one of three sets of cue cards and stick with it the whole time. Each cue card was long and teased the reader because they knew that everyone was either wishing they had picked another set of cards or was trying to read as fast as they could, so they could switch to another set. They were right. The entire time I was wondering what the others said.

The props not only included paint, drums, and television screens, but they used gumballs, Twinkies and Capt'n Crunch as well. They also played on long twisting tubes that created an original sound and changed pitch when bent the right way. The props had a big part in the finale. I won't give it away but let's just say there was a lot of lights, loud party music, and plenty of tissue paper. The audience was on their feet before the show even ended. Everyone felt like a kid again, in this show that Time Magazine called "A Sensation."

I was still smiling an hour after I left. This is the most exciting thing I have ever seen. I felt like I was as much a part of the cast as the actual actors. Would I see I again? Probably one hundred more times if I could. I loved it! I absolutely recommend "Blue Man Group" to everyone no matter what age. This show truly was a sensation.

rave reviews

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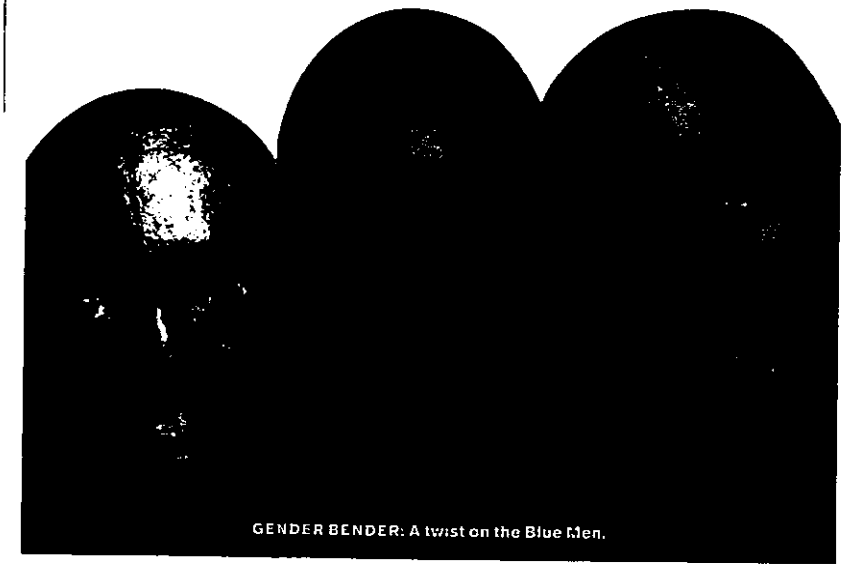
Boston Magazine
March 2001



GENDER BENDER: A twist on the Blue Men.

THEATER

Out of the Blue

Shhh... there's a surprise addition to the troupe.

By JESSICA PARISI

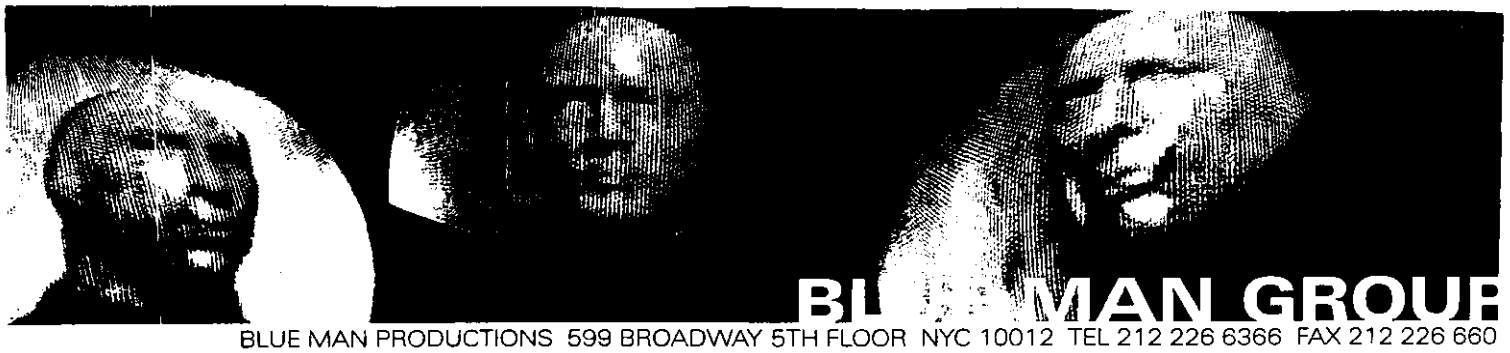
Over the years, the bass-thumping **Blue Man Group** has developed an intensely loyal following with its trademark trio of androgynous players, their paint-spewing antics, and off-the-wall skits. But the Blue Men have a secret: There is now also a Blue Woman.

"No one has even noticed," says 23-year-old **Andrea Johnson.** Since last June, Johnson has donned the cobalt-hued skull cap for nightly Blue Man Group performances. Her 5-foot-11 athletic frame and solid-black uniform give her the perfect camouflage during the wailing, pipe-beating shows.

Blue Man veteran **Colin Hurd** says gender is not an issue on stage. "It's an incredibly physical show," he says. "It's hard to find anyone who can drum for that long." But as far as Blue Man is concerned, not everyone is created equal. Prospects must be at least 5-foot-10, have excellent acting and drumming skills, and be able to catch things in their mouths.

So how did Johnson land this gig? She says her comedic experience and six months of drum lessons paid off at a New York audition for the Grammy-nominated group. "They've always been open and welcome to women trying out," Johnson says. "I just happen to be the first to become one. Luckily, I met their height requirement."

Blue Man Group—Tickets sold 6–8 weeks in advance. Tue.–Thu.: 8 p.m., Fri.: 7 and 10 p.m., Sat.: 4, 7, and 10 p.m., Sun.: 3 and 6 p.m. Charles Playhouse, 74 Warrenton Street, Boston. Call 617-426-6912.



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YOUR BEST S URCE FOR SHOPPING, DINING, ENTERTAINMENT & MAPS

DECEMBER 2000

WHERE

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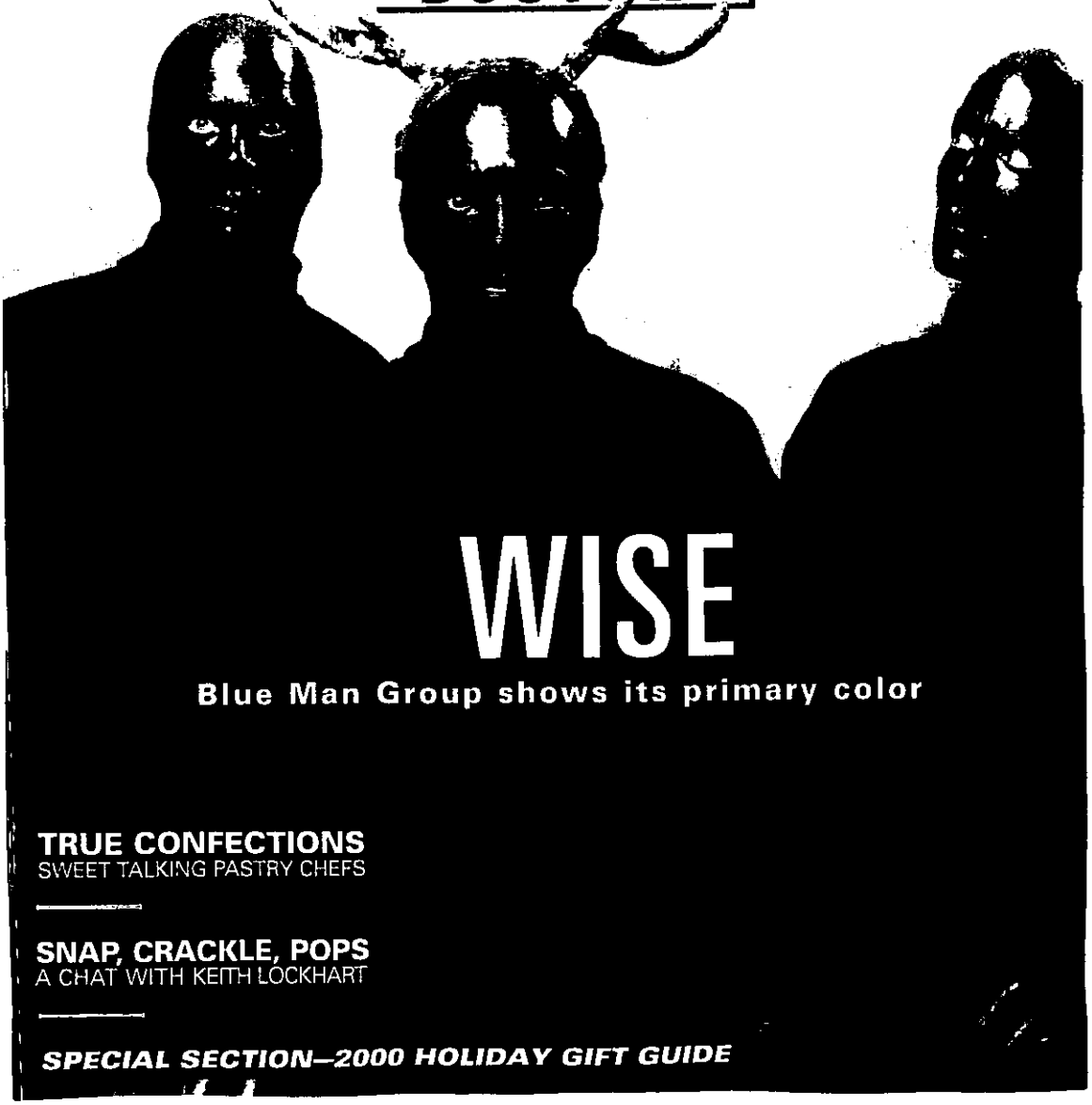


WISE

Blue Man Group shows its primary color

TRUE CONFECTIONS
SWEET TALKING PASTRY CHEFS

SNAP, CRACKLE, POPS
A CHAT WITH KEITH LOCKHART

SPECIAL SECTION—2000 HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

Painting The Town Blue

In their fifth consecutive year at the Charles Playhouse, *Blue Man Group* performs 'til they're blue in the face

by Seneca Clark

FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS, the Charles Playhouse has been saturated with the sounds and sights of ***Blue Man Group*** **(page 25)**—with intoxicating rhythms and vibrant images. Started in 1987 in New York City by friends Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink, *Blue Man Group* caught the interest of the public quickly. The show began with a series of "happenings," when Goldman, Stanton and Wink brushed on the blue and appeared in locations around New York City. Silently, the curious cobalt characters would attract an audience. When asked why they chose blue, the originators of the idea responded, "there is no particular significance to the color. It is a beautiful color that looks great on a bald head. We also wanted to avoid colors that had other connotations associated with them. For example, green would have been too alien or Martian. Red would evoke images of the devil or anger." Once the artists had piqued the interest of the public, Wink, Goldman and Stanton came up with the show "Tubes" that debuted in 1991 at the Off-Broadway Astor Place Theatre. Accolades such as the Obie Award and the Drama Desk Award started to roll in. With the success of the New York show, *Blue Man Group* made Boston their second home in 1995. "All of the *Blue Man* shows are slightly different since the audience contributes so much to the show. The Boston audience is so great that their enthusiasm and love of the *Blue Man* has made it a very unique experience, very much a show all their own," Wink, Stanton and Goldman have said. "Tubes" now plays in New York, Boston and Chicago, and a new show, titled "Live at Luxor," recently raised the curtain in Las Vegas.

I was fortunate to steal a minute with Blue Men Gideon Banner and Colin Hurd and musicians Hari Hassin and Victor McSurely to discuss the *Blue Man* phenomenon. All agreed that Boston is the best place to catch the show because of the "space of the theatre. It is very communal, and the size is right for the sound." The tight area of the Charles Playhouse allows the cast to reach the audience in the way that *Blue Man Group* intends—and *Blue Man Group* does intend to infiltrate. It

takes only a glance at the show's chat room to see that people are obsessed. Many claim that seeing the show is a life changing experience. For Hari Hassin, it truly was. Hassin saw the performance and was astounded. He auditioned the very next day and has since been a full-time drummer for the Boston stage. To become a *Blue Man Group* musician, you must know how to play the drums, the keyboard or the Chapman stick—and well. The audition is extensive, requiring the musician to play several pieces, and they must also be able to pick up on basic numbers from the show. To get the gig of a Blue Man, the requirements are a bit different. First of all, a height between five feet 10 inches and six feet two inches is a must, not to mention a Blue Man must have a symmetrical face. The actor does not have to be a man—the country's first female Blue Man joined Boston's cast recently. A Blue Man should have studied theatre, but drumming experience isn't necessary. In fact, some Blue Men know the songs by color code rather than notes, but from the audience, I certainly couldn't tell. The audition consists of improvisation with Blue Men, taster drumming and activities to see how the actor communicates with their eyes. It is a question of whether or not the actor can "get" the Blue Man character. The Blue Man "has innocence with strength and playfulness. He is a childish warrior," says McSurely.

With nine shows each week, there are bound to be some mishaps every now and then, though the cast insists that there are relatively few mistakes. Hassin recalls an episode when the power went out throughout the Theatre District. McSurely remembers another scene with a laugh. There was a woman in the audience who had clearly had too much to drink. During a scene where the musicians are the only ones on stage, she got up to use the ladies' room. Only, somehow, she ended up in the band loft instead. Unsure of what to do, she sat down right beside the zither player. "Mistakes do happen. But we deal with them and move on," says Hurd.

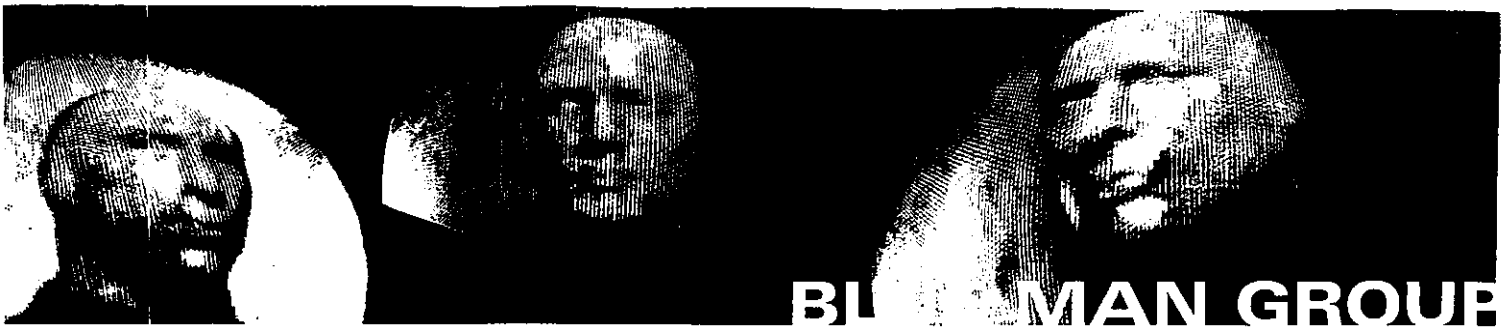
It's about breaking down the barriers of communication *Victor McSurely* **. . . it's about starting with extreme difference and ending with a common experience.** *Colin Hurd*

The troupe attests to the fact that being a part of *Blue Man Group* is physically exhausting. Many members are in bands outside the show, as well. It's tough because it is certainly "not a job where you just go through the motions," says Banner. "You have to be dedicated." Despite the weariness caused by long hours, most performers contend that an end to their reign as Blue Men is not in the near future. Everyone seems to truly enjoy their jobs, and respect and admiration is evident. Hurd says, "you can hear and see the maturity in the cast. They are all enormously competent and interesting individuals."

Though, for the most part, the show remains the same from night to night, the audience brings in a different reaction each time. Sometimes there is a roaring crowd, other times there is a palpable, quiet respect for the Blue Men. Often, there is an audience who arrives thinking it's going to be a sort of circus. Though the cast prefers an enthusiastic audience, McSurely says, "the show isn't about a spectacle." An audience donning ponchos and toilet paper headbands might disagree. At *Blue Man Group*, for an hour and forty-five minutes, I watched as marshmallows filled the mouths of Blue Men, an audience member was painted blue and dropped against a white canvas, Twinkies were spewed from holes in the characters' chests, vibrant paint erupted from the drums that the Blue Men struck and all things unimaginable occurred. So, if not a spectacle, what is *Blue Man Group* about? "It's about breaking down the barriers of communication," McSurely says. Hurd thinks "it's about starting with extreme difference and ending with a common experience."

Boston's Blue Men wish you a blue, blue Christmas, left and far left. "Tubes" is drumming up lots of attention, above.

During my most recent viewing of *Blue Man Group*, I was witness to this connection. I looked at those surrounding me as the show started. Everyone—from a wide-eyed child to an older, pensive man—looked excited, and maybe a little confused, as they tied strips of toilet paper around their foreheads. But, by the ultimate act, any apprehension transferred to jubilation. The performance's finale beholds a surprise that everyone must experience for themselves. What I will tell you is that nobody leaves the theatre without a smile.



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The UMASS – Lowell Connector
March 2000

Tangled up in blue me

Photo by Amy Eckhart
The Blue Man Group bring their innovative style to "Audio," a new CD.

by Joshua Spencer
Connector Staff

On March 8, the Blue Man Group took my imagination on a joyride for the second time. The music's hypnotic tribal elements combined with the amazing visuals create a whole world of its own. The unique instruments of the Blue Men, ranging from large drums to polyvinyl pipe, amaze the eye as well as the mind. The audio portion draws you into the Blue Man world, but when humor enters the picture, the enjoyment of the experience comes to its peak.

Many magazines have acclaimed the show all across the globe like *Time*, *People* and newspapers such as *The Boston Globe* and *The New York Times*. Blue Man Group is an inexplicable experience that is well worth the trip even for a third time.

Blue Man Group was co-founded in 1987 by three friends, Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink. These three men embarked on an idea that has turned into one of the most popular Off-Broadway shows in recent history.

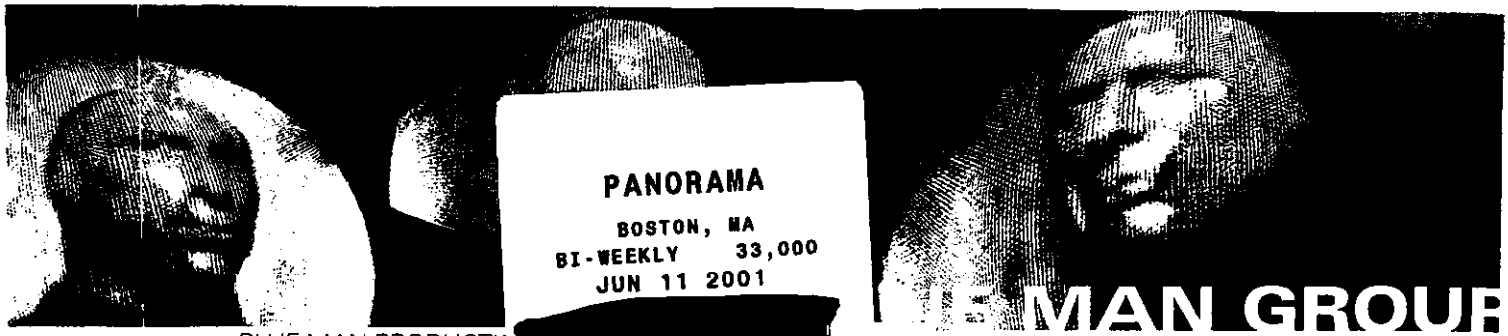
The show started in New York in 1991. After winning a few awards, it opened another production in Boston and Chicago. All three shows continue to sell-out audiences night after night. The newest production is opening this month at the Luxor hotel in Las Vegas. It is the largest Blue Man production to date.

Since the three friends began their journey, the Blue Man Group has grown to an organization of over 350 people that reaches beyond the realm of theatrical productions.

The most recent happening in the world of Blue Man Group involves the release of their first studio album. Like the Blue Man Group experience itself, the music on the album can't be categorized or explained. The music recorded is original and doesn't contain any performances in live shows.

The album mixes their tribal vibe with their masterful instrumentation and effects of their "wall-of-drums" to come up with an intense mixture of deep melodies and overwhelming percussion.

It's a breath of fresh air that Blue Man fanatics have been waiting for. Thanks to Virgin Records it has become a reality. The album is available at all major record stores and is a must have for any musician (drummers especially) or anybody who is fascinated by the show itself.



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PANORAMA

THE OFFICIAL GUIDE TO BOSTON

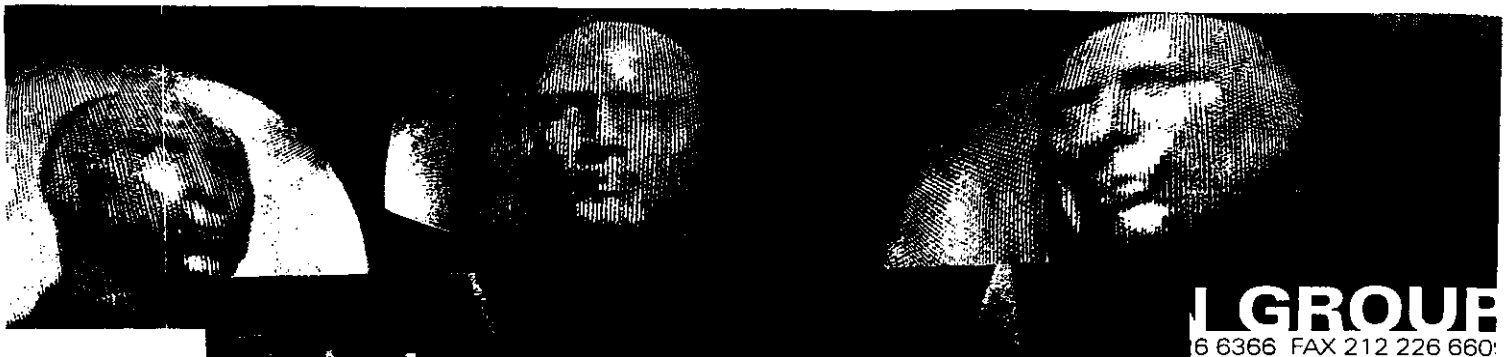
Totally

Blue Man Group's "Tubes" Ensnares the Charles Playhouse

Looking Back at 50 Years of *Panorama*

20 Cool Spots for Hot Summer Dining

CELEBRATING 50 years



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Totally Tubular

Colin Hurd talks about life in the silly, sarcastic, über-subversive world of Blue Man Group

by Christopher Wallerberg

For more than five years Blue Man Group has been mesmerizing Boston audiences at the Charles Playhouse with its inventive brand of multimedia theater — an amalgam of mischievous childlike stage antics, primal musical performance and irreverent art and cultural criticism — all wrapped up in a giddily subversive fusillade of sight and sound.

Launched from humble beginnings at the Astor Place Theatre in New York's Greenwich Village in the early '90s, Blue Man Group has become a certified pop culture phenomenon, with versions of its show running in four cities across the country, frequent guest spots on the late night TV talk show circuit and appearances in the now ubiquitous Pentium commercials.

Blue Man Group — led by founders Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink — eschew terms like "performance art," but it's not easy to pigeonhole the group's unique form of theatre to the uninitiated. Whether drumming on PVC piping or buckets full of paint, spoofing the inflated airs of the modern art world, commenting on runaway technology or engulfing its audience in a Silly String-like stream of intertwined paper, Blue Man Group manages to be contemplative and droll — but, above all, visceral. The audience doesn't have to "get" everything that's happening on stage because it's all so much fun.

N GROUP
226 6366 FAX 212 226 660

Blue Man Colin Hurd, who hails from Indiana, made his off-Broadway debut in the New York production of "Tubes." Colin earned his BFA from the North Carolina School of the Arts, where his credits included Ned Blunt in The Rover *and the title role in* Scapin. *Colin has performed several seasons with Music Theatre of Louisville and with the comedy movement group Trouble Squad. He is also a guitarist for the band Rock 'n' Roll City Rockers.*

Q: How do the Blue Men prepare before each performance?
A: Besides sound checks, we practice throwing and catching with our mouths, which we do a lot of in the show. Then we stretch out and do a couple of the drumming pieces.

Q: What is involved in putting on the Blue Man getup?
A: We have to glue the bald caps on, which takes about 15 to 20 minutes. We have a couple of layers of costume. Then to get blue, it only takes about three or four minutes. You just slop the paint on and rub it in.

Q: How long does it take to wash it all off?
A: It takes much longer to get out of the costume. It doesn't take too long to get the paint off because we have make-up remover. The adhesive for the bald cap is the hardest part. We have to scrub the glue off with Bond-Off. It gives your skin a workout night after night; therefore, we all use mud masks, lotions and other "girl" products regularly.

Q: How did you first get involved with Blue Man Group?
A: My roommate, one of my best friends from college, got the job right out of school. He knew I drummed and he got me an "in" for an audition. A lot of positions come through people already connected to the organization. I don't want to say we're all the same type of people, but many of us do have the same kind of humor, interests and energy.

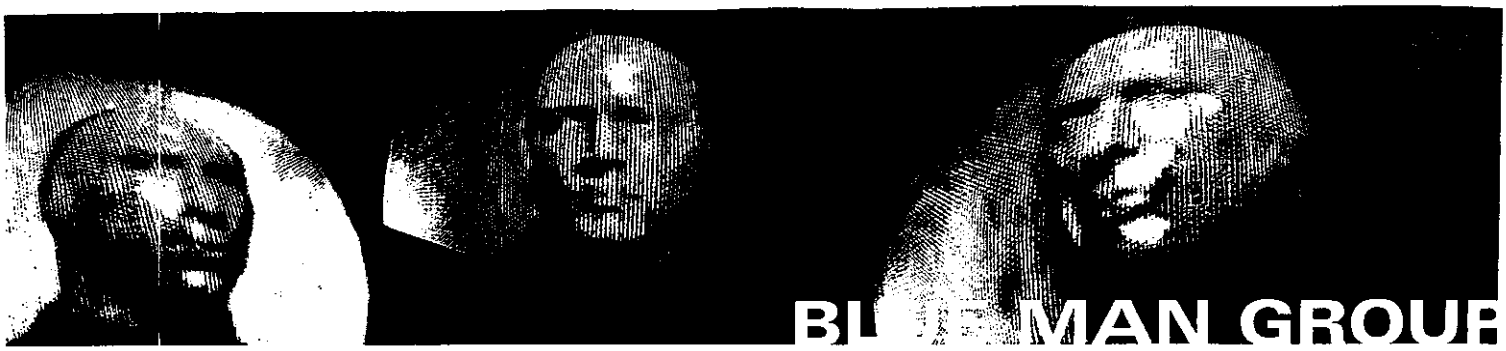
Q: How many auditions did you go through?
A: It was a two-week process. There were initial drum screenings. That was followed by some basic acting work and improvisation. If you pass that, the next step is what they call the "bald and blue" audition, where they see what you look like in the make-up. You really can't tell what someone's going to look like as a Blue Man until they get that bald cap on.

Q: What is it about Blue Man Group that first appealed to you?
A: There's that indescribable element when you leave the theater knowing you've just seen this amazing thing, but you're not really able to tell anyone what it is. You can describe what happened, but you can't really describe what you were feeling or why. It is probably the most visceral experience in theater I've ever had.

Q: How did your background prepare you for the Blue Man role?
A: I played drums in high school and I was a snare in the marching band. That definitely helped as far as technique goes. The drumming in the show is nothing like I did in high school, but I had the fundamentals and understanding of rhythm. As far as theater goes, I took movement classes, which help with awareness of your body and being able to tell the physical story.

Q: Do you talk to each other on stage?
A: There's no, "Hey, that was really good!" or anything like that. We do talk to each other silently though. It sounds silly, but we're having conversations with our eyes. All the Meisner work I did in college—on how to listen, how something effects you and then how you respond—that happens with us, just without words.

Q: What's your favorite part of the show?
A: There's this one part—we call it "grooming" or "touch-up." It's after the art fish bit with the harnesses. We all come together and we're fixing each other's make-up. Basically, we're touching each other's faces and we're really close and it's all projected on the video screen. It's such an intimate juxtaposition to this huge adrenaline rush that you've been experiencing through most of the show. You get to see this other side of the character shine through.



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DAILY ITEM
LYNN, MA
MONDAY 20,000
JUN 25 2001

Burrelles
INFORMATION SERVICES

'Blue Man Group' antics defy description

Show at Charles Playhouse continues to amaze

By Debra Glidden
The Item Staff

REVIEW / THEATER

BOSTON — I must admit when my 21-year-old daughter and her friends, who were visiting from out of town, uncovered one of the things they wanted to see, "Blue Man Group" ... they had to drag me kicking and screaming out of the subway into "Tubes" at the Charles Street Playhouse.

I couldn't possibly imagine what could possibly be entertaining about three grown men in blue makeup not saying a word for 80 minutes.

For those who hold the same opinion I did ... when can I say except run don't walk to the Charles Street Playhouse. You won't be disappointed.

When I looked up and saw raining snarking out of the walls, huge rolls of paper hanging from the balconies and a stage that defies description, I had no idea what to expect.

I must admit was a little nervous when I saw I was sitting in the fourth row and our seats had large clear ponchos folded neatly on the seat ... trust me you'll want to put it on.

The blue who hanging away on [illegible] drums while squeezing tubes of paint onto the drumhead. The effect looked more like a pyrotechnic display than paint splattering as they beamed the drums each trying to outdo the other. One blue man attacked a blank canvas and caught the paint splatters with the canvas.

One of the blue men spit gum balls at a blank canvas creating a piece of artwork that is reminiscent of spin art you create at amusement parks.

A second blue man tosses marshmallows into the mouth of the third. I still don't understand how he managed to stuff a dozen or so marshmallows in his mouth all at once and then re-angulate them into a sculpture resembling a phallic symbol. The appreciative crowd roared with laughter when he sticks a $4,000 price tag onto the sculpture.

◆

I must admit was a little nervous when I saw I was sitting in the fourth row and our seats had large clear ponchos folded neatly on the seat ... trust me you'll want to put it on.

◆

An audience member is hauled up on stage and dressed in a jumpsuit that makes her look like a human Twinkie. The blue men push on their chests, and filling that looks like some type of primordial ooze squirts out.

No one knew what to expect when strobe lights started flashing and suddenly the three blue men were standing on the arms of chairs staring into the faces of members of the audience.

Suddenly, streams of crepe paper were flying in every direction from the balcony. As a song, the audience who [illegible] showered up handfuls and passed it along to the folks sitting behind them.

The music which was constant throughout the whole show defies description.

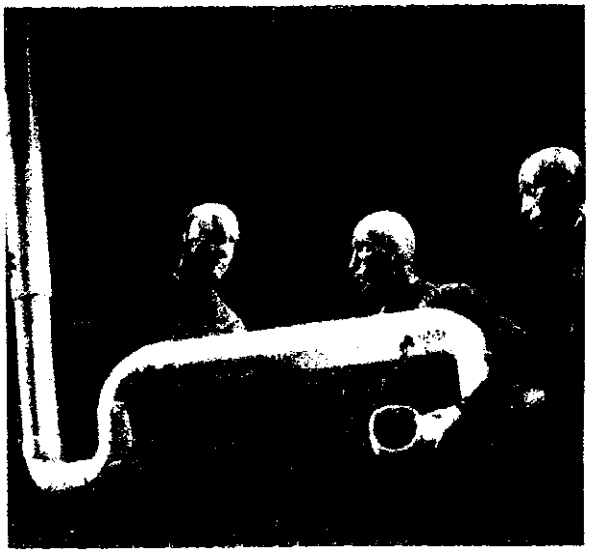
Some of the music is played by the Blue Man Group on drums PVC tubes and [illegible] from the ceiling and the walls.

What began as a simple [illegible] three friends, Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink, has [illegible] into a [illegible] organization that consistently performs to sold out crowds in Boston, Chicago, New York and Las Vegas.

What is it about the antics of three blue men who share a mouth and the amplified sound of [illegible] that makes grown men and women [illegible] childlike abandon ... when everything was a potential toy and our imagination knew no limits.

After the show the Blue Man Group hangs out outside the theater, kisses programs instead of signing autographs and poses for photographs with fans.

Tickets are available at the Charles Playhouse, 74 Warrenton St. in Boston or by calling (617) 426-6912.



Members of "Blue Man Group" perform a number in "Tubes" at the Charles Playhouse.

Group Activities

AGENDA BOSTON
NEW YORK, NY
ANNUAL
JANUARY 2002
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-K032

The Blue Man Group, with their unique blend of physical stunts, gags, commentary and audience participation schemes has been a steady hit with groups nationwide.

The Boston area provides plenty of opportunities for structured group activities, whether you're planning city tours and visits to historic points of interest or organizing corporate outings.

ORCHESTRATING GROUP ACTIVITIES presents its own set of challenges from selecting appropriate points of interest, making sure sites and staffs at the various locations can handle many people at one time, and often scheduling meals as well as arrivals and departures.

When planning an event involving groups of out-of-town guests, such free-day or evening activities for conference attendees, it is helpful to acquaint guests with the local attractions. You might do that in a number of ways, from simply providing information on various options so that your guests can decide individually which attractions they would like to explore, to organizing actual tours and outings. Even if you recommend points of interest, however, it's best to brief yourself beforehand, so that you will be familiar with hours of operation at various sites and be able to give advice on what to see and do as well as the best way to get there and back. If you can manage it, visit the sites yourself before you recommend them to your group. That way you'll be able to anticipate any special needs or concerns visitors might have as they go along.

If you are actually organizing activities for a group, schedule exact departure times at both ends and arrange for limousines, vans, or buses as needed. If local mass-transportation is convenient and appropriate, hand out transportation schedules and maps with specific details on fares, transfer points and points of departure.

Both the Group Activities and the Event Services sections of this directory list a number of companies that can help you meet your group transportation and tour-activities needs. Additional information can be found through various local chambers of commerce and directly through specific places of interest. Concierges at major hotels are also invaluable sources of sound information.

In addition you will find listings in this section for organizations specializing in developing team-building skills for groups of employees to boost productivity and enhance working relationships. ■

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3755

BOSTON IS BIG ENOUGH FOR YOUNG AND OLDER

WRITTEN BY TRACEY O'SHAUGHNESSY
©2003 Republican-American

As a city to visit with children, Boston has startling advantages and disadvantages.

The benefits are manifest. Boston's glorious public gardens and its wondrous ...dium, and, of course, the Children's Museum ...he Museum of Science, make it ideal for little ... with adventurous spirits and inquisitive minds. ...e disadvantage is that there are so many won...l things for adults, from the august Museum of ... Arts to the sumptuous yet homey Symphony ... that you may simply want to leave the children ...me and get away on your own.

...u can do both, of course, at different times. ...n is just a shade more than two hours away ...ts hotels, from the "grande old dame" the ...y Plaza, to sleek, contemporary new Ritz ...n at Boston Common to the Four Seasons and ...s, all offer luxurious — if sometimes extrava... — packages to accommodate all your needs. ...reater Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau ...ffer more than 30 summer 2003 Family ...ly Hotel packages this summer, starting from ...nd offering everything from complimentary ...rs to Sony Playstations. Just look on-line at BostonUSA.com. Select "visitor" and then ...mmodations."

...ilies may also want to avail themselves of ...'s "Around Boston With Kids," a post-card...ook of 68 great opportunities in and around ...

...domestic travel expected to increase this ... because of the fears of terrorism, Boston is ...ed to be a hot-spot for spring and summer

...ily-Friendly Packages

...ddition to a new musical director at Boston ...ony Hall, cultural enthusiasts will be able to inspect a lavish new exhibit of Thomas Gainsborough's work at the Museum of Fine Arts (June 15-Sept. 14). And the nearby Isabella Stewart Gardener Museum is celebrating its 100th birthday. Boston's Theater District will host "The Music Man" (Colonial Theatre), the fabulous and eclectic Blue Man Group (Charles Playhouse) and "The Producers."

Many hotels, including the Colonade Hotel, Park Plaza, Copley Plaza, The Westin, Doubletree and even the tony Le Meridien, offer family-friendly packages. Whatever hotel you choose, try to find one near public transportation, or the "T," since parking (to say nothing of driving) is difficult in Boston. To add insult to injury, it is expensive. To give you an idea, a couple of hours of parking at the Museum of Fine Arts garage was $14. Parking at the Prudential Center for the must-do Boston Duck Tours was a exorbitant $23. Quack, quack, indeed.

The Copley Plaza, along with other nearby hotels, is offering a special package for those who are in town to see the sumptuous Thomas Gainsborough show at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

If you are staying at the newer, more contemporary Ritz-Boston Common, the Common beckons across the street with a marvelous playground that kept our 2-year-old hopping. And for adults, the new Ritz boasts a spectacular La Fitness Club that boasts every imaginable fitness machine and accouterment, including a panoramic view of Boston Common. For a gym rat, it's heaven.

The older, more established Ritz-Carlton Boston, just opposite the Public Gardens (with its celebrated swan boats) was the first hotel to create a suite especially for children. The Children's Suite has been redesigned by B.B. Kids and is well appointed with toys by FAO Schwarz.

Big Dig Making Progress

Boston spares no expense in showing you a good time. Just ask the Bostonians, who have been putting up with history's biggest traffic jam for nearly a decade and this year will finally see some of its aggravation pay off when portions of the notorious $12 billion (thank you, American taxpayers) Big Dig come to fruition. The Big Dig's hallmark is the dramatic $100 million (and counting) Zakim Bunker Hill Bridge, a 10-lane cable stayed bridge that was dedicated last October by New Jersey's own Bruce Springsteen. (Evidently, no home-grown celeb... could be found who wanted to be associated w... the unconscionable price tag of the Big Dig). Onc... is finished, travelers to Boston will no longer have... look at the suspended licorice that passes for... Central Artery, and will instead be lavished wit... glorious "walkway to the sea." And if Bostonia... don't get that, don't be surprised if they bring ba... public hanging.

This summer will also see a new $100 million wi... on the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, which w... have a new center for families and children.

Boston is loaded with history and older kids a... adults will enjoy the 2 1/2 mile Freedom Trail, whi... now has a new portable audio guide ($12 for adu... and $8 for children) and takes visitors to the U... Constitution, the Paul Revere House, the Old Nor... Church and 13 other historic sites along a 3.5 mi... walking trail marked by a red brick line. Th... Freedom Trail is toured by more than 2 million pe...ple a year.

If you don't feel like walking that much and ca... bear the thought of driving, the subway system ... speedy and efficient and although it is not as cle... and high tech as Washington, D.C.'s Metro, the "T" ... not as dirty as New York's. Or, you could take one ... the city's wonderful Old Town Trolley Tours, whic... include a 100-minute narrative filled with histor... information and lots of inside-Boston humor.

Then there is the celebrated Boston Duck Tour.

Don't Miss the Splashdown

"Ducks" are renovated World War II amphibiou... landing vehicles. Some enterprising Yankee duck fi...ured they'd make great tour buses in a city whos... major features include water. And they were righ...

Please turn to 7H, BOSTO...

...OSTON: New England city offers much to visitors with children, but problems occur

...tinued from 8H

...80-minute tour narrated by an ...ired amphibian will take riders ...ll of Boston's hallmark spots, ...n the golden-domed State House ...unker Hill and the Fleet Center, ...ton Common and Copley ...re, to Newbury Street, Quincy ...ket and the Prudential Tower.

...nd they don't call them amphibi... for nothing. The ConDuck vehi... ultimately takes you to a ...ashdown" with all the other ...s on the Charles River for a ... of Boston and Cambridge. The ...is pricey — adult tickets are $23 ... children tickets range from 25 ...s for those under 3 to $14 for ...3 to 12 and $17 for kids 12 to 17 ...t it's worth it. The tours leave ... Prudential Center and the ...eum of Science (617-723-...0).

...rting at the Museum of Science ...t at all a bad choice, particular... you have older children. ...ger children should head for ...ands-on Discovery Museums. ...264-4201.

...e Museum of Science ...w.mos.org) is celebrating the ...anniversary of the discovery of ..., and is showcasing a new ...bit on The Computing ...lution, sure to be a hit with this generation's tech-happy kids. But it's tough to beat the beauties of the deep and the museum's breathtaking "Coral Reef Adventure" is a beautiful IMAX film that explores the sun-drenched waters of the South Pacific. You can literally spend all day at the museum and the Science Cafe offers an ample assortment of nourishment for curious minds. The gift shop is also tantalizing; hold on to your wallet.

Magnolias bloom on Commonwealth Avenue.

Courtesy BostonUSA

Two Discovery Museums

Younger kids may prefer the hands-on fun of the Discovery Museums, which are a bit of a drive outside of Boston. Two Discovery Museums, one a Children's Discovery Museum, a play and imagination museum, and the second, the Science Discovery Museum, which is for older kids interested in science, math, sound and music, are in Acton, west of Boston and not far from Minuteman Historical Park and Lexington and Concord. Admission is $7 per person for one museum or $10 for both. The discovery museums are at 177 Main St., Acton. For information, call (978) 264-4200.

If you are going to set up camp in Cambridge, you might also consider the Boston Marriott, The Hyatt Regency or the Royal Sonesta, which are a bit closer to the Museum of Science (671-723-2500).

But don't get stuck in Cambridge. You can trudge across the river and find yourself in downtown Boston, or you can get on the Green line at Science Park and hop over that way.

The T will also take you to the New England Aquarium.

The great virtue of the New England Aquarium is that it is suitable for both older and younger children. The sheer color of the 200,000 gallon tank that is the centerpiece of the New England Aquarium is breathtaking. The reef accommodates not only sharks, sea turtles, barracuda and moray, but also hundreds of smaller exotic tropical fishes, and it is one of the most detailed and scientifically accurate recreations of its kind. Younger children can simply stare at it for hours, hypnotized by this visual spectacle (Don't be surprised if they fall asleep). The aquarium now has an IMAX theater. If the tank doesn't leave your child transfixed, the film "Ocean Wonderland" will do it. Don't be surprised if he wants to join up with Bob Ballard.

Symphony Hall will host a colorful program designed for young audiences and families called "Love Stories," which will explore the music of Mozart, Bernstein, Prokofiev, Berlioz and Tchaikovsky.

From Tchaikovsky's version of Shakespeare's timeless tragedy "Romeo and Juliet" to the high energy of Bernstein's setting of "West Side Story," the students will learn how composers use music to create drama. It should be great fun for students of all ages. Youth concerts will be held April 30, May 1, 2 and 3. For information, call Symphony Hall at (617) 266-1492.

The Fairmont Copley Plaza, conveniently situated in one of the most beautiful urban squares in the country, offers several packages in conjunction with the city's art and cultural exhibits. These include the Perfect Harmony Package, which offers guests a guestroom and two tickets to the Boston Symphony Orchestra, among other goodies. Symphony Hall is easily accessed from the Green Line. Just take the Arlington station, diagonally across from the hotel, two stops to Symphony. If you are availing yourself of the kids package, you might want to eat at the Wendy's or Burger King right across the street. If you prefer something a bit finer, try Papa Razzis, a wonderful Italian restaurant just steps away from both the hotel and the subway entrance. The ambiance is both subdued and informal and you can have a satisfying dinner for two for less than $50.

It almost makes you want to leave the kids at home.

Aberdeen Press & Journal
Saturday 14. June 2003
22,23

ABC 100421 Daily
page rate £9,650.00
scc rate £21.50
01224 690222

Blue Man Group (BB106-4)

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PASSPORT DESTINATIONS

Boston Sox it to you

It's home to Cheers, the Red Sox and Harvard as well as one of the strangest theatrical spectacles you're ever likely to see. **Victoria Murchie** takes a whistle-stop tour of Boston, sampling the history, the culture and the truly bizarre

I'VE never been one of those people to get lost for words. Regardless of person or situation – and, believe me, there have been some very odd ones over the last few years – I'm never short of a word or three. Which perhaps gives some indication of how jaw-droppingly strange I found Boston's famous Blue Man Group. I sat silently, mouth hanging slightly open, during the entire performance.

But more of that later.

If tedious transfers from airport to hotel are one of your major gripes on holiday, Boston could be for you.

Logan Airport nestles right in the centre of the city, but the roadworks caused by the Big Dig – an ambitious and hugely expensive road project which will reroute traffic under and around the city centre that started in 1991 and is due for completion in 2005 – mean a short journey to the hotel could take a while.

Not that it matters – there's plenty to take in while you're sitting in the traffic.

We stayed in the newly-opened five-star Hotel Marlowe – the perfect spot for anyone with Pat Butcher or Bet Lynch aspirations. Leopard-spotted carpets and robes, faux fur throws . . . I thought I'd gone to heaven.

Located in Cambridge, and within walking distance of the Science Museum, it's a good spot for exploring the city and nearby Hah-vud, as the Bostonians say.

Two days is not long to explore a city, particularly one with as much to offer as Boston, so to make the most of your time you need to familiarise yourself with the "T" (the subway) or jump on an Old Town Trolley Tour, which takes you on a narrated tour of Boston's historic sites.

There are 16 stops where you can jump on or off, including Faneuil Hall, the picturesque Beacon Hill and of course the Bull and Finch bar, famously used as the exterior shot for Cheers.

Boston has several museums, but if you only have time to visit one, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum is regarded by many as Boston's best.

Inspired by a childhood visit to a private museum in Milan, Isabella resolved to build something similar and in 1890 began collecting paintings and artefacts in earnest.

In 1898, she began construction of a 14th century Venetian palace. Four floors high, the palace also has an interior courtyard with mosaic walkways, plants and statues. It may be raining outside, but inside it is always spring.

Paintings by Titian and Rembrandt mingle with tapestries and furnishings, arranged to please the eye rather than the intellect. And under Isabella's will, the collection must remain as is or the whole lot goes to auction.

The city boasts several department stores and hundreds of shops selling everything from the ubiquitous jelly lobsters to Chanel suits. If you're looking for a bargain head to the famous Filene's Basement, the kind of place where genteel ladies slug it out over a designer frock.

Or, if you have cash to splash, elegant Newbury Street, stopping off at the popular Sonsie bar and restaurant, for a bit of people watching.

Though perhaps still associated with lobster and beans, modern Boston offers everything from Thai curries to fine French cuisine to restaurants dedicated to the dessert.

We rounded off an evening at Finale, where Bostonians go after the theatre to sample lip-smacking sweets like Molten Chocolate and Boston Cream Supreme.

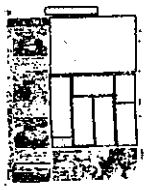
Though there's no shortage of things to do in Boston, we broke out beyond the city limits and headed west to the Wrentham Village Outlet Mall, a mini-village selling sportswear, designer gear, shoes, make-up and homeware all at discount prices. You'll need at least half a day – and a few dollars in your pocket – for the trip.

All too quickly, our two days in Boston had come to an end. Busy and bustling, it's a beautiful town and though more laid-back than New York or San Francisco it had still been a hell of a ride.

But my bag was packed and it was off to the airport for the second leg of the trip – to Iceland for two days in one of the most volcanically active places on earth (see Your Life next week).

As for the famous Blue Man Group, I still can't quite find the words. The on – and off – stage antics of the three-strong cast defy explanation and, as several baffled members of my family can attest, you wouldn't believe me if I tried.

All I'll say is men with blue heads, paint, dustbins and toilet roll . . . and if you're in a poncho seat, watch out.



BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 6609

TIMES HERALD RECORD
MIDDLETOWN, NY
SUNDAY 105,582
SEP 1 2002

Burrelle's
601 MH

Boston bound?

3755

By Deborah J. Babb
For the Times Herald-Record
anybott@warwick.net

Mention Boston, and people smile a knowing smile.

Big-city amenities in manageable bites.

No litter.

Lots of history.

Museums, theater, swans, great shopping.

And plenty of water.

Hard as it might be to believe, this native New Yawker had never been there before.

But that changed a few weeks ago when my husband, John, and I took our 13-year-old niece, Meagan, and her 11-year-old brother, Michael, to Massachusetts. The M&Ms, as they're affectionately called, escaped the oppressive heat of Arizona for oppressive mid-Hudson humidity. It had to be cooler farther north.

The trip on Interstate-84 and the Massachusetts Turnpike was pretty uneventful – except for the FedEx truck that attempted to overnight us as well as its regular cargo.

Four-and-a-half hours later, we were safely delivered to the doorstop of our temporary quarters.

John had been to Boston about 18 years ago. There's a portion of his brain that borrows from that of a baby duckling: He has the amazing gift of being able to imprint a setting. Almost two decades since his last visit, and he was still able to navigate his way around with little trouble. Amazingly, the horrific construction that produces horrific traffic seemed to be the same, too.

When traveling with family, we try to keep hotel costs around the $100 mark, leaving more to spend during daylight hours. Besides, those amenities that are appealing to us in bed-and-breakfasts – and drive up the price – are typically wasted on kids.

We spent a couple of nights at the Inn at Crystal Cove on Boston Harbor, about 10 minutes or so from downtown Boston. The room was clean, albeit a little too small for four people. There was a large living room/kitchen that three guest rooms shared, which we didn't use.

Our little deck offered a wonderful harbor view when you looked to the right – and there's nothing like the smell of saltwater in the air – but unfortunately our neighbors were unhappy people – and the walls were thin.

For $120 a night and the amount of time we were in the room, it was adequate. The Holiday Inn that followed for $99 just outside Salem was much more appealing. The room and bathroom were larger and the vending machines were stocked, which made the M&Ms happy.

But back to Boston.

The New England Aquarium was first on the agenda – and by far one of the best of its kind we've seen. A ramp encircles a huge multilevel fish tank, allowing a cross-section view of life under the sea.

Feeding time was a treat for the humans, too – amazing how much the hand-fed sea turtle could eat. And the sharks never bothered the divers.

On the periphery were many other exhibits, including an intensive-care unit, hands-on section and perky penguins. We even got to see a toddler penguin being taught how to swim – by its human caregiver.

Now in the water frame of mind, it was time for oceans of fun aboard the aquarium's Voyager III whale-watching tour, about $100 for the four of us.

I warned the M&Ms that I had tried several times before to see a whale in its natural environment. All I saw was water – and an occasional piece of litter.

My luck changed this time. After about an hour-and-a-half ride into the Atlantic at 30 knots, we sighted that awesome first spray from a blowhole. Finally, a whale!

Obviously, they're not out there performing for us; they're feeding. And the folks from the New England Aquarium are studying and learning about them with several dozen tourists in tow. Which means that once a whale is spotted, the crew is determined to track it down, satisfying appetites for knowledge and thrills simultaneously.

Our fin whale surfaced several times for us, staying below for an average of seven minutes.

A much smaller minke whale joined the feast. Mr. Fin was not happy – and conveyed this to the minke, who left the area, but then a second fin whale moved into the dining area.

Fin whales do not leap as humpbacks do – they're the ones always photographed with that rear fin waving. But these guys put on a spectacular show for us – rolling and spraying as if they knew they had a captive audience – well worth the effects of 30-knot wind on my hair.

Meagan Simmons assumes a bewitching persona.

As you exit the boat, you can't help but notice all the trolleys. There are several lines offering various city tours. We were tempted, but they're not cheap. The deciding factor for us was that the price – about $25 for adults, sometimes kids for free, sometimes not – was typically for two days. To be able to take the trolley to the various points of interest, explore, hop another trolley two hours later and continue like this for the next day, well, then it would have been worth the price. In our case, it was already late.

We opted to purchase tickets for the Blue Man Group appearing at the Charles Playhouse. For $53 apiece, we were treated to the most innovative theater we've seen in a long time. Three men with large eyes emerging from blue latex engaged and entertained for two hours – without uttering a word.

Above, perky penguins perform at the New England Aquarium. Left, there's plenty of consumer catnip at Faneuil Hall Marketplace.

Michael Simmons, formerly of Walden, was literally touched by the Blue Man Group performance.

We knew we were in for an out-of-the-ordinary experience when given toilet-paper like strips to wear as headbands. Electronic signs prompted the audience. "Say, don't sing, Happy Birthday to John Smith." The audience complied. "Jane Jones, you're late on your credit card payment." The audience roared.

Then the stage literally erupted with three passionate percussionists and volcano-like effects. The ensuing skits mesmerized, energized and prompted waves of laughter.

Blue Man are entertaining at many levels. They're extremely talented musicians. They're gifted in pantomime. The skits are jam-packed with satire. And they have a unique ability to reach all age groups on many levels. They were by far the highlight of the trip for Michael.

No trip to Boston is complete without a stroll down fashionable Newbury Street or through Faneuil Hall Marketplace, replete with pushcarts that sell everything. And while you have your walking shoes on, don't miss Boston Common and its neighboring Public Garden.

Speaking of walking, we opted not to do the famous Freedom Trail on this trip. However, despite the rolling eyes and sullen faces at the thought of anything – gasp! – educational, the M&Ms were exposed to a little bit of history.

By the time they got off the USS Constitution, they obviously had mental pictures in their heads of scores of dirty sailors manning the cannons, blood from ruptured eardrums running down the sides of their faces, deciding whether to use their three-cup ration of water to quench their thirst or quell their smell. This tour, by the way, guided by Navy personnel, is free.

There's so much more of Boston we didn't sample – museums, trendy restaurants that wouldn't satisfy kids' cravings and Kennedy Library, to name a few. But they wanted to see Salem.

Yes, it's a little commercial, things like the Dracula's House tour (the kids loved this typical haunted house and I did scream). But there's an important lesson in this town that draws its fame from the infamous witch hunts. The wax museum memorializes and personifies the effects of snowballed hysteria, while the witch village attempts to temper the witch kitsch with Wiccan philosophy. I wonder how Salem's early settlers would feel about their town being home today to more than 1,000 Wiccans?

Not to be missed is a tour of the House of Seven Gables. Our guide was a Nathanial Hawthorne scholar and passionate about the man whose book of the same name was influenced by his cousin's home. Interestingly, Hawthorne is a descendant of John Hathorne, who presided over the Salem trials and whose dying words expressed regret at not seeing more of "them" killed. The writer added the "W" to the spelling of his last name so that a connection to the judge would not readily be made.

Tips for travelers

▶ Decide whether you'll take a trolley tour early on. Most are good for two days and some offer free admission to other attractions, such as the New England Aquarium.

▶ Pick up a city map from one of the trolley stations, and guidebooks such as "The Complete Idiot's Travel Guide to Boston" are quite helpful.

▶ Some of the whale-watching tours offer a free trip if a whale isn't seen. To increase the odds of a sighting, look for a tour that gets to the feeding ground quickly and try not to go after a storm. Bad weather sometimes pushes the food supply further out to sea.

▶ Because there's so much to do, plan ahead.

3

SHARE YOUR VACATION

Despite what you might have heard, there are people who really want to hear about your vacation. And photos? Definitely! Please e-mail us at travel@th-record.com. Be sure to include a telephone number so that we can contact you for more information and make arrangements to get your photographs. Or you may write: Travel Editor, The Times Herald-Record, 40 Mulberry St., Middletown 10940

Source: County Down Spectator - Bangor
Date: Thursday 31 January 2002
Page: 6
Circulation: ABC 11834 Weekly
Ad Rates: page rate £0.00
scc rate £0.00
Tel: 028 9127 0270

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Blue Man Group (BB106-4)

Durrants

Boston: everything a city should be

One show in particular has gathered a kind of cult following. The Blue Man Group is a group of three men, dressed in blue rubber with only their eyes showing.

AMERICA has it all: fast cars, fast foods, the most advanced gizmos and gadgets available and more importantly, it is the home of Boston, a city that has to be seen to be believed.

The United States may not be everyone's favourite holiday destination after the events of September 11, but for those still happy to travel there, Boston Massachusetts is definitely worth a visit.

Making the most of cheap flights in the run up to Christmas, I travelled to Boston to take in the sights and do some Christmas shopping and I would go again tomorrow if I could.

To be honest, there were no major differences in travelling to America now than before September 11, and once you have arrived in the beautiful city, the flight delays and the cramped seat on the plane all become worth it.

In December, Boston should have been covered in a blanket of snow but I was lucky to experience December in Boston at an astonishing 70 degrees, it certainly made sight seeing easier.

The Boston area is like a piece of old England. Beautiful villages are scattered through woodland with big old white churches and village greens, it looks like something you would see in an old American film, the scenery is magnificent.

Boston city itself is awash with places to go and things to see. With the history surrounding areas such as Bunker Hill and the superb shopping, there is something to suit everyone.

TROLLEYTOUR

The easiest way to see what Boston has to offer is on one of the many trolley tours that take visitors to all the significant places. As is usual with city tours, the driver knows all the little scraps of information that makes the history even more interesting.

Stops include Bunker Hill - Constitution House,

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Date: Thursday 31. January 2002
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Circulation: ABC 11834 Weekly
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Beacon Hill and Boston State House, the hospital area, the university area, Fenway Park, home of the Red Sox baseball team, the Hard Rock cafe, the Chinese quarter and the theatre quarter.

Of course, no-one can go to Boston and not take a trip to the Cheers Bar, home of one of the most popular soaps of its time. Inside is a bit of a disappointment so having a nosey at it as the trolley passes by is probably enough.

Quincy Market is probably one of the best stops on the tour. Inside is a selection of market stalls and places to eat, all worthy of sampling. It would be easy to spend a few hours pottering through the areas, exploring the treasures hidden there.

Although tickets for the trolley are quite expensive, about £20 each, they are worth it as it gives you the chance to see as much of the city as possible. It is so much more enjoyable to loiter at places when you know you only have to jump back on the next trolley to go to the next site, without having to battle your way through the throng of people on the subway.

Other tourist sites not on the trolley tour that are worth taking in are the Christian Science Museum Headquarters and the reflecting pool there. The pool is a glimpse of tranquillity in the midst of the hustle and bustle that is downtown Boston, it is worth going there to catch your breath and have a look.

I always think observation towers in big cities are the best way to get your bearings and get that essential bird's eye view of what is going on in the city.

Until September 11, the Hancock Tower, the tallest building in downtown Boston, had an observatory but in the wake of tighter security and public safety measures, it has been closed.

There is still an observatory in the Prudential Building but you must have photographic identification with you or you will not be permitted to enter the building.

The observatory is on the 52nd floor of the building and on a clear day, it gives you an amazing view of Boston. You can see the tiny little islands scattered off the coast of the city in one direction and the lush green area beyond the sprawling city in the other, it is breathtaking.

One of the most popular activities for tourists in Boston is whale watching. Cruises, guaranteeing sightings, leave the harbour on a regular basis and they are definitely worth going on.

Words cannot describe how exciting it is when you see the huge creatures swim alongside the boat and play games with the passengers. It is unbelievable to see the whales at such a close proximity.

But as well as sightseeing in Boston, it would be a shame not to sample the excellent shopping which is hard to beat. As the centre of the city is not spread out over miles, trekking round all the shops is easy to do.

Even those who would normally detest shopping can't fail to get excited over the abundance of bargains waiting to be swopped from the shelves and brought home. Designer clothes from companies such as Gucci, Ralph Lauren, Guess and many more can be picked up at a fraction of the price they are here.

MUSICALS

And once the shopping is done and you could not possibly carry more bags, a trip to the theatre is the relaxation you deserve. Most of the big musicals are showing in the theatre quarter as well as ballet, opera and other alternatives.

One show in particular has taken the city by storm and has gathered a kind of cult following. The Blue Man Group is a group of three men, dressed in blue rubber with only their eyes showing.

When you first enter the small theatre that has been their home since they started, everyone is given a plastic raincoat. Once the show starts, it becomes obvious why a rain coat is needed. The men come into the stage banging empty barrels full of paint which splatters everywhere, including on the audience.

As the show progresses, the blue men take unsuspecting members of the audience on to the stage to join in the messy fun. They make them copy their movements, which include stuffing bananas in their mouths and throwing paint balls at targets.

It is hard to explain what the show is like but within the mayhem, there is a deeper message about the state of society today so you do leave the theatre with plenty to think about, it is definitely worth going to see.

And after sight seeing, shopping and going to the theatre, the only thing left to do is eat and believe me, there are plenty of places to choose from in Boston.

Boston is the home of seafood and no-one can go there without sampling something. Their fish is out of this world and you can guarantee only the freshest and the highest quality of catch is sold in the hundreds of restaurants scattered throughout the city.

Legal Sea Foods and Naked Fish are two of the most popular seafood chain restaurants in the city. They offer delicious meals at a reasonable price and service is always with a smile. And for those who do not like fish, most restaurants do offer alternatives which are equally good.

Boston really is a city worth visiting. The people are really friendly and welcoming and you will never be short of something to do or see.

December is a really good time to go as there is Christmas spirit in the air and the city looks beautiful with the Christmas lights. Apart from anything else, it is the most fun way to get all your Christmas shopping. I found that perfect Christmas present for everyone.

My only complaint about my trip to Boston was that it was [illegible] enough, you can [illegible] lost in the city [illegible] and still stumble upon new things to do and see.

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Blue Man Group (BB106-4)

Durrants

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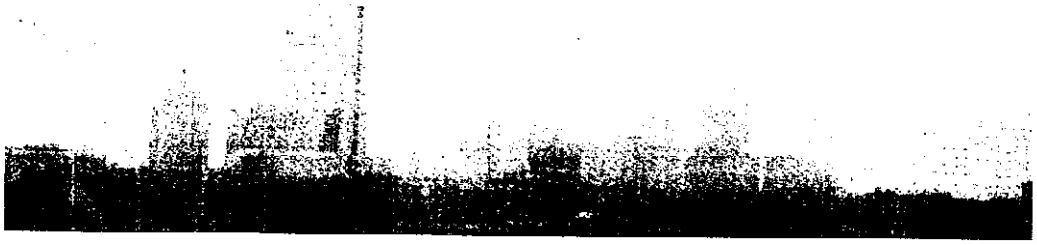
A feast for the eyes from the Observatory in the Prudential Building



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Source
Date:
Page

Circulation
Ad Rates.

Tel:

Southern Daily Echo (Southampton)
Saturday 24. November 2001
46,47

ABC 60352 Daily
page rate £2,486.40
scc rate £0.00
023 8042 4777

Blue Man Group

(BB106-4)

Durrants

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Welcome back to Boston

For travellers who may be fearful of visiting New York after the recent attrocities, why not take advantage of the cheap transatlantic flights on offer and give Boston a try instead? DAVE KING did a bit of early Christmas shopping

WHAT is it with the Americans and in particular New England? Wasn't it back in the 18th century that the American Revolution took hold in the Massachusetts Bay Colony as a series of tax-levying measures put into force by the British created resentment within the colonies.

The Boston Tea Party, 1773 and all that – as the Brits were unceremoniously kicked out of the country?

And now they want us all to come back!

The dreadful events of September 11 have left America's tourism industry in a terrible state of flux. But trans-Atlantic air fares are cheaper than ever and there are some very decent travel bargains to be had.

Of all the cities in America, Boston is one of the most delightful. It is without the brashness and the urban jungle feeling of some cities, but beneath the quaintness, culture and character, Boston is a lively east coast metropolis, diverse in its appeal.

The red-brick of centuries-old town houses and historic buildings nestling close to the Charles River in downtown Boston provides a contrast to the nearby hi-tech towers. Boston is, after all, a centre for education, hi-technology, architecture and medicine.

And for the Brits, the big attraction of this delightful New England city is that it is just over six hours flying time from London.

Boston provides a rich blend of the old and the new. It is a city steeped in history, as one would expect, with a rich colonial flavour. The red-bricked Freedom Trail connects 16 sites which played critical roles in colonial and revolutionary events.

It includes Faneuil Hall, built in 1742 by Peter Faneuil, and known as the "Cradle of Liberty". Housed on the site is the Faneuil Hall marketplace. The Freedom Trail finishes at the USS Constitution or "Old Ironsides"– the US Navy's oldest commissioned ship.

What's great about Boston is that it is truly a walking city. Most places of interest are within easy reach.

Initially, a good idea is to take the Old Town Trolley Tour, a 100-minute narrated trip which gives visitors a chance to get their bearings.

It passes the New England Aquarium which features a four-storey giant ocean tank containing a re-created coral reef and is home to sharks, turtles and moray eels.

The tour also skirts by the *Cheers* bar made famous by Ted Danson and co in the TV series in Beacon Hill.

You can get off the trolley bus for the half mile walk to the Museum of Fine Arts, which is a sensational place to visit and features the largest group of Monet paintings outside of Paris, as well as renowned collections of European and American paintings, Egyptian, Asian and classical art.

And the trolley bus also calls in on the luxurious shops along stylish Newbury Street with its elegant 19th century storefronts containing art galleries, antique shops, boutiques, speciality shops, sidewalk cafes and charming restaurants.

In fact shopping is pretty fundamental to the attraction of Boston, and it is a peg on which tourism chiefs are hoping to attract overseas visitors.

Whether you're a designer-label junkie, a sportswear freak or a classic dresser, it is impossible to leave Boston without finding at least a few stores to your taste.

Boston offers quality and versatility in boutiques, upscale department stores, eclectic galleries, glass-enclosed arcades and discount outlets.

Real bargain-hunters head straight for the designer deals at Filene's Basement, while antique-

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hunters hot foot it to Newbury to browse in the boutiques in search of those special items.

If you are tired of walking, then there is the underground train system, which is very cheap to use, and certainly not as crowded as the London Underground.

You can take a train from the centre of Boston for a ten-minute ride just out of town to the John F Kennedy Library and Museum. The museum itself is a spectacular-looking building which is set on the harbour and looks across at the Boston skyline and the harbour islands.

Visitors step back into a recreated world of the early 1960s containing 25 exhibits, three theatres and 20 video presentations about the life of John Fitzgerald Kennedy, the 35th President of the United States.

At the moment, through to February, there is also a separate and rare exhibition of Jacqueline Kennedy's dresses.

Theatre and fine dining is very much a part of Boston. It is home to the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and the theatre district is a hub of national and international shows.

One of the more unusual offerings is the Blue Man Group, who have been performing at The Charles Playhouse.

They are three bullet-headed, blue-coloured actors who provide an 80-minute visual spectacular.

This includes banging away at kettledrums while squeezing tubes of paints onto the drumheads creating volcanic eruptions of colour.

The guys stuff handfuls of Cap'n Crunch cereal into their mouths to produce a symphony of amplified chomping. And they then entice a member of the audience on to the stage for a banquet of Twinkies, before cream suddenly starts spurting out of their chests.

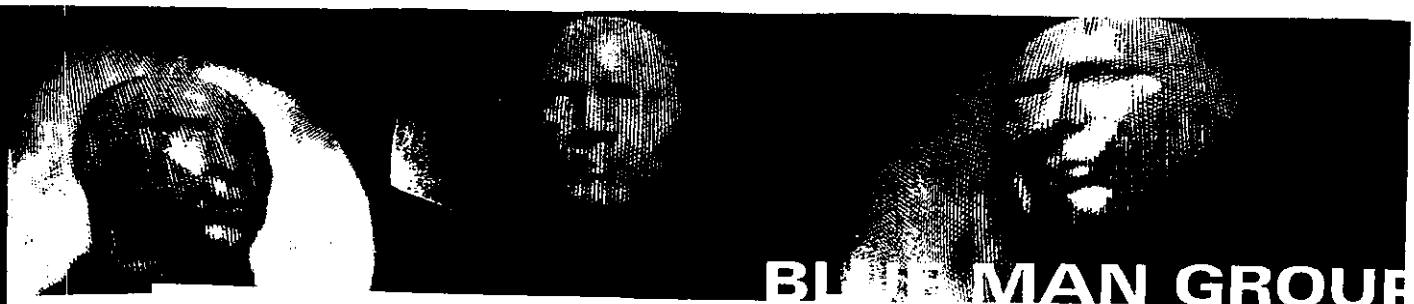
It's very bizarre, but worth catching if the show is on in town.

Afterwards, just around The Charles Playhouse is Radius, one of the swishest restaurants in town. It was recently chosen as the 25th best American restaurant in a gourmet magazine, and the food, prepared by chef Michael Schlow is something special. It's not cheap, but boy is the food good.

Also recommended on the culinary front, among some 1,900 restaurants in the city is the Top of the Hub restaurant, which soars 52 floors above the heart of the Back Bay atop the Prudential Center. It is a very romantic venue, with live jazz entertainment, and both the food and the view is outstanding.

Boston is a jewel along America's east coast. It has charm, presence and a huge amount to offer.

The Brits are being welcomed back.



Chicago Tribune ★ SECTION 7
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2001

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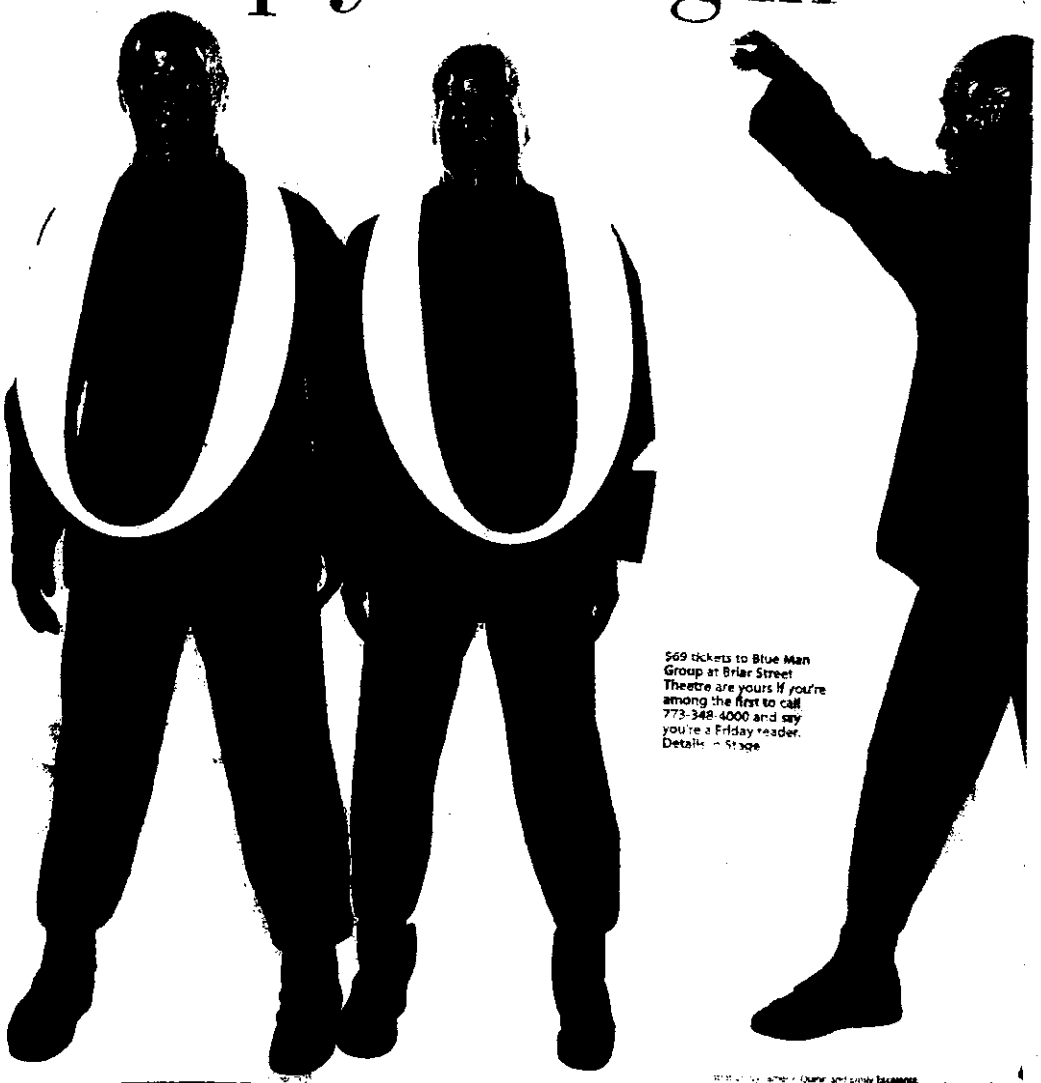
FRIDAY

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO ENTERTAINMENT

We'll help you ring in



$69 tickets to Blue Man Group at Briar Street Theatre are yours if you're among the first to call 773-348-4000 and say you're a Friday reader. Details ▸ Stage

Didn't get those New Year's Eve reservations you really wanted? Friday has hard-to-find seats in restaurants and theaters for the first callers.

(You still pay, but at least you have a spot.)

By Phil Vettel
Tribune restaurant critic

Putting off making New Year's Eve plans is rarely a smart move. Except this year, when it's practically a stroke of genius.

That's because Friday: The Section That Cares, has done the job for you.

All you have to do is call the place where you'd like to celebrate, and ask for the Friday reservation. If you're first and/or lucky, you're in.

Your odds aren't too bad; we've made reservations at more than five dozen restaurants in the city and suburbs, securing New Year's Eve tables that at this late date would be difficult — if not impossible — to find.

For example, ever try getting into Charlie Trotter's on three-days' notice? We've got a table. As we have tables for fellow four-star restaurants Everest, Le Francais and Tru. And 3.5-star Zealous.

Or are your tastes more up-and-coming and hipper? Such as, oh, Blackbird, Mod or Spring, three of the hottest restaurants around?

Got it, got it, got it.

And it's not just restaurants we've tucked away. The Stage section has primo seats to some of the biggest shows in town — including our cover boys, Blue Man Group. Metromix.com has VIP passes to the hottest nightclub parties this city has to offer — plus a few more restaurant reservations, including Vivre and Riva.

All you have to do is be the first caller or callers, identify yourself as a Friday reader and you'll be able to buy those tickets or claim that reservation.

Note, please, the use of the word "buy." These dinners and shows are not free. These are full-fare, no-discount, cannot-be-combined-with-any-other-offer deals.

Actually, many of the Metromix club deals are, indeed, free. And one of the participating restaurants is offering a freebie as well. But for the most part, all we're offering is availability to events that ordinarily might be sold out.

Have your credit card ready when you call; in nearly every instance, a non-refundable deposit, or full prepayment, is required. (At this late date, they need protection against no-shows.) And note that unless otherwise specified, prices are per person and do not include tax, tip or alcohol.

Also please note that in some cases, the phone number for securing the Friday reservation is not the restaurant's main number. In some cases, a particular person must be contacted. If you call before a restaurant opens, do not assume a voice-message request will be honored.

Table sizes are listed by the maximum number of people they accommodate. Specific party sizes may be negotiable.

Start dialing.

PLEASE SEE RESERVE, PAGE 15

10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 660[illegible]

SUNDAY SUN-TIMES
CHICAGO, IL
SUNDAY 431,639
JUN 10 2001
[redacted]
Burrelle's INFORMATION SERVICES

HOME OF THE BLUES

BY MIKE THOMAS
Staff reporter

They talk. When there's no audience and it's just them and scattered Blue colleagues roaming about, bugging, tweaking, readying for another performance, they talk. They also laugh and eat and stretch and yawn. Sure, if it's close to curtain, they might be bald and blue, but otherwise they're just like you and me. Sort of, anyway.

But come show time, they transform into otherworldly creatures. Twinkie-dissecting, [illegible] Crunch-bumping, marshmallow-gorging creatures who [illegible] with life's [illegible] sounds. They notice [illegible]. The slightest sound, the [illegible] flicker—it all be[illegible] jaded world, they ar[illegible] personifie[illegible] innocence, [illegible] joie de vivre. [illegible]

[illegible]

appearances on the Grammys, the NCAA basketball tournament, "The Tonight Show" and some clever Intel Pentium commercials (the show's three New York-based founders do all the high-profile national stuff), they're more widely known than ever. In fact, they're so ingrained in American culture that they merited mentions in a recent episode of "The Simpsons." Homer (drunk): "Did you see that Blue Man Group? Total ripoff of the Smurfs! And the Smurfs, they suck!"

Locally, since 1997, Chicago's Blue Men have ensconsed themselves in the Briar Street Theatre on North Halsted, where they perform [illegible] shows a week. Almost all performances sell out. Soon they'll hit the 2,000 mark, a milestone they're unlikely to acknowledge. The Blue Men are dismissive [illegible] superstitions about such [illegible].

On [illegible] Friday afternoon in [illegible] Blue Man captain [illegible] what it means to be a [illegible] tribe, and [illegible] has positively [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] How does that make you feel?

A. It feels great. But people don't know who we are outside of the building, which is really cool. Once in a while there'll be some makeup left on me or some glue, and someone will ask if I'm a painter. And I'll always say, Sure, I'm a painter. I usually don't say I'm a Blue Man.

Q. *When's the last time a Blue Man threw his celebrity weight around to get a last-minute table at Charlie Trotter's.*

A. Never.

Q. *Does it work for Oprah [illegible]?*

A. No, it doesn't. I can't imagine that [the Oprah] people would even believe we're Blue Men, because there's this myth that we're [illegible] tall, with eyes as large as half dollars.

Q. [illegible]

A. [illegible]

left yet. I walked right past them again and they had no idea who I was. Maybe one person kind of looked at me a little strange.

Q. *How would you react if a crazed fan rushed the stage?*

A. Wow. I don't know what I would do. I'd hope the crew would have him down and out before he got onstage!

Q. *What type of hazing must one endure in order to become a Blue Man, and does it involve Jell-O?*

A. (Laughs.) There are practical jokes from time to time, but no mean stuff that'll kill you.

Q. *In some ways your show is similar to the Broadway sensations "Stomp" and "Bring in Da Noise, Bring in Da Funk."*

A. Yeah, OK.

Q. *[illegible]*

A. [Laughs.] No, I [illegible] This interview is over! [Laughs.] Actually, I've never seen "Stomp" or "Bring in Da Noise." But I think Blue Man [illegible] like that.

Blue Men

Continued from page 1D

the most marshmallows in his mouth?

A. I have a pretty big mouth.

Q. How many can you stuff in it?

A. About 56. Initially I never thought I'd be able to do it. But it's second nature now. My family likes to throw things at me — grapes and stuff.

Q. To what extent are you influenced by Gallagher?

A. I'm a fan of Gallagher. Actually, I own a Gallagher T-shirt. I used to watch him when I was a kid.

Q. Recall your biggest onstage flubs.

A. It's all part of the show. A mistake is just another opportunity to figure out what we're going to do (next). I can't think of anything that would completely throw us, unless the power went out in the building. And even then, maybe we'd take the audience outside. We'd figure something out.

Q. Did that scene in "Hannibal" where Anthony Hopkins eats Ray Liotta's brain give you any ideas for the show?

A. No. It made me sick.

Q. Would the late performer Andy Kaufman have been a good Blue Man? He had great eye sparkle and excellent drumming skills, two things you look for in new recruits.

A. Yes! I love Andy Kaufman.

Q. Seeing as two of Andy's passions were prostitutes and professional wrestling, he probably would have visited brothels and made World Wrestling Federation guest appearances in full Blue Man regalia. Is that kind of stuff against the rules?

A. I don't think Blue Men would have prostitutes. But I think if they were to enter the professional wrestling arena, they would enjoy the spectacle. The sounds, the lights, the ceremony. And they'd definitely find the bell.

Q. Could your gang take the Vegas Blue Men in a rumble? Word is you mess with them, you mess with Siegfried and Roy.

A. The Vegas guys are big. They're large men. Not all of them, but I think the majority of them are peaking the 6-foot-2 mark. But we've been around longer, so —

Q. Which one of you guys was Mungojerrie in "Cats"?

A. I've never seen "Cats." I have no idea.

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SUNDAY SUN-TIMES
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Beneath the paint

A would-be Blue Man auditions for rare role

Let's get this out of the way. No, it isn't [illegible] especially when you [illegible] 35 [illegible] night after night and [illegible] sounds from [illegible] PVC [illegible] contraption. Still, the big beats [illegible] and the Blue Man G[roup] [illegible] in these [illegible] The [illegible] A few [illegible] a Chicago-based graphic artist, [illegible] and [illegible] of becoming a Blue Man. On a [illegible] one of [illegible] country. Before he [illegible] what began [illegible] into the experience of a lifetime. This is his story. As [illegible] member, [illegible]

People were already in line when I arrived at the Briar Street Theatre on Halsted that Saturday morning, so I grabbed a cup of coffee and joined them. At some point, the Blue Man people brought us in 10 or so at a time, very [illegible]. When I walked into the theater, the casting director made sure I had the right look (height, weight, etc.) and snapped my picture. I was then handed [illegible] and given a rudiments quiz to see if I knew the basic patterns of drumming. I'd been in line with this great local blues drummer, so I was kind of scared. He was so much better than me.

I must have done OK, though, because a while later I returned to see my name on a list of 16 guys (out of what seemed like hundreds) who'd passed the audition. I was so thrilled, I didn't know what to do. So I called my mom from a pay phone down the street. As I was talking to her, I turned around and there were a bunch of people listening to my conversation. They all congratulated me and I immediately felt like a minor celebrity. It was pretty cool.

My next test, not long after the first one, was at a [illegible] down the street. When I got there, a group of nervous-looking people were sitting on the front stairs, waiting their turns, so I took a seat and waited mine. When I got called in, it was sort of surreal, like a Monty Python prank. What they had me do was so ridiculous. First they put a rubber cap on me, like a thick condom or something. I felt really silly. It was like one of those cheap bald caps they sell at Uncle Fun. Beforehand, we'd been given certain phrases to learn. One of them was something to the effect of, "Wow! This is going to be something wonderful!" We were supposed to convey it using only facial expressions and gesticulations.

So I stood there in this goofy bald cap with a group of people, including the casting director and the Chicago director, staring at me really intently. They aimed a [illegible] camera at me and asked me to express the phraseology with my face. I was so nervous, I began sweating bullets. I also felt like throwing up. I don't think I was [illegible] failure [illegible] this was such a creative thing to be doing so fast. Earlier [illegible] I'd been standing around drinking coffee!

But I [illegible] it off [illegible] When I finished, they [illegible] and [illegible] I think [illegible] New York, [illegible]

[illegible] around. But I played it cool. I [illegible] something like "Oh, that's very interesting."

When I got to New York, they put me up at the Chelsea Hotel (Jimi Hendrix's old haunt). It was my first time in the city, so I was just overwhelmed. I [illegible] myself I have [illegible] The next morning I reported to the Astor Place Theatre for another audition. There [illegible] from around the [illegible] all [illegible] Blue Men [illegible] New York [illegible]

think. My life could change any minute now.

So I [illegible] waited a while and [illegible] I'd made it [illegible] another [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] beneath my plain Blue Man costume. I guess it was to androgynize me a little, slim me down. Another piece with a hole in the chest area went over the body suit. (If you haven't seen the show yet, I'll reveal only that the hole serves a very important function.)

Then, with some help from the makeup artist, I glued on a thin latex bald cap, a professional one this time. (No Uncle Fun head condoms in the big leagues.) Next, I slathered on the famous blue paint, which is more like cold cream. It's nontoxic, so if some gets in your mouth it's no big deal. It's actually very pleasing. You put it on and it's nice and cool. I felt very comfortable in it. It's made to look wet, and it [illegible] with sweat. They do touch-ups between scenes all the time. But overall, it's not bad. The four of us kept staring at ourselves in the mirror, making [illegible] faces because here we were, totally done up. We looked just like Blue Men. At this point, it was pure fantasy land.

After a briefing session, we walked out in front of 20 or so people — New York Blue Men, band members, directors. The scenario they'd given us was this: You're walking in, and there are lots of laser lights flashing all over the place. You don't want to hit any of them, so you must be very careful, walk slowly and remember your phraseology. For me, the key was just to relax and remember that a Blue Man should react to everything. Like, someone sneezed, and I made sure to notice it.

When we finished, I felt pretty good. I'd made people laugh a couple of times. I guess when I stopped for that sneeze, they were just delighted. Afterward they brought us out one at a time and told us if we were moving on. Unfortunately, my buddy from Chicago got cut. Of course, that meant I'd made it to the final three along with a circus clown from San Francisco and a guy from Los Angeles who'd been an extra in "Forrest Gump." I was still in the "Wow!" stage, so I called my mom again, then I called this girl I wanted to start dating and impressed the hell out of her. I was thinking, Man, life is great right now. Livin' large! Unstoppable!

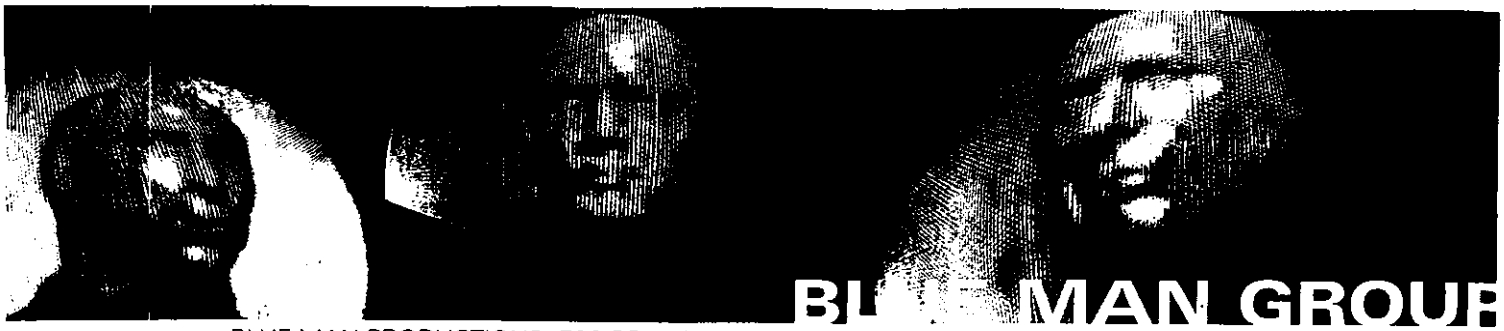
After some time off, we began a series of workshops over the course of a few days for which we were paid $100 per. Paid! We all wanted to dance! During these sessions, we began learning the initial beats of the show from one of the original Blue Men. And this guy was intense! *Intense!* When he'd vocalize how a Blue Man acts, he'd start howling and screaming and jumping up and down. It was amazing. He was so charged on command. No messing around. And that's when I really started getting excited at the thought of actually doing this for a living. At night, I practiced my drumbeats for hours in my hotel room. The hardest thing about being a Blue Man is you have to play these beats well while doing so many other things. Speaking of which, I also learned how to catch marshmallows in my mouth, a skill every human should have.

[illegible] we performed in front of the [illegible] Blue Men [illegible] And [illegible] I don't know [illegible] I was a little [illegible] but in the [illegible] still [illegible] My [illegible] in New York [illegible] the [illegible] of my life.

[illegible]

Above: A Blue Man needs drum skills and eye sparkle. Right: Steve Hartley, a Chicago-based graphic artist, tried to react to everything when he auditioned for the Blue Man Group.

Blue Man Group
Wednesdays-Sundays
Briar Street Theatre, 3133 N. Halsted
$43, $53
(773) 348-4000.



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OCT 4 2001

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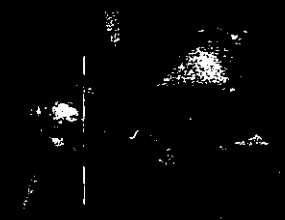
RICH HEIN/SUN-TIMES

BLUE MAN AT WORK: A member of Blue Man Group "paints" a chair, TV and ottoman with a blast of confetti and streamers Wednesday outside the Thompson Center as part of the Suite Home Chicago public art exhibition. These furniture pieces and 375 others made of fiberglass will be auctioned off for charity at the Chicago Theatre Oct. 20. Tickets to the auction are on sale at the theater box office.

JUST ASKING



TOM GALASSI (RIGHT), BLUE MAN GROUP CAST MEMBER

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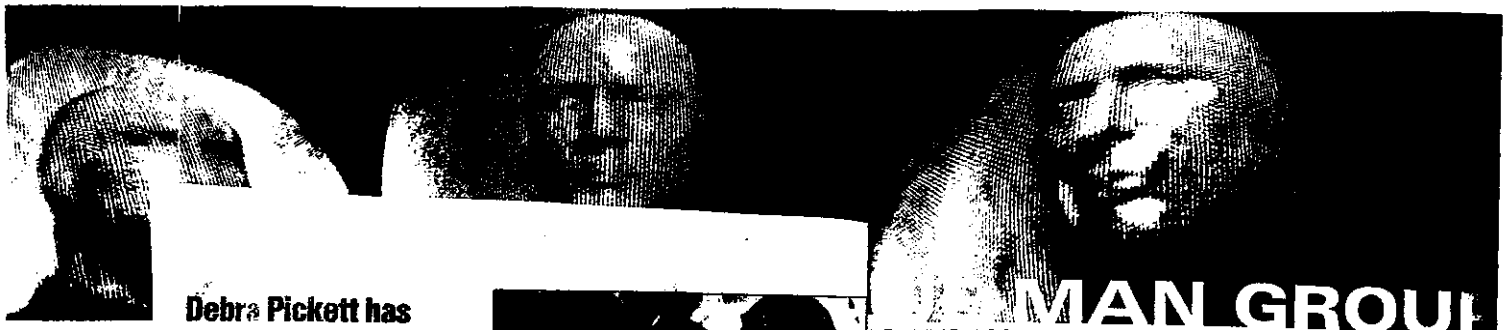

Debra Pickett has Sunday Lunch with . . .

The Blue Men

Page 8A

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CLOUDY Weather 2A, 55A SUNDAY, MARCH 2, 2003

SUNDAY LUNCH WITH . . . THE BLUE MEN

BY DEBRA PICKETT

'I just took my 1½-year-old nephew out into his first snow. He was so Blue Man'

It's not easy being them—and you have to see them to get what they're about

Rowan A. Conway/Sun-Times

Blue Man Group in Andrew Burlinson (from left), the Harvard man; Tom Galassi, the Illinoisan, and Eric Gebow, the Indiana one.

Left, middle, right. They walk down North Broadway, on their way to the Bamee Noodle Shop, in perfect order, three across.

Andrew Burlinson is always on the left. Tom Galassi is always in the middle. Eric Gebow is always on the right.

When they hang up their coats on the rack in the rear of the restaurant, it's the same order. And the same, too, when they sit down at our wood-paneled corner booth for lunch. They don't talk about it. It just happens.

Burlinson, Galassi and Gebow are Blue Men.

This is not the sort of thing that fits easily onto a resume or tax form, though Galassi, who recently bought a house, did put it on his mortgage application. All the bankers who weren't deeply confused were seriously impressed. Especially when they found out he was the guy who catches the marshmallows in his mouth.

The thing everyone says about Blue Man Group—that you just have to see it—is what these guys say, too. It's easier than trying to get it "right."

Blue Man Group, performed Wednesdays through Sundays at Chicago's Briar Street Theatre, is an absurdist piece of performance art that wryly comments on the pretentiousness of the '80s art scene in New York, while also being pretentious enough itself to evoke dadaism and '60s-style happenings. It is also this really funny thing where three guys in bald caps and thick blue paint get on stage to play weird music and do crazy stuff without ever talking. It is both these things, plus an art exhibit in the lobby. And there's a bar, and they let you bring your cocktail into the theater and you get to sing along to an all-percussion version of Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit."

Over the years—they debuted in New York in 1987 and arrived in Chicago seven years ago—the Blue Men's audience has shifted a bit from the folks who cherish the wry-pretentious-dada part to the folks who really enjoy a good, drunken singalong. They have also grown from being three friends in an off-off-off-Broadway theater to a 350-person production company, running shows in New York, Boston, Chicago and Las Vegas. Which is not to say that the Blue Men have sold out.

They are, after all, having lunch in a Lake View noodle shop.

Or, well, some of them are. Burlinson, Galassi and Gebow actually represent only about 10 percent of the Blue Man population of the United States. Between the four locations and multiple shows, there have to be a bunch of Blue Men at the ready. I guess, on some level, I'd known that already, but it was tough to hear when I invited them to lunch.

"Lunch with the Blue Men." I'd said.

"Which ones?" the publicist had asked.

That's the kind of innocence you never get back.

Still, Burlinson, Galassi and Gebow are ... of an elite fraternity.

"It's very nerve-racking," Gebow says of the long audition and training process they had to undergo in order to become Blue Men. "After you get through the first audition, you have to do this thing when you have to hold eye contact with the casting person. It feels like it goes on forever."

Gebow's explanation of the audition process—which is followed by about six months of training, before a Blue Man can truly be said to be a Blue Man—goes a long way in explaining my two biggest surprises about these guys: they are not bald, or even close to it, and their eyes, which appear wide and bulging when surrounded by blue face paint, are perfectly normal. They all say they've had to work hard at mastering the intense stare that gives them their alien look.

"I've had little kids not-Blue Man me," says Gebow, and the others immediately agree.

When you're tall and blue and silent, kids are going to stare at you, no matter who tells them it's impolite.

"Kids go through that phase when everything is absolutely fascinating," Gebow says.

"Yeah," agrees Galassi, "that's the Blue Man stage."

"I just took my 1½-year-old nephew out into his first snow," Burlinson says. "He was so Blue Man."

"Everyone has that in them," Gebow says.

He's the most intensely philosophical Blue Man of the group, the one for whom it seems most important that people "get it."

"Right," Burlinson agrees, "but it gets indoctrinated out of you." He's the intellectual.

Talking to the three of them is a lot like talking to close siblings or even triplets. They have an uncanny sense for picking up in the middle of each other's sentences. It comes from the time they've spent on stage together: two hours at a time, locked in eye contact with one another. It's a weird kind of intimacy, one that can be almost embarrassing for an outsider to observe. Actors often have these relationships with each other, while they're working together. But stage productions and movie shoots rarely last as long as Blue Man Group has.

"It has become my social circle," Gebow says, "because you just get so close to people. You know them so well."

"I didn't know anyone here when I moved here," says Burlinson, who was originally cast in New York. "I'm a middle-aged actor who's never been in anything for longer than eight months."

Galassi, who grew up in Springfield, has the most local ties. He's been a Blue Man in New York and Boston, but, over his large bowl of sliced chicken and noodle soup, he says that Chicago is his favorite Blue venue. The audiences here seem to have a special attachment to the Blue Men.

"Chicago is cool," Galassi says, "in that, if they love something, they really love it. I've even heard people say it started here."

"There's a huge segment of taking modern art down a notch," adds Burlinson, a Harvard graduate, recognizable on stage because he is the skinniest of the three and because his Blue Man is the one whose posters and signs make all the "smart" jokes. "That works well for Chicago because there is no pretension here."

Gebow, a professional drummer who had never been in a stage production before becoming a Blue Man four years ago, has donned the paint in New York, Boston and Las Vegas.

He finds the crew here to be the most exceptionally talented and diverse he's worked with. And, like Galassi, he appreciates Chicagoans' relationship with the Blue Men.

"In New York, you go one block away from the theater, and no one's heard of Blue Man Group," he says, just stopping himself from shaking his head in disgust.

"Here, we've had people crying in the lobby [after the show, where the Blue Men stand silently as the crowd slowly leaves the theater], like it was a religious experience," Galassi says. "There was this girl who kept saying, 'I got it. I got it.' Of course, right behind her, there was a guy who was like, 'Nice job, guy.'"

"In Vegas," Gebow says, "there was a 100-year-old woman who came three or four times. . . .

"And there was also a 80-year-old businessman who said if he'd seen it 20 years ago, his life would have been totally different."

They're all sort of awed by this, so they just look down at their noodles and don't say anything. After years of being Blue, there are things they still don't understand.

E-mail: dpickett@suntimes.com

STAR (CRETE-UNIVERSITY PARK)
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FEB 28 2002

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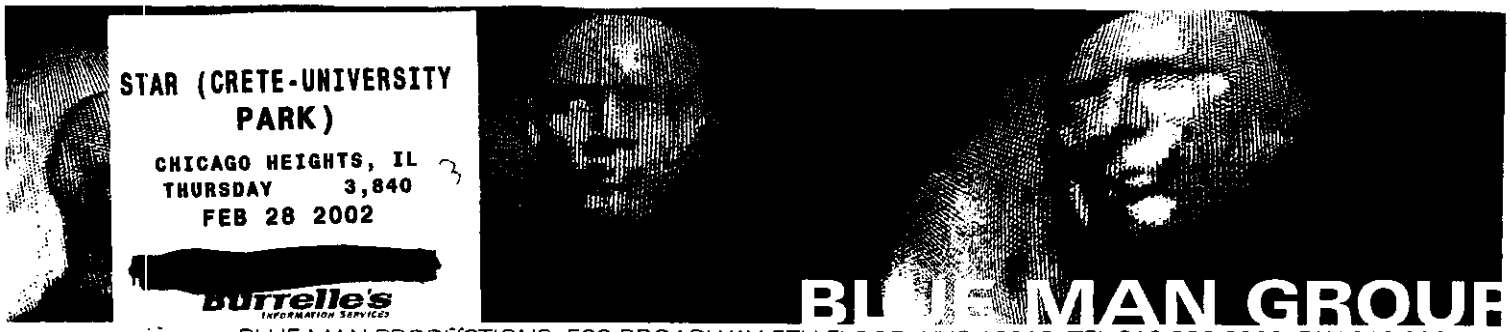

BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 660

Thursday, February 28, 2002
THE STAR NEWSPAPERS

Firstlook

What's Ahead This Weekend

THE WEEK'S FLICKS

The Star's movie reviews, Pages 17, 20.

Kevin Costner stars in "Dragonfly" (above); also reviewed are "Queen of the Damned" and "Big Fat Liar."

Firstlook's Myra Eder goes backstage at

Page 16

Behind the blue

Backstage with the

Myra Eder is easy to spot, but the Blue Men? They're without makeup at right.

Firstlook's Myra Eder goes behind the scenes with Chicago's stage phenomenon.

By Myra Eder

pen sesame.

A magical door or portal swings open and you're in another world, a different dimension or perhaps some other time.

From fantasy and fairy tales to science fiction, this gateway device takes the audience wherever the script leads, to Munchkinland, the castle of King Arthur or even the end of the universe, where no one has gone before.

Here on Earth, in Chicago (as well as New York, Boston and Las Vegas), entering the orb of Blue Man Group whisks any visitor into another sphere of existence.

A ticket to Blue Man Group at Chicago's Briar Street Theatre becomes a total immersion into another way of looking at life, the arts and certainly sound and color.

Blue Man Group is "art personified," says Chicago's Blue Man company manager Chris Kantowicz.

"It's modern art come to life," he says.

Just about everyone has glimpsed the eye-catching three blue guys spouting paints or playing the tubes on television commercials.

Their live show in New York, Boston and Chicago is called Tubes" (see review, Page 19).

But before the show, there is the lobby.

That is where Chicago's Blue Man experience begins.

It's just past the ticket booth and inside the magical glass doors.

It's another dimension inside the lobby ... eye candy and lots of sound.

Day and night are indistinguishable here.

Miles of different kinds and colors of glowing vinyl tubes, wound up like Picasso-designed pretzels, cloak the ceiling and walls.

Plastic hose sections, the equivalent of Blue Man chat rooms, project from the walls.

Louis Jeroslow is Chicago's Blue Man Group lobbyjack. He helped install and design the entryway art, and it's his responsibility to make certain the active elements remain in working order, glitch free.

Blue Man lobby took nearly a year to get where it is now.

"We are trying to create an organic environment using industrial materials," Jeroslow says of what must be miles of twisted pipes.

"There are multiple types of tubing," he says.

The impression is one of "infinity."

"There also are tube talkers," he says.

Indeed. Those plastic chat tubes sticking out of the wall are connected to professional actors upstairs.

Talking into one of these tagged pipes is like, well, conversing on the phone with a friendly stranger.

"Hello. Can you see me?"

"Sure I can. What do you think of the lobby?"

Tube talkers can see the lobby, but guests can't see them. Kantowicz loves watching guests' reactions as they talk into tubes.

Other tubes pipe Blue Man music directly to any ear placed next to the opening, in addition, of course, to the continuous lobby symphony.

It's all Blue Man sound (now on CD).

But there's lots more stuff.

On the walls, in addition to the tubes and flowing, glowing, kinetic

Staff photos by David Banks

Blue Men Tom Shallenberger (from left), Matt Galassi and Bryce Somerville stand in front of a faux Toulouse-Lautrec in the Briar Street Theatre lobby.

sculptures, Blue Men sit in some of the world's greatest works of art.

Or, rather, copies thereof.

Visualize Toulouse-Lautrec's brilliant, red-hued "Moulin Rouge," to scale, with Blue Man Group added in the background.

A copy of Van Gogh's "The Night Cafe" at Arles also finds the Blue Men at a table.

"The artistic energy of these works is timeless," Jeroslow says.

Numerous other altered artworks also incorporate Blue Man , from Millet's "The Gleaners" to Dali's surreal "Persistence of Memory" rendered even more fantastic with Blue Man Group seated at a dining table in the painting.

And then there's the Degas with a different angle, two ballet dancers (of course), one with Roger Ebert's face and the other with the visage of the late Gene Siskel, who looks almost

See BLUE, Page 19

Lobbyjack Louis Jeroslow poses under the theater's tubing and sculpture.

Blue

Continued from Page 16

like an angel in the portrait.

Designing the lobby to reflect Blue Man Group doesn't end at the bathroom door.

Actually, the music becomes more distinct in the lavatory.

With the exception of the occasional flush, the lobby restroom is quiet enough so one can make out the lyrics to the song coming through the bathroom speakers.

One hears Blue Man tubes and the repetitive lyrics: "Blue Man lobby bathroom ... Blue Man lobby bathroom," sung to a most indescribable melody.

Is anyone peeking?

The fourth character

Bryce Somerville is a Blue Man, one of three actors who will be performing "Tubes" the evening of this adventure in blue.

Part of the audience priming experience indeed is the lobby, Somerville explains.

It's all part of one goal, he says. That is, making the audience "into collectively being the fourth character" in the show, "Tubes."

And it works.

Blue Man hype pulls everyone together.

By the time audience members are taking their seats, there is a sense of connectedness.

People in front, in back, next to each other, become friends.

If only for the two hours of the show, every audience is part of one Blue Man in-crowd.

As Kantowicz says, "There are no demographics."

The lobby "removes the foundations of experience."

Blue Man, blue glop

Every Blue Man knows the importance of erasing boundaries and pre-conceptions.

Each actor must evolve into that almost anonymous Blue Man persona, visually, before he can begin to take the audience even further on its journey beyond Halsted Street reality.

That means makeup and costumes.

Upstairs at Briar Street the green room is where the actors get dressed. The room is a shambles of clothes, stage makeup, shoes, combs, glue and whatever. Martha Stewart has not been here, and this is not the dressing room one sees in glamour shots.

The cast this evening includes Somerville, 27, who is been a Blue Man for four years; Matt Shallenerger, 23, who hails from the Aloha State and is a one-year Blue veteran, and Tom Galassi, 25, who was raised in downstate Springfield, is a whiz on drums and has been seriously Blue for four years.

The men begin their makeup session with bald caps and glue.

Somerville says his ears stick out so he glues them to the side of his head before pulling his bald cap on all the way.

"I'd look like a lemonhead if I didn't glue my ears," he quips, brushing stage glue behind his ears.

Before pulling their bald caps all the way over their heads, the men insert earplugs.

The sound level on stage reaches 120 decibels, and they need protection. That level of sound is where pain and potential hearing damage begin.

Once the caps are secure, the blue starts going on. First, there is a blue product called PAX, an acrylic and adhesive substance that is extra blue "where makeup might come off," Shallenberger explains.

The men smear the stuff on, as an underlayer of makeup, on their ears (by now covered with bald caps), noses and Adam's apples.

After that comes the outer blue.

Blue Man's cobalt makeup is specially made for the actors in the four shows now. It's called Mettron Foundation Special Blueman.

Basically the stuff is petroleum jelly with deep cobalt-colored pigment, the actors say. They gob the stuff onto their heads, faces, necks and smear it around. Somerville gets a little on his teeth but he says no one will notice.

Once the makeup is on, the men don their all-black outfits — Spandex unitards, black pants, loose shirts and specially made Blue Man boots with Velcro tongues over the ties, not under.

Under each outfit, the actors wear a harness with a spigot device.

This is for containers of paint and other gloppy stuff, hidden in various locations on stage, that will shoot out of their chests, "Alien" style.

Blue latex gloves, taped on for security, complete their outfits.

Superheroes

Certainly it's easy to tell who's who so close up. But are on stage?

Here are three of Chicagoland's most famous actors, Blue Man Group (actually there are seven rotating Blue Men for the show here). For all intents and purposes, they are invisible except to those who know them personally.

Fame without recognition.

Does the anonymous celebrity bother them?

"Absolutely not," Shallenberger says. "It's great not being recognized."

The actors sometimes go into the lobby after the show, without makeup, so they can hear what the audience thought of the production.

"It's kind of like being a Superhero," Somerville says. No one in Metropolis or Gotham City really knows who Superman and Batman are.

The anonymity, as with Clark Kent and Bruce Wayne, is "part of the character, part of the fun," Galassi adds.

However, his wide, slightly slanted almond-shaped eyes gave him away one time up on Halsted, not too far from Briar Street Theatre.

"This girl came up to me and said she knew me," Galassi says.

"Then she said, 'You are a Blue Man. I remember your eyes.'"

That is the only time any of the Blue Men recall being recognized.

Secrets

It's almost showtime.

Kim Crabtree, production stage manager, points out where the off-stage band plays, where the lighting technician sits and where all video, audio and other technical elements are handled, all above the audience in various corners of the 627-seat theater.

The show is very complex, both from the technical and performance standpoints.

Some of the staging is pre-programmed, some must be handled real time.

More than two hours have passed since the lobby and backstage tour at Briar Street Theatre began.

Will the entire show still have the same magic now that Blue Men are real people and some of the tricks have been revealed?

No time for more questions.

"We have to get ready now," Crabtree says.

"We can't show you all the secrets."

Only 1 out of 1,000 candidates are selected for "Blue Man."

'Blue Man' trivia

- Only about 1 out of every 1,000 candidates for the four Blue Man Group shows is selected to train as a Blue Man.
- Auditioning for Blue Man Group is an ongoing process, done in steps for various skills, sometimes lasting up to six months.
- Chicago has seven Blue Men performing, three at a time.
- Two kinds of blue makeup are used, one as an undercoat where regular Blue Man makeup might wear off during the show, such as on ears, nose and Adam's apples.
- The "marshmallows" tossed into a Blue Man's mouth really are globs of cream cheese.
- Some 5.5 miles of paper streams are used at every Blue Man show. All the paper is recycled through a private company.
- The production stage manager "calls the show," that is, gives stage hands their cues, and has some 130 cues to call during the approximately 90 minutes of show time.
- Blue Man Group was founded in 1987 by three men, Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink, who evolved their performance art in New York into a full show.
- Three groups perform "Tubes," the Blue Man Group show, one in New York, Boston and Chicago.
- Chicago's show opened in 1997.
- Blue Man Group, "Live at Luxor" opened in Las Vegas in 2000.

— Myra Eder

True blue

BL MAN GROUP

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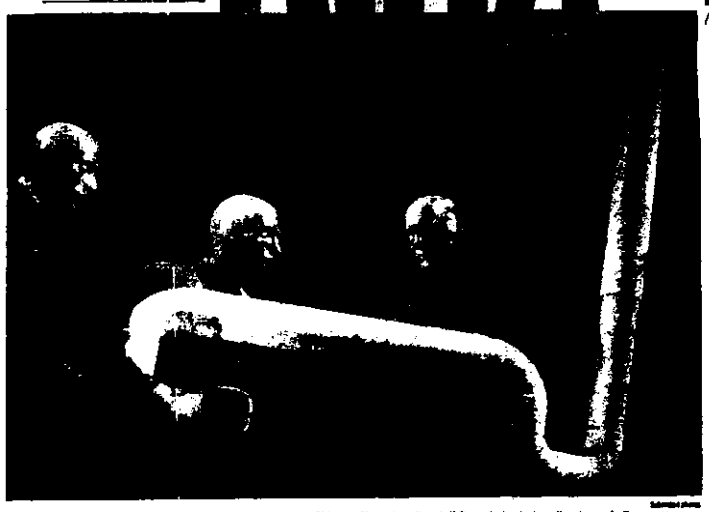

AUGUST 3, 2002

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www.postcrescent.com

THE BLUE MAN GROUP performs Wednesdays through Sundays in Chicago. Neenah native Jeff Quay (below) plays the drums in the group.

enah native Jeff Quay marches the beat of a different drummer the popular Blue Man Group

n Lundstrom
ncent staff writer

can tell Jeff Quay really loves his

erything I do and all of who I am
to this job," he said.
the past seven years the 1979
h High School graduate has been a
er of the Blue Man Group, the trio
ormance artists who began blowing
'orkers' minds in

y's title with the
is music director/per
r.
one of the only
ho is a director and
mer," he said. "When
ally know the aesthet-
I it's a bizarre aesthet-
can graduate and be
a director. You don't
o play shows any-
I very much need to
ing a player. That's
really love about this
has allowed me to completely im-
myself in it."
ay, 41, was hired as a drummer in
o open the first Blue Man branch
in Boston. He did that for two
sometimes filling in New York, until
when the Chicago branch opened.
t the trip from Neenah to becoming
Man drummer was filled with inter-
twists and turns.
y brother John, 11 years older, was
nsible for turning me on to music
y right from the start," he said.
rds and live concerts at an early age.

He had and still has very broad tastes, which is why I was listening to country, jazz, blues, folk, psychedelic and reggae without ever noticing a difference between them. It just all sounded like good music. Having maintained that attitude, I think, has made me a more valuable musician."

Quay's mother, Arlene Spafford, who still lives in Neenah, said she bought him his first set of drums when he was 10 years old.

"He was always going around with little sticks and pounding on everything," she said. "Instead of pounding on furniture, I thought I'd better get him a drum set."

She said he wanted to play drums in the school band once he entered junior high school.

"But the band director said, 'Everyone wants to play drums,' so Jeff played cornet the first year," she said. "The second year he asked me to talk to the band director because he didn't want to play cornet. They gave him a rhythm test and he was good enough. That's how it all started."

"We were really lucky that in Neenah during the late '70s we had a really good jazz program with a particularly good jazz director by the name of Dave Kiegert," Quay said. "This guy turned me on to how to listen to jazz, to practice, to take the music seriously and be disciplined. He was fantastic and recognized statewide.

See QUAY, E-3

PERFORMANCE

WHAT: The Blue Man Group
WHERE: The Briar Street Theater, 3133 N. Halsted, Chicago
WHEN: Wednesdays through Sundays
COST: $43-$53
INFO: 773-348-4000 or www.blueman.com

BMG goes mainstream, turning a street performance into a million-dollar franchise

By Jim Lundstrom
Post-Crescent staff writer

How popular is the Blue Man Group?

What began more than a decade ago as three guys doing performance art on the streets of New York City today is a finely tuned machine of some 600 people, with franchises in four cities and an annual operating budget of $28 million.

According to the BMG Web site, the original trio of Chris Wink, Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton got their start as Blue Men in Central Park in 1988 at a premature burial for the yuppified '80s.

The guys staged "happenings" at a variety of venues, until the experimental Wooster Group, of which Appleton native Willem Dafoe is a member, gave them a chance to do an hour of material at the group's theater, the Performing Garage.

That led to participation in a sold-out show as part of an art festival at the Lincoln Center's 1,250-seat Alice Tully Hall.

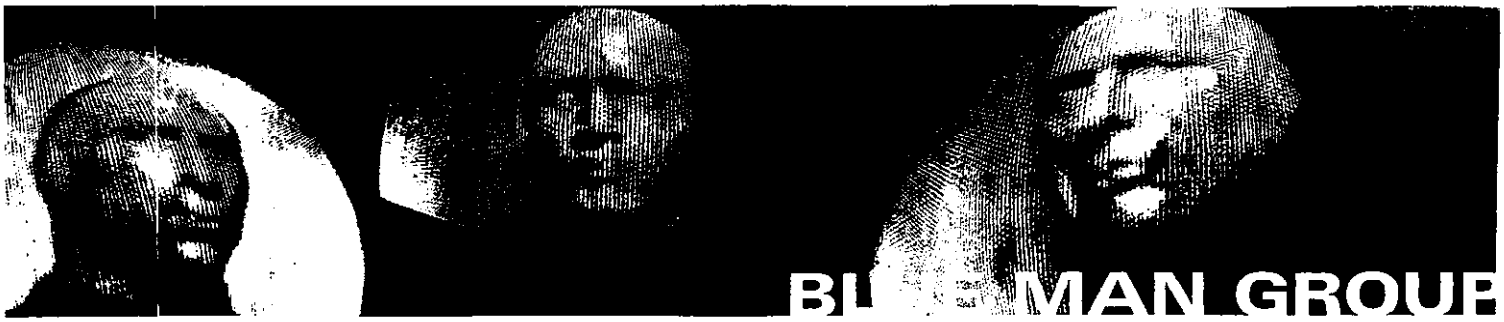
On Nov. 17, 1991, the Blue Man Group opened its current show, "Tubes," at the Astor Place Theater. The evening of tribal rock, silent social commentary and performance art continues there today.

See FRANCHISE, E-3

QUAY: 'Tribal' feel of The Blue Man Group appeals to drumme

FRANCHISE: Part of show includes meeting audienc

Performer helps out young musicians



BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 6609

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Nothing blue about this group's work

By Dave Zuchowski
News Correspondent

I managed to take in a performance by the Blue Man Group at the Briar Street Theatre.

Founded in 1987, these "mad scientists" of off-Broadway have gone on to become an international sensation with four productions running concurrently in New York, Boston, Chicago, and Las Vegas.

Now in their fifth year in Chicago, the Blue Man Group has got to be one of the most inventive, original, entertaining, and hilarious acts to have graced a stage since the time of Aristophanes. With bald heads, painted cobalt blue, as well as blue faces and hands they begin their act by beating water-drenched drums with clubs that sends color splashing every which way.

Eccentric by most standards, the trio of azure-drenched performance artists do things like catch paint balls in their mouths, which they chew, then spit onto a canvas to create an ad hoc work of art. With deadpan expressions set against a wordless backdrop, their antics are sometimes underscored by a musical combo that generates hypnotic, percussive, emotion-driven sounds.

Members of the audience sometimes get into the act. One poor chap was dressed in coveralls from head to toe. After a helmet was placed over his head, he was tied by his feet, hoisted upside down, painted with rollers, then swung against a canvas to create a piece of art Jackson Pollock would have been proud of.

Places to visit

The Wheeler Mansion
2020 S. Calumet Ave., Chicago
(312) 945-2020
www.wheelermansion.com

Construction of this 11-room boutique hotel began in 1870 as a residence for the family of Delvin T. Wheeler, banker and president of the Chicago Board of Trade. Now centrally located close to McCormick Place and within walking distance to Chicago's Museum Campus, the Wheelers once had as neighbors rich and powerful industrialists and merchants such as the Fields, Pullmans, and Kimballs.

A detailed restoration of the mansion completed in 1999 included the installation of 19th century antiques from Europe and America, armoires from the castles of Europe, tapestries, silks, Oriental rugs, and the finest bath fixtures and original paintings in each room.

A complimentary fresh breakfast is served at a private table in the dining room or on the veranda overlooking the courtyard. At night, turndown service includes delicious chocolate truffles made in a small factory in France.

The climax of the show takes place with strobe lights blinking in sync to the band's ecstatic music while rolls of crepe paper unfold from the back of the theater, then are pulled forward by the frenzied audience till the entire theater resembles the aftermath of a Times Square New Year's Eve celebration.

I ended my Chicago visit by lunching with Jennifer Cooke, PR coordinator for the city's Four Seasons Hotel. The hotel has received a Five Diamond Award from the AAA for the 12th consecutive year and also has the distinction of being the only hotel in the Midwest to earn the Mobil Travel Guide's Five-Star designation. The combination gives the hotel a "Perfect 10" rating, an honor given to only nineteen lodging establishments in the nation.

After finishing my sumptuous lunch, I should have strolled over to the Four Seasons' newly opened $2.5 million Spa and Fitness Center for a good workout. Instead, I walked over to the city's famous Water Tower landmark for one last look at the only building Downtown Chicago to survive the Great Fire of 1871. What the hey, walking is good exercise, too.

For information on other attractions in Chicago, phone toll free 1-877-CHICAGO (244-2246).

NEW CASTLE NEWS
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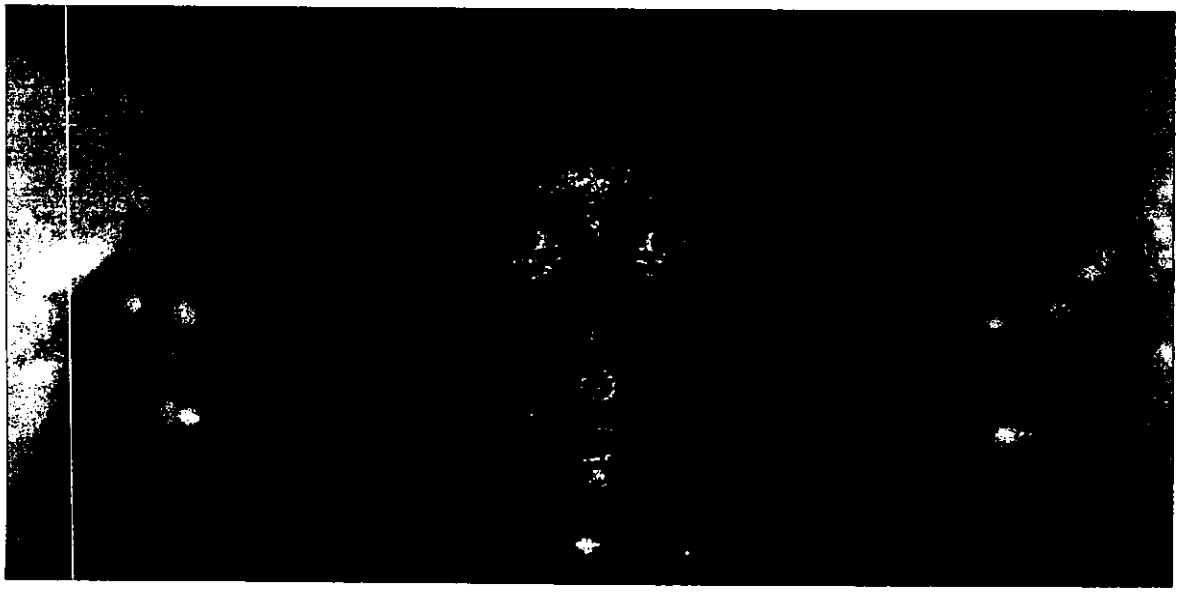

Photos by Steve Matteo/Red Streak

The newest member of the blue-faced clan is Jason McLin of Chicago, who, after his training in New York, was lucky enough to land a role right back here in Chicago's production.

NEW MAN GROUP

Latest Blue Man blood is a DePaul graduate — and he's watching you

BY BENJIE HUGHES
RED STREAK

"It's almost like we're the audience," Jason McLin says. And you believe him if you've seen them on stage — the wet blue faces, the careful thought, the curious bugged-out eyes that drink in the whole theater, searching for a victim.

He wades into the crowd, and when he re-emerges he has a nervous blond women by the arm. She follows him onstage. She sits. He stares. He feeds her Twinkies until creamy filling spurts out of her chest.

He knew it would end like this. But what he didn't know about — what makes it fun — are all the little details in between.

"The blue men are the audience," McLin says. "And we're looking in on you."

At 26, he is the newest of those looking in. He started Blue Man Group in November. He's wanted to do this since he first saw the show when it opened in Chicago and he was an acting student at DePaul University. He had grown up in Indianapolis, the son of a chef and a financial planner. He'd played drums when he was younger, but his parents sold his set when he quit taking lessons. He'd been a singer in high school; he still reads vocal music. Now here he was in Chicago, with a stint at Comedy Sportz in Indiana behind him, looking to get his degree and lend some legitimacy to this acting love of his.

Here was a show that took that, mixed it with his other love, the drums, and made it — something. Something fascinating. Something weird.

He had to do this show.

He finished school and bought a drum kit. When he wanted to audition, he made himself wait — a year. He practiced, played in garage bands, even lived in Los Angeles a little while. Then he was ready to audition.

There were a lot of people at the open call. McLin's first great gift: He is 6 foot 1. Blue Men, to keep that neutral, same-across-the-board look, must be between 5 foot 10 and 6 foot 1. McLin made the cut.

Next came proving he could drum and act.

With the condition he find a teacher and start taking drum lessons right away, he was hired. He turned up in New York for two months of Blue Man training and discovered he and one more future Blue Man were all that remained from five cities of open-call auditions.

To be sent back to Chicago to perform is even rarer. Blue Man Group was founded in New York and is still running there and in Chicago, Boston and Las Vegas. Most performers don't end up in their home cities. McLin has it good.

When he's not painted blue he lives in Lakeview and plays drums in bands with college buddies. He's starting piano lessons — but just to ramp himself up for the trombone.

But when he's blue, he's part of the collective. Three Blue Men are all the same — one mind, three bodies. That's the idea. They're a wordless, hairless, empty slate for you — the audience — to write your own artistic evening on.

Of course, McLin's not really hairless. The skull cap covers it all — if his sideburns get any longer, McLin is in trouble — and a good blue coat of oil paint does the rest. Inside, it's warm and wet — but holes cut in the skull cap help his head breathe. After his first week in there he couldn't even tell he had it on. He would forget, then spot a mirror and be shocked — a blue surprise. In time, it just stops mattering what color a person's skin is painted.

If real life were that way, he might not face the nightly task of taking off makeup — more of a chore, he says, than getting it on. Backstage there is a hefty bottle of makeup remover, kept eternally full by other Blue Man staff. The cap comes off, then it's time to scrub.

And scrub some more.

"It's a series of washcloths," McLin says. "It probably takes me 15 or 20 minutes to get out of the stuff."

Being blue means more than makeup, though — there's a "neutral" persona to be learned. Blue Men are bland and generally expressionless; the joy they convey comes through their bodies and the way they interact with props. To get there, Blues-in-training spend months in mask and clown workshops. The exercises teach them to take acting from the face into the body.

Once that neutral foundation is laid, they work on improvising. Blue Man Group's show, between bouts of spattering paint and catching marshmallows in the mouth, draws on audience participation. That requires performers to be on their toes.

"What you perceive is going to happen and what happens are very different," McLin says. It's a lesson he has taken to his whole life. Change will come, so enjoy it.

Like the time during one of his first shows in New York when an audience member emerged onstage from the inside of a hefty Jell-O mold. That was supposed to happen. The surprise was the man did not want to leave the stage afterward.

"Your expectation of what's going to happen is never what happens," McLin says. "That really opens the door for there to be no mistakes."

Those open doors keep him coming back excited, wondering what each night will bring. He plans to try a few small side projects, as an actor and as a musician. But his blue face isn't going anywhere.

"I see myself doing the show a minimum of three years," McLin says. "I'd like to stay with Blue Man as long as they'll have me."

ON THE SCENE

What: Blue Man Group

Where: Briar Street Theater, 3133 N. Halsted

Tickets: Floor tickets go for $53 a piece; balcony seats are $43. Call the theater at (773) 348-4000 or Ticketmaster at (312) 902-1500.

Visit www.blueman.com

Chicago Sun-Times
Showcase

N GROUP
226 6366 FAX 212 226 660

SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 2002

NEW DINE-AMICS

KEITH HALE Sun-Times

WANT A PINT? Need to confess? Have a story to tell? What better setting than a real Irish pub—and they don't get any more authentic than Gov'nor's Pub where castmembers of "Flanagan's Wake" share a pint and a tale.

AT TRU, THE DINING EXPERIENCE begins with the synchronized choreography of the waitstaff filling the water goblets. Each course is served with progressively more razzle-dazzle. No theatrical group could feel more at home amongst the restaurant's decor of Yves Klein's Venus Bleue bust then the Blue Man Group. In true blue fashion, the group makes eating Tru's signature caviar staircase "fish & chips" tuna, hamachi and salmon tartar served in a dish surrounded by a live fighting fish, and Blu Sapphire martini's just part of the act.

Bread & circus merge as today's eateries supper for their art

BY SARA FIDELHOLTZ
Staff reporter

Dining out is no longer just about eating; it's about being entertained. Celebrity chefs, well-dressed waitstaff, perfectly selected music, detailed lighting, hand-selected decor, innovative menus and highly styled patrons all contribute to a theatrical dining experience.

MORE FOOD FOR THOUGHT
PAGE 8D

Imagine, for a moment, dinner theater in its truest form. We took actors from recent or current Chicago productions to new local restaurants to see what would happen. Sit back and enjoy the show.

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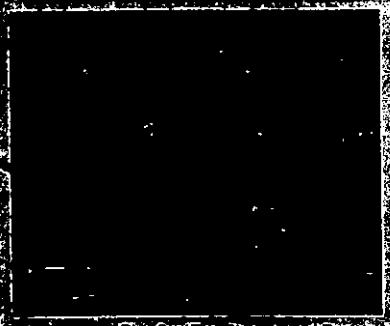
Heartland
MAGAZINE
THE STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER
MARCH 29, 2002

Men in BU

Tom Galassi, center, is a member of Blue Man Group

Heartland

MAGAZINE



Tom, left, and Adam Galassi work together with Blue Man Group.

Rich Saal/St. Petersburg Times

Not many parents would tolerate a drum set in the middle of the kitchen, much less install it themselves for their two young sons. Who could stand all those run shots at breakfast?

Debbie and Tom Galassi of Petersburg did, it seems, to mind too much, says free-lance writer Julie Cellini, who interviewed the parents of two boys who ended up putting the kitchen stage to work in show business as a couple of Chicago Blue Men.

"I can just see how the two of them are two really nice men," Cellini says.

Even with their busy schedules revolving around life, successful stage show and the public appearances, Tom and Adam were generous with their time, Cellini says, cheering on their mom as she sat in the audience through the Blue Men warm-up.

Tom and Adam are best friends, Cellini says, and probably have been all their lives.

"Adam likes nothing better than being the guy at the camera and taking care of all the technical things. Tom very quickly pointed out that Adam's a Blue Man, too," she says.

Tom and Adam share an apartment in Chicago, and they've replicated their grandmother's basement, complete with velvet paintings — a touch of home.

"They're really well-raised young men, and I credit the Galassis," Cellini says. "They had such a nurturing environment."

Read about the life of a Blue Man in this week's Heartland.

In Springfield Stories, by Doug Pokorski, read about the closing more than 30 years ago of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church, which had served the Lithuanian community in Springfield. And master gardener Patty Lloyd writes about creating your own hypertufa containers.

On the cover: Tom Galassi, center, is part of the Chicago Blue Man Group. Photo by Rich Saal.

Eileen Brady, features editor

If you have questions about Heartland, contact features editor Eileen Brady at 788-1605 or eileenbrady@sptimes.com.

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Petersburg's Tom Galassi can catch and hold 35 marshmallows in his mouth, among other things, as a member of the famous Blue Man Group.

True Blue

Story by Julie Cellini Photographs by Rich Saal

When Debbie and Tom Galassi bought their first home video camera, they warned their sons, Adam and Boomer, then 8 and 10, to keep their hands off.

"That lasted about a week," Debbie says. "Before we knew it, they were writing scripts and making movies starring themselves and their friends. Right from the start, Adam loved doing the camera work and Boomer was a born performer."

Fast forward 15 years. Boomer, 25, now known as Tom, is still performing while Adam, 22, follows him around with a camera. Except now they appear on stage in Chicago instead of in the kitchen of the Galassis' rural home near Petersburg.

Painted in cobalt blue makeup and wearing a skullcap, Tom is a Blue Man, now in his fourth year in the Chicago production of the wildly successful Blue Man Group. Adam joined the stage crew a year ago.

"We tell them they're the luckiest guys in the world," Debbie says. "How many people get paid for doing what they love?"

It's easy to love Blue Man Group. Describing it is harder.

Time Magazine called it "a potpourri of physical stunts, visual gags, art commentary, audience participation and all-out sensory assault." That leaves out the Jell-O, paint pellets, drums, Twinkies, marshmallows, electronic message board and free plastic rain ponchos that protect the first five rows from flying food.

The audience enters the theater through a maze of industrial tubing. Put a piece of plumbing pipe to your ear and you hear all manner of music. Throughout the loony lobby, illuminated silver torsos stand among send-ups of serious artwork.

Inside, ushers hand out strips of paper. Some audience members use them to tie back their hair or create headbands. I use mine to hide my notebook, but my husband fashions a Windsor knot — clearly the only person in the 250-seat Briar Street Theater who's wearing a tie.

On stage, a trio of mute Blue Men eyeballs the audience with curiosity, as if they just parked their spaceship in the alley. What follows can best be described as 90 minutes of nonstop surprises that veer from the rambunctiousness of "Animal House" to the wonder of "Close Encounters of the Third Kind."

Splashes of paint poured on lighted drums create vivid, messy multi-colored rainbows. An audience member is coaxed on stage to join the Blue Men in a buffet of Twinkies so bountiful that cream filling explodes into abstract art.

The finale involves swamping the audience in a seemingly endless river that's really reams of crepe paper. There's almost always a standing ovation at the end.

Back stage, a sweat-drenched Tom Galassi peels off his Spandex body suit and two pairs of latex gloves before vigorously scrubbing layers of blue makeup from his face.

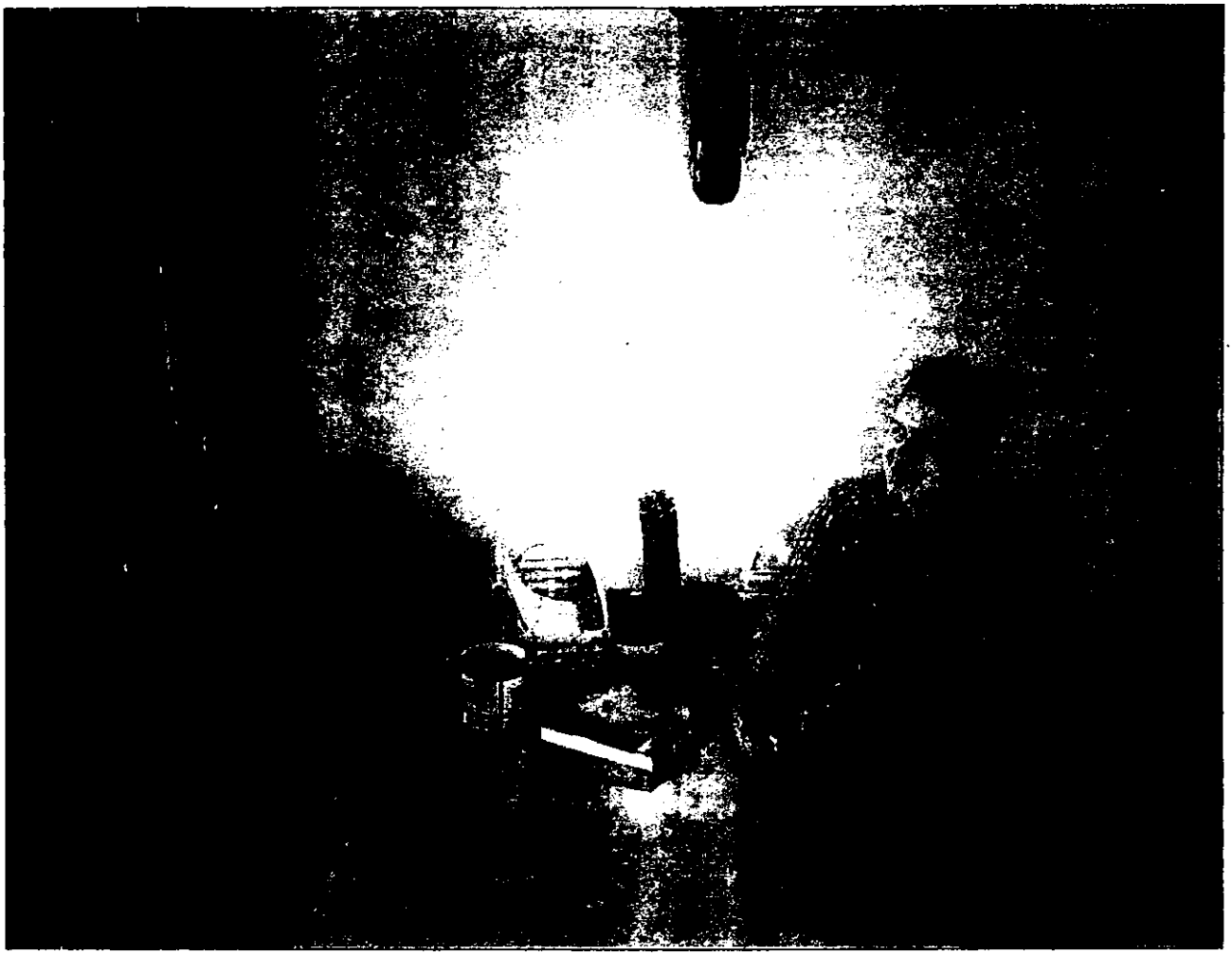
"I do eight shows a week," he says. "Even with all the washing, when I blow my nose, the Kleenex is blue."

Nearby, Adam coils camera cable and readies equipment for the Blue Men's halftime appearance the following day during the Bulls vs. Wizards game at the United Center.

continued on page 8A

Blue lip prints from Tom Galassi are a hot commodity following a p

nmance of Blue Man Group at Chicago's Briar Street Theater.



Tom, left, and Adam Galassi credit their parents with letting them ham it up while they were young, giving them an early taste of show business. The brothers now share an apartment in Chicago.

continued from page 6A

The Blue Men do a lot public appearances, and Tom thinks their heightened popularity comes from a clever batch of television commercials.

"We'll be appearing at an event and some guy who probably never heard of the Blue Men will yell, 'Intel dudes! Cool!' "

Adam is a bit shy, but Tom's look-you-in-the-eye directness is probably born of performing hundreds of shows in total silence. On stage, Blue Men communicate solely with their eyes. Off stage, Tom says he has to remind himself not to stare at strangers.

Even in his street clothes, people occasionally ask if he is "one of those guys."

"So much is said through the eyes," he explains.

Besides Chicago, there are Blue Man Group productions in New York, Boston and Las Vegas. All play to mostly packed houses. Tom, who occasionally appears at the New York and Boston venues, has been in the Chicago cast since the show opened in 1998. Of the eight Blue Men who rotate appearances in Chicago and the 25-member crew, Tom has the greatest longevity.

So how did two guys from Petersburg launch careers with one of the hottest shows in the country?

Both credit their parents, neither of whom has a theater background. Debbie and Tom Galassi Sr. run a family-owned construction business. Tom Sr. used to play drums with local groups, including the Ben Harmony Band. When his sons were small, he installed a set of drums in the kitchen and taught them how to play.

"I remember when I was 5 or 6," Tom says. "I went to a friend's house and I asked where his drums were. I thought everybody had a home like ours.

"Recently Adam and I were home visiting, and we looked at some of our old videos. There we are, acting out a story about removing the brain from an imaginary horse. In the background you can see our kitchen. Mom's washing dishes and Dad's setting the table for dinner and we're making all this noise and doing all this crazy stuff and they're just fine with it."

"We asked them, 'Didn't you ever just want us to shut up?' " Adam says. "It never occurred to them."

Last summer, the entire Blue Man cast and crew spent the Fourth of July weekend at the Galassi home. "We called it 'Blue Man Group Does Menard County,' " Tom says. "We pitched tents all over the yard and had fireworks and camp fires. Many of them had never been in the country."

Adam chose not to attend college and Tom quit after his junior year as a theater major at Western Illinois University and went off to New York to break into show business. He had already spent several summers in New York enrolled in a theater workshop, but he had few connections and not much money.

"We told him we'd pay his expenses for six months, but after that he had to support himself," says Tom Sr. "He landed the job with Blue Man Group just as his six months were up."

Blue Man Group, which began as an off-Broadway show in 1988, pays potential cast members while they learn the show.

"I practiced two hours a day, every day for two months to learn how to catch and hold 35 marshmallows in my mouth at one time," Tom says.

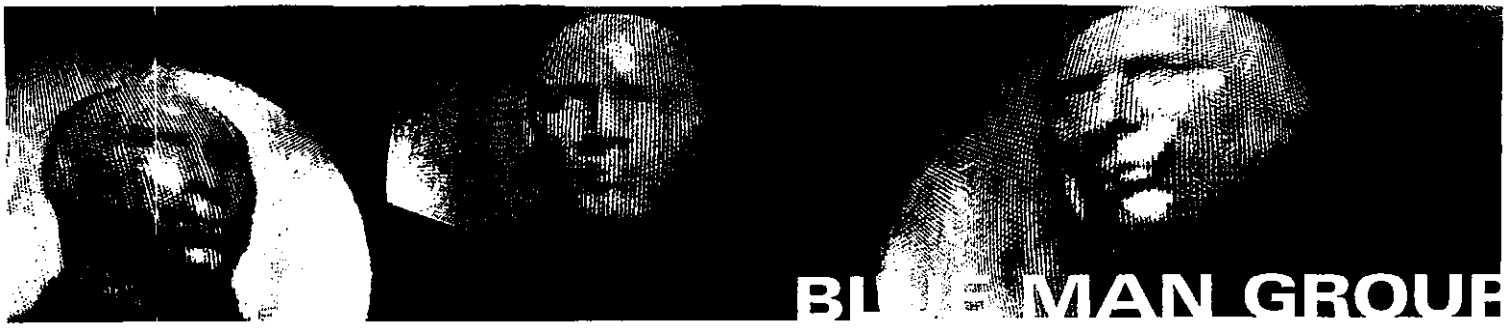
It's the marshmallow bit that scares Debbie every time she sees Tom perform it. She says she always worries he will choke.

Although the Galassis drive to Chicago frequently to see the show, there are no freebies.

"We got two free passes once," says Tom Sr. "We've probably spent a thousand dollars on Blue Man tickets. It's worth it."

Blue Man Group performs nine times each week at the Briar Street Theater, 3133 N. Halstead St., Chicago. For ticket information, call (773) 348-4000 or Ticketmaster at (312) 902-1500.

Julie Cellini can be reached at jcellini@mindspring.com.



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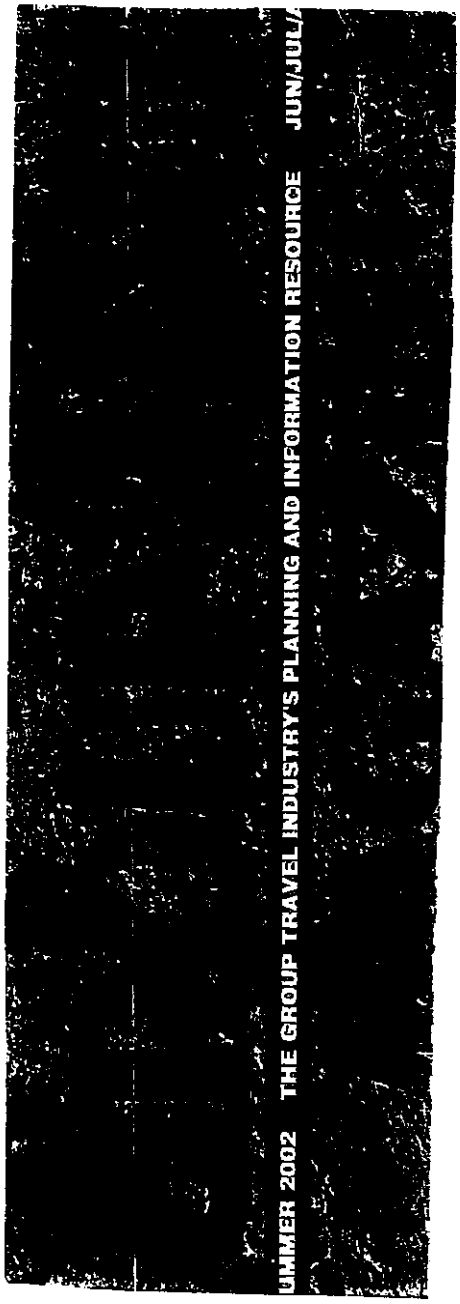

Playing it blue

"The idea of expressing emotions through action and color, this is a very exciting prospect," said Chris Wink, who, along with Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton, founded Blue Man Group in New York City in 1987. To try and explain what Blue Man does 10 years ago would have been difficult to say the least, but today, thanks to exposure on national television at the Grammy Awards and in Intel commercials, most everyone has some knowledge of the trio.

Described as an "antic blend of music, painting, and clowning," the three friends combined their drumming, acting, and assorted interests with earning a living. But it wasn't always easy. The triad performed in every off-Broadway performance for the show's first three years. Today there are at least 33 blue men (and one woman), a staff of nearly 500, and an operating budget in the millions. Not bad for performance artists who make their living with PVC and Twinkies.

It isn't easy finding someone to be blue. First of all, full-time recruiters look for those with the same physical proportions. Drumming is important as is acting, and being able to catch things in your mouth is also a big factor. After 30 hours of video orientation, the recruits work on their drumming, acting, and attitude through a system of coaching and critiques. Then, after six months of training, a Blue Man is born.

Defying definition, the show consists of three mute, deadpan characters of equal size and build whose heads are painted a glossy, intense blue. Throughout the show, the trio drum and play unique instruments while performing amazing feats that are simultaneously silly and thought-provoking with paint, food, and goo. Strobe lights, strange sounds, and brilliant colors add up to a show of sensory overload causing the audience to become mentally as unhindered as the imagination of children.

Blue Man Group puts on a show filled with unique sights and sounds. The PVC instrument uses hundreds of feet of PVC tubing, utilizing different links for different pitches. PVC is considered one of Blue Man Group's coolest instruments because of its sound and because it changes color. Other instruments involve strings, airpoles, drums, and a miscellaneous instrument. But the trio also chews Cap'n Crunch cereal in a symphony of amplified chomping. In other venues, audience members are invited onstage to feast on Twinkies, while cream filling suddenly bursts from Blue Man's chests. The troupe's 80-minute Tubes features physical stunts, visual gags, audience participation, and a bout of sensory sensations.

Following the success of the New York Show, Blue Man Group opened an equally successful production in Boston, which celebrates its seventh anniversary in October 2002. The show can also be seen in Chicago. All three shows continue to play to sold-out audiences. Blue Man expansion reached Las Vegas in March 2000, with its largest production to date at the state-of-the-art Luxor Theater.

Group rates for the Blue Man show in Boston apply to parties of 20 or more. The theater is dark on Monday.•

Blue Man Group
The Charles Playhouse
74 Warrenton St.
Boston, MA 02116
(617) 931-2787 groups
(617) 426-6912
www.blueman.com

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CHEROKEEAN/HERALD of Rusk, Texas - Wednesday, May 7., 2003

BLUE MAN GROUP WILL TICKLE YOU PINK

BY TERRIE GONZALEZ
MANAGING EDITOR

They march to a different drum beat, like wide-eyed aliens seeing planet earth for the first time. The Blue Man Group, with theatrical troupes based in Boston, New York, Chicago and Las Vegas, can only be called avant guard as they spoof the haute art world, technology and even themselves until they're ... well ... blue in the face.

This trio uses home-made drums and instruments to communicate a message too big for words. But don't expect them to "talk a blue streak." Early in their careers, Blue Man verbally engaged audiences. "When Blue Man stopped talking, we noticed that suddenly our personalities went away, and this other character showed up who was more profound," said Chris Wink, one of the troupe originators. "Not speaking almost felt like a form of rebellion."

From the Charles Playhouse in the heart of the theater district in Boston, Blue Man Group utilizes a three-man band perched high in a loft above the stage, and they punctuate a rock-techno sound with drumming that resonates and penetrates. The opening mantra where BMG drums on a type of kettle with paint gives the illusion of erupting volcanoes with hot yellow, orange and blue.

When they aren't drumming, they pull reticent audience members to the stage and create full-body-sized art canvases and a follow-the-leader type skit reminiscent of a Vaudeville gag.

The show lasts about 90 minutes, and culminates with a big wrap-up. Audience members take dozens of rolls of faux toilet paper, and wrap themselves, the people around them and anything that can be wrapped. From the upstairs balcony to the floor seating below, thousands of yards of paper are pulled and pushed as strobe lights trick the mind into believing time exists only on every other beat. With a tap on my shoulder, I turned to see my favorite Blue Man standing behind me like a statue, with a curious, frozen look on his face. I turned for a second to share the experience with my daughter, Sandy, and the moment was gone. In the blink of a strobe light, everyone with a blue face raced to the stage as a massive paper tide rolled toward them.

With their trademark bald heads and blue skull caps, Blue Man Group is a frequent guest on The Tonight Show with Jay Leno. They also became familiar faces in 2001 as the point-men for a $300 million advertising campaign hawking Pentium 4 computer chips.

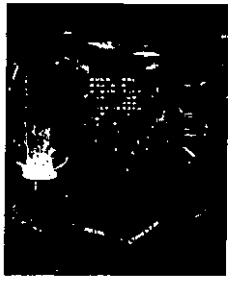
The BMG webpage, www.blueman.com, provides a number of QuickTime clips, including Exhibit 13, the group's tribute to the Sept. 11, 2001, tragedy. Information on their latest album, *The Complex*, is also available, along with reservation information.

For a fun-filled evening of true-blue entertainment, check out the Blue Man Group. We did, and we were tickled pink. Tickets in Boston generally range in price from $43-53 each.

this week in chicago

August 11 - 19 • Volume 162 - Number 11

cover



There's been something sort of strange going on at the Briar Street Theatre for years now—and the weirdness doesn't look like it will stop any time soon. Intrigued? You should be. Because a few blue men have somehow taken the City of Big Shoulders by the horns, and they're doing the same in New York City, Boston and Las Vegas. *Blue Man Group* is their name and musical high jinks is their game.

The show can't be easily described, but here goes: Picture three blue dudes coming out on stage, looking befuddled and curious, yet having a strange aura about them. They want to show us the Blue Man's art—which includes an astounding talent for percussion, amazing gastronomic feats, and an ability to get the audience in on the act. It's a colorful kaleidoscope of sizzling sounds and sensory assault. Yes, it is definitely different. And yes, you'll definitely have a good time.

Blue Man Group is now playing at the **Briar Street Theatre**, 3133 N. Halsted. Get to the theater early to check out the lobby art exhibit that provides insight into the Blue Man's unusual world. Tickets are $43-$53. Performances are Tue-Thu at 8pm; Fri at 7pm & 10pm; Sat at 4pm, 7pm & 10pm; and Sun at 3pm & 6pm. Call 773/348-4000.

friday, august 10

The 44th annual Gold Coast Art Fair is Chicago's third-oldest fair and will have over 300 leading artists from around the country displaying paintings, sculptures, wood, jewelry, photography, watercolor and mixed media creations. Live music on Fri & Sat. The fair is held on the streets of Chicago's River North gallery district between State and Wells from Erie to Huron. Aug. 10-12 from 10am-8pm. Free. 847/432-3606.

Chicago Cubs vs. San Francisco Giants at Wrigley Field, 1060 W. Addison. Today at 2:20pm, August 11 at 3:05pm, August 12 at 1:20pm. 773/404-CUBS.

CHICAGO
CHICAGO, IL
WEEKLY 23,000
AUG 11 2001
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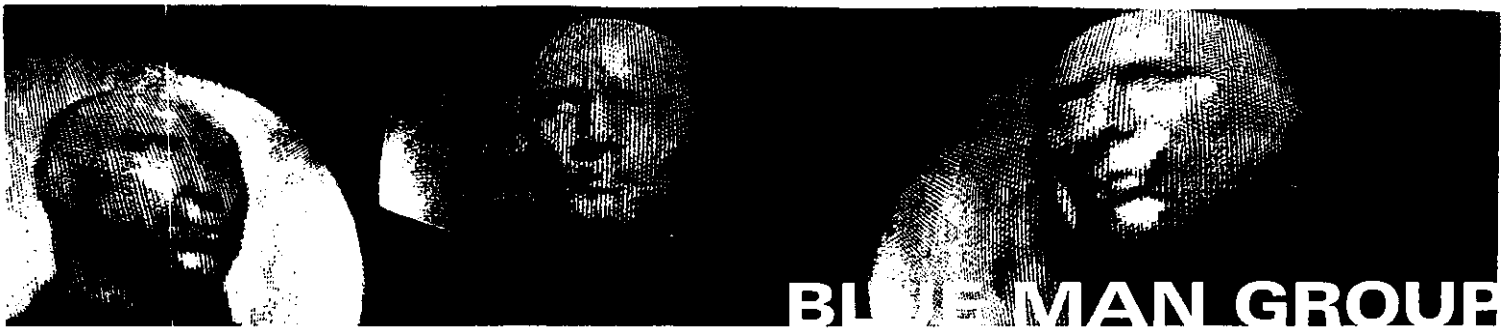
Burrelle's



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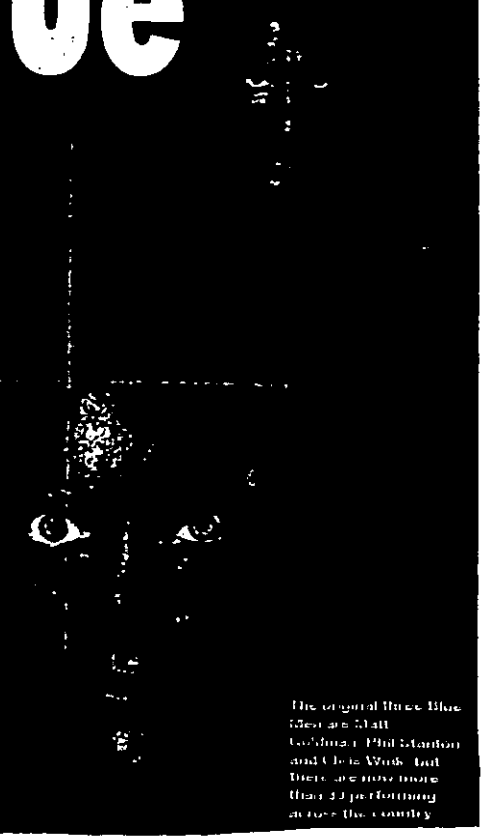
EVIDENCE

Blue

What began as a series of 'happenings' is evolving into the 'Blue Manization' of the world



The original three Blue Men are Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink. But there are now more than 15 performing across the country

...sting "Gifted at catching things in my ...lish" as a special skill on a resume ...ht not be the best way to get hired at ...t jobs, but it just might give you an ...with the Blue Man Group.

...known around the country mainly for ...f Intel TV commercials and captivating ...earance at the 2001 Grammy Awards ...Moby and Jill Scott, the trio of bald, ...y blue guys have been performing their ...brand of theater for a decade.

...They have off-Broadway shows in New ...k, Boston, Chicago and a review at the ...in Las Vegas. What began as per-

...Chris Wink have been gathering a legion ... Blue Men and fans (perhaps called Blue ... Man Groupies?).

The show "Tubes" literally invaded the ... Briar Street Theatre on North Halsted in ... Chicago's theater district back in 1997. The ... lobby has been taken over by a series of ... tubes of various sizes, snaking up the walls ... and across the ceilings. Coming through ... the ends of the tubes are sounds, songs and ... occasional rude noises. Take a trip to the ... restroom and be treated to the "Bathroom ... Song," which is constantly playing. The

■ See BLUE, Page B

Blue

■ Continued from Page B1

tune, while amusing, makes it quite difficult to "perform" under pressure.

That's one of the goals of the Blue Men, though, not only to entertain the audience, but to make them a little bit uncomfortable as well.

Last month in Chicago, about 300 hopefuls showed up for a noon open call, some as early as 7:30 a.m.

Tom Galasi, Blue Man and captain for the Chicago troupe, aided in the auditions with the other Blue Men. "It was pretty crazy. We take them in and have them try on a bald cap and see if they fit the physical requirements. If they do and they have drumming experience, we give them the drumming audition," he said. If they are lucky enough to make it through the first day, potential Blue Men come back over the next two days for intense one-on-one acting auditions. If they make it past that, they might be sent to New York for a month-long training process. But there's no guarantee that they'll make the cut. "There's many opportunities to be let go. It's quite a hard time to get in," he said.

Galasi said for every 2,000 or so who audition, maybe one will get the chance to become a Blue Man. He spent five months training and auditioning before he was actually hired.

Galasi was raised in Springfield and did some local theater there before following his acting dream to New York. "I saw lots and lots of people come and go," he said. He was lucky and got chosen, partly because he was a good drummer (his father taught him) and partly because he was 21, with some naivete and a lot of innocence.

The Blue Men wear bald caps that cover their hair and ears, and their heads are covered in a grease-paint type of makeup. A company actually makes a color for them called Blue Man blue.

The Blue Men are quite innocent characters, with a tiny bit of mischief. They are observers, but they also make things happen. They are silent, but can communicate volumes with a simple expression or the use of marquees.

Their show is a series of vignettes, some comical and involving physical comedy, and others involving a little more thought. The show begins before the Blue Men ever hit the stage. Electronic marquees invite audience participation from the onset. Specific audience members are invited to stand and be noticed, while the rest of the audience reads aloud a message from the prompter.

The experience is part magic show, part rock concert and part vaudeville. But, as Galasi said, if it were just jokes and silliness, why would people keep coming back?

"I always tell people that it's an experience and it's a gathering of people and what they take from it is there's," he said. "I think the show tends to do a lot of things. It's intended to making you laugh, but by making you laugh it opens you up to thinking about yourself. It frees you up, makes you look at a complete stranger and laugh with them."

Galasi said he has spoken with many people who tell them the show has been a life-changing experience for them. There are those who come back to see it again and again, and others volunteer to usher weekend after weekend, just to see the show for free.

The sillier parts of the show are amusing enough, such as when the trio shove handful after handful of Cap'n Crunch cereal into their mouths without season.

The real treats of the show are the times when the Blue Men drum. Early in the show, they pour colored liquid on a large timpani-type drum, making little red and yellow explosions with the drumsticks. Later in the show, they use the soles off their shoes to play what appears to be plumbing tubing. The audience is invited to sing along to their sole cover tune, Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit."

"We have very trained drummers come in and they have a hard time. It's kind of a Kodo-type (Japanese style) drumming; a lot of arms," Galasi said. "It's not very efficient drumming and it's not very flashy. It stems from tribal drumming where people come in with different parts to make one big song. It's not about people soloing and showing off. It's a workout. There's a lot of listening and giving and taking."

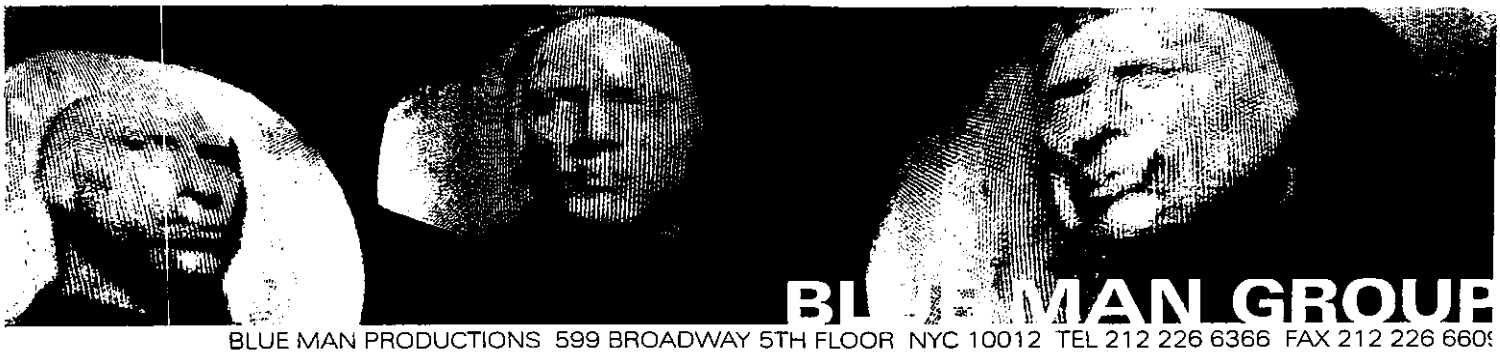
The Blue Man Group's Grammy Award-nominated album "Audio" featured instrumentation on giant drums, plumbing pipe, electric zithers and Hungarian cimbaloms.

Galasi said the Blue Men have been accused of selling out, with their show in Vegas and their Intel Pentium commercials, but he does not see it that way. "They're not selling out. They're invading," he said. "They invaded a commercial. People stopped and they saw it, and whether they knew it was for Intel or not, they saw the Blue Men.

"And then Vegas. Why not Vegas? They're gonna stay true to the Blue Man. It's more about the Blue Manization of Vegas and not the opposite."

And while the Blue Manization of the world has not yet begun (as of press time, no Blue Man cults or religions had been formed) they may be expanding even further; a second album and a tour is in the works.

For ticket information for the Blue Man Group's show in Chicago, call 773-348-4000 or visit blueman.com.



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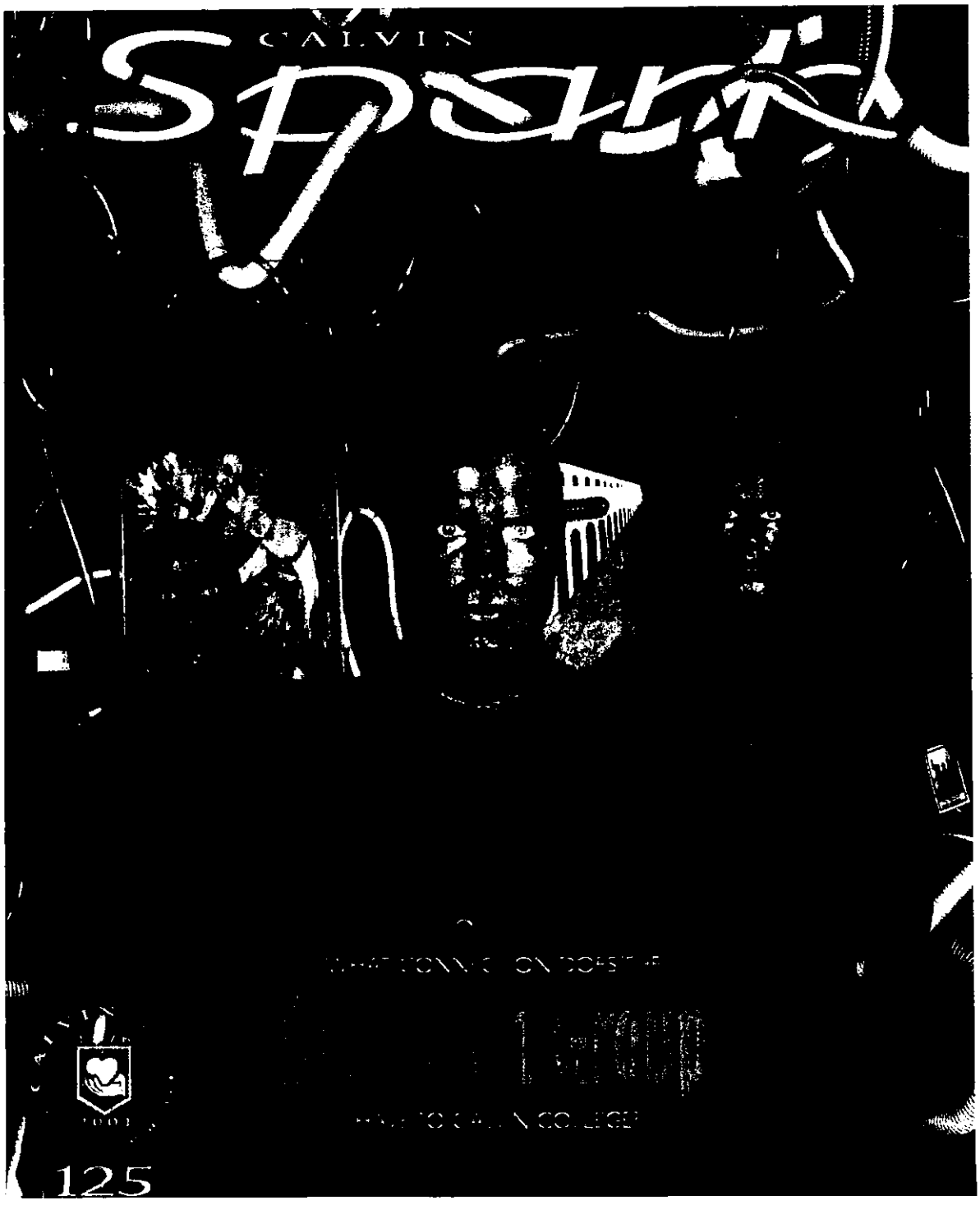


A teacher once told Jeffrey Doornbos, "You have to be ready when your moment comes."

For Doornbos that moment came when he was most unsuspectingly bald and blue.

"You could say it was a combination of being in the right place at the right time and a strong work ethic," said Doornbos. "I've been really tenacious about going out and trying to get something."

Doornbos earned a coveted role with the Blue Man Group, currently one of the hottest theater groups in the country performing at venues in New York, Boston, Las Vegas and Chicago.

But in 1994, when Doornbos auditioned for the part, he had never seen the group perform.

"I hadn't seen the show (which was only in New York at the time), but it sounded like something I could do," he said. "They had me go see the show and then got me bald and blue to see how I would look in character. They gave me a couple of musical pieces to learn and helped me get immersed in the atmosphere of it. After a month-long audition they told me they'd like to hire me."

Doornbos, a 1989 Calvin graduate, was hired on just as the Blue Man Group was starting to develop a following.

"The show had been running for three years in New York, which was definitely unheard of especially because at the time it was considered to be incredibly experimental," he said. "So it was already a big hit before I joined."

But Doornbos had no idea just how huge the Blue Man Group would become. Now a production company of just under 500 people, Blue Man Group has most recently become a household name because of their appearance on Intel's Pentium III commercials (which Doornbos helped direct) in which the performance-art trio in blue face paint attempts to recreate the product's logo of three green stripes.

The silent, bald guys also recently appeared on the Grammy Awards, have fre-

quently appeared on *The Tonight Show* with Jay Leno, and now are starring in Intel's newest Pentium 4 commercials.

Originally, Doornbos was hired to give the show's founders, Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink, a break from their eight-shows-a-week routine.

"They wanted time to work on other material," said Doornbos, "so they hired me and two other guys to learn it. They weren't sure how it was going to go because these characters come from a very organic place inside the minds of the creators. They wanted to see if others could pick it up."

Doornbos performed the show full time for 2-1/2 years at New York's Astor Place Theatre. "I probably did about 1,200 shows during that time," he said.

In 1995, a second show opened in Boston at the Charles Playhouse and more recently shows were added at Chicago's Briar Street Theatre and Luxor Theater in Las Vegas.

With these came the addition of more blue guys and Doornbos' promotion to performing director. He now is heavily involved in casting and directing.

The appeal of the show is easy to imagine, but hard to explain. The show is made up of sketches about ordinary things—Twinkies, Cap'n Crunch cereal, clap-on lights—that three silent blue guys encounter and find totally different ways of using. They even have released a CD featuring the music they play on tubes, plastic pipes and canister-type drums.

In a recent Chicago appearance in which Doornbos filled in as one of the performers, he caught small paint balls in his mouth tossed to him across stage from fellow performer Andrew Burlinson. He then spewed the paint in various colors on a canvas to create a work of art. Burlinson then repeated the trick with Martin Marion this time using marshmallows—the outcome was not nearly as dramatic. And none of the participants seemed to know exactly why not.

"The whole idea for the Blue Man Group came up as a reaction to the '80s consumerism and the 'me generation.' The creators were disgruntled with what was happening in music and art," said Doornbos. "Things were being over-publicized. We were just flooded with all this stuff. What Blue Man Group seeks to do is invigorate community through engaging the audience—not to teach them anything, but to get them thinking. Most people leave and they're not sure what they just saw, but they had a really good time. When their friends ask, 'What was it about?' they can't really say."

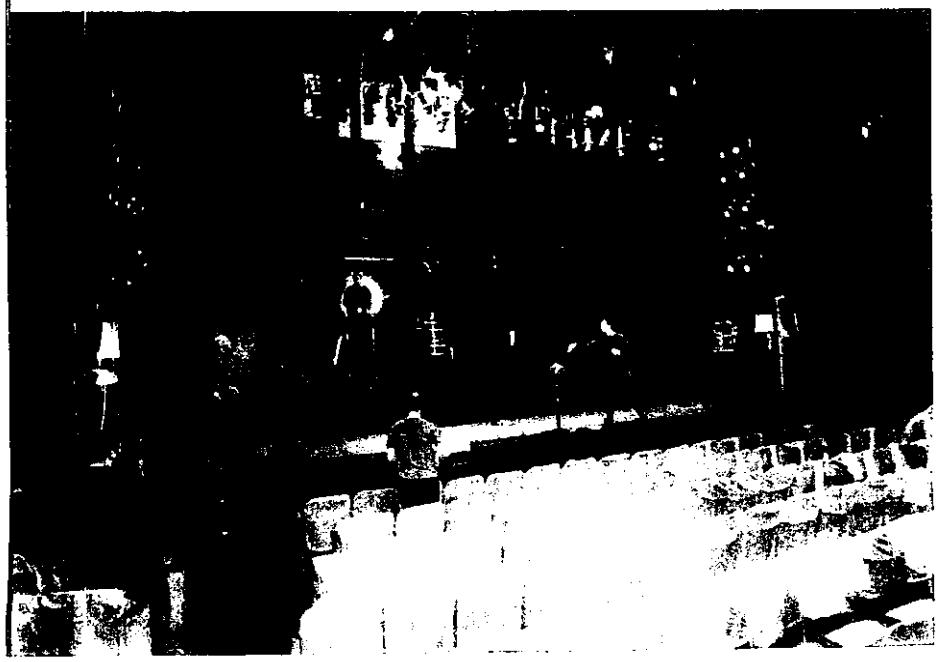
One person who has tried to describe the Blue Man Group's significance is Calvin art professor Frank Speyers.

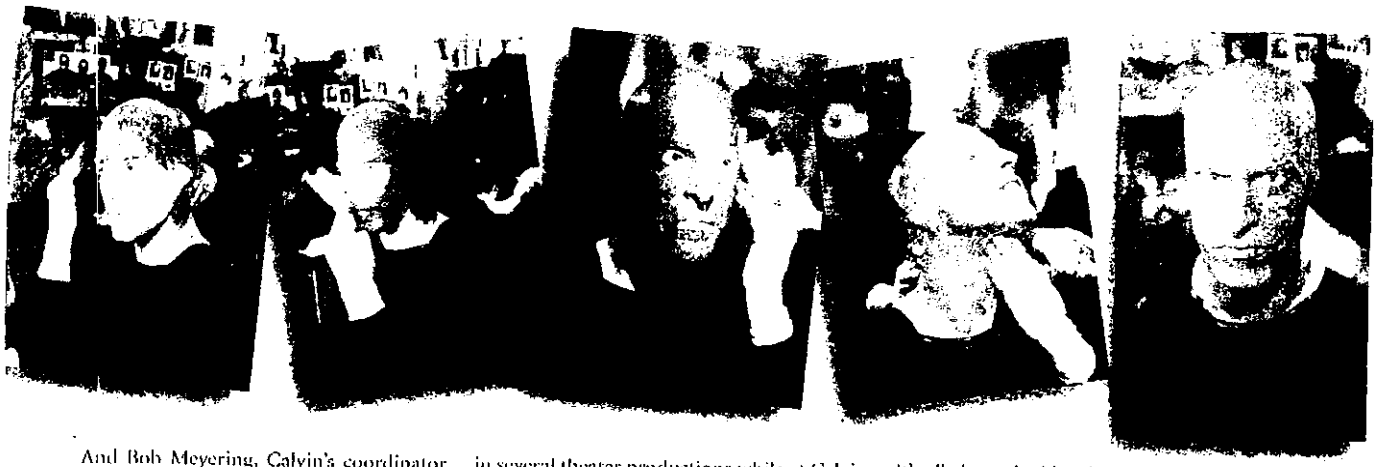
"It's no exaggeration to say that Blue Man Group is unlike anything on Broadway or even Off-Off-Broadway," he said. "Perhaps because it originated in the streets before it settled into the theater.

"Blue Man Group is really about worship at its deepest impulses," he continued. "That it is a threesome is reflective of the Trinity as found in scripture. Also the exact (Goethe) blue, representing the highest spiritual truth, is used. But the Blue Man Group 'trinity' is silent. Blue Man Group consists of mimes. In other words if God is here, he is silent."

Last spring, Speyers and colleague Henry Luttikhuizen, professor of art history, organized a bus trip for the Calvin community to participate in a Blue Man Group experience. The attendees created a listserv, which they kept up for 30 days following the performance.

"It was good to hear what people perceived and what effect it had on them," said Luttikhuizen. "Blue Man Group are three mimes who mimic our cultural milieu, and intentionally leave themselves open for multiple interpretations. We've come through the 'linguistic turn' of the 80s which Blue Man addresses by engaging the audience to read three versions of textual explanation simultaneously. It is as if they were saying, 'Truth in text depends upon which narrative you choose to read.' As for the visual surprises, they seem to heighten the ambiguity that one finds in the deluge that engulfs us each day."





And Bob Meyering, Calvin's coordinator of life long education, had his own take: "We saw no individuals. Any attempt to act on one's own was quickly stifled. From the beginning we were encouraged to abandon all sense of individuality and become part of the mass, get on the bandwagon. And we did. But of course, all of us together had a lot of fun. It was great with all of the music, the strobes, the crepe paper, the tubes. There was for sure a child-like quality to it."

Ultimately, what Speyers and others end up with are questions: "Is Blue Man Group art? Or is it reflecting something deeper about the darkest impulses of our culture?" questioned Speyers. "Is it mere entertainment? Or is it suggesting reality is a Sisyphean effort interminably toiling upward to find truth beginning from implicit philosophical vantage points which can only end by jesting the inevitable conclusions of modernity? It transcends race and sex, yet lives off the borrowed capital of Judeo-Christian suppositions."

And creating questions, provoking thought is what Blue Man tries to do.

"We're intrigued with what Blue Man Group does to people," said Doornbos. "There are reasons for the art references to be there, but we don't want to tell people what to think about that. The three act as one and the whole is bigger than the parts, that's in there too, but it speaks to a lot of different people in different ways. People see what they want to see and it offers everyone that chance."

That's the mystique of the Blue Man Group and what keeps people coming back.

And it's one of the reasons that Doornbos has stayed around for the past seven years.

"The reason I stay with it is because it's an inspiring place to be," said Doornbos. "It's a really creative environment and they encourage you in your other pursuits."

For Doornbos that includes work in film and other areas of theater as well.

In fact, he got his start in more traditional theater work as a youngster and continued pursing that interest at Calvin, where he majored in communications. He performed in several theater productions while at Calvin and then studied theater for a year at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. From there he went to Chicago, where he performed in local theater, and ended up in New York, where he attended Circle in the Square Theatre School.

"Both of my parents (Clarence Doornbos '62 and Jan Jouwstra Doornbos '62) are very supportive of my acting career," he said. "They are both performing artists themselves, but they went the route of education. I did have several people question me about an acting career. They would say, 'Okay, that's what you like, but what are you really going to do?' I think one of my defining moments was when somebody asked me, 'What are you going to fall back on?' and I realized I didn't want anything to fall back on because this is what I wanted to do."

Doornbos said his work with Blue Man Group gives him the creative energy to pursue his other interests.

He has written, produced and directed three short films— *Jesus Factor, Fear of Flying* and *Buzzkill*—and has ideas for another. *Fear of Flying* was recently selected, along with two other short films, for the Slamdance Online Film competition, a leading American film festival and originally started as an alternative to the more well-known Sundance Film Festival.

Doornbos is also working with three other Blue Man Group colleagues on a feature-length film project that he hopes to begin filming in about a year.

"I enjoy the story process," said Doornbos. "I don't want to teach anybody anything. I feel compelled to tell a story and see how it affects people. I like to see who connects with it and who doesn't. It's a difficult process though. It's about having the energy and the courage to think that other people want to hear and listen to my story.

"This concept is a primary element that I absorbed from Blue Man Group," he continued. "I saw these three guys who created something that they thought was interesting, and they thought other people might think so too. It's all about the idea that someone's personal story might have relevance and interest to someone else. You have to do it and trust that other people will find it interesting as well."

Once a short film is out in circulation, the goal is to get someone interested enough to pursue other projects with you, possibly even a feature film, he said.

"I love everything about the film making process," he said. "I like the story process and I like casting it. Once I find the right actors, shooting it is a blast and editing it is another creative process. I love everything creative and technical about it."

The ability to express his ideas is something he thanks Calvin for, he said. "When I was at Calvin, I was introduced to the fact that there were other ways of thinking," Doornbos said. "Calvin encouraged me to explore different opinions and ideas. Clearly it (going to Calvin) did open the pathway for that. I don't feel that I can go out and change the world's mind, but I can interpret a part of the world I'm in and I don't have to accept everything I see."

Being in a creative environment has been good for Doornbos, he said.

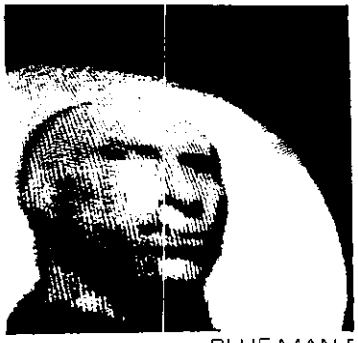
"What [Blue Man Group founders] Chris, Matt and Phil do so well is build a community of artists that work together," he said. "There's like this central energy point with everything else spinning off—like a tornado. A lot of us who are in Blue Man have other projects too. This is a place where you can launch out into other creative pursuits."

Exactly where that will lead Doornbos is unclear at this point.

"The biggest thing for me is constantly staying prepared for the next thing that comes along," he said. "I just want to be sure that when additional opportunities come along I don't blow it."

For now though, Doornbos is quite happy being Blue.

Lynn Bolt Rosendale is Calvin's publications coordinator.



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BL GROUP

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EYE ON THE ARTS

by Jerry Davich

3755

Are you in the 'in' crowd?

It was just minutes before Blue Man Group was about to hit the stage. My wife and I took our seats and soaked up the pre-show sights and sounds that swirled around us inside Chicago's Briar Street Theatre.

Like with most live performances, the audience was as restless as a kid on a car trip – abuzz with giddy anticipation and culture vulture chitchat. Verbal electricity filled the air.

As with all Blue Man shows, staff members passed out hundreds of those white paper streamers to a mostly perplexed audience when I overheard a Blue Man newcomer sitting behind us.

"What are these for?" the woman asked her date.

"It's all part of the show. You're supposed to make a headband out of it, like this," he replied, tying it around his forehead to look like some kind of a yuppie Rambo. He also reminded the woman that this wasn't his first Blue Man show. (Probably for the umpteenth time.)

The woman didn't hesitate and followed her date's lead while looking around to see what everybody else did with their souvenir streamer.

I noticed other audience members – obviously hip to the show's avant-garde mentality – informing the uninitiated what was going on. At least what they thought was going on, step by

And that's what caught my attention.

Regardless if these experienced fans knew what they were talking about, they *acted* like they knew. And that's all that mattered.

They – we – thoroughly enjoy pretending we're part of the elusive "in" crowd, smugly oozing that been-there-done-that attitude.

Whether it's Blue Man Group, Tony and Tina's Wedding or The Rocky Horror Picture Show, the same phenomena comes into play: We love to be in-the-know, and have all the answers.

And I'm no different.

I remember taking friends who were new to the Rocky Horror cinema experience into the theater and proudly explaining in great detail what the toilet paper, butane lighters and bags of rice were used for.

If only for a few fleeting minutes, I was in the in crowd and I reveled in it. Same goes with Blue Man.

But although I've seen the show before, I still wasn't quite sure what to tell my wife what to do with her streamer. I always thought it was to be used for self-expression of some sorts. (I used mine to wrap my banged-up knee, though it didn't help the pain.)

She made a bonnet like the ones people with toothaches wear in the cartoons.

After the show, I asked Blue Man's associate company manager, Laurie Viets, why the streamers are handed out. She told me they're used as a way to unite the audience. They're also intended to symbolically remind the audience that they're a part of a interactive show, not just spectators.

"It's all part of the mystery, part of the adventure," she said.

Ohhhhh.

For all you Blue Man insiders, feel free to pass the word. For all of you new fans still holding tickets, consider it a free tip.

For that schmuck sitting behind us, take note: I think the in crowd has just kicked you out.

41

Chance meeting in Sin City

Rye 'Blue Man,' fashion model have unexpected reunion in Las Vegas.

By Gina Carbone
gcarbone@seacoastonline.com

Viva Las Vegas!

In a town of oddsmakers, who could have predicted two childhood friends from bucolic Rye would reunite in Sin City more than a decade after leaving the Seacoast to find success — she as an international model and he as a 'Blue Man'?

Sarah Clarke and Eric Gebow were best friends since kindergarten — growing up five houses away from each other on Wallis Road in Rye.

"Eric and I played all the time on acres of land. Our moms would know when it was time to come home," Sarah says.

He reminded her when other kids teased her about her Korean heritage.

"I was just Sarah to him," she says. "She was devastated when she wasn't invited to his first all-boys birthday party.

"We talked about how we never realized he was a boy and I was a girl, we just always hung out together," she says.

When theater veteran Sarah graduated from Portsmouth High School in 1987, her career took off as a singer/dancer with the international tour group Up with People — performing for the pope and President Clinton among other notables.

After Eric's mom had to sell their "huge, cool old house" in Rye for a smaller home in Hampton, Eric attended and graduated from Winnacunnet High School, and began inching his way toward success as a drummer.

"I was living in San Francisco, playing music there — struggling out an existence. I remember dumping change on my table to buy some food," he says. "I was constantly looking for things. I just happened to see this ad — an open call audition for (popular performance art show) 'Blue Man Group.'

"It's background as a drummer and a good 'look' for Blue Man (height around 5 foot 10 to 6 foot 1, and weight proportionate) got him past the first audition to a second day call back where the focus was on acting — foreign territory to Eric.

"For me it was absolutely terrifying. I was much more comfortable with the music and the drumming."

Since being a mute, anonymous Blue Man involves elements of vaudeville, Eric says he was given a series of phrases meant to elicit a physical reaction so they could see how he translated emotions on his face.

Apparently his face was a good read since Eric was chosen as one of the Las Vegas cast members in a nation of about 35 Blue Men.

Meanwhile, Sarah had moved to Colorado where Up with People transferred its headquarters. With four agents acting, print, runway and promo, Sarah logged time as an extra in "The Wedding Planner" and white-water rafted in Arkansas for a camera brochure ad while continuing her modeling career.

"When I was modeling (in March) for the International Ski Association in Las Vegas, I went to see the show 'Blue Man Group.' After the show, I had my photo taken with some of the other models and one of the Blue Men," Sarah says.

After performing at a sold out show in the 1,200 seat theater, Eric went into the theater's lobby for the standard meet and greet photo shoots with audience members.

"I was taking pictures with these people," Eric recalls. "I've got my arm around this group of three people to my left and my other arm around this woman to my right. I looked again at the woman to my right and it was Sarah Clarke."

"The Blue Men are not supposed to talk," Sarah says, "and I was very startled when the Blue Man looked at me while we had our photo taken and said 'Is your name Sarah? Sarah Clarke?'

"I recognized her immediately," Eric says. "I just said her name and she was completely freaked out."

"Not being able to recognize him in costume, he quickly grabbed me and we ducked outside to the nearest exit where I proceeded to inquire as to its identity," Sarah says. "I was truly puzzled. He said, 'It's me, Eric Gebow.' I almost fell over with shock, especially since I hadn't seen him since I was about 21."

Eric quickly got her cell phone number, changed out of his costume and met Sarah for dinner where they talked until 3 a.m. about "old times" in Rye.

"I loved my childhood there," Eric says. "In hindsight, I'd say it's kind of a sheltered New England experience."

"I miss a lot about the area — the food, the fall, the ocean, the lakes," Sarah says. "Nobody worried about us (growing up in Rye), because it was safe. I loved that. No locked doors, etc."

Though Eric is continuing with 'Blue Man Group' in Las Vegas and Sarah is off to the Italian Alps this summer to model, the duo hope to continue their hometown connection across the miles.

"She's an amazing, amazing person," Eric says. "It's one of those friendships. We've known each other so long — every once in a while we cross paths and it's so comfortable."

She's an amazing, amazing person. It's one of those friendships. We've known each other so long — every once in a while we cross paths and it's so comfortable.
Eric Gebow
Rye native and member of Blue Man Group

Courtesy photo

Rye native Eric Gebow, right, (seen here with a fan), who now plays a "Blue Man" in Las Vegas, met up with a childhood pal after a recent performance of the popular show. Sarah Clarke was, by chance, modeling at the International Ski Association in Vegas at the time and happened to attend one of Gebow's shows. The two hadn't seen each other in more than a decade.

PORTSMOUTH HERALD
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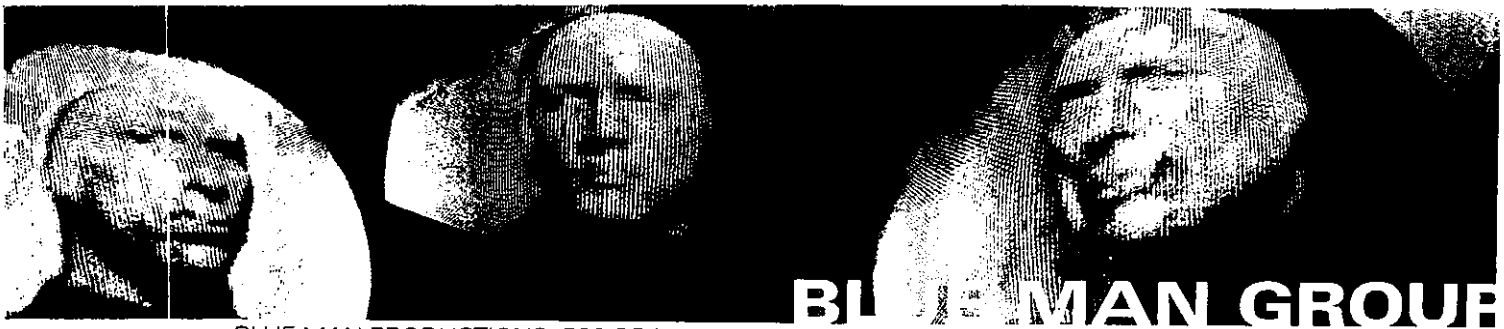


BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 660

Kiel McCully, of Evansville, cleans up crepe paper after a Blue Man Group performance at the Briar Street Theatre in Chicago.

FORGET THE BLUE GUYS; THE REAL ENCORE IS THE POST-SHOW TIDYING EFFORT

Like mischievous toddlers in an oversized playpen, Blue Man Group makes on-stage messes like nobody's business. Well, actually it is the performers' business.

After any given performance at Chicago's Briar Street Theatre, the rotating trio leaves behind an unapologetic trail of Blue Man droppings. Splatterings of multi-colored fluorescent paint, soggy marshmallows, freshly chewed Captain Crunch cereal, wads of gooey cream cheese, mutilated Twinkies, five miles of white paper streamers and, of course, blue smudges litter the stage and props.

It's like someone crammed the entire stage spectacle into a massive blender and forgot to put the lid back on. Blue Man puree, anyone?

See CLEANUP, F2

Workers remove six miles of paper, Jello and paint from the stage and seating area.

STORY BY JERRY DAVICH PHOTOS BY TASOS KATOPODIS THE TIMES

Who actually makes a best seller?

Recently settled lawsuit between chain stores and independent sellers magnifies hot issue

BY JERRY DAVICH
Times Features Writer

A three-year court case filed to level the competitive field in the book-selling business finally ended last month with both sides claiming victory. But another chapter in this David vs. Goliath saga is still being written.

The American Booksellers Association (and 25 independent booksellers) charged the country's two largest chain stores, Barnes & Noble and Borders, with receiving sweetheart deals and other "secret" discounts from book publishers during the past few years.

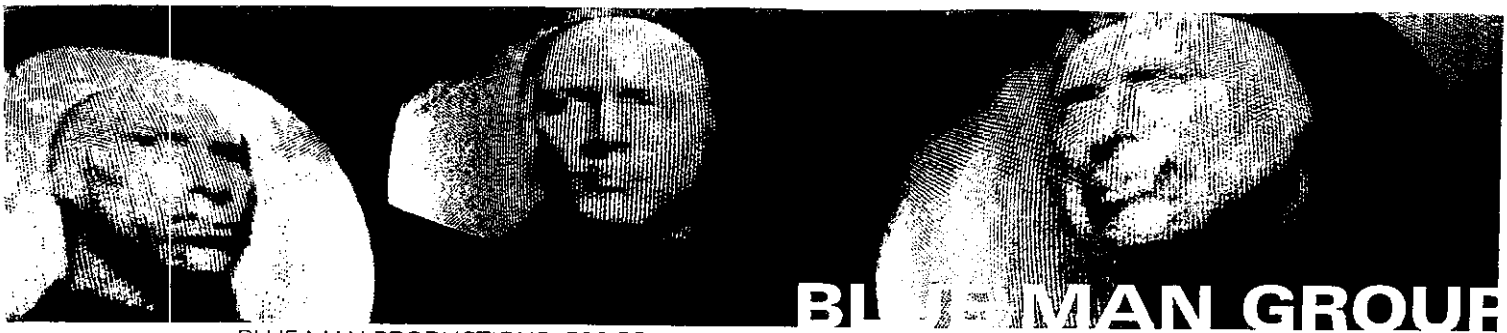
The groundbreaking antitrust suit was settled out of court in late April with the two chains paying $4.7 million to the plaintiffs to cover court costs, legally ending the bitter battle. The ABA believes the court case forced the two chains to stop their dirty dealings, and the chains say no such thing ever took place. Case closed.

But one appendix to this story still evokes debate: Industry insiders disagree on what makes a best-selling book a best seller?

One longtime area book store owner claims that best sellers are not ranked on actual sales to consumers, but rather on "presales" to the large chain stores. In other words, a No. 1 best seller can sport such a decorative tag before it even gets bought and read by the public.

"It's very similar to the daily special in a (diner). The food is special because the establishment picked it and promoted it as such," said the owner, who asked not to be identified. "Publishers know full well that the initial orders to chain stores have to be

See SELLER, F2



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Cleanup

Continued from F1

"It's the most hellish mess night after night," said cleanup crew member Lindsay Suits, one of the show's unsung heroes. "Some (Blue Men) spit more, some sweat more, some spray more and some touch things more often. Blue is everywhere."

Like the show's Smurf-faced stars, Suits and other clean-up workers team in groups of three to transform the trashed stage into a blueless performance platform time and again – 10 shows a week and nearly 2,000 since the show began in Chicago in 1997.

"That's probably the worst, getting the blueness off of everything," said fellow crew member Noel Williams, quickly noting how some Blue Men are less tidy than others. "We feel like parents coming home and seeing what kind of mess the kids made this time."

According to associate company manager Laurie Viets, it's not uncommon for audience members to lose their rings, eyeglasses and other personables during the unexpected avalanche of white streamers that pours over them at the end of the show. And it's the cleaning crew that must forage through the white paper mountain to extract the articles.

The crew also must deep clean the first five rows of seats because much of the show's sticky shenanigans are not confined to the stage. (Those clear ponchos only catch so much.)

And exactly what makes up the yellow Twinkie-ooze that must be wiped off the floor and walls?

"It's a trade secret," Viets said, downplaying the rumor that it's banana pudding.

James Smith, another crew member, said it takes a power hose to pry the Captain Crunch off the wet paint that temporarily decorates the stage. "It's like someone used Super Glue. But the paint comes right out of the drains without much problem."

Smith has been cleaning up after the Blue Man clan since day one at Briar.

Like most behind-the-scenes staff members, Smith juggles several positions at Blue Man Group, including working at the box office and helping other crews.

"I like what I do," he said. "I'm not very theater literate, but I enjoy working behind the scenes."

At the tail end of each Blue Man show, the cleaning crew often sneaks a peek at the stage to see what it's up against. And you should see the place on Saturday night, after a three-show performance, they agree: "It's an absolute wreck."

Usually it takes a good hour to thoroughly clean the stage and all the props after a show. But the crew has to cut that time in half during changeover shows. Of the four Blue Man shows currently playing – in Chicago, New York, Boston and Las Vegas – the Briar cleaning crew has been rated the fastest, Viets said.

"It takes an incredible sense of ensemble teamwork," said Williams, a playwright, clown and stage performer who also works in the show's wardrobe department.

Suits is a weekday musician who's been cleaning behind Blue Men on weekends for the past year and a half. She started as a Blue Man Group "commando marketer," paid to hit the streets and spread the word about the show and its loyal following.

The tight-knit group has honed their post-show routine down to a squeaky clean science, complete with environmentally friendly detergents and a strict recycling program. The stage also is equipped with two drains and plenty of squeegees, and the venue has its own industrial-size washers and dryers.

But much of the work still involves the oldest of cleaning solvents – good ol' elbow grease. And that includes washing away the blue from the musician-mimes also. A separate crew does that.

"It takes a lot of scrubbing," said Williams, who helps out.

"Let them make their mess. We don't care," Suits said.

"We just crank up the music and get to it," Smith added.

And no, it's not the Blue Man Group music.

Jerry Dowich can be reached at jerryd@thenpubs.com or (219)762-4334.

Need a job?

Blue Man Group always is seeking new faces for behind-the-scenes work. For more information, check out its Web site at www.blueman.com, or mail a resume to Laurie Viets, associate company manager, at Briar Street Theatre, 3133 N. Halsted, Chicago, IL 60657.

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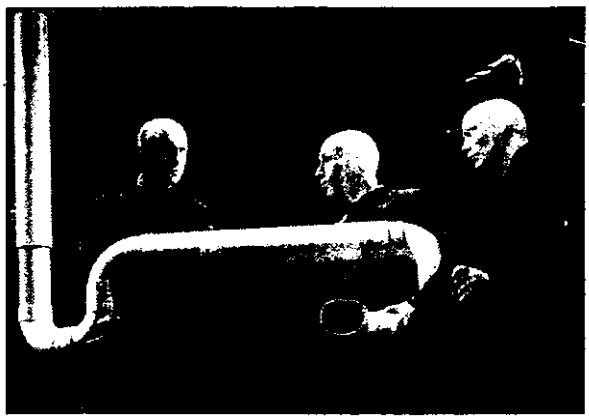


Some latecomers to the Blue Man Group at Briar Street Theatre become a part of the show.

hicago Tribune, Sunday, February 18, 2001

Blue Man Group: Now in its fourth year, this multimedia show at the Briar Street Theatre starring three guys painted blue features lots of participation by audience members, including latecomers.

At every show, according to associate company manager Laurie Viets, there are at least 10 to 15 latecomers. (On one snowy night in December, she said, there were 185.) The first 10 minutes after curtain time is a sort of audience participation "grace period." Anyone arriving after that is invited to stand in the stairwells or the back of the balcony to watch until a break comes about 15 minutes into the show (when the Blue Men are being videotaped backstage and shown on screen, and it's not a major disruption to let people in, said Viets).

At that point, two latecomers are shown to their seats while "an alarm, a sort of bullhorn, sounds, the words 'Late Arrivals' flash across the screen on stage, an opera singer starts singing 'You're late, you're late,' and a crew member videotapes them so that they're featured on the screen," Viets said.

How are the lucky latecomers selected? "We choose people with tickets way down front," so they have a long way to walk while the Late Arrivals sign is flashing, she said.

"A few people have panicked, but with most people, it's just embarrassed laughter while they're walking to their seats, or maybe they punch their partner for making them late," she said.

What is best excuse offered for being late? "My plane was late," said Viets, who said she has checked luggage in the office for people who have flown in to see the show and have gotten hung up in traffic.

Anne Taubeneck

BLUE MAN GROUP

Theater

Taking bows

Even though it's curtains for many shows, others take Y2K in strid

By Chris Jones
SPECIAL TO THE TRIBUNE

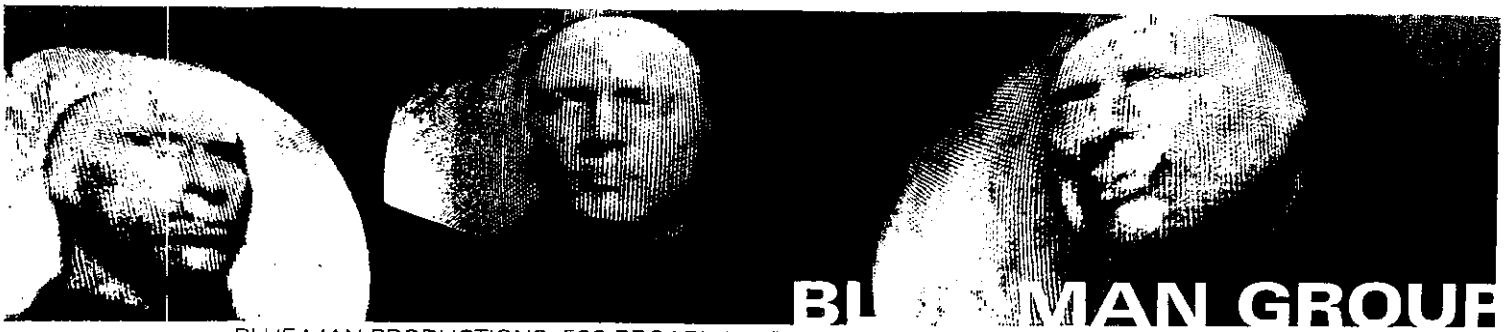
Perhaps it's the symbolism of a new century, but shows have been closing in Chicago at a drastic pace over the last few weeks. "Fosse" has now slinked away on tour. "Shakespeare's r & j" has ended its run at the Chicago Shakespeare Theatre. After disappointing ticket sales at the Royal George Theatre, the Northlight Theatre's production of "Visiting Mr. Green" is gone. And Walt Disney Theatricals' "Aida" completes its Chicago run Sunday before going back into rehearsals prior to its opening on Broadway in March. Even the long-running "Shear Madness" has been forced into prolonged hiatus due to losing its space at the Blackstone Hotel.

There are, of course, lots of replacement attractions coming down the pike. But not every show from the last century has suddenly exited like a bottle of spent champagne. Here are updates on Chicago's small but proud collection of long runners:

Blue Man Group, Briar Street Theatre: "Things are so good in Chicago there's no end in sight," says Manuel Igrejas, the New York-based spokesperson for the hugely successful Blue Man Group, which has been occupying the Briar Street Theatre since October 1997. Even though the show has not changed at all since its opening, the local demand for these cobalt performance artists seems insatiable. In Chicago alone, for the week beginning on Dec. 27, Blue Man Group performed a whopping 20 performances in a seven-day period, with most tickets going for $49. Since there are now more than 30 Blue Men of various ranks who rotate through the New York, Boston and Chicago casts, the high number of performances each week is relatively easy to achieve.

So in a city that has not been kind to long runs in the past few years, why has the increasingly cultish Blue Man done so astonishingly well? Igrejas credits the unique concept and the show's ability to rival "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" in attracting repeat business (one audience member has seen the show more than 70 times). It also helps that the Chicago production is the biggest and most recent of the three current troupes: The New York theater is so small that some of the current material in the Chicago production does not fit there and cannot be included. "Everything we learned in other places, we brought to Chicago," says Igrejas.

This March, the latest version of Blue Man Group will debut at the Luxor Theatre in Las Vegas. Since that's a far larger space than the Briar Street with appropriately higher expectations, the creative team of Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink is increasing the size of the band and beefing up the scale of the various visual tricks for Vegas. This will give the show a chance to introduce some new elements to its original trio of productions—and ensure their longevity well into the current century.



Being Blue

Doing the Blue Man walk: **Two unidentified painted men in pajamas as they frolic around the Charles Playhouse in Boston**

BY JESSICA TABAK '01
A&E EDITOR

When I got a call from the Charles Playhouse in Boston, I knew it could mean only one thing: The Blue Men were looking for me. I was so excited about being asked to see the Blue Man Group that, for a full week, I went around telling everybody in my path that the Blue Man Group had called me and that I was going to see their show (gasp!). All of this exorbitant felicity led more than one curious person to ask me just what the Blue Man Group is, a question to which I responded, "I really don't know." I figured that I would be able to appease the sincerely curious in a few short weeks when, after seeing the Blue Man Group perform, I would sit down to write one of my always illuminating reviews.

So, here I am, writing in the wee hours of the morn, and I'm here to tell you that, after seeing the Blue Men in action, my companion and I walked to the T-stop in a relavite fuddle, not quite sure what to say. Weeks have passed, and I still have no idea how the hell to describe their show. Is it a play? No. Is it a concert? Not really, although they do have an overpriced CD that you can buy after the show. Was I forced to sleep with any of the folks I met at the Charles Playhouse as part of the onstage antics? Well, no—but a Blue Man did dance on the arms of my chair (more on that later). Did I get it? Did I understand it? Did I even like it?

BLUE MAN GROUP
CURRENTLY PLAYING AT:
THE CHARLES PLAYHOUSE
74 WARRENTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116
FOR TICKET INFO, CALL:
(617) 426-6912

If Blue Man Group is supposed to be a variety show for the tragically hip, then, yes, I did get it. The Blue Men (unnamed actors who, along with about thirty other Blue Men who don the paint and colored latex gloves, rotate performance duties in Boston, New York, and Chicago) put on a unique show. Organized in a series of visual, audio, and sensory skits, the show played like an MTV version of performance art. Think RISD student art exposition meets Bob Hope entertaining the troops.

I don't really mean this to be derogatory. There were parts of this show that were really entertaining. Take the opening sequence, which starts with the three Blue Men playing drums on one of the stage's upper levels. As they play, they each pour paint on the drums. When they hit the drums, the drums light up, illuminating brilliant splashes of paint. The combination of throbbing music and radiant color makes for a sense-pleasing skit, and opens the show on a really high note.

Unfortunately, the majority of the show's remaining two hours are more concerned with social and artistic commentary than with sensory experience. A sometimes humorous but extremely self-conscious skit featuring the Blue Men holding a stack of poster-sized cards in front of them. To the sound of a beep, they each drop their top card, revealing a different message on each card. The catch? You're only given enough time to read the message on one card at any given time. It's supposed to be a commentary about information overload, but it's too pretentiously unpretentious to have resonated with me.

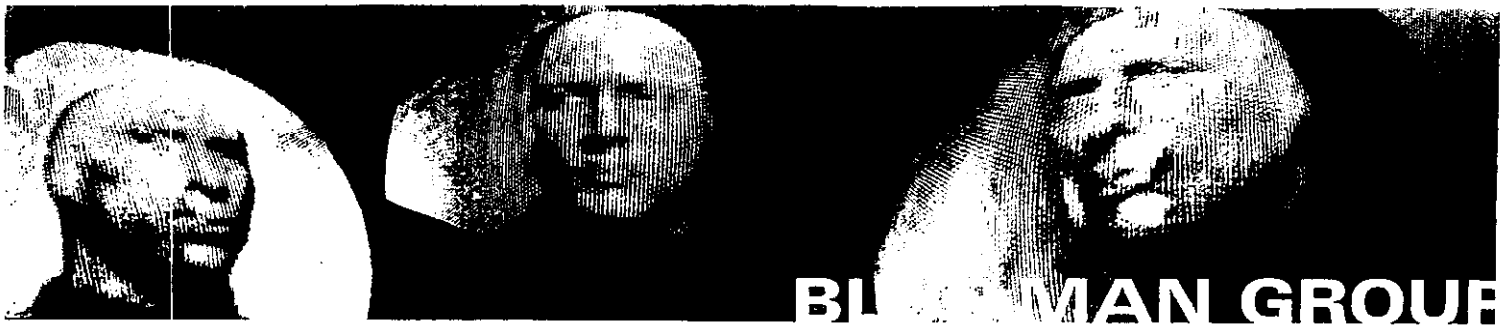
Later, the Blue Men "analyze" a dead fish on a canvas in terms of its artistic value. Each Blue Man communicates his reactions through one of those electronic scrolling bar things (Did I mention that the Blue Men don't speak?), with responses ranging from the overanalytical to the smart ass. While some of the banter (can you call it banter if they aren't actually talking?) was entertaining, I felt sort of like they were perpetuating the "pretentious art" attitude that they were making fun of by their supersocial awareness.

My last gripe (and this one is sort of personal) is that the show isn't very audience friendly. Or maybe it's too audience friendly. I guess it depends on whether or not you like being accosted during show that you probably paid a lot of money to see by performers who do not speak or make facial expressions (this would be where my disturbing "Blue Man dancing on my chair and slapping my head between his hands" story comes in). And just in case you're shy, they make sure that your exploits with the Blue Men are projected on a very large screen in the center of the stage so that everybody in the audience can enjoy the exchange.

So, the show is definitely original. It's definitely...engaging. But is it really worthy of the Drama Desk Committee inventing a whole new award category for "Unique Theatrical Production" in order to honor the show back in the early '90s? Why do people go so ga-ga over this show?

"Maybe it's just so big because they're blue," mused my companion, as the train sped into Allston.

"This man is onto something," thought I, and I stored his comment into my mental rolodex.



CITY TALK
CHICAGO, IL
50-TIMES/YEAR 170,000
MAY 4 2001

Burrelles

How to decipher *Blue Man* art satire

3755

STAGE ONE

TOM VALEO

The reasons for the success of a long-running show tend to remain elusive and mysterious. ome, like *Flanagan's Wake*, celerate silliness. *Nunsense* and *Late-light Catechism* certainly are silly, ut they also tap into a deep vein of ostalgia among survivors of atholic schools. *Forever Plaid*, bout to close at the Royal George heatre after more than 2,750 perormances, provides nice, safe, inoffensive music – a perfect show for om, dad, the kids and out-of-town uests.

Then there's *Blue Man Group*, his, I believe, is the strangest success story of all. The show has been nning at the Briar Street Theatre nce October, 1997, and attendance so strong that the producers reortedly have eased up on their adertising. Not only that, the show has lones in New York, Boston and Las egas (where tickets cost $65, com-ared to a top price of $53 n Chicago). The Blue Men ave turned up in TV commercials for Intel's Pentium 4 chip – ads that seem o have stimulated box-office sales even more.

Sure, the show has plenty of elements audiences njoy – music (played on izarre homemade instruments), comedy (wordless, of course, since the lue Men never speak), a ittle audience participaion. The final moments ven include miles of toilet aper.

Many shows thrive on ese elements (well, aybe not the toilet paer), but they don't provide sufficient explanation for e success of *Blue Man roup*. Why? Because *Blue lan Group* began in New ork as a hip, high-brow poof of modern art designed to apeal to the art crowd in lower Manattan. The show has grown amazngly in popularity even though it has etained those allusions to art and rtists.

What allusions? Well, let's start ith the cobalt-blue paint smeared ver the heads of the Blue Men – it's he exact shade invented by Yves lein (1928-1962), the French conceptual artist who sought to put aint on canvas without interference of an actual artist. Klein once conducted a *Monotone Symphony*, for example, consisting of one note, during which three naked women smeared themselves with paint (blue, of course) and pressed each other onto a canvas, leaving abstract impressions. The Blue Men allude to this when they grab an audience member, wrap him in a white suit, hang him upside down, roll paint (blue, of course) onto the suit and swing him against a canvas. *Voilà!* An instant painting created without a human hand applying the paint.

Certainly most people who see the show are oblivious to all the esoteric art references. How many people have ever heard of Yves Klein, much less acquainted themselves with his ethereal ideas?

One of the Blue Man posters even spoofs the photograph of Klein's famous "leap into space," in which he jumped off the ledge of a house in suburban Paris so he could be airborn for a moment. "In order to paint space, I owe it to myself to go there, to that very space," he intoned in explanation for this bizarre act.

When a Blue Man catches a few dozen marshmallows in his mouth, the stunt can be dismissed as a cheap vaudeville trick. But when he extrudes the marshmallow goo from his mouth onto a pedestal, creating a "sculpture," he's actually making a wry reference to the soft sculptures of Claes Oldenburg, the artist best known to Chicagoans for the towering baseball bat column on West Madison Street near the Metra train station.

The messages that crawl across the electronic ticker-tape sign refer to Jenny Holtzer, who once commandeered the huge electronic ticker in Times Square to display "truisms," such as, "Slipping into madness is good for the sake of comparison."

The Blue Men join Yves Klein making his famous leap, above, and Jackson Pollock doing "action" painting, below.

And when the Blue Men take aim at a copy of Jasper Johns' famous target paintings, they are "reclaiming" it – Johns painted a target and declared it art; the Blue Men take "art" and declare it a target. Get it?

The show is full of other allusions to modern art, and the three creators – Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink – have always thought of themselves as satirists. Two years before creating *Tubes*, their first Blue Man show, which opened in 1990, they held a "funeral" for the '80s. ("The only thing that happened in the '80s was that everyone got a VCR," Wink told *The New York Times*.)

But this raises the question, how did a show intended to amuse mavens of modern art become such a hit with the masses?

Certainly most people who see the show are oblivious to all the esoteric art references. How many people have ever heard of Yves Klein, much less acquainted themselves with his ethereal ideas?

No, most audience members must be experiencing the show at a much more superficial level than the creators intended. They must simply be enjoying the percussive music, the bizarre images, and the Blue Men themselves, who, despite their silence and the thick blue paint covering their faces, have distinct personalities.

Of course, theater pieces that can be experienced at dual levels are not new. Shakespeare created them all the time. He made a point of packing his plays with low comedy, high melodrama and plenty of violence to amuse the "groundlings" – the poor, uneducated peasants who couldn't afford seats and had to stand on the ground in front of the stage. Meanwhile, those who had the intellectual resources to recognize what the playwright was doing with language could sit back and marvel at the dialogue's depth of meaning.

Obviously no one is marveling at the words spoken by the Blue Men, but those who have studied a little art history and cultivated a sense of irony are going to experience the show at a deeper, richer level – one that gives the expression "blue humor" a new meaning.

Chicago Tribune
Tuesday, October 14, 1997
Chicago Sports Final
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TODAY'S TRIBUNE

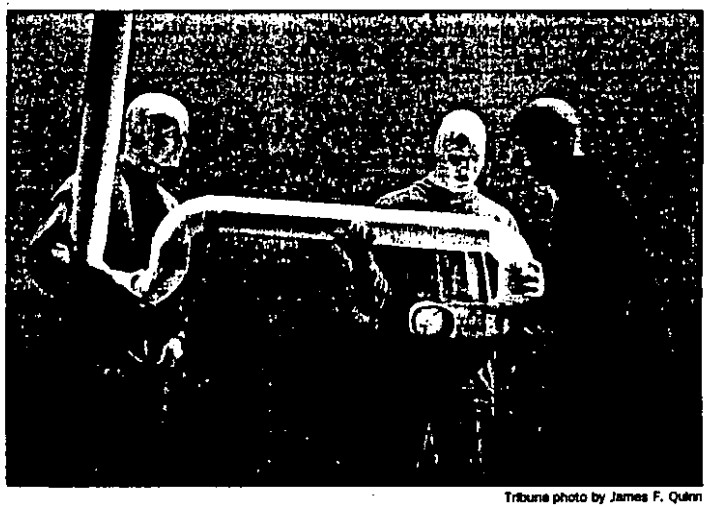
TEMPO

Colorful theater

The Blue Man Group's techno-hip performance art is ideal entertainment for the '90s, says Richard Christiansen.

THEATER REVIEW

Blue Men stage a raucously entertaining assault on the senses



Tribune photo by James F. Quinn

With computer-generated images and elaborate lighting effects, the Blue Man Group offers a hip show for the '90s at the Briar Street Theatre.

By Richard Christiansen
Tribune Chief Critic

Whether by design or by accident, Blue Man Group appears to have created the perfect entertainment for the '90s.

It is loud, so loud that the Briar Street Theatre literally vibrates when the Men and their three-piece backup band get kicking.

It is fun, so much fun that it raises its audience to a state of rock concert giddiness.

It is techno-hip, so filled with virtual reality, computer-generated images, television screens and elaborate lighting effects that it will make even the complete middle-aged nerd feel up to the minute and engaged with the young crowd.

And, of course, it is totally cool.

Divided into a slam-bang series of non-related stunts, ideal for the short attention span, and performed without words, but with plenty of music, the production is consistently ingenious without for once being threateningly thoughtful.

And, for all the weird alien, Twilight Zone aspects of its performance art, it is, to its great credit, firmly anchored in the mystery and the folly and the celebration of being human.

Introduced in 1991 to an off-Broadway theater in New York, branched out to Boston in 1995 and now ensconced in its third production here at the spacious Briar Street, Blue Man Group's show is a most shrewdly composed piece of theater.

It immediately immerses its customers in the Blue Man environment in the theater's lobby, which has been designed as an incredible tangle of tubes, pipes and transparent globes, dotted by fake Old Masters paintings in which the Blue Men are always

See Blue Men, Page 2

Blue Men

Continued from Page 1

present.

Inside the auditorium, amid a rumble of music, blinking electric signs get the customers in a convivial mood by urging them to extend birthday greetings to certain audience members and to whoop it up in the style of the old Arsenio Hall TV show.

There will be more, and much more complex, audience participation later on in the show, but first, out come the Group. Silent, unblinking and stiff as robots at first, they are indeed blue in face and hands, their bodies encased in plain dark brown uniforms.

For the next 90 minutes, without intermission, they bang drums, flip posters, digest Twinkies, paint pictures, spew Cap'n Crunch, smear shaving cream, and play Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit" on a xylophone made up of a small forest of tubes.

At one astounding point, one of the Blue Men unerringly catches about two dozen marshmallows in his mouth (thrown at him from across the stage by another Blue Man), spits them out and turns them into a work of art.

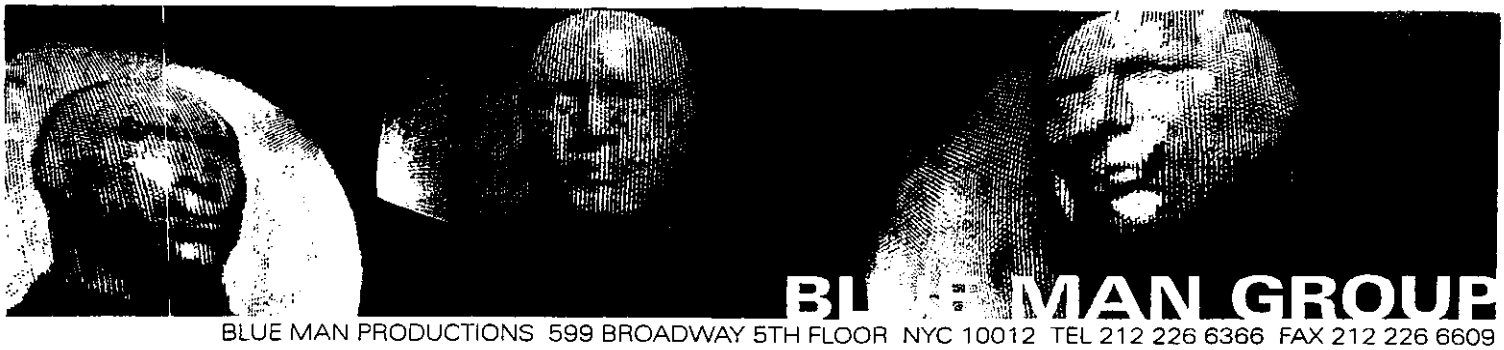
There may be a few spots when the surprise-box delight of the program slightly slows down, but, in their stone-faced, wide-eyed way, the Blue Men have their timing down perfectly, reacting to the moment with amazing cleverness and wit.

(Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink, the original Blue Men, are to perform here through mid-week, after which five other Blue Men will alternate in performances.)

Finally, after whipping the crowd into a frenzy, the Blue Man Group uncorks a finale of spinning tubes, crashing sound, exultant triumph and miles of toilet paper that must be experienced to be believed.

All this technical wizardry would be nothing if it weren't for the endearingly sweet and simple desire to entertain that informs the whole production.

In a way, it's street performance, or fraternity stunt night, raised to a new level through the genius of the computer generation. It's incredibly complicated, and totally accessible.



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DEMOCRAT AND CHRONICLE
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Burrelle's

Concert review

Blue Man is silent but entertaining

JEFF SPEVAK
STAFF MUSIC CRITIC

What is Blue Man Group? It is David Byrne's id, in his blue period, times three. The Blue Men are alien, curious, wryly funny, groovy, anthropological, and probably white wine drinkers.

And their "Complex Rock Tour" was probably the most amazing, wildly entertaining, challenging show to be seen in this city for a long, long time. Tied together by voiceovers and video displays that introduced each segment as though it were a chapter in a how-to manual for rock stars ("Concert Movement No. 2, the One-Hand Fist Pump"), the 2,400 people in the sold-out Auditorium Center will never again be able to sit through a Journey concert without laughing hysterically.

From three blue, mute guys who combined percussive music with performance art and comedy in New York City in the '80s, the Blue Men have escalated into a full-blown rock show, complete with video screens, screaming guitars and Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit."

Since they're mute, "White Rabbit" was sung by Tracy Bonham, one of two excellent opening acts chosen for their charmingly exotic nature. The other was Venus Hum, a trippy pop band that was later brought back so that lead singer Annette Strean could sing the '70s disco hit "I Feel Love" while wearing an electric-rainbow dress.

The Blue Men had help in pulling off this rock-concert commentary on rock concerts, with a real eight-piece rock band. But the Blue Men are best when left to their own devices, mainly a set of ungainly percussion instruments constructed from PVC pipe. Two of these instruments were worn like deep-sea breathing apparatus during the Who's "Baba O'Reilly."

The encores opened with "Exhibit 13." A subtitle on the video screen introduced it simply as paper that had fallen into a garden in Brooklyn. The Blue Men settled into a simple percussive groove on their PVCs as the big screen behind them and smaller ones all over the stage showed scraps of paper tumbling down against a dark background, some pausing in midscreen so that they could be read. They were mundane items, some scorched, but it slowly began to dawn on the audience - perhaps it was the one with the Cantor Fitzgerald letterhead - that this was paper that had fallen into a Brooklyn garden as the twin towers fell. It was very simple, but very powerful.

But mostly it was a night of amusing satire, highlighted by one of the Blue Men walking to the front of the stage to hold his lighter aloft, in a time-honored tradition. Just a few in the crowd responded with the own lighters: Western New Yorkers are woefully unprepared to defy the state ban on smoking in public places. But at that moment, someone in the back of the theater shouted "Freebird!" So at least one guy got the joke. ◻

JSpevak@DemocratandChronicle.com

BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 6605

Blue Man Group show splendid

Blue Man Group

The most unusual band that's ever played Burgettstown showed up Saturday with one of the best concerts the venue has ever hosted. Blue Man Group has twisted and turned its artsy off-Broadway stage hit into The Complex, a world-class rock 'n' roll concert tailored for alt-rock audiences.

Instead of long hair and bell-bottoms, shaved heads and leather or tie-dye and sandals, the three stars of Blue Man wore glossy blue paint on their heads and hands. The music stretched from power-chord rock to world-beat rhythm. The Blue Men played unusually melodic percussion on homemade PVC pipes, flexible tubes, conventional drums of every size, and the taut strings of an open piano banged with a big mallet. The killer eight-piece backing band included three percussionists, a set drummer, guitar, electric bass, keyboards and vocalists collaborating a set list of original rock and creative interpretations of a few rock standards. Keyboardist Peter Moore oozed rock-star charisma as the principal singer, with guest vocals by opening acts Tracy Bonham and Annette Strean of Venus Hum.

With this tour, Blue Man Group has propelled the art of concert spectacle to new professional standards. Existing ideas like rear-screen video, conventional and fluorescent stage lighting, laser projection and lighted stage set pieces are stretched to new limits. Three-dimensional effects and the concept of the Blue Man enhance the symmetry of sound and spectacle.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about the show is that 5,000 people paid standard ticket prices to see a group that doesn't have a single radio hit. In the pavilion-only show, the crowd's energy was palpable as it responded in unison to tongue-in-cheek cues that poked fun at typical audience activities. Blue Man Group should be playing stadiums. It's that good.

—John Hayes,
Post-Gazette Staff Writer

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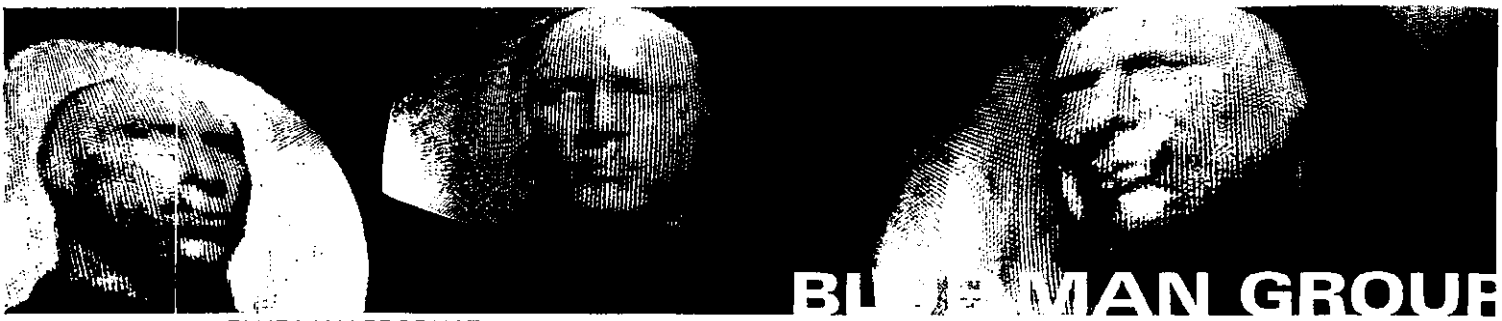

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Chicago Sun-Times
JULY 21, 2003

Blue Man Group at the Rosemont Theatre

by JAE-HA KIM

If there was anything lacking at the Blue Man Group's "Complex Rock Tour" Saturday night at the Rosemont Theatre, I didn't notice. PVC pipes, Judy Jetson dresses and an odd little trio of bald, blue men. ...What more could you ask for in a rock 'n' roll concert?

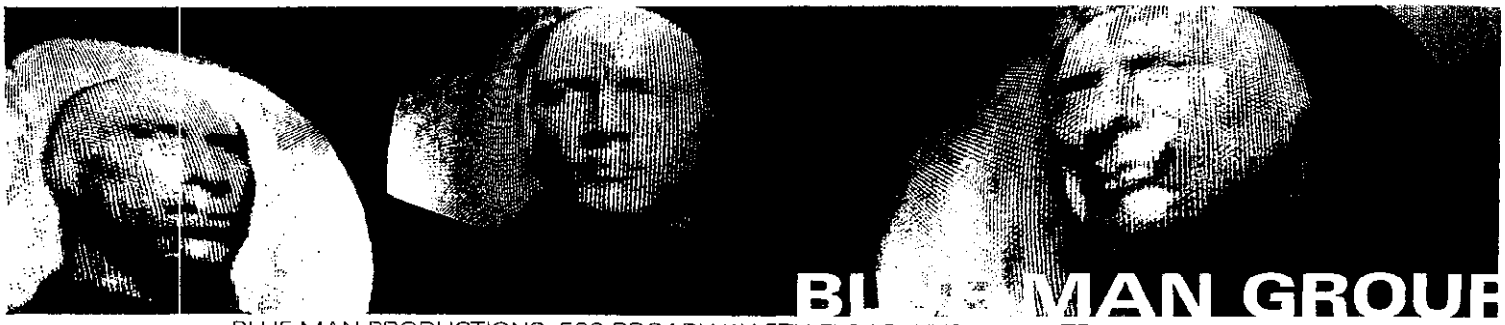
From the infectious dulcimers that started the show to the thundering crescendos that ended it 90 minutes later, the Blue Man Group and its eight-piece percussion-heavy backup band delivered what a bevy of "real" rock bands consistently fail to deliver--awesome musicianship enhanced by unadulterated good humor and fun.

Like their long-running avant- garde theatrical production at Chicago's Briar Street Theatre, the Blue Man Group's concert began with audio visual material that pitted itself against, well, itself. The words scrolling across the stage right monitor mocked the cautionary suggestions on the stage left monitor for being too conservative and goody two shoes.

As fans of the theatrical concept know, the Blue Men never, ever speak. They got around this quirk by having guest artists sing with them. Both their openings acts Tracy Bonham and the Texas trio Venus Hum joined them onstage, as did backup musician Peter Moore. All three are featured on the Blue Man Group's album "*The Complex*," which has sold more than 500,000 copies since its April release.

Moore subbed in for Dave Matthews, who sings on the album, and Bonham did a yeoman's job playing violin and tackling an impressive version of the Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit."

But the evening's vocal highlight's belonged to Venus Hum's powerhouse singer Annette Strean, whose pristine powerful voice had the rich delivery of a jazz artist, but also the quirky innovative quality of Bjork. As part of the opening act, she seemed awkward onstage. She'd fare better if she had a guitar, or even a triangle, to play live. But singing Donna Summer's "I Feel Love" in a space-age flickering mini-dress, Strean was in her element.



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The Blue Man Group got away with incorporating some serious rock 'n' roll cliches by mocking them. As a serious-voiced announcer pointed out the stagnant rock star moves that are de rigueur for all bands--the head bob, the one-armed fist pump, bringing audience members onstage to dance and up and down jumping--the performers mimicked them.

And because this is the Blue Man Group, they had to throw in another for good measure: the behind-the-head leg stretch. Apparently, the only rock band that will be able to match this move would be an offshoot of Cirque du Soleil.

The ultimate question is: Was the "Complex Rock Tour" truly a rock concert? For purists, no. But aside from the bald blue men, were the theatrics really any more distracting than, say, giant blow-up dolls at a Rolling Stones show or a outhouse-size lemon at a U2 concert?

Absolutely not.

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BLUE MAN GROUP COLORFULLY TAKES ON CONCERT CLICHES

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BYLINE: Carol Simmons csimmons@DaytonDailyNews.com
DATE: October 28, 2003
PUBLICATION: Dayton Daily News (OH)
EDITION: CITY
SECTION: LIFE
PAGE: E5

FAIRBORN - The **Blue Man Group** phenomenon is a real head-scratcher. How something that began on the streets and rarified performance-art spaces of New York City's East Village became an entertainment juggernaut with multiple ongoing theater productions across the country, including a big Las Vegas Show and an arena-style rock tour, would be unimaginable if it weren't true. This kind of stuff - a trio of **blue**-painted fellows pounding out rhythms on a variety of found objects - isn't supposed to appeal to the masses.

But what's more surprising is that the story of the **Blue Man Group** isn't one of an artistic enterprise turned sell-out, but rather a successful merging of the oil-and-water tastes of a cliquish downtown hipster scene and the general-admission amusement park crowd.

Having traveled through the region this summer with stops in Cincinnati and Columbus, **Blue Man** Productions brought its Complex Rock Tour to the Dayton area for the first time Sunday night with a performance at Wright State University's Ervin J. Nutter Center.

The show, which was put together in tandem with the release earlier this year of the Complex rock album, is a parody of sorts about the rock-concert experience, while at the same time offering that experience in its full glory - complete with an eight-piece band and guest appearances by singer-songwriter Tracy Bonham and the electronic-trio Venus Hum (who also had opening sets).

The **blue** men are as much observers of the endeavor as they are

participants, acting the role of the unknowing innocent as they follow a manual-like list of instructions on how to put on a rock show, with all of its traditions and/or cliches. As they test out each new concept - the various moves, including head-bobs and arm thrusts; crowd interactions, such as inviting audience members on stage to dance or acknowledging the fans in the `cheap seats'; and performance elements like honoring musical influences and the inclusion of a guest singer - the **blue** men, who are actors and percussionists, react with mild surprise and a measure of delight.

The effect is consistently amusing as they reveal a certain ridiculousness in the formulaic elements of many rock-concert outings. But rather than reject those elements, the **Blue Man Group** embraces them - just as we do.

There's real music, too. Not only the **Group**'s signature percussive works, but also songs written for the Complex album, as well as some well-chosen covers.

Contact Carol Simmons at 225-7309.

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Story last updated at 9:24 a.m. Thursday, November 13, 2003

Blue Man Group is sensory overload

BY DEVIN GRANT
Special to The Post and Courier

To understand how incredibly cool Blue Man Group's Complex Rock Tour is, one needs to have an idea of what takes place during the production.

Therein lies the rub. There is no easy way to relate in writing what a huge dose of sensory overload Blue Man Group provides in a live setting. You've probably seen the black-clad, blue-skinned guys on television ads for computer chips, or maybe even live in one of the group's permanent productions in New York, Boston, Chicago, Las Vegas or Los Angeles. But the Complex Rock Tour, which made a stop at the North Charleston Coliseum Nov. 6 is unlike anything the troupe has attempted before. It is a piece of performance art masquerading as a rock concert. It is a comedy sketch that parodies the clichÉs that one can find at any pop music performance. It is a two-hour drum solo, with occasional bursts of guitar, keyboards and vocals. It is also quite possibly the coolest thing I've seen come through Charleston, ever.

Since the members of Blue Man Group never speak, it was necessary to bring in a vocalist or two. The evening began with a short set from singer Tracy Bonham. Bonham had appeared here in Charleston as one of the acts at 96 Wavefest in the mid-'90s when her song "Mother, Mother" was a radio hit. Along with guitarist John Darling and keyboardist Peter Adams, Bonham got the crowd in the mood for a rock show with everything from a great original songs such as "Eyes" and "All Thumbs," to a blazing version of Led Zeppelin's "Black Dog" played on violin. The classically trained violinist related a story where she played the Zeppelin piece as her final exam in college, a feat that, according to Bonham, got her kicked out of music school soon after.

Next up was supposed to be another music act, Venus Hum, but

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because one of the members of that act was ill, that band's set was cancelled. The audience sat through a brief intermission before Blue Man Group took the stage. During the break, the crowd was entertained by a pair of electronic light signs on either side of the stage. While the sign on the right scrolled interesting bits of trivia, the sign on the left seemed to only be interested in poking fun at its mate. At one point, the left sign announced that it was being turned off for being surly, and pleaded with the audience to stop reading the right sign. True to its words, the left sign went blank for a few moments. As the right sign continued to prompt the crowd to respond, the left sign suddenly sprang back to life. "Hey, what the hell is going on?" demanded the left sign, "You're still reading the sign on the right!" It was a creatively hilarious way to keep the crowd occupied during the intermission.

Finally, it was time for Blue Man Group to hit the stage. Backed by four percussionists, two guitarists, a bassist, and keyboardist/vocalist Peter Moore, the trio of Blue Men took the audience on a sonic journey that deconstructed the rock concert experience like only Blue Man Group could. The instrument of choice for Blue Man Group is PVC pipe, and the middle of the stage was dominated by a twisted mass of the stuff that resembled some sort of pipe organ from outer space. The Blue Men used paddles to strike the ends of the tubes, producing a hauntingly cool sound, especially when coupled with the backing band.

A video screen hung above the stage occasionally broadcast instructions for the Blue Men to follow, such as practicing their pelvic thrusts or inviting a member of the audience up on the stage. Indeed, several times during the show the Blue Men pulled unwitting spectators up onto the stage to dance, introduce the band, or, as one man found out early on, assist with a lesson on the digestive system.

While Blue Man Group focuses on spectacular visual and sound effects in its shows, humor is also a big part of the production.

Ordered by the video screen to pay tribute to rock shows past, the Blue Men performed PVC-fueled covers of everything from Devo's "Whip It," to Ozzy Osbourne's "Crazy Train." A screamed request from the audience for "Freebird" drew menacing stares from the Blue Men, and instead Tracy Bonham returned to the stage to add vocals to a cover of Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit."

Additional special effects that were executed during the show included stick figures that appeared to jump off of the video screen and dance on the stage, Bonham returning yet again to the stage in a fiber optic dress that glowed in response to the volume of the music, and a version of the Who's "Baba O'Riley," that featured the Blue Men wearing backpacks made of huge lengths of tubing.

Part of the encore also featured a sobering performance piece that centered on images of pieces of paper that blew into a garden in Brooklyn. As the scraps of paper were projected onto the screen, it became apparent that the pieces all had a common bond having to do with September 11 tragedy.

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To properly describe everything that occurred during the roughly two-hour show would take an entire additional section of this newspaper.

The Blue Man Group experience is indeed sensory overload. There are so many things to see, hear and feel at once that when it is over, you feel physically and mentally exhausted, but in a good way.

Let's hope that Blue Man Group mounts another production like this one in the future, so another Coliseum full of unsuspecting folks can have their minds blown.

Devin Grant is a freelance entertainment writer based in Charleston. Contact him at chucktowncritic@yahoo.com

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Calgary Herald
SEPTEMBER 30, 2003

Blue Man audience gets triple treat: Vaudeville humour meets booming rock

by Nick Lewis

Blue Man Group with Venus Hum and Tracy Bonham at the Jubilee Auditorium on Monday night. Attendance: 2,519.

Oh. My. God. You know when you pay for the cheeseburger and get the lobster? It was kinda like that.

On what has to be the best triple-bill I can recall, Blue Man Group, Venus Hum and Tracy Bonham put on a brilliant show for $49.50 that should shame the Streisands of the music world.

Not anticipating having to write anything about Bonham save her reminding us how her 1996 single Mother, Mother went again, the singer's pop-lite fare was a great appetizer to the next courses.

Accompanied by a keyboardist and a guitarist, her Led Zeppelin cover of Black Dog on violin was more than passable, it was pretty sellable.

Next, Montana's Venus Hum electrified the crowd with their fiery, effervescent electro-pop. Sounding like Bjork with heavier, trippier arrangements, the trio was infectious from the minute they took the stage.

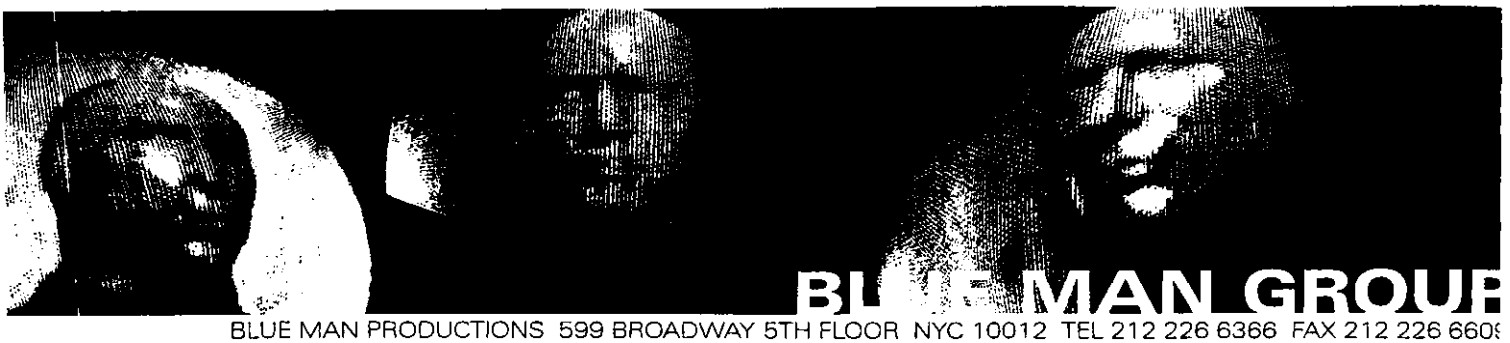
And it just got better from there. Blue Man Group were better than the hype-- they were downright amazing. Three nameless, blue-faced aliens accompanied by an eight-piece rock band (two guitarists, a bassist, a keyboardist/vocalist and four drummers), they put on a mock rock show that was better than most rock shows.

A blend of vaudeville humour blended seamlessly with tribal, worldbeat percussion served over booming rock, the Intel Smurfs were captivating from the start of their 90-minute set.

Bashing overturned grand pianos, swishing boat antennas and drumming PVC pipes, the trio managed to make beautiful sound fill the Jubilee.

With Bonham joining the musicians for a cool cover of White Rabbit, they created a bigger acid trip than Jefferson Airplane could have imagined. And Venus Hum joining for a cover of Donna Summers' I Feel Love was even better.

If you missed the show, there's still the opportunity to catch all three in Edmonton. Do it. People in attendance Monday are considering it this morning.



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Fort Worth Star Telegram
AUGUST 13, 2003

Blue Man Group is exhilarating, smart rock show

by Dave Ferman

The concept behind the Blue Man Group's Complex Tour is that it is a rock show about rock shows.

The punchline? The Blue Man Group's show, which sold out two nights at NextStage, is more entertaining than the vast majority of rock shows by actual rock bands.

For more than an hour, and with the help of guests Tracy Bonham and electronica band Venus Hum, the Blue Man Group gave Tuesday night's crowd a variety of stuff, all good -- deadpan humor; a constantly shifting array of percussion devices, patterns and textures; some of the most famous melodies in rock history; a batch of original material; and the chance to both laugh at and celebrate the dynamics of being a rock fan and the interaction between fan and performer.

The Complex Tour -- named after the Blue Man Group's *The Complex* CD, which features cameos from Bonham, Venus Hum, Dave Matthews and others -- seamlessly blends what we already know and love about the whole Blue Man experience with smart commentary about how empty and facile rock stars, and pop music in general, can be. Much of this material was covered in Drumbone, the "rock manual" segment where standard rock concert moves, such as thrusting one fist into the air, are explored by the three Blue Men, who start off bewildered and then get into the spirit of things.

And then came Your Attention.

Attention is a marvelous live pop-music moment. At first, an unseen announcer mentions how paying tribute to rock stars by playing classic rock songs can cover up lack of talent -- and then the Blue Men and their eight-member band play snippets of those classics, such as Devo's Whip It and Led Zeppelin's Kashmir. This is the Complex Tour's conceit in a nutshell -- knowing how empty rock 'n' roll can become, and then sort of dancing all over that notion by showing how exhilarating it can be.

For all its conceptual smarts, though, this show is exhilarating because at its heart is a love for the music and for people coming together to celebrate their love of music.

Bonham and Venus Hum opened the show with separate 30-minute sets. Going on first, Bonham switched between violin and guitar and did her one big hit, Mother Mother, and a solo voice-and-violin cover of Zep's Black Dog, but concentrated on unreleased material.

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Venus Hum did 30 minutes of sugary, soaring, up-with-people electronica. By this time, a lot of people were impatient for the Blue Man Group to come on, but I found their miniset to be bubbly and charismatic.

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Blue Man offers rock with giggle, message

Concert review by Rick Bird
Post staff reporter

It was part performance art, part "Spinal Tap" satire, with a touch of retro arena rock and a hi-tech light and sound sensory overload.

The Blue Man Group came to Riverbend Sunday night with their first-ever amphitheater-sized show, brilliantly translating their long-running theater act to the big venue as their multi-media performance humorously mocked the Pavlovian response of the rock concert-goer.

It was a show that played on a magnificent number of levels ranging from silly rock spoofs to cerebral messages of self-identity. Along the way the three Blue Man mimes performed their bizarre percussion instruments banging on PVC pipes with rubber paddles, the strings of an open piano mounted sideways and their patented "drumbone" and "air pole."

Backed by an eight-piece band featuring three percussionists, the blue-hued, faceless stars, who never speak a word, took the crowd on a Rock 101 primer.

It started with a disembodied voice thanking people for "purchasing the rock concert instruction manual." We then learned about Rock Concert Movement No. 1 -- The Basic Head Bob. It was on to Movement No. 2 -- The Fist Thrust. While the lessons were "taught," the music thundered on with songs drawn from "The Complex," the Blue Man project's first rock album aimed at a mainstream audience, released in April.

The Blue Man Group was the creation in the late '80s of three New Yorkers -- Matt Goldman, Chris Wink and Phil Stanton, all self-confessed '70s rock fans. Their quixotic, multi-media cult project has taken off to where there are now some 50 Blue Man members performing almost nightly at theaters in Boston, Chicago, Las Vegas and New York.

For the big stage theme, Blue Man creators went to rock for inspiration.

The performance art humor was delightful with the three mimes in their quizzical way acting as both students and teachers with the audience for the rock "lessons." There was a Rock Concert Movement instructing "get a closer look at your audience." They obliged by picking a man from the crowd and sticking an endoscope down his throat with his innards flashed on the big screen. There were instructions to "Bring audience members on stage to dance," and they did. No rock concert is complete without the sing-a-long, and band vocalist Peter Moore led the crowd in a rocker with the lyrics, "If I sing a song, will you sing along?" We did.

They were instructed to "bring the guest vocalist on stage." That would be

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opening act Tracy Bonham, who performed five songs, including a searing "White Rabbit" and a powerful lead on "Baba O'Riley."

Throughout the show there was a stunning sensory overload with an indescribable light show and effects the troupe is known for.

In the end, the silent, androgynous Blue Man trio flashed more personality than most rock stars, as their intelligent act was an engaging paradox of rock spoof and salute.

On a more cerebral level, the Blue Man message is about not becoming a faceless automaton in a world dominated by corporate thinking. It is the theme of their sonic rocker, "The Complex," played to a video of a white-collar worker trying to find the light in a dreary office building.

But it's best not to get too metaphysical about the Blue Man guys. Ultimately, it was just great rock 'n' roll entertainment with a giggle, and a message, if you wanted one.

Publication Date: 07-28-2003

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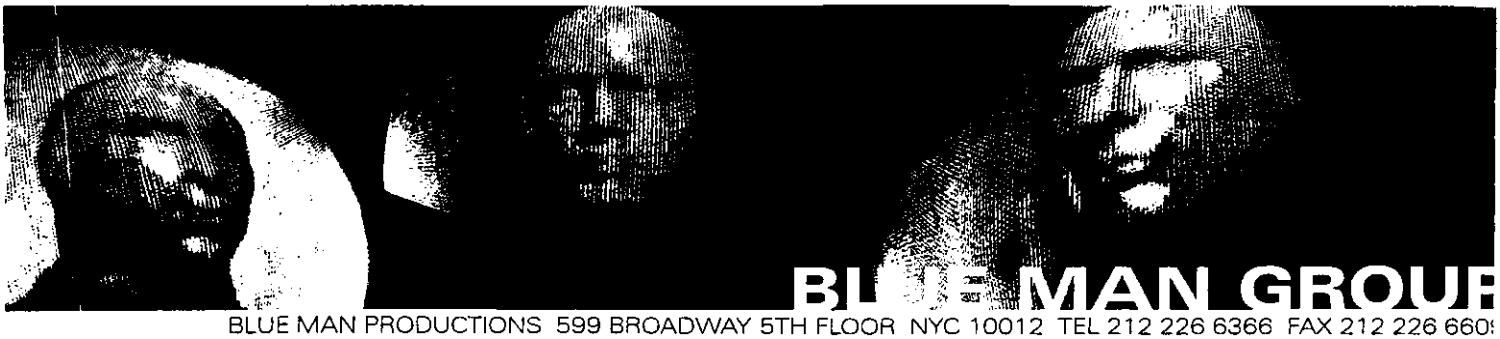

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The Salt Lake Tribune
AUGUST 5, 2003

Blue Man Group's music, antics enchant SLC crowd

by Tom Wharton

Categorizing the Blue Man Group has never been easy.

And neither is figuring out exactly what the three guys with the blue faces and black suits were up to Monday night before a packed lower bowl at the Delta Center.

They call this "The Complex Tour," and it is.

One minute, the group and its eight-piece band -- including four drummers -- poked fun at the rock concert genre.

They satirized rock traditions, including the psychedelic time of Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit," with laser mushrooms and mayflies in the background.

Or they make fun of rock traditions such as waving cigarette lighters, audience participation, pelvic thrusts, playing to the folks in the cheap seats and head bobs.

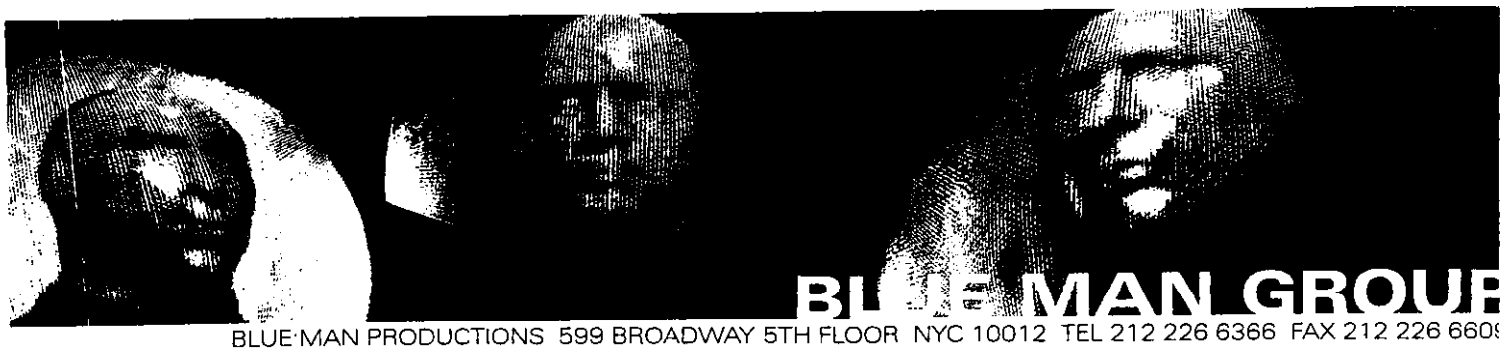
;Using a haunting voice from nowhere backed by a state-of-the-art video screen, they laugh at rock stars with names such as "The Edge," "Slash" or "Scary Spice." They turned the art of bringing on a guest singer into satire.

Then, almost as quickly as they beg their audience to not take rock music seriously, they turn the tables, trying to make serious statements about the state of the world.

Using the video screen showing faceless workers in endless halls and cubicles, they effectively used the rock medium to get across the message of a single individual trying to escape the sameness of the world.

And the loud audience -- made of kids with spiked hair and oldsters with little hair, of young boys playing video games at intermission, grandparents and grandchildren -- loved every bit of it.

The crowd marveled as the Blue Men turned airport security wands into musical instruments, used PVC pipe as organs and blasted drums filled with



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fluorescent paint splattering skyward under black lights. And the audience loved the talent of the eight musicians backing the Blue Men. They alsoenjoyed vocalist Tracy Bonham and the trio Venus Hum, who opened the three-hour show with half-hour concerts before coming back on stage to join the blue guys.

The big concert venue proved to be an entirely different experience from the Blue Man Group show in Las Vegas. This show was more about the music, without some of the sight gags, and intimacy at the smaller venue.

Still, few could complain about the wild, energetic show that offered a whole new take on performance art, different than anything and anyone touring anywhere.

Complex, yes. But completely satisfying.

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'Blue Man' whipped audience into frenzy

Sandi Davis
11/17/2003

NOTE: REVIEW

For most, the Blue Man Group is best known for its odd commercials for Intel's Pentium processors.

Those who have seen the group started anticipating the show the minute Venus Hum finished and the dueling scrolls began to turn.

However, their show Sunday night at the Civic Center Music Hall in Oklahoma City promised to be different than shows in New York, Boston, Chicago, or Las Vegas where the group has ongoing engagements.

"The Complex Rock Tour" started with a spectacular percussive opening with a decibel level showing on a big center screen.

Using a tiny camera and big sounds created by big PVC pipes backed by a rock band □ complete with two drum kits, two percussion areas, two guitarists, a bass player and a keyboard player □ the three won the audience over.

The bit became audience friendly during a review of basic concert movements □ the head bob, the fist shake with bent elbow and finally, the jump.

You could tell who the veterans were, because they were happy to play along. Newbies were at first afraid, especially when it seemed that the tiny camera went down the gullet of an audience member.

When "Movement 15," using a guest vocalist was announced, the crowd uneasily laughed and wondered who'd be up next when a Blue Man left the stage to pick up opening act Tracy Bonham, who helped with a blistering "Up on the Roof" □ not the doo-wop version, but a racy, tech-filled song about flying stairs.

The group's foray into heavy metal was a Metallica-tinged anthem sung by the keyboard player, Peter Moore.

A brief look into Devo's "Whip It," Ozzy Osborne's "Crazy Train," and Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit" with a decidedly Blue Man- twist delighted the audience. The use of antennas and piano keys as percussive instruments in the latter song, plus a light show of mushrooms and dragonflies took even the youngest back to the 1960s.

In the end, it seems the best trick the Blue Man Group possesses is including everyone in on the jokes.

Sunday night's show was sold out, so here's hoping this group returns again.

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Blue Man Group bizarre and captivating

By MARY RUDLOFF
Ocean City Sentinel

ATLANTIC CITY – "Blue Man Group" is probably one of the most innovative productions to grace an Atlantic City stage in too long.

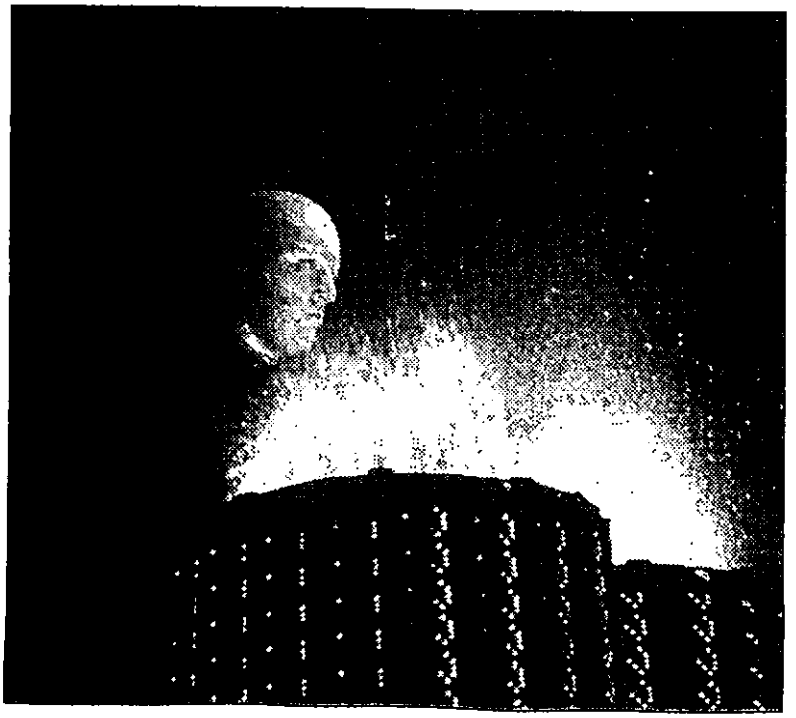
Not quite a concert, and not a stage show, the experience that is Blue Man Group (BMG) is not to be missed. A frenetic blend of percussion, instrumentals and a few stray vocal numbers all serves as a backdrop the central focal point of the show, three blue headed, blue handed percussion wizards who take the audience on an entertainment thrill ride while never uttering a single word.

The premise of the BMG performance "Complex Rock Tour" is centered around instructional steps to become a rock star. It is no less than amazing to watch the humor expressed by the trio of blueheads in even the simplest of moves and expressions. The show is fast paced, funny, musically solid and never predictable.

But it is when the BMG members pick up drum sticks, mallets and anything else they use and let the percussion fly that they are at their breathtaking best. They are both musically and visually stunning. This is not your ordinary percussion work either, using a twisted circuit of PVC pipes, airpoles, strings including a mallet applied directly to the inner workings of a piano, and just a pipe and tubing combination worn by the BMG members that appears to almost consume the players.

It is nice to see at least one local casino figure out what Las Vegas and New York audiences have known for years. This trio is a one of a kind entertainment pleasure. Should one of the casinos manage to lure Blue Man Group back to the area soon, don't miss this show. It is a sensory feast, entertaining for any and all age groups, and just plain fun. And be sure to arrive early ... the battle of words between LCD screens before the show is one of the best opening acts seen in quite a while.

Mary Rudloff/Ocean City Sentinel
Members of the Blue Man Group play their "Complex Rock Tour" in Atlantic City.



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Blue Men pound out great show at SPAC

By MICHAEL LISI
Gazette Reporter

SARATOGA SPRINGS — They're blue.

They're bald.

They're artsy.

And they rock.

What better way to describe Blue Man Group's performance of "The Complex" — an elaborate, high-tech spoof on becoming a rock star, for lack of a better explanation — at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center on Saturday night.

This was one wild show to say the least. From the breathtaking special effects to the wide-eyed Blue Men playing and banging on an assortment of bizarre instruments — such as the Angel Air Pole and the Drumbone — "The Complex" was without question one show not to miss.

And the music plain-out rocked. Blasted out by a wired, percussion-heavy 10-piece band, it melded perfectly with the beautiful noise made by the Blue Men and came off sounding raw, primal and melodic all at the same time.

MUSIC REVIEW

Blue Man Group, for those who aren't familiar with the cobalt-blue trio, has been around since 1991, when it launched its off-Broadway show, "Tubes," in New York City; the show has spread to Boston, Chicago and Las Vegas.

"The Complex," which was released earlier this year, is an offshoot of "Tubes;" here, the Blue Men try to understand an audio primer on how to be a rock star that they somehow stumbled upon.

Wide-eyed and innocent, the Blue Men start out following the advice of a deep, disembodied voice as it explains the basic "rock movements" any rock star worth his salt needs to succeed, such as the "basic head bob" and the "one-armed fist pump."

As if it were second-nature, they all begin pounding on a huge instrument made out of winding PVC tubing with day-glo orange sticks as the band kicks into a driving beat for "Time To Start," one of the opening numbers in the 75-minute performance.

Things just get wilder and more visual from there, with the Blue Men banging on a huge drum with a big rubber mallet and striking the Piano Smasher, a piano stripped down to its sound board with strings exposed that's smashed with a mallet called a smasher.

For "Piano Smasher," two Blue Men went into the audience, following the disembodied voice's instruction for another rock movement: to "say hello to people in the cheap seats."

The show was very interactive; at one point, one Blue Man waved a pair of hand-held lights — much like those used to direct airplanes down runways — realizing that moving the lights controlled the band behind them. Fans booed when one Blue Man took the lights from the other and stopped the music; fans cheered when the other Blue Man took them back and started the music — which bewildered the Blue Men.

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University Wire (Champaign, IL)
OCTOBER 24, 2003

Blue Man Group take art, rock to new level

by Kevin Borgia

If surrealistic artists Salvador Dali and M.C. Escher used PVC pipe, boat anntenas and broken pianos to make music, they would have been Blue Men.

Simultaneously a quintessential rock show and parody of all things rock, the Blue Man Group performed Saturday at Assembly Hall Star Theater in Champaigne, Ill., where they took the audience on a multi-sensory journey.

Packed with innovative instrumentation, pounding yet melodic drumming, a top-notch backing band and theatrics peppered with social commentary, the Blue Man Group's show was nothing short of mind-blowing.

The experience began with one Blue Man silhouetted behind a giant tapestry, hammering out a sharp melody on an auto-harp. The two other Blue men soon added echoing percussion.

In true rock fashion, the band kicked in as the tapestry fell, revealing the Blue Men in all their percussive glory, flanked by their eight-member backing band.

Instantly, the power was on. They launched into their first song with energy unparalleled in any rock show, beating on their classic tube instruments with incredible precision.

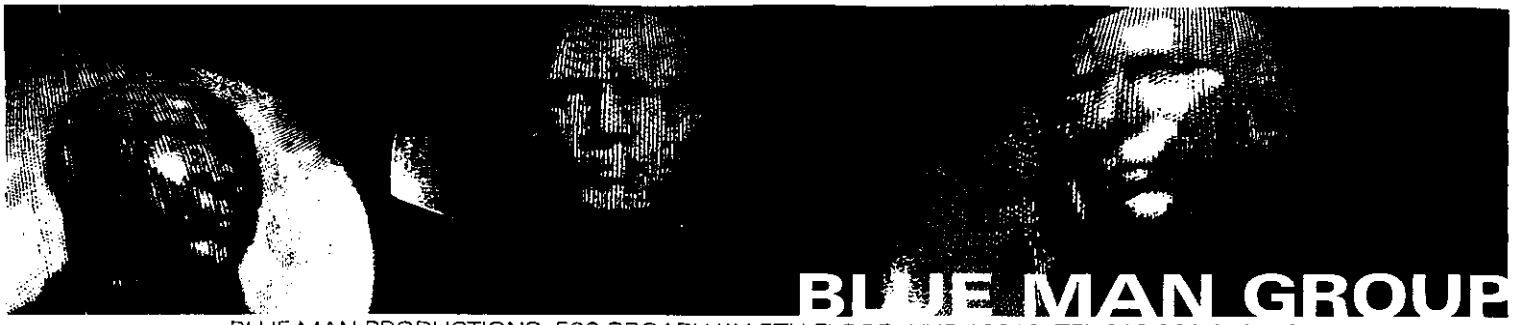
Afterward, the Blue Men wandered stage innocently and childlike, puzzling over the presence of the band and the crowd, and filming them with a fiber-optic camera that projected the image on an enormous screen behind the band.

With the second song: "Time to Start," the show's overall theme revealed itself as the "Rock Concert Manual."

Classic rock movements like "The basic head bob" and the "One-hand fist pump" were portrayed in the song, and the hysterical theatrics of the Blue Men melded perfectly with the fierce rhythms.

Next, "Up on the Roof" was the first appearance of opening act Tracy Bonham, who dazzled the crowd with her searing vocals.

In "Persona," the Blue Men exhibited their first bit of social commentary with a comedic skit featuring ringing cell phones -- first from one Blue Man, then the other two and finally the entire band.



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During the thundering song that followed, an overwhelming number of facts and statistics raced across the screen. Hordes of question marks flooded other screens on stage.

The intention was to make a statement -- the world today is fraught with an overload of information in such quantities, it can never fully be absorbed.

The Blue Men then briefly returned to their comedic form, in a hilarious section of unexpected cover teases, including Devo's "Whip It," Ozzy Osbourne's "Crazy Train" and Led Zepplin's "Kashmir."

But the teases ended with a full-throttle cover of Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit," a long-time component of Blue Man Group's Chicago show, featuring Bonham on vocals.

It was the most intense song of the evening, from the unmistakable opening rhythm, to the celebratory climax with Bonham wailing "feed your head" again and again.

The audience laid their heads on "surrealistic pillows" as a school of jellyfish swam dreamily across the giant screen, while the psychedelic, "Alice in Wonderland" inspired lyrics streamed from Bonham's pipes with an intensity unparalleled since Grace Slick herself.

Then, huge neon jellyfish and dragonflies descended from above, flashing and morphing shape for a true sensory overload.

In "Shadows," the group's most powerful piece of social commentary, the Blue Men wore masks to make a statement about isolation in contemporary society.

Simultaneously, the screen portrayed a man wearing a similar mask, lost in the maze of a modern office building, struggling upstream against the onslaught of contemporary society.

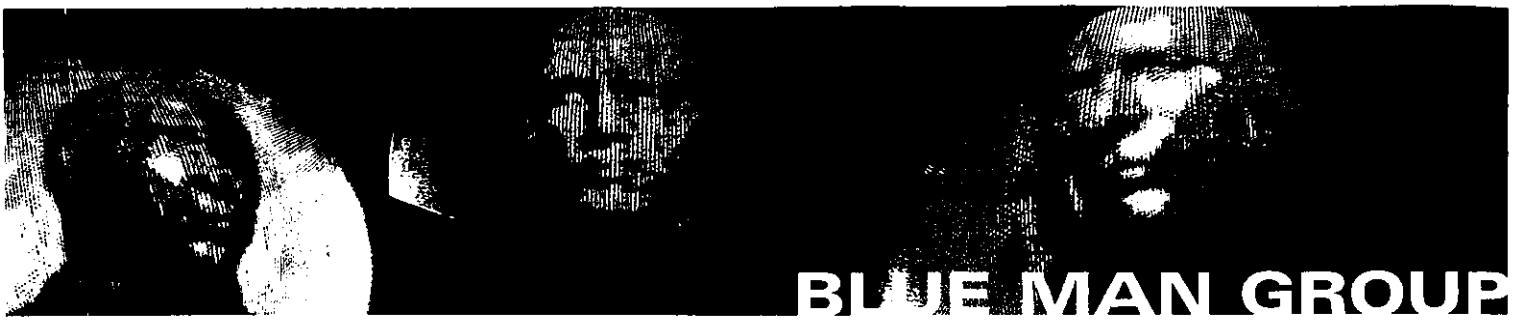
At the conclusion of the song, the man in the video emerged atop the office building and removed his mask triumphantly.

The Blue Men also removed their masks at this time, and they peered at and touched each other's faces as if the bare human form was completely unfamiliar to their "civilized" eyes.

The overall effect stated that modern society is restricting, and that life has become a perpetual crisis where the soul is too often forgotten.

For an encore, they quietly tapped a soft and mysterious melody in a song entitled "Exhibit 13."

The visual aspect of the song was initially marked only with the message, "The following pieces of paper blew into the Carroll Gardens neighborhood in Brooklyn, New York."



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Throughout the song, half-burned scraps of paper appeared on the screen, interspersed with shots of paper falling from above.

Although the message was a slightly veiled, the meaning was delicately poignant. The paper had fallen into the Brooklyn neighborhood on Sept. 11 -- remnants of the World Trade Center.

After the tribute, the Blue Men returned to their expressionist roots, donning enormous tube-drum apparatus backpacks, for a percussive version of the Who's "Baba O'Reilly."

Finally, the Blue Men performed one last selection -- a dramatic and triumphant song that culminated in the repeated line, "Once the song has begun, the group is one."

BLUE I

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BUFFALO, NY
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MUSICAL THEATER

Blue Men rock the house with a smart celebration of rock

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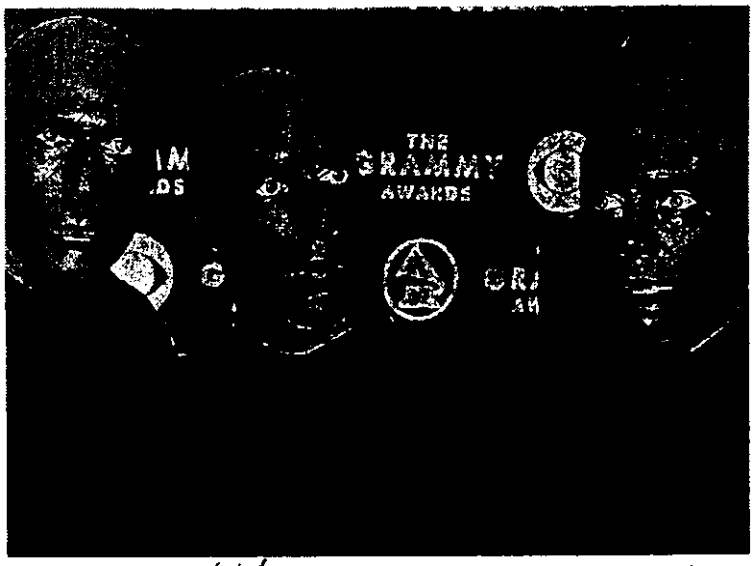
By JEFF MIERS
News Pop Music Critic



Associated Press
The all-percussion Blue Man Group deconstructs the rituals of the rock concert.

The cool thing about rock music is, once you deconstruct it, you find that, despite the silliness, the contrivances, the iconography, it still has a big fat soul.

Wednesday evening, performance-art ensemble-turned-rock outfit Blue Man Group entertained a sold-out Shea's Performing Arts Center by pointing out the silliness of the entire affair.

Self-conscious, ironic and hopelessly naive, Blue Man still managed to rock the house.

Formed more than a decade ago by three New York buddies with an inclination toward the arts and a desire to do something unique, Blue Man Group has since evolved into a sizable organization, with 30 rotating cast members and roughly 500 office personnel. The "Complex Rock Tour" is an offshoot of the stage show that now runs continuously in New York, Boston, Las Vegas and Chicago, with a fifth installment opening soon in Berlin.

The rock show is heavy on irony, but just as dedicated to celebrating rock, warts and all.

The Blue Men — three black-clad, blue-faced figures who take the stage in a state of confusion — happen upon their instruments as if unaware of their surroundings and devoid of any conception of rock etiquette.

Those instruments — bizarre varieties of percussion, from a deconstructed piano to a modified PVC pipe contraption — are the medium through which the trio forges a relationship with the audience.

The concert is arranged to follow a "standard rock concert" manual, which is directed by an anonymous voice blasting over the PA. The Blue Men are being trained in the language of rock performance; they never speak, never move their mouths, employing only their eyes as portals of emotion.

The point is to at once deconstruct the iconic nature of the rock concert and celebrate it. Toward this end, the Blue Men were backed by a large band: four drummers, two guitarists, a bassist and a keyboardist. The sound was full, the performance flawlessly tight as the Blue Men led their band through selections from the recent "The Complex" album.

"Time to Start" found the anonymous PA personality instructing the Blue Men, and the audience, in the standard rock concert moves, from the head-bang to the pogo; "Sing Along," given voice on the album by Dave Matthews, featured a crowd participation segment based on a sly lyrical conceit involving commentary on groupthink, herd mentality and the general insecurity of the individual; "Up to the Roof" found opener Tracy Bonham baring her soul against the relatively static and nearly emotionless background, in what was surely the highlight of the evening; for a take on Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit," Bonham returned and simply rattled the walls with her emotional performance.

How silly do we look as we embrace our rock rituals? How completely ridiculous is it to make a shaman of a rock singer? How much of our rock-show behavior is a result of our desire to blend into the group? Is rock release or imprisonment?

The Blue Men didn't answer these questions. But they had a good time raising them.

Openers Bonham and the Venus Hum received enthusiastic reactions from the crowd. Bonham in particular was impressive. Performing songs from her recently released independent EP, including "Something Beautiful," "All Thumbs" and "And the World Has the Nerve to Keep Turning," Bonham and her two backing musicians threatened to steal the show. Crossing the folk-based beauty of "Led Zeppelin III" with the melodic acumen of Paul McCartney, Bonham proved she is an artist worthy of our full attention.

And we say that without the slightest trace of irony.

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BLUE MAN: HEADY SATIRE WITH A BEAT

BYLINE: CHARLES PASSY, Palm Beach Post Music Writer
DATE: August 22, 2003
PUBLICATION: Palm Beach Post, The (FL)
EDITION: FINAL
SECTION: ACCENT
PAGE: 8E
MEMO: CONCERT REVIEW

Face it: The rock concert, as we know and love it, is nothing more than a series of cliches - the grand entrance, the fake ending before the encore, the "We love you insert-city-name" closing speech. It's all as scripted as the canned laughter on a bad sitcom.

The inventive **Blue Man Group**, a performance-art troupe that got its start in New York more than a decade ago, has taken that very notion and turned it into - what else? - a rock concert. Or rather, a deconstruction of a rock concert, one that's infused with more than its share of sharp-edged humor but still leaves room for the three-man group to demonstrate some of its trademark surreal theatrics. The **Blue Man Group**, in other words, really does rock - in more ways than one.

At least they did on Wednesday night at the Sound Advice Amphitheatre, where the percussion-based ensemble, supplemented by a plentiful rock band and guest artists Tracy Bonham and electronica group Venus Hum, brought their "Complex Tour." The near-capacity audience (though the venue didn't open the lawn area) spoke to the group's eclectic appeal, since it included everyone from grade-schoolers staying out way past their bedtimes to mohawk-sporting teens to more than a few grandparently types.

The **Blue Man Group** got them primed with that grand entrance - in this case, they played some of their array of percussive instruments, from PVC pipes to an oversized drum to a half-sawed piano, behind a curtain, letting it fall at just the right frenzied moment.

Then, a disembodied voice instructed the group, who truly are three men with their heads painted in an electric blue, to try out various rock "movements": the head bob, the fist pump, the hip swivel. From there, the show evolved into further forms of satire, as in "Rock Concert Movement No. 27: Say hello to the people in the cheap seats."

All the while, there's music playing - loud, crunchy, liberating - sometimes with the blue men assisting on percussion, sometimes without. And lighting and special effects - let's just say the Blue Man team considers any flat surface a video projection screen - supply the evening's eye-popping quotient.

But part of the joy is a quieter, more restrained form of theater - when the blue men react to the disembodied voice's commands and to the audience's hoots and hollers with a kind of man-from-Mars curiosity and wonderment. At these times, they aren't just deconstructing the rock concert; they're deconstructing our world - and forcing us to examine ourselves in a new light.

That's pretty heady stuff to see at a venue like Sound Advice - and the amphitheater deserves all the credit for presenting it.

(Wouldn't it be nice if the Kravis Center took up that sort of mission on its main stage more often?)

On another level, the "Complex Tour" revels in the largeness of spirit that comes with rock shows.

You could see it near the end, when Venus Hum's Annette Strean majestically cooed her way through Donna Summer's I Feel Love and Bonham devoured The Who's Baba O'Riley, with the blue men and their backup band joining in on the full-throttle performances. Here, satire gave way to a celebration of pop culture, albeit with a layer of avant-garde sensibility. Strean's multicolored dress, for example, lit up like a plugged-in lollipop.

Then again, what else would you expect a **Blue Man Group** production?

charles_passy@pbpost.com

Illustration: PHOTO (B&W)

Blue Man Group provides a rock concert combined with avant garde theater and thought-provoking satire of an ingenius nature. (Photo ran MSL only.)

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Invasion of the little blue men

Blue Man Group visits Hershey tonight

INTELLIGENCER JOURNAL (LANCASTER, PA.)

Publication Date: October 31, 2003
Tag: 10177171
Section: HAPPENINGS
Page: 4
Jon Ferguson

DETAILS The **Blue Man Group** with Tracy Bonham and Venus Hum, tonight, 8 p.m. Giant Center, Hershey, $45, 534-3911

Ask Eric Gebow what he does for a living and he simply answers, "I'm a Blue Man."

Ask him what a Blue Man is, and it gets a little more complicated.

"A Blue Man is an egoless character who has a quick learning curve, but figures things out as he goes," Gebow said. "He possesses a very childlike wonderment to things, very open. He can find an incredible fascination with something very simple that, as adults, we may not notice because we're bogged down in thinking about something else."

Whatever.

For most people, the Blue Men are those three bullet-headed guys in gooey blue makeup with bulging eyes who get to bang on weird-looking percussive instruments in fantastical settings while loud music blares and bright lights flash.

The Blue Men, stars of television and stage, are a wildly successful performance and musical act that attracts sellout crowds at their theaters in New York City, Boston, Chicago and Las Vegas, with Berlin to follow next year.

They have released two albums, with the latest, "The Complex," featuring guest vocals by artists like Dave Matthews, Gavin Rossdale of Bush and Tracy Bonham.

This year, for the first time, the Blue Men have embarked on a nationwide tour that has been attracting sellout crowds at venues across the country. The tour makes a stop tonight at Giant Stadium in Hershey.

Gebow, one of dozens of Blue Men, is one of the four Blue Men (only three perform on a given night) touring the nation.

He promises a rock spectacle.

The Blue Men, armed with an array of odd-looking instruments, will be joined onstage by a large rock band (two guitars, keyboard, bass, drums, three percussionists and a backup singer). Opening acts Bonham and Venus Hum, which also performs on "The Complex," will join the Blue Men onstage.

The show, which is hauled around the country in five buses and seven tractor-trailers, features a massive set, high-tech light show and huge video screen.

"It's a rock 'n' roll show, but there's another story line to the whole thing which brings some theatrics to it," Gebow said. "We actually comment on the theatrical things that go on at rock shows.

"We sort of lead the audience through different things that go on at rock shows - pumping your fist in the air, bobbing your head up and down to the music. We kind of, like, make people look at that and think about it. It sort of turns it into an analysis, but also pokes fun at it. It doesn't take itself too seriously."

Gebow, 34, a New Hampshire native, said he was working as a rock drummer in San Francisco in 1999 when he spotted a notice about Blue Men auditions. Though he had no theatrical background, Gebow got the job and went to New York City, where the huge Blue Man organization is headquartered, for extensive training.

He joined the cast in New York and also worked some in Boston. He then went to Las Vegas when that show first opened and is now stationed in Chicago when he's not on the road with the touring ensemble.

"This is certainly the largest tour I've ever been on," he said. "It's a lot more people than what I'm used to. Before I was doing maybe four or five people in a van with a trailer. Now it's five buses and seven trucks. It's a whole different level."

Gebow said it takes between 30 minutes and an hour to apply the makeup and it hasn't turned him permanently blue. As long as he is doing the show, Gebow said he doesn't have to worry about getting enough exercise.

"There are times, especially in the summer, when it's really warm, that we're incredibly exhausted after a show - both mentally and physically," he said. "You have to be very, very aware during the show and that takes a lot of energy. And just the nature of the drumming and the moving around the stage is very physical. You have to take care of yourself. The show keeps you in shape."

Expect a Blue Man workout tape soon as they continue to expand their entertainment empire.

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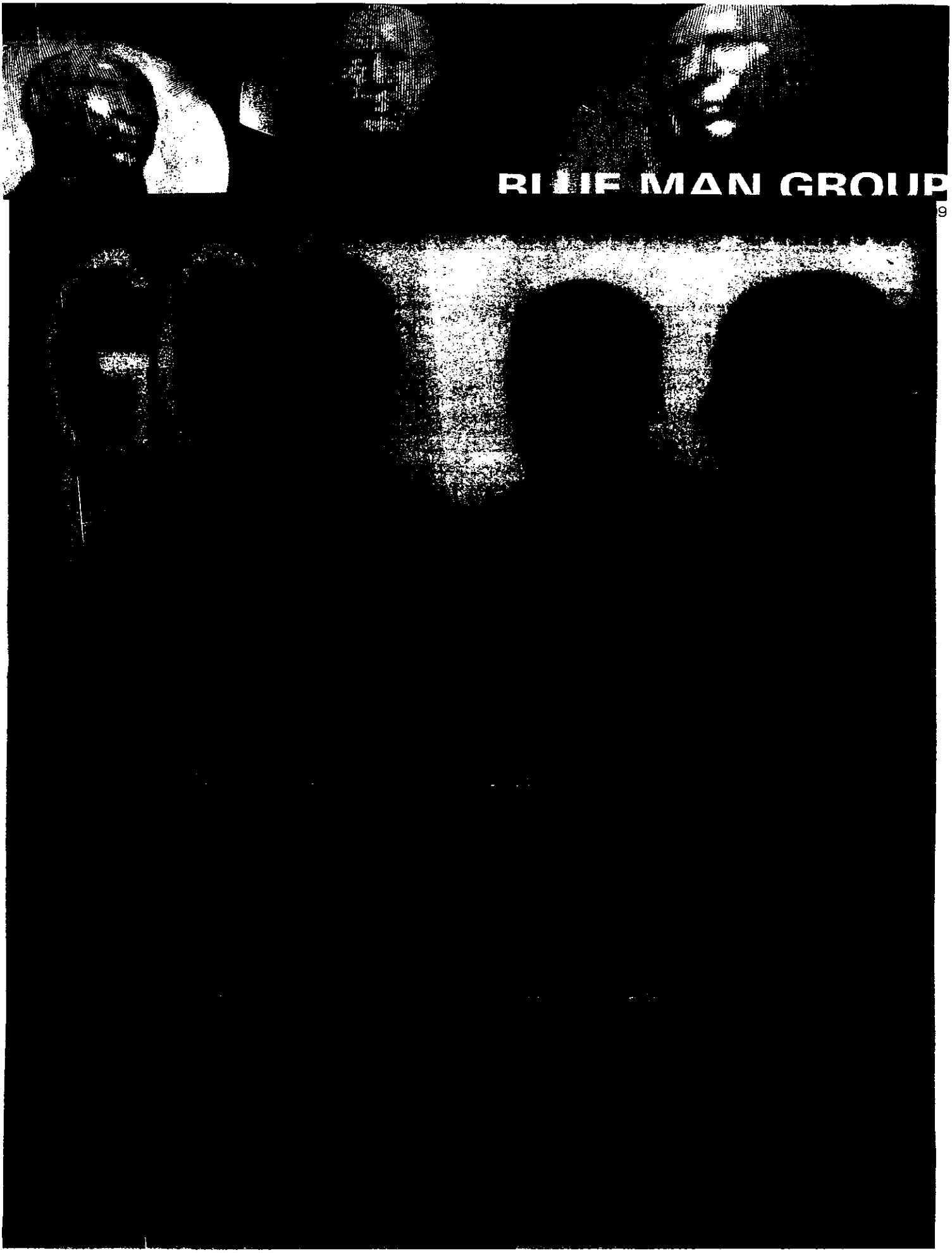
BLUE MAN GROUP

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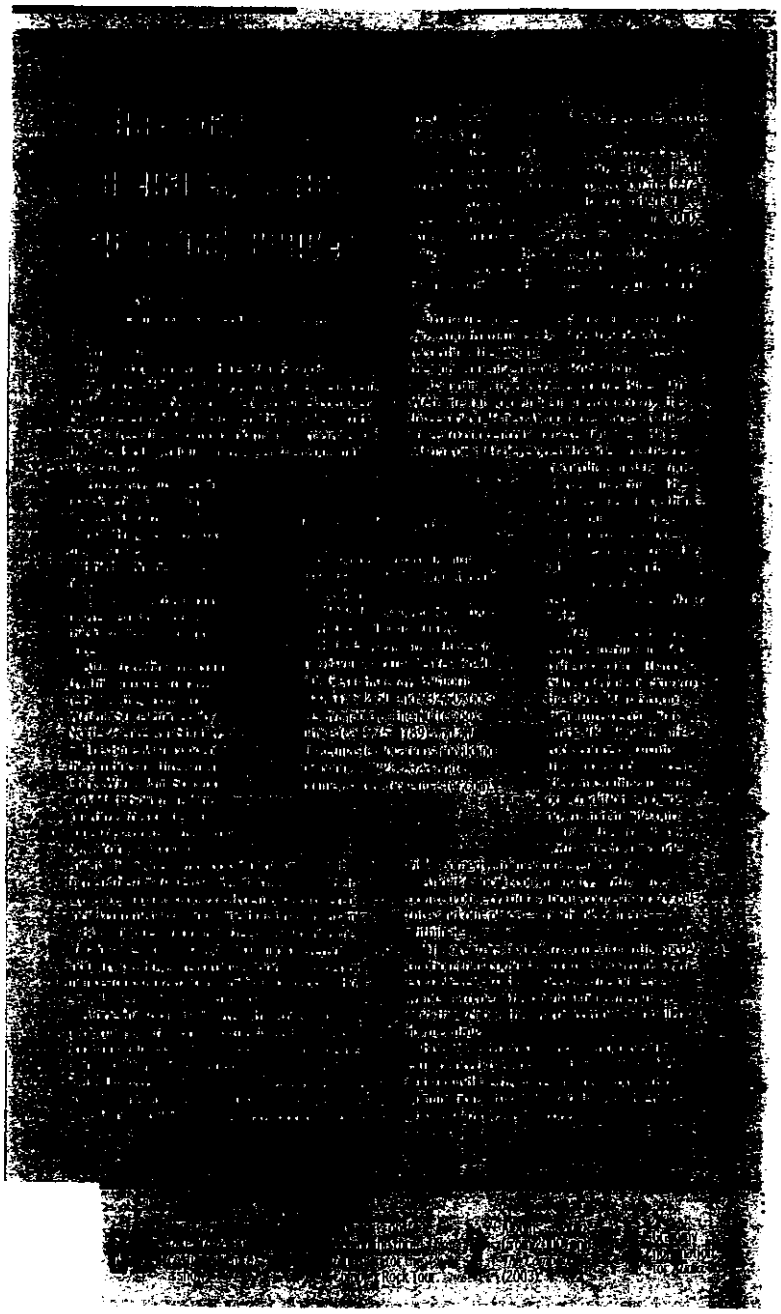

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Blue Man Group does its take on rock 'n' roll

By DAVID PENCEK
Norwich Bulletin

Weird, innovative, blue ed, Yes, they all describe ue Man Group.

What also describes the o is great fun.

Blue Man Group visited e Mohegan Sun Arena uesday as part of its "The mplex" tour. It's the part-eatrical, part-musical oup's first foray into the ck and roll medium.

Backed by an eight-piece nd that included four drum-ers, Blue Man Group stimu-ed the audience with sight d sound. With flashing lights and the three blue-faced men dressed in all-black outfits banging on tubes and other instruments they created, it wasn't a traditional rock show to say the least. But who cared?

The concert played off the fact that this was Blue Man Group's initial attempt at putting together a rock show. A voice over the loudspeaker told the trio about how to be a rock star. It included instructions on pelvis exercises and coming up with a name like Scary Spice if personality isn't a strong suit.

One of the early highlights was when the voice instructed the Blue Man Group to pay tribute to past rock stars. The segment included parts of Devo's "Whip It," Ozzy Osbourne's "Crazy Train" and Led Zeppelin's "D'Yer Mak'er."

The crowd also received instructions on classic rock movements to do during the show, such as the head bob and the one-arm fist pump.

Tracy Bonham, who sang with Blue Man Group for part of the show, and Venus Hum opened the concert with 30-minutes sets each.

While she is not the daughter of Led Zeppelin drummer John Bonham, Tracy Bonham opened her set with her take on Zeppelin's "Black Dog." Bonham strummed her violin while singing the rock tune.

She sounded like part Alanis Morissette, part Dar Williams and part Joan Osborne. Which is to say Bonham didn't really stand out as a female vocalist.

The trio Venus Hum played music that would go well in a techno club. Lead singer Annette Strean was all smiles throughout the show. While not having the best voice, it went well with the computer-generated music bandmates Kip Kubin and Tony Miracle played

dpencek@norwichbulletin.com.

Sarah Schultz/Norwich Bulletin

The Blue Man Group performs during its first set on Tuesday night at Mohegan Sun in Uncasville.

BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH

YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE: The Blue Man Group

By
Benjy Portnoy and Julia Gordon
10/23/2003 8:35:51 AM

In recent years, a growing cultural finger has been pointing out the fact that modern society generally has its principles and goals, wants and desires, and everyday lifestyles all wrong. This theory suggests that we work jobs we don t enjoy to get things we don t need. It states that while our priorities point toward amassing material goodies and more crap to heap on the pile, we spend less time with people. We engage in fewer meaningful human relationships and generally disassociate from society. We are reduced to cogs and gears i a colony of machine ants, identified by numbers, divided into cubicles, all chasing after the illusionary Calvin Klein-flavored cheese at the end of the maze.

The new champions of this movement are unlikely heroes. They don t say much. But even without words they swirl sound, emotion, catharsis, humor, psychology, satire, lights, spectacle, and above all else, a lot of blue paint. They are of course, Blue Man Group.

Commanding a near-full house at The Fox on Tuesday, October 21, BMG s percussion-driven tubefest came on the heels of its recent release, *The Complex* [Lava/Atlantic]. The record is a step away from BMG s established role as purveyors of instrumentals only. Combining guest vocalist appearances and voiced over rock concert movement instructions such as fist pumping and unbridled screaming, the general theme of the record is that of rock music; its influence, its cliches, its power to incite fiery rebellion in the hearts of all us working class stiffs AND its potential to create communities and love where before there were none. This concert was a visual

extension of these themes. And a hell of one, at that.

Along for the live ride this evening were two artists that were also featured on the record, quasi-acoustic chick rocker Tracy Bonham and avant-garde alternafreaks Venus Hum.

Introducing herself as "the appetizer," Tracy Bonham's sound was gorgeously enhanced by the palatial Fox Theater acoustics, as compared to her UMB Bank Pavilion show three months earlier. Accompanied by the mega-talented team of Peter Adams (keyboard, vocals and spoons) and John Darling (guitar and vocals), the trio melded with a vocal beauty and lyrical punch not heard since the great days of Toad the Wet Sprocket. Bonham's sultry and emotive voice is felt in the heart as well as the guts, but that doesn't stop her from being a bit of a comic, introducing one number: "I got kicked out of music school and turned to the dark side--obviously--and then I wrote this song." She launched into her huge hit from 1996, "Mother, Mother," a kicking cover of Led Zeppelin's "Black Dog" on violin, and closed with PJ Harvey's unforgettable "Fifty Foot Queenie" a song with enough soul and power to take the roof off the house (and she just about did).

Venus Hum took over next, upping the energy notch just a tad, readying us for things to come. Lead vocalist Annette has a Broadway-quality voice over a quirky, electronic disco beat. While they didn't have the visual display behind them that they had a few months earlier, songs such as "Bella Luna" still soared us to the heavens. Both Bonham and Venus Hum's performances proved indispensable when they returned as guest vocalists/artists with the Blue Men later in the show.

And then, there were Blue Men. For those who've never seen it, here's the meat of it – the "Blue Men" are three guys who aren't quite aliens, even less human, but carry insatiable curiosity and oddly deft percussion skills. They also have a backup band, made up of a bunch more drummers and guitar players that contribute to the heavy percussive rock sound. The Blue Men are the bouncing balls to watch – they beat on PVC tubing, mammoth bass drums, upright grand pianos, and incorporate various other invented implements that whirr, bang, whizz and boom.

The show actually began during the intermission after Venus Hum. Although the lights were on and the stage was vacant, the entire room's attention was focused on two 2x10' message boards (purposefully out of sync with one another) that were broadcasting various facts about Internet usage. This included the number of Instant Messages were sent last year, the percentage of words in the dictionary that have been registered as Internet domains.

Within a few minutes, these figures began to include stats that correlated higher computer usage with increased levels of depression and feelings of isolation; another patch in the quilt of this evening's theme. It should also be mentioned that in-between the facts and figures, the signs began to alternately berate and insult each other, attempting to garner

crowd favor by inciting yells and screams and "my side is better" type activities. (e.g., "THE SIGN ON THE RIGHT IS SUCKING UP TO THE MAN WHILE I'M RAGING AGAINST THE MACHINE...CELBRATE OUR SOLIDARITY BY CHANTING 'THE WORDS ON THE RIGHT SUCK'...IT'S TIME TO PEE...OR YOU CAN PURCHASE OVER-PRICED REFRESHMENTS...")

The disjointed messages proved somewhat unsettling. They were competing for our attention, much the way it is done day in and day out through ad slogans, cluttered TV programming, extraneous noise and words and sounds; millions of bits of fragmented information to be received and processed daily by every set of human ears.

Foreshadowing perhaps, for the messages to come.

At once, the lights went down and the phrase that is found throughout *The Complex* album was echoed here: YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE. Eyes were directed to a gargantuan, stage-enveloping backdrop that resembled the blueprint of a cityscape, but wasn't too far off from a rat maze. From behind the curtain a silhouette appeared and began pounding away. Ten seconds later, another one seemed to drop from the ceiling and joined in. A third followed. Suddenly the shadows of a band appeared. When the silken sheet finally fell to the ground, a dizzying collection of musicians, instruments, lights and instruments was revealed. The 90 charged minutes that followed featured varying degrees of interaction between Blue Men and audience (several people were pulled onstage throughout the show), Blue Men and narrator (a sort of Big Brother in this instance), and Blue Men and themselves.

Over the course of the evening, it became increasingly evident that the level of planning and production that went into this spectacle was mind-boggling. For this outing, BMG brought aboard production designer Marc Brickman, known for his work with Pink Floyd, Nine Inch Nails and Paul McCartney. The result was stunning; the audio, video, and intellectual themes running through the production were pulled consistently through, and though each was distinct, they all seemed to interweave with the others.

The underlying premise suggested that the Blue Men were following a how-to manual for being a rock band; exploring it and sharing their results with their audience. We were presented with the "rock concert movement" instructions, ranging from headbobs, to jumping up and down, to fake endings, etc., all satirical, yet sincere homages to the rock idiom.

Added to the tribute list were the barrage of covers. These included select tunes from Led Zeppelin, Ozzy Osbourne, and The Who's Baba O'Riley, the beginning of which was played note-for-note on the tubes.

The apex of the evening, however, came when Venus Hum returned to the stage to accent BMG's version of Donna Summer's "I Feel Love." Although one might say it was just a good American song, another argument is that they were giving the answer to their

own challenge: when does a human life have meaning? The answer: when it feels love. Even Venus Hum□s lead singer was outfitted in a dress like a light-up roll of Life Savers, each stripe firing at different times until the □love□ chorus when all the colors reached a logical visual harmony, symbolizing that unity.

These clever guises buried the true message just under the surface □ that rock music, throughout its history, present and future, is a great catalyst for bringing people together. In a sense, this □rock concert□ was more a celebration of music and its power and potential to unite the disconnected aspects of humanity. All NT staffers in attendance agreed □ the Blue Man organization is brilliance incarnate, and puts on the most engaging and thrilling live performance we□ve ever seen in our lives. Ever.

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don't stay

Music

Blue Man takes concert experience to a deeper level

By KYLE MUNSON
Register Music Critic
10/17/2003

Concert review rule No. 1: Load the opening sentences with colorful details to set up your opinions as critic.. . . .

They beat neon orange drumsticks against a twisted glob of PVC pipes that looked like musical intestines at center stage. They struck the strings of a disemboweled piano, propped on its side, with giant mallets. They never uttered words or sang but instead stared with bug-eyed curiosity into the audience and at every object that they manipulated into a percussion instrument.

The Blue Man Group, three guys whose heads were covered in bald caps and blue greasepaint and who were backed by an eight-piece rock band, brought music with a heavy message on Wednesday night to Stephens Auditorium in Ames. By the time the 2,722 fans were given an encore that included the Who's "Baba O"Riley" and a shower of streamers, they had enjoyed a good laugh at just about every rock-concert cliche in the book.

Concert review rule No. 17: Explain the deeper meanings behind the concert's music and imagery. . . .

Pioneered as a theatrical-percussion show with residencies in major cities (New York, Boston, Chicago, Las Vegas), the Blue Man Group dubbed this debut rock tour "The Complex" after its recent CD. Turns out that "The Complex" is also the blue men's label for our modern corporate/industrial culture that's killing our souls.

And every blue man's mission is to rouse us, the masses who are mere rats in a maze, from our collective stupor so that we may escape our cubicles and instead make "meaningful connections with others."

In delivering this message on Wednesday the Blue Man Group's art-rock

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show borrowed its philosophy and style from Pink Floyd's "The Wall," George Orwell's "1984," the "Terminator" trilogy, "The Matrix" trilogy and the opening scenes of "2001: A Space Odyssey."

Even the choice of "Baba O"Riley" as a cover song was apt, considering that it was originally written by Pete Townshend for his aborted rock opera ("The Lifehouse") about a "teenage wasteland" where over-reliance on technology alienates people from one another.

At least those were the deeper levels at work as the blue men, with childlike awe, poked fun at such concert rituals as head bobbing, fist pumping, raising a cigarette lighter and "the fake ending" (that of course sets up the encore).

And lest anyone take their anticapitalist message too far, the blue men paid tribute to the victims of 9/11 with a video slide show. (To see it, go to www.exhibit13.com.)

Concert review rule No. 22: Mention the opening acts. . . .

Messages aside, this was a rock concert in which the warm-up bands were allowed extra time to shine.

Tracy Bonham, a classically trained violinist who was a one-hit-wonder casualty of the 1990s Lilith Fair scene, won over the audience during her own set with a solo violin rendition of Led Zeppelin's "Black Dog" that had bite. She was welcomed back by the blue men for frequent duty as guest vocalist.

Venus Hum is a new Nashville-based trio whose electronic beats are programmed on laptop computers but then humanized by Annette Strean's soaring voice that evokes Icelandic pop star Björk. She also had a guest vocal turn for the blue men, wearing a dress that blinked like a Christmas tree.

Concert review rule No. 46: Close with a pithy sentence that summarizes your opinions as critic. . . .

Blue Man Group remains more theatrical curiosity than outright rock band, but these guys should be admired for trying to cure our modern society's blues.

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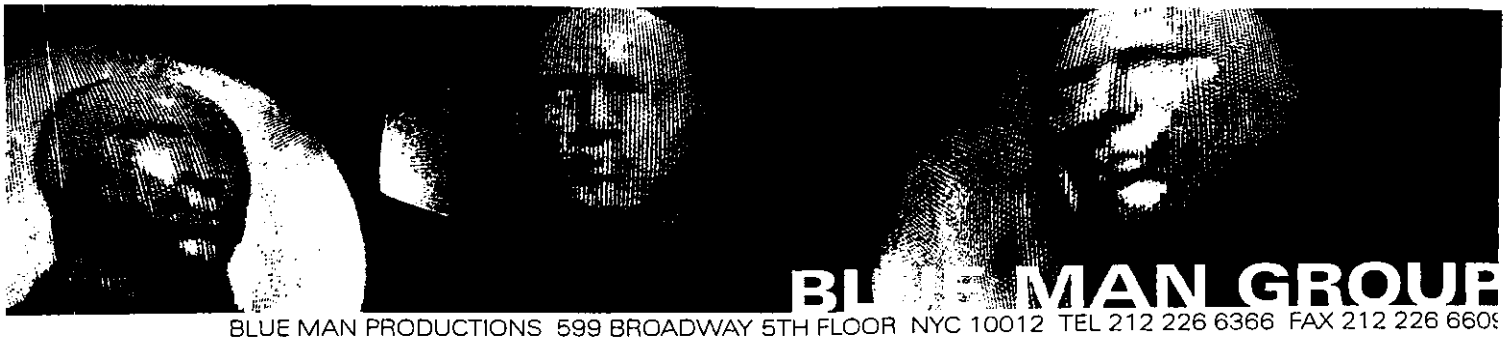

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NEW YORK TIMES
(NATIONAL EDITION)
NEW YORK, NY
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ROCK REVIEW

Taking Those Tubes on Tour

3493

By JON PARELES

Songs with words are the latest enhancement to the Blue Man Group, which is making a foray onto the rock circuit after more than a decade in theaters. "The Complex," its new touring spectacle, came to Hammerstein Ballroom in Manhattan on Monday night, where the group was joined by Tracy Bonham and the group Venus Hum, who are guests on the album version (Blue Man Group/ Lava Records).

The Blue Man Group hasn't dropped its longtime obsessions with tubes, from plumbing to digestive tracts, and with impersonal modern life. As in the group's theater shows, bald men painted blue maintain quizzical, deadpan expressions as they apply themselves to an array of percussion instruments: tuned plastic pipes, whooshing fiberglass rods, the innards of a piano struck with a mallet. Although "The Complex" is made for touring, it deploys singers, a band and plenty of lights and video, including gizmos that seem to place animated figures on stage and in midair.

Those figures are the group's logo: a featureless man, generic and corporate. The new songs put words to his alienation: "If I could only find the exit door I'd run away/ I'm so far in I can't get out," the band sang in the title song of "The Complex" as the video showed the faceless figure in a maze of cubicles. An encore, "Exhibit 13," was an elegy behind images of documents that drifted from the World Trade Center on 9/11: scraps from corporate lives.

Despite the futuristic technology, most of the music harked back to 1980's hard rock. Wide-open power chords enfolded the blue men's polyrhythms, minus the more ominous, claustrophobic tone of more recent industrial rock and new metal. Although the songs brood, the show is about the muscle and exuberance of a big shared beat. And while the lyrics worried about conformity and authority, the audience didn't. Instructed by unseen voices to yell, pump fists or jump to the beat, the crowd happily complied.

THE TIMES

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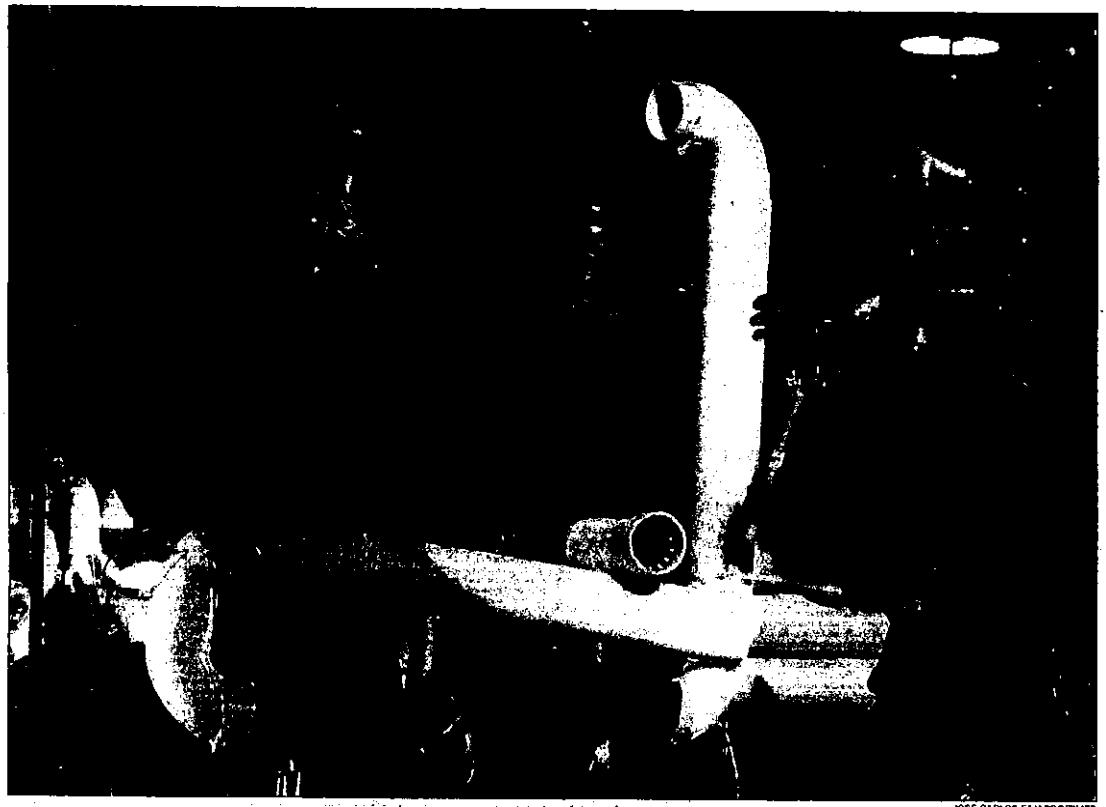


JOSE CARLOS FAJARDO/TIMES

PIPE DOWN? Not the Blue Man Group, which brought an intense show to the Warfield Thursday night.

Rockin' a Blue streak

Innovative band takes 'Complex' to the people

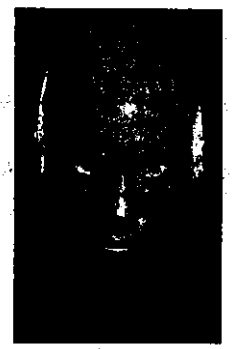
By Tony Hicks
TIMES STAFF WRITER

EVEN BEFORE hitting the door of the Warfield in San Francisco on Thursday night, it was pretty clear that what was happening inside was no ordinary show.

A half-dozen tractor-trailers crowded either side of the one-way street. The sidewalk was blocked off with police barricades, so the technicians could better monitor computer screens, set among dozens and dozens of equipment crates. The whole thing was covered by a canopy, giving the impression of a small street fair. Either that or some sort of hurried investigation into a dramatic and unexpected event.

Unexpected is a good word to describe the Blue Man Group. Even if one has seen this post-modern technological marvel of 21st century vaudeville perform at one of its four permanent locations around the country, things still come as a temple-throbbing surprise.

The act, fixed around three bald, blue-faced, dead-panned stage mutes, is touring for the first time on the strength of the Blue Man Group's second album, "The Complex." Since its inception 15 years ago, the original trio has grown to 30 performing at the various permanent locations — Las Vegas,



New York, Boston and Chicago. But the original members — Chris Wink, Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton — made the recording and are performing on this tour.

They faced an interesting quandary: How to fit a show that exists in theaters designed

CONCERT REVIEW

for their array of tricks, comedy routines and percussive wonder into various venues around the country. Thus, the big trucks and technical spillage onto the sidewalk.

And they certainly pulled it off Thursday. They could not perform some of their best tricks, but to complain about that would be looking a gift horse of a tour square in its blue-stained mouth.

Since the blue guys are touring behind a record, they focused mostly on the new music, as any band pulling through the Warfield usually does. But even in touring mode, this is no regular show. It's an absolute full-throttle assault on the senses from the get-go.

In Las Vegas, the comedy rules the show. But laughs, special effects and the gamut of audience-participation stunts are eschewed on this tour for a sonic barrage of percussion, seasoned with some powerful guitar. In addition to the three Blue Men spending most of their stage time in a half-circular formation of alien-looking pipe percussion, an eight-piece, white-and-black-dressed band barely squeezed onto the stage, above and behind the Blue Men. Four band members excelled in synchronized pounding on four drum and percussion sets that formed a crushing wall of sound. Guest vocalists/musicians Tracy Bonham and Venus Hum occasionally appeared to reprise material they performed on the record with the Blue Men, but were mostly lost in the wide and turbulent sea of sound.

It didn't matter. And even though the comedy element is toned down, it was still

See BLUE, Page 4

Blue

FROM PAGE 1

enough when mixed with the special effects overload and wall of percussion to give the dancing audience a heavy slap to the head. The tricks vary, from seemingly shoving a small camera down the throat of a guy in the front row, creating a brief, Discovery Channel trip through inner space to playing "Your Attention," a song that relies on the group's trademark crash-test-dummy-like video figures leading the crowd through classic audience participation moves (rock concert movement No. 2 — the pumping fist).

There were a few down moments, which wouldn't be down moments at all for anyone else. The band played most of its new record and let the music do the talking at points, moving hand in hand with 3-D effects that stretched from the massive video screen above the fray to the very edge of the stage itself. Bonham appeared on the songs she sang on the CD. But her best moment was a cover of Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit," with accompanying laser-guided jellyfish and grasshoppers moving across the back wall.

The band's other best musical moment — aside from countless drum breaks more powerful than any drum corps from a college marching band (these guys all hit really hard) — was another cover near show's end, this time the Who's "Baba O'Riley." The Blue Men came out with these giant, pipe-percussion things strapped to their backs and, incredibly, nailed the song's classic keyboard intro with amazing and precise whacks on just the right pipes. It led into the third Blue Guy whacking the power-chord intro on a piano just like the real song — only the grand piano was turned on its side and he was slamming whole sections of piano strings with a mallet. Somehow, it worked beautifully.

The show ended with the crowd nearly buried in long strings of confetti, which replaced the claustrophobic Vegas show-ender of long sheets of paper extending from the back of the theater and over the crowd's head. One can only do so much on the road! It was still amazing to watch, and still one of the best pure entertainment spectacles ever conceived.

Tony Hicks is the Times pop music critic. He can be reached at 925-952-2678 or thicks @cctimes.com.

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TOURING

Blue Man Group Takes Its Show On The Road

3755

BY SUSANNE AULT

LOS ANGELES—Blue Man Group attracts 1 million people annually to its four combined stage productions in Las Vegas, New York, Chicago, and Boston. Now, in launching its first full-blown tour, the act wants to add color to the concert business.

Supporting the Blue Man Group album *The Complex* (which streeted April 22 on Lava Records), the tour begins April 26-27 at Indio, Calif.'s Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival. Eight theater shows, promoted by Clear Channel Entertainment, will follow through June 2 at the Keller Auditorium in Portland, Ore. There are plans to take the road trip—also called the Complex—on a 40-date amphitheater run in July and August.

Average ticket prices are $30-$35. The dates will feature singer Tracy Bonham, who performs on two tracks on *The Complex*.

PUTTING IT ALL ON THE LINE

Known for engineering innovative sounds during its stage shows—such as a mallet smashing a piano—Blue Man Group creators are investing much time and money to ensure that the rock tour lives up to the ensemble's visionary reputation.

"We spent everything that we accumulated in the last two years," says Blue Man Group originator Chris Wink. He insists—without revealing specifics—that this is just a slight exaggeration of the resources that went into the Complex. "We spent everything we had to make this our best next show. We're doing 40 more dates in July and August, so our hope is to be in black rather than red ink . . . But we're lucky that we have the day jobs of our theater [productions]."

Speaking on behalf of other group originators Phil Stanton and Matt Goldman, Wink says that "most bands don't take 50 weeks to build a show . . . our record label thinks we're crazy."

Trying to get across just how intricate the Complex will be, Wink says that at one point a holographic image of a jellyfish will swim across a number of video monitors that have had their glass screens cracked. At another time, dragonflies will appear to swarm the stage. Seven drummers will be incorporated into the act.

"After 30 years of doing rock'n'roll shows, this is the most refreshing and challenging project I've come across in years," Complex production designer Marc Brickman says. "[Blue Man Group's] commitment to the music world is really staggering."

Brickman—who has supervised the onstage look for tours by such notable acts as Pink Floyd, Paul McCartney, Nine Inch Nails, and No Doubt—says that he so believed in the Complex striking audience gold that he packed up and moved from Malibu, Calif., to live in New York during the months he was laying out the show.

Brickman says the six-truck production, 12-member band, and three Blue Man Group performers (who will vary throughout the tour but will not include Wink, Stanton, or Goldman) is a big project for theaters. But the Complex is falling within a standard 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. load-in and three-hour load-out time, so crew costs are manageable.

Complexity Can Be a Good Thing. Blue Man Group's theater show is being staged in four cities. Its innovative concert tour will visit such markets as Indio, Calif., and Portland, Ore. The original Blue Man Group members—who are not part of the touring company—are, from left, Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton, and Chris Wink.

While "the guys have definitely gone to the wall [with the expense], they've all worked really hard to make every penny count," Brickman says. "They should come out OK. I'm hoping this will tour for years and be accepted by the music community."

SOMETHING NEW TO SEE

One obvious question regarding the tour's concept is whether those people familiar with Blue Man Group's current productions can get something fresh out of the Complex. Wink says that the worry of paying for the same thing twice is likely clouding buyers' minds in New York and Chicago. Complex tickets are moving slower in those cities than tickets at fresh markets, such as the now-sold-out May 18 date at the Warner Theater in Washington, D.C.

"Other places, like Seattle, Portland, and Denver—we've never been there before, so I think that people are clamoring for any version of Blue Man that they can get their hands on," Wink says. "But for Chicago and New York, the challenge is to get people to understand that this has nothing to do with the theatrical show."

Granted, signature Blue Man Group elements will be infused into the rock show, such as the performers' deadpan sense of humor and use of unique instrumentation—for example, their invented "airpole" (an antenna that is whooshed through the air). But Brickman says that what stands out to him in prepping the Complex is "this is great music. It really moves like a rock'n'roll show."

Blue Man Group's debut album, the instrumental *Audio*, has sold 414,000 units since its December 1999 release, according to Nielsen SoundScan. And Larry Webman, VP/agent at the act's booking agency Little Big Man, is confident that attention for the *Complex* album will spill over into the tour. The video for *The Complex*'s first single, "Sing Along"—which features Dave Matthews Band—is currently airing on VH1, and the track "The Current" will run in ads for the upcoming film *Terminator 3*.

Also, the Blue Man Group has locked in a string of promotional spots in April and May on *The Tonight Show With Jay Leno*, *Late Night With Conan O'Brien*, and *Live! With Regis and Kelly*, among other TV programs.

"All of this is happening at once: There's the album coming out, the single. Like any other band, there's going to be more awareness," Webman says. "Theater is what people know [Blue Man Group] for. But we have to convince people that [the Complex] is different."

Fostering another family show is an exciting premise for Webman, who hopes the wide appeal of the Blue Man Group's stage shows will translate to the Complex. As proof that this goal can be reached, he points to his having to skip some cities on the tour's initial routing because the markets lacked a large enough theater.

"The audience range for this is so big," Webman says. "We can make an amazing tour."

For Wink, the Complex shows are a natural progression for Blue Man Group, since its mission is to take risks within the entertainment world.

"You've got to keep reinventing yourself. You've got to keep surprising yourself," Wink says. "You don't want to be predictable. You want to wake up and think, 'What's the most exciting thing to do?' Well, this is it."

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NEW YORK, NY
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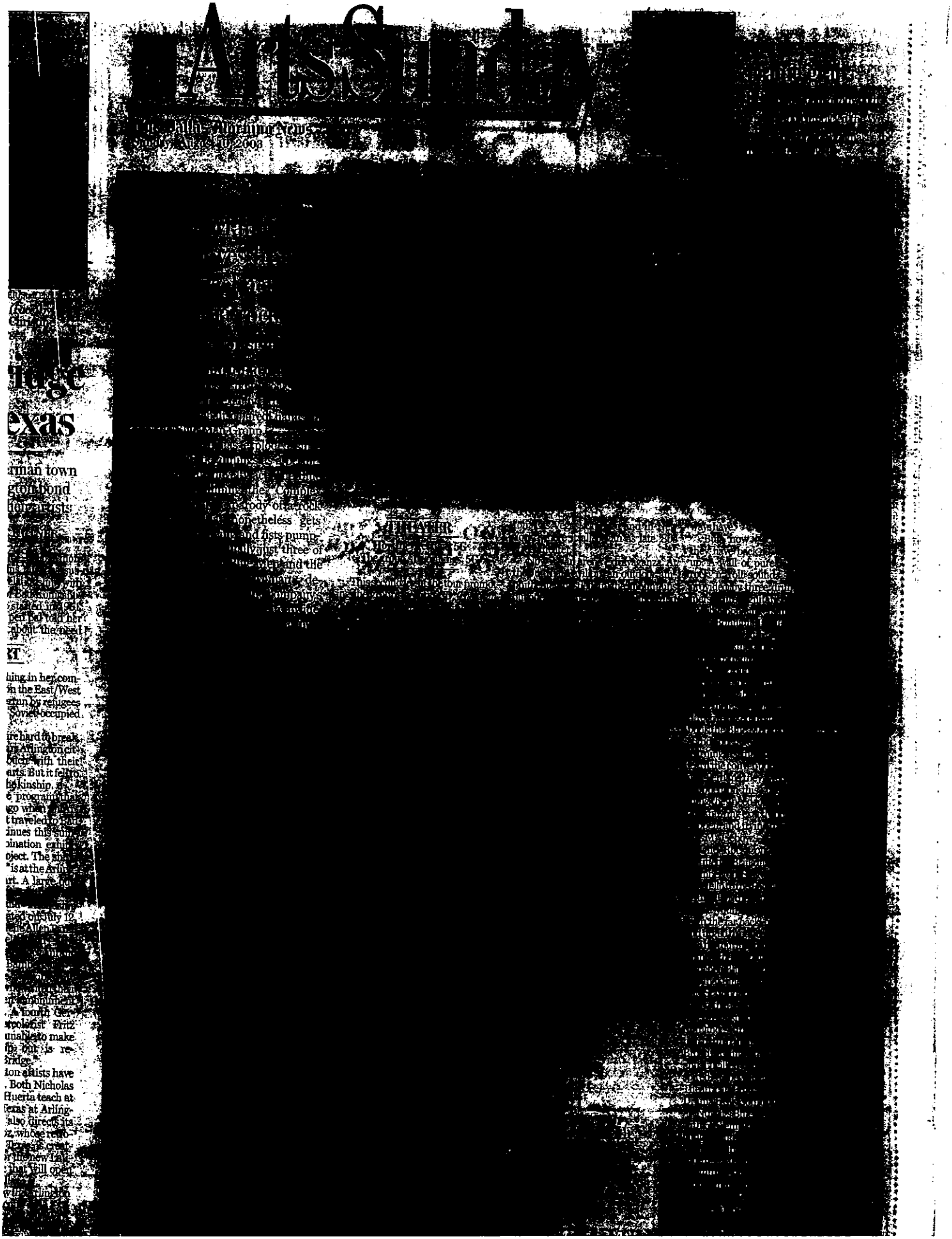
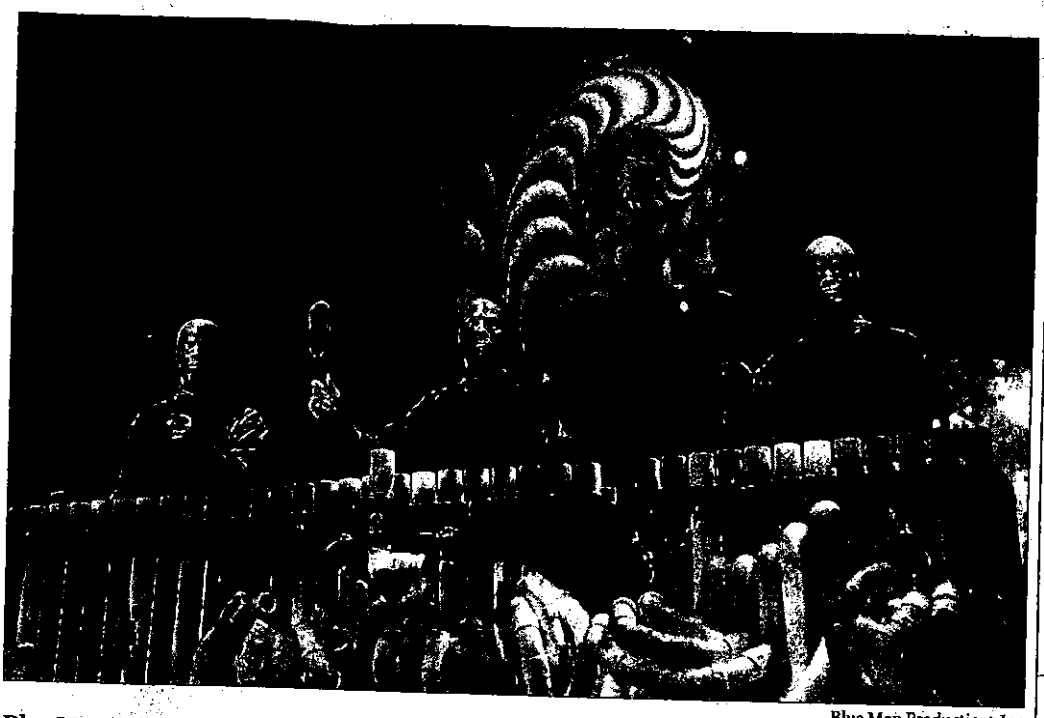


Success is in their makeup

Continued from Page 1G



Blue Man Productions Inc

Blue Man Group gets heads banging and fists pumping with its "Complex Rock Tour."

With *The Complex*, Blue Man Group added lyrics to its vision, the first time the group has used words since its early days. They tend to be simple — "If I sing a song/Will you sing along?" guest singer Dave Matthews croons on the CD — but also hint at the social mechanization that is the album's and the concert's underlying motif.

A constantly recurring character is a generic man who's seen wandering through gray streets and dreary cubicles of a generic city in the video projected over the band. During one song, laser outlines of this figure take the Blue Men's place onstage.

"It's the symbol on the bathroom door: That means you. Every person is that symbol," says Mr. Galassi.

"It's something that Blue Man's talked about for a long time, the effect of technology on society," says Mr. Gebow. "The loss of the individual, people not connecting with others, trying to fit in certain social settings in a certain way. It's pointing out that we've all lost something that we once had through this information overload."

To help make the point, every Blue Man actor subsumes his personal identity into the trio. "It's three as one. There's no ego," says Mr. Allmandinger. "All three characters are of a like mind. They're bred of the exact same thing. They have the same goal shared between the three of them, no matter what the goal is. ... It's childlike playing. By us being this egoless character, and a playful one, and an inquisitive one, hopefully we'll bring them [the audience] to the same place, with a similar energy, if we do our jobs well."

"We talk about the cultural mask a lot, too," says Mr. Galassi. "By putting the makeup on, it's sort of revealing your true self. ... It allows you to open up, be that part of yourself that we lose when we're growing up. You're born with this wide-eyed wonder; you can be completely entertained by nothing. When you're older, it's more complicated, and for me anyway, it's harder to feel joy or enjoy simple things. So we put on this makeup and tear off the other stuff that we learned. Hopefully, we can look at things in a new way, a more pure way."

"A lot of times, we talk about, 'Are we really putting a mask on, or are we taking one off?' " says Mr. Gebow.

On the tour, singer Tracy Bonham opens for the band and serves as its main voice, although the techno-pop band (and second opening act) Venus Hum steps onstage with singer Annette Strean in a light-up dress to do the album's pounding Donna Summer cover, "I Feel Love."

Ms. Bonham, best known for her 1996 hit "Mother Mother," sings other covers such as Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit" and The Who's "Baba O'Reilly," for which she plays the violin; along with the original song "Up to the Roof," which she also sings on the CD. Throughout the concert, the band plays snippets of tribute to such antecedents as Led Zeppelin and Devo.

Mr. Galassi, Mr. Gebow and Mr. Allmandinger, who range in age from mid-20s to early 30s, had some time to relax in Albuquerque between unloading their gear and starting the roughly hourlong makeup process that turns them into Blue Men. Mr. Allmandinger is on leave from the Boston show, Mr. Gebow and Mr. Galassi from Chicago.

The rock tour is "very, very different" from the other Blue Man shows, Mr. Gebow says. "We've been given a lot of freedom to try different things within what's written for the show. That's something we don't really get to do as much with a show that's been up and running for a long time."

It's surprising to see how different the three touring Blue Men are from each other. One wonders what Blue Man Productions looks for in recruiting new talent.

"They're looking for a certain kind of physical type, but not a mold. You have to communicate a strong point of view without speaking," says Mr. Galassi. "It takes a lot of auditioning. It takes a long time to pull that out. You get it or you don't. I don't know what it is. They talk about the 'eye-sparkle.' It's a point of view."

"You have to be a certain height," adds Mr. Gebow.

"Your head has to be the right shape," says Mr. Allmandinger. "It can't be square."

"They put you in the makeup to see how you look," says Mr. Gebow.

"We don't really look alike at all, but we're able to convey the idea of that, of being one entity," says Mr. Galassi. "We're encouraged to bring our own personality out in the character but at the same time be connected to the other two guys. In fact, they encourage that quite bit: 'Find your own Blue Man.' "

That's the message to the crowd at the Journal Pavilion, and to other Blue Man fans, too.

"We always look at [the audience] as the fourth Blue Man, the fourth character," says Mr. Galassi.

E-mail tsime@dallasnews.com

Blue Man Group: The Complex Rock Tour
Tuesday and Wednesday at 8 p.m. at NextStage Grand Prairie, 1001 NextStage Dr. $23.50 to $41. Call 214-373-8000 or metro 972-647-5700.

"That's why there are three of us, I think — it's the smallest number that can be a 'group.'"

Phil Stanton, a founding Blue Man

How Blue Man grew into art happenings

Phil Stanton, one of the original members of Blue Man Group, looks back from what's now a pop culture empire at the troupe's first guerrilla-theater performances in New York.

"I didn't know what to call us at first," says the Lubbock native — "I'm a Texan at heart" — of the early Blue Man days in spring of 1988.

"I was in some acting classes at the time, and I would tell my acting teacher, 'This thing we're doing, it's not really acting; it's more like art come to life.' So that's kind of the way we viewed them at the time. We called them 'happenings,' a word people used to use for art kind of gatherings in the '60s. It wasn't so much theater as something we would just go out and do." In short, performance art.

Early stunts included staging a funeral for the '80s. "We had these likenesses of things from the '80s that we buried two years before the decade was over," says Mr. Stanton. He remembers bicycling around the city just to startle people with that bald, blue look.

One performance was set up across the street from a hot nightclub where "there would always be a couple hundred people outside trying to get in, the whole New York doorman kind of thing," Mr. Stanton recalls. "So we set up our own velvet ropes across the street. It was just sort of a velvet-rope box. We called it 'Club Nowhere.' Anyone could join our club."

At that time, Blue Men weren't silent. "We didn't know enough about the [Blue Man] character to know that he didn't speak, so at that time we kind of talked." But when Blue Man Group moved to the stage of the Astor Place Theatre in 1991, "somehow we knew the character wouldn't talk. We knew that he would drum, that he had something tribal to say. That's why there are three of us, I think — it's the smallest number that can be a 'group.'"

The show is still playing at the Astor Place (and elsewhere), but the original Blue Men don't perform much anymore, except for big gigs, such as the group's Intel commercial, promotions for the theater shows and music videos.

"I haven't performed in a live show in a while," says Mr. Stanton. "I miss it a lot. It's really a lot of fun to perform. ... It's not like [you're] acting as a character. It's more immediate and real than that."

Tom Sime

Blue Man Productions Inc.

Though their domes are smooth onstage, the Blue Men actually have hair that is concealed with a latex skullcap.

HOW THEY GET BLUE

Goo: A Blue Man's preshow makeover starts with an application of glue around the edges of his face. The stuff brushes on white, then turns clear and tacky over 20 minutes.

More goo: A second coat of glue is applied, with another 20-minute wait. He may or may not glue his ears back to help flatten them.

That cueball look: While the glue is curing, a thin, translucent latex skullcap is fitted over his hair (yes, they have hair).

Wiring: Earpieces with attached wiring for the sound system are fitted in his ears, with a cable running down the back like a ponytail.

Fitting: When the second layer of glue gets good and sticky, the latex cap is pulled down over his ears and affixed to the edges of his face and the base of his neck. The glue lets the latex adhere to his skin.

Trimming: A makeup assistant trims away excess latex (each skullcap is used only once) so that its surface blends with the skin beneath.

Coloring: Then it's an all-over application of "Blue Man Blue" greasepaint, the company's own custom-blended cobalt-blue shade. Two coats are generally applied for hotter, sweatier venues to allow for some runoff.

Wardrobe: Blue latex gloves, a simple black tunic, black slacks and black boots complete the ensemble.

Multicoloring: During the show, the blue gets liberally spattered with red and yellow as the Blue Men pound paint-filled tom-toms.

Tom Sime

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PRESTONWOOD - 5405 Beltline/East of Tollway

S.W.A.T.*	PG-13	(4:10)	7:10	9:45	
AMERICAN WEDDING*	R	(3:30)	6:00	8:20	10:25
SEABISCUIT	PG-13	(3:20)	6:00	8:55	
BAD BOYS 2	R	(3:40)	7:00	10:05	
THE LEAGUE OF EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN	PG-13	(4:00)	7:50	10:15	

PLANO - 4721 West Park/East of Preston

FREAKY FRIDAY*	PG	(11:25	1:40	4:00)	6:20 8:35
AMERICAN WEDDING*	R	(12:00	2:20	4:35)	7:10 9:30
EAGLE*	R	(11:30	1:45	4:25)	7:25 10:10
SEABISCUIT	PG-13	(12:20		3:30)	6:50 9:55
SPY KIDS 3-D	PG	(11:35	1:40	3:35)	6:10 8:20
TOMB RAIDER	PG-13	(11:40	2:00	4:20)	7:00 9:25
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN	PG-13	(12:30	3:00)		6:00 8:55

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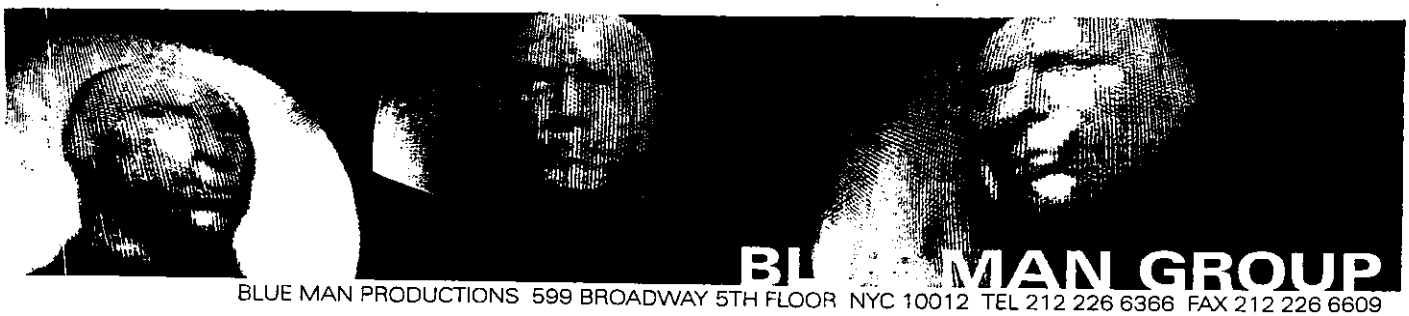

BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 6609

DAILY HERALD
(BARTLETT/HANOVER PARK/STREAMWOOD)
ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, IL
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INFORMATION SERVICES

Curiosity keeps seats full at 'Blue Man'

3755

By JENNIFER O'NEILL
Medill News Service

Psst: the secret to the success of long-running Chicago theater is ... you.

Productions like "Blue Man Group," "Tony and Tina's Wedding" and "Forever Plaid" depend on satisfied audiences telling their friends about the shows.

Word of mouth is the key to the continued popularity of "Blue Man Group," which celebrated its third anniversary in Chicago last month.

Since October 1997 the troupe of blue-headed artists has been plying their unique brand of performance art at the Briar Street Theatre, 3133 N. Halsted St., Chicago.

The show is the longest-running production in the history of the theater.

"I think it's so popular because you can't describe to anyone what it's about, so people get curious and have to come see it for themselves," said Bea Rosengard, 76, of Palos Hills, who attended a recent performance.

"I think it's also the performance art factor," said Lisa Castillo, 21, of Aurora, who was seeing "Blue Man Group" for the second time. "It's hard to describe. It's so different from everything else here in Chicago."

The three performers – their faces, heads and hands covered entirely in blue, play with light, sound, toilet paper and Captain Crunch to give audiences a spectacle unlike any other show.

"It's very refreshing," said Manny Igrejas, public relations director for Blue Man Group New York. Because the Blue Men don't speak throughout the entire show, Igrejas said the audience just absorbs the light and music.

"We don't realize how much value not being bombarded with babble," he said.

Identifying exactly what the performers do is difficult, yet somehow they manage to fascinate, engage, thrill and surprise their audiences without uttering a word.

"If you don't love three blue guys, then there's little things," Igrejas said.

The show began almost 10 years ago in New York and currently has permanent sites in Boston, Chicago, New York and Las Vegas. The Blue Men are also featured in a touring production that plays in different venues around the country.

"Audiences develop a relationship with the Blue Men and the show," Igrejas said. "Sometimes the show is different, sometimes it's the same, but it's always fresh. It's always new. It's always exciting. There's always something that people see that they've never seen before. That happens when artists ... they never do this thing again. ... People see it all."

The show commemorated its sixth anniversary Friday. It opened in New York 10 years ago and is still performed in San Diego and Las Vegas. But Chicago is the city with the longest-running production.

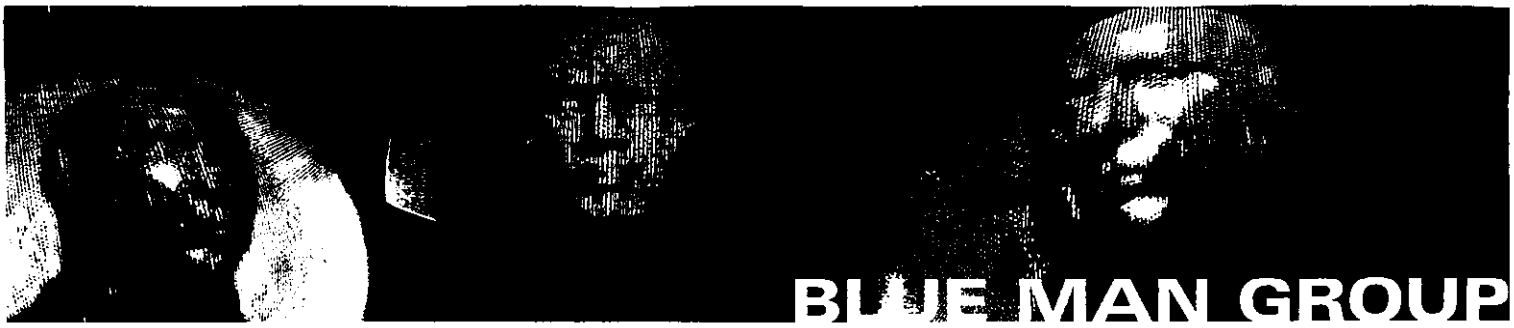
General manager Michael Paulken said word of mouth often brings people to the theater, adding that he knows people who have seen the show 30 times.

"Every spring we pack the theater with school groups like choirs and marching bands. It's the charm of the show," Paulken said. "It appeals to the Midwestern sensibility."

In its eighth year, "Tony and Tina's Wedding" enjoys many repeat viewers at Pipers Alley, 230 W. North Ave., Chicago.

"It's interactive, the cast is always changing and there's lots of improvisation; there's always a different feel to it," said Jenny Pila, the ticket-taker for "Tony and Tina's Wedding." "I don't think there's anyone in Chicago who hasn't seen it."

"Blue Man Group" is the longest running production in the history of the Briar Street Theatre.



BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 6609

Philadelphia Inquirer
JULY 28, 2003

Blue Man Group is tint-ense

by A.D. Amorosi

For Friday's packed show at the Mann Center for the Performing Arts, Blue Man Group went beyond the stage skulking and self-made drum-banging it's known for.

It didn't just play its sliding, tubular Drumbone, paddle its PVC pipe organ, or rely solely on bald grease-painted pates or deadpan stares.

Instead, the trio of Blue tribal beaters, eight musicians and singers (including four percussionists), vocalist Tracy Bonham, and members of Venus Hum made a generic form of anthemic rock, one whose crunching guitars and uplifting choruses acted in tandem with projections of atypical "rock manual" instructions ("pump your fist," etc.) to reveal the irony of a rebel music's complacent conformity.

Under a single audio-video banner, BMG was dazzling; filling its show with quirky audience interaction (like cramming a digital camera down a participant's throat as if on CSI), spectacular triggered effects, and an awesome, immense sound.

If BMG relied on a purely musical experience, it would have been lame. But production designer Marc Brickman and BMG fashioned a joint effort in which constantly throbbing rhythms and liquid-light eruptions emanating from Lite-Brite staging gave the proceedings an electronic big band feel - lending the snorting guitars and percussion overdrive of "Time to Start" and "Your Attention" the feel of an epiphany.

On "White Rabbit" and "I Feel Love," Bonham and Venus singer Annette Strean shone, effectively cooing and screeching their way through BMG's electro-tribal mien. And, for a production short on subtlety, BMG's take on Sept. 11, "Exhibit 13," was musically and visually stunning - a projected stream of burnt paper falling like autumn leaves accompanied by an equally forlorn music made for an electric moment of bare-bone simplicity.

Inside: Loretta [illegible] James Taylor, Tom Jones, Howard [illegible] Whitesnake, [illegible] Maxi Priest, [illegible] Meghorne, [illegible] well continues)

In Family: [illegible] to the Thimble [illegible] Oat Theater, Bugs and eels at [illegible] Nature Center, [illegible] dance at OSV, [illegible] Thursday [illegible]

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Blue Man Group's latest CD, "The Complex," features the single, "The Current," heard on the sound track of "The Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines," not surprisingly the week's box office champ. The Blue men play the Arena at Mohegan Sun at 7 p.m. Tuesday.

Blue Man Group to take over Arena

By DAVID PENCEK
Norwich Bulletin

This wasn't one of those trick mirrors that make people look tall or fat or just plain funny. When Eric Gebow looked in the ordinary mirror, he saw that indeed his head was really shiny blue with bulging eyeballs and without ears.

Upon seeing how he looked the first time he wore the Blue Man Group makeup, Gebow's response was understandable.

"I had this feeling of 'How did I end up here?'" Gebow said during a recent phone interview from his home in Chicago.

Gebow's path to becoming a Blue Man was quite simple. After spending time as a drummer for hire for San Francisco area bands, Gebow answered an open call to audition for Blue Man Group. He was hired and Gebow has been performing as a Blue Man for the past four years.

Tuesday Gebow will be one of the members of the Blue Man Group that plays in the Mohegan Sun Arena. The concert, part of "The Complex Tour," begins at 7 p.m. and features Tracy Bonham and Venus Hum on vocals.

Since three long-time friends founded Blue Man Group in 1987 in New York City, Blue Man Group productions have opened in Chicago, Las Vegas and Boston. A production in Berlin is set to open next year.

Gebow opened the Las Vegas show, which was the company's largest production before moving to Chicago. While he had the music part down, acting as members of Blue Man Group have to do, wasn't Gebow's forte.

"The acting part of the Blue Man interested me, but it was also terrifying to me having never done stage stuff," Gebow said.

That's where the blue makeup helps. Identities are lost when one dons the blue face.

"I actually enjoy wearing the makeup," Gebow said. "It's very freeing. You trust in the character. You trust the mask you're wearing. My face is painted blue. I have no ears. No one knows who I am."

Understanding and knowing Blue Man can prove difficult, especially if you haven't seen a show.

In the artist statement from Blue Man Group, the founders, Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink, describe the featured characters as "outsiders."

"They are meant to represent the part inside each of us that feels like a stranger no matter how far 'in' or accepted we get," the three wrote in the statement. "We've never viewed the Blue Men as 'aliens.'"

The Blue Men play invented instruments like airpoles, tubes and stringed instruments. Its debut album, "Audio," was released in 1999 and nominated for a Grammy Award.

Earlier this year came the group's second CD, "The Complex." The album and the ensuing tour represent another progressive step for Blue Man Group. It's an attempt to bring the act into the mainstream rock music medium.

On the album, Blue Man Group recruited the likes of Dave Matthews, Bonham and Peter Moore to sing vocals and it recorded covers of Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit" and Donna Summer's "I Feel Love." The single "The Current" can be heard in the movie "Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines."

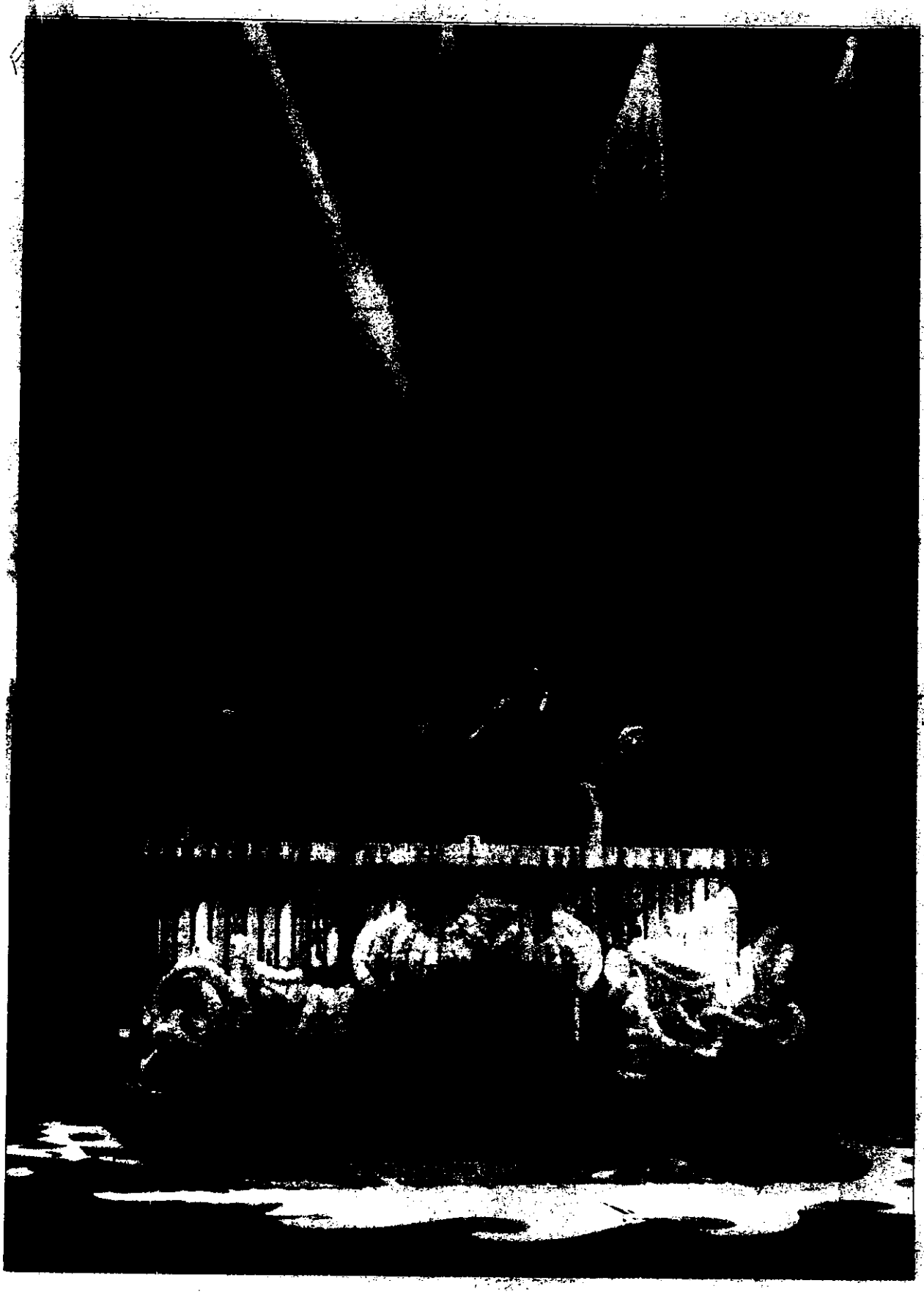
"There's always been a rock 'n' roll element to Blue Man at some levels," Gebow said. "I think going to the rock thing is a natural place for Blue Man to go."

Gebow described the concerts as rock shows with the Blue Man Group acting as a connector between the audience and the traditional eight-piece musical band and lead singers who accompany them on tour.

This movement to a rock 'n' roll sound doesn't mean Blue Man Group has lost its unique appeal. Familiar elements of past Blue Man performances are still evident.

It's still three guys with bald, blue heads, bulging eyes and no ears who make the show what it is.

"We're trying to stay true to what people expect at a rock show," Gebow said. "But we're also breaking down those expectations as well."



BEAVER COUNTY TIMES
BEAVER, PA
FRIDAY 42,052
JUL 11 2003

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THE BLUE MAN GROUP has altered its style — but not its appearance — to fit larger, outdoor sites like P-G Pavilion.

Bathed in Blue

SPACE ALIENS? THEATER TROUPE? NO, IT'S THE VERY MUSICAL BLUE MAN GROUP

IF YOU'RE GOING

- **What:** The Blue Man Group
- **When:** 7:30 p.m. Saturday.
- **Where:** P-G Pavilion, Burgettstown.
- **Tickets:** $15, $20, $28.50 and $38.50.
- **Information:** (412) 323-1919.

Scott Tady
Times Staff

BURGETTSTOWN — Red seemed too devilish; green too Martian.

Throwing out black (too minstrel) and white (too mime) and the palette of choices narrowed to a few.

Thus, the Blue Man Group found its hue.

"Blue was more of a neutral color not associated with anything," said Kalen Allmandinger, whose head will be plastered with blue paint when he takes the P-G Pavilion stage Saturday as one of those three straight-faced, beat-loving performers, the Blue Man Group.

You've seen them in a Pentium Intel commercial, and perhaps thought of them as a theater troupe, yet the Blue Man Group's current tour finds the trio in more of a rock-'n'-roll context.

Their heads and hands bathed in blue, the group and its backing musicians will use exotic instruments like a zither and a Chapman stick to churn out fast and hearty rock.

> I like to think of my character as a mad scientist who examines all these behavior patterns at, in this case, a rock concert.
>
> **KALEN ALLMANDINGER**
> Blue Man Group

"There's some pretty crunchy songs," Allmandinger said.

The group's current CD, "The Complex," includes vocals from Dave Matthews and alternative-rocker Tracy Bonham. Bonham will reprise her vocals Saturday, appearing on stage as the Blue Man Group performs its tight-lipped stage act, which mixes futuristic dance, music and theatrics.

"I like to think of my character as a mad scientist who examines all these behavior patterns at, in this case, a rock concert," said the Iowa-bred Allmandinger.

In one of the show's earliest numbers, "Time to Start," the Blue Man Group pantomimes the basic fan rituals of a rock concert, identified by the narrator as "the basic head bob," the "one-armed fist pump" and "the up-and-down jumping motion."

The Blue Men will be both celebrating and poking fun at the whole shared, ritualistic concert experience.

It's fascinating stuff to Allmandinger, "especially because it's so easy today to be isolated. It's so easy to go through your day and then run home to your computer where you can get anything you want ordered to your door."

But at a rock concert, Allmandinger noted, strangers can act joyfully in unison while still maintaining individualism.

Accustomed to performing for crowds of 550 to 1,200, the Blue Man Group has had to alter its style, emphasizing more physical movements, to fit larger, outdoor sites like P-G Pavilion.

"Just to communicate to everybody in such a big place is a challenge," Allmandinger said.

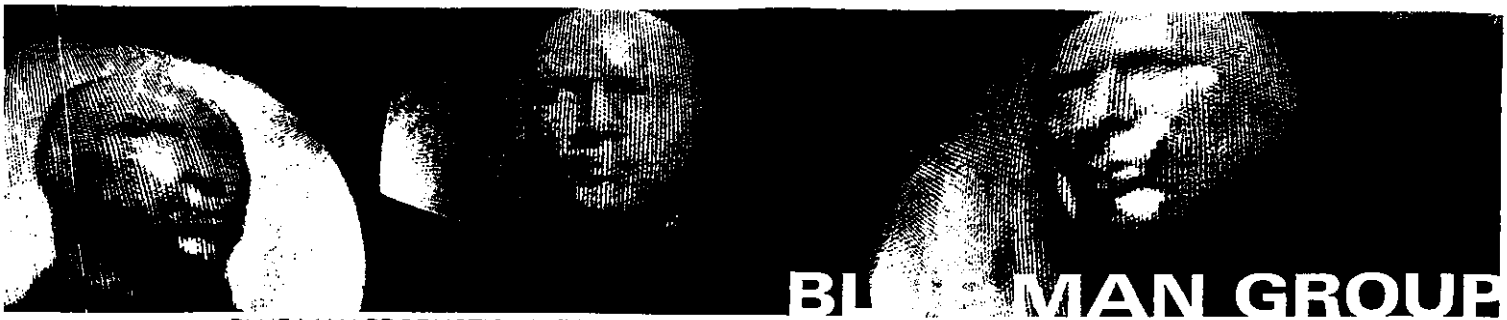
"If we're doing anything subtly, it has to be very, very clear, otherwise you won't get the nuances if you're sitting in the back."

One thing that hasn't changed for the performers is the hour they spend in a makeup chair, waiting to be transformed into blue men.

"The longest part is waiting for the glue to dry," Allmandinger said.

Glue is attached to their heads, to hold down brim-less caps that conceal their hair and ears.

Scott Tady can be reached online at stady@timesonline.com.



ENTERTAINMENT

Sound, movement and paint

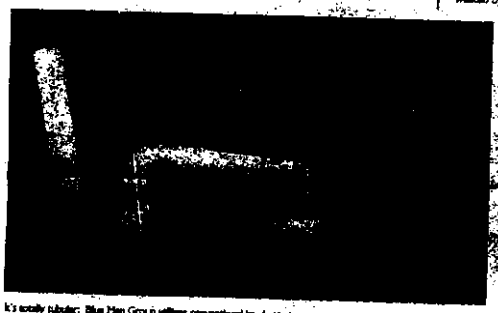
The *Complex* Blue Man Group hits Albuquerque

by Simón Trujillo

Clad in black jumpsuits and blue gloves, and covered in shiny blue grease paint, **Blue Man Group** has always been a flamboyantly mysterious phenomenon. And one which, until this week, New Mexicans could only experience by travelling out of state. Since its inception in New York in 1987, the group — founded by Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink — has risen from the outer fringes of experimental theater and performance art into a wildly popular cultural icon.

Weaving deftly and strangely through the corners of high and pop culture, Blue Man Group's performances are a trademark synthesis of theater, music, satire, science and vaudeville. Although three members occupy the stage during a performance, the group in actuality has about 30 members rotating through its four current and permanent shows in New York, Chicago, Boston and Las Vegas. With its fame aided greatly by a recent TV commercial campaign by Intel, Blue Man Group has become caught between the accessibility of mainstream media and the mild, though fascinating, avant-garde strain that has always characterized its work. If anything, its current position is prompting some of its most interesting work to date.

While renowned for its overall musical inventiveness, Blue Man Group is especially famous for its labyrinthine percussive instruments. Crafted mainly from PVC pipes, instruments such as the "Tubulum," the "Drumbone" and the cleverly named "PVC Instrument," can emit complex, engaging and hypnotic rhythms when played in unison. Other characteristic instruments include a group of fiberglass rods called "Air Poles" that, at varying lengths, are swung through the air and create a succession of "whooshing" sounds.



It's totally tubular: Blue Man Group utilizes conventional hardware to create unconventional musical instruments as part of its one-of-a-kind, trade mark performance style. photos courtesy of Blue Man Productions

All of these instruments — along with a slew of others — are usually combined in the group's live shows to a dazzling effect. Its show *Tubes*, which won an Obie in 1991, and its first CD release in 1999, *Audio*, were generally centered on the audio and visual vividness that the tubes and other instruments created. This time around, however, Blue Man Group has unavoidably expanded the scope of its show and sound. Rather than remaining in its four permanent venues, Blue Man Group decided to take its show on a national tour in support of its latest CD, *The Complex*.

What separates *The Complex*, which was released in April, from Blue Man Group's other efforts is the very fact that it unabashedly embraces and complicates the conventions of pop music. In other words, *The Complex* is Blue Man Group's rock album — full of pulsating guitar rhythms, layered drumbeats and a whole host of guest musicians. With appearances by Dave Matthews, Tracy Bonham, Gavin Rossdale, Peter Moore and Barbero, among others, the album is an eclectic mix of heavy, drum-based power-chord progressions and lighter, periodically tongue-in-cheek melodies.

The Dave Matthews' track, "Sing Along," has him singing in his usual fuzzy drawl to Blue Man Group's usual PVC plucking. Some of the song's lyrics resonate with an unexpected sadness and desperation that is hinted at throughout the album. "Persona," featuring Josh Hadea, is a haunting, mid-tempo number that picks up where Matthews left off, though with a much more dramatic effect. Featured in *Terminator 3*, Gavin Rossdale's "The Current" attempts the same level of energy and depth as in the movie, with mixed effects. Other notable tunes include "What is Rock," featuring Aimee Dyer and Peter Moore; Barbero's electronic cover of Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit"; and the nearly nine-minute finale, "Exhibit 13."

Lyrically, *The Complex* ranges from the Kafkaesque to the just plain frivolous — which, overall, gives the album a strange cohesiveness. Missing most prominently from the CD, however, is half of Blue Man Group's wonder: their visual flair. While some of the songs are strong enough to remain likable without the group's added presence, others are lost in a sea of indistinct synthesizers and percussive rhythms. The most forgettable songs, it seems, are those that would have the most effect in conjunction with the live imagery found in its shows.

Nevertheless, *The Complex* tour promises to be a genre-bending, rollicking show. Working with production designer Mark Brickman, whose credits include Pink Floyd, Nine Inch Nails and Paul McCartney tours, the second leg of the tour is slated to hit the Journal Pavilion on Aug. 2. As usual, blue paint, loud music and the unexpected are all anticipated. **CW**

Blue Man Group, Featuring Venus Hum, with special guest Tracy Bonham, performs Saturday, Aug. 2 at 8pm at the Journal Pavilion. Doors open at 6pm Tickets run from $30 to $46 via Ticketmaster, 883-7300. For more information, visit www.blueman.com or www.journalpavilion.com.

A Blue Man speaks: An interview with Tom Galassi

by Simón Trujillo

CW: How did you become involved with the group?

TG: I was living in New York and I actually walked by a theater and one of the posters caught me. This was back in 1996 or '97, I think. I was just an actor and a drummer and I looked into the show and I thought, "Man, this is something I would really love to do." So I dropped off a picture and a résumé, and about three weeks later I heard back from them and I came in and started the audition process, which is about three to six months before you get hired — if you get hired at all. It's one of the hardest things I've ever auditioned for. I mean, it just [illegible] they've created a new way of acting and a new way of playing on these new instruments that they've invented. So, it's quite a task.

CW: Are there just three members who perform permanently at each of the four permanent venues, or is there a constant rotation?

TG: There's usually around four or five in each of the venues — because there are so many shows per week we rotate in and out. For the tour, they auditioned within the company and then took four blue men from all the different cities — I think it was one from each city, and so one of us always has the night off. The four of us rotate and one of us always watches the show.

CW: I've been listening to The Complex CD and it's something rather different — especially from the first CD, Audio. Were you involved in the production of the show, or were you just given instructions on what to do?

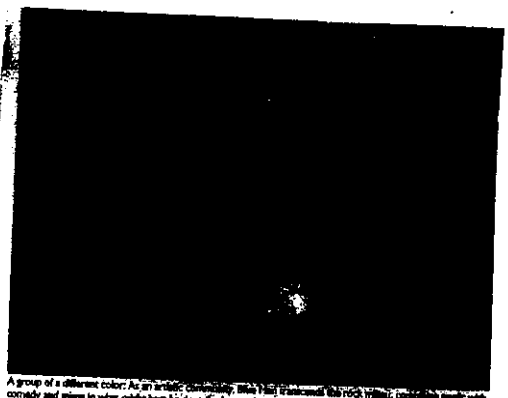
TG: The interesting thing about Blue Man is that everybody was just in a huge room in New York and we were just chopping away at it. We've got the materials, all the directors were there, all the performers were there, and we would just try things. That's the thing about Blue Man, because it takes a long time to get something going because we're sort of this huge artistic community and we all would just go in and try it all out. And that's one of the reasons why I've been at it for so long is because I feel that I have a hand in it. And a lot of spontaneous things have come out of the show. The nature of the show is that the audience is a huge part of it, a huge character. And once we start dealing with them, things change and you start to realize what's working and what isn't. I mean, it's not always about making people laugh, or jump up and down.

CW: What would you consider the themes of Blue Man Group?

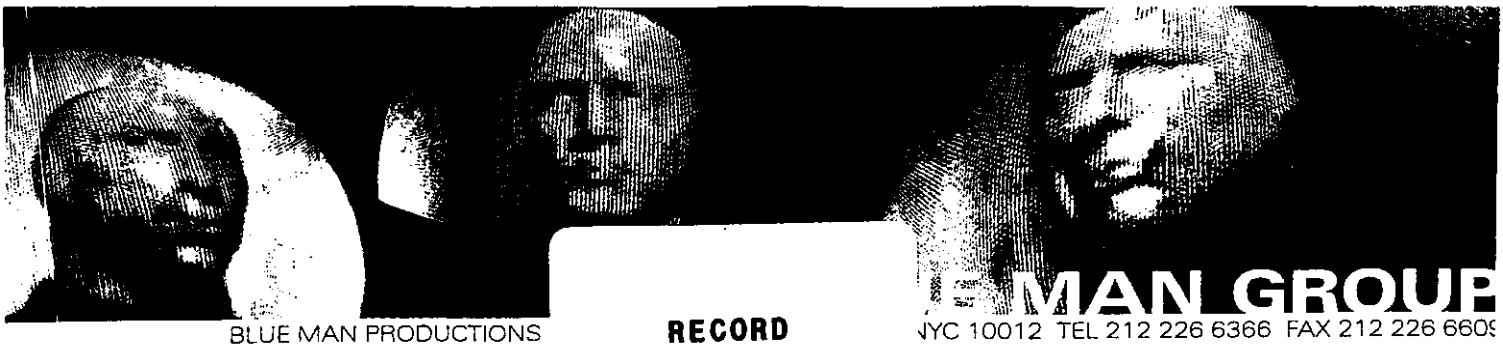
TG: The themes for Blue Man [illegible] people say, are that we are post-apocalyptic shamans. They're not from outer space, but when there is a need, the Blue Men come for connectivity. And a lot of the themes are the isolation in the world, which keeps getting bigger and more intricate, yet in some ways we're sort of not really getting closer. In *The Complex* that we definitely hit on this more literally. But at the same time, with the show, we're kind of making fun of a rock concert — all of the clichés that go along with the rock concert and, also, the rituals that go along with a rock concert. But [illegible] also putting on probably one of the biggest rock concerts of the summer. The premise is that the Blue Men are dropped in from orbit 8,000 people and they have these instruments and a backup band and they have no idea they have to put on a rock concert, but they know that there is some sort of ritual involved in the whole thing. So it's kind of like a play about a rock concert.

CW: How is the tour being received currently?

TG: It's unbelievably humbling and surprising. I mean, we don't really have a hit song, we don't really have a hit video out there. We're just kind of out there, and I think most people know us from the Pandora ads. So it's really great to go and see the cities and show them that we just didn't sell computer chips for Pandora and that we're this huge artistic organization.



A group of a different color: As an artistic community, Blue Man transcends the rock milieu, blending music with comedy and more in what might best be described as performance art.



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Blue Man meets Pink Floyd

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Avant-garde theater group does rock show

By JOHN PETRICK
STAFF WRITER

The experimental, non-conformist Blue Man Group is pushing the envelope even further this year. It's going mainstream.

Wait. Blue Man Group meets Casey Kasem's American Top 40?

Not quite. But the three mysterious, mute men with blue heads and bizarre percussion instruments are making their first big foray into the rock music arena with the recent release of their CD "The Complex" and accompanying national tour.

For years, Blue Man Group has been packing in audiences at off-Broadway's Astor Place Theater with wild performances combining everything from experimental music to a spew of Cap'n Crunch into the audience. Since first opening in 1991, it has grown into a kind of avant-garde performance art for the masses and has expanded to several national companies in Boston, Chicago, and even Las Vegas.

This new show may not require the first five rows to wear protective plastic ponchos, as is the case off-Broadway, where the theatrical production has been exploding nightly since 1991. But it will still employ unconventional rules of engagement as only the Blue Men know how.

"It will be something like you might have experienced at a Pink Floyd show," says Phil Stanton, one of Blue Man Group's three founding members.

"Pink Floyd meets Devo meets KISS meets Blue Men," adds Matt Goldman, another of the founding trio.

Like anything Blue Man Group has done, it's a little hard to explain how it all sounds and looks and feels without actually, well, hearing it and seeing it and wiping it off you. But make no mistake, the CD is composed of real songs with a few real singers like Dave Matthews, and that in itself is a huge departure for the group that prides itself on doing things out of kilter.

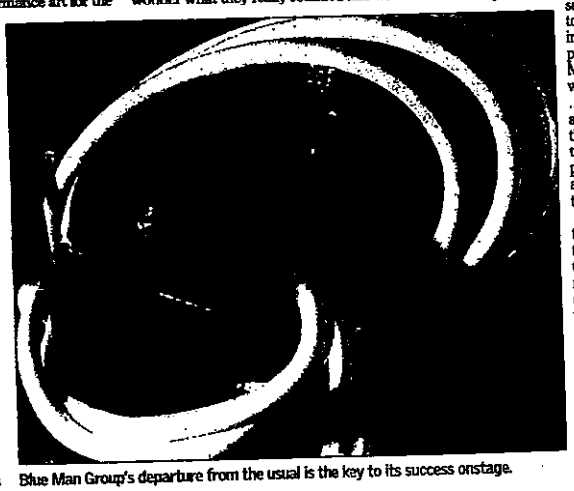
"One of the scariest and most exciting things about this latest grand experiment is that, in the pop and rock world, everything revolves around a cult personality," says Stanton. "So I think it will be interesting to see how the press and public reacts to their not being a 'star.' A 'central character.' It's going to be a very different thing to latch onto."

But isn't there a central cult figure in the Blue Men themselves?

Yes and no, says the creative team. It's still not like having a Britney Spears, or a Bob Dylan, or any kind of real personality centering the act. "It's not like they could do a 'Where Are They Now' about the Blue Men some day," says Goldman, referring to the VH1 program that tracks the whereabouts of pop's faded mega-stars and one-hit wonders. "You wouldn't be able to see where a Blue Man lives. You won't be speculating about who the Blue Man broke up with."

And this, they feel, is a good thing. Thus, don't expect to find out much about the Blue Man Group – the characters, anyway. Even in the lobby of the Astor Place Theater after a recent sold-out Wednesday night performance, it was clear that these creatures never let their masks down.

The Blue Men were there, after a vigorous performance, to shake hands with departing audience members and pose for pictures with them. But they remained in character, acting somewhat like aliens, somewhat like confused animals let out of their cages, somewhat like humans. You couldn't help but wonder what they really sounded like when they spoke, or what they really looked like out of their makeup.



Blue Man Group's departure from the usual is the key to its success onstage.

Then again, they sure wouldn't look or sound like Stanton, Goldman, or Chris Wink, the third founding member of Blue Man Group. Though they performed in the show for the first three years of its run, replacement performers have taken over. There are several casts of three that are rotated through the week, a decision that was made after the three founders experienced for themselves the physical toll of doing the show.

The company has expanded to more than 30 Blue Men and 50-plus musicians, all of whom rotate in the shows and work on other outside projects in various combinations.

In fact, while the three founders appear in a music video for the new album, they will not actually be the Blue Men performing in the tour to promote "The Complex," either. That might at first sound strange. But nothing is strange in the world of Wink, Stanton, and Goldman.

"For the first time, we will not be the first ones appearing in the show," says Goldman, noting that the three have been consumed with writing and directing the project. That, not to mention making the album itself, making a video to promote it, and doing interviews.

It doesn't matter who is behind the blue-painted heads onstage, they note. "The very first thing we ever did had 12 people in it," says Goldman, referring to the group's days coming up in the downtown performance-art world in Manhattan. "This has always been a collective. ... It's always been about who can best serve the project at any given time. ... We're sort of proud of that. Part of the art form is the organization itself."

The new album features the group's signature sounds, such as its trademark tube instruments, giant walls of percussion, and other invented instruments. But there are also the more coined techniques of pop music, such as thrashing guitars, verse-chorus-bridge song structure, scratching, and a variety of guest artists such as Matthews, Tracy Bonham, and others.

"The rock world, for the most part, takes itself so seriously that you have to layer some humor into it," says Stanton of the record. "So that's also part of what it's about. ... But it's also about creating a tribal, transcending kind of experience. ... I think it's the continuation of our work, conceptually, but it breaks from the show at Astor Place. ... The themes in the show at Astor are more abstract," he says.

Those same themes can be found on "The Complex," just in more literal and strictly musical ways. "There are themes of urban isolation, and that we live in a world that's not making a place for the human body to be. ... There are all these forces that try to splinter people and compartmentalize our lives," Goldman says.

"It's about being in an urban setting. But being alone."

John Petrick's e-mail address is petrick@northjersey.com.

WHO: Blue Man Group.
WHAT: The Complex Tour, with guest vocalist Tracy Bonham and special guests Venus Hum.
WHEN: 8 p.m. Monday (doors open at 6:30).
WHERE: Hammerstein Ballroom, 311 W. 34th St., between Eighth and Ninth avenues, Manhattan. (212) 279-7740.
HOW MUCH: $32. Ticketmaster, ticketmaster.com.

Distinctive Blue Man Group stands apart from other acts

3155

BY BRAD HUNDT
THE OBSERVER-REPORTER
bhundt@observer-reporter.com

Blue Man Group may be described by most observers as a band or a performance art phenon enon, but, boy, it sure does resemble a religious cult.

Its members go through a six-month "Blue Man boot camp" before they are fully initiated as Blue Men. Once they're in, they subsume their individual identities and sport identical bald heads, blue greasepaint and black jumpsuits.

And then there are two Blue Man discs - they ponder routine conformity and contain cryptic missives like the following in the liner notes: "Sometimes my shadow leads or it follows me, but we never seem to become one and the same."

Tim Galassi, one of the Blue Men, sounds pretty well-adjusted on the phone from his Chicago home. And, surprisingly, he doesn't get defensive when the cult comparison is brought up.

"Absolutely," affirms the 26-year-old Galassi. "We kind of have our own language. There's nothing like this anywhere."

He continues, "It kind of feeds the cult-like nature of the whole thing. This is something so different from anything else."

There's little doubt about that. Of all the musicians pouring into "the sheds" this summer, jurassic rockers to metal head-bangers, there's nothing quite like Blue Man Group.

Aside from the sheer visual and conceptual oddity of it, Blue Man Group also is known to play long, hypnotic passages on the drums, use homemade instruments and throw food and paint into the audience.

There also aren't many summer tours out there that come with so much philosophical rumination attached. Galassi calls the Blue Man character "a post-Apocalyptic shaman ... and we talk a lot about chaos theory, and try to apply all these things to the show."

For the uninitiated, a Blue Man Group history is probably in order: The first incarnation came together in 1987, when Matt Wink put the ensemble together and became fixtures of the New York performance art scene. A 1991 production, "Tubes," won an Obie Award and went on to successful runs in other cities.

There are now five separate Blue Man trios prowling the landscape and about 30 Blue Men overall; permanent companies operate in New York, Boston, Las Vegas and Chicago. The three original Blue Men now take primarily administrative roles in the Blue Man empire, which employs about 500 people.

Goldman, Stanton and Wink did step back into their Blue Man guise, though, for "The Complex," the second Blue Man Group album. Released in April, it features guest appearances by Dave Matthews, Josh Haden, Spalding Gray and Tracy Bonham and contains covers of Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit" and Donna Summer's "I Feel Love." Generally well-reviewed, it peaked at No. 60 on the *Billboard* album chart shortly after it reached stores.

Bonham will be along for "The Complex Rock Tour," which will be at Star Lake Amphitheater in Hanover Township Saturday night. It's the first time Blue Man Group has played venues in the 20,000-seat vicinity; for the occasion, they've hired veteran production designer Marc Brickman, who's previously worked on tours by Paul and Nine Inch Nails.

"This is going to be a new experience for us as well," says Galassi, who will be one of the Blue Men participating in the 34-city tour. "To do the Blue Man character in front of 20,000 people and see what happens."

He adds that concertgoers feeling more than merely entertained or bemused by the antics up on the stage. Despite the uniform appearance of the Blue Men, Galassi describes the show's message this way: "We're individuals and we all have potential beyond what we see on TV. It's kind of preachy, but it doesn't come across in a preachy way. It's very entertaining, but there are these messages. You see people leave with this high. I don't want to push that there's going to be some sort of religious experience, but it does happen

IN CONCERT

BLUE MAN GROUP

WHEN: 8 p.m. Saturday

WHERE: Star Lake Amphitheater

TICKETS: 412-323-1919 or go online to www.blueman.com

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SOME CONCERTGOERS DESCRIBE SEEING THE BLUE MAN GROUP PERFORM AS A REGILIOUS EXPERIENCE.

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PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE
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JUL 11 2003

Burrelle's
INFORMATION SERVICES

BY JOHN HAYES
POST-GAZETTE STAFF WRITER

Somewhere between French mimes and world-beat bands, there's something uniquely American called Blue Man Group. Somewhat more than performance art and something less than mainstream rock, Blue Man is contemporary concept art with enough musical chops to offer credibility and enough charisma to keep crowds coming back for more.

Blue Man Group is three bald guys with gleaming blue heads and hands. Backed by a live band, they make music on homemade percussion instruments. Without talking, they make audiences laugh with funny skits.

2755

As off-Broadway hit, Blue Man has spun off successful satellite troupes in Boston and Chicago. Three years ago, they debuted a new theatrical show tailored for larger audiences and signed a long-term Las Vegas contract. In May they opened another show in Berlin. Blue Man performs the title track of the new "Terminator 3" movie, and although the group is too artsy for commercial radio, Blue Man wasn't too pious to turn down lucrative TV commercials for Intel Pentium computer chips.

Now in its 14th year, there are 36 Blue Men in the network. Blue Man Group has evolved into a multimillion-dollar enterprise attended by some 10,000 people a week. With virtually no radio airplay, Blue Man's 1999 "Audio" album has gone gold.

Despite the group's hitchhiking bigness, creators Chris Wink, Phil Stanton and Matt Goldman say, at heart, they're something dribbling bridles raised on common '70s arena rock. Instead of carrying their conceptions to a more esoteric road, they've written a new show for rock audiences and feel Blue Man on a summer amphitheater tour they call "The Complex."

"Pink Floyd are heroes of ours," says Stanton. "We're not modeling the creative aspect at all on them — I'm talking about the experience of going to an [amphitheater] and having your mind blown."

"It's the difference between random pyrotechnics to fill the space and a big-concept show where the sound and music and lights are all choreographed to make a point," says Wink. "Pink Floyd were pioneers of that. Short films and animation — in the pre-MTV world, those things enhanced the concert experience. Blue Man was preceded in theatrical rock by bands like Kraftwerk, Peter Gabriel and Alice Cooper. We've added another dimension. The modern tools of multimedia ..."

"And the concept of the Blue Man ..." adds Goldman.

"Give fun] a catalyst for going deeper into the song. We're also fans of good ol' honest punk rock," Wink continues. "Simple music who you over. We don't have lasers and pyro — we don't even know what to do with those. Essentially, it's about the music. The Blue Men help to take you into the song."

MUSIC PREVIEW

[redacted]

If the Blue Men are the body, Stanton and Goldman are the feet, the engine brains. They compose the rhythmic scores, inject the dramatic [illegible] and instruments like PVC pipes, [illegible] and produced the group's new album, "The Complex," on Level Records.

In their theatrical shows, the Blue Men become perplexed over scrolling text messages that they appear to misinterpret. In other scenes, they create music by banging [illegible] against a series of [illegible] and drum devices in a performance called paper roll-a-thon.

"The rock show is very different," says Wink. "Things that work well in a theater setting just don't work as well in an outdoor amphitheater."

"The rules of rock and theater are completely different," says Goldman. "There's only about five minutes of material common to both shows. We cut out a lot of the comedy routines and focused on the music."

"Something that does work very well in an amphitheater is the primal, ritual, rhythmic trance musical experience," says Wink. "Although there's a bigger band on this tour, three blue characters and eight or nine band members, we focus more on the drums than guitar. Anyone who doesn't like drums should frankly stay home ..."

"Or if you're a 14-year-old theater-goer ..." adds Stanton.

"Or into death metal and mosh pits," says Goldman. "It won't be their cup of tea."

In concert, the whimsical blue characters from the popular TV ads torment each other and show a decidedly wicked streak.

"If people only know us from the Pentium commercials," says Wink, "this is the darker side."

Unlike rock bands, Blue Man Group, with its cast of androgynous characters, is relatively easy to split off into ancillary acts. Casting the rapidly growing franchise, however, is a tough job.

"For six or five months a year since 1991, Cincinnati's Anthony Sturnick-ovic has traveled the urban centers of North America searching for performers who have what it takes to be a Blue Man. Sturnick got the job when his brother, Steven Sturnicking was a performer with the Boston troupe. As many as 300 performers showed up for any open casting call in Las Vegas, but Sturnick has a habit of dropping into bars unannounced and sizing up members of local bands. Most Blue Men, he says, are discovered through word of mouth.

"There are very stringent requirements to be a Blue Man," says Sturnick. "The characters have to be between 5 feet 10 inches and 6 feet 1 inch. It's a choice the creators made. In the context of the show, the three characters create one being, and we want the audience to see them as indistinguishable. The first time I saw my brother in it, I couldn't tell it was him. He came right up to me [during the show] and whispered something, and I was like, Oh, is that cool?'"

Blue Man came in any race, and in 15 years there's been one Blue Woman.

"The criteria," says Sturnick, "include an athletic build, the right structural features, and the person has to be a kick-ass drummer. Drumming is the Blue Man's only means of communication. And he's got to be an amazing actor. The primary tool of an actor is his voice, and when we take that away, it's really tough."

The touring "Complex" show was cast from within the Blue Man network. "We used the strongest drummers that we had," says Sturnick.

In the Blue Man universe, this show is unique in that two of the songs have words. Opening acts Tracy Bonham and Venus Hum return to the stage to sing the vocal numbers.

"It's been amazing watching this project blossom," says Sturnick. "It amazing to be a part of that."

John Hayes can be reached at jhayes@post-gazette.com or 412-263-1981.

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La Presse
JULY 11, 2003

Excellent Techno-Comic Show
by Isabelle Massé

Not everyone can be a rock star, yet how many would love to become one? The Blue Man Group trio hopes to make it...just for laughs. Last evening, three blue heads invaded the Bell Centre, as part of the Just for Laughs Festival, to present The Complex Tour before an audience of 4,500 people. This is a musical, theatrical and multimedia show that has already captivated people in Chicago, New York, Boston and Las Vegas.

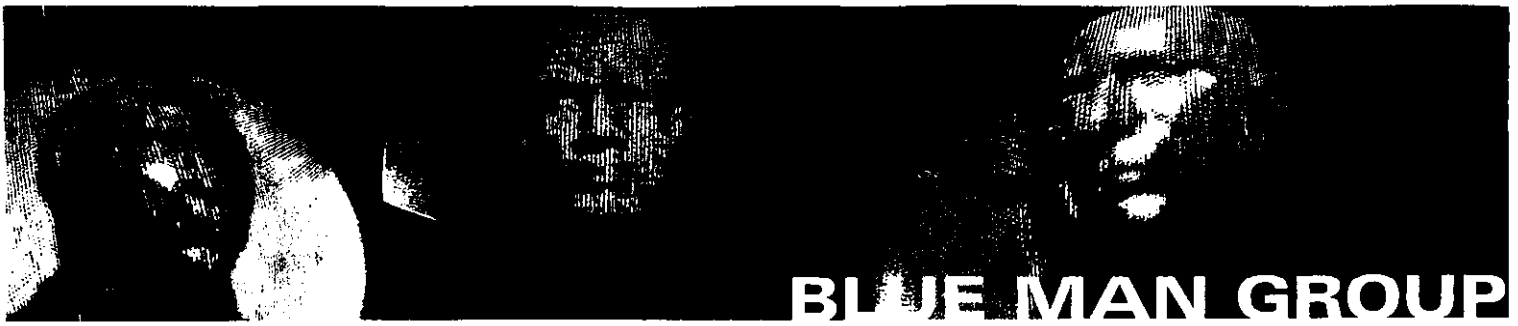
And justifiably so! It has everything to entertain, amuse and astonish: highly appealing men, even when hidden behind their blue masks, who bang on anything within reach; eight seasoned musicians; singers with golden voices; a giant screen projecting hypnotic film clips, and an orgy of lights.

Staging has never been so tightly coordinated with music. You can't tell which is at the service of the other, as they form such a harmonious whole. Each noise is wrapped in lights to bring it into focus. Even if every inch of the stage is filled with instruments and tubes, there is nary a movement nor sound that is superfluous. One plays with colors; another with neon lights, which sometimes serve to outline the musicians who disappear in the darkness, and sometimes form jellyfish that float over the stage. No detail has been spared to amaze us. Even as the Blue Men play at being wannabe rock stars.

Throughout the show, in fact, a voice spits up the basic rules for becoming a rock superstar. "Rule 1: wiggle your pelvis; Rule 2: keep your head moving; Rule 20: find a personality and a look; Rule 27: greet the audience up in the cheap seats..." It serves as a good way to get the public involved in the trio's musical and visual frenzy. You can't help but raise your arms and cry out in unison, grinning from ear to ear.

You can't help but identify with the Blue Men and sympathize with them, even though they have spoken not a single word during the show! Within only a few seconds, they have the audience in their pockets with a brilliant tonal opening number: banging on an assemblage of tubes—the nerve center of the stage—which resemble a giant intestine.

As accomplished artists, the guys from the Blue Man Group (two Americans and a Canadian) do things like no one else. Perhaps this is why children along with senior citizens are drawn to their concerts. They present a perfect marriage of grace and technology. They are there to please and not just to be cool. If only all rock stars shared their gentle egos.



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CMJ
JUNE, 2003

BLUE MAN GROUP: Brave Blue World

by Christopher R. Weingarten

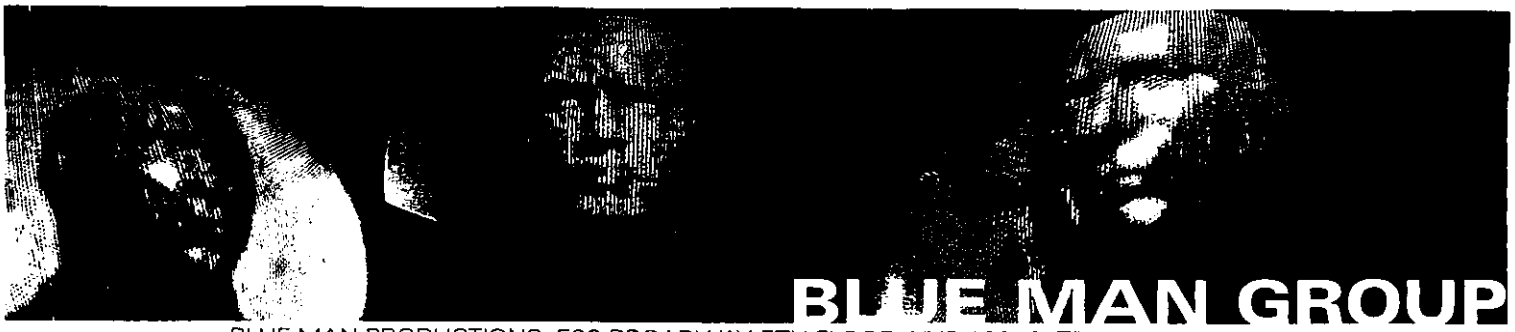
Three enraged Ramones fans, brandishing sticks, used their blunt implements to furiously BAM BAM BAM on the door of WESU/Middleton, Connecticut. They had enough... and were going to make their point to the program director of the Wesleyan University station.

"I didn't want to play the songs all the way through," says DJ Chris Wink, speaking of his tenure transmitting live to a campus of 2,000 students, back in the days when "new wave" was the enveloping appellation du jour. "I was just gonna play a bunch of Ramones songs. As a DJ, it would be an art form. I got through 10 songs and then these three guys show up banging on the door with sticks! They thought I was unbelievably stupid for taking really short songs and making a medley. Maybe they had a point. I had a shorter attention span than a Ramones song!"

Wink, apparently still determined to gleefully distort the preconceptions of pop culture, can still be heard splattering off College Radio antennas, co-conducting a dogpiled pummel of thwappy tubes and mangled membranophones with decades-spanning confreres Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton. Like a volcanic torrent of blue goo ejaculating from the top of a jerry-rigged drum, the triad, known collectively as the Blue Man Group, recently slapped a greasepaint-coated cobalt palm across the airwaves, thanks to its PVC-core endeavor *The Complex* (Lava). From being anti-high-art high-art artists at NYC's Astor Place Theatre, to unleashing a colossal Las Vegas Dadaist Marx Brothers extravaganza, to their ubiquitous Intel ads, to a Gold-selling West-Africa-meets-East-Village exercise in tube-whackery, the Blue Brothers have performed a cultural Blue d'Ėtat -- making performance art populist, making avant-garde theatre marketable and making polyvinyl chloride rock like a fuggin' Fender.

An ivory tangle of tubes -- like a colorless model of the large intestine -- sits center-stage inside a converted movie theater in Manhattan's Lower East Side. Three T-shirt-and-blue-jean-clad percussionists meticulously swat the open ends -- like performing a root canal on the busted teeth of a giant shark -- all spanking out an exact replica of the Giorgio Moroder proto-techno synth gurgle from "I Feel Love." Ten-or-so musicians stay perched behind them, bashing Vistalite drum kits, strumming guitars, hammering keyboards and occasionally whacking the strings of an overturned piano (all strings tuned to the same note, natch) with a giant rubber mallet.BLANG!!

The Blue Man Group is preparing for its first-ever tour of rock venues, a trek -- with all the drums, vertical pianos, tubes, LED towers, 3-D live-wire jellyfish, under-stage lighting, guitars, doo-dads, geegaws and buckets upon buckets o' blue paint -- that will take five (hell, maybe six) trucks and five buses to transport from city-to-city. "We did the first record with Virgin and they were like, 'You guys gotta pay your dues, get out and



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play the clubs!'" says artistic director Michael "Puck" Quinn. "We were like, 'Are you nuts? To get them bald and blue takes 12 people!'"

All that theatre background has got the Blue Men eyeing some epic shit: the trio is working with production designer Marc Brickman (Pink Floyd, Nine Inch Nails) to bring elephantine, LED-scrollin', epileptic-light-flashin' insanity to 2,000-to-4,000-seat venues. The group's massive band of drummer-after-drummer- after-drummer (isn't the guitar dated yet?) even found room for pals Tracy Bonham and Venus Hum to add extra layers of vocal ooze and violin squiggle to the already heart-stoppingly loud ensemble, which punctuates its rockinest moments by walloping a six-foot bass drum.

"That is so far the biggest head that we've been able to get," says Quinn, pointing to the biggest fucking drum you've ever seen. "We've been making our own stuff here.We'll make our own frames and we'll make our own bodies and all that, but the head is the problem. We just can't make heads.We'd make a 50-foot drum if we could, if we could get a head for it.

"There's this word, *synesthesia*, that's about hearing color or seeing sound -- the crossover of senses. So we really are into that and we really like the idea of a musical instrument that 'feels.'We want our music to be visceral; we want it to be resonating in your chest cavity," Quinn says, adding a guttural rumble for emphasis. "That's pretty exciting."

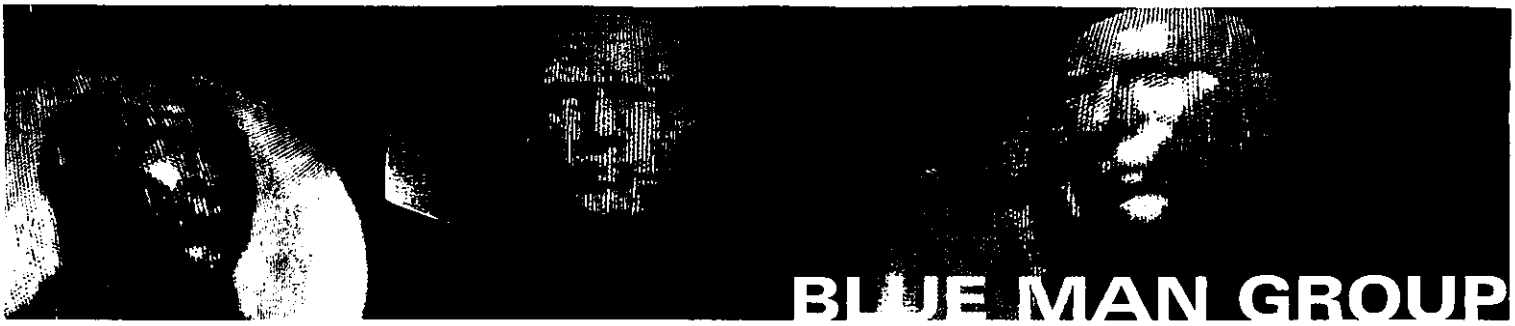
Tons of handmade instruments -- the Piano Smasher, the Drumbone, the Tubulum, the Drumulum -- are the main ingredients for banging out rhapsodies in Blue. Most notable, however, are the Air Poles: long and sproingy fiberglass rods that, when properly whipped and swooshed about, make a sexy swish much like the scritch-scritch-scritch of a turntablist. Plus, they're pretty dangerous!

"I have this thing about Air Poles that freaks me out," Quinn says. "I'm just worried that somebody's gonna take it in the face one time."

If I Sing A Song, Will You Sing Along?

" We went out to dinner with Dave and everyone loves him in Seattle. What's it like to be him? He's sitting there and strangers feel comfortable coming up and entering his airspace and talking to him," Wink says about Mr. Dave Matthews, vocalist on "Sing Along," Complex's polyrhythmic, tube-thumping lead single. "'Sing Along' is about that feeling of being alone and wanting to connect.

There's something about him that really works as the everyman. It's not like he's some kind of weirdo. He's just like, 'No, I'm just a regular guy. And it's part of my regularness that is actually making me feel a little strange.' What about the people that fit in just fine and they wonder what it is the hell they are fitting into?"



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The original boys in blue -- Goldman, Stanton, Wink -- sit in blocky chairs, clad in five o'clock shadow, turtleneck and rolled-sleeves respectively. Their short skull-cappable hair and everydude look, to the casual observer, may seem contrary to the group's freaknik cobalt-coated exterior and the troupe's austere obsession with urban isolation and chaotic info-overload. But hey, that's the rub. They *are* men. They are *not* Devo. They continually sell out shows 'cause a little Blue blood runs through all our veins.

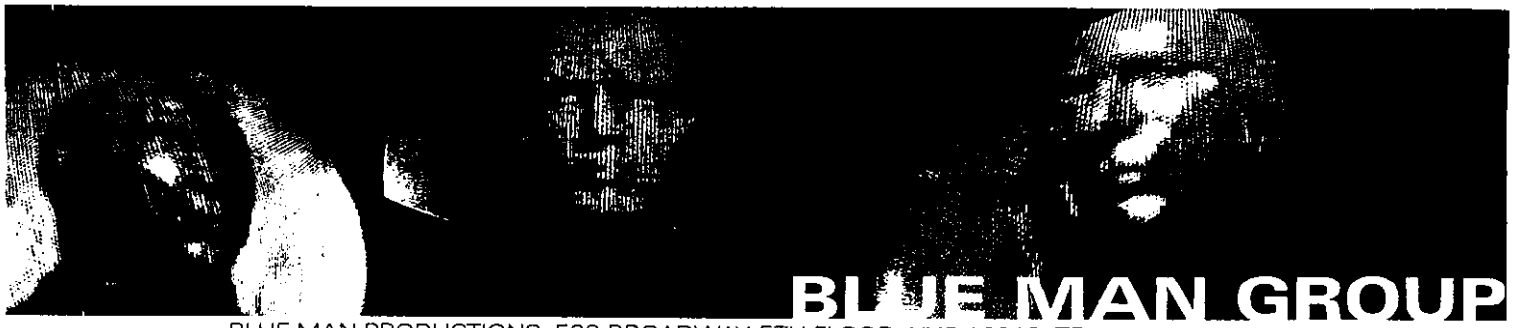
"If you look into the Blue Man's eyes, you don't see a fucking freako machine, what you see is very human. That's what people connect to. They're amused by the strangeness and they're intrigued by the scariness, but ultimately they connect to the human side. At the end of the day, underneath the exterior -- which you have to look past -- there's an everyman," says Wink, as Goldman loudly sucks an orange. "I think underneath the Blue Man is a Dave Matthews, more than a robot or an incredibly obtuse artistry that's superior-thanthou. That's who we are. *We're* more like Dave than we are like some obnoxious art student."

The Blue Man Main Office is a cozy Manhattan space teeming with library-chic receptionists, clinical wall clocks displaying three time zones spanning four concurrent live shows, a pair of seemingly narcoleptic dachshunds mewing like cats, and an endless supply of tantalizing oranges, grapes, blueberries, watermelons, green and red peppers, carrots, papaya, broccoli and strawberries. The bevy of produce is some of the fruits of the group's labor since it first worked blue in 1987. Invading Astor Place in 1991, conquering Vegas in 2000 and now taking on rock, the Blue crew thrives on situations where its product isn't the most easily embraced.

We walked [into Vegas, and it was] like, 'Look, you guys can do your little New Yorky crazy shit back there, but that's not gonna fly here on the strip,'" says Wink. "So here we are again in the rock world and, yeah, it's like right out of the gate. 'I'm sorry, I had you all in my head as this sort-of theatre/commercial thing, and now you say you have a regular album... and that's making me have to actually recategorize my neurons, which is actually inconvenient for me.'"

"Meanwhile," chimes in Goldman, "we've always been writing fuckin' crazy, rockin', get-your-blood-goin' music. But because it's [theatre], it's something different." Since they are unquestionably theatre types, is this latest musical focus just the manifestation of a bunch of clandestine rock-star fantasies? Hardly... considering the original three Blue Men will be performing on approximately *zero* dates on the summer-long tour.

"It is so not about me or Chris or Phil or any of the people that play the character," says Goldman between bites of yellow pepper (Stanton, throughout the interview, remained only slightly less silent than his pop-eyed, blue-visaged alter-ego). "When the Blue Men are performing up there, it is me. It's *us*. We write, we direct, we perform, we build, we sweat. We love performing, but it's not like we gotta get out there for it to be our juice. The second part is... we wrote all this music and I literally wrote myself out of the show! I just can't play the parts. It's just such a fuckin' hard show."



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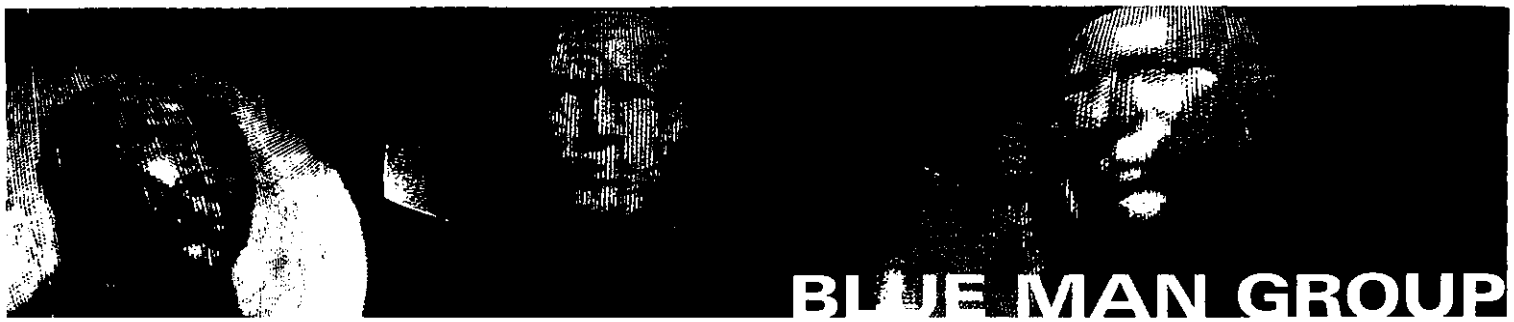
"The *[Chicago Tempo]* called the Blue Man Group the 'anti-rock-star.' And that really seemed to fit," Goldman says. "At the Grammys -- that was in front of 35,000 live people and whatever the propaganda is on how many tens of millions were watching -- that's a heightened experience. The whole auditorium, every last person, got up on their feet. I'll have that forever. And for a guy who's not really that good a musician, I have a lot of those 'rock moments.'"



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The Plain Dealer
JULY 24, 2003

Without speaking a word, Blue Men have lots to say

by Wilma Salisbury

The strange-looking creatures of Blue Man Group are learning to be rock icons. In their entertaining show, "The Complex," they take the audience along for the ride.

The three unidentified drummer-actors who portrayed Blue Man Tuesday night at the Cleveland State University Convocation Center made a sensational entrance. First seen as shadow figures beating their PVC-tube percussion instruments behind a distorted black-and-white movie, they appeared in person when the huge front curtain dropped, revealing the mysterious trio and a rock band exploding with energy under dazzling lights.

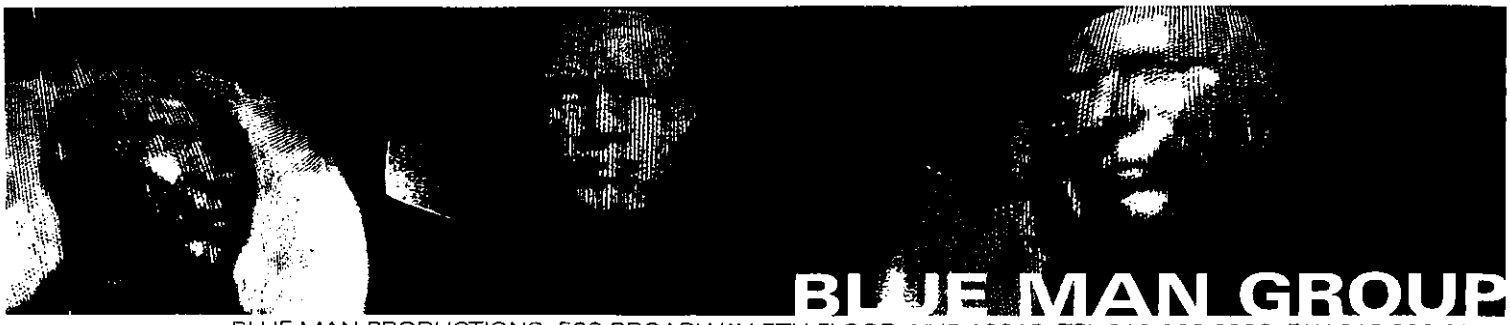
True to the persona that the group has developed over the last 13 years, the tall bald men with shiny blue heads stood in a state of alertness. With arms slightly bent, legs spread wide and eyes bulging, they resembled storm troopers in dark uniforms checking out the scene. Darting to their places, they beat their primitive tubular drums with neon sticks, then began taking lessons in rock rituals.

Obeying rules that were flashed on a screen and spoken by an invisible instructor, they nodded their heads, pumped their fists, jumped up and down, raised their arms and yelled. The crowd followed their lead, and a few audience members were invited onstage to participate.

One unlucky guy had a camera poked down his throat, allowing the crowd to see his tonsils. A couple of women from the cheap seats were ushered down the aisle to dance with the silent Blue Men. Another fan was asked to read the names of the band members.

As the show progressed and the drumming got wilder, sparks flew, lights flashed and laser images sliced through space. Besides rhythmically whacking their collection of vinyl pipes and drums, the Blue Men played cimbalom, sliding "drumbones," swooshing air poles and backpack "tubulums" that shot confetti into the air. They also lit cigarette lighters, took video footage of the crowd, directed the band like traffic cops and led a chorus of humorous cellphone tunes.

Large-screen video projections showed gigantic insects, floating mushrooms and iconic male figures performing rock-concert movements and playing roles as faceless figures in urban settings. The videos made social statements about the cultural masks people wear, the pressures of the daily grind, the anonymity of the workplace and the need to escape the dehumanizing maze of office corridors.



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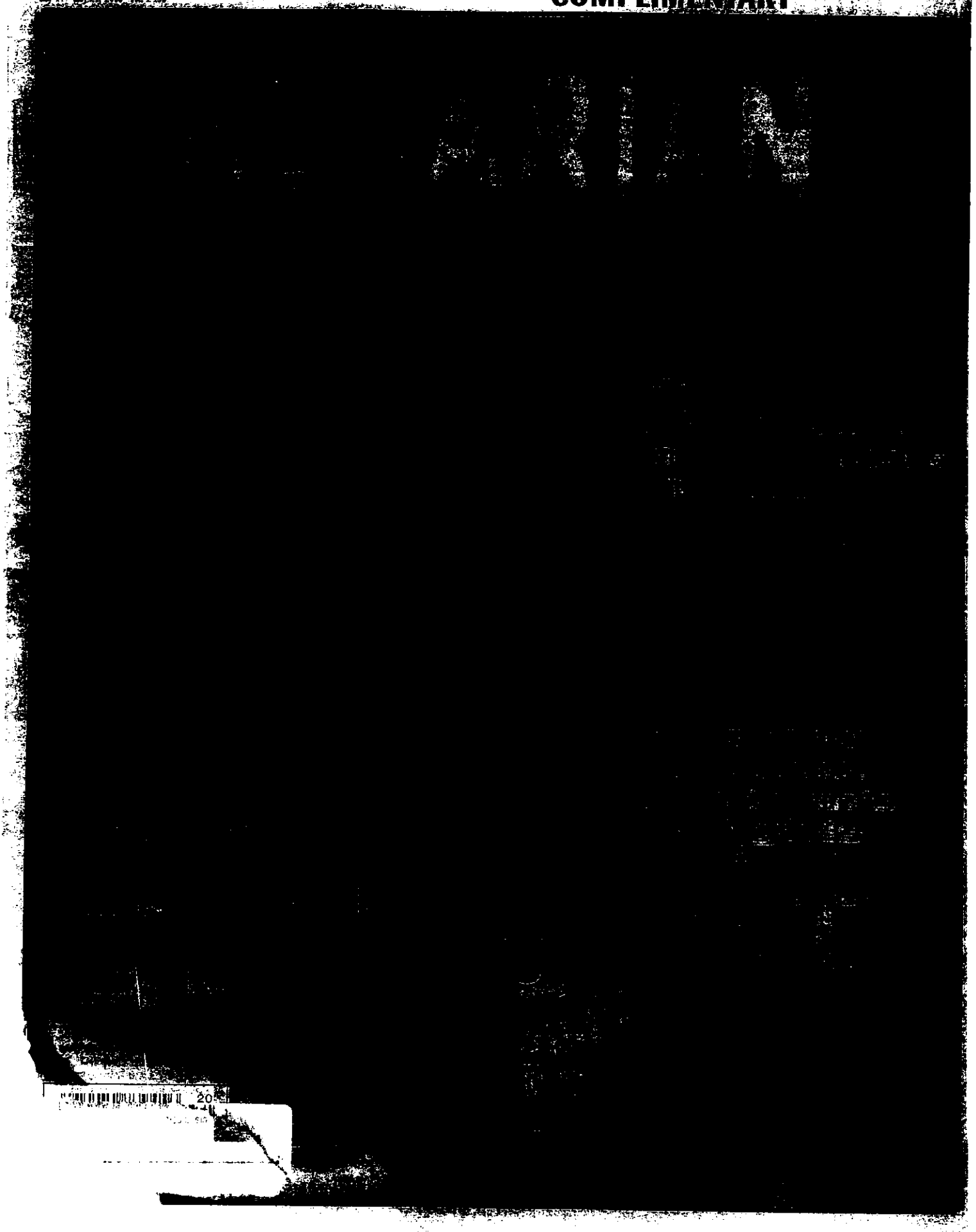
Rock singer-guitarist Peter Moore stepped out of the band to perform songs that fit the theme of alienation. Tracy Bonham and Venus Hum, the evening's opening acts, made brief return appearances. "Exhibit 13," a film of floating pieces of paper with burnt edges, paid poignant tribute to the victims of 9/11. Overall, though, the mood was lighthearted.

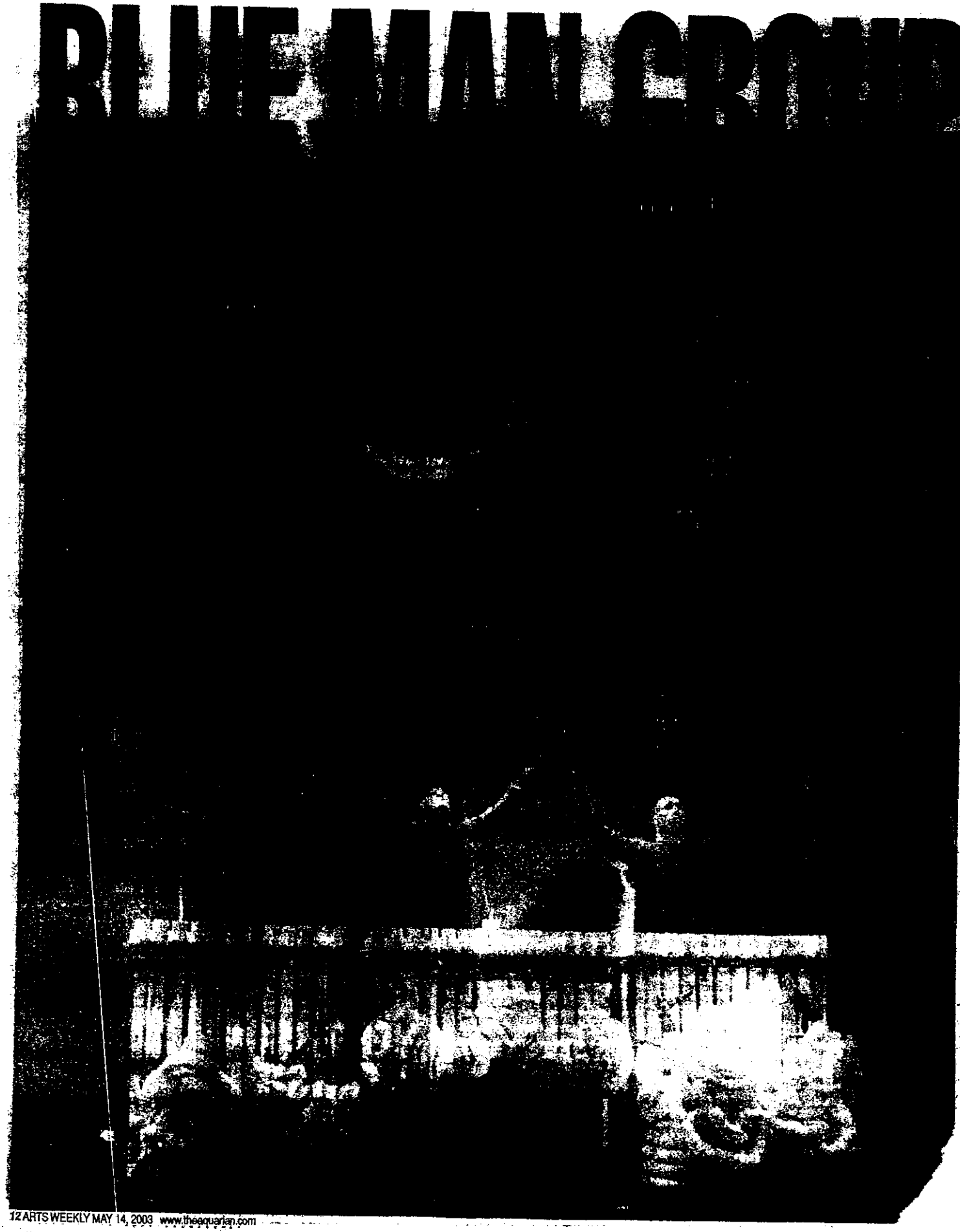
The band raised the roof with driving rhythms, aggressive guitars and superloud amplification. At one point, the musicians paid tribute to real rock icons with snippets that won cheers of recognition. But it wasn't necessary to be a rock fan to enjoy the rock show about a rock show.

The Blue Men endeared themselves to the crowd with their wide-eyed wonder and childlike curiosity. They offered good, clean family entertainment that unfolded in a theatrical spectacle of fresh imagery and unexpected turns. Their show wasn't high art or pathbreaking entertainment. But it was great fun.

COMPLIMENTARY NEWSSTAND PRICE: $1.50



BLUE MAN GROUP



Friday, July 25, 2003

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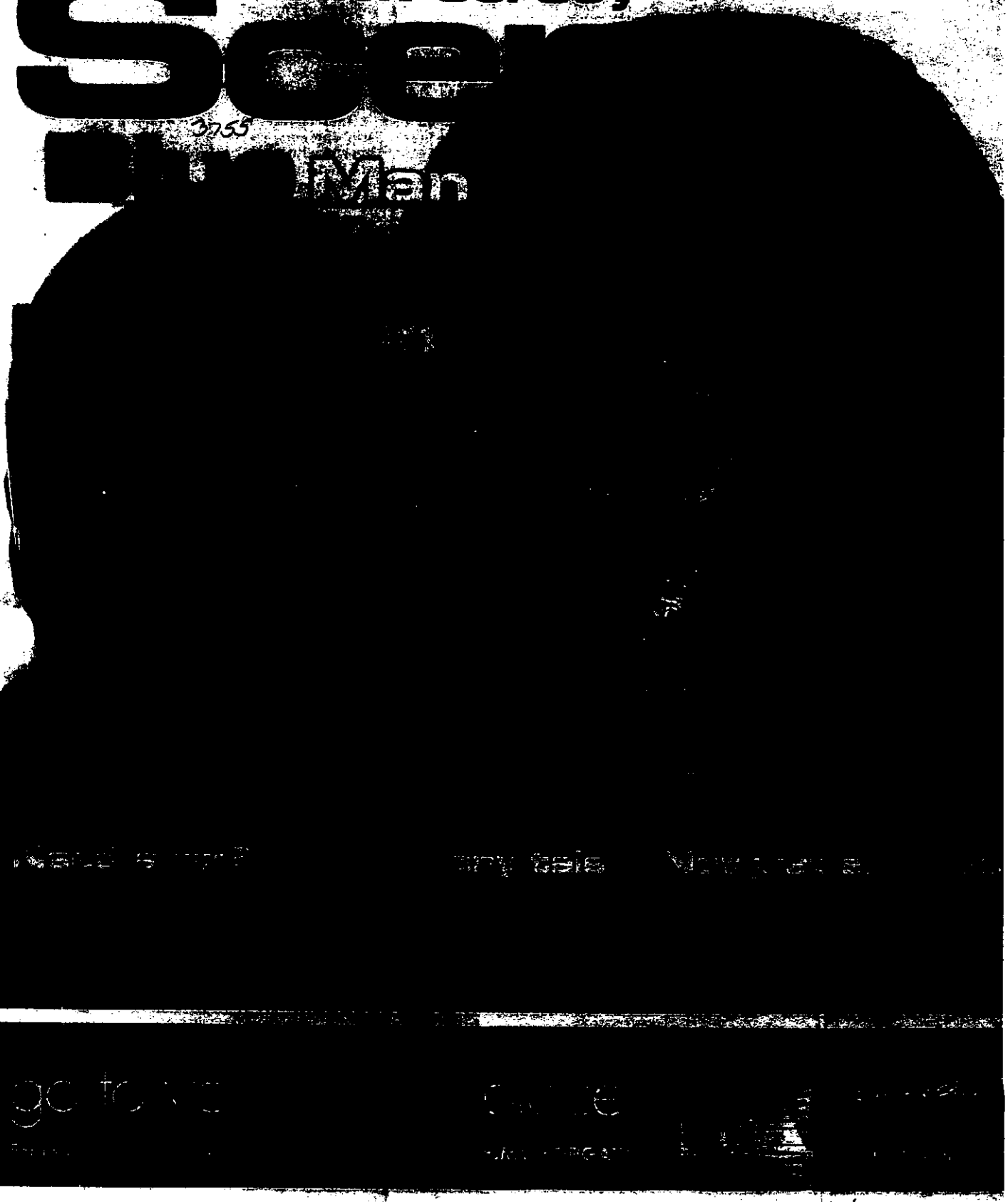
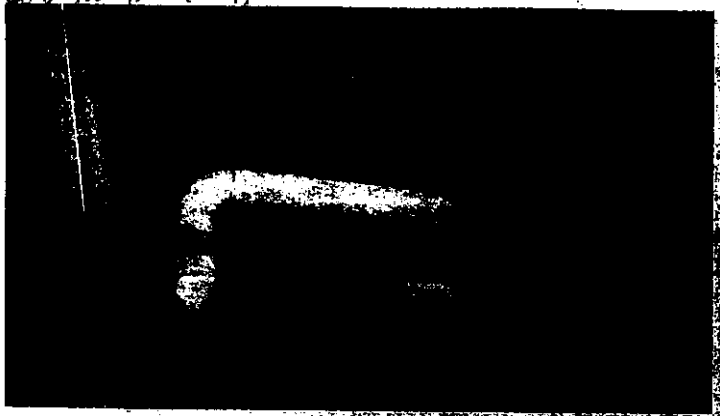
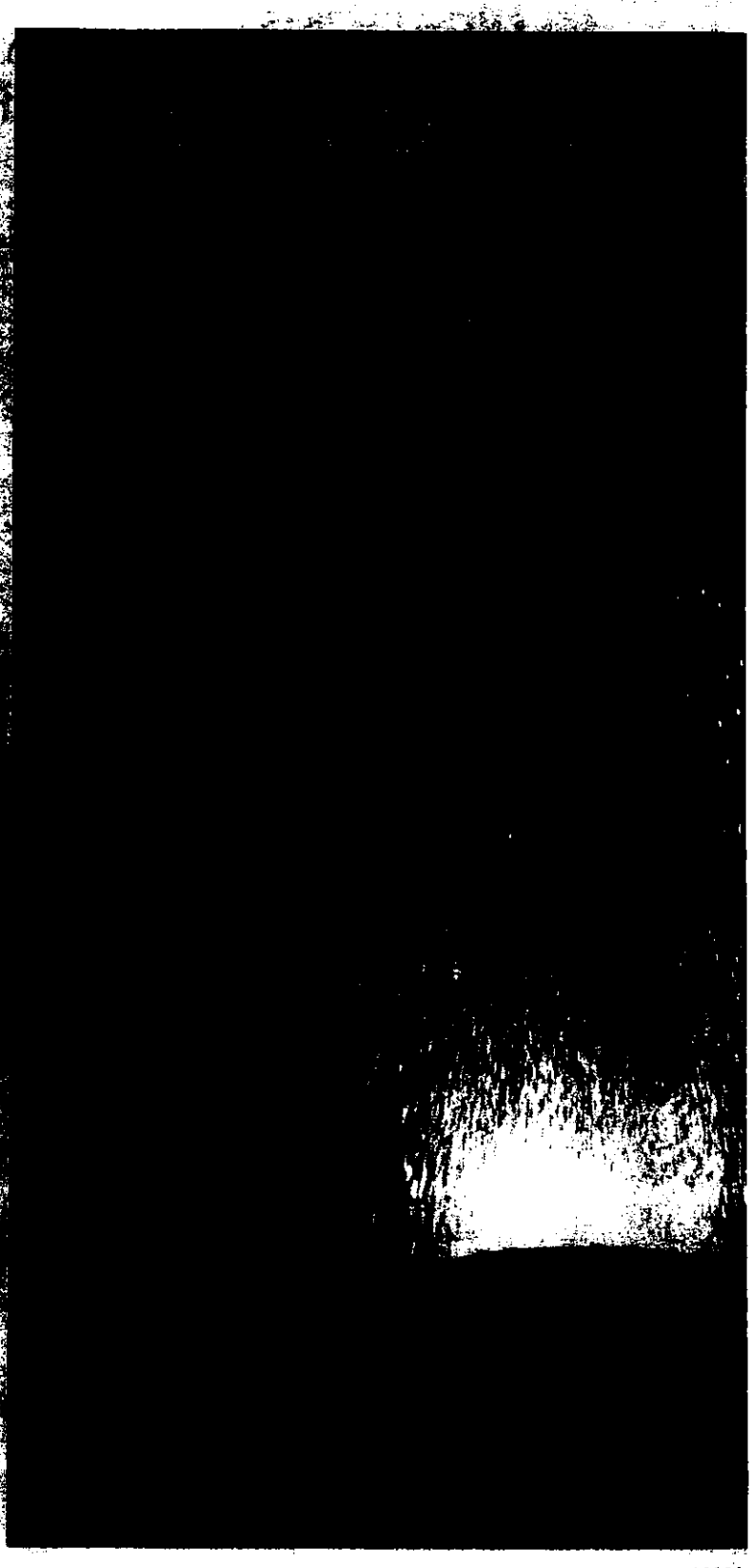




Photos courtesy of KEN HOWARD/Blue Man Group Productions

lue Man Group makes oddball sounds with unlikely instruments in 'The Complex Rock Tour.'

Silent stars, odd sounds sit well with audience



The three paint-covered Blue Man [illegible] a rock star tutorial in the show [illegible] leased CD 'The Complex.'

by CHUCK DARROW
Courier-Post Staff

As a classical guitarist, 32-ear-old Sara Overholt has een a lot in musical circles. ut she was surprised and impressed by the recent Blue Man Group performance she nd her friend, Yoon Song, attended.

"I've never seen anything with seven drummers before. think it was fabulous. I loved he imagery, and I liked the nusic a lot," said the New Haen, Conn., resident following recent Blue Man Group performance at the Mohegan Sun asino in Uncasville, Conn.

Song, a classical pianist, kewise admitted she'd never ncountered anything quite ke BMG's *The Complex Rock Tour*, which will be staged tolight at the Mann Center for ne Performing Arts and on ug. 31 at the Taj Mahal Casio Resort.

It's not surprising Song, 30, f New Haven, was impressed. BMG's blend of avant arde performance art, highech staging, dramatic music nd bizarre comedy has been stounding and delighting pa-ons since the group's humle beginnings in New York's nderground theater scene in 987.

"It's very innovative," said ong. "I couldn't ever think ne (oddball percussion) inruments made that kind of ound. The combination of nagery and sound is very ell done."

So it went following the now, part of BMG's first road tour. Those who had just seen their first BMG production and those who were old fans agreed the program was something special.

Blue Man Group is one of those rare productions that offers something for everyone. While Overholt and Song could appreciate the more technical aspects, younger audience members found the over-the-top aspects of the high-tech, multimedia presentation to their liking.

"The loudness was cool. And they were funny," said Rachel Carder, 10, of Manchester, N.H., referring to the show's three anonymous stars who perform wearing the trademark dark-blue latex masks.

And speaking of the performers' unique look, Hope L'Heureux, a service manager from Manchester, found it fascinating their facial expressions never changed.

"I think it's amazing," she said. "No smiling, no talking. I've never seen anything like it before."

Seth Resler, 26, of Providence, R.I., is a BMG show veteran, having seen the act at Las Vegas' Luxor casino. He noted *The Complex* doesn't boast the kind of uproarious comedy shtick that has made the Vegas production a hit.

"But I'm not disappointed at all," said Resler, program director of Providence alternative-rock outlet, WBRU-FM. "I like the musical aspect of it. It was just a different (emphasis)."

Reach Chuck Darrow at (856) 486-2442 or cdarrow@courierpostonline.com

Music, stardom how-to may amaze first-timers, but veterans might feel let down

If you go

- **What:** Blue Man Group's "The Complex Blog Tour"
- **When:** 8 p.m. today and Aug. 31
- **Where:** Mann Center for the Performing Arts, 52nd Street and Parkside Avenue, Phila. (tonight); Taj Mahal Casino Resort, Boardwalk and Virginia Avenue, Atlantic City (Aug. 31)
- **How much:** $25, $33, $38 and $48 (tonight); $35 and $45 (Aug. 31)
- **Tickets:** (215) 893-1999 or www.manncenter.org (tonight); (609) 449-5150 or www.trumptaj.com (Aug. 31)
- **Online:** www.blueman.com

[illegible] McCartney" and Nine Inch [illegible] the three Blue Men and their big sound behind (topped by drummer and three — count 'em — three percussionists) serve up a selection of the group's big songs. With the exception of one or two, they are dense, intricate pieces devoid of immediate hooks.

That means those who haven't bought the album are in for some tough sledding, although the ensemble instrumental work and additional vocals by Tracy Bonham and Venus Hum vocalist Juliette [illegible] range from solid to spectacular (especially the musicians' performances).

For pure visual delight, nothing beats the stumbling fusion-building "Above," which uses silhouettes and lighting to create what this critic thinks is one of the most exciting show-openers of all time.

Several bones are thrown to the audience by way of covers of Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit," The Who's "Baba O'Reilly" (aka "Teenage Wasteland") and snippets of Ozzy Osbourne's "Crazy Train," Led Zeppelin's "Kashmir" and DEVO's "Whip It."

All the while, the three Blue Men are front and center, in whites of their eyes, spooky. Bulging. While an ensemble of lights and [illegible] contributes exactly [illegible] that, the men themselves are quite a spectacle, the likes of which represent the zenith of early 21st-century stagecraft.

But, despite the nonstop assaults on the senses, *The Complex* doesn't quite measure up to its predecessors. Not because, at the last show I saw, it's not funny. It is. Very.

While there are plenty of comedic visuals and sounding-board gags, the show's funniest moments are the ones that unite getting a kick out of how to open cellophane with unexpected and surprising [illegible] and [illegible] ward melding of percussion and comedy.

Thoroughly entertaining, whimsical programs in show business annals.

Sadly, that whimsy is missing from *The Complex*. Too often, the three Blue Men are reduced to being nothing more than auxiliary percussionists, flailing away at a variety of oddball instruments (most of them lifted from PVC tubing).

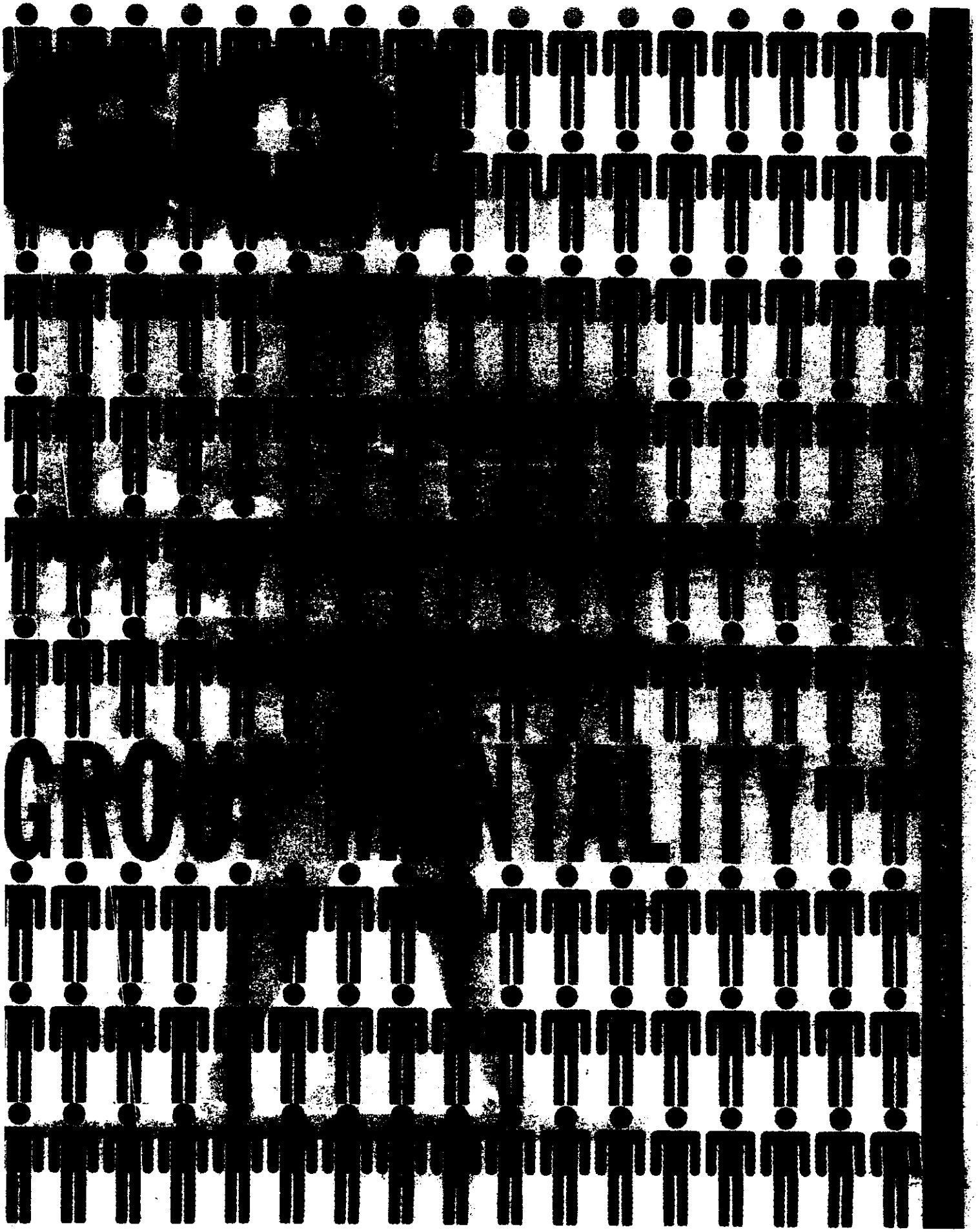
So, the bottom line is that, while *The Complex* is certain to be unlike anything you've seen before, you won't be getting everything Blue Man Group has to offer.

Two advisories:

1. The music is unrelentingly high volume. Ear plugs, especially for youngsters, are highly recommended.

2. This, like so many rock concerts, has opening acts, the aforementioned Tracy Bonham and Venus Hum. The hour of music they provide is really not worth the rush to get to the show on time.

Reach Chuck Darrow at (856) 486-2442 or cdarrow@courierpostonline.com.


GROUP

Blue highways

Davenport native talks about being part of Blue Man Group

By David Burke
GO! Editor

As a member of Blue Man Group, Kalen Allmandinger says he gets the best of both worlds.

He gets to be on stage before a screaming crowd as one-third of the performance art-turned-musical trio Blue Man Group, but after the show can slip through the stage door unnoticed while fans wait outside.

"That's the best part," said Allmandinger, a Davenport native. "We take off the makeup and walk around among the people who may still be hanging around. No one really knows.

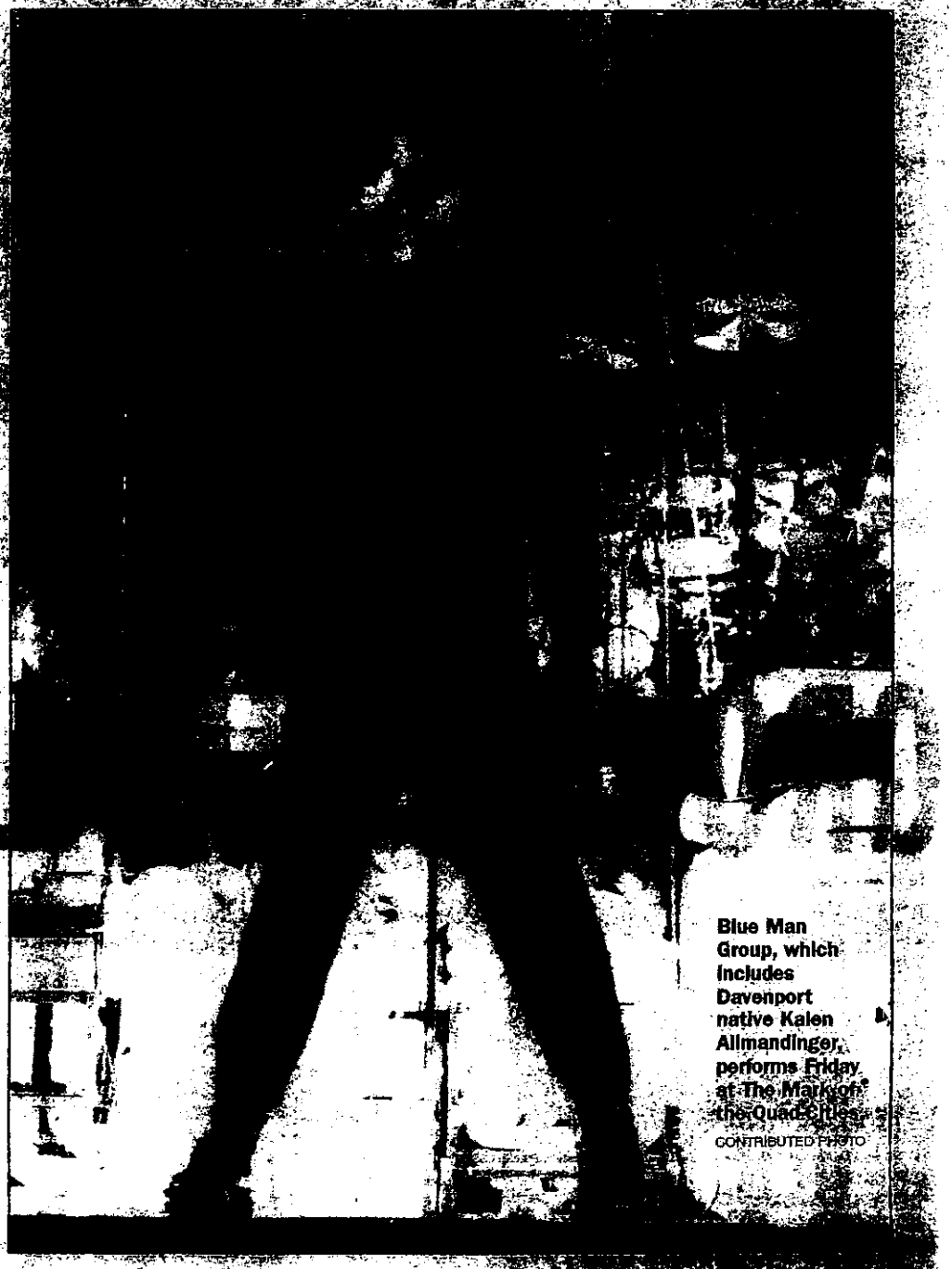
"It must be rough to be a celebrity and be recognized everywhere you go, and not have any free time or private time. We get to pretend like we're crazy rock stars a little bit, get all that energy up on stage and then slip into the crowd afterwards."

Allmandinger gets to fulfill both halves of the performers' dream when he and the Blue Man Group come to The Mark of the Quad-Cities, Moline, on Friday night.

The 25-year-old — who undergoes a transformation each night, thanks to a bald cap and blue greasepaint — was hired by the producers from among the 30 performers in the New York, Boston, Chicago and Las Vegas troupes.

The performance art group,

— Continued on Page 3



Blue Man Group, which includes Davenport native Kalen Allmandinger, performs Friday at The Mark of the Quad-Cities.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

If you go

Blue Man Group, with Tracy Bonham and Venus Hum

When: 7:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 17

Where: The Mark of the Quad-Cities, Moline

How much: $43.50 and $33.50

Information: (309) 764-2000

Continued from Page 2

which first formed in 1991, enthralled Allmandinger when he was a freshman in college at Roosevelt University, now Chicago College of the Performing Arts. As a freshman, he auditioned with the group. The producers liked him, but wanted him to finish college first. That drew praise from his mother, Mary Pat Allmandinger, a Walcott, Iowa, chiropractor.

The performance art group is turning rock act in promoting "The Complex," its CD released in April. Allmandinger was not one of the performers on "The Complex," which includes guest vocals by Dave Matthews, Gavin Rossdale of Bush and Tracy Bonham. Bonham and the group Venus Hum are among the acts joining Blue Man Group on the tour.

The backup band for the band includes a bass, keyboards and percussion. The Blue Man instruments include a larger-than-life drum, a "piano smasher" — a grand piano, minus lid, set on its side that's played with a huge mallet.

There's also lengths of boat antenna that sounds like a record scratching.

"It's kind of like our guitars, because it's an instrument we can walk around and play at the same time instead of standing at a stationary monstrosity," Allmandinger said.

Percussion is played by foam-rubber mallets beating against the end of PVC pipe, he said.

"It's funny, interesting music that you don't normally hear," he said. "It's got its own sound."

There is a plot to the show, Allmandinger said, where the Blue Man Group stumbles onto a "rock concert manual."

"While we are actually performing a rock concert, we're learning how to do it as we go along," he said. "We're pretending we're these crazy mad scientists, conducting experiments. It's so much fun to have all that energy thrown in your face from the crowd."

Allmandinger, who has toured with the group throughout the country, was especially thrilled that the Midwest tour stops included The Mark.

"I've seen a lot of cities I've never been to, and have been able to hook up with some old friends I haven't seen in years and years and years because I'm coming to their neighborhood," he said. "The show itself has been a blast because it's really developing."

His time on stage during the Blue Man Group show is exhausting physically, Allmandinger said, but it's worthwhile.

"But everything I'm doing is exactly what I want to be doing. It's hard to consider it work," he said. "It's a wonderful opportunity for me."

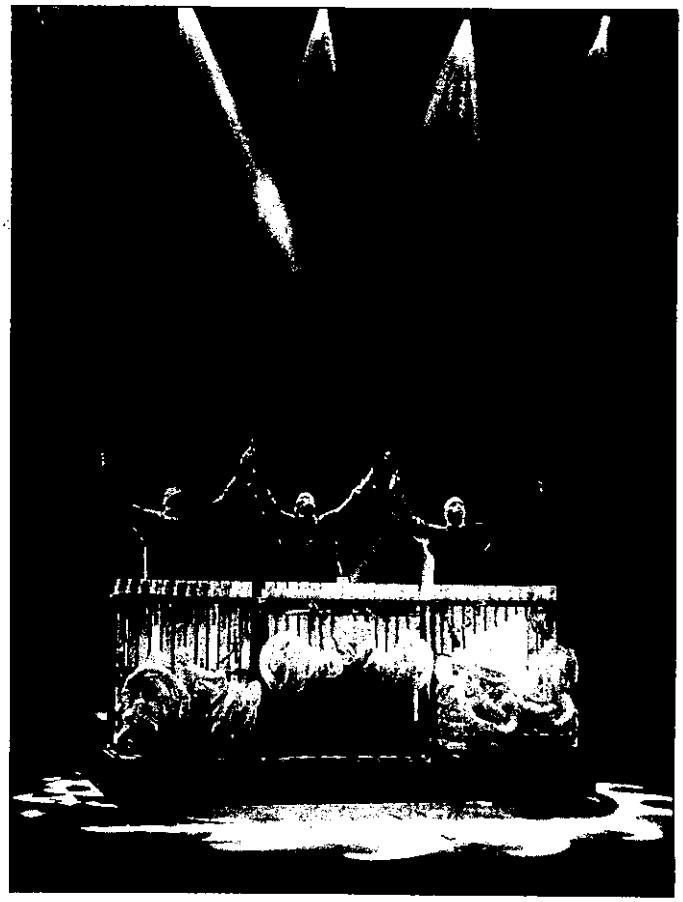
Every show is unique, the 1996 Davenport West High School graduate said, which keeps the show fresh for its performers.

"Because the character is so tuned in to the audience, it makes you feel each night is its own special, unique happening," he said.

The Blue Man Group tour, which concludes Nov. 22 in Biloxi, Miss., has been praised by critics nationwide, and Allmandinger says it's because it's something unique.

"There's really nothing else like it. It's like a huge rock show with a lot of lights and video effects that you don't see anymore. You don't have these Pink Floyd-types of shows out there anymore," he said. "There are a lot of people who connect in different ways to the characters. It's not spoon-fed to you. You know exactly what it is, and people assigning their own beliefs and values and notions onto the blank screen of a blue face."

David Burke can be contacted at (563) 383-2400 or dburke@qctimes.com.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Blue Man Group uses PVC pipe and foam-rubber mallets in its concert.

Rock duo seeks attention — and late night burritos

Oklahoma's The Stellas play Clinton

By Sean Moeller
GO! Writer

Notice to all Taco Bells, Taco Johns and taco anythings of Clinton, Iowa: Keep your doors open a few hours longer than your sign states you normally do on such an evening. There will be two Oklahomans just squirming to get at your soft shells and refried beans. They're very particular about where they eat post-show. Your tacos are they're only wish.

Raechel Duncan and John London – The Stellas when in tandem – upturn new cities for Mexican food and sniff out the nearest mall wherever they go. It's the food that can ultimately be a tougher find.

"It's my thing to find new places to eat when we're on the road," lead singer/guitarist/keyboardist Duncan said. "It usually ends being Mexican food because it's kind of scary to try fish places you've never heard of. Sometimes even chicken is scary."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Stellas — John London and Raechel Duncan — play Saturday at Eddie's Castaways in Clinton, Iowa.

ifyougo

The Stellas, with Echo 3 and the Crotch Rockets

When: 9 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 20

Where: Eddie's Castaways, 134 5th Ave. S, Clinton, Iowa

How much: $5

Information: (563) 242-1791

The college dropouts, now teaching various subjects at a fine arts academy in Oklahoma City, have solidified their two-person ensemble over the last nine months to the point where they've developed a fuller, more complete sound then they had in the previous two years as a three-piece.

"It works really well for us and when we're on tour, the money goes around a lot easier," Duncan said.

Striving through a solid summer of hitting all of the places they've never been, they earned some credibility that Duncan had thought was lacking.

"I suppose we did get a little more credibility, but we don't even take ourselves seriously," the 21-year-old said. "It drives us crazy when other bands take themselves too seriously. Everyone fights to be the coolest band.

"We've definitely got a little more under our belts after this summer."

What they already had under their belts was a knack for writing strong power-pop songs and having them come across as polished as is possible with the help of producer Trent Bell, the former guitarist for poppers the Chainsaw Kittens. Duncan has taken what she heard as cheesy songs (aka Good Charlotte) and made them into legitimate tunes (aka Mr. T Experience or The Donnas) that won't illicit the vicious scowls of rock snobs.

"Everywhere we go, there are people who are really friendly and tell us they like what we're doing," Duncan said. "I look at the merch sales. We're making money so it's like, 'Okay, we'll keep doing this for awhile.'"

And all a good pull at the merch table means is more late-night tacos for The Stellas.

Sean Moeller can be contacted at (563) 383-2288 or at smoeller@qctimes.com.

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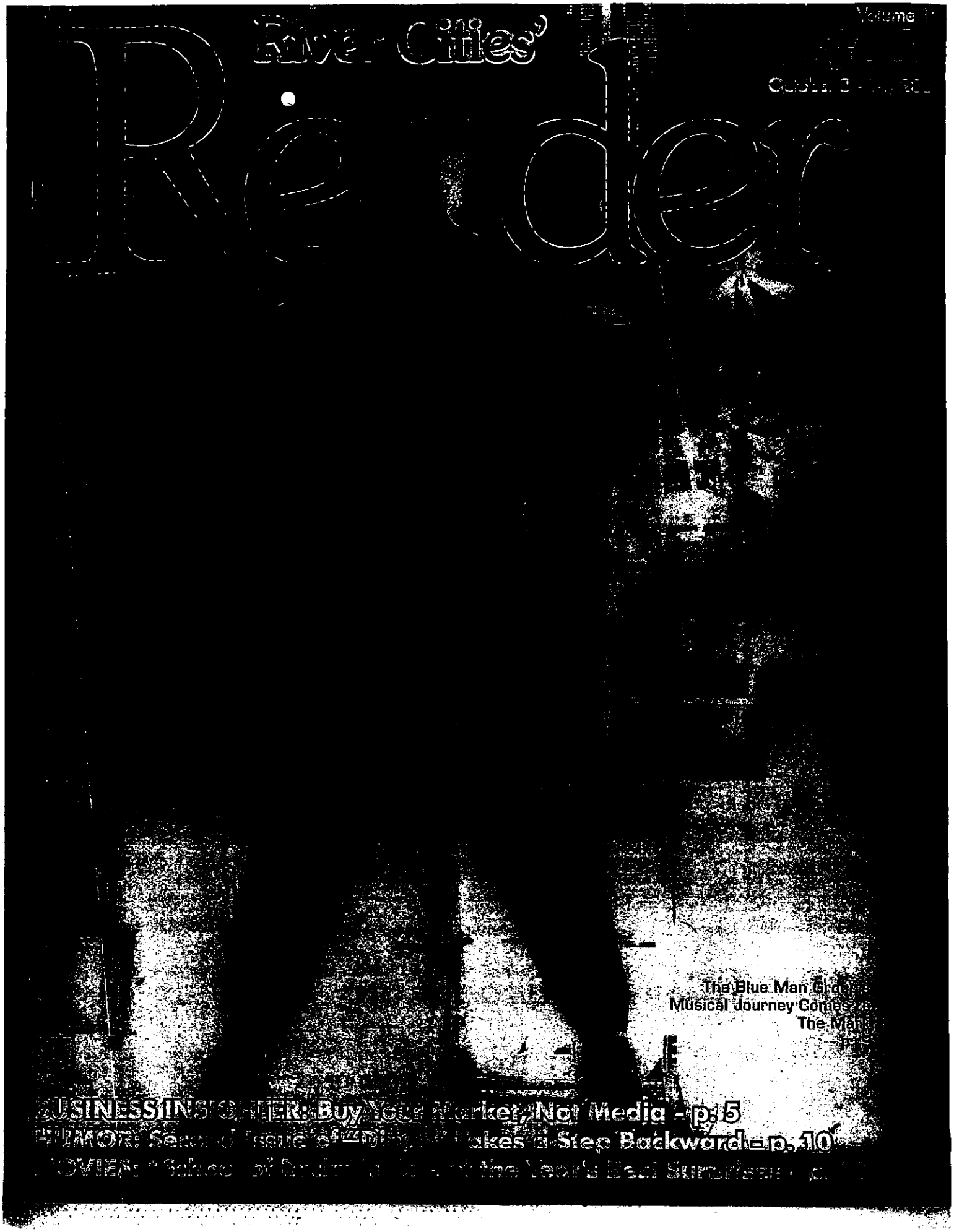
Volume 1

October 3 - [illegible]

River Cities' Reader



The Blue Man Group's Musical Journey Comes to The Mark

BUSINESS INSIGHTER: Buy Your Market, Not Media - p. 5
HUMOR: Second Issue of "Dinner" Takes a Step Backward - p. 10
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Cover Story

FEELING BLUE

The Blue Man Group's Musical Journey Comes to The Mark, October 17

by Jeff Ignatius
jeff@rcreader.com

Kalen Allmandinger says that his mother can always identify him at the start of a show. He's in profile, and "she can always tell by my skinny neck," Allmandinger said.

Of course, most mothers can readily identify their kids, but the task is a little more daunting if yours is one of three mute guys on stage with a bald pate, covered in blue grease paint. Allmandinger is a Blue Man, one of about 40 people who play the creative, experimenting, but silent character in four stage shows around the United States and, now, in a rock-concert tour.

Allmandinger will have a homecoming of sorts next week, when The Blue Man Group brings its Complex Rock Tour to The Mark. Allmandinger, a native of Walcott, expects to have roughly 70 friends and family members in the audience at the Quad Cities show next Friday.

Allmandinger joined the troupe in September 2000, after he finished studying acting at Roosevelt University in Chicago. He had originally tried out for the Blue Man Group after his freshman year, but "they told me to finish school and keep in touch." At his first audition, Allmandinger said, "I didn't even know what it [Blue Man Group] was."

Although he studied acting in college, Allmandinger said he's not sure he ever envisioned an acting career. Drums have always been his first love, and in Blue Man Group, he's able to use both his acting and percussion skills.

The Blue Man Group is most familiar to audiences from a series of commercials for Intel and numerous appearances on *The Tonight Show*, but the troupe started in 1987 as underground performance art in New York City by longtime friends Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton, and Chris Wink. The show *Tubes* was developed to showcase the Blue Men, their custom percussion instruments (mostly made from PVC pipes and rods), and their playful, audience-spraying experiments with art and food. That show has grown, with long runs in Boston, Chicago, and Las Vegas. A new show is planned to open in Berlin in May.

The theatrical nature took a backseat to music with 1999's Grammy-nominated, all-instrumental *Audio* album, and this year the Blue Man Group made its first foray into rock music with *The Complex*. It is from that record that the current traveling concert derives most of its material, again putting performance at the forefront.

And most reviewers have noted that it's difficult to fully appreciate the album *The Complex* until you've seen the stage show and can watch the music being created live with the Blue Man Group's instruments. Yes, it's rock music, but it's not *made* like rock music, and its layers of percussion and textures elevate it into something special. The Blue Man Group is adept at everything from trippy techno to hard-rock crunch.

It's important to note that this isn't some traveling show with Blue Men a tier below those in the long-running shows. "You're getting the real thing," said Manny Igrejas, the Blue Man Group's publicist. Allmandinger, for example, comes from the Boston ensemble. He said he had to try out for the tour, with the auditions focusing on members' musical abilities.

Both the album and show feature the Blue Man Group sharing tracks with guest vocalists and bands. On the tour, singer Tracy Bonham and the band Venus Hum open for Blue Man Group and are an integral part of the stage show.

Igrejas describes the show as "Blue Man learning to be a rock star, and teaching the audience some aspects of rock stardom."

Allmandinger views it differently. Rock stardom is all about the charismatic individual, the single focus of attention, so the three Blue Men – they're always a trio, and never alone – play "kind of anti-rock stars," Allmandinger said. "Ego is not part of it." Instead, he says the show is about "how to have a rock concert." The show becomes a voyage of discovery with these "inquisitive, curious beings," as Allmandinger describes the Blue Men.

In its first leg, the tour was basically a musical performance, but The Complex Rock Tour has evolved, expanding on the album's conceit – performance as an instruction manual for rock music. The album and show strives to do for rock what Leonard Bernstein did in his Young People Concerts, except that instead of being merely an instruction tool, the performers are learning along with the audience. The track "Time to Start" instructs: "In a moment, it will be time to execute Rock Concert Movement Number Three, the up-and-down jumping motion."

"There was less of a story," Allmandinger said of the first incarnation of The Complex Rock Tour. "The character wasn't really developed." Now in its third leg, the tour has the Blue Men finding and following "a rock-show manual," Allmandinger said.

"The characters are trying to get this elevated group experience," Allmandinger explained, trying to get the people to bob their heads, pump their fists.

There's certainly a difference of audience scale between the *Tubes* show and this tour, which is particularly challenging for a troupe that tries to get a crowd as involved as possible. Allmandinger said the Boston theatre holds a little more than 500 people, and "we're playing to crowds of thousands. In the smaller show, you can have the 'little moment.' That doesn't read the same here. That's the challenge: to include everyone."

The tour features four Blue Men, although only three perform on any given night. (In addition to Allmandinger, the tour includes a performer from Springfield, Illinois – Tom Galassi – strengthening the middle-America connection.) There are three defined roles – Allmandinger described them as "mischievous," "strong, grounded, and direct," and "frenetic" – and three of the Blue Men always play the same character. Allmandinger gets to do all three.

As Blue Man Group has grown, it has certainly lost some of its underground credibility. When asked about the tension between art and commerce, Allmandinger paused. "I think something can be both" commercially successful and artistic, he said. "It's not easily definable, but it is a performance." He eventually settled on calling Blue Man Group "large-scale professional performance art."

Allmandinger enjoys Blue Man Group partly because it leaves him time during the day to make music and films. But he also loves the persona. Although the Blue Man is a defined character, each performer brings something to the role. "It's a pretty fun mode to operate in," he said. "We're finding out new things about what the character can do." □

Tickets to the Blue Man Group are $43.50 and $33.50. The October 17 show starts at 8 p.m., with opening acts Tracy Bonham and Venus Hum. Tickets are available at The Mark box office or Ticketmaster outlets. For more information, visit (http://www.themark.org).

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New Haven Register
FRIDAY, JULY 11, 2003
SECTION W

BLUE MAN

GROUP

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Movie review: 'Blue Gar[illegible]
Johnny Depp in 'Pirates of the Caribbean' [illegible]
Deep Dish: 'The Blue Pearl' [illegible]

Blue Man Group has deconstructed the rock concert experience and turned it into its own touring show

'COMPLEX' MADE SIMPLE

By Fran Fried
Register Entertainment Editor

COVER STORY

A good percentage of us have been to enough rock shows in our lives, and we know the drill. The band comes on and starts playing and we react physically as a conditioned, knee-jerk reflex — even if, after the show, we look at each other with grimaces and say, "Gawd, that show *sucked*!"

Well, just as garage and punk stripped rock'n'roll back to its basic, fundamental, three-chord structure, those cobalt outsiders in Blue Man Group have stripped audience behavior down to simple, knee-jerk elements, and in their unique way, they've been explaining them to us:

- Rock Concert Movement No. 1: The Head-Bob.
- Rock Concert Movement No. 2: The One-Armed Fist-Pump.
- Rock Concert Movement No. 3: The Up-and-Down Jumping Motion.

There are other movements, but these are the basics.

As a companion to its second album, the April release "The Complex," Blue Man Group — the enigmatic theatrical group that started out as a trio in New York in the late '80s and has become a multi-branched phenomenon — has created its first touring rock concert show. The bald men in blue greasepaint bring the show to Oakdale Theatre Sunday night and to the Mohegan Sun Arena on Tuesday, and unlike the group's famed theatrical show, expect people to act — well, like a rock concert crowd.

"It pokes fun at (rock concerts), not necessarily out of mocking," explained Matthew Banks, one of the four Blue Men on this tour (don't worry; it's still three on stage at one time). "It's just deconstructing it so the audience member gets a closer look at the rock experience."

Blue Man Group will be joined by opening acts Tracy Bonham and Venus Hum, both of which sang on "The Complex," and Peter Moore, who will sing the Dave Matthews part in the song "Sing Along." The music ranges from techno-fueled to ballads to an edgy remake of the Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit." But, as usual, the focus will be on Blue Man Group, which will play their unique instruments: the PVCs, tubulars, piano smasher, varietal drums and air poles.

"Well, it's more rock than theater," explained Banks, 29, a native of Milton, Ontario, who has been a member of Blue Man Group for four years; he joined this tour from the group's Las Vegas show.

"The theater performances have a definite theater vibe to them. People get dressed up in their Sunday finest and are more polite. The rock show is more of a standing audience. We have two opening acts, plus the material is completely new."

When this phone conversation took place last month from Las Vegas, Banks and his fellow Blue Men (Eric Gebow and Tom Galassi, from the Chicago theatrical show, and Kalen Almondinger, from the Boston show) had only performed "The Complex" 11 times, so it was hard for him to gauge yet the full effect of the show — especially one that had changed and evolved over five weeks of rehearsal. But he did see some reactions that made him take notice.

"In Minneapolis, people thought they were going to be seeing the Chicago (theater) show. It was a polite theater vibe," Banks said. "All of a sudden, we blew the roof off. By the end, these people wearing suits and ties were jumping up and down and yelling. It was an amazing transformation.

"By deconstructing," he said, "you (the audience) come here, you scream, you jump up and down. It gives you permission to be an insider in an insider world — especially if you're sitting on the floor. People might stand up before I do. Or before I feel free enough, or sometimes I feel the need to jump up and scream. This way, it literally brings people together, gives permission to act like you're excited about it."

Blue Man Group, formed in New York in 1988 by Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink, is supposed to be a group of men who stand out and stand apart from the rest of humanity.

And the paradox is that as their unique stage shows became increasingly popular; as the founding trio, which never took a day off its first three years, sat down to create a blueprint book so others could assume the roles; as Blue Man Group began showing up on TV shows and in commercials; as the company grew into a 500-person organization, with full-time theatrical shows in New York, Boston, Chicago and Las Vegas; and now as they produce a rock concert tour ... the ultimate outsiders have become insiders. The guys who were once looked at with funny glances on the streets of New York are now rock stars in their own right.

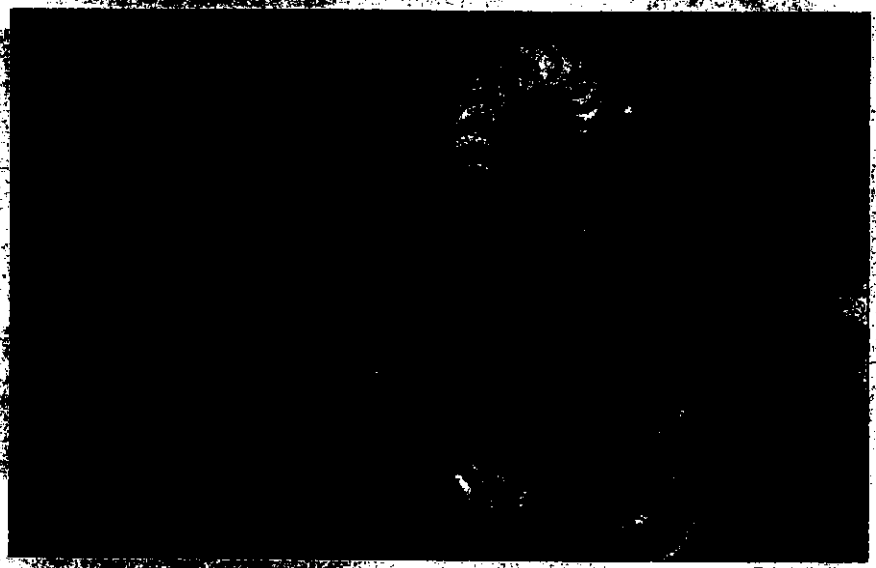
"I do experience that," Banks admitted. The night before the interview, "I did two Vegas (theater) shows. Right off the bat, there were people up on their feet and screaming for us."

So how do confirmed outsiders adapt and adjust? By doing what insiders do — twisting the rules to suit their needs. And by militantly being committed to being those observers looking in, Blue Man Group is there to make people feel less like outsiders themselves.

"When I first started, the audience would be silent because they didn't know what we were," said Banks. "Now people come into the show: 'I love Blue Man! I buy it! I'm into it!' That's not what we're supposed to be. We just play against it. Blue Man interprets the screams as a call for hunger — a hunger for connection.

"If we just started the show with people screaming, it's just so constricting to the character. He's not there to be praised outright. He shows up because there's a need. People are so connected now, but yet, there's this huge isolation factor, this huge loneliness factor. Blue Man is paving that way to break down barriers between people."

Fran Fried can be reached at (203) 789-5678 or ffried@nhregister.com.

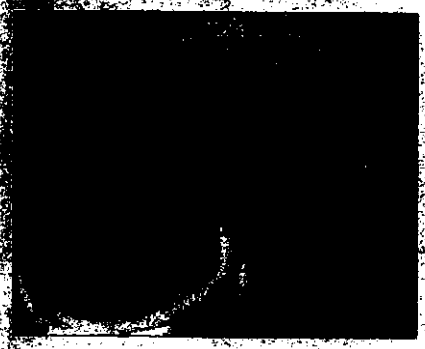


Photos by Ken Howard

Blue Man Group has created "The Complex," a rock concert tour to accompany its album of the same name. It's different from its theatrical production in that it has singing and it has "a different vibe." But despite their popularity, the men in cobalt greasepaint insist on remaining outsiders looking in.

IF YOU GO

- **Event:** Blue Man Group's "The Complex"; opening acts Tracy Bonham and Venus Hum
- **Times/Places:** 8 p.m. Sunday, Oakdale Theatre, 95 S. Turnpike Road (Exit 64 off Wilbur Cross Parkway), Wallingford; 7 p.m. Tuesday, Mohegan Sun Arena, Mohegan Sun Casino, off Route 2A (Exit 79A off I-395), Uncasville
- **Tickets/Info:** Oakdale — $45, $35 and $25, (203) 265-1501; Mohegan Sun — $35 and $20; Tickets.com (800) 477-6849



More than dazzle to the Blue Men

■ Founding Blue Man Group member talks about the performance artists' influences and ideas

By Paul Freeman
TIMES CORRESPONDENT

Question: What exactly *is* the Blue Man Group, the collective of inquisitive, bald, blue, seemingly-earless wonders that can be seen on TV ads, in a glitzy Vegas act, on late-night TV. Is it a performance art troupe? Is it a rock band?

The answer seems to be a little bit of both. Especially now that the band has released a new CD, "The Complex" (Lava Records), a full-on rock album complete with guest vocals by such luminaries as Dave Matthews, Josh Haden and Esthero. The Group has mounted a road show, featuring singers Tracy Bonham and Venus Hum.

PREVIEW

■ WHO: Blue Man Group, with Tracy Bonham and Venus Hum

■ WHEN: 8 p.m. Thursday

■ WHERE: The Warfield, 982 Market St., San Francisco

■ HOW MUCH: $30

■ CONTACT: (415) 775-7722 or www.blueman.com

At the Warfield on Thursday night, in addition to the Blue Men pounding out rhythms, there'll be four drummers and four other musicians.

There are now dozens of performing Blue Men involved in various productions, including the hit show at the Luxor in Las Vegas. Chris Wink, one of the three original members of the Blue Man Group, ponders the rock concert tour's reception:

"I don't know what the perception is of Blue Men in San Francisco," he says. "For all I know, people think the Blue Man is the Intel Man. I couldn't blame them. But I hope word gets to the people who wish they could see a slightly alternative-influenced musical production with the production values of Pink Floyd. For the right person, this show could blow their mind."

BEST KNOWN FOR acclaimed theatrical performances that combine music, art and slapstick, the Blue Man Group, which performs Thursday at San Francisco's Warfield, has released a new album.

For this tour, the Blue Man Group collaborated with famed production designer Marc Brickman (Pink Floyd, Paul McCartney, Genesis, Nine Inch Nails). "He's someone we had been fans of and it turns out that's mutual," Wink says. "It's been incredible to put our heads together and get the real quality toolbox of a rock kind of rig. At some rock shows, the lights shoot out almost randomly. You get the feeling that the machines are in control. We try to use the technology to support the human performance, as opposed to replacing it."

Functional glitz

Sometimes a simple effect can go a long way. "On one song, on our video screen, we just project an oscilloscope, which is fed to the sound board. It's an interesting circle. The drummer's beat makes the oscilloscope jump around. When it jumps up, it lights him up better. If he gets louder, it gets lighter. We're thinking about how to enhance the performer versus just having lighting effects happen purely as a spectacle. We like to have an element of dazzle. But it's a functionality that drives us."

Wink is excited about three-dimensional animation that accompanies the Group's version of Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit." "Jellyfish swim up from the floor to the stage, over the performers' heads. That's kind of fun, just to give us some surrealism."

On "The Complex," the Blue Man Group offers a modernized interpretation of Donna Summer's "I Feel Love." "For the Blue Men, a cover song is just like a box of Jell-O or Cap'n Crunch or toothpaste. It's something interesting to observe. This song was originally played on a synthesizer. Apparently, the only things that were nonsynthetic were the vocal and the kick drum. The Blue Man, in his naivete, tries to re-create it on his tubes."

For all its high-tech stage effects, the Blue Man Group, which earned a Grammy nomination in the pop instrumental category for its debut album, 1999's "Audio," eschews computerized music.

"That has its place, maybe," Wink says. "But you're going to always want to see a drummer drumming. There's something about the act itself. It isn't just the sound of the drum. The more drum machines became popular, the bigger the drums we made. So we were fighting the fight of the drum army, as we call it."

Pulsating percussion fuels the CD. "It seemed to us that the guitar had been very much explored in rock. But has the drum kit and its role in rock been completely explored? Has the seven-drummer rock song been fully explored? Has the 7-foot bass drum sound been explored? Talking about that got us excited."

'Very conscious'

Working in a huge warehouse with tubes and drums everywhere, the Blue Man Group wrote and arranged music for "The Complex" that could be adapted into a visually arresting stage show.

"You could get into recording studio-itis, where you just keep adding things and don't consider what's going to happen later, when you have to play it," Wink says. "We were very conscious of what the Blue Men and the band would be playing, what the Blue Men would be doing at each point. That is actually an interesting way to create music."

The number that rocks hardest is "The Current." A version of the song, with a Gavin Rossdale vocal, will back the closing credits of "Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines." Wink and his compatriots just finished shooting the video.

"That song was where we really pushed into the kind of sound we secretly go home and listen to. It's funny: On our stereo, for every Knitting Factory, cool, crazy record you'd expect a performance artist to have, we have, like, a stupid punk rock band album that probably gets a lot more play," says Wink with a chuckle. "Ultimately, I'm more influenced by the Sex Pistols than I am by Harry Partch or some other artistic thing."

BULLETS & BOMBS

The Blue Men break their silence

3755

According to Blue Man Group's Phil Stanton, the difference between a play and a rock show becomes clear the second the lights go down.

"When it gets dark in the theater, people know it's time to be quiet and concentrate," he explains. "When it gets dark at a rock show, people know it's time to jump up and scream. They're polar opposites."

That hasn't stopped Blue Man from trying to bridge the two. While the indigo-hued act's Off-Broadway show has run long enough to rate as "The Fantasticks" of its generation (12 years and counting) — and while it has spawned productions in three other cities — only now have its founders released a rock CD.

The album, "The Complex," has elements that go unexplored in the show — such as vocals and big fat guitars. It made its debut this week at a respectable No. 60 on Billboard's Top 200 Album chart, with sales that tripled the opening numbers of the band's all-instrumental album in 1999.

KRT

RECORDING THE BLUES: One of the Group's theatrical troupes

It didn't hurt that the CD's lead single features warbling from Dave Matthews.

"One of the first dates Dave had with the woman who became his wife was at a Blue Man show," Stanton explains. "So he has a warm place in his heart for us."

So do Bush's Gavin Rossdale and alterna-rockers Venus Hum, Josh Haden (of the crooning group Spain) and Tracy Bonham. All of them put in cameos on the album.

This is the first time any of the Blue Man productions (which are still overseen by founders Stanton, Matt Goldman and Chris Wink) has included spoken or sung words. In the show, communication comes entirely through gestures, signs and percussive effects.

JIM FARBER

Using lyrics, says Stanton, "gave us a chance to make explicit what had always been abstract." It also let them bring something new to rock. Here, rather than a star, it's the generic character of "Blue Man" who plays frontman.

To stress the point, the founders, who recorded the album, won't perform at the upcoming live shows. They'll leave that to other "Blue Men," just as they have at subsequent productions of the theatrical event (which now run in Boston, Chicago and even Vegas).

"Rock is usually based on the cult of personality of the performer," Stanton explains. "Even with a highly theatrical character like Ziggy Stardust, everyone knew that was really David Bowie. So this is a first."

To plow even more fresh ground, the Group's new tour (which hits Hammerstein Ballroom May 19) will be a pastiche of theater, performance art, rave and rock tour.

"It's closest to the old Pink Floyd shows," Stanton says.

Meaning it should be anything but just another brick in the wall.

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Blue Man Group provides entertainment for the senses

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By Ed Condran
Special to The Mercury

While checking out the Blue Man Group six years ago in a downtown Manhattan theater, it was hard to imagine the experimental musical theater troupe transcending cult status. The group, which featured a troika of oddballs, Matt Goldman, Chris Wink and Phil Stanton, had a great gimmick. Each sported blue painted skin, skullcaps and black clothing.

The act's shows featured sight gags, physical stunts and audience participation. Those in the crowd were given ponchos since paint, food and other objects that could stain were tossed into the darkness and onto paying customers.

Sure, it was entertaining, but it appeared certain the Blue Man Group, which formed in 1987, would remain a fixture in Lower Manhattan.

However, the Blue Man Group decided to put out an album. The act, recorded "Audio," which was released in 1999. The disc, which was full of trippy, electronic sounds, went gold and helped earn the act a Grammy nomination in the Best Pop Instrumental category.

The Blue Man Group edged ever closer to the mainstream by participating in Moby's Area 2 during the summer of 2002.

The savvy outfit decided to add vocals to its quirky work, which owes a good deal to Kraftwerk. The group's latest album, "The Complex," features a number of vocalists. Dave Matthews has a cameo for "Sing Along." Matthew's pipes aren't half as interesting as the Blue Man Group's plastic pipes, which the band uses in lieu of guitars.

Some of the singers participating in the project, including Tracy Bonham and Josh Haden add a nice touch to the tunes, but in the end it's the Blue Man Group that makes a spin of "The Complex" worthwhile.

Such covers as Donna Summer's "I Feel Love" and Jefferson Starship's "White Rabbit" triumph due to the percussive schemes employed by the Blue Man Group.

"There is something primal and very exciting which draws people to the Blue Man Group," Blue Man Eric Gebow explained while calling from Montreal. "That's why I'm part of this. It excites me."

BLUE MAN GROUP

Gebow, a native of San Francisco, didn't know much about the Blue Man Group until he auditioned. "I went out for it and saw the show and was amazed," Gebow said. "It was just so intense. It blew my mind. I never saw anything like it. That's a big part of the attraction."

Indeed. There is no other show that is comparable to the Blue Man Group, which is slated for Friday at the Mann Center for the Performing Arts. The Blue Man jaunt is heavy on the visuals. The act presents a kaleidoscope of wild images to go along with the visceral sounds.

"It's a wild event since there is so much stimulation for people to deal with," Gebow said. "It's something you have to see to believe. The Blue Man Group is best witnessed in a theater."

That's a point well taken. Most folks around the country had their first taste of Blue Man at Area 2, which featured a daytime performance. Much like a vampire, the Blue Man Group needs darkness in order to thrive.

"The lighting is a big part of what we do," Gebow said. "The difference between performing in the light and the dark for us is massive."

The Blue Man Group's single, "The Current," is part of "Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines" soundtrack. Bush pinup Gavin Rossdale, who has been accused of being a bit mechanical, aptly enough, handles the vocals.

"We've been really fortunate to have people like Gavin Rossdale, Dave Matthews and Josh Haden be part of what we're doing. I know Dave has been friendly with (Matt Goldman and Chris Wink). I know Dave's a fan and so is Josh. All that has helped us immensely. So the Blue Man Group has gone further than most people ever imagined."

Blue Man Group appears Friday at the Mann Center for the Performing Arts, 52nd Street and Parkside Avenue, Philadelphia. Tickets are $48, $38, $33 and $25. Show time is 8 p.m. Call 215-893-1999.

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True Blue

Blue Man Group with (from left) Tracy Bonham, Esthero and Annette Strean of Venus Hum

Special guests add softer hues to renowned Blue Man Group

Having won over sold-out audiences in New York, Boston, Chicago, and most recently, Las Vegas, the Blue Man Group is now out to conquer the realm of the rock concert. Touring in support of their recently released album, *The Complex*, the spooky painted percussionists have loaded up their tubulum and hit the road with special guests Tracy Bonham and Annette Strean of Venus Hum to create what is truly a rock spectacular—three percussionists, drums, bass, keys, and two guitarists on a spacious tri-level stage.

Club Rock

Fist-pumping
Head bobbing
Booty shaking

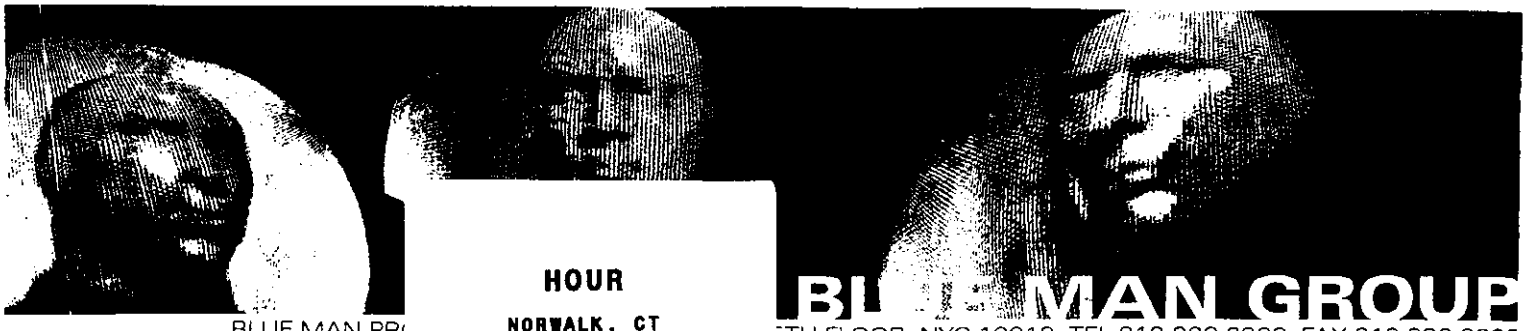
To help pull off the new rock angle, BMG decided to add vocals, so they recruited not only Tracy and Annette but also Dave Matthews (who sings on the record's first single, "Sing Along"), Gavin Rossdale, and Esthero, who provided her own unique sound to BMG's cover of a Jefferson Airplane classic. "'White Rabbit' was a lot of fun to do," says the Canadian singer, who is currently mixing her own record for a late summer or early fall release. "They just let me do my thing, add my own flavor to it."

In addition to singing with BMG during the show, both Tracy and Annette have opening slots on the tour. "I'm really excited that I get to play my own music as well," says Tracy, who sings on "Up to the Roof" and "Shadows Part 2" on *The Complex* and in the live show. "I have a new direction with my music. It's not as hard; it's more acoustic and stripped down, more beautiful."

Annette is not only excited about her role in the show and her opportunistic opening slot, but also at the prospect of working with BMG in the future. "I'd love to have the Blue Men do a remix of a Venus Hum song," says the fetching singer, whose vocals on the Donna Summer classic "I Feel Love" brought the already at fever pitch audience even closer to aural climax.

But it was Annette's words about the group as a whole that shed the most light on how she, Tracy, the Blue Men, and the band ensure that they and their audience have a great time at every show. "They're just great people," says the singer. "It's so great to meet people, where you like what they do, they like what they do, and on top of it all, they're nice." —MICHAEL MUELLER

FYI Tracy's favorite BMG instrument is the backpack tubulum. "It looks like they could just fly off the stage at any moment—like *The Rocketeer*."



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Blue Man Group expands touring plans

3755

By BARRY A. JECKELL
Billboard.com

NEW YORK — The inimitable Blue Man Group will kick off a U.S. summer tour July 7 in Columbia, Md. Currently dates run through Aug. 30, although more are expected. The act kicked off its inaugural rock tour at the end of April at the Coachella Valley Music & Arts Festival.

As on the current outing, Tracy Bonham and Venus Hum will open. Both were among the guests on the Blue Man Group's Lava album, "The Complex," and both appear onstage and contribute to the act's elaborate stage show.

The tour features a 12-member band that incorporates seven drummers, and three Blue Man Group performers — but not group founders Chris Wink, Phil Stanton, and Matt Goldman. Visual elements include holographic jellyfish and stage-swarming dragonflies.

"After 30 years of doing rock'n'roll shows, this is the most refreshing and challenging project I've come across in years," production designer Marc Brickman recently told Billboard. "(Blue Man Group's) commitment to the music world is really staggering."

Audiences have long enjoyed the performance troupe's show "Tubes" in New York, Boston, and Chicago, and its "Live at Luxor" spectacle in Las Vegas. But Wink told Billboard that the Complex tour brings something completely different. "The challenge is to get people to understand that this has nothing to do with the theatrical show," he said.

Released in April, "The Complex" debuted at No. 6 on Billboard's Top Internet Album Sales chart and No. 60 on The Billboard 200. The set also features guest turns by Bush's Gavin Rossdale, Dave Matthews, Esthero, and Josh Haden. Rossdale's track, "The Current," is featured in the film "Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines." A video for the song was recently completed.

For more information on the group, the album, and the tour, visit the official Blue Man Group Web site.

Blue Man Group's summer Northeast tour includes Oakdale Theater in Wallingford on July 13.

The big bang

Members of the Blue Man Group have designed a touring rock show — with emphasis on the corniest aspects of the spectacle.

Blue Man Group on tour with its latest rhythmic project

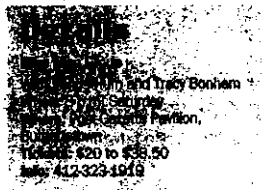
3755

By Michael Machosky
TRIBUNE-REVIEW

Whether it's theater or music or performance art or the new vaudeville or "multimedia extravaganza," the Blue Man Group — for good or ill — is in a category all its own. Only Cirque De Soleil — and maybe Pittsburgh's own marvelous Squonk Opera — has as long a reach in its mission to bring weird art to the masses. But Cirque, helpfully, has "circus" in its name to give you some way to describe it. The Blue Man Group doesn't make it so easy.

Even the members of Blue Man Group don't think it's easy putting the Blue Man character into words.

"He's a bit of three different



and Tracy Bonham
Pavilion,
Tickets: $20 to $33.50
Info: 412-323-1919

things is that he has the curiousity, innocence and excitability of a child. And yet, he has the groundedness and focus and reflexes of a hunting dog. And, his intentions and purpose and drive are very superhero-like. Blue Man arrives because of the need ... for Blue

bald, black-clad completely blue men of the Blue Man Group from a few Intel commercials, strange "Tonight Show" appearences or an episode of "The Simpsons," but the group's roots go back to avant-garde performance art spaces in New York's East Village in the late '80s. Three friends — Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink — cobbled together an unusual percussion ensemble out of PVC pipes and put on shows heavy on audience participation, sight gags, bizarre stunts ... and Twinkies. The first rows in the theater were often given rain ponchos to shield them from hurled paint, food and other random projectiles.

From there, Blue Man Group with permanent running shows in New York City, Boston, Chicago and Las Vegas. The latest Blue Man project is tied to their second album of music, "The Complex," around which they've designed a touring rock show — with all the electric guitars, pyrotechnics and bombastic stage presence that that implies. This is what's coming to the P-G Pavilion on Saturday night.

"The tour is really funny," says Banks. "It's fun to watch Blue Man taking a tutorial in how to do a rock concert."

Watching the Blue Man Group systematically master the cliches of a rock show — the one-hand fist-pump, the hop-up-and-down, the rhythmic head-nod — is a curious way to both deconstruct the typical rock performance and indulge in its corniest aspects.

The record — which includes collaborations with musicians as disparate as Dave Matthews, underground hip-hop producer Dan the Automator, and turntable whiz Rob

BLUE FROM/B5

Swift (of the X-ecutioners) — also features vocals for the first time in a Blue Man project.

"Rock concert movement No. 237 is 'bring a guest vocalist along,'" says Banks, adding, "It's a great mixture of tribal, drum-circle feeling with very modern technological glaze over it."

The three Blue Men — there are always three — are backed up by a full rock band this time around, but they still provide most of the rhythmic heft with their own array of homemade instruments. There's the two-story "Drum Wall," with seven different percussion stations. There's also massed jumbles of PVC pipe, cut to very specific lengths, that make a sound at different pitches when struck. There's also very large PVC pipes, called the "Tubulum," for heavy, resonant low-end sounds.

Banks, before was absorbed into the Blue Man trinity, was a fairly good piano player. He didn't know it then, but this would come in handy as a Blue Man. "I've played piano all of my life, and now instead of playing pianos, I smash them," he says.

The "Piano Smasher" is a grand piano turned on its side, so you can see its strings. "The strings are tuned to one specific chord, and then you hit it with a mallet. It turns into a percussive instrument," says Banks.

Finding unusual things to beat on is a Blue Man obsession.

"We always ask, 'How would Blue Man do this?' says Banks. "He's always looking at things differently than anyone else. So when Blue Man sees a piano, he may see a human doing all the intricacies of hitting the ivories and stuff, but he'll say, 'Well, I can just take this big mallet and whack it – and get a deeper, louder, more intense sound out of it.'"

SUNDAY TRIBUNE REVIEW
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'Complex' made easy with Blue Man Group

PITTSBURGH — The critically acclaimed theatrical ensemble, Blue Man Group, will perform Saturday at the Post-Gazette Pavilion as part of their Complex Tour.

They'll be joined by special guests Tracy Bonham and Venus Hum.

Blue Man Group is an innovative, highly creative theatrical production that works throughout the music industry in a variety of mediums. They are well known for their award-winning theatrical productions viewed by more than 7 million people.

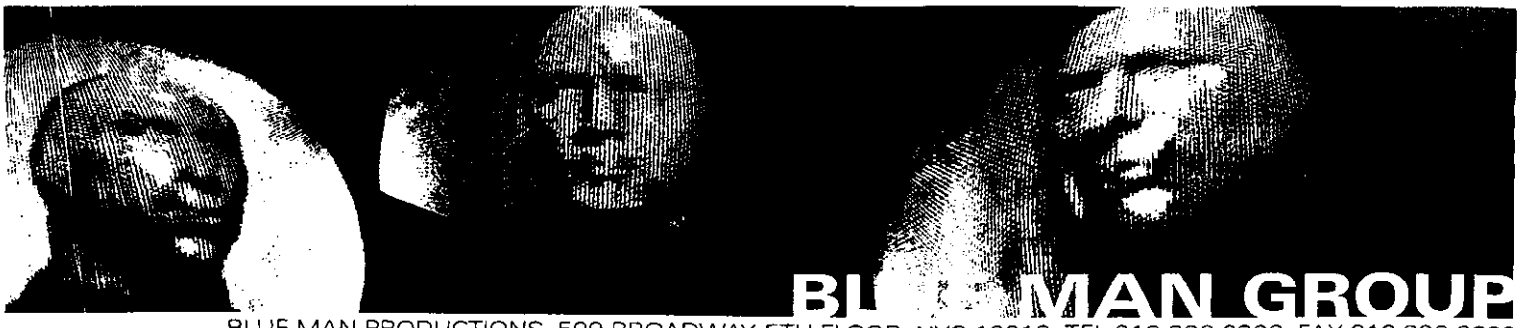
Blue Man Group's performances feature three enigmatic bald and blue characters who take the audience through a multi-sensory experience that combines theatre, percussive music, art, science and vaudeville into a form of entertainment that is like nothing else. Much of their creative performance credit is due to production designer Mark Brickman, who has worked with Pink Floyd and Nine Inch Nails.

Blue Man Group's debut album, "Audio," has been released on Virgin Records and was recently nominated for a Grammy in the category Best Pop Instrumental Album.

They are touring to promote their new album, "The Complex," which includes collaborations with Dave Matthews, Gavin Rossdale, Bonham, Venus Hum and Esthero.

Seats for the pavilion-only event are $38.50, $28.50 and $20.

■ **Tickets:** Call (412) 323-1919 or visit www.ticketmaster.com.



BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 6609

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CONCERT REVIEW

Blue Man Group creates wild rock parody

By Ann Surrette 3755

WALLINGFORD — What do you get when you combine three men who look like creatures from a bad science fiction film, mime, rock, and lots of humor?

The highly entertaining and fascinating Blue Man Group and The Complex Tour, which made a stop at the Oakdale Theatre Sunday night.

The show highlights the new album, "The Complex," the group's first venture into rock 'n' roll music. While the original elements — intriguing instruments made of PVC tubing and three blue men who don't speak — that made Blue Man Group famous are still there, the album and tour feature a full band as well as songs with lyrics.

The production, designed by Marc Brickman, who has put together shows for Pink Floyd, Nine Inch Nails, and Paul McCartney, is set up to make fun of all the silly elements that can make up a rock show. Throughout the show, with the help of a recorded voice and screen displaying various "rock movements," the blue men practiced things such as moving the pelvis as a dance move, the basic head bob, the one-armed fist pump, and getting a closer look at the audience, for which they pulled a guy on stage and put the camera in his mouth for a disgusting look down his throat.

The next step, bringing a guest vocalist on stage, showed one of the blue men on the video screen dragging opening act Tracy Bonham out of her dressing room and onto stage, where she performed an incredible version of "Up to the Roof," which she sings on "The Complex."

Bonham joined the band for several tunes throughout the evening, including the eerie "Shadows Part 2" and a fantastic cover of The Who's "Baba O'Riley (Teenage Wasteland)," which was the first encore.

The second opening act, Venus Hum, joined the group for a cover of Donna Summer's "I Feel Love," also from "The Complex." The number was very futuristic, from singer Annette Strean's blinking, colorful striped dress to flashing lights and bright sparks illuminating the blue men's drumlike instruments.

Handling the rest of the vocals was keyboardist Peter Moore, who was excellent on "Sing Along," which naturally led into the rock movement of getting the audience to sing along, and "Current," which featured glowing green figures on the blacked-out stage with only Moore spotlighted. Moore had big shoes to fill, considering on the CD those songs feature Dave Matthews ("Sing Along") and Gavin Rossdale ("Current"), but he met the challenge beautifully.

The show played out like some strange, drug-induced dream sequence, especially when the blue men came out to "say hello to the people in the cheap seats." Up close, the men are awfully scary, as one almost caused a little girl to cry when he tried to bring her on stage, his mottled blue makeup dripping from his face all over his black outfit and the floor.

Bonham opened the evening with an acoustic set that included angry-girl rock with interesting and thoughtful lyrics.

She was followed by Venus Hum, a trio that offered a painful set that sounded like a cross between Enya and electronica. Strean has a beautiful voice, but she was trying too hard to make it into something it's not.

Ann Surrette is a Journal Inquirer associate editor.

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Blue Man Group has 'primal' appeal

3755

While checking out the Blue Man Group six years ago in a downtown Manhattan theater, it was hard the imagine the experimental musical theater troupe transcending cult status.

The members of the act sported blue painted skin, skullcaps and black clothing. The act's shows featured sight gags, physical stunts and audience participation. Those attending Blue Man shows wore ponchos since paint, food and other objects were tossed into the crowd. Sure, it was entertaining, but it appeared certain the Blue Man Group, which formed in 1987, would remain a fixture in Lower Manhattan.

However, the Blue Man Group decided to put out an album. The act, recorded "Audio," which was released in 1999. The disc, which was full of trippy, electronic sounds, went gold and helped earn the act a Grammy nomination in the best pop instrumental category.

The Blue Man Group edged ever closer to the mainstream by participating in Moby's Area2 during the summer of 2002.

The savvy outfit decided to add vocals to its quirky work, which owes a good deal to Kraftwerk. The group's latest album, "The Complex," features a number of vocalists. Dave Matthews has a cameo for "Sing Along," Tracy Bonham, who is touring with the band, and Josh Haden, lent their voices to the project as well.

However, when push comes to shove, the Blue Man Group make a spin of "The Complex" worthwhile. Such covers as Donna Summer's "I Feel Love" and Jefferson Starship's "White Rabbit" triumph due to the percussive schemes employed by the Blue Man Group.

The Blue Man Group will perform at the Mann Center for the Performing Arts, 52nd Street and Parkside Avenue, Philadelphia, tonight at 8. Tickets: $25, $33, $38 and $48. Call: 215.893.1999.

"There is something primal and very exciting which draws people to the Blue Man Group," Blue Man member Eric Gebow said. "That's why I'm part of this. It excites me."

The Blue Man Group is slated for tonight at the Mann Center. The Blue Man jaunt, which is dubbed by the act as a rock tour, is heavy on the visuals. The act presents a kaleidoscope of wild images, to go along with the visceral sounds.

"You'll never see anything like it," Gebow said. Ed Condran

FINGER LAKES SUNDAY TIMES
GENEVA, NY
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Entertaining visually with humor

Blue Man Group has a child-like innocence

By TODD LOTHERY
Raleigh News & Observer

On stage, an eight-piece band is pounding out a percussion-propelled rock tune. Lights are flashing everywhere, like a stroboscopic circus. A giant video screen shows images that comment on the impersonal nature of modern society.

Sounds like a standard arena rock concert, no? Well, pretty much, except for those three bald blue men who hop around enthusiastically like children at a birthday party, who never speak and wear permanently guileless expressions but convey worlds of emotion through their sparkling eyes and robotic yet elastic body movements, and who bang on a battery of sundry drums and an assortment of invented instruments made of PVC pipes and other materials, sometimes splattering paint in the process.

Who are these blue men, where did they come from and what do they want? Perhaps you've seen their series of commercials for Intel or caught their performance at the Grammy Awards. They are the Blue Man Group, they were formed in Manhattan and their mission is to entertain you on multiple levels — musically, visually, viscerally, intellectually and, above all, humorously.

So exactly what is it that the founders were trying to say? "One of the themes is urban isolation," said Kalen Allmandinger, one of the touring Blue Men. "Like the fact that in this digital age, we are closer to each other than ever, and yet, in a lot of ways, we're more isolated from each other than we ever have been. You can easily get almost anything you need by yourself without really leaving your home. Computers have sort of become our hearts — instead of gathering around the glow of the fire we're gathering around the glow of our computer screens."

OK, but what does that have to do with a trio of blue guys dancing around and pounding on stuff? "The character is an outsider, somebody with the innocence of a child and no ego to inform his actions," Allmandinger said. "So he'll see an object and experiment with it, not coming to it with any preconceived notions about its use, and often what comes out is music. There's this childlike innocence, but at the same time, the drive and focus of a superhero. And they always show up in threes."

Allmandinger's description might have muddied the picture rather than cleared it up, but the Blue Man Group is something to be experienced, not explained. Their music, though not terribly innovative, pulsates with a tribal beat that gets heads bobbing. In their multimedia shows, they playfully mock rock concert tropes while getting the audience to participate in the very rituals they are poking fun at. There is irony, but it is irony sans cynicism. The idea of community, of collective experience, is satirized and celebrated in equal measure.

The founders — Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink — got together in New York in the late '80s, when they were in their late 20s. They staged guerrilla theater skits on the streets of Manhattan, and in 1988, they held an early funeral for the '80s in Central Park, throwing effigies of things associated with the decade — Ronald Reagan, yuppies, crack cocaine — into a coffin.

What started as three guys who set out to puncture the pretensions of performance art has grown into a multimillion-dollar business that employs almost 500 people and produces four stage shows — in New York, Boston, Chicago and Las Vegas — as well as the new show that's on tour.

There are now three dozen Blue Men — musicians/actors who underwent a rigorous training program before they earned their greasepaint and a slot in one of the shows. Blue Men must be between 5-foot-10 and 6-foot-1, have an athletic build, have solid drumming and acting skills and possess the ability — no joke — to catch things in their mouths. In addition to learning how to create music on PVC pipes, they have to master such unusual instruments as the drumbone, air poles, the shaker gong and the cimbalom. (They don't have to shave their heads — they wear latex caps.)

The original Blue Men no longer perform — they have their hands full producing and directing the shows, writing new material and running the company.

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BLUE MAN

SCENE & HEARD

The Blue Man Group wraps up the summer concert season at SPAC on Saturday.
Photo provided

Got the end-of-summer blues?

Blue Man Group will reignite your sunny outlook

3755

THOMAS DIMOPOULOS

On Monday, it all comes to a grinding halt.

All the months of preparation, the perspiration and anticipation of the six-week season in the "summer place to be," is in the final stretch.

Monday is the finish line, and across it go names like Santos, Prado, Bailey and Velazquez.

The images of riders and the world's most beautiful animals will be committed to the record books; their words as footnotes of Saratoga's summer 2003, and photographs filed as fast as the memories.

The midnight parties and parades through the paddock will end as well; the simulcast TV's will go dark. And after one last call to the post, Sammy the Bugler will lock away his horn into its brown leather case, where for the next 10 months it will remain muted.

Those old horseplayers, the "beggars of the grandstand," as writer Charles Bukowski called them, "forever hooked on an impossibility," will move on elsewhere, "swallowed forever as the horn sounds to post," the Spa City deferring to fading leaves and the inevitable long black nights of winter.

It is the final stretch, the finish line with Fats Domino singing "Blue Monday" as its soundtrack.

Fittingly, perhaps, blue is the color of the group ending the special events slate at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center. Dark blue and noisy.

In the late 1980s, longtime friends Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink painted their faces the color of the sky and began performing on Manhattan sidewalks.

They played homemade instruments and called themselves Blue Man Group.

A little more than a decade later, there are more than 30 "blue men" in an organization that totals 500 people.

There are a pair of albums, "Audio" released in 1999, and its recent follow-up "The Complex."

The group is completing a lengthy North American tour, stopping Saturday night at SPAC.

Special guests Tracy Bonham and Venus Hum are performing with the group as part of its "lyrical" stage production of "The Complex" — an outgrowth of the blue men's all-instrumental work earlier in their career.

"We stuck to the themes and ideas that have been present in all Blue Man work," the group says in an artist's statement, citing the themes of "urban isolation, the cultural mask, tribalism and sensory overload."

In "The Complex," they say, "We felt the pull toward more song-like structures and were intrigued at the idea of having a voice."

On stage, they appear with twisted sound tubes and walls of drums.

They don latex skull caps, wear blue faces and play hyper-amped air poles and metal gongs and create rhythms by using mallets to strike sheets of aluminum.

Their songs have titles like "Mandelgroove," "Synaesthetic" and "Utne Wire Man."

Their stage show includes original music, although, if you listen closely, you can hear snippets of everyone from Devo and the Who to the Jefferson Airplane and Donna Summer.

Blue Man Group has been described as having a punk rock aesthetic with a Marx Brothers' attitude. Throw in some Japanese Kodo drumming and you begin to get the idea. Sort of.

For fans going blue on Saturday, the group issues this warning: "We strongly suggest that you NOT wear clothing you consider nice or valuable."

The reason? "The blue men use a variety of materials on stage and at times those materials go into the audience. We encourage casual attire," the group says.

Codes of living, courtesy of the blue men. Don't say you haven't been warned.

Thomas Dimopoulos is a feature writer at The Saratogian. Scene & Heard is published every Friday in the Life section. 2

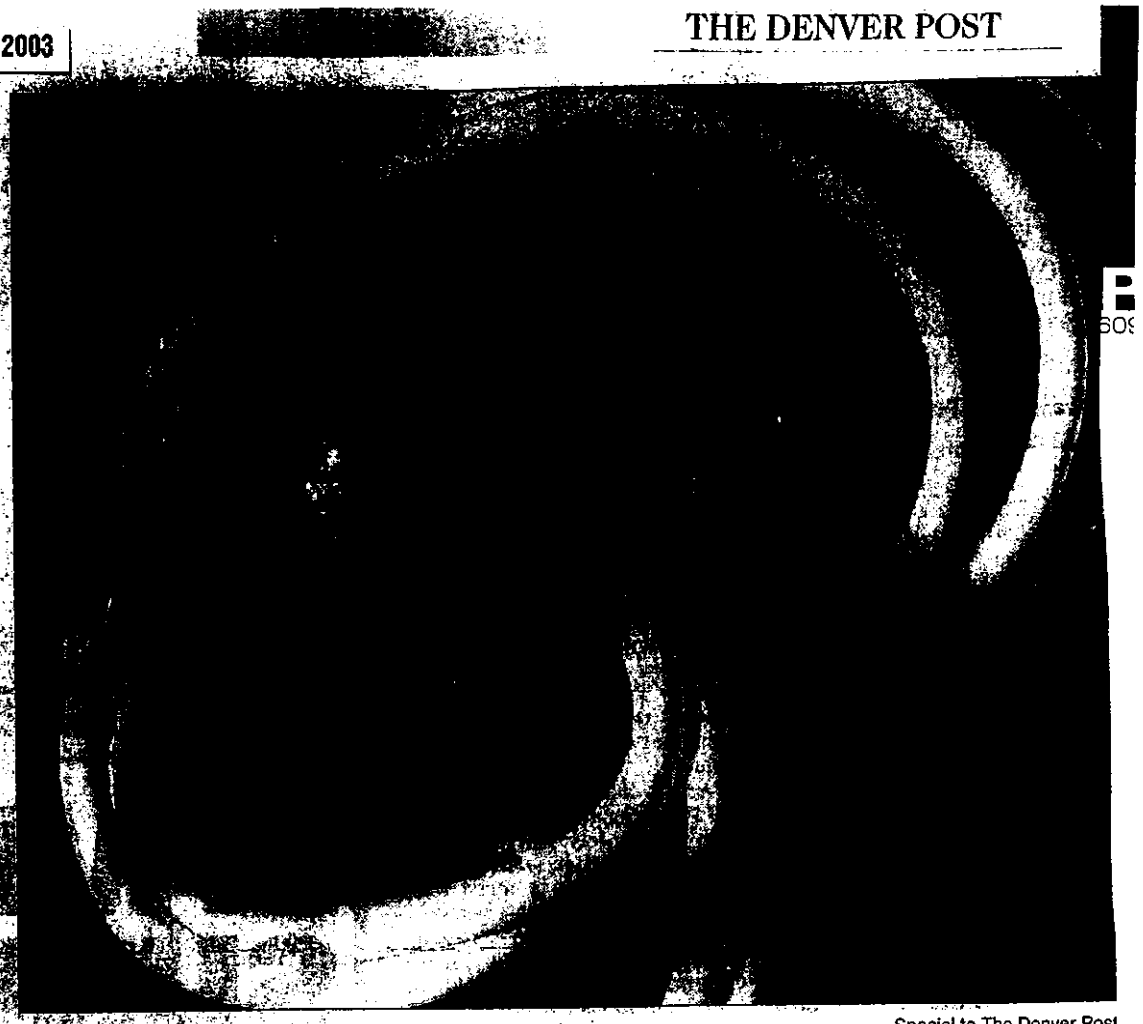
Music behind the paint

The Blue Man Group finally rocks out

...modern marketing savvy, ...an Group has moved to... mainstream. The ...ming performance-art ...ensemble is known from ...s television appearances, ...g commercials for computer processors, talk shows and music stations.

Founders Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink have expanded their coverage area, setting up a handful of ongoing theatrical productions in several U.S. cities and London. The mute multimedia collective was also the surprise hit of Moby's Area:2 music festival last year.

G. Brown
Sound Check



Special to The Denver Post

Blue Man Group, featuring Tracy Bonham, will perform at the Pepsi Center on Sunday night.

In the live show, the cerulean-skinned gents bang, drum and ...on enormous plastic tubing ...ant sticks and rubber sledge ...ers. Their eyes are perpetu... ...zed in focus on their music ...munication comes entirely ...ugh gestures, signs and percussive effects. So much of it is visual — the Blue Men play around with oversized props, cover everyone in toilet paper and throw paint — it's hard to imagine an audio offshoot being more than a souvenir for fans.

But Blue Man Group has released "The Complex," something akin to a real rock album. The band's assortment of self-invented tubular instrumentation and drum-driven undercurrent is now accompanied by more traditional big guitars, and vocals are provided by an array of emotive guests, among them Dave Matthews (a cataleptic cameo on "Sing Along") and Tracy Bonham.

The tracks pulse and pop — it's a glistening techno headphone experience — and there are covers of Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit (a team-up with Esthero) and the Donna Summer disco classic "I Feel Love."

"The Complex" debuted at a respectable No. 60 on Billboard's Top 200 albums chart, with sales that tripled the opening numbers of the band's all-instrumental album in 1999. Now Blue Man Group's first full-production tour has been launched, and it will visit the Pepsi Center on Sunday.

Goldman, Stanton and Wink, who recorded "The Complex," won't perform at the live shows. They're leaving that to other Blue Men, just as they have at productions of the theatrical event.

Tom Galassi has packed a summer's supply of blue body paint. "You have to be a certain height and body type, and you have to be able to express a lot through your eyes," Galassi said recently. "Those guys who wrote this are twisted, messed up in the best creative way. You have to have that in you, because there's no amount of training. ...

"The Blue Men have jumped into rock concert technology. Area:2 was just the music. Now they're bringing their stage show, a finished work."

Blue Man Group collaborated with production designer Marc Brickman (Pink Floyd, Paul McCartney, Genesis, Nine Inch Nails) to plan the concert experience.

"Marc brought that Pink Floyd size and scale to the Blue Man vision," Galassi said. "There's video of primal goo and insects and jellyfish, live wire technology they've invented, some holograms inside of drums — interesting things I've never seen before. The stage is Plexiglas and a lot of the show is lit from the bottom — it gives the appearance of floating on light."

The trek should raise the bar on Blue Man Group's offbeat musical and conceptual aesthetic. "The theater shows have underlying themes of isolation, wearing your cultural mask, but they are about making people feel like they're a part of something," Galassi said. "The oldest form of that is sitting around and beating on things — or each other!

"There's that kind of feel to this. It's more literal, a dark, creepy production — but it's not about just one person, a star playing the drums. It's about what happens when everybody puts in their little bit at the right time, and it gets passed around, and it starts to grow. There's eight people playing a big drum, you put it through a sub-woofer — the ground shakes! We're joking about if it will change our heartbeats."

Blue Man Group featuring Tracy Bonham with Venus Hum: 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Pepsi Center, $30-$45, Ticketmaster

MORE MUSIC:

CSO: Pianist Awadagin Pratt joins guest conductor James Judd as soloist with the Colorado Symphony. **18FF**

The charts: Last week's top sellers from Radio & Records. **18FF**

Et cetera

Musiq at the Gothic Theatre on Thursday (8 p.m., $24, Ticketmaster) ... **The Long Winters** at Lion's Lair tonight (10 p.m., $7, TicketWeb) ... **Lynn Skinner** at Swallow Hill on Thursday (7:30 p.m., $6, 303-777-1003).

G. Brown covers live popular music in his Sound Check column Fridays in Weekend Entertainment. Ticketmaster: 303-830-8497 or www.ticketmaster.com. TicketWeb: 866-468-7621 or www.ticketweb.com. Service charges additional.

Go-Do Elsewhere

ENTERTAINMENT THAT'S WORTH A DRIVE

Three nearly identical Blue Man characters marvel at their paint, music, light and effect-filled surroundings.

Music You Can See

Blue Man Group changes rock dynamic

By MICHAEL SHASHOUA
ORLANDO SENTINEL

Blue Man Group's Rock Tour

WHEN: 8 p.m. today
WHERE: 3rd Road, Orlando
TICKETS: $34-$39 through Ticketmaster (407) 839-3900, (904) 353-3099, www.ticketmaster.com

Blue Man Group is bringing to Orlando tonight a variation on its hip theatrical spectacle begun in New York's Complex [illegible] this summer, taken out to the great American masses.

The group's new CD, The Complex, and tour play with the original idea of three nearly identical Blue Man characters who marvel at their paint, music, light and effect-filled surroundings.

For The Complex album and tour, the Blue Men find themselves catapulted into the world of the rock concert, with some assistance from Dave Matthews, Tool drummer Danny Carey, Moby, Fishbone bassist John Bigham, Yes keyboardist Rick Wakeman and keyboardist Bowman and Venus Hum are joining the Blue Men on their tour. Eric Gebow, formerly a session drummer, has performed as one of the Blue Men at their Las Vegas production, and is now on the tour, which rotates four actors in the three roles.

On some nights, the nonspeaking actor is completely on the audience, out of character, observing how the show goes, to help the cast fine-tune its performance. Although the Blue Men play their own instruments, they are also backed by a full band of four other drummers, two guitarists and singers, including Bonham. Blue Man Group's instrument builders have surrounded the stage with lighted and paint-projecting pieces used by the performers.

"Time To Start," a track on "The Complex," features half-spoken, half-sung lyrics over a beat propelled by the Blue Man Group's own unique percussion instruments made of PVC pipes, plastic tubes, "The sheer [illegible] of the concert can be overwhelming," says Gebow. "Sometimes I'll be playing and I'll look up and I'll see the audience and they're high off their asses. They're [illegible] and they're just going crazy. It's a rock show. But it's turned on its ear a little bit," says Blue Man Eric Gebow.

"Our show is a big rock show. But it's turned on its ear a little bit," says Blue Man Eric Gebow.

People leave energized, whether they're drinking about the comedy or just feeling good from a performance and they're high off that energy," he says.

On the tour, Blue Man Group intends to change this dynamic among music and seen at rock concerts. "It's like a rock concert, two people who wouldn't look at each other if they passed on the street will stand next to each other and bump their heads in time to the music," says Gebow. "Our show is a rock show, but it's [illegible] a little bit."

Gebow first started as a Blue Man in the New York and Boston productions before joining the Las Vegas and Chicago productions. He then was cast for The Complex tour, and began that with 18 dates in the early spring of 2003.

Even as an experienced drummer, Gebow says the show required some adaptation. Gebow explains, "I'm still working out all the time, because we're dealing with other elements. It's very physical. It takes a lot of practice and a lot of shows going to get comfortable enough to play well ... while you're having all these things happening around you. We're also trying to find the stage. It makes what seems like very simple tribal drumming very difficult to do well."

BEST

B2K, AUG. 22: with and Mario DJ Jus, Waterhouse Centre St., Orlando. $35.5 839-3900.

"THE CLASH" OF CLASH TRIBUTE featuring Green Go Spitvalves, 8 p.m., Downtown Disney Buena Vista. $5 ad show. (407) 934-2

COWBOY MOUTH rock, 7 p.m., Hous Downtown Disney Buena Vista. $15 a day of show. (407)

KORN, AUG. 27: Revolution Smile, Live, Festival Lot, Orlando. $39.75. (

OZZFEST 2003, Osbourne, Marilyn Chevelle, Trust Co more, 9 a.m. doors Music Amphitheat Way, West Palm B $75.75-$65.75. (4

CHEVELLE, AUG. guest Kill Hannah, Blues, Downtown Lake Buena Vista. 934-2583.

THE TOM JOYNE REUNION SATUR PARTY, AUG. 30: include Destiny's individual perform and Kelly Rowlan Romeo and more, 6 p.m., Disney-MC Buena Vista, Flori (407) 839-3900.

MARIAH CAREY, Bob Carr Perform 401 W. Livingston $111-$51. (407) 8

SISTER HAZEL: alternative, 9 p.m Downtown Disney Buena Vista. $15 day of show. (407

CRAIG CHAQUIC KISHIWA, SEPT. Center for the Pe N. Wickham Roac $34-$28. (407) 8

TYPE O NEGATI Lacuna Coil, Rock Bikes, Downtown Lake Buena Vista $17.50 day of sho

SIMPLE PLAN, S tapers, 9 p.m., H Festival Lot, Univ Orlando. $10. (40

SALIVA, SEPT. 1 rock, 8 p.m., Hous Downtown Disney Buena Vista. $15 show. (407) 934

DASHBOARD C SEPT. 21: with g Festival Lot, D 7:30 p.m., House Downtown Disne Buena Vista. $2

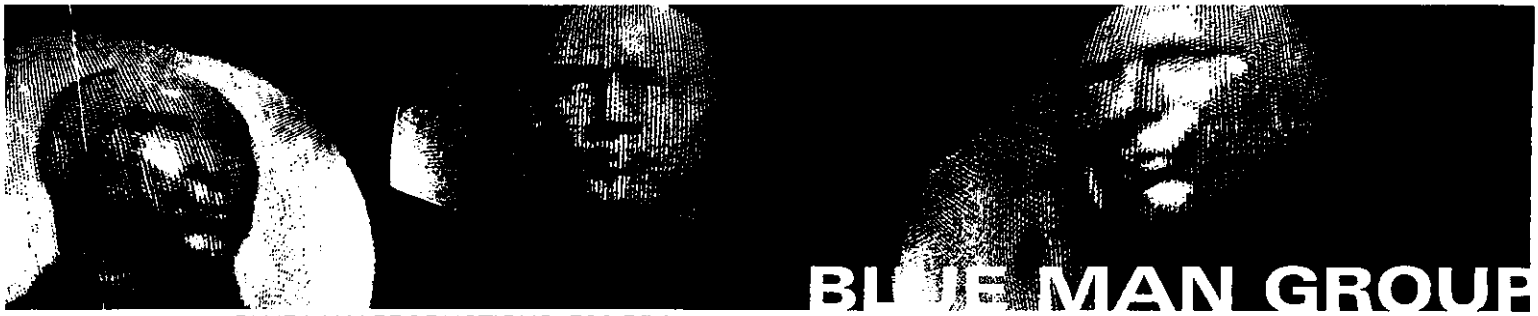
AEROSMITH/K Nothing Salva Dance Anthe Rock Bikes, We $53-$100 reser

CAFE TACUBA, music, 8:30 p.m. Downtown Disn Blues, Buena Vist (407) day of show. (4

JUANA THEO Rock Bikes, Buena Vist day of show. (4

STEELY DAN, South Florida Fairgrounds, Expo Center, Pavilion, Florida Fairgrounds, Expo Center, Pavilion, 8 p.m. $65-$90. (8

BRIAN MCKN 8:30 p.m., Hous Downtown Disn Buena Vista. $3 day of show. (4



BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 660

SARATOGIAN
SARATOGA SPRINGS, NY
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Painting the town at summer's last bash

3755

By THOMAS DIMOPOULOS
The Saratogian

REVIEW

MARTY McAULIFF/The Saratogian

Blue Man Group was as much a visual happening as it was a concert Saturday night at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center. The show was the last of the summer concerts at SPAC.

The 2003 summer of pop is officially over, effectively done in by the blazing spectacular of the Blue Man Group, which appeared at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center Saturday night.

The trio of performance artists in cobalt came to paint the town with their visionary brand of a rock 'n' roll freak-a-rama. And after their departure, there was nothing left for anybody to say. The blue men played to the shadows and danced in the light; they combed the crowd — from center stage to the far reaches of the upper balcony — with miniature "spy" cams, and blew the curtain off its rigid sky-hooks in an opening spectacle worthy of Springsteen or the Rolling Stones. Psychotic reactions for the cyber-age.

Backed by an eight-piece ensemble of keyboards, bass, a pair of guitars and four drummers, the blue men performed a 90-minute ritual in a celebration of rhythm.

On their backs, they donned hyper-amp'd "tubulums" — portable drumming tubes — which they attacked with orange neon sticks to create a symphony of poly-rhythms.

They used wands like sonic scepters, slicing through the air as huge beams of light maniacally ricocheted on and off the stage. Among the arsenal, an intricate weave of vinyl tubes, giant sheets of aluminum and a grand piano turned on its side, its wire chords periodically struck by large white-tipped mallets whose atonal chimes reverberated throughout the amphitheater.

These were moments inspired by John Cage as much as by Johnny Rotten. The musical staging was reminiscent of the avant-theatrics performed by Laurie Anderson in her "United States Live" shows of the 1980s.

Tracy Bonham, who led her three-piece band in a pleasing opening set, kicked things off with an electric violin performance of Led Zeppelin's "Black Dog." Later, Bonham played the role of psychedelic chanteuse Grace Slick, joining the blue men for a surrealistic rendition of "White Rabbit," then belting out the rock 'n' roll power vocals for a version of The Who's "Baba O'Reilly," surrounded by portable tubulums that shot long gobs of confetti into the crowd.

The evening's other opening act, Venus Hum, joined the blue men as well for an ethereal Quentin Tarantino-meets-Las Vegas performance of the disco hit "I Feel Love," complete with the lead vocalist's bowl-shaped skirt illuminated with pulsating light that mimicked the multiple video action on stage.

There were solemn moments as well. When Blue Man Group performed "Exhibit 13" in memory of 9/11, tattered pieces of scorched paper fell across the stage like sad winter leaves.

Before the blue men came on stage, the crowd was entertained by a pair of electronic message boards posted on either side of the theater that insulted each other, soliciting audience response.

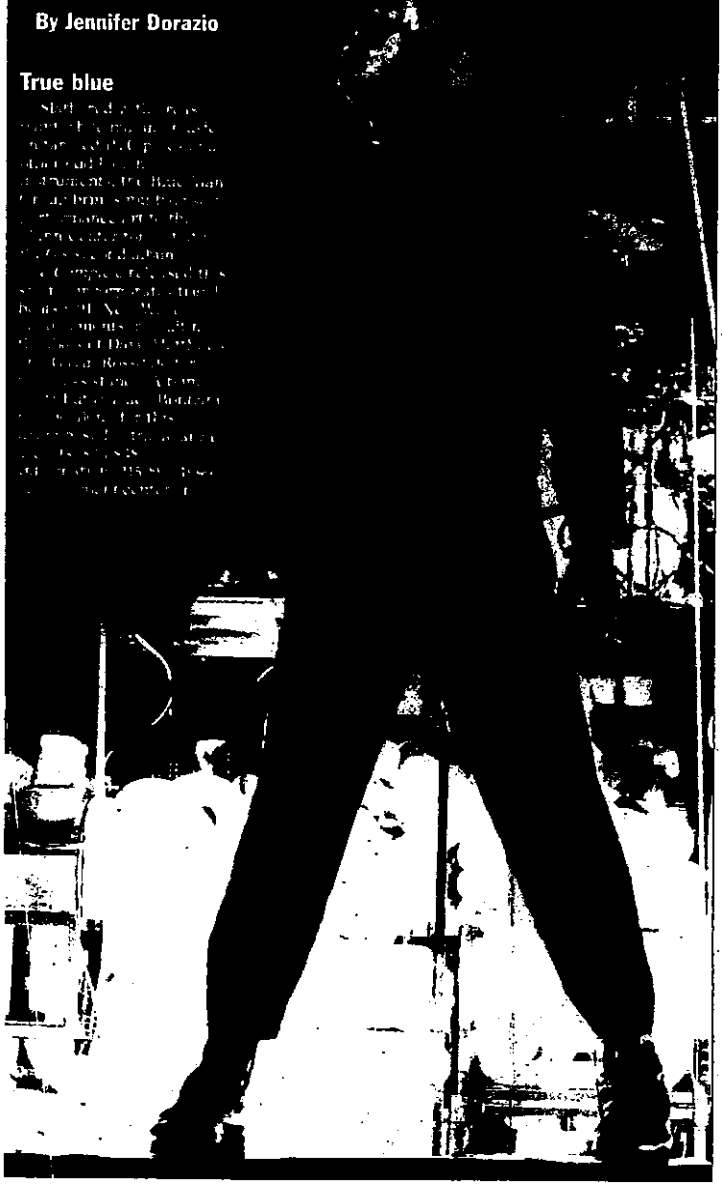
By evening's end, the audience was satiated. Splattered in flecks of multi-colored paint and caught in the flicker of strobe lights, they rose as one and chanted into the night: "Blue! Blue! Blue! Blue!" like a sonically possessed throng of loons bidding farewell to the waning days of summer.

BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 660

Do This!

By Jennifer Dorazio

True blue



A little free night music

Capping off two weeks of South Philly outreach programs, the Philadelphia Orchestra brings a classy, classical touch to Capitolo Playground, Ninth and Federal Streets, at 7 tonight. Assistant conductor Rossen Milanov (below) will direct a program of arias and other works by Rossini, Mendelssohn, Verdi, Puccini and Leoncavallo. Guest tenor Stuart Neill lends his vocal chords for the evening. Heavy rain will cancel. Information: 215-893-1999 or www.philorch.org.

New concert digs

With a few shows already under its shiny new belt, the Borgata is geared up for its first concert double bill: Hootie and the Blowfish and Big Head Todd and the Monsters Sunday night at 8. After Hootie's over-exposure in the '90s, the Darius Rucker-headed bluesy rock quartet took a break, then released a self-titled album in March. The guys should pair up nicely with roots rock trio BHT. Tickets: $35-$50. Information: 1-800-736-1420 or www.theborgata.com.

Up in lights

Take your basic Fourth of July fireworks display. Then multiply it tenfold: with pyrotechnic effects, a multimedia display and Springsteen tunes. It's called "Lights of Freedom," and it's engineered by German Gert Hof, responsible for similar spectacles in Athens, Budapest and Beijing. The "light artist" sets up stateside for the first time, for a week's worth of free shows centered around the Trump Taj Mahal in Atlantic City. The opening event will be at 9:30 Saturday night. From Sunday through Aug. 2, there will be two shows nightly, at 9 and 11. The best viewing spot: south side of the Boardwalk. Information: 1-800-736-1420 or www.trumptaj.com.

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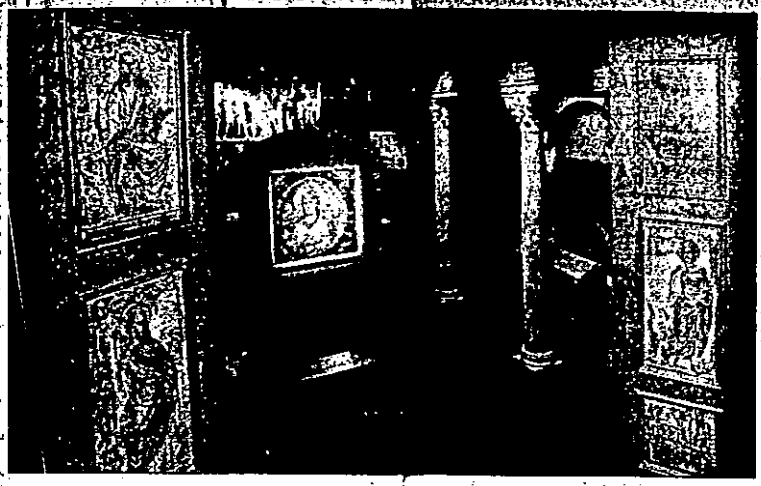
■ VATICAN CONTINUES ON 2D



SCALED DOWN: A Giotto mosaic angel, the surviving fragment from Gospel scene commissioned in 1304, is positioned between half-sized copies of the doors from the fourth-century basilica. **Photo/Oscar Williams**

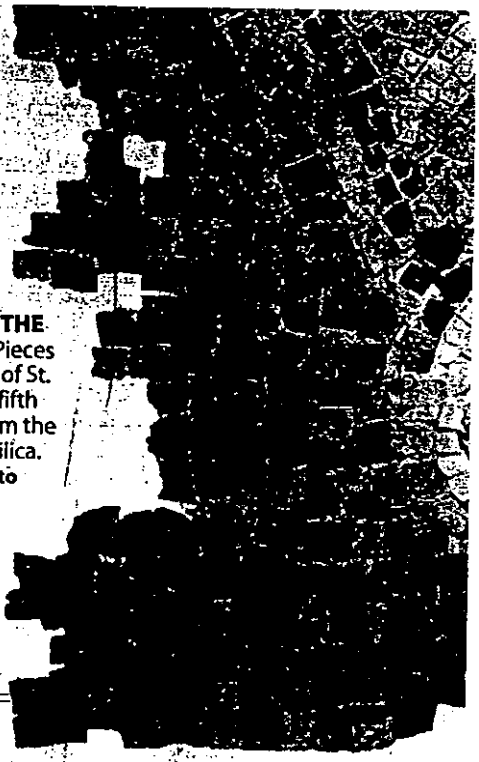


IMAGE OF THE MARTYR: Pieces of a mosaic of St. Peter, circa fifth century, from the ancient basilica. **Vatican photo**

In Blue view of rock concerts, bodies scream

BY SEAN PICCOLI
POP MUSIC WRITER

Matthew Banks says he finds it "hilarious" when people ask if he belongs to a cult. Banks is just a Blue Man — one of several, in fact, belonging to a collective known as Blue Man Group.

His role in the group is to dress like a designer matchstick — black coveralls, head enameled blue — and with two other identically garbed, anatomically similar males act out wordless musical and theatrical programs that reflect their creators' themes. No cults here. One such demonstration, "The Complex Rock Tour," will be performed on Wednesday night with a supporting cast at Sound Advice Amphitheatre near West Palm Beach. Banks in a telephone interview calls it "a rock concert tutorial."

This deconstruction of rock spectacle was composed by his bosses, founding Blue Man groupers Matthew Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink. Friends since college, the troika started toying with mask theater and blue body paint in the late 1980s and within

■ BLUE MAN CONTINUES ON 11D

ELECTRIC VIBES: Blue Man Group's deconstruction of rock concerts is at once respectful and mocking. **Photo/Ken Howard**

IF YOU GO

Blue Man Group performs with Tracy Bonham and Venus Hum at 8 p.m. Wednesday at Sound Advice Amphitheatre, 601-7 Sansbury's Way, West Palm Beach. Tickets $30-$47. Call Ticketmaster (561-966-3309, 954-523-3309, 305-358-5885).

Amid

Ah, France — th

BY SCARLET CHENG
SPECIAL CORRESPONDEN

"This is a more frivolo
Merchant Ivory film th
people are used to," Jam
Ivory says about his n
film, *Le Divorce*, whi
opens Friday in South Flo
da.

"It's not a period film, i
a contemporary film, i
much more openly a kind
comedy, with even sor
farcical elements to it," e
plains the director of peri
favorites such as *Howar*
End, *A Room With a Vi*
and *The Remains of t*
Day. "Most of our films a
a bit more sober, this one
to enjoy and have fun with

Not that there aren't s
ber topics addressed in tl
story of Americans in Pa
taken from Diane Johnso
best-selling novel. It's ju
that she suspended her ke
and acerbic observations
whipped cream.

South Florida Sun 8/17/03

Several groups spread Blue message nationwide

BLUE MAN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1D

a decade turned their New York art-house project into an industry. They have graduated from the nightly on-stage grind to creating and dictating performances to well-trained sets of three.

The latter handle ongoing Blue Man theater residencies in four U.S. cities, including New York and Las Vegas; Banks is part of another deployment that tours a different show. An estimated 7 million people have seen one Blue Man Group production or another. Many more saw the trio in ads for Intel's Pentium computer chips. The founders spend their time today expanding on their tri-furcated vision, and seem happiest having a surrogate do interviews. They are somewhat accessible, however: In a making-of video that comes with the group's new album, *The Complex*, Goldman wears no concealing makeup as he confides, "One of the things that we are setting out to do with this album is shake the rock world up a little bit."

They rocked Banks' world. An actor and drummer, he auditioned four years ago at a recruiting session in Toronto, was accepted into the fold, then "molded and taught," as he puts it, in the ways of Blue Man Group. He found their antic mix of pantomime, multimedia, percussive music and critique to be revelatory. "I just felt like I was part of a movement rather than a band," he says.

But not a cult.

Besides, what cult can command as many walk-ons as *The Complex*? The album features guest vocal turns by rockers Dave Matthews, Gavin Rossdale and Tracy Bonham — non-Blue people are permitted to sing — as well as performances by DJ Rob Swift of the X-ecutioners, production by Dan the Automator and music and vocals by electronic pop trio Venus Hum. Bonham and Venus Hum both open for Blue Man Group on this tour and then perform in The Complex production. Bonham's cameo illustrates a segment cheekily titled "Rock Concert Movement No. 37 (Bringing Out a Guest Vocalist)."

Banks calls Bonham's presence on the hard-rocking songs *Up to the Roof* and *Shadows Part 2* "a really great display of how a woman interacts with a Blue Man." He adds, "There's a feminine quality to Blue Man, inherently, who is both yin and yang."

Other segments in this liberated discourse include "Rock Concert Movement No. 1 (The Basic Head Bob)" and "Rock Concert Movement No. 2 (The One-Armed Fist Pump)."

COMPLEX, BUT NO CULT: In concert, members of Blue Man Group, accompanied by a live band, mime, cavort and pummel a collection of objects that function as percussive instruments. **Photo courtesy MSO**

Blue Man Group, accompanied by a live band, conducts these examinations of rock ritual like a trio of curious, data-absorbing androids. They mime. They cavort. They pummel a collection of found, converted and newly named objects that function as percussive instruments. "Airpoles" create a whipping sound. A "drumulum," basically a canister fitted with a sliding pipe that changes the device's pitch, booms up and down the bass scale. Blue Man music has the pulse of electronica but, relatively speaking, the tools of prehistory. Call it techno-lithic.

It is an approach that reminds one Blue Man Group collaborator of, well, a cult.

"I always have this image of, an element of Blue Man being kind of like a cargo cult," says *The Complex* studio bassist, guitarist and "tuvulum" player Larry Heineman, talking in the making-of video. The original cargo cultists were Melanesian islanders who thought their gods would arrive in great airships bearing goods. What they got, of course, were Allied flyovers during World War II, and they quickly came to regard the discovery as more practical than divine. The islanders built airplane replicas out of straw and left them in plain sight in order to fool troop resupply planes into dropping cargoes of food, clothing, materiel and other strange, new and wonderful stuff.

Likewise, says Heineman, Blue Man Group "heard all this electronic synthesizer music and frantically [figured] out a way to re-create it."

Thankfully, the Blue Man Group aesthetic hardly qualifies as a closed belief system. The founders borrow from too many sources, admit too many ideas. A Blue Man Group production plays like a salad toss of Kabuki stuntwork, Mummenschanz prankery, Devo's we-are-not-men deadpan and Max Ernst's visual surrealism. For The Complex Rock Tour, add loud rock guitar, and stir.

"It deconstructs in a way that is, like, kind of giving, respecting and paying homage to the rock concert ritual, so in one way it's, like, pure and honest," says Banks. "And then sometimes it's not: It's out-and-out mockery and we're not taking it seriously at all."

There are rules, however, if one is going to become a blue-headed mime who investigates the nature and meaning of things. Banks had to fall within a certain height and weight range. He had to learn the drill. Auditions, workshops and instruction consumed at least two months. One bit of indoctrination — OK, schooling — involved going to a public park to watch dogs interact because, Banks learned, "Blue Man is part dog."

Blue Man Group has a fascination with dogs. One instrument employed on the new album is called a "dogulum."

"The dogulum is a vibe instrument," founding member Wink says on the video. "We get someone to pet a dog and get it into kind of a real meditative state, and then we mike that — the sound of that — to get some of that vibe on the album."

The idea in any case for Banks was to absorb a bit of animal expressiveness. Or was that pet-like obedience? Regardless, a Blue Man needs access to many nonverbal forms of communication.

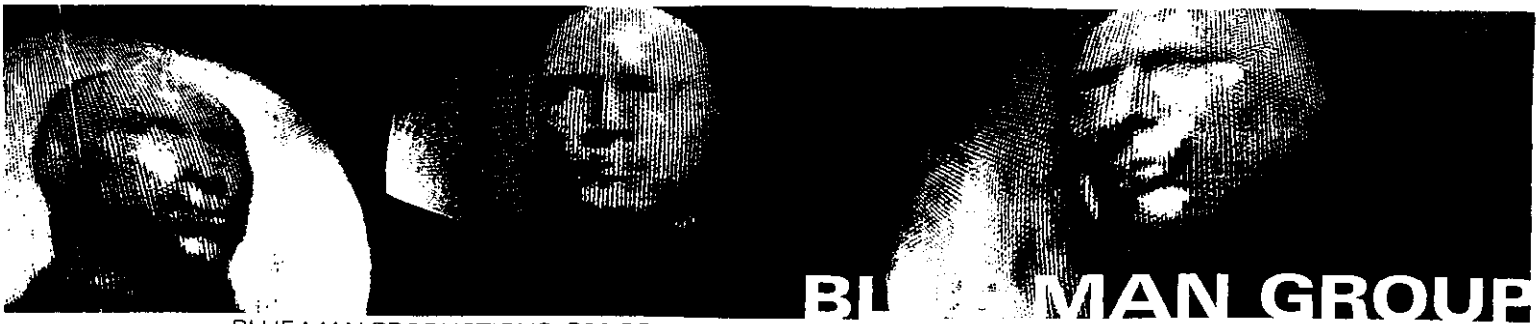
"Blue Man obviously doesn't speak with his voice but for all intents and purposes he screams with his body," says Banks.

Spoken like someone fully committed.

"I feel like I'll always have a relationship with the company," he says. He has already graduated to training new recruits.

Sean Piccoli can be reached at spiccoli@sun-sentinel.com or 954-356-4832.

South Flor'd Sun 8/17/03



BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 99 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 660

METROLAND
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The Blue Man Group

For over 15 years, the New York-based experimental theatrical troupe the Blue Man Group have been flouting conventions and defying the expectations of audiences; in so doing, they've become a minor theatrical institution in their own right. They've become so successful, in fact, that they've franchised, establishing four permanent splinter groups in Chicago, Boston, Las Vegas and Berlin. Now, in a wonderfully perverse bit of logic (artistic perversity being their modus operandi), the Blue Man Group have subverted their own subversion by using the momentum of that cult popularity to go mainstream—after a fashion.

With the release of *The Complex*, the outfit's second album, the Blue Man Group have continued the exploration of the sound studio begun on 1999's *Audio*. But where the debut album relied on many of the "homemade" instruments the group use in their theatrical presentations (giant, curved lengths of PVC, etc.), *The Complex* is at its weird heart a rock & roll album, complete with guest-vocalist turns from the likes of Dave Matthews, Bush's Gavin Rossdale and Tracy Bonham. It's the Blue Man Group's cooption of arena rock; so, it only makes sense to stage an arena tour.

Hence, the Complex Rock Tour.

The Blue Man Group have teamed with Marc Brickman—the production designer behind the elaborate tour sets of Pink Floyd, Genesis and Nine Inch Nails—to devise a setting appropriate for a full-scale mauling of the routines typical of the big rock show. They're promising a "playground," combining the elements of performance art, rave culture and rock, and even the tentative set list is tantalizing: From the introductory "Drumbone (Rock Manual)" to "Your Attention"—which includes fragments of "Whip It," "Crazy Train," "Kashmir" and the *Peanuts* theme—to "Piano Smasher (Jungian light dimming)" and the closer, "What Is Rock," the songs suggest the same gleefully anarchic approach that has made the Blue Man Group, heretofore, a *hip* household word. Now, the Blue Man Group seem ready for the big time; the question is, is the big time ready for them?

The Blue Man Group featuring Tracy Bonham play the Saratoga Performing Arts Center (Saratoga Springs) on Saturday (Aug. 30). Tickets for the 8 PM show are $30-$45. To purchase tickets, call 476-1000.

BLUE MAN GROUP

Los Angeles Times

SUNDAY, MARCH 5, 2000
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ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT

Las Vegas!

Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink make up the Blue Man Group, a performance troupe whose show opens March 15 at the Luxor. The unusual production is described as a multimedia event that mixes music, painting and clowning. Its off-Broadway incarnation won Obie and Drama Desk awards.

The Bald and the Blue-tiful make artistic statement at Luxor

BY BOBBIE KATZ

And now for something totally different . . .

Las Vegas—the land of showgirls, splashy productions and Elvis impersonators—is about to become home to "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor."

True [illegible]is, it will be a new experience for Vegas

March 15 for an indefinite run in the Luxor [illegible], "Blue Man" defies categorization.

A performance troupe whose members feature bald, cobalt-blue heads (thanks to the roar of the grease paint), the silent Blue Man Group is made up of longtime friends Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink. In the show, they neither talk nor show emotion.

Rather, the collective Blue Man—three bodies, one entity—expresses himself through art and music, and the result only goes to prove that whatever has been living inside him all these years definitely needs to get out.

What one reviewer termed a "deliriously antic blend of music, painting and clowning [that produces] an amusing spoof of art criticism," "Blue Man" already has wowed crowds in New York, Boston and Chicago. Along the way the production also picked up prestigious Obie and Dram Desk awards.

" 'Techno-tribal' describes our work," Wink says. "For example, we have a light inside a drum and we pour paint

Please see BLUE MAN, Page 9

into the drum and it explodes 25 feet into the air—it looks like a rocket. Then Phil and Matt put [up a canvas to catch the spraying paint]. It's abstract expressionism. Are we making fun of it, or do we love it? We don't know. For people who like art, there are a lot of inside jokes hidden in there. Basically, our act is based around art and science—we call it 'artworld science.' "

"The process is hard to understand or explain," Stanton chimes in, "but it leads to something beautiful or tribal."

The three like to describe their show as a multimedia journey that is at once funny, intelligent and visually stunning, accompanied by a live band whose haunting tribal rhythms fuel the action.

However you tag it, "Blue Man" most certainly contains scenes you've never witnessed before. At various points, the three catch marshmallows or gumballs of paint in their mouths and spit them out as art; they stuff handfuls of cereal into their mouths, resulting in an amplified chomping symphony; they call an audience member up for a banquet of Twinkies; and they do things with jello that . . . well, you just have to see it.

"We have a lot of freedom on stage," Goldman says. "And we have genuine moments with each

Please see BLUE MAN, Page 94

BLUE MAN

Continued from Page 93

other. There is no script, so there are a lot of different scenarios in which we can present ourselves. We surprise each other on stage. And the audience is a big part—we bring people up to join in the fun."

"Blue Man is a deadpan character," Stanton continues. "We wanted to create a cool kind of character that never laughs, smiles or speaks. We didn't start out to be funny. But the comedy comes out of three people trying to work together, and things going wrong or taking some weird twists."

"Blue Man stands for the fact that no matter how modern we get, we still have to stay connected to our tribal past," Wink adds. "It's a visceral experience. The message is: Let's not get so advanced that we forget to be passionate, playful and creative."

The show—or at least its style—is very much rooted in the members' past. Wink and Goldman have known each other since they were 13. In their 20s, they moved to New York, became roommates and met Stanton there in 1986. The three began hanging out and were part of a club of sorts.

At the time, they were searching for something exciting, and they would go to gallery exhibits, museums and concerts. The problem was that the only thing that happened in the '80s was that everyone got a VCR, they say.

"The '80s were a pretty stagnant decade for us," Wink says. "Our generation was kind of in-between things. The three of us were bonded by exasperation and the determination to get into something. We looked for it in art, music and science."

In 1988, the three friends decided to bury the '80s—literally. They dumped most of their possessions in the garbage in an attempt to start with a clean slate. Then they had an inspiration. Stanton, who had come to New York to be an actor; Wink, who was writing synopses of articles for a Japanese magazine; and Goldberg, who was working for a software company, decided to turn their trash into ritual.

"We came up with the Blue Man character among the three of us—it was our expression of being bored with the times we were in," Wink says. "So we had an East Village artist paint us a psychedelic coffin, and we got a permit from the city to conduct a burial in the park.

"Dressed like Blue Man, we walked to the park with the coffin and buried it with a yuppie doll with a tie . . . some semblances of post-modern architecture and a puppet of President Reagan inside."

This first Blue Man event drew a crowd and managed to get coverage on MTV news. It didn't take Goldberg, Stanton and Wink long to realize they were on to something, that the Blue Man character resonated with people.

After that, the trio would don the Blue Man costumes and do what they termed "guerrilla events" in bars, clubs and museums. Over a period of about two years, they developed a body of bits they could string together into an entire show. Those routines became the production that opened off-Broadway at the Astor Place Theatre in 1991 and won an Obie Award. Then the Drama Desk Committee also decided to give the three an award. To do so, the committee had to invent a new category: "Unique Theatrical Production."

Goldberg, Stanton and Wink did the first 500 Blue Man Group shows in New York themselves. The trio then recruited 25 other Blue Men and opened equally successful productions in Boston (1995) and Chicago (1997). All three shows continue to run. The Las Vegas show will be the largest production to date.

"Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" will play at 7 nightly Wednesday through Monday, with additional 10 p.m. performances Wednesday through Saturday. Tickets are $61.50 and $71.50 and may be purchased by calling (800) 557-7428.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.
IONDAY, JANUARY 14, 2002

Imagine This

By JOHN BUSKIN

Ve went searching for new ideas for fixing Web ads. We found them

BLUE MAN GROUP

PERFORMANCE ARTISTS

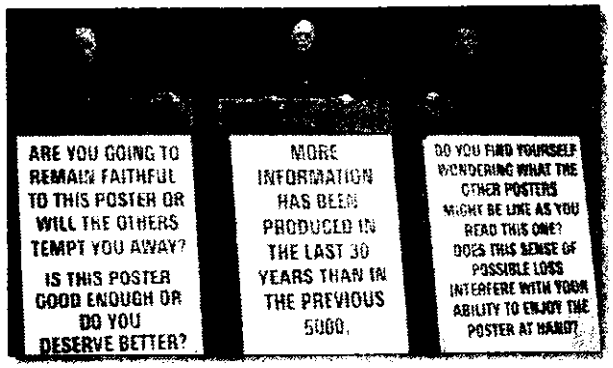
"The failure of ads on the Web doesn't surprise us," says Chris Wink, who founded Blue Man Group along with Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton. "It isn't a medium yet. Asking why advertising doesn't work on the Web is like asking why advertising doesn't work in a library-card file."

What the Web does well, the Blue Men argue, is give people streams of information—like live stock tickers or news feeds—as opposed to presenting entertainment that can be broken up by ads, like TV or radio. So how would the Blue Men turn data flow into a memorable sales pitch? They'd adapt one of the techniques they use in their live performances.

If you haven't seen Blue Man Group—either on stage or in one of the TV ads they crafted for Intel Corp.—here's a quick guide. The Group are a trio—or, rather, trios, since there are productions in cities across the country—who perform as completely blue, hairless, androids who don't speak but make all sorts of other noises. They also beat on an eclectic assortment of objects, accompanied by a mysterious, dimly lit instrumental combo.

But though the show is almost constantly rhythmic and musical, it is more about information and communication. During the performance, information is presented through digital signs, large pads, artist's canvases, video screens, voice-overs, props, colors and mime.

At various times, the flow of information is increased so that it's impossible for an individual viewer to assimilate it all—as in the accompanying photo, where three pads with different text are displayed next to one another and their pages turned simultaneously at a faster and faster pace.



Hank de Leyrandsse

THE BLUE MAN GROUP
Web ads should offer streams of information

The Blue Men propose something similar for a Web ad: simultaneously presenting parcels of information on "a pulsating scale," says Mr. Wink. For example, they might offer a cracker's constituent ingredients in one info-stream, a listing of the conceptual benefits of snacking in another and a third that catalogs some of the noises (presumably pleasant) that one might make while noshing on said cracker.

Like Ms. Erickson, the Blue Men think an online ad needs to be compelling and fun. "Our approach would be to create a legitimate stand-alone experience—something people would pay to see," says Mr. Wink. "Arguably, the term 'advertisement' would no longer apply."

The pace and scale of the presentation would be as compelling as the content (assuming the content is seductive enough to make users want to see all of it). For example, the trio might alternate noise-making, frenetic movement and frozen silence. They might present literal interaction with a product or its logo (as they did in their Intel TV spots), or they might describe and then question the product's relationship to society. Varying pace would "create a sense of seeing something exotic or exciting," says Mr. Wink.

The goal would be "to surprise people; to move people's consciousness out of the part of their brain that tries to characterize things. We would take advantage of pulsating—I could picture someone's heart rate changing."

The bizarre Blue Man Group are taking performance art to the heart of America, says CHRISTOPHER GOODWIN

GUY ARCH/RETNA; FRED PROUSER

Sacré bleu: main picture, the Blue Man Group in thoughtful mood; right, rehearsing for the Grammys

Odd men out

The most startling sight at the recent Grammy awards, apart from Elton John's Munich-style appeasement of Eminem, was that of the three robotic blue men who accompanied Moby on his techno-blues hit Natural Blues. The bald, cobalt-blue, expressionless men had been spied snaking their way along the red carpet before the show, but their explosive appearance on stage, bashing a huge percussion backpack that looked as if it had been constructed from an air-conditioning duct, clearly marked the bizarre trio's arrival in the mainstream.

In fact, the Blue Man Group have been a significant presence on the off-Broadway New York theatre scene for more than a decade but, until recently, were little known to middle America and almost unknown outside the country. That is all changing. The Blue Man Group were at the Grammys because their first CD, Audio, had been nominated in the "best instrumental album" category. The music — intense rhythmic layers of percussion and guitars that mirror the group's stage show rather than ape it — is largely played on instruments constructed by the men themselves, often from what look like the internal organs of a vacuum cleaner. Hauntingly melodic, it has been compared to the sound popularised by the likes of Ennio Morricone.

It has certainly proved a success at the enormous Luxor hotel in Las Vegas, where the blue men now perform nightly in the 1,250-seat main theatre. There have also been Blue Man Group shows running in New York, Chicago and Boston.

The three original blue men, Chris Wink, Phil Stanton and Matt Goldman, who are now all about 40, are the creative gurus behind the shows, and were the ones who appeared at the Grammys, but the group now has about 30 blue men performing across the United States. They even held auditions in London last week for more blue men, although there are no plans just yet to take the show outside America.

Time magazine called their performances "the closest thing to avant-garde theatre ever to make it in Vegas". From the earliest days in New York, Blue Man shows, which have a ritualistic, primal, comedic frenzy, have elicited nothing but superlatives from critics who have raved about the troupe's unique melding of performance art, visceral theatre and powerful music.

The core elements of the Blue Man Group shows differ little from city to city, although some of the more abstruse art references have been excised from the Vegas show, while the drumming and musical elements have been beefed up.

There's the deliciously messy creation of an abstract painting — à la Jackson Pollock — by squeezing huge tubes of paint onto enormous drumheads, which the three blue men then bash to an ear-splitting crescendo as paint splatters onto canvas. There's the moment when one of the blue men starts throwing marshmallows across the stage — dozens of them, which are, astoundingly, all caught by another blue man in his mouth and eaten.

An audience member is dragged on stage for a "Twinkie banquet", a mad ingestion of huge quantities of a chocolate-covered American sweet, which gets bizarrely chaotic as huge globules of cream filling start bursting out of blue men's stomachs. There's a twisted karaoke segment where the audience sings along with Jefferson Airplane's famous 1960s drug anthem White Rabbit. The show's climax involves thousands of yards of paper streaming on top of the audience from the back of the hall. The entire show is wordless, but all the while the blue men bash their home-made instruments and an LED screen scrolls ironic commentaries on art and life.

"From our very first performances we were blue and catching stuff in our mouths and making action paintings," says Wink. "There was no logical impulse behind it. The illusion we hope to create is of three blue men who come out, stare at the audience and literally have no idea what they are going to do. People ask, 'Why blue?', and we don't really have an answer: somehow the blue colour just resonates for us as serious and funny at the same time." Still, it's not easy being blue: the make-up, which is supposed to make them look moist and gooey, as if they had just been born off a painting, can take as much as two hours to put on.

The Blue Man Group first appeared in New York in the late 1980s, on the streets and in some of the performance-art spaces that were all the rage then. In 1988, they performed a famous Funeral for the 1980s, a decade they loathed, in Central Park, burying such symbols as postmodern architecture, yuppie TV and deconstructionism.

Wink and Goldman were childhood friends from New York. Wink went on to study art history and played in a punk-rock band. He met Stanton when they were both working as waiters. Stanton was a drama student and the son of a Pentecostal minister from Georgia, in the deep South. "Our show is in some ways similar to a Pentecostal service — a ritual, emotional thing," says Stanton.

The show that evolved partly fed off, and was partly an ironic commentary on, the deadly serious high-brow art currents sweeping New York. The group can clearly trace its artistic influences back as far as the dadaists and forward as far as underground performance artists, such as Paul McCarthy, who emerged in the 1970s and 1980s. Even today, it's as if Damien Hirst or the Chapman brothers had started a run in Blackpool music hall.

Of course, the work of such artists is too intellectual, too scary, to reach the American mainstream. But by incorporating other elements of popular culture, such as punk rock, the Blue Man Group can make many of the same points, to many more people, as artists such as McCarthy.

"Our hope is that the show will shake people out of the intellectual and get them into the visceral a bit through the music," says Wink. "It's okay to take off your cultural mask and have your intellect tickled." ❑

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Full history of the indigo oddballs

London

BLUE MAN GROUP

People weekly

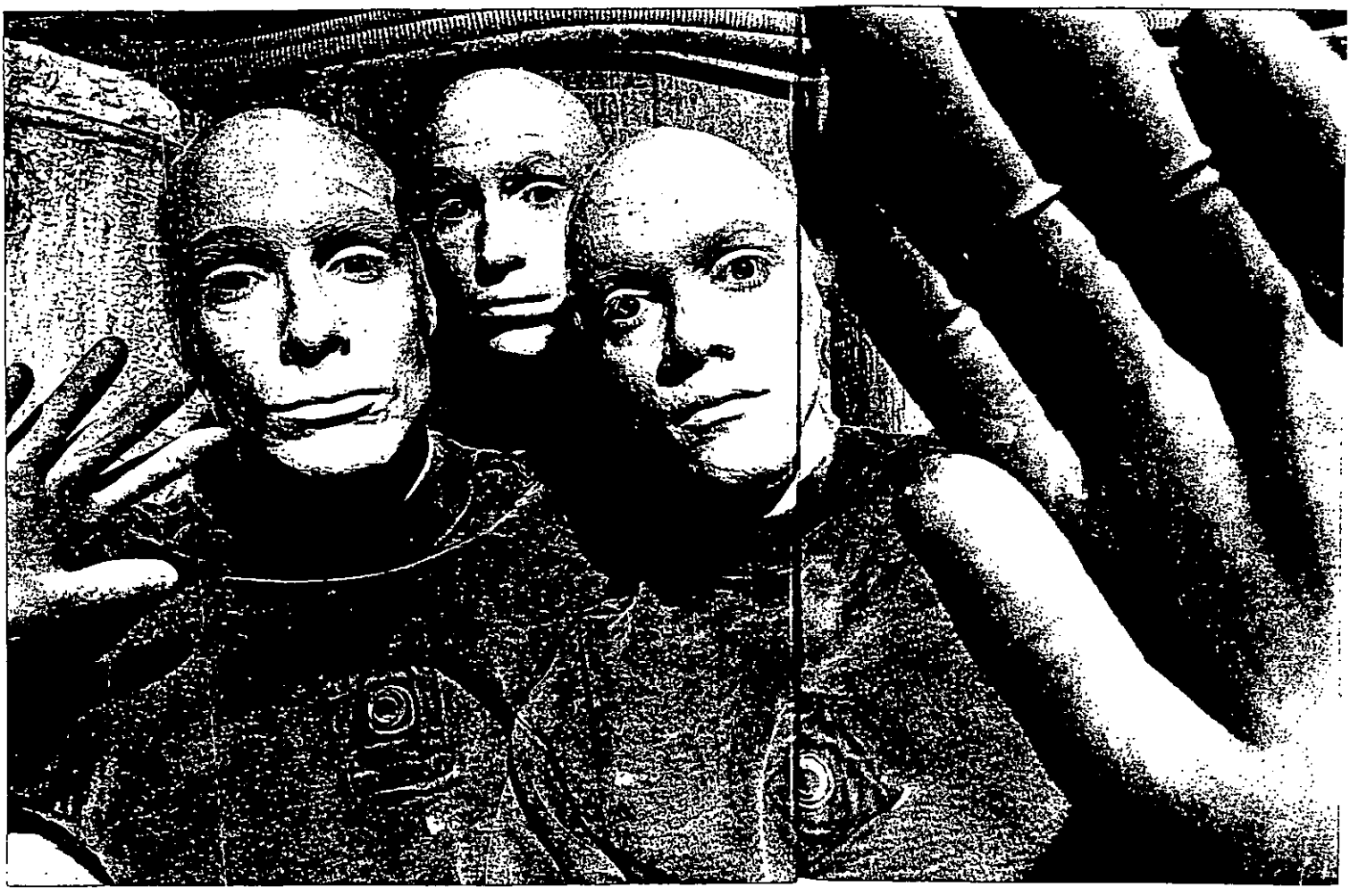
June 8, 1992
Vol. 37, No. 22

STAGE

MASTERS OF SPLATTER MAY TURN YOUR MOOD INDIGO

You ain't seen blue till you've seen Blue Man Group get offbeat off Broadway ■ by Kim Hubbard

IT'S AN ACCLAIMED PERFORMANCE ART PIECE playing on Manhattan's bohemian Lower East Side, but don't buy a ticket to Blue Man Group's *Tubes* expecting a sophisticated aesthetic experience. Eight times a week the Blue Men—Chris Wink, Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton—don cobalt paint and skull-



Photographs by Peter Serling

▲ "We thought up this bald blue guy," says Wink (right, with Stanton and Goldman). "We didn't know where he'd take us."

Blue Man Productions, Inc. 434 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10003 (212) 387-9415 Fax (212) 674-4754

BLUE MAN GROUP

BLUE MAN GROUP "TUBES"

caps and purvey their own brand of magic: They perform a symphony for teeth and Captain Crunch cereal, squirt snakes of banana from their chests and catch paint-filled gum balls in their mouths, among other stunts. It isn't to some people's taste. "This poet-type guy we know came," says Wink. "and afterward he said he thought the show was going to be more 'rigorous.' "

That's precisely what the Blue Men didn't have in mind. Their performance. which has been selling out to fun-loving types since it opened last November, is dedicated to the idea that "our brains help us only so much. You have to have your heart, you know?" says Wink. To that end *Tubes* offers haunting music, audience participation—the chance to have your head encased in Jell-O, for one—and plenty of mess. (Viewers in the first few rows are given plastic sheets.) By the time the show's silent, expressionless stars reach their exuberant finale, audiences are cheering.

"Combine[s] the malicious vaudevillian humor of Penn and Teller with the rambunctiousness of . . . *Animal House*," declared Frank Rich of *The New York Times*. "An opportunity to regress. . . ."

Which is not to say, however, that *Tubes* contains no food for thought. Sitting in the almost furnitureless uptown Manhattan apartment that Wink and Goldberg, both 31, share (Stanton, 32, lives downtown), the Blue Men are fairly brimming with ideas. Blue Man Group started, they say, as a Sunday salon to which they invited friends for discussions about art, science and "whatever was exciting out there," says Goldman. Wink and Stanton were working as waiters, Goldman as a software producer, and all three were seeking ways to express themselves in 1987 New York, which struck them as a cultural wasteland. "Rock and roll had become MTV, all safe and noncommunal," says Wink. "We heard about this art world thing happening, but you'd go and look, and it was like, you were always in the wrong gallery or something. We wanted to shake things up."

Enter the Blue Man. Explains Stanton: "We thought that to turn the corner and see a blue man would be surprising." Not as surprising as they'd planned, apparently. When the trio would barhop after getting blue, the blasé denizens of Manhattan nightlife barely blinked. But friends responded enthusiastically. "We don't play with ooze ourselves," explains Wink, "but we thought the Blue Man would. We pictured him having been born off a painting, being this moist gooey thing."

Gradually Blue Man increased his repertoire, each piece growing from his creators' musings: about ritual, the

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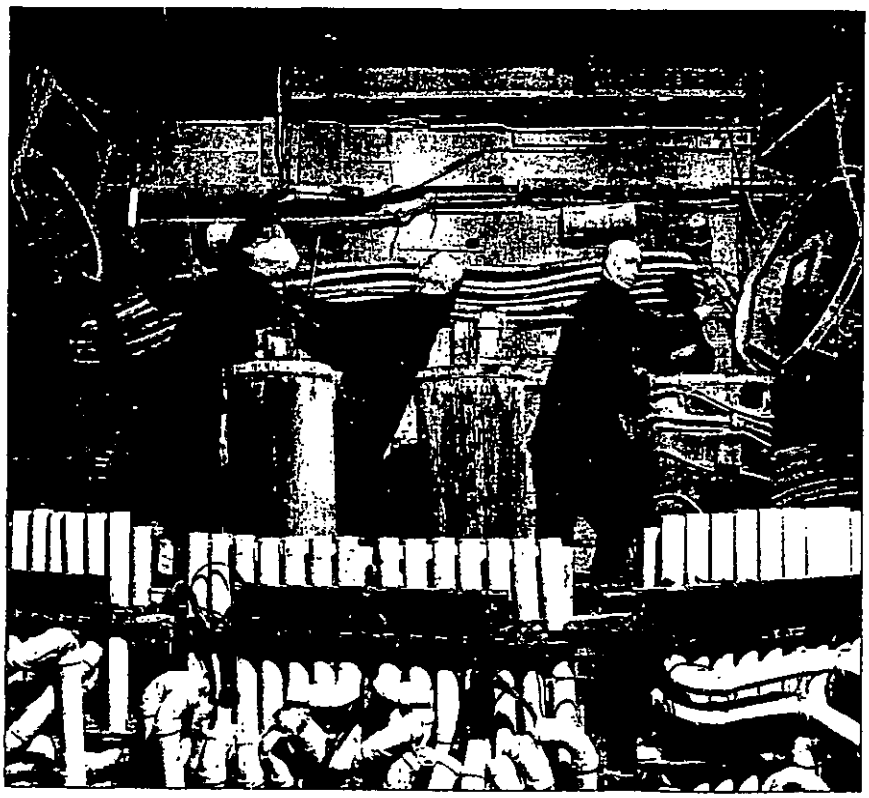
limits of technology, information overload (one segment involves signs flipped too quickly for the audience to read every word). The group performed at nonprofit theaters in New York City and across the country and won an Obie in 1991. "That was wild," says Goldman. Adds Wink: "We didn't write pieces about having stuff spurt out of your chest thinking mass appeal. The first time I saw an actual upright adult see that and not leave the theater I was really surprised."

Among the upright adults the group numbers as fans, in fact, are their parents. Goldman's "are on a high about the show," Matt says. Stanton's have seen only videotape but are planning a trip from Savannah, Ga., this summer. And the Winks, says Chris, "are proud I haven't sold out."

Wink grew up in Manhattan, where his father taught at Union Theological Seminary and his mother was a bioenergetics therapist. He and Goldman, the son of writers, met at New York's private Fieldston School. They remained friends while Wink studied art history and pop culture at Wesleyan and Goldman got his B.A. and M.B.A. from Clark University. After college Goldman landed a job producing software at Omni Resources, a then fledgling computer company. ("It was actually very creative," he says.) Wink, casting about for a way to "combine all my interests," synopsized American magazine articles for a Japanese company, played drums in a punk rock band and worked as a caterer. It was at the East Side catering company Glorious Foods (where he helped cater Caroline Kennedy's wedding) that he ran into Stanton.

◀ Many of Blue Man's antics originated in the apartment Wink (center) and Goldman (right) share. Says Stanton (left): "We never thought there'd be 2,400 people a week who'd be interested."

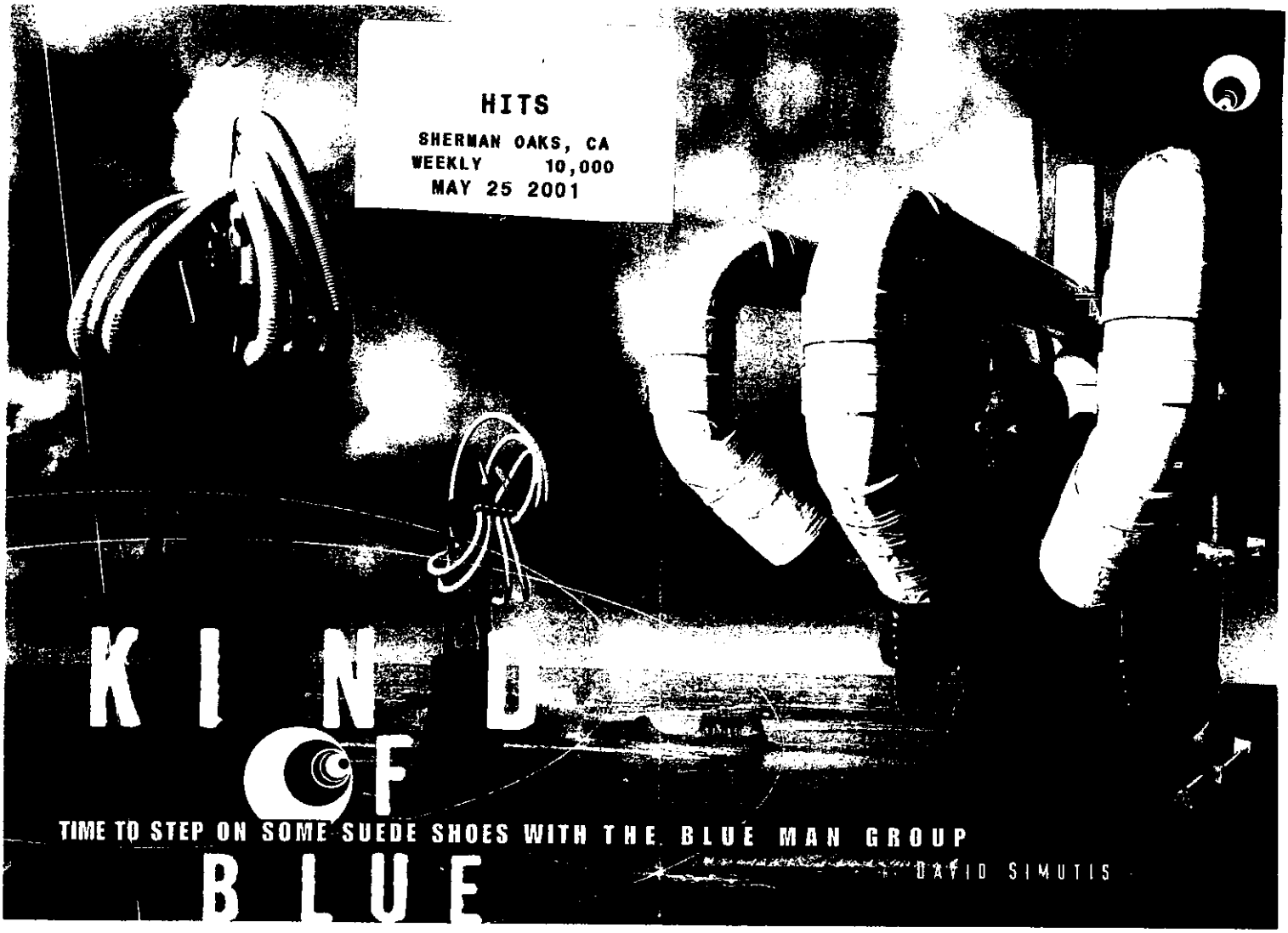


▼ "It's fun," says Goldman (onstage with his costars). "When the audience, music and technology are clicking, it's almost like an out-of-body experience."

"We connected," says Wink. Stanton, an acting student from Georgia, is the son of a Pentecostal minister and a housewife. "Our show now is in some ways similar to a Pentecostal service —a ritual, emotional thing," Stanton says. A theater grad from Evangel College in Missouri, he shared Wink's interest in art and technology. Before long the think tank that would be Blue Man was born.

Today the show seems to occupy most of the group's thoughts and all of their time. Aided by a crew of 15, "who've never worked in theater and don't have a clue, just like us," says Wink, they spend 90 minutes making themselves up, perform and then stick around for cleanup. Given that 60 pounds of bananas, a 70-pound Jell-O mold (courtesy of Glorious Foods' Jean Claude Nedelec) and reams of crepe paper are integral to each show, that's no simple task. They have little excess energy to squander on romance (of the three, only Wink has a girlfriend) or leisure activities. "Once, in the middle of winter, I did go to the beach," says Goldman.

How long can they keep this up? "We've never planned ahead, and it's worked for us so far," Wink says, shrugging. Theater producers around the world are clamoring for Blue Man's services, and the group has scheduled a tour of Japan. "We're making enough money to live on, we're not catering, and we love our work," says Wink. "We're the happiest people in town." ■



KIND OF BLUE

TIME TO STEP ON SOME SUEDE SHOES WITH THE BLUE MAN GROUP

DAVID SIMUTIS

It is, without a doubt, the oddest show ever performed in a Las Vegas casino. The Blue Man Group's "installation" at the 1200-seat Luxor Theater in the Luxor Hotel, which opened last year, features 13 weekly shows by the performance art/music/comedy group. It defies conventional description—it's three figures, dressed in black, painted royal blue on any exposed skin, including the entire face. The three play PVC-pipe instruments, dance, bring audience members onto the stage and do sly, consumer-culture-skewering skits—all without speaking. Plus, they're joined by a seven-piece band, painted with tribal, Day-Glo markings and hidden behind transparent screens. In addition to Las Vegas, there are ongoing Blue Man Group installations, almost like franchises, in Boston, Chicago and New York. The Blue Man Group was conceived by Phil Stanton, Matt Goldman and Chris Wink 13 years ago. Now Blue Man Group Productions has just under 500 employees, including more than 30 Blue Men (and one Woman). For its music, the Group received a Pop Instrumental Grammy nomination for its debut album, "Audio" (Virgin) and performed at the Awards with Moby and Macy Gray. And then there's the ubiquitous series of Intel commercials...The Group keeps its members fairly anonymous, so much so that Stanton, Goldman and various members of the production team did this interview simultaneously, but asked that all answers be credited to "Blue Man Group." Unfortunately, the Group was stuck talking to HITS' Little Boy Blue, David "*And Ego*" Simutis.

With installations in four cities, it's sort of like an assembly line; you can just keep cranking them out.
The Vegas show is probably about 50% brand-new material that we hadn't done before. We went from three band members to seven band members. And the Zoetropes—the dancing sculptures—all the neon-animation and the big shadow piece at the beginning those are all brand-new elements that we brought to the show.

Let's talk a little bit about the creative side. Where do some of the performance ideas come from?
Well, if you could help us figure that out, it would be a lot easier to write this stuff!

What's the process like? Is it sort of like, "I know: We'll put up a big white screen and turn lights on and off behind the people?"
It's so varied, but it is that! There have been many times it's been like, "Hey, I know let's do some big shadows." Or it can be like the time we were at a lighting designer trade show, where we saw live wires, stuff that looks like neon. We went, "Oh, that's really cool." We put it on a costume, and we had also been experimenting with fiber optics at the time, but we were frustrated by the fact that you could only see the end of the fiber optics. Then, all of a sudden, they ended up on a costume and we were like, "Wait a minute...We can animate this thing!" Then we performed it. We made like a little mock piece in our warehouse down on Third Street in New York and did something that looks very, very different than what ended up on the Vegas stage. Over the course of about 16 months, that piece went from something at a trade show that we spun in our hands, to what you saw. It's also a painstaking process because you can find plenty of visual effects, but the challenge is always, "Where's the idea? How can we put this together with an idea so that it has some meaning behind it and also so it has a spectacle, or a fun, entertaining element? What can it have to say?" We have a building in the East Village in New York and it's like the Blue Man research laboratory. It's just a wild place; so many things are in the process of being worked on in so many different ways. That's how we were able to create some larger pieces for a stage that would be as big as the one in Las Vegas. And we also built our recording studio there and where we recorded all of the CD.

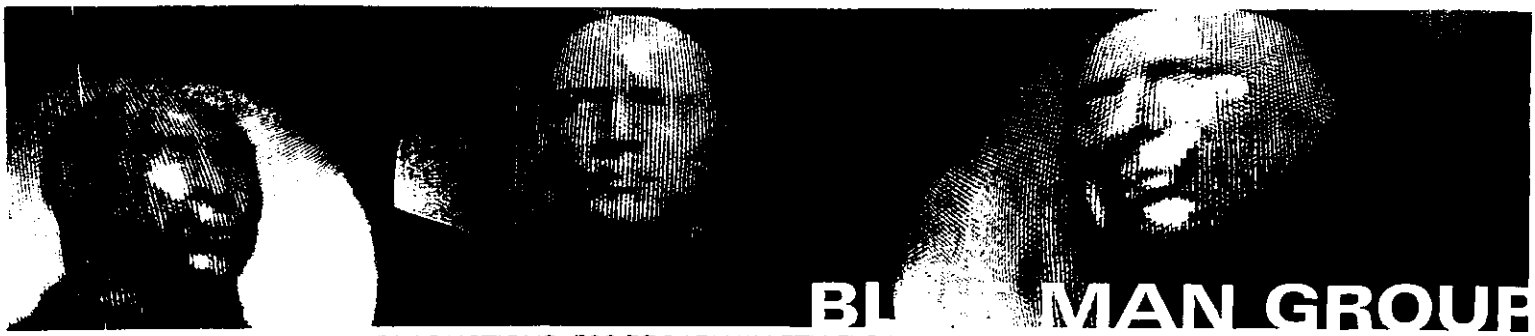
What's the process of picking and training Blue Men?
It's brutal. We have five full-time people who do nothing but go around the country and around the world, looking for possible Blue Man candidates and training them. It's a grueling process and they're so many intangibles... because we've had people who are amazing actors or excellent drummers, but they just don't have that Blue Man look. Or vice versa. Our community is so tight-knit, even though we're spread over four cities across the country, that...it's gotta work. The truth is they just can't be an asshole, they gotta be the kind of asshole that would be happy sitting around all day knocking on hollow pipes and cutting up PVC.

What's the training program like? Is there a physical course that they have to go through in under two minutes and they have to do 100 sit-ups?
That's exactly what it is. We set up a bunch of tires and they have to run through that. Then they've got to scale a wall with just a little string hanging. We have a big vat of Jello that they have to be suspended in for six hours—and they can only breathe through a straw.

When did you realize that you were a success?
Is it successful?

You've got more people working for you than we have at HITS.
But it is a little different than the way most companies are, because it's the Vegas show, the Boston show, the Chicago show and the New York show. That also includes people who work on the shows. We have 75 that don't work for any one particular show, that just help guide the whole organization?

Do you get a special deal on blue paint?
We sure do. That stuff is made especially for us, it's a color called International Yves Klein Blue. That's a color invented by a French performance artist in the '50s named Yves Klein, whose heart exploded when he was about 35 or something like that. He did blue monochrome paintings in the shade we use. ■



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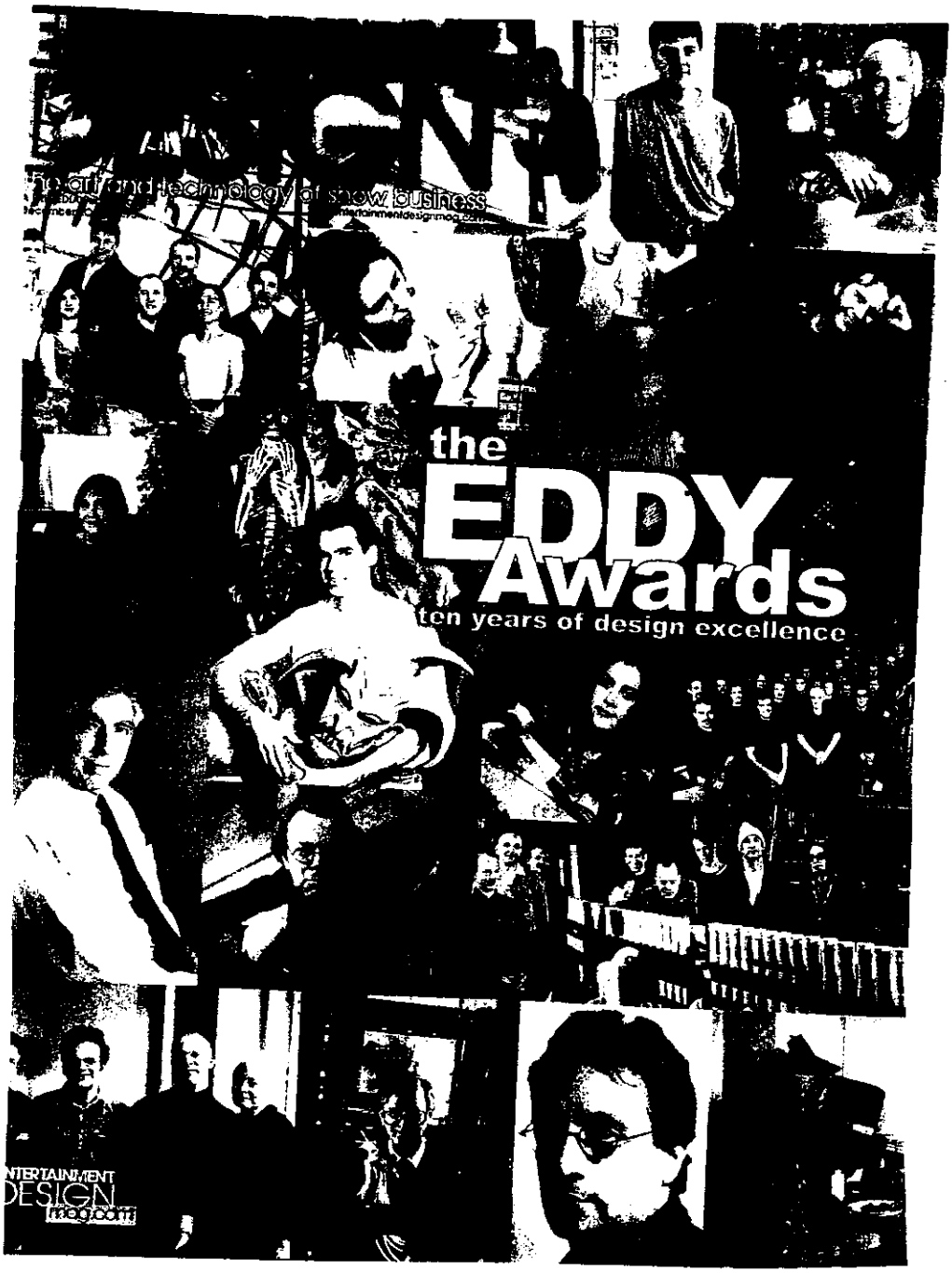

Blue Man Group

Those of us who saw Blue Man Group in their formative days at La Mama in New York City's East Village have watched them catapult to the top of the entertainment scene with a certain sense of amusement. Who would have ever guessed that these three weird bald guys who don't utter a single word, paint themselves blue, and give a new meaning to the concept of spray paint would become the toast of the town, not only in New York, but also in Boston, Chicago, and of all places, Las Vegas.

The old Vegas is slowly morphing into a destination not only for gamblers but also for connoisseurs of avant-garde performance art. If that's the case, perhaps *Blue Man Group Live at Luxor* is the next generation's Rat Pack.

The usual assortment of edible props, homemade musical instruments, and endless rolls of toilet paper expanded into a massive 1,200–seat theatre, *Blue Man Group Live at Luxor* is performed nightly to soldout crowds at the Luxor Hotel on the Strip. Blue Man Group founders Chris Wink, Matt Goldman, and Phil Stanton are at the root of all the zaniness that takes place onstage, but behind the scenes they are supported by a large group of designers (and technicians) who help transpose their inspired ideas onto the stage.

In tribute to the success of *Live at Luxor*, a 2000 EDDY Award goes to Wink, Goldman, and Stanton for their artistic conception of the show, and to the team that helped them pull off the move to Las Vegas, including: Lauren Helpern and David Gallo, set design; Caryl Glaab, video design; Kevin Frech, associate video design; Matthew McCarthy, lighting design; Marc Janowitz, associate lighting design and Live Wire designer; Todd Perlmutter, sound design; Ross Humphrey, sound design; Patricia Murphy, costume design; Chase Tyler, associate costume design; and Scott Fisher, zoetrope designer.

Needless to say, the Blue Man creative process is a little different from most. "Their creative process is always very collaborative," notes Janowitz. "They always listen to everybody and are interested in what you have to say. Even the cleanup guys can contribute, and there are many incarnations of every piece." This translates into an open attitude of accepting different ideas, and frankly, trying just about anything. Or as McCarthy puts it quite succinctly, "Many minds are better than one." The end result speaks for itself.

Blue Man's approach to technology is also a bit unusual. Janowitz recalls a trip to LDI in Orlando in 1996 with McCarthy and Wink, who they lost on the show floor. When they found him, Wink was busy playing with Live Wire, an unusual lighting product that the group has adopted to create a visually arresting animation sequence in the Las Vegas production.

The Blue Man set itself not only needs to be foodproof and waterproof (it is washed down after each performance), but the Luxor show meant a major expansion of the smaller sets that had been used before. Enter Helpern, who worked carefully to make sure the sightlines were good for every scene, and had to devise her own choreography for the quick moves required by the set pieces. Not to mention the stroboscopic effects of the fast-spinning zoetropes designed by Fisher and his company Fisher Technical Services.

Video is incorporated into the performance and the set itself, to enhance the action both on- and offstage. The majority of the video images are created by Caryl Glaab.

Perlmutter and Humphrey went for a kick-ass, rock-inspired sound, since they have a seven–piece band onstage and no spoken words to worry about.

Technology helps communicate the twisted ideas of Blue Man Group to their audiences. Flashing messages on LED screens create a preshow dialogue, video images blend seamlessly with live action, drum solos take centerstage, and loudspeakers and lighting fixtures turn up in highly unusual places. At the center of all this are those three bald guys with their heads still painted blue. Today there are a small army of them, performing all across the United States, both in the original show, *Tubes*, and in the new Las Vegas extravaganza, *Live At Luxor*, as Goldman, Stanton, and Wink continue to expand the Blue Man parameters. One can only imagine what they and their design team will think of next.

[illegible]

[illegible] performance art finds a home on the Vegas Strip

BLUE MAN GROUP

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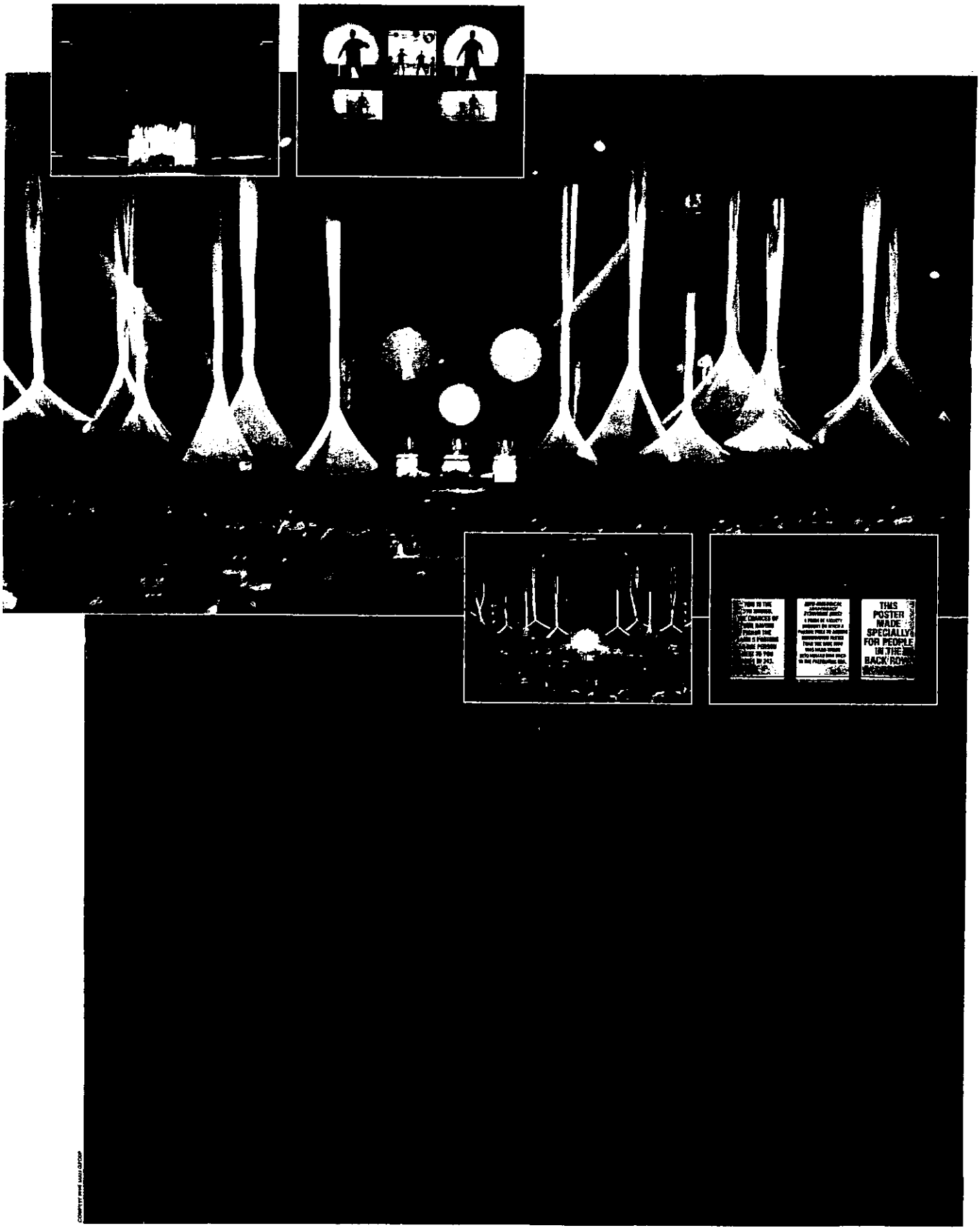
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Chasing the Blues

Blue Man Group Takes Las Vegas by Storm

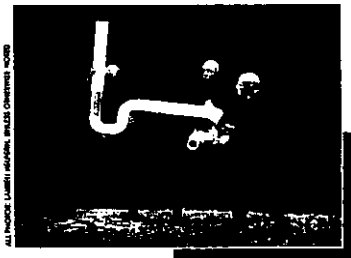
by David Barbour, David Johnson, & Ellen Lampert-Gréaux

Take three bald, silent guys with blue heads, add some incredibly odd performance material, mix in edible props, heavily percussive music, and flying paint, squeeze into a tiny East Village theatre, and the result is Blue Man Group's *Tubes*, one of New York City's longest-running and most indescribable Off Broadway experiences. Move the entire concoction to a 1,200-seat theatre at the Luxor Hotel in Las Vegas, rename it (*Blue Man Group Live at Luxor*, appropriately enough), and the result is a show that's bigger, messier, more explosive, and more fun—but just as indescribable.

"It's not exactly a move, since so much of the show is new," explains set designer Lauren Helpern, who collaborated on the concept for the designs with "CMP," the original Blue Men: Chris Wink, Matt Goldman, and Phil Stanton, as well as with designer David Gallo. "The show is such a collaborative entity. I feel that our job as designers is to make real what the creators of the show envision, so in some ways we operate as translators," says Helpern. "It's what I would call an ego-less show, since so much of it is about function and problem-solving."

Blue Man Group also has a large in-house, New York–based framework of people involved with the creation of their shows, which is how they've put together not only the New York and Las Vegas productions, but also the Chicago and Boston versions of the show as well. Some of the concepts for Vegas in fact, had been in development for months or years. "Las Vegas was also the first time the group encountered union production people," notes Helpern, who credits "an amazing group put together by our technical supervisor, Hillary Blanken, and her company, Juniper Street Productions. It was tough at first to get the two different approaches to doing things working together."

One of the first things the design team had to confront was the Egyptian-style decor of the theatre at the Luxor, which is of course not in keeping with Blue Man's contemporary character. And there was a mandate from the Luxor: Do not destroy the original decor. "This made it an interesting challenge," says Helpern. But in order to "modernize" the interior of the space, four Egyptian columns were removed and the walls (up to the cornice) were covered in flameproof black velour provided by David Rosenberg of I. Weiss and Sons in Long Island City, NY.



ALL PHOTOS: LAUREN HELPERN, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

"Above the cornice we painted the remainder of the wall black," explains Helpern, who points out that black is also the basic color of the set, which she describes as "textured underfoot, and smooth on the vertical surfaces. If anything, the less aware of the scenery the audience is, the better. Black is a great background for all the flying paint and colored light in the air."

Some of the other factors that affected Helpern's designs for Las Vegas are sightlines, transitions, and cleanup. "Sightlines are particularly important to CMP. They want everyone in the audience to see the entire scene, which is difficult in a fan-shaped auditorium," she says. "We used our fact-finding trips to Vegas to determine the best locations for the big set pieces."

The seven-piece band in Las Vegas is larger than in New York, and had to be split into two groups. From a design standpoint, the band needed to be placed at a height where they were visible but not intrusive. "They also needed easy access to the stage," notes Helpern, "because they perform in the matrix scene," which occurs near the end of the show. "To accomplish this, we tied the band lofts into the existing stairways, so it is a safe and easy run."

There was also some tricky planning for the quick movement of large set units onstage. "This was the first time the show had to have a large number of moving units," Helpern says. "The pieces that move on the deck in the other shows—the feast table and PVC instruments—need to be as compact as possible and don't go very far. It was a different way to look at the dynamic of the event, and definitely a challenge to every department to make the moments fluid and interesting."

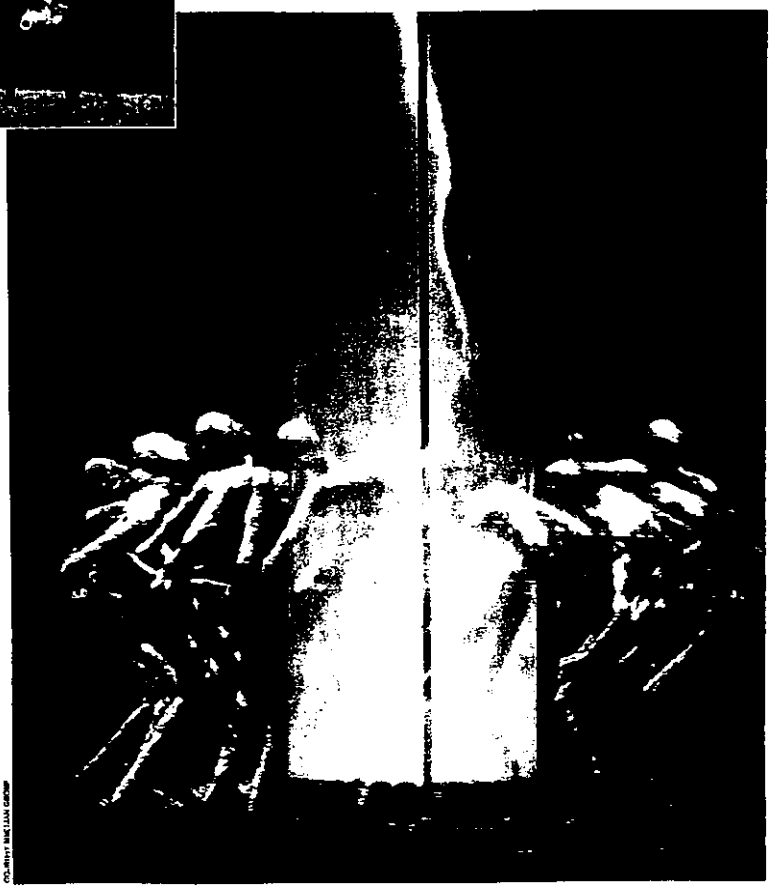
Cleanup provided another interesting challenge. The entire stage needed to be waterproof and configured for drainage to make the turnover between shows go as quickly and smoothly as possible. "Because of all the different substances—from paint to Jell-O—that land on the deck, it needs to be slip-proof, which means a textured surface, making it even more difficult to clean," says Helpern. "There are also pieces that get cleaned during the show in an upstage wash-down area."

To enlarge the concept as well as the size of the show, "CMP" added some new pieces that they had been developing (the numbers involving the drum matrix) as well as some of the show standards: the Twinkie feast, the Captain Crunch boxes, and the live paintings based on works by Yves Klein. "They wanted the show to be bigger but not stray from the qualities that make it so accessible," Helpern explains. "We knew we were going to have to play with making certain moments more intimate, bringing them down onto the apron, and then turn other ones into huge statements. This meant figuring out how pieces could be played together, basically creating Swiss Army–knife scenery."

How much bigger are things in Las Vegas than in New York? As Helpern points out, the set piece used for the Twinkie feast—in which the Blue Men and an audience member dine on Twinkies, with unexpected results—is comparable to the size of the entire stage of the Astor Place Theatre, where Blue Man Group performs in New York. To compensate for this, many of the things used in the show were simply made much bigger, including posters and cereal boxes. Other units were expanded as well, including paint drums, which grew to 6' tall, and performance platforms placed at different elevations, in order to use the height as well as the depth of the space.

As Helpern recalls, "We made several trips out to the venue to determine the appropriate sizes of the different elements. Blue Man Group's in-house prop people (headed by Blakely Braniff) made about half a dozen of each item so that the proper balance between legibility and believability could be achieved."

An automated, waterproof deck with rust-proof tracks is one of the major set elements and



CO-ARTIST: MARC LEVI GERSH

Blue Men at work: The drum matrix (opposite page, top left and right) is one of the largest set pieces of *Blue Man Group Live at Luxor*; the climax of the show features 5" PVC tubes spinning from the ceiling on small-gear motors (opposite page, large top photo and middle insert photo); LED signs (opposite page, bottom) are built into the set; the vortex and zoetrope (right) are staples of all Blue Man shows. Above right, a PVC tube, one of the show's many homemade instruments.

was developed in conjunction with Fred Gallo of Entolo, a division of Production Resource Group, whose shops in Las Vegas and New Windsor, NY, worked on the project. The company provided scenic fabrication and painting, as well as show control and Stage Command Systems® scenic motion control.

Other major units were built by Showman Fabricators, Inc. in Brooklyn, NY (project manager: Warren Katz). "They had done some work for Blue Man prior to Vegas, so they understood the needs of the show," says Helpern. SFI built the matrix, which is the largest piece in the show. "It was a little like building a house: it is three stories tall, has scrim roman shades, multiple staircases, and has to withstand all sorts of abuse," Helpern notes. "That piece has to incorporate sets, lighting, video, and sound."

SFI also built the feast unit, which incorporates A/V elements as well, from a flat plasma screen TV embedded in the front of the table to a the microphone on the wall. "It is probably the most complex of all the pieces because it needs to move in two different directions," Helpern says. "It is driven downstage on a track and then pulled upstage at an angle by a cable above the ground that is attached to the upstage side of the platform. It is completely waterproof, has step units that track upstage into its wall, and incorporates all sorts of fun things, from giant posters to a Jell-O catapult. Not to mention that the surface needed to be as smooth as possible. They did a great job making it all work."

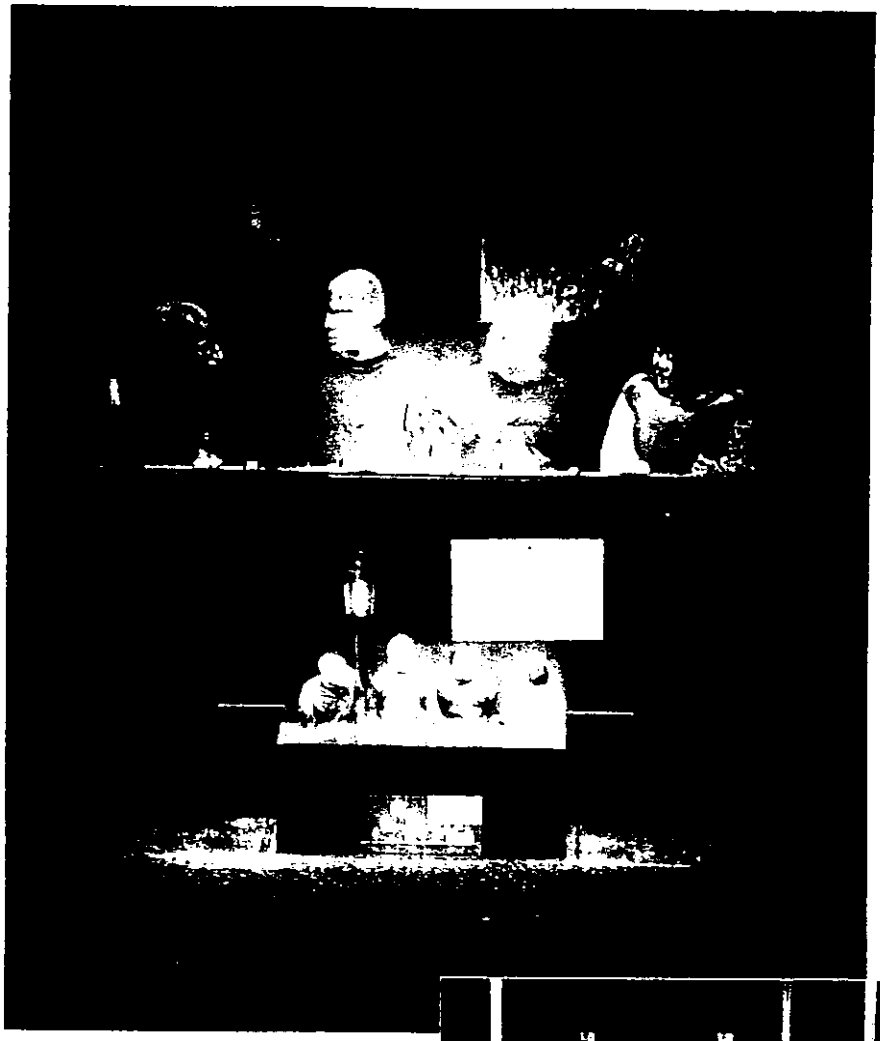
Another technical collaborator on this project is Scott Fisher, of Fisher Technical Services in Las Vegas, who worked on a series of specialty pieces, including the water vortexes and zoetropes, which stand downstage left and right. "The original vortex machines were created by Phil Stanton and have always been a part of the show. This time they needed to be almost twice the size of the ones in Chicago, which meant a significantly larger motor and propeller, not to mention all the engineering issues," says Helpern. "To make it more difficult, they had to be freestanding in the center of a donut turntable.

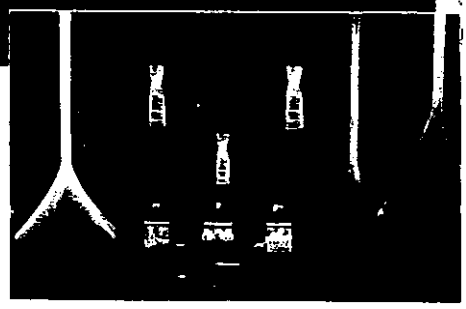
"The turntable is what we call the zoetrope, which is based on a 19th-century optical animation toy," she continues. "Ours, based on a three-dimensional version developed early in the 20th century, is called a stroboscopic zoetrope. There are 12 sculptures mounted in a circle. When the turntable moves, it is synched up with a strobe, creating an effect that looks like a single dancing figure. We played with this in a much smaller form for a workshop, though then the sculptures were all tethered to a central point on a solid disk.

"The turntable needed to be incredibly fast, start and stop quickly, and have an easily controllable variable speed," Helpern continues. "Also, the figures, which were sculpted by Andrew Benepe, needed to be beyond secure, so Scott had to develop the armature and connection. Basically, we didn't have much to do with Scott other than give him the space parameters and stand back. He was wonderful." Helpern also credits the work of scenic coordinator Patrick Fahey, who oversaw the drafting and worked with the various scenic shops during the build and in the theatre, as well as Kevin Cwalina, who did much of the drafting and the set model.

One of the high points of the show comes at the end, when rolls and rolls of white paper come careening over the audience from the back of the house. The audience gets into the act, passing the seemingly unending streams of paper forward as they work their way toward the stage.

"Inevitably, the solution, involving modified paint rollers and Velcro, was very simple and low tech considering the requirements—it had to be a surprise, which meant the paper and the cover needed an easy release, the changeover had to be fast, and it needed to flow," says Helpern. There is an army of people who help it happen during the show, get the streamers started, help them jump the dead areas, like the huge center aisle and the voms, and collect it afterward, because it gets recycled—a big Blue Man Group concern.





The ever-popular Twinkie feast (above) features a large custom-made screen from Gemlets as well as a small plasma screen built into the set. The final scene (right) features the Blue Men shadows on a DNA strand projected on custom-made screens. Lighting designer Matthew McCarthy kept the eye candy to a minimum (opposite page, top left); Sony cameras serve as an integral part of the show (opposite, top center), as did Live Wire (opposite, top right). Below right, a detail from the vortex and zoetrope design.

The audience is also pulled into the show by a series of funny messages on LED signs built into the set. "There is a sense of community in the audience, which is created as everybody reads them together," notes Helpern. These messages serve as the only "language" in the show. "So much in the show is about connection, with the paper being the most literal display," she adds.

At the same time as the paper gag, a forest of long PVC tubes starts spinning from the ceiling on small-gear motors (provided by Capital Scenic of New York). Peter Flathers, Blue Man Production's technical director, points out that there are 54 tubes (27 double sets) made of white neoprene-impregnated vinyl industrial hoses strapped to Tomcat truss. Columbus McKinnon chain motors are used to lower the truss for accessibility, as the tubes are rehung after each performance. The tubes are automatically released via a cue from the lighting console.

Video is also an important element in the show to help enhance what is happening onstage, as well as behind the scenes. "One of my favorite moments is the final one with the Blue Men's shadows on a DNA strand, another statement about how close we all are," says Helpern. "The scenery functions as a backdrop for all this wild video and light. I love the way scale is played with through video and shadow."

The video images were created by Caryl Glaab, Blue Man Group's associate artistic director and video designer. "The show in Las Vegas has the largest video component; in our other shows, video was mainly used to expand the parameters and see the action backstage," says Glaab. This time, the sheer size of the venue allowed Glaab to create original video pieces that are incorporated into the visual landscape of the show.

During the Twinkie feast, for example, there is a live feed of the Blue Men selecting a participant from the audience. You also see the feast itself in a screen above them and in the small plasma screen built into the front of the table, so you can see intimate details. In another scene, large prerecorded images of the Blue Men's eyes are projected on multiple screens. What is interesting here is that the Blue Men themselves are blocked to the movement of the images and a Wybron AutoPilot system allows the moving lights to follow the men.

For a singalong to Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit," three circular screens are used with the text set against fractal computer-generated images. "We bumped

this piece up to the next level," explains Glaab, who likes the juxtaposition of the classic 60s music with cutting-edge video technology creating a psychedelic look.

To create the images he used Dataton's Tracks software, which runs on a Macintosh G4 computer, and Avid to create some of the text. The live video cameras are two Sony D30s and one Sony XZ999 small "cigar" camera. Playback is via three DoReMi DDRV1 units. The projectors are from Digital Projection Inc. (DPI); the screens were custom-made with material from Gerriets.

'One of our goals was not to lose Blue Man's traditional character in the bigness of the new show," Glaab says. "We maintained the use of video for moments of intimacy you couldn't see from the back of the house, and to see further backstage, yet we did things we couldn't do in the other venues." In effect, they tied together what they did before with new applications, using video in the same conceptual manner yet on a larger scale.

Halpern says her biggest challenge was making everything function well in light of the constantly evolving, organic creative process. "We are dealing with years of development, so everything needs to stay true to what has come before," she says. "Each set piece needed to be treated independently yet as part of the whole production, since the show was constantly being refined. It is a remarkable thing to work on, because anything is possible. These are some of the most creative individuals out there, which is reflected in the way the audience responds to the show."

ELO

Wild Blue Yonder

How do they light *Blue Man Group Live at Luxor*? The answer is simple: volume, volume, volume. In the Group's other productions (in Boston, Chicago, and New York), the stage space is best described as intimate. Put that same show on the Luxor stage (which is 60' wide and 30' high) and you have a challenge: how to light three men, each approximately 6' tall, with blue skin and black clothing, against a massive, black set.

Just to make it interesting, lighting designer Matthew McCarthy says that the Blue Man aesthetic prohibits overly decorative lighting: "There's no eye candy," he adds. Nevertheless, for the Las Vegas show, he worked with a hugely expanded lighting rig to create stage pictures that kept the three performers from being lost in the vast blackness of the Luxor stage. The result is like concert lighting, with beams of white light crossing in the air, creating architectural patterns; to this end, this is the first Blue Man show with fog machines (six Reel EFX DF-50s and one MDG Atmosphere), to create a haze that allows McCarthy to light the air. The substantial use of backlighting and shadow effects also work to make the Blue Men seem larger than life.

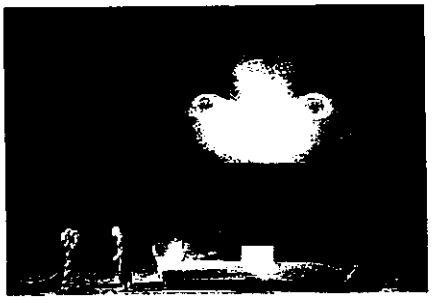
But *Live at Luxor* also features large-scale effects not seen in any other Blue Man Group production, at least not on this scale; some of these use existing technology in highly original ways. For example, Marc Janowitz, Blue Man Group's associate lighting designer, recalls a trip he made to LDI96 in Orlando, with McCarthy, a company electrician named Juniper Shuey, and Blue Man Chris Wink. "At one point, we lost Chris on the trade show floor," recalls Janowitz. "Then we found him at the LiveWire booth; he was swinging a piece of LiveWire around, saying, 'We can do something with this.'"

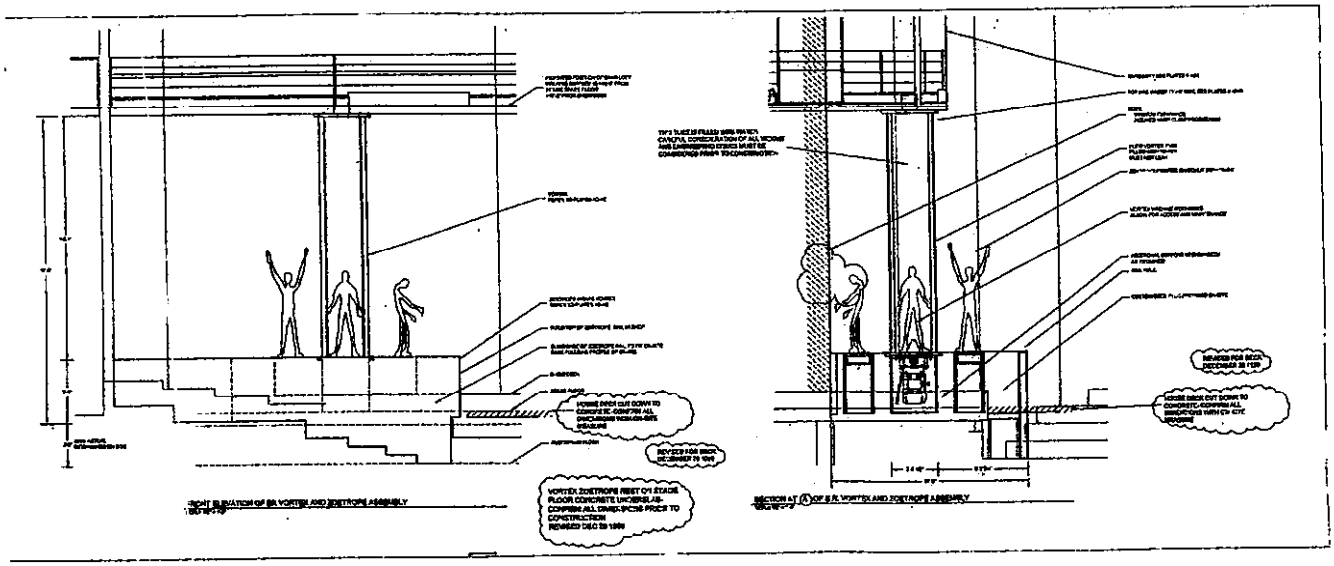
LiveWire is an unusual type of illumination using semiconductors on thin, flexible cable that is 1/4" in diameter; think of it as a really, really thin type of fiber optic whereby each strand is the source of light. As a result of that chance encounter at LDI, *Live at Luxor* features one of the most astonishing effects to be seen on a Las Vegas stage—a light animation sequence, which, when viewed, resembles a laser light display. It begins, in darkness, with the appearance of a desert landscape, on which cacti appear, a bird flies overhead, and a tumbleweed passes by. Then a trio of cowboy stick-figures appear and work their lassos as they dance.

According to Janowitz, "We did small versions of this effect once for *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*. But it was never this elaborate." The Blue Men, he adds, worked with the group's artistic coordinator, Aaron Tappan, creating the sequence in a computer, using Adobe Illustrator. Then, says Janowitz, "We set up a piece of fabric that's 30' tall and 60' wide. The fabric, which is flameproof, accepts male Velcro." The drop was built by four people, working at Entolo in Vegas, 12 hours a day for six weeks. Every step of the animation sequence was drawn on the fabric, then outlined in Live Wire; on the back of the fabric, each piece of LiveWire was hardwired to a series of custom interface boxes. From the interface boxes, the circuits of LiveWire were then patched to the DMX control systems, which mount on the batten and fly with the drop. The effect is that of hundreds of animation cels, each of which is illuminated in sequence, used to create the effect of movement.

The animation effect returns for the show's climax, in which blacklight also plays a considerable part. Giant rolls of tissue paper are unrolled at the rear of the auditorium and passed over the heads of the audience. The 5" PVC tubing suspended from the ceiling glows eerily under the effects of Altman UV 705 blacklight. The tubes spin slowly, while the Blue Men play a song on backpack tubuhums (which are lit by Altman 703 blacklight). Meanwhile, coils of LiveWire attached to ceiling fans are slowly unloosed, and descend, spinning, like the overhead PVC tubes. Then side panels on the auditorium walls come to life with 14 LiveWire dancing stick

Continued on page 63





Blue Man Group

continued from page 43

figures; it's one of the most hallucinatory moments to be found on a stage anywhere today, a barrage of effects that has the audience screaming with delight.

The control system for the LiveWire sequence was created by Production Solutions, Inc., a company founded by Janowitz and Brian Fehd, a former Blue Man Group staff member, with Raymond C. Wszolek, EL Systems engineer for *Live at Luxor.* (Production Solutions licenses the technology to Blue Man Group.) To run the effect, "there are two types of controllers," says Janowitz. "There's an Animator 256, just for the animation sequence, which can control up to 256 animation cels with eight DMX channels. The other device is an EL-12, which is a 12-channel electroluminescent dimmer pack. All the background stuff, the cacti, the road, the dancing figures in the audience, and the spinning wire overhead, are controlled by EL-12 units." On the operations side, the LiveWire is controlled by a Compulite Spark 4D console, chosen because it is compatible with the Luxor's house board, the Compulite Sabre. The Spark is connected to Sabre via MIDI for the animation piece and directly to the sound board via SMPTE for the closing number (the paper roll sequence).

There are, of course, many other aspects to the Blue Man lighting rig. Over 350 Altman Shakespeares and 150 Altman PAR-64s are used, many of them for house lighting, since so many sequences feature the Blue Men prowling the audience, interacting with various viewers. Six Altman ZipStrips are placed above in stage-right and stage-left positions, to silhouette the musicians who sit above the stage. A number of Altman fresnels are used as a colored backlight system, which helps to highlight the Blue Men at certain points.

One of the key Blue Man Group images is that of the trio, their faces uplit, standing over drums, on which pools of brightly-colored paint dance up and down. "The drums are double-headed," says Janowitz. "We had 1k PARs inside, but they melted the drums. Actually, I specify Source Fours because the increased speed of a Source Four HPL lamp going off as compared to a traditional PAR is more than twice as fast. So we used ETC Source Four MCM [metal cold-mirror] PARs, five of them, with five more in the deck as an uplight, which keeps the heat away.

"The challenge in lighting the Blue Men from within the drums was twofold," Janowitz continues. "We needed a light that had a rapid blackout as well as one that would not melt the drum heads from heat output. Traditional PAR-64 1ks do not 'snap out,' and the heat out the front of the light would just melt through drum heads." Janowitz adds, "We elected to go with the Source Four PAR MCMs because the HPL lamp would snap out and the metal cold mirror dissipated the heat out the back of the unit, thereby preserving the drum heads."

The parade of gear continues. The proscenium is lined in PAR-48 ACL bars, placed behind scrim for moments that blast the audience with light. Thomas Far Cycs are used in the drum matrix sequence, in which a towering assemblage of musicians are revealed silhouetted in a two-story drum wall. Selecon Pacific lights have been retrofitted with Diversitronics sockets and lamps to make them intro strobes. Diversitronics strobes are also used to light the zoetrope effect of spinning statues, creating another astonishing animation effect. The water vortex at the center of the zoetrope is lit by another Source Four MCM PAR.

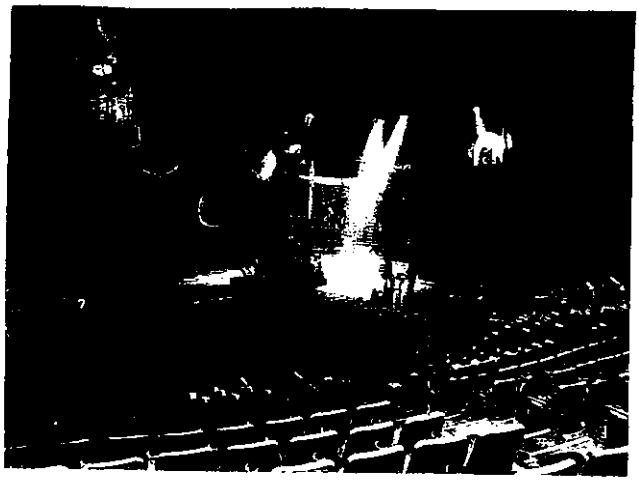
This is the first Blue Man Group production to utilize moving lights, all of them coming from High End Systems. Thirty-eight Cyberlights® are hung in the catwalks and box booms for audience lighting, sweeping the audience, picking up Blue Men in the aisles; they also help to sculpt certain onstage looks and, in the drum matrix sequence, create a radiant effect behind the musicians. A number of Studio Color 575 and Studio Spot 575s are hung in front-of-house positions, to fill in the audience from a high angle. "They're used to cut through the haze and paint the air with color," says McCarthy. Studio Spot 250s are hung around the perimeter of two projection screens located on the matrix, creating a set of eyes which follow the Blue Men around the stage using the Wybron AutoPilot system. Wybron wrote the software for the Studio Spot 250s specifically for the Blue Men.

With all the effects unleashed on the audience and stage, McCarthy points out that one of his biggest challenges remains in lighting the Blue Men. To begin with, he is limited in his color choices. "I seldom use amber," he says, adding, "It's not flattering on blue skin. Then again, "Blue frontlight makes the whites of their eyes turn blue," a definite no-no, since the performers rely on their eyes to communicate with the audience. Thus, most of the time, the designer relies on no-color followspots. Fortunately, Janowitz adds, the three Strong Super Trouper followspots aimed at the Blue Men are well placed. "The angle is perfect, about 22°, which lights their eyes well." Overall, McCarthy says, the arc of the show follows three steps: 1) No color for the beginning, 2) The gradual addition of color for the paint/drum sequence, and, finally, 3) UV color for the final sequences. Of course, Blue Man Group's distinctive music gives the designer plenty to work with in cueing. "It's totally tied to the music," he says, adding, "almost half of them are time-zero bump cues."

There are, of course, many other aspects to the Blue Man lighting design. Additional color is provided by Wybron scrollers. Fifty Sunnywell Display Superbright zipper signs are used throughout, providing the show's sardonic running commentary. Tomcat trussing and CM Lodestar hoists are also used. The Luxor house dimming system consists of the Colortran I Series; this was augmented with ETC Sensor dimmers. For non-dim control, Doug Fleenor Design single-channel dry-contact relays and Gray Interface 12-channel relay driver cards are used. The Fleenor relays are used to control the DF-50s and some of the LED signs. The Gray Interface cards are designed into custom interfaces for control of the LED wall and of the Blue Man backpack lights and confetti effects. Lighting was supplied by Cinema Services, a PRG company.

As the accompanying credit box indicates, many, many hands were involved in the Blue Man Group Live at Luxor. Janowitz mentions Jeff Clark, head electrician at Luxor; Steven L. Shelley, lighting supervisor; Katherine L. Orr, assistant lighting designer; Robert Fehribach, production electrician; and Juniper Street Productions, which provided technical supervision, as well as David Rees of Cinema Services/PRG. Speaking of the highly collaborative nature of Blue Man Group, McCarthy simply says, "Many minds are better than one." At any rate, the collective result is, to any audience member, mind-blowing.

DB



The seven-piece Blue Man band is placed on two platform areas behind scrims stage right and stage left.

Rockin' the Blues

Everything else about *Blue Man Group Live at Luxor* is unorthodox, so why should the sound design be any different? The main "vocals" are the PVC tubes the Blue Men play throughout the show (the only human voice is heard via voiceover). Because of the heavily percussive nature of the show, there are an impressive number of inputs—nearly 200. And it's a theatre piece designed by two sound veterans with years in the recording and touring fields, but virtually no theatre experience.

In fact, the project was the first of its kind for Todd Pearlmutter and Ross Humphrey. Pearlmutter, who started out as a drummer in the Boston show, later produced the Blue Man album and has

served as the group's music director; Humphrey handled the sound for such rock groups as The Mighty Mighty Bosstones and the Goo Goo Dolls before turning Blue. "It's the first time I've worked as a theatre sound designer," says Pearlmutter. "Ross has never done theatre sound design either, but I wanted him to be involved because what I felt the Vegas show really needed was for it to have a kick-ass rock-and-roll feel to it, as opposed to regular theatre design."

"Luckily, the show is much more rock than theatre, so there were no surprises as far as that goes," adds Humphrey. "It was just a matter of keeping in mind that it's a wide demographic that comes to see this, from little kids to bluehairs, so you have to take that into consideration, without losing the balls."

Providing the pair with the requisite theatre design background was Mike Cusick and his company Specialized Audio-Video Inc. (SAVI), veteran of nearly a dozen major systems projects in Las Vegas, including the original audio installation of the Luxor venue. "They helped us bridge the gap from the rock and recording world to the theatre world, which was huge," Pearlmutter says. "They were able to foresee situations we had no idea about."

Working in tandem, the trio conceived two discrete systems that also worked in tandem, one with a standard left-right stereo configuration with the other offering a unique twist on the surround-sound format. "The sound design strips away layers of system complexity that had been building up with each new production. It's back to basics, based in large part on analog components," Cusick explains. "Blue Man Group's sound, at its essence, is more about drums and rock and roll rather than ethereal sounds moving all over the place."

Cusick, already quite familiar with the space as the designer of the venue's original system, notes that its acoustic signature has always been acceptable: "not too live, not too dead." Some of the previous system's Eastern Acoustic Works (EAW) loudspeakers were retained, such as SB-600s housed in special chambers under the stage to supplement the new system's low end.

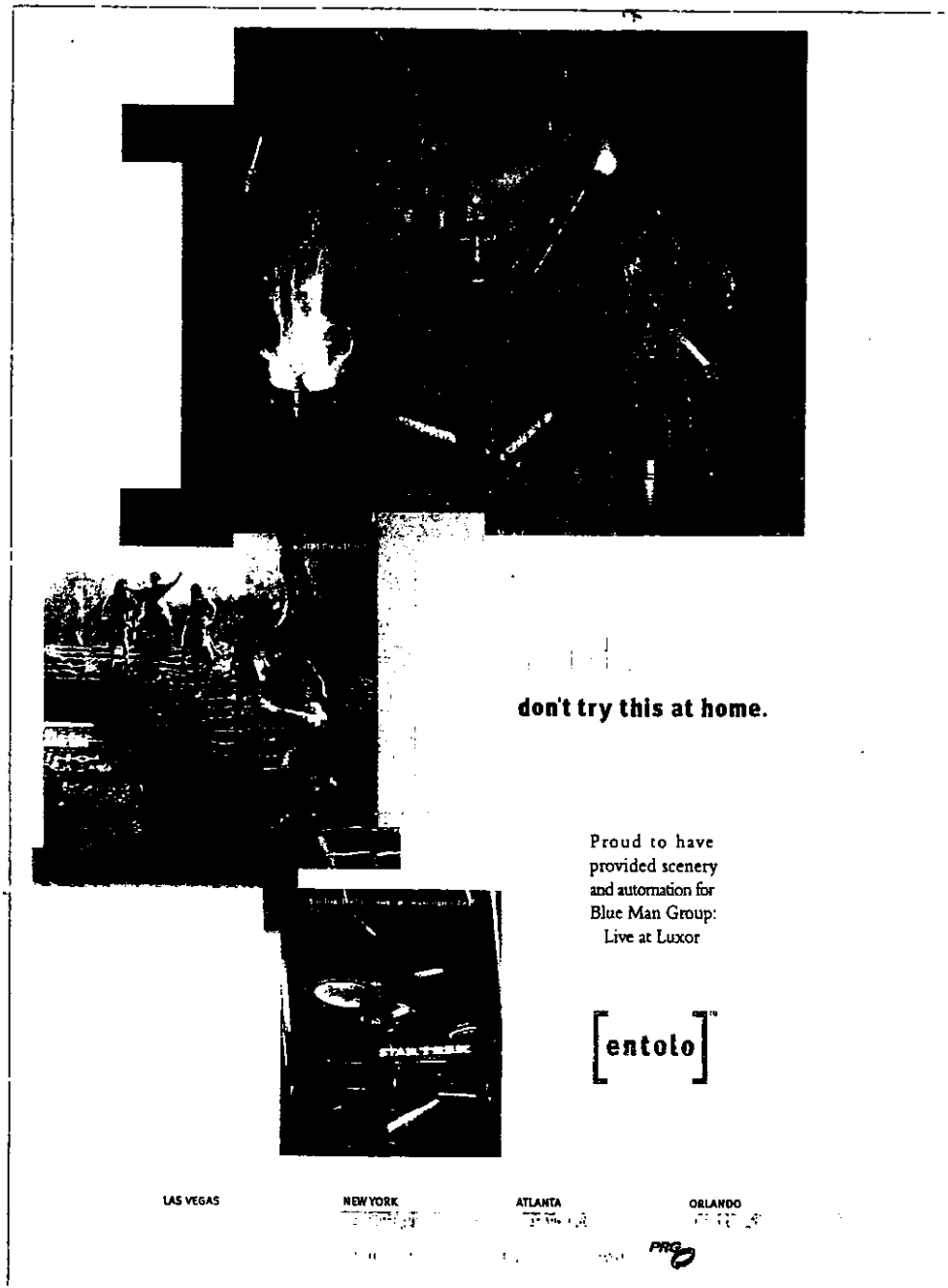
Both the main/stereo and surround loudspeaker systems are fueled by approximately 180 inputs supplied by no fewer than five consoles at the house mix position, located centrally just behind the primary aisle. "Drums take up most of the inputs," says Pearlmutter. "If you have one drummer, you have 12 inputs, because they're big kits. There are four kits on this production; that's 48 inputs right there. And we had to figure out how to get all the inputs managed." Basically, the main system provides playback of the band, while the surround system handles myriad tracks and effects that enhance a particular mood or environment. But there's also some interchangeability to the approach as well.

The stage is flanked by left and right arrays made up of EAW KF700 Series loudspeakers that provide complete coverage of the lower seating section. Each array includes three KF750 three-way loudspeakers above three KF755 specialized downfill modules. Below each array, four SB1000e subwoofers are subtly stacked vertically onstage, incorporated into a custom concrete bunker SAVI constructed to reduce low-frequency resonance.

At midpoint of the room, approximately above the main aisle, two more stereo arrays are flown left and right. They include four SB750 subwoofers topping four KF755 downfill boxes. "I found that the 750s were the best-sounding subs I'd heard in a long time," Humphrey says. "Even hanging in the air they're tight. I wish I could have used all 750s instead of the SB1000es, but with the constraints of the scenery and lights, they wouldn't work. The SBs worked better physically than sonically."

The surround system takes a unique twist on the 5.1 format. Rather than offering a center channel at the front of the listening area, this channel is fed to a grouping of loudspeakers flown from the ceiling at the midpoint of the theatre. The group includes four EAW ASV7923 three-way loudspeakers, each firing diagonally across each "quadrant" of the listening area. These loudspeakers are mounted together with four EAW BH822 "SuperSubs" configured in a block and firing straight down. The other surround channels are fed to pairs of EAW ASV Series loudspeakers (one long-throw, the other short-throw) flown in each corner of the theatre.

"Everything that happens on the stage,



Circle 70 on Reader Service Card

such as when Blue Man is playing, comes through the mains," Pearlmutter explains. 'But when there are things happening in the audience, especially at the end of the show, the surround system is used, because that's where the action is. There are other times when the two work together, such as when the voiceover comes through the mains, and the incidental music comes through the surround."

All loudspeakers are driven by Crown Macro-Tech Series amplifiers exclusively, which are distributed among six locations, putting them as close to the loudspeakers as possible. "We used the entire MA line. Reliable power and plenty of it," Cusick says. "They also offer good reserve power, which is handy in this application, because you're dealing with transient drum sounds."

An Otari Radar multitrack unit, backed up by a Tascam DA-88, delivers the surround soundtrack to a Yamaha 03D digital mixer, one of the few digital pieces incorporated into the design. Located at the front of the mix position, the 03D drives the surround system, handling levels, distribution, and programming. The main system offers a rather extensive mix situation, with two Soundcraft K3-32 consoles and a Midas Heritage 2000-48 console working in tandem with a Yamaha PM3500-48 console that essentially functions as a master section for all of these channels. The Heritage 2000 is dedicated to drums only, with the K3s handling all other instruments and performing auxiliary submix capability.

The only other concession to digital technology came in the form of XTA DP226 processors, utilized for all house loudspeakers. Distributed among the amplifier racks, the DP226s are networked (via RS-485) on a loop established in the multicable subsystem. Additional main system tailoring can be done at any time with a Klark-Teknik DN3600 digitally controlled analog equalizer inserted at front of house. This can be done within specific zones or system-wide.

The other challenge on the Vegas production was the same facing other versions of Blue Man: miking the unusual collection of "instruments," which this time around range from backpack tubulums (a musical application of PVC pipe), to Airpoles to the three-story-high drum wall. "Those instruments don't generate a huge amount of acoustic volume," explains Pearlmutter. "And when you have a band that's making a lot of sound, you really have to make sure these instruments can be heard."

"Todd and I talked about what they should sound like," adds Humphrey. "He did a lot of the musical part of it and would tell me what it was to sound like, and I'd do my best to achieve it through mics, equalization, etc. I found the hardest thing was to get them to sound how they should sound through a microphone, because they're actually pushing air through them, especially the tubulums. Those are difficult because all the individual PVC tubes are different lengths, and they try to bring them together into a cluster. But just trying to get an even balance between them and then get them loud enough to be heard over the band was difficult, because they're essentially the lead vocals."

Luckily, previous productions had generated a huge amount of research already, so after conducting their own tests in New York, the designers opted for a combination of Audio Technica 4051s, Audix SCX1s, and beyerdynamic M88s on the PVCs. For the tubulums, they drilled little holes in the reeds where the instruments are hit and placed Shure SM98s.

In addition to the various Blue Man instruments, the band, usually made up of a trio of musicians, has been expanded to seven, all of whom have been placed on two platform areas behind a scrim stage right and left. A guitar, zither stick, and one drum kit are perched stage left; another drum kit, two percussion stations, and a bass are located stage right. Both the musicians and the three Blue Man performers are outfitted with Shure in-ear monitoring systems.

"There are a few songs where the drummers and percussionists go onstage, while the strings stay up top," says Pearlmutter. "if we didn't have the in-ears, there'd be complete soup due to the delay."

The end result is a show that serves up its rock and roll in doses equally at home in the theatre and the Las Vegas showroom. "It's a rock show, and it should sound like rock, but you can't have it at 120dB," says Humphrey. "For me, that was the hardest thing: trying to make it sound like a rock show without scaring anyone off too badly. I think we might have achieved it. You still have people saying, 'Oh my God, that was loud,' but not too many people saying it wasn't loud enough."

DJ

Blue Man Group Live at Luxor

LIGHTING/PRODUCTION

Lighting designer: Matthew McCarthy
Associate lighting designer: Marc Janowitz
Lighting supervisor: Steven L. Shelley
Assistant lighting designer: Katherine I. Orr
Set designers: David Gallo, Lauren Helpern
Associate set designer: Patrick Fahey
Sound designers: Todd Pearlmutter, Ross Humphrey
Co-design: Blue Man Group: Chris Wink, Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton
Production electrician: Robert Fehribach
Asst. production electrician: Michael Pitzer
Master electrician (Luxor): Jeff Clark
Lighting assistant: Ray Doorman
Followspot operators: Lance Mich'L Mark McKintyre, Bob Beem
Deck electrician: Tim Reuter
Production stage manager: Kori Lynn Prior
Stage managers: Jenn Holland, Tracie Woolle, JR Thomson, Amy Mark
Production manager: Steven Ehrenberg
Assistant production manager: Anna Sea
Technical supervision: Juniper Street Productions: Hillary Blanken, Jack Anderson, Guy Kwan
Production carpenter: Richie Medhurst
Asst. production carpenter: Rhys Williams
Production props: Tim Able
Blue Man Productions:
Lighting director: Marc Janowitz
Technical director: Pete Flathers
R & D electrician: Raymond C. Wszolek III
Costume co-design: Chase Tyler
Props master: Blakely Braniff
Blue Man Technologies: Geoffrey Quelle
Blue Man Technologies/LED signs: Gary Hernandez

ELECTROLUMINESCENTS/LIVEWIRE CREW

Systems engineer: Raymond C. Wszolek III
EL consultant: Brian Fehd
Artistic coordinator: Aaron Tappen
Technicians: Louis Jeroslow, Joce Van Auken

LUXOR HOUSE STAFF

Technical director: Ron Stone
Head of lighting: Jeff Clark
Master carpenter: Michael Smith
Head rigger: Randy Chugg

SUPPLIERS

Lighting rental: Cinema Services/PRG[207]—David Rees
Electroluminescent control system: Production Solutions Inc.[208]
Electroluminescent fiber: LiveWire Enterprises[209]
MDG[210] Atmospheres: Four Star Stage Lighting[211]
LED signs: Sunnywell Display[212]
Sound installation: Specialized Audio-Video Inc. (SAVI)[213]
Scenery automations: Scenic Technologies (NY)[214]
Set construction: Scenic Technologies (NY, Las Vegas), Showman Fabricators[215]

Zoetrope turntable and water vortex:
Fisher Technologies[214]

Lighting Equipment

CONTROL

(2) Compulite[217] Sabres
(1) Compulite Spark 4D

DIMMING

(1) ETC[216] Sensor 96 x 2.4kW dimmer rack
(8) Colortran[219] I Series 96 x 2.4kW dimmer racks
(1) Colortran I Series 24 x 6kW dimmer rack

NON-DIM

(8) Doug Reenor Design[220] single-channel dry contact relays
(4) Gray Interface[221] 12-channel relay driver cards (designed into custom control modules)

AUTOPILOT

(1) Wybron[222] Autopilot control (for control of Studio Spot 250s)

MOVING LIGHTS

(38) High End Systems[223] Cyberlight® automated luminaires
(27) High End Systems Studio Color® 575

automated luminaires
(8) High End Systems Studio Spot™ 575 automated luminaires
(16) High End Systems Studio Spot™ 250 automated luminaires
(4) High End Systems Technobeam™ automated luminaires

CONVENTIONAL LIGHTS

(350) Altman[224] Shakespeare ellipsoidals
(150) Altman PAR-64s
(6) Altman 6' ZipStrips
(6) Altman 5000L fresnels
(8) Altman 8" fresnels
(24) ETC Source Four PAR MCMs
(90) ETC Source Four ellipsoidals
(10) Selecon[225] 90° (strobe retro) Pacifics
(12) Four-lamp PAR-48 ACL bars
(3) Strong[226] Super Trouper followspots
(12) Thomas[227] Four-lamp Far Cycs

ULTRAVIOLET LIGHTS

(3) Altman UV 703s
(58) Altman UV 705s
(4) Wildfire[228] WF-400s

STROBES

(10) High End Systems AF1000s
(20) Diversitronics[229] DMX-3000s
(16) Diversitronics ESMs (for Source Fours)
(10) Diversitronics ESMs (customized for Selecon Pacifics)

SCROLLERS/DIMMING SHUTTERS

(37) Wybron Coloram IIs w/UV scrolls
(60) Wybron "The Scroller" w/UV scrolls
(18) Phoebus[230] DMX dimming shutters

RIGGING

(67) Tomcat[231] 20.5" x 20.5" medium-duty box trusses
(32) Four-way corner blocks
(38) CM Lodestar[232] one-ton hoists

ATMOSPHERICS

(6) Reel FX DF-50s
(1) MDG Atmosphere

ELECTROLUMINESCENTS

30,000' LiveWire HD (blue, red, white, gold, green)

EL CONTROL

(23) Production Solutions EL-12 12-channel electroluminescent dimmer packs
(4) Production Solutions Inc. Animator 256 for multichannel animation sequencing

LED

(50) Sunnyweli Superbright zipper signs

Sound Equipment

MICROPHONES

AKG[233] 414 condenser mics
Audiotechnica[234] ATM 4041 cardioid condenser mics
Audiotechnica ATM clamp-on short or SM-98s
Audix[235] D4 High SPL Dynamic mics
Planar Wave 4000 Piano P/Us
Beyer[236] M-88TG dynamic mics
Countryman[237] Isomax Hyper hypercardioid mics
Countryman type 85 DI box direct box
Sennheiser[238] ME-66/K6 shotgun mic system
Sennheiser 421 dynamic mics
Shure[239] Beta 57A dynamic mics
Shure SM-81 condenser mics
Shure Beta SM-91 condenser mics
Shure Beta SM-98 condenser mics

MIXING DESKS AND FOH PROCESSING

Midas[240] Heritage 48-channel, 48 mono inputs
Soundcraft[241] K3-32 32-channel, 8-bus console
Yamaha[242] PM3500-48 48-channel frame w/30 mono and 22 stereo
Yamaha O3D 16-channel digital mixer
Amek[243] Recall-56 56-input console used for foldback
Lexicon[244] PCM60 Digital FX
Lexicon PCM70 Digital FX
Yamaha REV5 Digital FX
Aphex[245] 9000R 11-position rack
Aphex 9721 Dominator Limiter II
Dbx[246] 903 compressor modules
Drawmer[247] DS-404 four-channel noise gate
Denon[248] DN-990R minidisk player
Otari[249] Radar II 24-track digital recorder

AMPLIFIERS & SPEAKERS

Crown[250] MA-1200 power amps
Crown MA-2400 power amps
Crown MA-3600 power amps
Crown MA-5000vz power amps
EAW[251] KF750 three-way,triamped,concert downfill speakers
EAW KF755 four-way, triamped, concert speakers
EAW SB1000 subwoofers
EAW SB750 subwoofers
EAW KF940 overhead subs
EAW MQ1394 mid/high speakers
EAW MQ2364 mid/high speakers
EAW UB-82WP front fill speakers
EAW SM-500 foldback wedge speakers
XTA[252] DP224 stereo four-way speaker management DSP
XTA DP226 stereo stereo four-way speaker management DSP

MISCELLANEOUS

Middle Atlantic rack accessories
Whirlwind multicables, panels
Motion Labs AC distro
Jensen/Whirlwind 56-pair splitters
Shure P6TRE1 in-ear wireless monitor system
SIA SMAART analysis software

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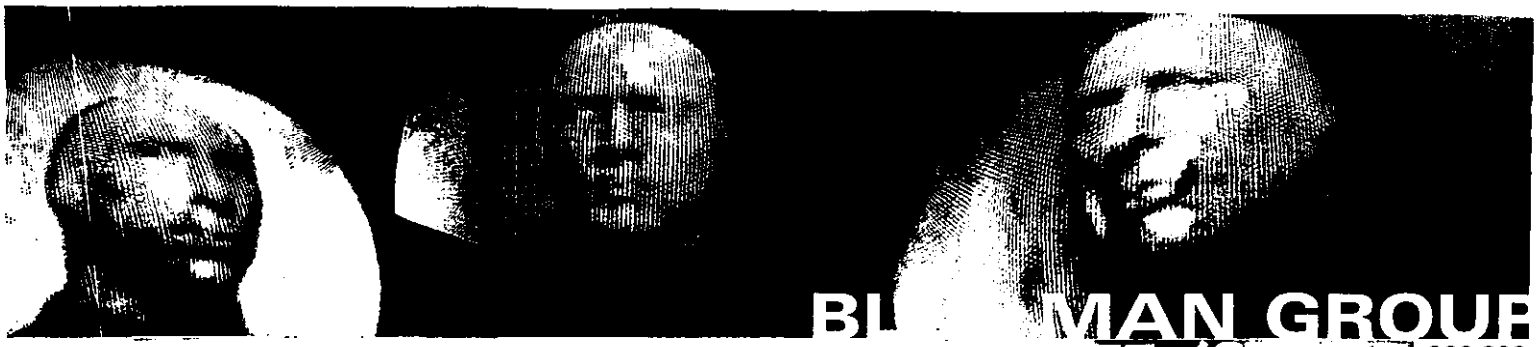


BL MAN GROUP
FE/STYLE
226 660

CMJ
NEW MUSIC
MONTHLY
ISSUE 83 JULY 2000

a m i
b l u e ?

You've got to open wide and play hard
to learn the ways of Blue Man Group.

NEIL GLADSTONE · CHARLIE LANGELLA

Scattered before me on a dressing-room table in the basement of the Blue Man Group's training facility are the tools of the trade: a bald cap, theater glue, cuticle scissors, Sea Breeze astringent, Q-tips, Lubriderm, and, of course, a couple of dishes of cobalt grease paint.

Infiltrating the blue brotherhood is not an assignment to take lightly; others have tried, but failed to understand the "nobility" (as one crew member put it) of the Blue Man. What nobility is there in playing surf rock on plastic instruments, spitting paint on a canvas and mocking modern art? That's why I'm half-naked in a room full of strangers—I want answers.

THE BLUE REVUE: PHIL STANTON, CHRIS WINK, MATT GOLDMAN.

Last year, legions of young men responded to open calls for actors about 6 feet tall, modestly built and adept at drumming. For every thousand or so who audition, one makes the troupe, which now boasts over 30 members nationwide. Luckily, I pretty much fit the physical characteristics and though my downstairs neighbors might disagree, I can keep a beat.

The Blue Man Group's long-running show *Tubes*, which opened in New York 10 years ago (later adding productions in Boston, Chicago and Las Vegas), offers an exhilarating concoction of space-age world-beat music, avant-garde performance art and high-minded parlor tricks. In a series of vignettes, three bald and blue mute aliens attempt to comprehend the culture that created Twinkies, rock and modern art. In one scene, for instance, the blue men douse a member of the audience with paint and then make a painting by swinging the unsuspecting volunteer against a large white canvas. Over the course of the evening, Jell-O flies through the air, puréed banana streams out of actors' bodies and reams of crepe paper engulf the theater. It's a thinking man's slapstick circus, and who wouldn't want to be one of the ringmasters?

Transforming into a Blue Man isn't as simple as icing your face with makeup, though. The process usually takes eight weeks of learning how to drum Cap'n Crunch between your molars, catch paintballs in your mouth and play "Peter Gunn Theme" on plastic tubes. Thankfully, a childhood of gnashing sugarcoated cereal and drumming pencils has prepared me for this day, so my half-day crash course should almost bring me up to speed. The makeup to make a cast member bald and blue costs about $50 (which may explain why ticket prices for the show are $39 and up) even though I've already got a shaved head and arguably don't require the $22 bald cap.

A stylist shaves the back of my skull to ensure that the glue adheres well and hands me a black bodystocking known as a mantard. "Is there supposed to be anything between me and my mantard?" I fret.

"No."

Though the other two men suiting up today, four-year blue man veteran Steve White and trainer Chris Bowen, ease into their second skin, I sheepishly duck into the bathroom. Wrestling with this spandex turns into something between experimental dance and a Nutty Professor taffy pull. And that word—mantard. It sounds like the TV adaptation of *Batman* starring Bronson Pinchot.

Once wrapped in the human sausage casing, I begin interrogating cohorts about my new identity. "The Blue Man is interested in everything that happens outside of him," explains Bowen. White, who flew to New York from Seattle five years ago to audition, adds: "They must have a certain charisma and openness and an availability to what's going on around them and to have a presence about them even when they're standing neutral."

It's been years since I vogued, so instead of showing off my chops, I follow White's instruction to brush a thick layer of opaque glue (that looks unnervingly like Elmer's) onto my scalp. The dresser assists in the intricate bald cap application ceremony. When it's done, I feel like I just got a facelift from a plastic surgeon who advertises on the subway. Doesn't getting bald and blue five times a week, year after year, ruin your skin? "Not at all," maintains White.

Mid-transformation, there's a knock on the dressing room door. In walk the three original blue men: Chris Wink, Phil Stanton and Matt Goldman. Wink's translucent eyes make him seem a bit otherworldly even without makeup. There's a wire extending from Stanton's jacket to an earpiece, supposedly for a cell phone, but it may be for contacting the Mothership. The round-shouldered Goldman could be David Brenner's younger brother (though Brenner is more *Love Boat* than Mothership). Goldman clutches my cranium and consecrates: "You have a great head, man." The Blue Pooba has anointed me. We will reconvene when my instruction is complete so I may learn more about the Blue Man's latest creation, *Audio* (Virgin), an album of Blue music.

The grease paint must be applied in generous scoops since it will sweat off during training. In the meantime, everything I touch turns to blue—my tape recorder, notepad, backpack—like I'm some leper Smurf. After the eyeliner is applied and crevices filled in using Q-tips, my face doesn't appear as otherworldly as I hoped. My forehead isn't quite oval enough to pass as the Martian ambassador; I look more like Dr. Freeze.

"You're our burliest blue man yet," whispers the dresser as he hands me the black turtleneck and lederhosen that give the Blue Man a streamlined appearance. I think I know what he's implying: Cover up that mantard, pronto.

Upstairs in the white training room, three boxes of Cap'n Crunch are lined up on the floor in front of three "PVC Instruments" that could be pipe organs fashioned from gargantuan ziti. There's also a canvas on an easel, boombox, TV and a handful of chairs for members of the crew who want to see an outside agent naive enough to put himself through this theatrical hazing.

As in life, first I must learn to walk, and before I walk, I must learn to stand. Heels must be kicked out a little, so feet are parallel. Like a gunslinger about to enter a shootout, hands are at one's side and always at the ready. Mouth closed (it's the difference between a highly advanced telepathic being and Bobo The Blue Wonder Chimp).

"The Blue Man is always looking for something, so that's part of what informs us," explains Bowen. In the world of blue, stage directions sound more like philosophical tenets that were scribbled on the pyramid tomb walls when the brothers from another planet visited long ago. (Do you think it's just a coincidence that in Vegas the Blue Man performs at the Pyramid-shaped Luxor casino?)

"If a Blue Man is going to face someone, he's going to face him head on."

I turn, approximating the elk-like grace of my blue leaders. "There can be a smoothness to your movements," corrects Bowen. Okay, so I look more like Beck doing the robot than an ethereal creature whose body is just transport for his oversized brain. Stage director Randall Jaynes, still wearing the Blue Man jersey from the morning's softball practice, coaches me on the proper stance and mental state. "Very little of Blue Man is an introverted moment, everything is out here," he says, gesturing out to the great beyond about four feet in front of me. "You're not pondering."

The three Blue Men are often referred to as a pack of dogs, not only because they should be ever on the hunt, but also because they're supposed to be one creature with three bodies and therefore the three must always check with one another, no matter what they're doing. As the three of us walk together, slightly arched forward and intrigued, I wonder if the Blue Man is more like an interstellar detective or a Tyrannosaurus Rex with a pea-sized brain.

Everything I touch turns to blue, like I'm some leper Smurf.

"What is that? What is that?" prompts Jaynes, our master. Like a pack of pointers, we glance at

each other and then off into the unknown, and then back again. When navigating this foreign world, the Blue Man must be careful, because every decision is a matter of life or death. "It's like that moment when Indiana Jones has got the sandbag in one hand and the idol in the other," urges Jaynes. Instead of nabbing a priceless ancient artifact, I'm grabbing a box of Cap'n Crunch, er, a potentially poisoned box of Cap'n Crunch. "Ask the tough question with your look," commands Jaynes. "'Are you with me?'" As much as I fear that I may momentarily be asked to pirouette, my mind becomes more centered, my posture straighter, my grease paint runnier from nervous sweat. For years I've been staring at people, dumbfounded; now I'm finally among others who stare right back, and we're all searching for something, but we're not sure what.

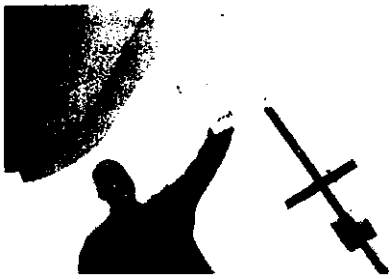
"We go through great pains to create something that's pretty subtle," Wink reflects later. "If you don't look carefully, you'll just think it's robotic. If you look carefully, you'll see something that's intensely human." Without language, it's as if all emotion is distilled into a binary code of intrigue and wonder that travels from the depths of my soul to the space between my eyebrows. And what better way to illustrate the depth of my soul than by swallowing paintballs? Here's where the high-minded parlor tricks come in.

In *Tubes*, one Blue Man tosses three paint balls to another one standing about 15 feet away. Each pigment package is then spit in a colored stream across a canvas in affectionate send-up of Jackson Pollack's drip paintings, which accentuate artistic intent over delicate brushwork.

"Now when you bite down on the paintball, you're going to taste something hideous in your mouth, but it doesn't matter because you're so focused on what you're doing you're not going to notice it," warns White, who'll be serving up a condom filled with non-toxic tawny. I flash back to my year playing Little League as a second string right-fielder. Pretty much the best I could do was stop the ball from hitting my face or watch it fly over my head—catching it was out of the question. I've done okay with the practice paintballs, but the real thing comes with the warning, "Okay babe, we drop 'em, they break." I shudder at the thought of a paint-splattered forehead, even though I'm soaked in grease paint. I give the pitcher a slight nod to let him know I'm set. Here's the windup. It's a highball...ooh, off the cheek. My only saving grace is that it doesn't break on the linoleum. The second chance, it's up, a fastball, closer, closer (does anyone else hear "Chariots Of Fire"?), it's in, it's good. I'm a spastic golden retriever with a Frisbee, not knowing what to do next. I bite down and suddenly there's a noxious yolk rolling over my tongue that tastes like it's made out of paste. I guess I'm not concentrating.

"Now you've got something, what are you going to do with it?" spurs Jaynes. I turn around, pick the canvas off the easel and let out a blast like Dizzy on a high-C. The result is a horrendous mustard stain on white tablecloth, yet I am ecstatic. The peanut gallery whoops and I triumphantly hoist my Grammy. I gulp 'n' spit two out of the next five tosses and my batting average has the stands on their feet.

Already running low on time, we quickly take position behind the "PVC Instruments." The original Blue Men got the idea for these *Battlestar Galactica* xylophones while watching an *Australian* musician whack the ends of two plastic



tubes. They developed that nugget into a two-octave instrument that creates pizzicato melodies resembling rubber bands stretched across the Milky Way. Mastering this celestial harp doesn't require decades of silent contemplation or severe brow-beating by a grey-haired sadist, just the loving tap of a flat rubber mallet. Within moments I'm smacking out "Peter Gunn Theme" in a musical Whack-A-Mole. Okay, so perhaps I'm not exactly a maestro—who knows how all of the notes are arranged—but if it's possible to get a cool surf tune out of an instrument with five minutes of "watch me," said instrument should best be marketed to FAO Schwartz (with a hefty profit margin). Alas, this is art, and each one of the "PVC Instruments" is crafted by hand. Tuning each note requires adding or subtracting just the right amount of tubing.

For the new album, *Audio*, several other instruments were added to the Blue Man's orchestra, including the 12-foot-plus "Tubulum," which bellows long, low, didgeridoo-like tones with the wallop of a drumstick. The "Drumbone" creates sliding notes and the boom of the eight-foot tall "Big Drum" makes Kodo percussion pale in comparison.

As heard on *Audio*, Blue Man music melds tribal, surf and industrial rock 'n' roll. The pliant tones of the Tubulum and PVC instruments fold into burbling, synthesizer-like repetitive motifs while the larger-than-life tom-toms add earthy rumbles recalling music from Africa and the Far East. The slightly more familiar scrappy and twangy ruminations of electric guitar and Chapman Stick distill the percolating, expansive mixture into exalted spaghetti-Western pop that could easily leap into service as the soundtrack for silver screen sword fights or drag races.

Wink describes their music as an expedition for the crossroads where the indigenous and industrial meet: "There's a tribal feel we're trying to get, but not literally."

In some ways, the music is so modern it could be mixed in with drum 'n' bass. Yet Wink figures the sweat gives it spirit: "Someone could use a home computer to make an album with sounds similar to what we're going, but you'll hear the difference, so for us it's still worth it to make these things out of cardboard and plastic."

Perhaps I'm just lightheaded from manically tapping tube tones with a bald cap glued on, but there's a primal joy and release in rapping plastic tubes as if they're bones assembled around a bonfire. I am one with the Blue people, sounding like Brian Eno or Phillip Glass jamming out a Gregorian version of Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit." In *Tubes*, the drug anthem invokes the specter of '60s art happenings that inspired the founders' early search for a bohemian community, which had all but disappeared by the time they came of age in the '70s. (Wink, Stanton and Goldman are all in their late 30s now.)

Once you have participated in the tone ceremony from the other side of the stratosphere, what else is there to understand, you ask? And the answer comes: The Ritual Of Cheese.

At the start of the toss, I'm not exactly sure why they call it cheese, since the practice seems to involve catching marshmallows in your mouth and then sculpting them into a cone using your lips (it's another modern art joke, alright?). I return to the catcher's stance and those marshmallows start flying rapid fire. Luckily, the gooey wads are easier to catch than paintballs.

When I don't get my lips around them, they stick to my face. As the white goo piles up in and on my cheeks, a gag reflex swells in the back of my throat as if I'm a reluctant participant in a hot dog-eating contest.

"You got plenty of room in there, butt brother," assures White. (Um, I hope the Blue Man isn't expected to fill any other orifices other than his mouth.) I realize the marshmallows are actually marshmallow-shaped bits of cream cheese and wonder if I should mention I'm lactose intolerant. Not much I can do, though, since any chunk of cheese within feet of me immediately sticks to my lungfish face. Once my jowls are packed as a foaming rabid chipmunk, "It's sculpting time!" I bend over a black pedestal and regurgitate a tower of cheese.

"Make a cone, make a cone," barks the crew. "Shape it, shape it." As my head bobs over the gloppy cylinder, I realize the pictures of this will probably wind up on a food fetish Web page.

The final test? A six-block walk from the training studio to the Astor Theater, where the Blue Man show has run for the better part of the last decade. Never have I been so happy to see two other bald and blue men as when I'm strolling down New York's Lafayette Street being photographed by tourists and, worse, ignored by too-cool hipsters. I am the dermatologically challenged freak, the boy in the blue skin bubble, the embodiment of an oxymoron: the successful performance artist.

"Hey, Blue Man!" shouts a delivery boy on a bicycle. Even with my eyes clouding over from the grease paint and the glue tugging my skin, the effects of blue boot camp are starting to seep beyond my epidermis.

As we're wiping off the layers of makeup, Bowen warns me "You never completely get all the blue off." Although I fear the troupe will circle around me and chant "One of us! One of us!" I wonder if he means that the blue people have a different view of the world.

A stylist hands me a black bodystocking called a *mantard*, which sounds like the TV adaptation of *Rainman* starring Bronson Pinchot.

Upon rejoining the blue forefathers at the recording studio they built to make the new album, I ask about the blue credo, and the wise blue gurus turn the question back on me.

"What do you see that being?" wonders Wink.

"I'm not sure." I reply, "There seems to be an emphasis on communal effort, losing yourself and certain phrases keep coming up like, 'Be curious,' 'Be forward,' 'Look at each other,' 'Depend on each other.'"

"When we first started the show, there were elements of Blue Man, but they weren't always consistent," says Wink. "People would come up after the show and say, 'I don't think Blue Man would have done what you just did.' Blue Man had its own inner logic. We just wanted to make sure we followed through and made it consistent."

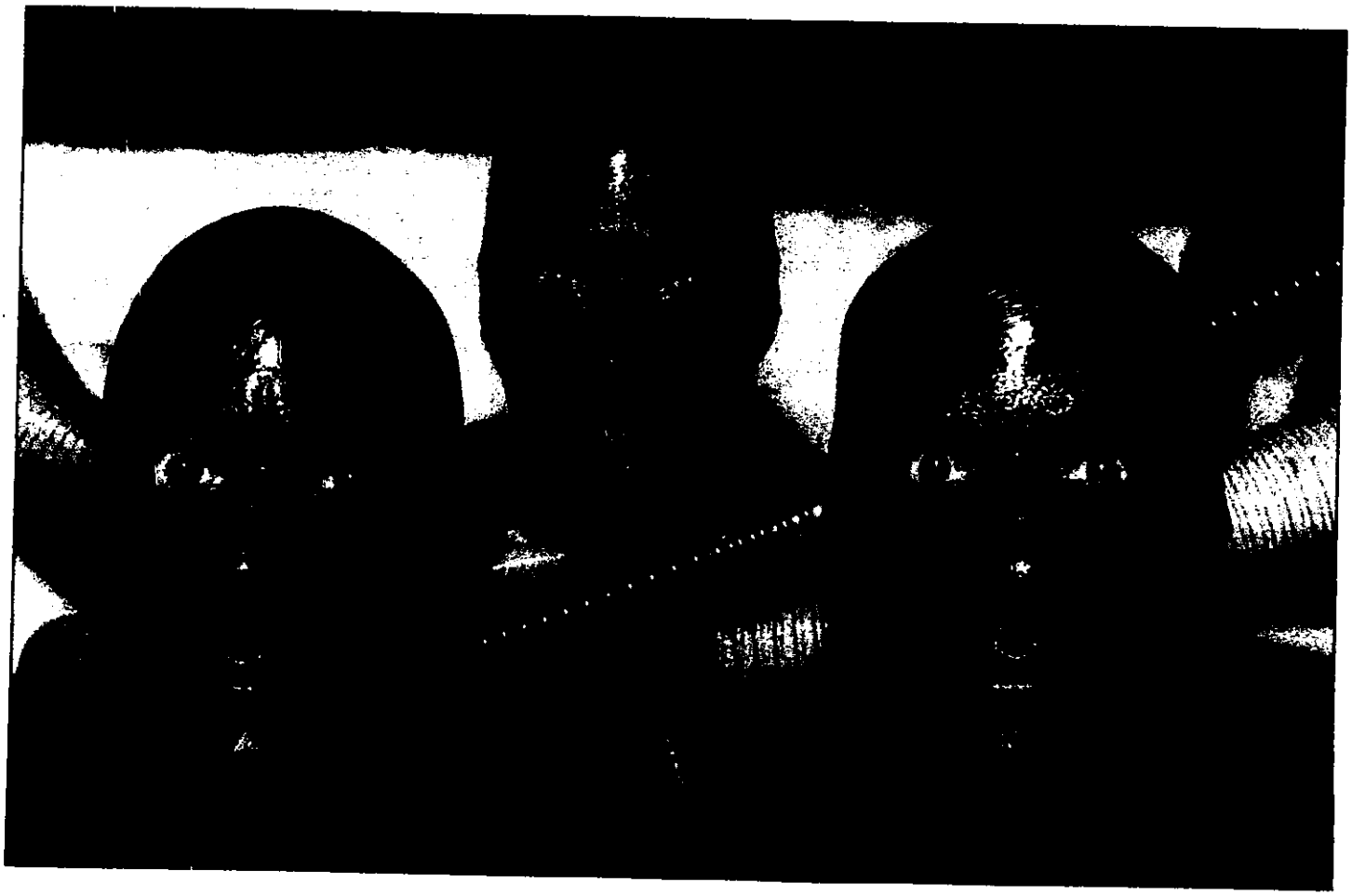
When performers beyond the original three trained to be blue men, debate began about what the Blue Man would and wouldn't do.

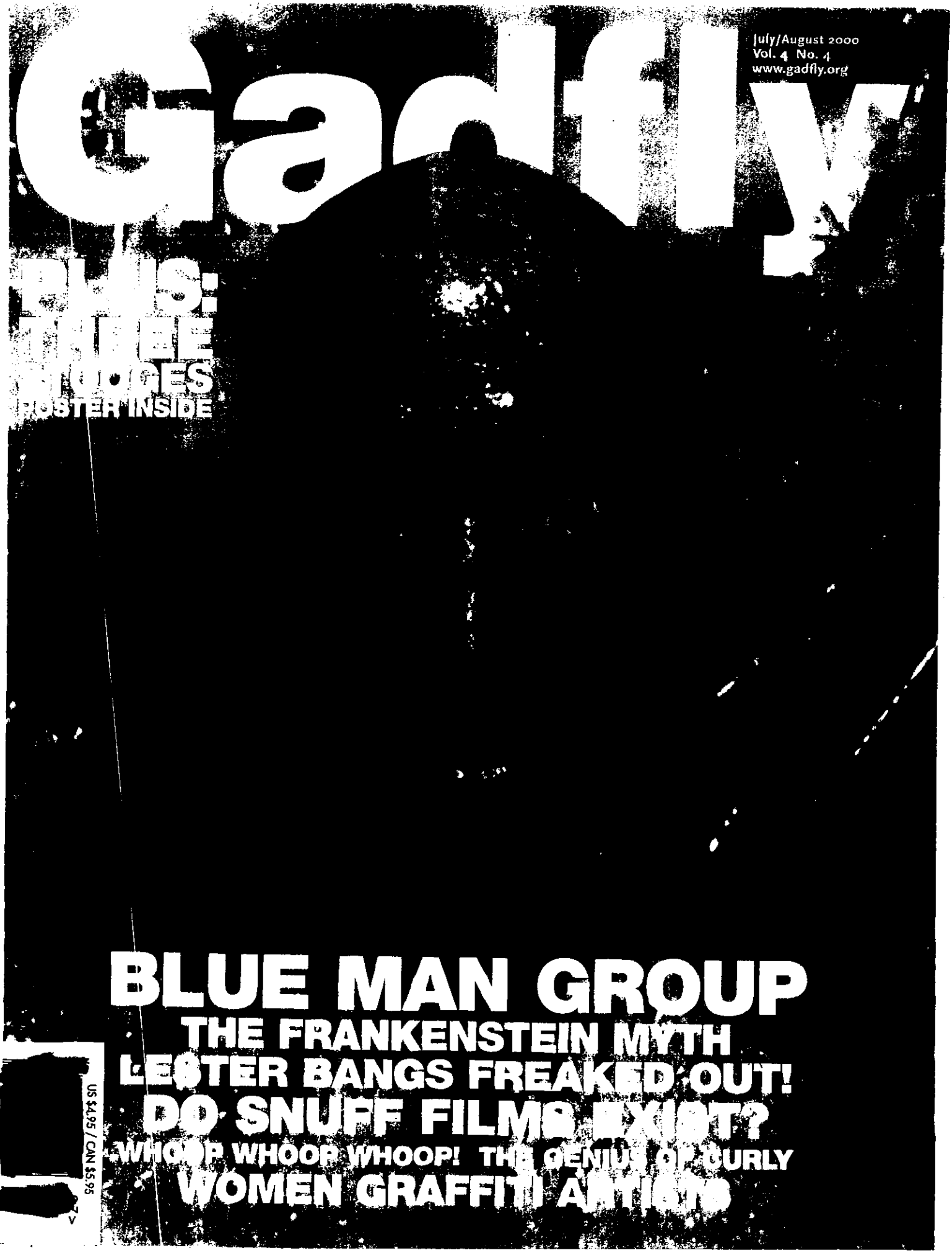
"With all of that discussion about, 'Are you on the track or are we off the track?' we don't even know what the track really is. So, we're constantly trying to have discussions about what the track is."

This from former cater-waiters who used to spend their breaks at elaborate functions wondering things like, "What would it be like if waste came out of someone's chest onto the table?" Such notions evolved into metaphorical skits and these skits into an ad-hoc philosophy.

"I recently saw the new Sex Pistols documentary *The Filth And The Fury*," mentions Wink, "And there's one interview in which Johnny Rotten says, 'All we ever wanted to do was tell the truth.' That's all we ever wanted to do."

So, underneath the bald cap and blue paint, Blue Man is just a bohemian with a hippie heart looking for the punk rock "truth." Somewhere along the way, he found nobility. **NMM**




Gadfly
July/August 2000
Vol. 4 No. 4
www.gadfly.org
POSTER INSIDE
BLUE MAN GROUP
THE FRANKENSTEIN MYTH
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WHOOP WHOOP WHOOP!
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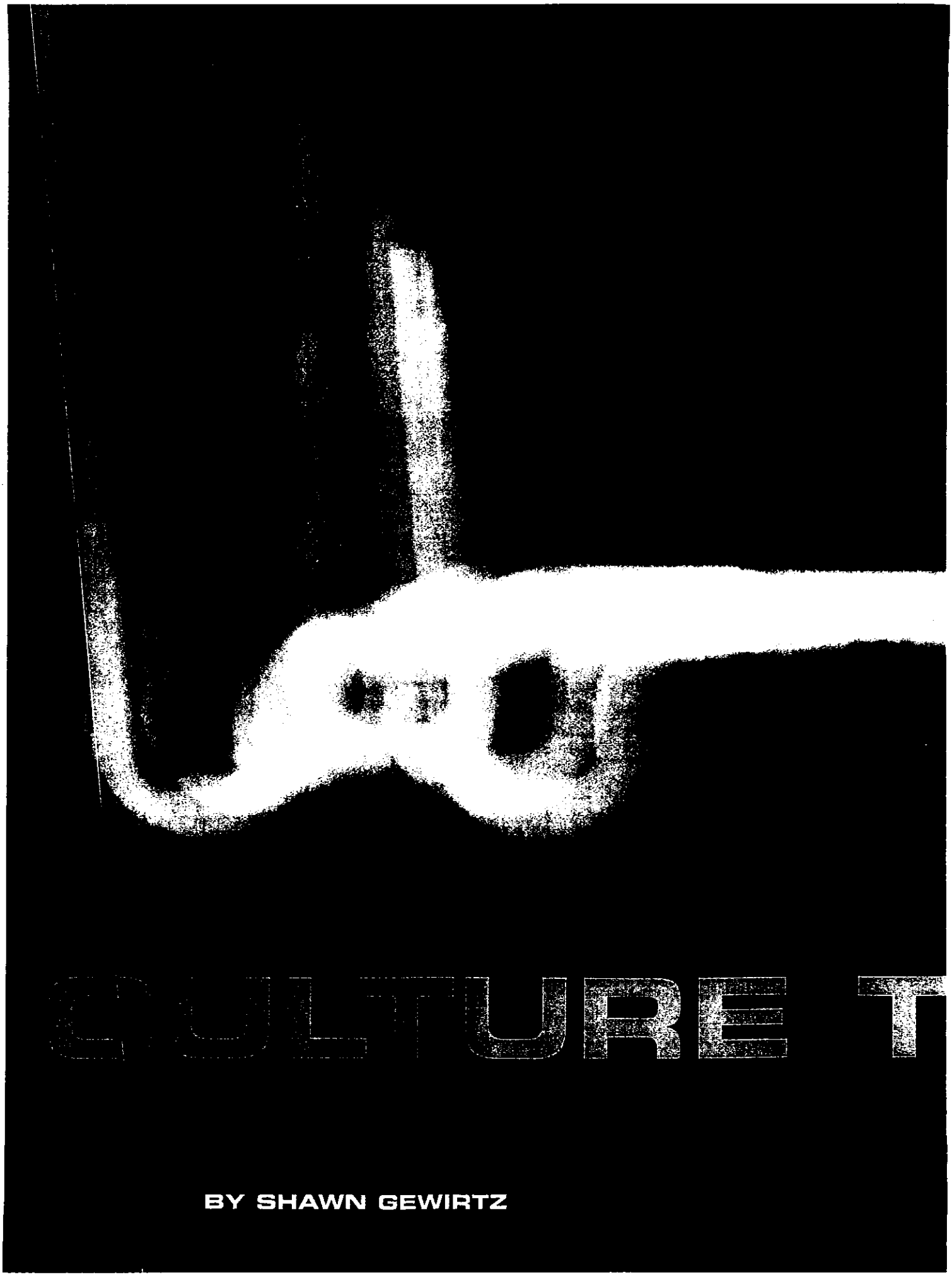


CULTURE T

BY SHAWN GEWIRTZ

"The highest art will be that which in its conscious content presents the thousandfold problems of the day..."

Richard Huelsenbeck – *First German Dada Manifesto, Collective Dada Manifest*

Composer John Cage once wrote that "art is the imitation of nature in her manner of operation." Following this logic, the 21st century finds Mother Nature fraught with electronic messaging, vibrant splashes of reds and yellows and endless acoustic possibilities—that is, if you take the Blue Man Group's word for it. This trio of blue-tinged performers has been captivating audiences with its "illegitimate theater" since 1991, treating viewers to a circus of colors, rhythms, tomfoolery and homemade instruments.

The Blue Man Group examines modernity with a bemused curiosity, as a child might. Garbage pails morph into drums and then paintbrushes as the Blue Man pounds the paint-covered lids, cascading showers of color onto a canvas overhead; marshmallows and paint balls caught in their mouths are spit out, transformed into works of art; Cap'n Crunch quickly becomes a Blue Man symphony of call-and-response. Clearly, this is not the theater you're used to.

SINCE THE BLUE MEN
IN THE
75-MINUTE SPECTACLE,
SCROLLING ELECTRONIC
MESSAGES AND FACIAL
EXPRESSIONS,
IT PROVIDES
THEM WITH A VOICE.

Driving the show is a support band of percussionists—their tribal rhythms saturating the performance with a heightened sense of anticipation. These musicians are as integral to the performance as the Blue Men themselves. Their driving cadences provide the show with its backbone, complementing the antics of the performers on stage. Since the Blue Men never speak a word in the 75-minute spectacle, communicating instead through gestures, scrolling electronic messages and facial expressions, the music is a necessary tool for the trio—it provides them with a voice. In fact, communication is a central concern of the Blue Man Group and, consequently, a recurring theme throughout the show.

At one point, the three cobalt figures simultaneously flip through three stacks of posters too fast for the audience to read all the messages. The placards range from trivia as simple as "A weekday edition of *The New York Times* contains more information than the average person was likely to come across in a lifetime in 17th-century England" to sardonic quips about the information age: "Once again you have chosen the wrong poster to read. While the people next to you read useful information, you are stuck with the equivalent of junk mail." The sketch is especially potent in our Internet-obsessed era—you can get your message out there and scream it till you're blue in the face, but that is no guarantee you'll be heard.

The Blue Men examine modernity as a child might.

In another scene, a screen shows several connecting tubes while a voice-over talks about the one system that ties the diverse populations of the world together. But it's not the Internet or the telephone—it's modern plumbing. The voice continues, explaining that pressures within the system sometimes send the input back out through the original entry terminals, and only then is the system interactive.

This satire belies the Blue Man's true yearning for community and communication. Accordingly, the trio does not detach itself from the audience. At times, the Blue Men roam through the crowd, exploring the audience, while other segments involve audience members on stage with the performers. There is a conscious effort to "blesh" with the audience. The term, a combination of *blend* and *mesh*, was adopted by the group from Theodore Sturgeon's sci-fi novel *More Than Human*, which is about limited beings with singular talents who combine to form something far better.

The Blue Man Group just might be the longest-running Happening in history. Although by definition a Happening should occur only once, this show has that kind of feel to it. Co-creators Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink founded the trio in 1987 with guerrilla performances on New York City sidewalks, and the indoor performances have preserved much of that public character. The line separating performer from spectator is successfully blurred. Audience members react to the Blue Men as they roam throughout the crowd, and the Blue Men, in turn, react to them. In a sense, the audience makes its own theater—much like John Cage's audience made its own music in his experimental composition 4'33" (a "silent" piece consisting of four and a half minutes of various spontaneous sounds from the audience).

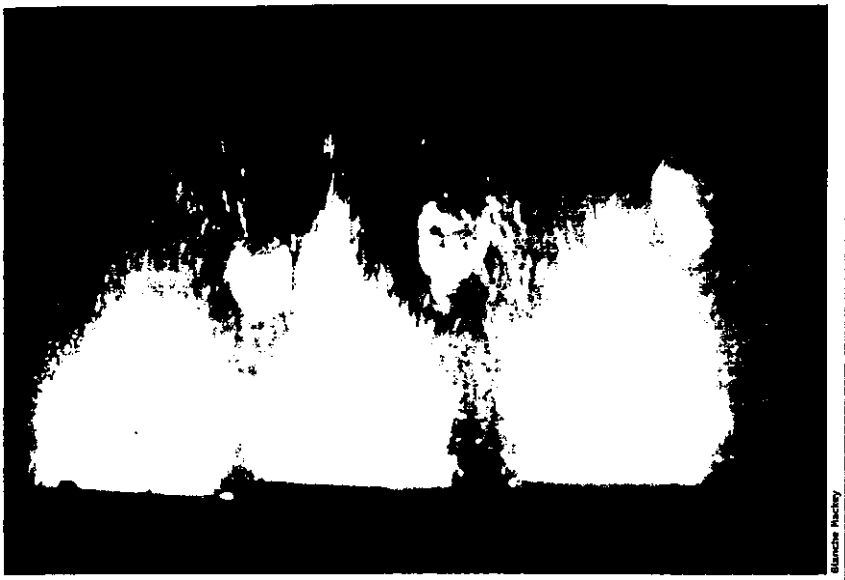
The group's grounding in the arts is readily apparent. In one segment, a fish skeleton on canvas—reminiscent of Dadaist Max Ernst's *Here Everything is Still Floating*—is descended from the rafters. The piece then becomes the subject of the trio's high-toned art critique, which scrolls across an electronic message board above each performer's head. The group's allusion to the Dada movement is not inadvertent. They cite Dadaist humor as an influence, and the show parallels the work of their Dada predecessors. Both reject the notion that art can only be created by an initiated few—a piece of art, the Blue Men attest, is only a marshmallow chew away.

The Blue Man Group strips itself of the pretentiousness of art—the ultimate failure of the Dadaists—and what remains is a wholly accessible piece of theater, if it can be labeled *theater*. The show delivers serious ideas in a candy wrapping, a hybrid of spectacle and philosophical inquiry, and engages even the most fidgety patron. How often does theater do that?

The show concludes with one last communal ritual. Large rolls of paper tumble into the crowd, accompanied by the thin slivers of a strobe light and the pounding of the support band. The theater throbs with energy as the trio and audience alike clutch the descending paper, spider webbing it throughout the theater. Finally, the music reaches its apex, and the lights come up. The Blue Man's "art playground" is now closed.

* * *

The Blue Man Group's long-running theatrical production *Tubes* can be seen in New York, Boston and Chicago. Their latest show, *Live at Luxor*, is performed in the lovely confines of Las Vegas. For more information, call (212) 226-6366 or check out www.blueman.com.



Blanche Hackey

Blue Man Group

Blue Man Group opened to critical raves in 1991 at the Astor Place Theatre and has become an international sensation, with audiences pouring in from all over the world. The cobalt-blue trio has astounded audiences on *The Tonight Show, Live with Regis & Kathie Lee*, MTV, Nickelodeon, CBS *Sunday Morning* and *Entertainment Tonight* and continues to play to sold-out houses, so three companies are performing *Blue Man Group* simultaneously. • Blue Man, a curious, gentle being who wants to "blesh" with the audience through sound and color, is backed up by an incredible three-piece band. It was created on the streets of Manhattan in 1989 by longtime friends Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink; and played in performance spaces around New York before settling into the Astor Place Theatre. The performances create experiences that defy categorization. They are best known for theatrical performances featuring three bald and blue characters who take the audience on a multimedia journey that is funny, intelligent and visually stunning. • *Blue Man Group* awards include Obie and Lucille Lortel Awards; and the Drama Desk Committee decided to present Goldman, Stanton and Wink with an award for their production. They invented a new category: "Unique Theatrical Production." *Blue Man Group* has been followed by other "unique" productions such as *Stomp* and *De La Guarda*, helping this genre grow into one of the most vibrant sectors in theater today.

MAN GROUP
012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 660

BLUE MAN GROUP

REASON • MARCH 2001

Big Blue Men

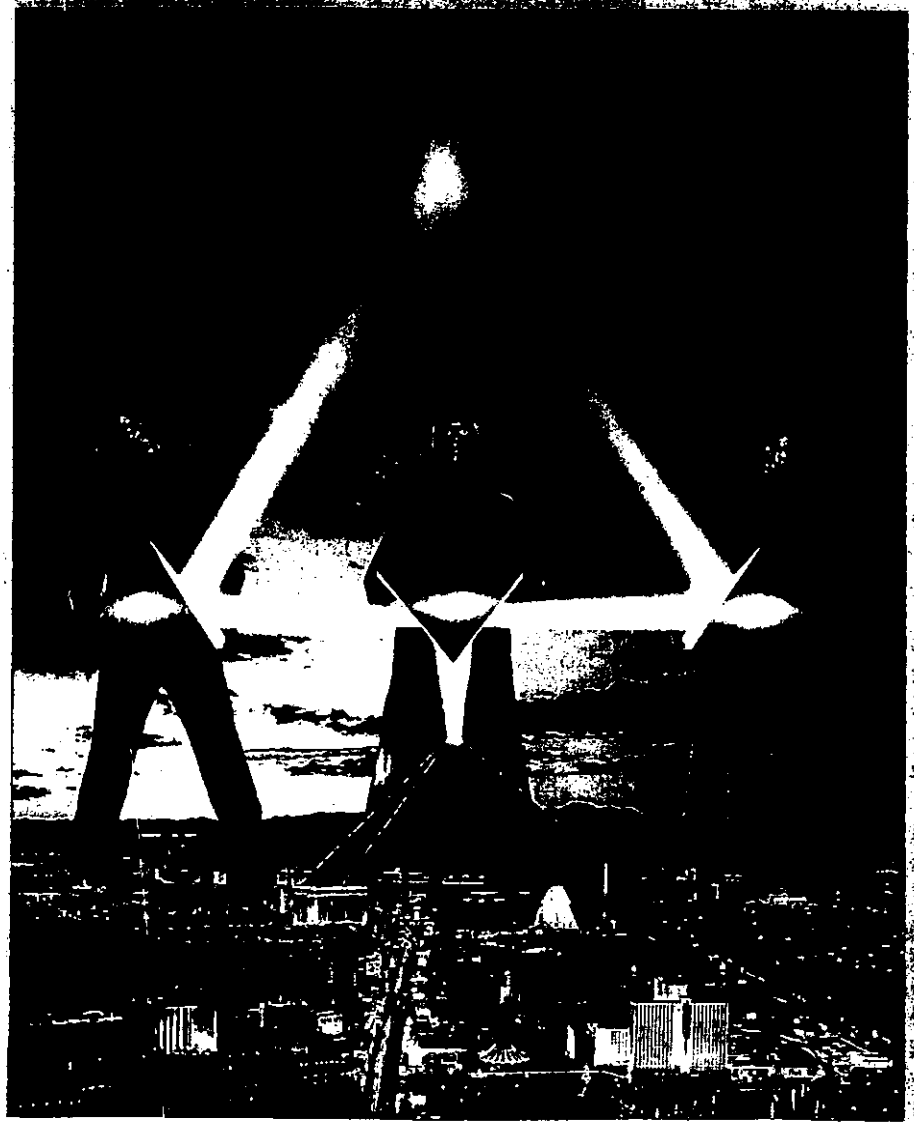
Downtown artists capture Las Vegas

By Sara Rimensnyder

Las Vegas has long been known as the place where once-cool performers go to die slow, campy deaths (think Sinatra) and where never-hip singers build inexplicably large, devoted followings (think Wayne Newton). Since last summer the city of showgirls and Siegfried & Roy has also been home to an altogether different sort of act: the critically acclaimed and wildly popular performance art of Blue Man Group.

At first blush, cutting-edge sensibilities and crass commercialism may seem a strange combination, but it's a wholly sensible, and enjoyable, pairing. Indeed, one of the great appeals of Blue Man Group is the way in which it blurs categories once thought mutually exclusive, including such hoary art-world dyads as artistic success vs. popular appeal and the avant-garde vs. the mainstream.

Twelve times a week at the Egyptian-themed Luxor hotel, some 1,200 tourists take time off from the roulette wheel and pay as much as $75 to watch three bald, cobalt-blue figures throw food, eat Twinkies, and play giant musical instruments made from PVC piping. In oddly memorable vignettes, the blue men, who never speak while on stage, construct a marshmallow sculpture (and slap a $4,000 price tag on it), compete in raucous, oversized drumming competitions, and conduct cheeky, multiple deconstructions of Jefferson Airplane's anthem of adolescent drug use, "White Rabbit." Another part of the show uses electrifying music and a splashy light display to explore what sound might look like if we could see it. Each performance begins and ends with audience participation (including the unfurling of thousands of feet of crepe paper).



JIM PORTO

Blue Man Group was created by Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton, and Chris Wink, and debuted about a decade ago in New York. Since then it has been awash in critical acclaim. *The New York Times* called the group's performances a "deliriously antic blend of music, painting and clowning," and an "ingenious downtown hit." These days, the group is best known for its stylized Intel Pentium III television commercials, in which members fling themselves at walls, slather themselves in green paint, and disappear through floors. Not surprising for an act that appears in TV ads, Blue Man Group is not shy about marketing itself, hawking everything from coffee mugs to keychains at their shows and on their Web site (www.blueman.com). To keep up with demand, there are now about 30 blue men, spread around the country, playing sold-out, permanent performances in New York, Chicago, Boston, and most recently Vegas.

Though the show they've created is exhilarating, Blue Man Group's relatively rare combination of critical and popular success is a spectacle in its own right. Not many artists are able to pitch computer chips on TV,

thrill crowds in Vegas, and still keep the esteem of the New York art world. Yet the group has done so with seeming ease. A December article in the *Village Voice* posed the question inevitably asked of all serious artists who manage to make a living off their work: "So, did they sell out?" The *Voice*'s verdict: "Not at all."

In fact, the Blue Man Group's drums are drowning out a sacred tenet routinely invoked by romantic artists: that commercial reward only comes at the expense of artistic integrity. For the group, there's simply no opposition between the two. Like Warhol and even Picasso before it, the troupe has smartly navigated the endless channels of cool that capitalism creates, and has given an audience

Not many artists are able to pitch computer chips on TV, thrill crowds in Vegas, and still keep the esteem of the New York art world.

something worth paying for. Their ads for Intel, a company with a stake in hipness, are less product endorsement and more prime-time performance art. Similarly, the group's new residence in Sin City plays to the postmodern embrace of kitsch, camp, facade, and, most of all, fun.

On the Vegas Strip, it's the glowing mainstream reception that is perhaps most surprising. Performance art is notorious for its inaccessibility and elitism—when tourists in Manhattan see a show, it's *Annie Get Your Gun*, not the latest offering from Karen Finley. The audience's enthusiasm for the engagingly alien Blue Man Group suggests that we are living in a time and a place where being weird is not only cool, but a selling point.

BLUE MAN GROUP

DAILY VARIETY
FOUNDED 1933

LEGIT REVIEW

Blue Man Group

(Luxor Theater, Las Vegas; 1,200 seats; $71.50 top)

A Blue Man Prods., Luxor Las Vegas and Mandalay Resort Group presentation of a musical performance piece in one act written and directed by Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton, Chris Wink. Set, David Gallo, Lauren Helpern; lighting, Matthew McCarthy; sound, Todd Perlmutter, Ross Humphrey; costumes, Patricia Murphy; music director, Perlmutter; music, Goldman, Stanton, Wink, Larry Heinemann, Ian Pai, Christian Dyas; casting, Kathleen Tomasik. Opened March 14, 2000; reviewed March 24. Running time **1 HOUR, 30 MIN.**

Blue Man Group: Matthew Banks, Chris Bowen, Jeffrey Brown, Jeffrey Doornbos, Eric Gebow, Ryan Gerard, Brett Gillen, Matt Goldman, Randall Jaynes, Scott Kinworthy, Anthony Parrulli, Brian Scott, Phil Stanton, Chris Wink.

Musicians: Earl Bethel, Mike Burns, Jordan Cohen, Thaddeus Corea, David Corter, Christian Dyas, Larry Heinemann, Aki Ishihara, Matthew Kreimelman, Phil Leavitt, Elvis Lederer, Billy O'Malley, Ian Pai, Todd Perlmutter, Craig Rodriguez, Vince Verderame, Todd Waetzig, Nick White, Richele Winslow.

By PHIL GALLO

Las Vegas goes out on a performance-art limb with a show that deserves applause from entertainment-seekers with no interest in dancing girls or white tigers. Blue Man Group is part rock band, part theater act, part surrealist troupe and all percussion — a plotless hour and a half overflowing with the unexpected antics of the three emotionless and wordless bald men painted blue. It should generate positive word of mouth among the culturally savvy; however, varying audience responses at the show caught suggested that it was soaring over some gamblers' heads.

The show draws on conceits first explored by performance artists in the 1960s and '70s, when their every statement and movement had political, sexual or social motivations. Blue Man Group's act is devoid of any of that pretense — they use the stage as an art-and-music playground wherein the games have few rules (and little sense of competition).

Without words, the Blue Men convey amusement and curiosity with ease, but no activity has meaning beyond the physical performance.

The opening number sets the tone: bizarre occurrences that showcase the three performers' facilities. The center Blue Man throws a marshmallow to his colleagues on either side of the stage; each catches the treat in his mouth.

The first one then magically spits color onto a canvas, while the second comes up empty as he attempts to do the same. Eventually, as more marshmallows are tossed, one Blue Man has created an abstract piece of art and the second has just accumulated a wad of goo in his mouth. (Have no fear — he will get to create, too).

Much of their subsequent feats involve food (including one with Twinkies and an audience member) and/or paint (including one with a jumpsuit, a blank canvas, a pulley and an audience member).

Early on, the three men eat from their own boxes of Cap'n Crunch cereal. Two boxes are standard size, but the third is larger than anything even Smart & Final would carry. They stuff their mouths, they chomp.

Blue Man Group founders designed the instruments and some of the greatest fun is derived from watching them play these pipes.

One Blue Man mindlessly smears his face in the cereal while the second, through pantomime, advises him to tidy up his appearance. Soon, the two realize the third has a large box, which he discards to put them all on equal footing. The three then chomp a percussive melody; with mouth and cereal they recall Chico and Harpo Marx's perf of the Anvil Chorus with cash register, bell and whistle 70 years ago.

All of this is done to a ferocious rock soundtrack that initially mimics glam rock effects, with a bit of twang thrown in on lead guitar. The music is always driven by drums, lots of them.

Some of that percussion is provided by the Blue Men themselves: They bang on oil drums that are covered in paint, which splashes about; later, enormous industrial pipes are tuned to allow melodic intervals to enter the picture.

Blue Man Group founders designed the instruments and some of the greatest fun is derived from watching them play these pipes. At one point they do a series of familiar tunes and end with the Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit," during which the audience is invited to Karaoke along. It is the only time any words are spoken.

Blue Man Group is coming up on a decade of performing, a considerable achievement for an act that didn't hire any replacement actors until the show had been staged 1,200 times at New York's Off Broadway Astor Place Theater.

Founding trio Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink have grown their troupe to include 14 players though producers make no effort to inform the audience who is onstage. Similarly, the band that plays above the action numbers seven although the show employs 17 musicians.

Subsequently a hit in Chicago and Boston, Blue Man Group has created its largest piece for its largest venue yet; the 25-row, 1,200-seat Luxor Theatre has double the capacity of its largest other house, in Chi.

First-time visitors will have a hard time picturing this production in a smaller hall. It's out-of-control messy, with paint and paper and aerosol cheese flying every which way. And it is very loud.

Blue Man Group is as logical a choice as any to continue Vegas' interest in importing acts from the New York stage. Their competition is much more Cirque du Soleil than "Splash" — this is the decidedly hip side of Vegas. The show has only one lull — an all percussion blow-out that relies on an uninvolving light-and-silhouette spectacle.

By show's end, when the entire crowd is cloaked in strands of heavy duty toilet paper, the stage is full of food remnants and paint and the onstage troupe/band shows no signs of exhaustion, there's a sense that this is the best light-hearted diversion anyone could possibly want to see.

Gloss & Glitz

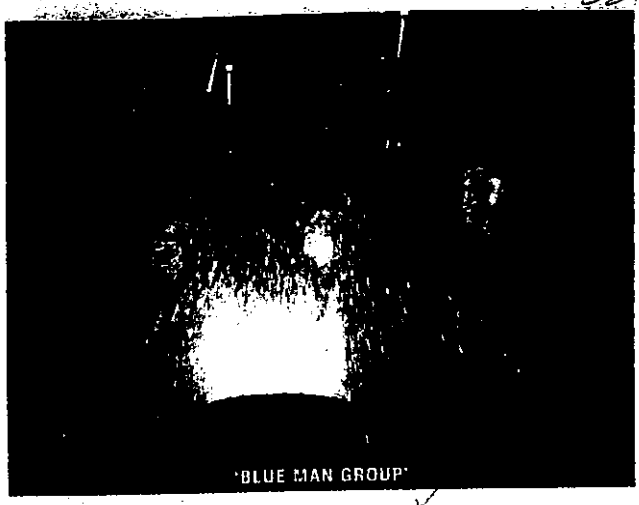
BLUE MAN GROUP • When these monochromed madmen brought their drums, paint balls, and projectile cream filling to the Luxor three years ago, critics wondered how an act predicated on art-world in-jokes would go over in a town built on machines that go *ka-ching*. It turns out that slapping a $4,000 price tag on a regurgitated marshmallow sculpture goes over even better with outsiders, especially the kind that understand the value of a quarter. Is a deadpan Blue Man chainsawing a Twinkie and vacuuming up the mess funny because it ridicules our penchant for whipping out our biggest guns at every opportunity? Or because vacuumed Twinkies go *thwack*? That depends on whether you're seated in the thinking or nonthinking section. And yeah, they still have both in Nevada. **A–** (The Luxor, 800-557-7428) —*Carina Chocano*

CIRQUE DU SOLEIL: MYSTERE • O That *Ocean's Eleven* remake that replaced the Rat Pack with Clooney and Co.? Maybe it should have starred a bunch of French Canadians dressed like Peter Max fever dreams and capable of contortions that can give chiropractors the vapors. That's how completely Cirque du Soleil has redefined the "Las Vegas show" since *Mystère* opened a decade ago and made desert getaways suddenly about grabbing a piece of...class. Its even splashier sister show, *O*, has become the hotter ticket since its premiere in '98. But *Mystère* still deserves the slight nod, if only for its focus on one or two of its phenomenal gymnasts and acrobats at a time. The costumes, sets, and conceptualizing are gravy; we'd even enjoy *Mystère* if it were done in leotards down at Circus Circus. Over at *O*—set in a 1.5-million-gallon water park of a theater, where Dalí does laps with Busby and Esther—it's more about team sports and giving synchronized swimming a good name. Expect to exit these shows with two thoughts: (a) Human beings, capable of greater feats of raw physicality and abstract beauty than most of us can imagine, are a wondrous, underrated species, and (b) however much time you've been spending at the gym, it's not enough. *Mystère*: **A** (Treasure Island, 800-392-1999) *O*: **A–** (Bellagio, 888-488-7111) —*CW*

CIRQUE DU SOLEIL'S 'O'

LA FEMME • They look like the *Chicago* inmates. they flop around the stage like wanton nymphos, and they christen themselves with drag-worthy monikers like Roxy Tornado and Ruby Chromatic. But the best thing about the women of this topless revue—transplanted from Paris' legendary Crazy Horse saloon—is their take-no-prisoners attitude. Against a cold, spare backdrop, they lip-synch and high-kick with all the force of seen-it-all courtesans. The result? A subversively sensual delight for intelligent folk who'd *never* venture into a standard strip club. **A–** (MGM Grand, 800-929-1111) —*Nicholas Fonseca*

PENN & TELLER • "Vegas won't change us," these two claim on billboards leading into town, positioning themselves as the anti-Siegfried & Roy. Penn's mile-a-minute patter takes aim at two favorite targets: fellow magicians and supposedly irrational beliefs (he even mocks the idea of a human soul—something merely implicit in most other Vegas shows). Perhaps they revel too much in being bad boys, but there *is* something still unmatched about a magic act relying less on shock and awe than on alternation between nonstop blowhard articulation and some beautiful, if morbid, vignettes that are virtual silent movies. The only letdown is the climactic bullet routine, which—due to its lengthy setup and prior TV exposure—ends the show with a literal but not quite figurative bang. (Rio, 888-746-7784) **B+** —*CW*



'BLUE MAN GROUP'

SIEGFRIED & ROY • "When you go to New York, you see the Statue of Liberty; when you come to Las Vegas, you see Siegfried & Roy," quips the duo's manager. The masters of il-*yoo*-sion and wildlife conservation have been around long enough to qualify for inclusion in the National Register of Historic... Magical German Guys—and yet still they manage to draw the herded masses of nickel-slot players yearning to be wowed. Wondrous as it is to watch Roy hover cross-legged above the stage, or Siegfried make big cats disappear with a gerontic wave of the arm, or both of them reshuffle the limbs of dancers like Rubik's Cube tiles, nothing delights the jaded, postdigital F/X-era eye like the fake, sculpted-foam six-pack torsos on the raven-haired dancing men. Meow. **B–** (The Mirage, 800-963-9634) —*CC*

Comics & Crooners

DANNY GANS • The chipper, clean-cut Gans has a deep arsenal of spot-on impersonations—a smarmy Tom Jones here, a nonsensical Anita Baker there—and he unleashes them with appealing energy. But it doesn't save this bombastic show—which can vary fr night—from achin nor does it excuse tural references (suupp" ads, Tae-E Men). Gans could show's finale: a go Creed cover and s *found-Jesus-and-* proto-sermon. Stil that he's one of th popular performers, he must be doing something right, so we'll play nice and give him a **C+**. (Mirage, 800-963-9634) —*NF*

CLINT HOLMES • Have you ever just known, in that creepy, precognitive way, that you were about to hear the words *make sweet love*? Catch this show and feel the psychic chill along your spine. Indefatigably upbeat one-hit wonder (1973's cloying "Playground in My Mind"), favored entertainer of Prince Albert of Monaco, and darling of the Strip since 2000, Holmes models himself on the crooners of old, but softens any roguish edges with an eager-beaver bonhomie and plenty of feely-speak (the presaged line can be heard in a tune his guitarist wrote while "going through some stuff"). The son of a black American jazz musician and a white British opera singer, Holmes is a wellspring of poignant life stories. Though he dabbles in both parents' musical genres, he has a soft spot for word-associative pop medleys. The many throaty chuckles feel about as carefree and spontaneous as a Swiss rail timetable. Don't forget to pack the insulin. **C–** (Harrah's, 800-392-9002) —*CC*

RITA RUDNER • Rudner's intro and outro music is early Beatles, but Wings' "Venus and Mars are all right tonight" chorus might be more

Entertainment WEEKLY

NEW YORK, NY
WEEKLY 1,275,000
APR 4 2003

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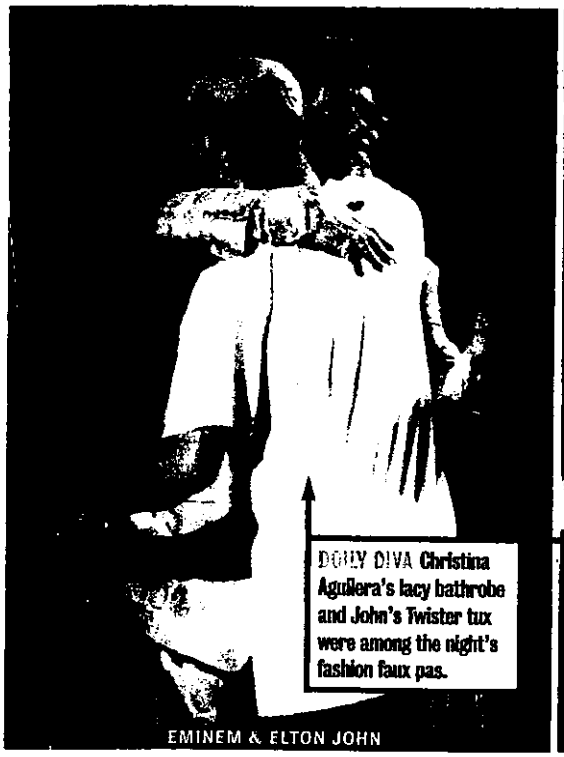
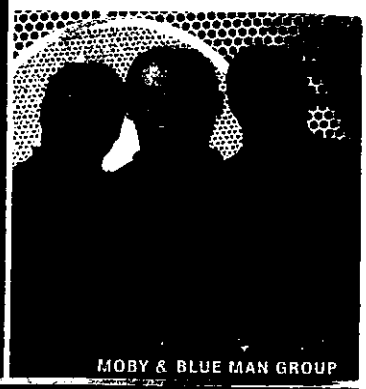


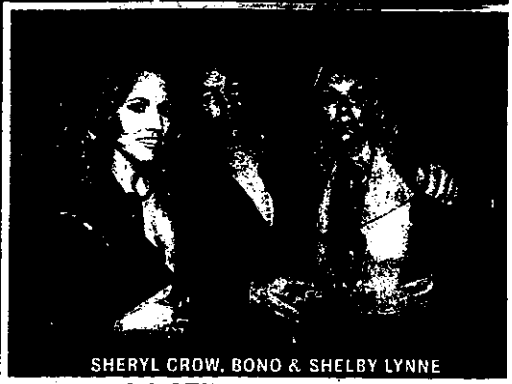
EMINEM & ELTON JOHN

DOILY DIVA **Christina Aguilera's lacy bathrobe and John's Twister tux were among the night's fashion faux pas.**

CHRISTINA AGUILERA



MOBY & BLUE MAN GROUP



SHERYL CROW, BONO & SHELBY LYNNE

Two Against Everyone

SCENE **Eminem is a hit on stage but misses a Grammy slam. by Ethan Alter**

3755

"JUST DON'T ASK ME ABOUT EMINEM," MOBY warned. Which summed up the tired attitude of Grammy attendees toward the heavily hyped duet between Sir Elton John and the Angry Blond. Eminem, who swept the rap categories despite losing the night's big prize to Steely Dan, had one unlikely admirer in Toni Braxton (Best Female R&B Vocal). "As a woman and an African American, 50 years ago people thought I shouldn't be doing what I'm doing," said Braxton, who hit the treadmill earlier in the day and consumed only water for her J. Lo moment. The post-Grammy bashes were hit-and-miss affairs. "Let me know if you see any celebrities," said Jane Wiedlin of the Go-Go's at the BMG party. "I can't see anyone." As for the Real Slim Shady, he attended Universal's Cicada bash, where Melissa Etheridge declared she'd be proud to be the next gay musician to team with the rapper: "This was an important night for America." If you could "Stan" it.

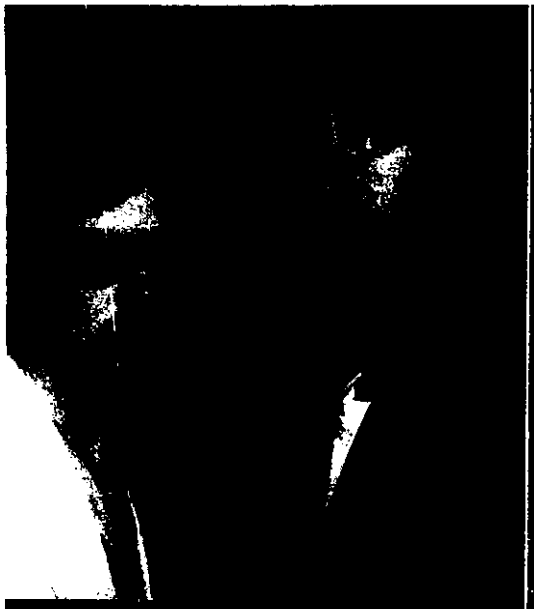
BALD SOPRANOS **De-turbaned Erykah Badu and scalped Justin Timberlake**

KID ROCK & MOM

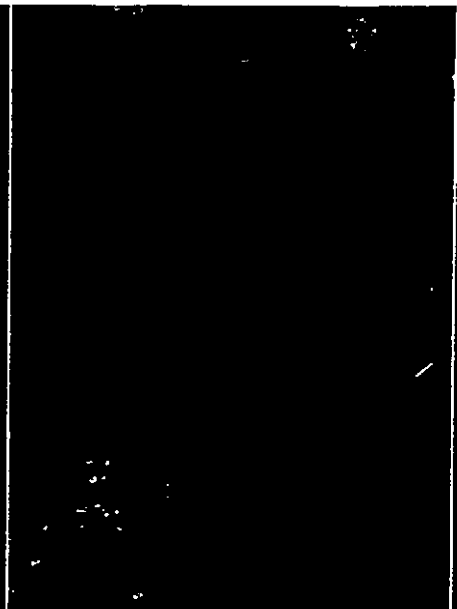
BECK & VAL KILMER (ABOVE)

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY
NEW YORK, NY
WEEKLY 1,275,000
MAR 9 2001

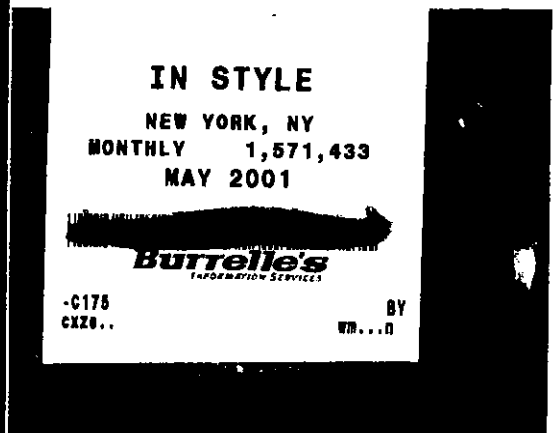
Burrelle's
INFORMATION SERVICES



Beck & Val Kilmer



Blue Man Group



The courtyard of L.A.'s Hotel Figueroa

GRAMMYS | *EMI* Lucky for the EMI Group, which hosted its bash at the Hotel Figueroa, the days when rock stars trash hotel rooms are long gone. The after-party, with a guest list of 1,000, took over the lobby, private dining room, downstairs lounges and outdoor patio—everything but the pool itself—and still managed to leave the furniture intact. Val Kilmer joked that his reason for attending was so that he could find winning R&B stud D'Angelo and "take him down. He's too handsome, too talented, and he's got to be stopped." Mysteriously, D'Angelo was nowhere to be found on this night—he failed to make the show or the scene—leaving swooning groupies to swarm around nominee Beck, who proved that he's no sore loser, baby. Taking a brief break from boogying with fans, he said that the evening's most memorable onstage performance was a slightly flawed one: "My favorite part was when Christina Aguilera got stuck in her chair and couldn't get out." But it was hard to find anyone glued to their seat at this party. The dance floor was standing room only.

Hole's Eric Erlandson & Daryl Hannah

Melissa Auf Der Maur & Dave Grohl

what's your most rock and roll accessory?

"Probably my underwear, even though *you* can't see it!" —**GLORIA ESTEFAN**

"I brought a flask tonight, since I'm sitting next to Kid Rock." —**CARSON DALY**

"My date: my mother." —**KID ROCK**

"I would have to say my little black sequined tube top." —**TARA REID**

"My Motorola two-way pager." —**FRED DURST**

"These studded pants I got from the Denim Doctors." —**MELISSA ETHERIDGE**

"It would have to be my brave use of the color purple tonight." —**ROB THOMAS**

"Diamond-patterned black fishnet stockings." —**DARYL HANNAH**

"My suede jacket—now that it's been cleaned." —**RACHAEL LEIGH COOK**

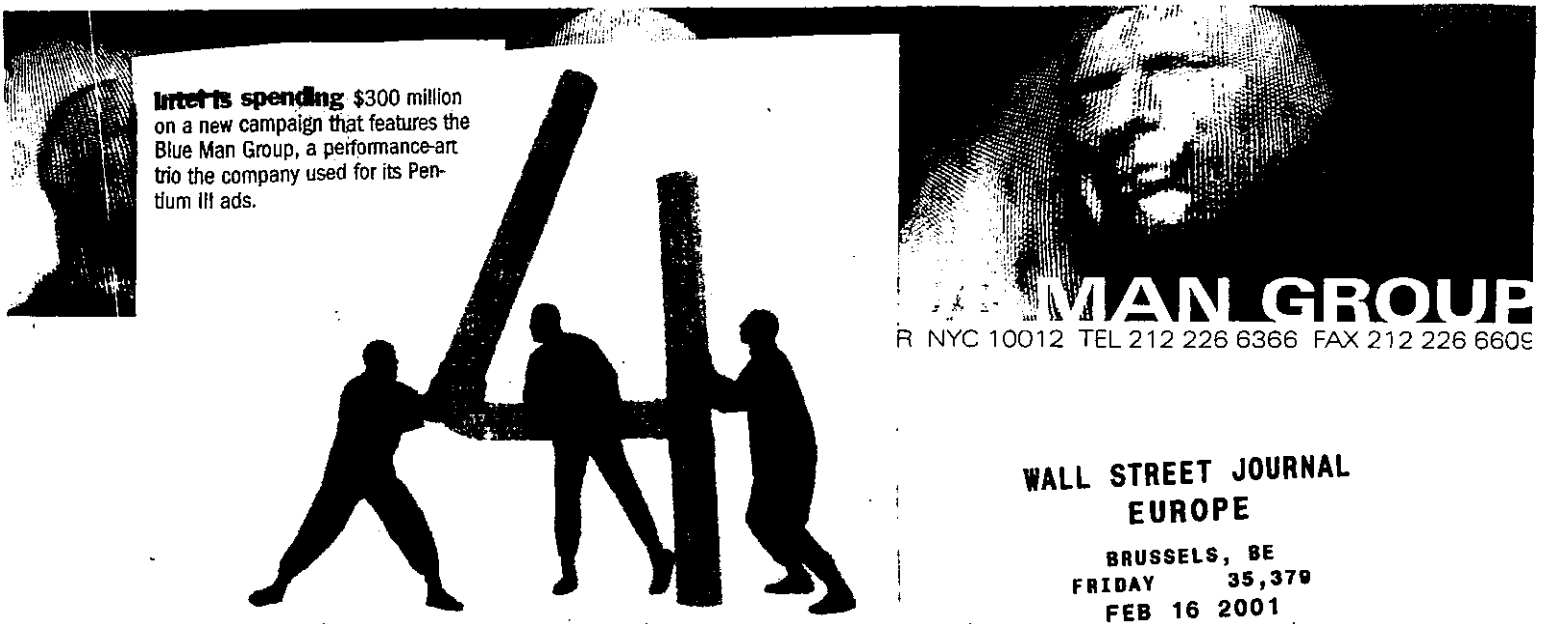
"Definitely my $10 1970s fake-gold chain belt." —**AIMEE MANN**

"Probably my Nelly necklace. I keep it with me at all times." —**NELLY**

"I'm very grateful to Pamela Dennis for making me this leather jacket." —**BETTE MIDLER**

"My nail polish!" —**COURTNEY LOVE**

"My condoms, I guess." —**SHAGGY**



Intel's spending $300 million on a new campaign that features the Blue Man Group, a performance-art trio the company used for its Pentium III ads.

WALL STREET JOURNAL
EUROPE
BRUSSELS, BE
FRIDAY 35,379
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Intel Will Splurge In Selling New Chip

Ad Campaign Will Play Up Digital Angle

But Pentium 4 'Doesn't Make Your Phone Line Any Faster'

By MOLLY WILLIAMS
STAFF REPORTER

PC 3755-Blue Man Group

SANTA CLARA, California — Intel Corp. is about to go on a marketing offensive with a high-end chip that skeptics say few people really need.

Facing a steep drop in personal-computer sales that will hamper earnings for at least the first half of this year, the U.S. chip maker is looking to woo computer users to its leading-edge microprocessor, the Pentium 4. The first step is a $300 million (€326 million) ad campaign — more than Intel has spent on any other chip — that kicks off Monday on American television.

Intel wants to focus on its high-end offerings as it battles **Advanced Micro Devices** Inc., maker of the Athlon microprocessor, in the consumer PC market. The broader PC industry could use a boost as well, as many computer makers are struggling with flagging sales.

Intel says the money spent on Pentium 4 is crucial, even as the company curbs hiring, cuts costs and halts construction of office buildings. "Just as we're investing in other areas of the company, we're investing in this campaign, regardless of what the current environment is," says Pam Pollace, Intel's vice president of world-wide marketing.

The company has an enviable track record of persuading PC buyers to move to the successive generations of chips that have provided its explosive growth. But getting people to move to a new generation may be tougher this time. There's the U.S. economic slowdown and the reluctance of consumers and corporations to spend. Perhaps more important, most PC users simply don't need to trade up to more powerful processors the way they used to in order to enjoy the fruits of modern-day computing.

The Pentium 4, which made its debut in November in PCs that start at $2,000, offers the average business or home user little incentive to spend more. It's great for hard-core computer gamers or tech-savvy users who want zippy video and high-quality graphics or sound. But a much older and cheaper Intel chip, the Celeron, does just fine for the Web browsing or word processing most people use a PC for.

"The Pentium 4 doesn't make your phone line any faster," and that is the biggest bottleneck for new applications, says Kevin Krewell of MicroDesign Resources, a research firm. "Marketing is going to have to be a very big part" of the chip's success.

Intel acknowledges that the Pentium 4's extra horsepower may not be for everyone. But its tagline for the new ads — "The center of your digital world" — shows it is trying to hitch up with the increasing sales of gadgets

PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 26, COLUMN 2

Intel Will Splurge on New Chip

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

such as MP3 players and digital cameras. Those devices require more processing power to manipulate [illegible] images or sound files — perfect reasons, Intel believes, for PC users to trade up to Pentium 4 machines.

For the new ads, Intel plans to stick with Blue Man Group, the performance-art trio in blue face paint that appeared in Intel's Pentium III ads. It is the first time the company has used the same advertising theme for two different products — a decision Intel says it made because the previous ads were so successful, as well as providing some continuity between the two chips as it phases out the older product.

The ads, created by New York-based Messner, Vetere, Berger, McNamee Schmetterer/EuroRSCG, will feature the new Pentium 4 logo with the silent, bald members of Blue Man Group doing different things with the [illegible] at the end of the Pentium logo. [illegible] ads will run through May. The campaign will also include retail merchandising programs and Web ads.

Intel faces challenges in its advertising because its product isn't as easy to grasp as say, Coke or Tide detergent. The company says that, in testing the effectiveness of the Pentium III ads in getting people to remember the brand and get the intended message, it found that the Blue Man Group ads scored very high among the target audience of well-educated, middle- to upper-income PC buyers. In fact, Intel says the ads had appeal beyond the target group.

Intel is counting on the general increased profile to move Pentium 4 to the top of the corporate buyer's mind as well. Intel will launch more programs aimed at companies later in the year, Ms. Pollace says.

The Pentium 4 offensive will involve more than advertising. Intel is pushing prices of the chip down — it cut prices as much as 23% late last month — and is also trying to push the Pentium III chips into cheaper machines by cutting prices of the older chip as much as 46%. Intel has said it is accelerating production of Pentium 4, making it the fastest transition to a new chip in Intel's history.

The plan has at least one potential snag. The current version of the Pentium 4 is a large chip, which means it is more expensive and harder to make in large volumes than most chips. Intel is looking to push the Pentium 4 to a more advanced manufacturing process that will slash the cost, but that isn't likely to happen until later this year.

ADWEEK/EASTERN EDITION
NEW YORK, NY
WEEKLY 43,219
NOV 20 2000

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creative

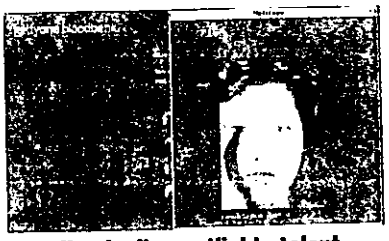
edited by Mallorre Dill

3755

First Aid for Recruiters

London's **Design and Art Direction** has partnered with **Getty Images**, one of the industry's largest stock-visual resources, to produce the **D&AD GettyOne Bloodbank**, a Web site devoted to young talent.

Launched earlier this month, the site showcases key projects from about 100 people, who are graduating from school or beginning their first year of work in the industry. Animation, illustration and package design are among the 14 disciplines represented, though the vast majority fall under advertising, photography and graphics.



Bloodbank site spotlights talent.

D&AD chief executive David Kester estimates that 99 percent of the rookies featured on the site are winners of young creative awards or distinguished students in programs from organizations such as D&AD and the Association of Photographers in the U.K. "Other people have simply paid to get on a job site. Nobody can apply to Bloodbank; you have to be selected," says Kester.

In order to reach its goal of 500 to 1,000 creatives showcased on the site within a year, and to increase the percentage of international talent, Bloodbank will build partnerships with more international organizations, adds Kester. The venue is currently trying to develop U.S. alliances to add to partners The One Club and the American Institute of Graphic Artists. ■

Chin Up

The presidential election isn't the only thing that's been turned on its head. In a spot from **FCB** in San Francisco for **Water Pik**'s Flosser, two inverted face puppets are harassed by index fingers wielding dental floss. Sound bizarre? It's nothing compared to the casting session, which consisted of hundreds of videotaped mouths viewed on an upside-down monitor. "We had to find actors who had the bizarre ability to contort their faces to look like miniature [upside-down] faces," says copywriter Mike Towell. The actors then spent up to three hours at a time with their chins in the air and a small set strapped to their heads. The spot broke last Monday and will run on ABC, NBC and cable stations.

Water Pik mouths off.

Zyman Says

Former Coca-Cola chief marketing officer Sergio Zyman's New York-based marketing firm, **Z Marketing**, launches a print campaign from **Ogilvy & Mather**, New York, today in *The Wall Street Journal* and other publications. The seven executions show him in various poses, along with a quote, such as "Zyman: Marketing as we know it is dead. And every day, more marketers crawl into the grave with it."

People

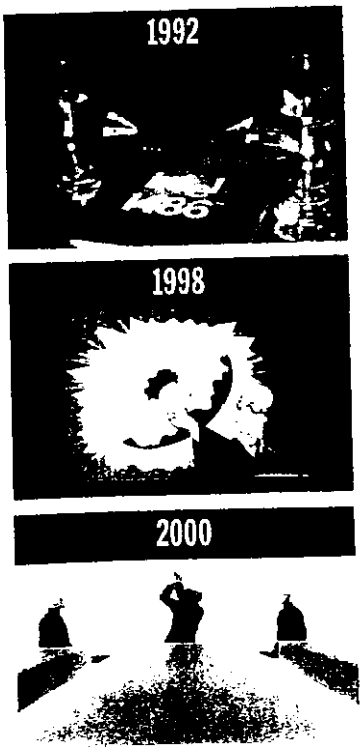
A year after leaving **Fallon** for stints at Goodby, Silverstein & Partners and Black Rocket, both in San Francisco, **Harvey Marco** has returned to the Minneapolis agency. Marco, who was a group creative on Lee Jeans, works as an art director and supervisor on accounts where needed, including United Air Lines. ... Freelancer **Brian Gold** has joined **DDB** in New York as associate creative director on Reuters, Cigna and PlanetFeedback.com. ... **The Martin Agency** has hired novelist **Kathy Hepinstall**. As creative director of the Richmond, Va., agency's San Francisco office, Hepinstall will focus on the $10 million-plus account of Charles Schwab & Co. ... **Richard Mahan**, who last November became one of four executive creative directors at Grey Worldwide, has left the agency to join **McCann-Erickson** in Los Angeles in the same role. Mahan will work on all agency business there, including Nestlé and Boeing. **Rapp Collins Worldwide** in New York has promoted group creative directors **Doug Klein** and **Tony Lamont** to senior vice presidents, co-creative directors.

Inside Intel

The challenge for **Intel**'s first consumer advertising was to make a computer chip sexy. **Euro RSCG/DSW Partners** responded with the "electronic fantasy" campaign, animating the processor's features via George Lucas' Industrial Light and Magic. "It made the inside of a computer an OK place to be," says Jeff Bagley, agency partner and CD.

Four years later, the Salt Lake City agency created the dancing Intel technicians, who later gave Homer Simpson a smarter brain. "That campaign put us on the map as a consumer brand," says John Travis, worldwide consumer promotions director at Intel.

Current ads from **Messner, Vetere, Berger, McNamee, Schmetterer/Euro RSCG** feature the Blue Man Group. "They came with their own level of creativity" and helped develop the concepts, says CEO and chief creative partner Ron Berger.



Group Paints For Intel And MVBMS

Artists Shine—And Splatter—In David Kellogg-Directed Commercial.

Paint, a performance piece for performance troupe Blue Man Group, is a whole multimedia physical act incorporates bizarre stunts, percussive music, art and audience interaction.

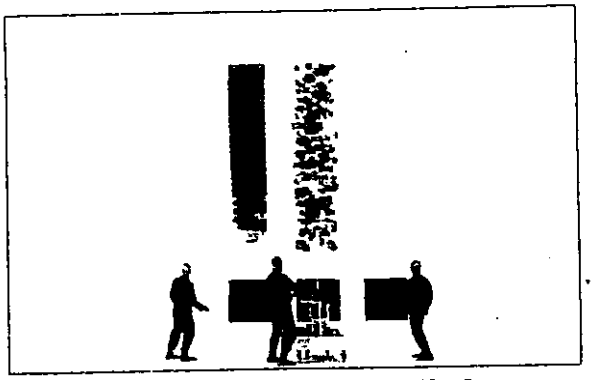
Paint also serves as a central element of a whimsical Intel Pentium III Processor spot called "Paint," featuring Blue Man Group, out of New York-based agency Messner Vetere Berger McNamee Schmetterer/Euro RSCG (MVBMS). The ad was directed by David Kellogg of bicoastal Anonymous in a co-production between Anonymous and Academy Commercials, London.

For the uninitiated, Blue Man Group, which has become a cult event in New York, Chicago, Boston and Las Vegas, was created in Manhattan in the late 1980s by Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink. In their act, the three perform as sleek-pated, silent, cobalt-blue alien-like creatures who engage in a variety of unusual activities—e.g., spitting paint-filled gumballs onto a canvas to create "artwork"—in the interest of delivering cultural satire.

Music is also a key part of the spectacle. The group members have a number of homemade instruments made from PVC piping, which they play with paddles or sticks; and they also play drums whose heads hold pools of paint that erupt in fountains of colored spray when struck. The result is a unique form of tribal rock whose driving, industrial rhythms create a strangely hypnotic audio experience.

The same can be said for the music in "Paint"—an original composition which borrows thematic elements off Blue Man Group's '99 album, *Audio*. The spot's track was composed by Goldman, Stanton and Wink, in collaboration with composers/arrangers James Wolcott and Tara Gregory of New York-based Wax Music & Sound Design, which recorded and produced the music.

The commercial opens on a wide shot of white background punctuated by three black squares. Two of the Blue Men climb out of two of the black squares, while the other Blue Man enters frame from above. As his cohorts watch earnestly, the lone Blue Man (Wink) rappels down the white wall, painting a neon-green stripe with a paint roller as he descends. The stripe ends just above one of the black squares, creating a makeshift exclamation point. Taking on the challenge, the second Blue Man (Stanton) pushes out a huge catapult that he uses to fire large green paint balls into the air. They splatter against the white canvas, creating another stripe alongside the first.



Exclaimation points courtesy of the Blue Man Group.

The two Blue Men then turn to the third (Goldman), who one-ups the previous feats. He picks up a can of green paint and dumps it over his head. Thus adorned, he seats himself in the catapult and launches skyward. He smacks against the canvas and, as his body slides down, it creates the third vertical green stripe. He reaches the ground and collapses, falling backward, out of frame, as his two colleagues stare.

A Blue Man goes splat.

A bit of seamless post wizardry created an extreme zoom backward. Through it the three painted exclamation points become the "III" in the Pentium Processor III supered text that comes up. A voiceover says, "Get the power of three—the Intel Pentium III Processor." The spot concludes with a shot of the Intel logo and Intel's signature four-note music sequence.

"Paint" is one of four spots in a campaign featuring Blue Man Group that also includes "Keys," "Treadmill" and "Rocket Launcher." MVBMS creative director North America Larry Silberfein, who served as copywriter for "Paint," explained that with the current influx of dot-com advertising on the airwaves, Intel and the agency decided they needed a strong branding campaign. "[We needed] something that cut through all the clutter," he pointed out, "and by the end of the commercial, the one thing you'd know for sure was that this was an Intel Pentium III commercial."

Besides Silberfein, the agency team consisted of worldwide creative director/partner Michael Lee, who serves as creative director on Intel; creative director North America Walt Connelly, who was the art director; senior producer Joe Guyt and assistant producer Lia Perretti.

Silberfein added that he can't remember how the idea of Blue Man Group came up. But the creatives realized that the trio was, in some respects, a perfect fit for the client. "On a superficial level, they're blue and the Intel logo is blue," noted Silberfein. "But when we dug deeper, we realized there were very strong similarities between the two. The group's sensibility and approach is very similar to Intel's; they have a sort of tech-y quality about them that Intel has. There's an innovative, fresh approach they have of looking at things ... every time they pick something up, [it's as if] they're exploring it in detail for the first time. Intel also has that sense of being very innovative, very discovery-oriented. Also, the humor of Blue Man Group fit very nicely with Intel's."

The spot was a collaborative effort between the agency, Blue Man Group and Kellogg. After MVBMS created the ad's basic premise, noted Silberfein, the team worked with Wink, Stanton and Goldman, who embellished it. For instance, the original notion of throwing paintballs against the wall was altered to a catapult at the suggestion of the group, which uses one in its act.

The spot was shot over two days at London-based stage Black Island against a 24' x 24' white cyclorama. Among the challenges was the makeup, which ran under prolonged exposure to hot lights. The grease base that Blue Man Group uses in its two-hour-long live show wouldn't hold up for the two-day shoot required by "Paint."

"At one point we were blowing a really fine powder on top of the makeup to dull the shine," said Kellogg. "The next issue became that the [skullcap surface] was so smooth that it reflected the lighting set-up on their heads. We then changed the makeup. But it was incredibly hot for them, and they'd start sweating under their skullcaps. A bunch of water would collect at the base of the skullcaps, and we had to poke holes in them."

Kellogg related that they filmed the spot with the green stripes already painted on the wall. Visual effects supervisor/Inferno artist/online editor Simon Scott of Santa Monica-based Method traveled to London to oversee the shoot. In the post process, Scott first erased the stripes and then made them gradually reveal themselves in synch with the performers' actions.

One concern was how much splatter should be on the second stripe. "We ended up making these fake splatters that are like the fake vomit things you buy at gag stores," Kellogg recalled. "We also shot separate splats so you could see them hit the wall."

The catapult shot was achieved with a stuntman who was pulled on wires controlled by pulleys. But due to equipment problems, said Kellogg, "The guy was never consistently pulled out of the seat, and you'd have to keep doing it [until you

Continued on page 14

TOP SPOT OF THE WEEK

CLIENT
INTEL/PENTIUM III PROCESSORS

PRODUCTION CO.
ANONYMOUS, BICOASTAL
David Kellogg, director; Stephen Keith-Roach, DP; Andy Trailes, executive producer; John Bramble, art director.
ACADEMY COMMERCIALS, LONDON
Mark Whitlow-Williams, executive producer. Shot at Black Island Studios, London.

AGENCY
MESSNER VETERE BERGER MCNAMEE SCHMETTERER/EURO RSCG, NEW YORK
Michael Lee, worldwide creative director/partner/creative director; Larry Silberfein, creative director North America/copywriter; Walt Connelly, creative director North America/art director; Joe Guyt, senior producer; Lia Perretti, assistant producer.

EDITORIAL
THE FIRM, LONDON
Marc Langley, editor; Melanie Baker, assistant editor.

POST
RIOT, SANTA MONICA
Kim Muller, colorist.

VISUAL EFFECTS
METHOD, SANTA MONICA
Simon Scott, visual effects supervisor/Inferno artist/online editor; Mark Coulianos, executive producer.

AUDIO POST
POP SOUND, SANTA MONICA
Loren Silber, mixer.

MUSIC
WAX MUSIC & SOUND DESIGN, NEW YORK
Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink (Blue Man Group); composers/James Wolcott and Tara Gregory, composers/arrangers; Gary Sutcliffe, executive producer.

SOUND DESIGN
MACHINE HEAD, VENICE, CALIF.
Stephen Dewey and Mike Johnson, sound designers.

BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 6609

PR WEEK
NEW YORK, NY
49-TIMES/YEAR 20,000
MAR 18 2002

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Newton... *has helped draw top performers to the USO tour*

USO has new top brass to clarify its nonprofit status

By Phil Rabin 3755

WASHINGTON: The United Service Organization (USO), which became a household name by sending performers overseas to entertain US servicemen and women, has a new senior vice president of marketing and communications.

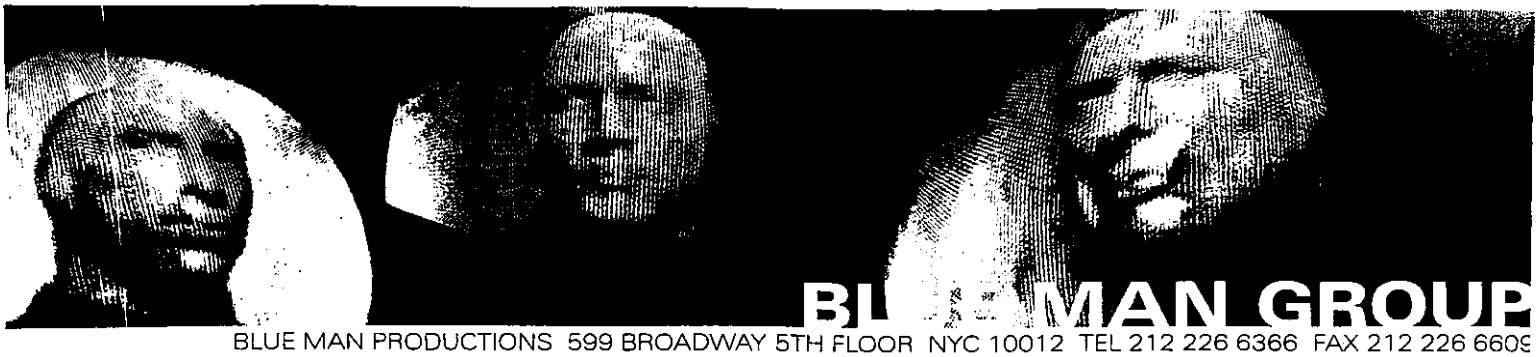
John Hanson, formerly VP of communications at Very Special Arts, will report to Edward Powell, newly appointed president and CEO of the 61-year-old organization.

Despite its longevity and visibility, the USO must still explain to people "who we are," said Hanson. He stated that many people think the USO is part of the federal government when, in fact, it is a private organization that must compete with other nonprofits for funds.

The USO has two ongoing projects: maintaining 122 service centers, and engineering worldwide tours by performers.

The appointment of Wayne Newton as chairman of the USO Celebrity Circle in October 2001 helped bring renewed awareness to the USO, and more participation from entertainers.

Late last year, Mariah Carey, Drew Carey, Jessica Simpson, Peter MacNicol, and Jennifer Lopez made their first USO tours. In addition, performers such as Jay Leno, Wayne Newton, and the Dallas Cowboys cheerleaders went overseas to entertain US fighting forces during the December holiday season.



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BILLBOARD
NEW YORK, NY
WEEKLY 48,692
JUL 5 2003

Burrelle's
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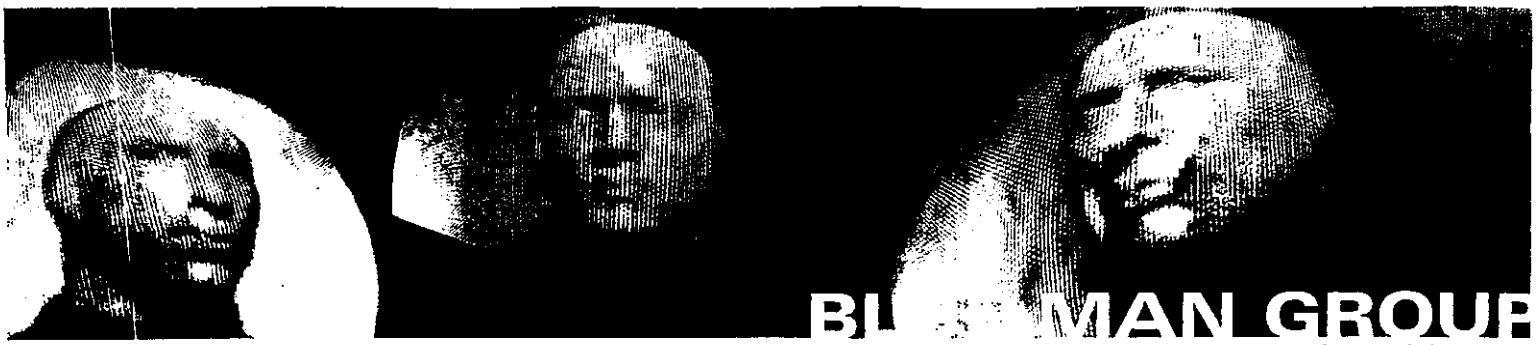
Rossdale Gets Blue

Bush's Gavin Rossdale recently teamed with **Blue Man Group** at an abandoned power plant in Redondo Beach, Calif., for the video shoot for "The Current." The track is from Blue Man Group's disc "The Complex"; it is also being used in the upcoming film "Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines." The video, directed by **Jeff Mann**, was shot at the plant to capture the movie's mechanical theme.



BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 660

ADVERTISING AGE
NEW YORK, NY
WEEKLY 85,000
FEB 19 2001

[redacted]

BURRELLE'S

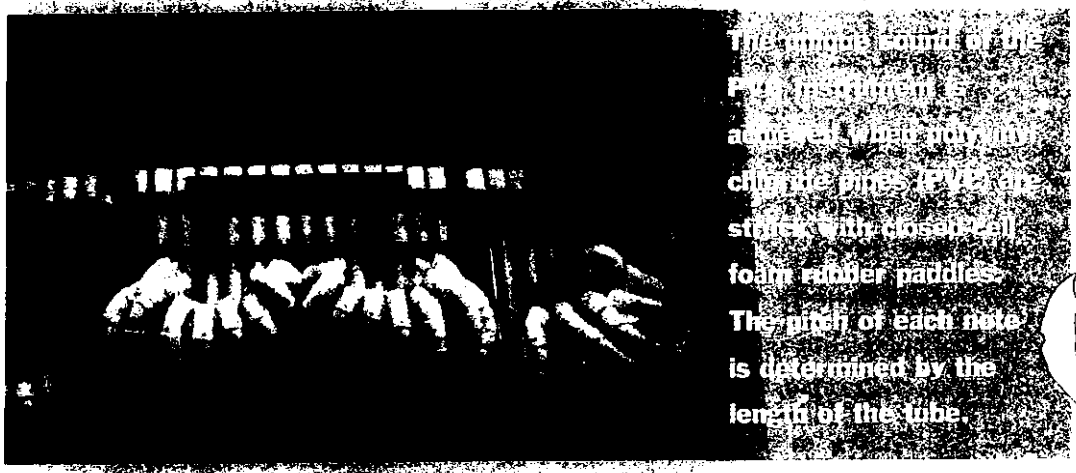
3755

Intel breaks campaign for Pentium 4 processor

As first reported on AdAge.com on Feb. 14, Intel Corp. on Feb. 19 unleashes a $300 million global ad campaign supporting its Pentium 4 microprocessor, initially with three 30-second TV spots breaking on network broadcasts. The campaign, created by Intel agency Messner Vetere Berger McNamee Schmetterer/Euro RSCG, New York, features performance artists Blue Man Group in TV and online ads with the new tagline: "The Pentium 4 processor. The center of your digital world." Print ads are expected later this year, and outdoor is under consideration. Online advertising was created by Modem Media, San Francisco.

Music of a Sears?

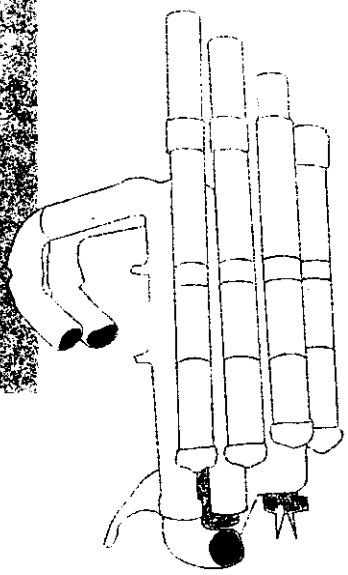
The Blue Man Group began in 1988 in New York. Since then, the group's performances in New York, Chicago, Boston and Las Vegas have been filled with instruments of their own design. But the music they make is not from fancy instruments from an orchestra. Many of them are made of twisting PVC tubing. This look has become something of a trademark for them. But the sounds of the instruments are unique to the Blue Men as well. Sometimes they look like a trombone a plumber would play. Others are huge drums with mallets made of LED screens. Still others resemble hollow, white curly fries played with paddles. According to Phil Stanton, "When the Blue Man Group started to work together, we felt the only way we could be good musicians was to build the instruments ourselves." Over time, the common language of the Blue Men has become their music. It allows them to communicate ideas and emotions. It reveals excitement, confusion, celebration, curiosity and humor.



The unique sound of the PVC instrument is achieved when polyvinyl chloride pipes (PVC pipes) are struck with closed-cell foam rubber paddles. The pitch of each note is determined by the length of the tube.

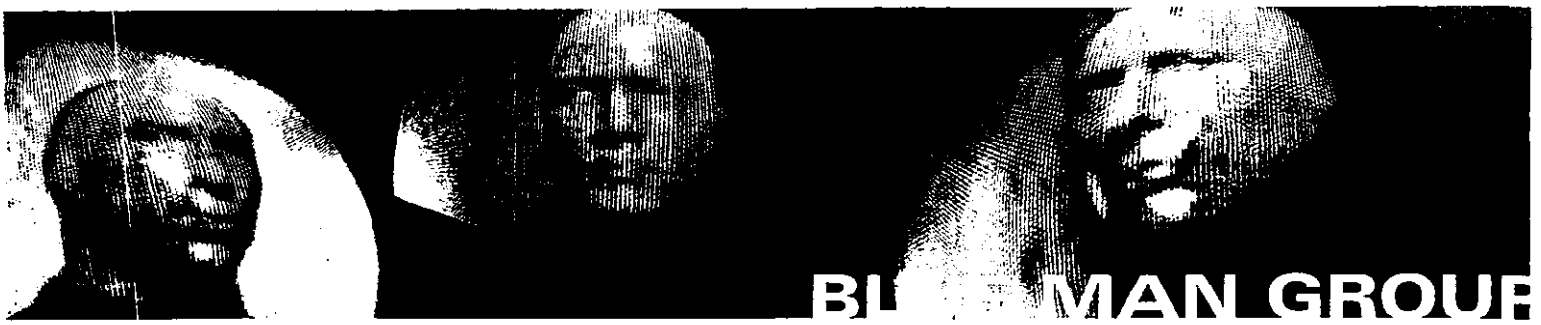
"The Blue Man character seemed to drum more than anything else," explains Phil. "The Blue Men wanted to express themselves and what they saw in a modern way. But they wanted to make melody at the same time." So, the Blue Men ended up searching for sound in local hardware stores in New York. There, they experimented with the sounds of PVC tubing and the odd noises it made when hit with a xylophone-like mallet. "We liked the noises the tubes made because they sounded like a synthesizer but they weren't," remembers Phil. "People have been hitting tubes like that for thousands of years. This seemed to put the modern and the ancient world in the same place."

The Angel Air Poles are balanced instruments that can reach extremely fast tempos.



The three Backpack Tubulums pack all the percussive wallop of the PVC Instrument. This one is portable, though!

The Wiper Air Poles are up to 18 feet in length and play at slower tempos.



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ADWEEK/EASTERN EDITION

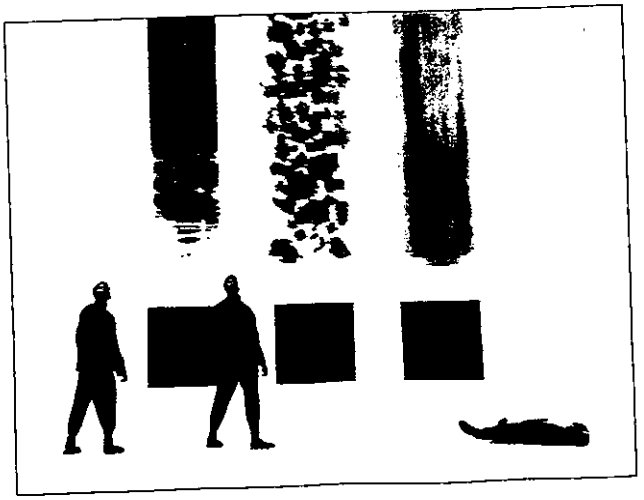
NEW YORK, NY
WEEKLY 43,219
JAN 1 2001

I also find the ongoing poetry of the entire Volkswagen campaign incredible. It brings art to commerce. And the wonderful Intel spots featuring the Blue Man Group brings performance art to commerce. This is a great marriage of brand and troupe: the futuristically skullcapped, blankfaced but bluefaced group always reminded me of machines with silicon chips under their caps. Intel could be inside.

The Intel spots have a stripped-down visual look that's memorable, but also a neural sophistication that goes with the complicated work of the Pentium 3 processor. The colors are blazing, and the group's wordless work is charming.

To create the three blue stripes of the Pentium 3 logo, the theatrical trio catapults paint against a blank white wall. In another, a blue man shimmies down the wall, making body art.

My fave involves a huge three-keyed blue xylophone. The combination of the graphic simplicity and almost primal action is smart—as if they are giving birth to this great new thing. By the way, this exposure should also do for Blue Man Group what *Cast Away* does for Fed Ex.



Intel

Continued from page 12

got it right]. Or then the catapult would work great, but maybe the guy didn't wave his arms enough or looked out of control." Still, it was the paint-drenched Goldman who slid down the wall, which was built on an incline. "It was leaning a little bit," noted Kellogg, "so that he'd stay on the wall but also slide down."

Kellogg added that one performer had the flu and another had to deal with a hernia, but ultimately they all came through like champions: "They were totally into it."

AMERICA WEST
AIRLINES MAGAZINE
AUGUST 2001 • VOLUME 18, NUMBER 6

Code Blue

If Chris Wink were sitting in the seat next to you right now, he might come across as a bit evasive. That's because he doesn't like the standard small-talk opener, "So what do you do?"

"I always avoid that question," says the 40-year-old Wink, one of the three co-founders of Blue Man Group, the bald, blue guys on the Intel Pentium 4 television commercials. "It's just too hard to explain."

At its simplest, Blue Man Group is a multisensory experience that combines theater, music, art and vaudeville into a form of entertainment that is like nothing else. "It's part rock concert, part improv live theater and part science fair from the fourth dimension," says Wink. "Blue Man is a character who's exploring things from our culture. He's not an alien, but he is an outsider. He's intrigued by disposable packaging, by Twinkies, by food that's sold by how loud the crunch is."

BLUE MAN GROUP PRODUCTIONS.

Hued crew: three of the 33 members of performance-art troupe Blue Man Group.

The show follows three identical, interchangeable Blue Men as they explore and experiment in this foreign world—conducting a dueling banjos-style drumming competition on oversized instruments, unfurling thousands of feet of crepe paper, building a sculpture out of marshmallows, and turning the crunch, crunch, crunch of Cap'n Crunch into a song. But, Wink warns, Blue Man is not simply a slapstick food fight: "We are proud of how beautiful the show is: the staging, the lighting. We're serious students of comedy—Buster Keaton, the Marx Brothers—but we also take the stage craft of creating a breathtaking experience seriously, and we take our music seriously."

Ah, yes, their music. . .yet another area that

Clown collectibles are on display in *Under the Big Top.*

This, That & The Other

This: Ladies, gentlemen, boys and girls can step right up for a sneak peak at circus life at *Under the Big Top*, an exhibit featuring more than 200 artifacts that highlight the art and science behind the entertainment. Through Sept. 9 at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago. (773) 684-9844.

That: For a more in-depth immersion, head to the Circus Hall of Fame in Peru, Indiana (60 miles from Indianapolis), where area farmlands once served as winter quarters for large circuses. A museum on the grounds explores circus history year-round, while live parades and performances draw crowds every day during summer (through Sept. 3 this year). (800) 771-0241.

The Other: If you'd rather join a circus than see one, consider taking a class at the San Francisco School of Circus Arts, offering everything from acrobatics and clowning to juggling and wire walking—the perfect prerequisite for taking your own act on the road. (415) 759-8123.

—Sonya Goodwin Hemmings

defies conventional description. Performed on instruments they've created—including the 14-foot, 1,000-pound "tubulum" made from PVC plumbing pipes and the three-story-high "drumbone," a percussion instrument that slides like a trombone and requires all three characters just to create a few notes—their music has won critical acclaim. Their debut album, *Audio*, was nominated for a Grammy in February. And Blue Man co-founders Wink, Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton are currently in the studio recording their second album, due out in summer 2002.

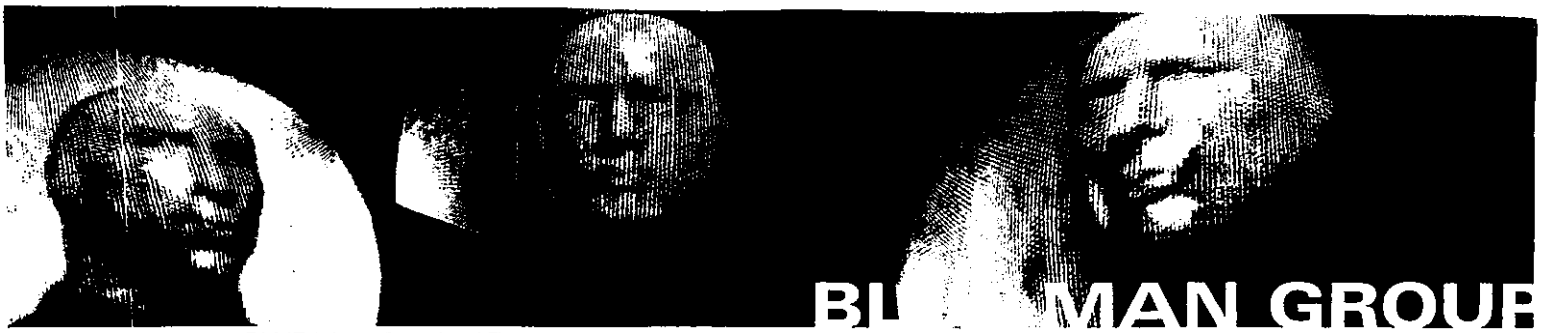
The three friends never imagined they'd reach this level of success back in 1988, when, along with a few others they'd met at informal salon gatherings for performing artists in New York, they first donned "blue face" as a gag to stage a mock funeral for the '80s in Central Park. That event struck a chord with the three, and they decided to pursue this blue-ness. Wink and Stanton were drummers, so they started playing with ideas of how they could combine their love of rhythm with the fun of performance art, all the while keeping their day jobs (Goldman, for one, was a software producer with an MBA). They began performing on the streets of Manhattan and at nightclubs during open-mike nights, and then incredibly, after receiving a three-minute standing ovation at a performance-art festival at Lincoln Center, a couple of producers offered to finance them in an off-Broadway show.

Today, Blue Man Group Productions comprises a cast of 32 Blue Men—and one Blue Woman—performing permanent, consistently sold-out shows in Las Vegas, New York, Chicago and Boston. The company employs nearly 500 people, including four whose sole job is to travel around the world searching for new Blue Men. They're looking for men and women with both acting and drumming skills who are within their height requirements (between 5 feet 10 inches and 6 feet 1 inch tall)—cast-

BLUE MAN GROUP PRODUCTIONS.

Paint job: Blue Man Group's onstage antics are replete with flying colors.

On 'Fame': "A good reputation is better than fame." *—Louis Dudek*



BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 660

TRAVELAGE WEST
SAN FRANCISCO, CA
WEEKLY 38,200
DEC 11 2000

Burrelle's
INFORMATION SERVICES

LAS VEGAS

A Blue Bonanza

Avant-garde theater troupe succeeds with Las Vegas audiences

By Kathy Espin

When the long-running off-Broadway hit "The Blue Man Group — Live at Luxor" came to Las Vegas last March, local nabobs expressed skepticism. How in the world would the average Las Vegas visitor, hardly known for avant-garde taste and sophistication, take to a group of blue grease-painted clowns spitting paint and chomping Cap'n Crunch into a microphone to the percussive sounds of loud, tribal music?

The answer, several months later, is "very well, thank you."

"We just expanded to a 12-show, seven-days-a-week schedule," said Manny Igrejas, Blue Man Group public relations director. "We pumped up our performance schedule due to an increase in demand. You know, most places we go, people have doubts, but this show comes to stay. It's a keeper."

Igrejas said the show's appeal is the Blue Man. "People like it because, at the core, there's a character who people just like," he said.

Igrejas is referring to the three main characters he says are really one person in three different bodies. The characters do not speak but, with body language and tons of slapstick, say volumes. The Blue Men represent other-worldly beings who are fascinated with humans and make nontraditional use of the artifacts they find here on Earth, such as turning PVC pipe into fantastic musical instruments.

The show grew out of a series of salon-style meetings in New York in 1987. The Blue Men played street corners across from Broadway theaters in New York for awhile, then opened off-Broadway at the Astor Place Theater in 1991. The show has played to packed houses ever since.

Founders Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink played the central characters for three years without understudies. When the show expanded to Boston in 1995 and Chicago in 1997, new Blue Men were trained. Today, 30 actors take turns starring in the four cities in which the show runs.

Of the four, the Las Vegas show is the biggest and most technologically advanced, Igrejas said.

"Because of the scale (of the 1,200-seat theater) and the space that was available, there were enhancements that were created to fill the space. The last third of the show is brand new material created just for Las Vegas," he said.

Photo by Jim Porto

The Blue Men make nontraditional use of the artifacts they find on Earth, such as turning PVC pipe into fantastic musical instruments.

And fill the space they do. The first third of the show features silent comedy; the Blue Men play with their environment, the audience members and, well, their food. Twinkies, Jello, marshmallows and the above-mentioned Cap'n Crunch

Continued on page 44

LAS VEGAS

Blue Man Group

Continued from page 41

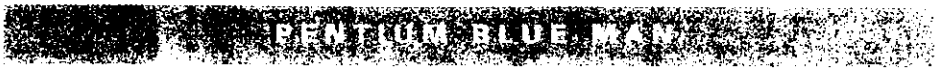
are put to unconventional use with hilarious effect. The last two-thirds is a high-tech extravaganza that plays with neon, black light, video cameras, strobe lights and LCD displays.

"Las Vegas is such an entertainment-saturated market that you have to really be good to get their attention," Igrejas said. "Once we get them inside the theater, we have to really wow them."

"Blue Man Group — Live at Luxor" is presented at 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, and at 10 p.m. Tuesdays and Fridays.

Tickets are $55 and $65.

Call 702-262-4400 or 800-288-1000. ■



A pair of young travelers passing through the baggage claim area of Las Vegas' McCarran International Airport recently looked up and spied a huge poster for "Blue Man Group — Live at Luxor" high overhead.

"Hey, it's the guys from the Pentium commercial," said the young man.

The Blue Men have achieved new fame and fortune from appearances in two national television ads for Pentium III. In one, the Blue Men use the three green slashes in the logo as piano keys; in another, they paint the logo in unconventional ways, Blue Man-style. The ads are seen daily in all major markets.

The national exposure has created a buzz that has made the show even more popular in all four of the cities in which it plays.

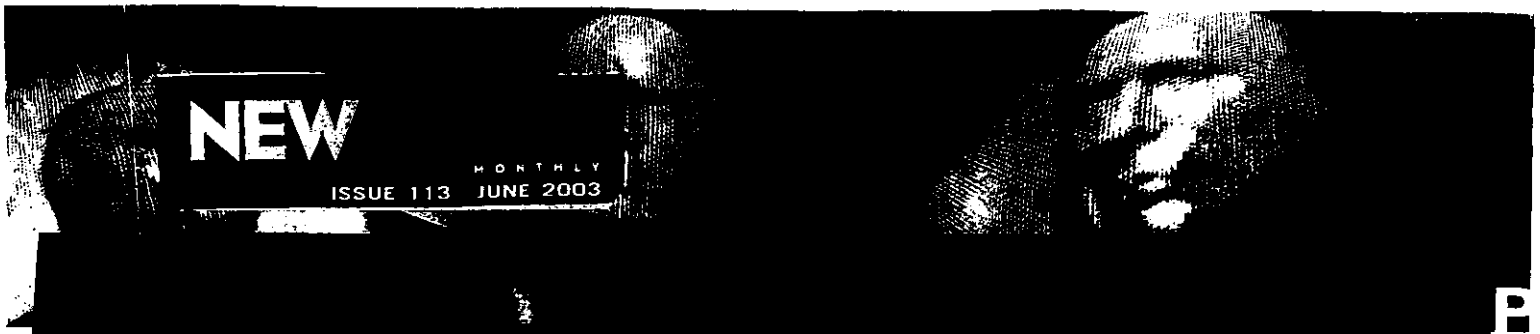
"Boy, have they raised the bar," said Manny Igrejas, Blue Man Group public relations director. "You can just feel the wave all across the organization. Not a lot of people can afford to buy that kind of commercial time."

Igrejas said the group has been approached to do ads and promotional appearances but "we just don't do that," he said.

However, Pentium approached the company with really creative ideas that fit with the Blue Man image and theme.

"It certainly hasn't hurt. It's provided a nice boom. Now, everybody that you couldn't reach before, you've just reached," Igrejas said. "It's a beautiful thing."

— Kathy Espin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MONTHLY
ISSUE 113 JUNE 2003

WHEN THE BLUE MAN GROUP STARTS A ROCK BAND it's a little more involved than three guys in a van. The tour for *The Complex* (Lava) features four drummers, two singer guitarists, a bassist, Venus Hum and Tracy Bonham on vocals and three Blue Men going apeshit on as many custom instruments as can fit on a stage. Their workhorse (and the first instrument they designed) is the cleverly titled "PVC instrument" (pictured), one part whack-a-mole and two parts Giger-esque piping nightmare, and capable of both percolating plinks and low bass thwacks.

"[At first] you had to build one instrument for each song, says Michael "Puck" Quinn, the group's artistic director, "because once you glued the pipes together they were stuck that way. You tune those things with a sander or file and shave it down... [Luckily] the tubes stay consistent. They tend to get a little sharper in the winter but other than that they'll probably stay at that pitch for a half-life of like 10,000 years." The introduction of interchangeable and moveable pipes led to other PVCs like the tuba-dwarfing Drumbone and the Backpack Tubulum, which doubles as mobile musical instrument and gizmo-laden rocket launcher. In addition to the biggest drums, well, ever ("We have drums that are so big they won't go through the [venue] door," Puck says), the Blue Men will roll out a new instrument for this tour. Introducing the Piano Smasher, a baby grand flipped sideways, tuned to a single note and then walloped with a cartoon-sized rubber mallet, which will be used for both the *Complex* song that bears its name and to replace the Who's epic piano chords on a PVC-ized live cover of "Baba O'Riley." And while more thought goes into the design of a Blue Man show than into a Broadway musical, they'd rather not think about the safety concerns of pounding 88 taut steel cords with a mallet. "We don't talk about that," Puck laughs. "We have lots of instruments that could take your eyes out."

DIVERSE TASTES SEEN IN ACADEMY PICKS

(Continued from page 1)

expressing such candor in the wake of Grammy victory. After U2 scored its awards—including the most wins in the major categories, with "Beautiful Day" earning both record of the year and song of the year honors—front man Bono proudly noted that it was apparently "our turn to be in the sunshine, and it's a great feeling."

He showed minor surprise at the band's multiple wins, adding that he had predicted that U2 would have to wait another year for Grammy recognition. "We thought we'd come here to reintroduce ourselves, [and] it would take three or four songs from [*All That You Can't Leave Behind* (Interscope)] for people to get what it's about." Nevertheless, "Beautiful Day" has been widely acknowledged as indicative of the band's rediscovered artistic confidence.

THE OUTSIDERS ARE IN

For Steely Dan's Walter Becker, winning the album of the year race for acclaimed Warner Bros. opus *Two Against Nature* was a "tribute to our fans and the people who have survived all these years."

Bandmate Donald Fagen glibly added that scoring three Grammy nods put the act in in danger of losing its well-cultivated "outsider status" within the industry. He also said that the act planned to rebound from its year in the spotlight by "resuming our normal lives as shut-ins—and getting back to making new music."

STEELY DAN

Faith Hill, arguably the crowd favorite of the evening, also said she was planning to "relax and take some time off the road," following her marathon tour behind the Warner Bros. epic *Breathe*, which was honored as best country album. She revealed that she's also eyeing the prospect of taking the leap into acting. "We're looking at a few scripts right now. I think we'll decide on something soon."

Beyond the top winners, the Grammy field was flush with diversity, with honors going to a healthy balance of newcomers and veterans.

"Thank God for Johnny Cash," exclaimed venerable singer/songwriter (and 1999 Billboard Century Award winner) Emmylou Harris as she accepted the best contemporary folk album award for her exceptional *Red Dirt Girl*. The artist was referring to her longtime friend's recent recovery from pneumonia. (Cash won best male country vocal performance for "Solitary Man.") Backstage, Harris was buoyed by news of Cash's release from the hospital but added that, regardless, it's not easy "to see your friends suffer and go through moments of pain."

Shifting her attention to the success of *Red Dirt Girl*, Harris praised her label, Nonesuch, for "knowing how to properly promote a record to the left field. There are people in this business who can learn from the way this label has been committed to finding people who are interested in more than the mainstream. You don't need radio airplay to have a hit record. You have to be more creative and imaginative about marketing music."

In the rock music field, Foo Fighters nabbed two awards: best rock album for the Roswell/RCA set *Nothing Left to Lose* and best shortform music video for "Learn to Fly," which it shared with director Jesse Peretz and producer Tina Nakane.

Despite the multiple honors, head Foo Fighter Dave Grohl joked backstage that "we're not big winners. We're actually big losers." He later noted that the band will soon enter the studio to begin working on a new record, due early next year.

Although Capitol quintet Radiohead failed to win the coveted album of the year trophy, it did snag best alternative rock album honors for the acclaimed *Kid A*, which will be followed in June by *Amnesiac*, a set of other tunes created during the *Kid A* sessions.

"We originally considered releasing a double-album but eventually decided that it would be more effect divide the into two di tive-sets," Radiohead m Ed O'Brien, that the act rently prepa tour that wil it to U.S. sho summer. "Th album is song-driven.'

In the R&B race, D'Angelo dominated the field, earning nods for best male R&B vocal performance for "Untitled (How Does It Feel?)" and best R&B album for the Virgin set *Voodoo*. The most memorable moment of the presentation of awards in that genre, however, was provided by Otis Williams, the lone original member of enduring Motown act the Temptations. He accepted the group's award in the best traditional R&B vocal album category for *Ear-Resistible* by declaring, "People keep writing us off, but we're gonna ride to hell on this horse before we're finished."

Hosted by comedian Jon Stewart, this year's Grammys were held at the Staples Center in Los Angeles. At press time, CBS-TV reported that the telecast had a preliminary national rating of 16.9 and a 26 audience share. That translates into approximately 27 million viewers, according to the network. Viewership for the program was up 8% among the 18-34 age demographic from last year—the show's best numbers among that demo since 1993.

BL MAN GROUP
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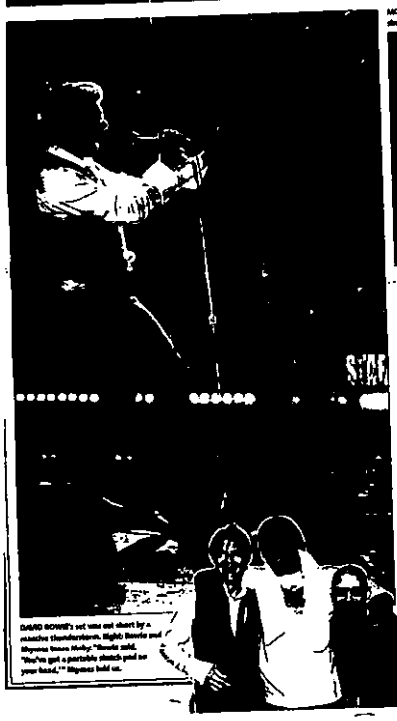
ROCK&ROLL



Area2: The "Aliens" Tour

Moby, Bowie and several other extraterrestrials invade New York

SEMICONSCIOUS AFTER THREE HOURS OF SLEEP, Moby still knew what his Area2 festival was all about. "Space aliens," he said firmly. "Bowie, Busta, Blue Man Group, myself – we're all space aliens." When Area2 came to Jones Beach Theater in Wantagh, New York, on August 2nd, David Bowie was the unquestioned leader of the extraterrestrials. "General Bowie!" cried Busta Rhymes when he saw him backstage. Bowie introduced him to wife Iman, who proclaimed herself a huge Busta fan. Moby was the show closer, at Bowie's insistence – he wanted to drive

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

METALLICA's new album; plus the Beasties, Pearl Jam, other Nineties rock stars missing in action PAGE 25

GRATEFUL DEAD live again; plus news on their upcoming fifteen-date tour PAGE 32

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home and see his baby daughter after the East Coast dates. "Bowie hasn't seen us yet," said Blue Man Chris Bowen, "but he told us he would once we got out 'into the wilderness.' " "My favorite moment," said Moby, "is when Bowie walks out and does 'Life on Mars?' – just him and his piano. His performance is very elegant and has a quality of reserve, while mine is a big, nasty, bombastic thing." —GAVIN EDWARDS

Last year, at Area2 One, the dance tent was almost too crowded for dancing; this year, it has grown. "I haven't eaten much," said DJ JOHN DIGWEED (above). "I don't want to be running off to the toilet halfway through the set."

BLUE MAN GROUP use instruments of their own invention, such as the percussion tubes you see here, in addition to four drummers and a five-piece band. "Their set is fucking unbelievable," raved Busta Rhymes.

ASH (lead singer Tim Wheeler, above) were the first band onstage, at 4 P.M., rocking the empty seats (right) with their excellent Irish buzz-saw pop. Says Wheeler, "We want them dancing like crack-smoking hippies."

Rights Fight

Guest-Artist Phenom Causes Trouble

BY MICHAEL PAOLETTA

Fabolous has done it. So have Kid Rock, Lil' Kim, Santana, 50 Cent, Blue Man Group, and Blu Cantrell, among others.

Though these artists have done nothing more than feature other artists on their records, they're causing quite a stir.

In recent weeks, the featured-artist phenomenon has resulted in squabbles among labels over the singles rights to such tracks. This has led to new versions, featuring different artists, being worked to radio.

Case in point: The original Lava/Atlantic album version of Rock's "Picture" featured Sheryl Crow. But the song was later rerecorded with Allison Moorer.

"This whole phenomenon bleeds over from the hip-hop and rap world," says Lee Trink, senior VP of marketing at Lava.

According to Trink, Rock and Crow knew each other. Recording the song was a natural, organic process for them, and it was probably done without thinking what label would get the rights to the single.

Lava/Atlantic was not given singles rights from Crow's label, A&M/Interscope. At the time Lava/Atlantic went to radio with "Picture," Crow was promoting a new album and single. "We didn't want to compete with her," Trink explains.

Enter Universal South artist Moorer, who performed "Picture" live with Rock last year. This performance paved the way for the rerecording. Universal South released this version as the commercial single.

While Universal South delivered that version to country radio, Lava/Atlantic did the same with other formats. But a strange thing happened.

"Stations began playing the original album version," Trink says. "You can't

(Continued on page 69)

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ued from page 5

nt a radio station from playing an
n track."
word spread among radio, the orig-
ersion was added to more stations.
then, Crow was nearing the end of
romotion cycle for her own album.
, Trink says, "we went back to her
After reconsidering the situation, we
ed to actively promote the original
n—while Universal South contin-
orking with country radio." Stations
d the version that fit their format.

)O MUCH ISN'T A GOOD THING

ontrolling an artist's image and the
of overexposure are major factors
a label considers granting singles
ts. Being featured on too many
rds can dilute that artist's impact,
label executive says.
ne current Lil' Kim hit, "Magic
" featuring 50 Cent, was deliber-
y not promoted to radio at the
est of the rapper's label.
rt that did not stop radio from play-
the album track.
lantic's urban CMI Ronnie John-
tells *Billboard* the label didn't get
les rights for the track, "but if we
, we would have been able to ag-
sively promote and market the
rd. We would have had the tools,
a video and maybe even perform-
e opportunities. This would have
wed us to expand the sales and air-
on the record."
he reality is that "sometimes radio,
t did in this particular case, dictat-
that this was an official single,"
rson says.
f oversaturation is a concern for
ds, it should be noted that 50 Cent's
singles still performed well while he
participating on the Lil' Kim track.
n the best cases, singles-rights
rements stipulate that a record
st be released or serviced to radio
certain date to prevent interfering
h the featured artist's own record.
Earlier this year, Lava released Blue
n Group's second album, *The Connection*. It featured several guest turns by,
ong others, Dave Matthews ("Sing
ng"), Venus Hum (a cover of Donna
mmer's "I Feel Love"), and Gavin
ssdale ("The Current").
The label received single rights for
lead single, "Sing Along," and its
low-up, "The Current."
"Sing Along" was released at the
t time, Blue Man Group co-founder
dit Goldman says. "We were lucky
at Dave had a gap between albums.
agreed that this should be a single."
Ditto for Lava and Matthews'
ief, RCA.
Goldman notes that "Sing Along" was
corded with no guarantee of getting
gles rights. "But it's become such a
ve song that we could never have
corded the song with another artist."

ORIGINAL OR REMIX?

Radio is not so concerned about the
fficial" single. In its original album
rsion, Fabolous' new single, "Into
u," features Ashanti, while the video
ant a rerecorded version spotlights
Fabolous labelmate Tamia.

For the most part, PDs say they are sticking to the original version of the song.

"Our stations are all playing [the version by] Fabolous and Ashanti, because that's the only version CD buyers have and can hear," says Steve Hegwood, owner of R&B group On-Top Broadcasting, which has stations in Norfolk, Va., and New Orleans, among other markets.

"When the video hits, we'll decide if we switch versions," he adds.

Jack Spade, PD of R&B WQSL/WQZL New Bern, N.C., is opting for the Ashanti version. He cites its "smoother sound," which makes it "a better fit for the song."

Ken Johnson, who oversees the R&B outlets of Cumulus Broadcasting, acknowledges that a number of PDs have gone with the rerecorded version.

"I like to stick to versions of songs that record companies are pushing, because of the possible additional exposure it may or should be getting, meaning video play and other stations," Johnson says.

Echoing label concerns, some PDs say Ashanti may be over-exposed.

"We're playing the Tamia version simply because we have a lot of Ashanti on the air already," says R. Dub, PD of rhythmic top 40 KQHT Tucson, Ariz.

But that's hard to square with the reality of stations playing between four or five 50 Cent singles on any given day.

Erik Johnson, PD of rhythmic top 40 KQCH Omaha, Neb., says that if the singles rights issue was not a problem, radio would "avoid the confusion of the remix. It would also create less confusion regarding [music research] hooks."

Some PDs say the confusion goes deeper than simply figuring out which version to play listeners in callout research.

"In addition to the different performers, [even] the various mixes that are available to radio that don't make it to the consumer are an additional source of frustration," says Tracy Johnson, CHPD of adult top 40 KPMB San Diego.

Cumulus' Johnson says listeners understand there are multiple versions of a song, because "they are always on the Internet and all over BET and MTV. They will be aware of the controversy."

R&B KVLG Las Vegas is playing the Tamia version of "Into You." PD Sherita Saulsberry says that at first, "listeners were definitely confused. We received numerous calls from the listeners correcting the jocks: 'It's Ashanti, not Tamia; I have the album.' At one point, my jocks were just announcing Fabolous. Now the confusion has cleared and the listeners understand that there are two versions. If the second version is just as good or even better, who cares? It's a bonus for music lovers."

Mike Parsons, PD of modern AC KPEK Albuq.erque, N.M., disagrees.

"It must suck for a listener to realize $18 later' that a song they purchased is "no: exactly the song they heard and loved," he says. "I'm sick of getting the CD that has a rock mix, alternative mix, dance mix, country mix, and polka mix. The artist recorded the song a certain way. Leave it alone. Remember when we actually thought of music as art, not product?"

Additional reporting by Roshaun Hall and Sean Ross in New York.

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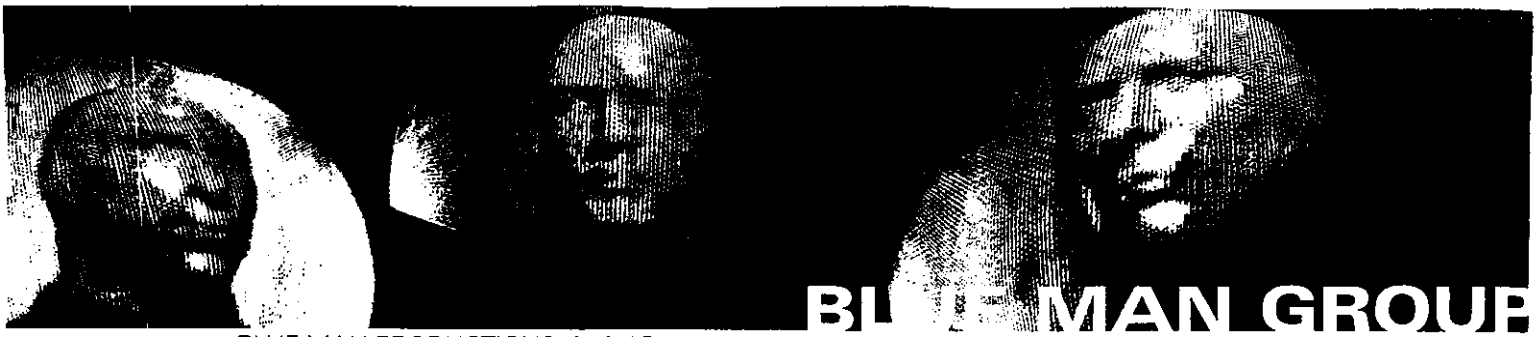


BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 660

Chris Wink, founding member of Blue Man Group: "The gunbursh effects are meant to have an emotional effect rather than an intellectual one."

Blue Man Group

Unique Sound & Vision on DVD

by Terence P. Keegan

For the past 10 years, the Blue Man Group has enjoyed a popular residency in Manhattan with a live theatrical show driven by dense peals of percussion and visually striking, otherworldly-sounding, custom-built instruments, with names like the "Drumbone," the "Tubulum," the "Shaker Gong" and the "Angel Air Poles."

It's not surprising that two years ago, when the group's founders finally found time to record an album, they latched onto surround sound with the same aggressive zeal as their music and performance. Even less of a surprise is the fact that their resultant DVD, *Audio*, is one of the freshest demonstrations of what artists are capable of conveying with DVD and surround sound over CD and stereo.

Following *Audio*'s DVD release late this past winter (the CD was released late in 1999 on Virgin Records), Blue Man founders Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink are holed up in their East Village recording and rehearsal space, conceiving of a new surround album. (A team of 30 Blue Men now perform ongoing shows in New York, Boston, Chicago and Las Vegas.) Multiple customized drum kits litter the warehouse-like space, with homemade PVC-pipe percussion monstrosities crowding the perimeter. One entire wall is lined from floor to 20-foot ceiling with shelves of musical equipment. Inside the control room, Todd Perlmutter has just bubble-wrapped and carted out his two inch tape machine to make room for new surround speakers - one of the final touches in readying the space to digitally record, mix and edit the new Blue Man Group surround album.

Perlmutter was one of the chief sound designers for the Blue Man Group's Las Vegas show at the Luxor casino; unlike the group's *Tubes* show in New York, Boston and Chicago, the Vegas show has "a huge surround element to it," he says. Becoming the group's music director as they finished *Audio*, Perlmutter turned the founders onto the idea of recording with surround in mind. "We just realized very early on that [the album] was going to be really appropriate for surround," he recalls. "There's so much percussion and so much drums—there are times when there's 10, 12 drummers playing at the same time. And it would be difficult to try to get that feeling across in a stereo mix. It's ideal for a surround mix—we could have all these drums come from everywhere, and it would be much more involving that way."

Audio was recorded in the East Village space by Andrew Schneider, and mixed at the Manhattan studio Quad by Mike Frasier, who like Perlmutter, had no experience mixing albums in surround, but felt confident in his ability to simply "make it sound good."

The surround mix wound up impressing Gateway Mastering legend Bob Ludwig (who mastered the album) so much that he convinced the group to let Gateway master and author an -Audio program as well. Thus, not only is the *Audio* DVD one of the superior surround mixes released thus far; it also is the first to feature a DVD-Video program on one side, and a high-resolution, surround DVD-Audio program on the other side of a DVD-10 disc.

The Video side plays still images of the band at work that correspond to the tracks, which are available in either Dolby Digital 5.1 or DTS 5.1 (a video for one track, "Cat Video," is also included). Extras include a comical video interview with the founders about working with the Blue Men, as well as nine promotional radio spots and text info on the band and its instruments. The -Audio side presents the music in 96kHz/24-bit MLP surround, and features the same set of still images for each track.

"I felt like we were really lucky to have this material for me and Mike to do as our first surround project," Perlmutter adds. "If you have a band—bass, drums and guitar—and you want to get those into a surround mix, you know, most of the time you want those things to be locked together, so you're options aren't as wide. We've got a gamelan—a million drummers and tribal instruments, and this feeling that you can be in the middle of a room with a whole tribe of people playing all around you. That's the ideal—we could get cohesion between all of the speakers in a much easier way than if it was a rock band."

For the most part, the group recorded *Audio* with little

continued on 6

Blue Man Group

continued from 4

initial planning of the final surround mix. "We did a few things where we would have mikes spread out, and we would have a couple things that we knew would be spread through the surround space," Peilmutter says, "but for the most part it was more like, 'We're gonna have two drum kits and four drummers,' or, 'We're gonna have the three Blue Men's PVC instruments in the front three speakers.' We just went about recording the stuff, and when we went to mix, everything found its place very easily."

Gathering new songs and ideas for the next album is a different story. Where *Audio*'s tracks were largely based on the Blue Men's live show, the next album is first and foremost a collection of songs that may or may not make it into future performances. Now that the Blue Men have experience with the surround space, their recording ideas have become more adventurous.

Wink and Stanton are fooling around with a new instrument they invented called the "Spindulum": a hollow plastic pipe, open on one end, attached to a rosined string, and then tied to a notched bamboo rod. the instrument is played by waving the rod over one's head in a circle; the whining pipe effectively sounds like a combination of a didgeridoo and an airplane propeller.

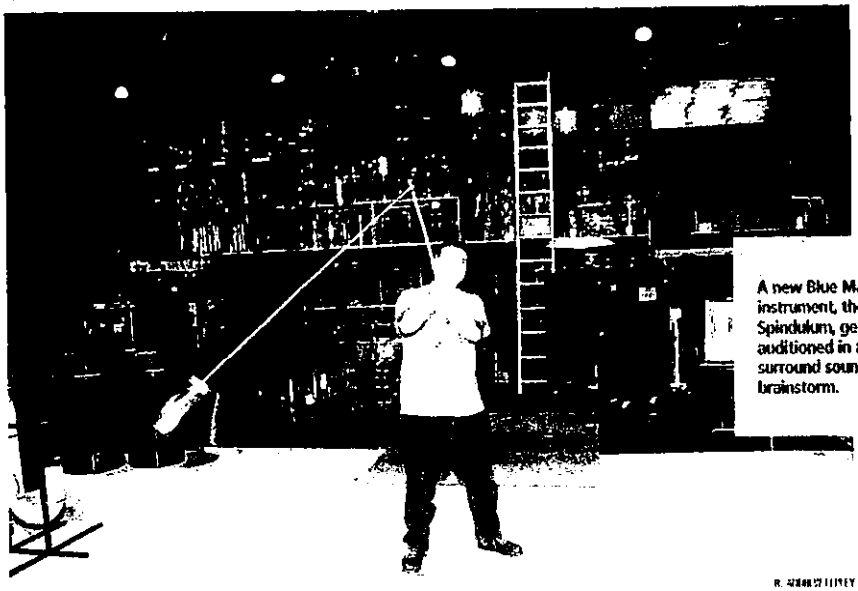
Arranging three Spindulum players in a triangle, Wink and Stanton walk into and around the triangle of sound, brainstorming on what a surround recording could capture. "This may only wind up on the DVD," Wink muses.

He also shares that the group also plans to set up a video camera in the recording space to film the action of the musicians. "You'll see the drums, and hear them like you're in the middle of them."

Blue Man Group had been proceeding for nearly 10 years on its live shows alone, declining opportunities to try out other hyped technologies like CD-ROM or Flash animation on the Web. "CD-ROM – it's all lame," Wink opines. "I'm not going to put my time and energy in that." In contrast, surround audio and DVD instilled in the group "a genuine artistic excitement.

"We never want to use tech for tech's sake," Wink stresses when asked about his surround mixing aesthetics. "We're not trying to masturbate – we're trying to create something tribal; the surround effects are meant to have an emotional effect, rather than an intellectual one."

On the consumer's surround experience, the group is happy to report that even when they're outside of the surround space as listeners in their own homes, the music has a presence unmatched by stereo. "When we were mixing at Quad, there's this little room off the back—kind of outside," Peilmutter says. "And as we were running down mixes, we would go out there and listen, just to see if they would hold up. And they would always sound great – we were totally behind the rear speakers, or off to the side. Yeah, it's giving breath to the sound in a way that just doesn't happen in stereo."



A new Blue Man instrument, the Spindulum, gets auditioned in a surround sound brainstorm.

R. [illegible]

Wink is bothered by DVD-Audio's lackluster launch. "It's annoying that three people have players." About 1,000 copies of the *Audio* DVD have been sold to date (and sales of some 120,000 *Audio* CDs in its first year), but Wink hasn't been in a record store since its release to see where it's stocked. "We have no expectation," he says of the DVD, adding that the group is in an "unbelievably luxurious position" where it doesn't depend on album sales as a primary source of income.

Nevertheless, the position affords the group with an artistic freedom to create ambitious works that may inspire artists, industry executives and consumers into action.

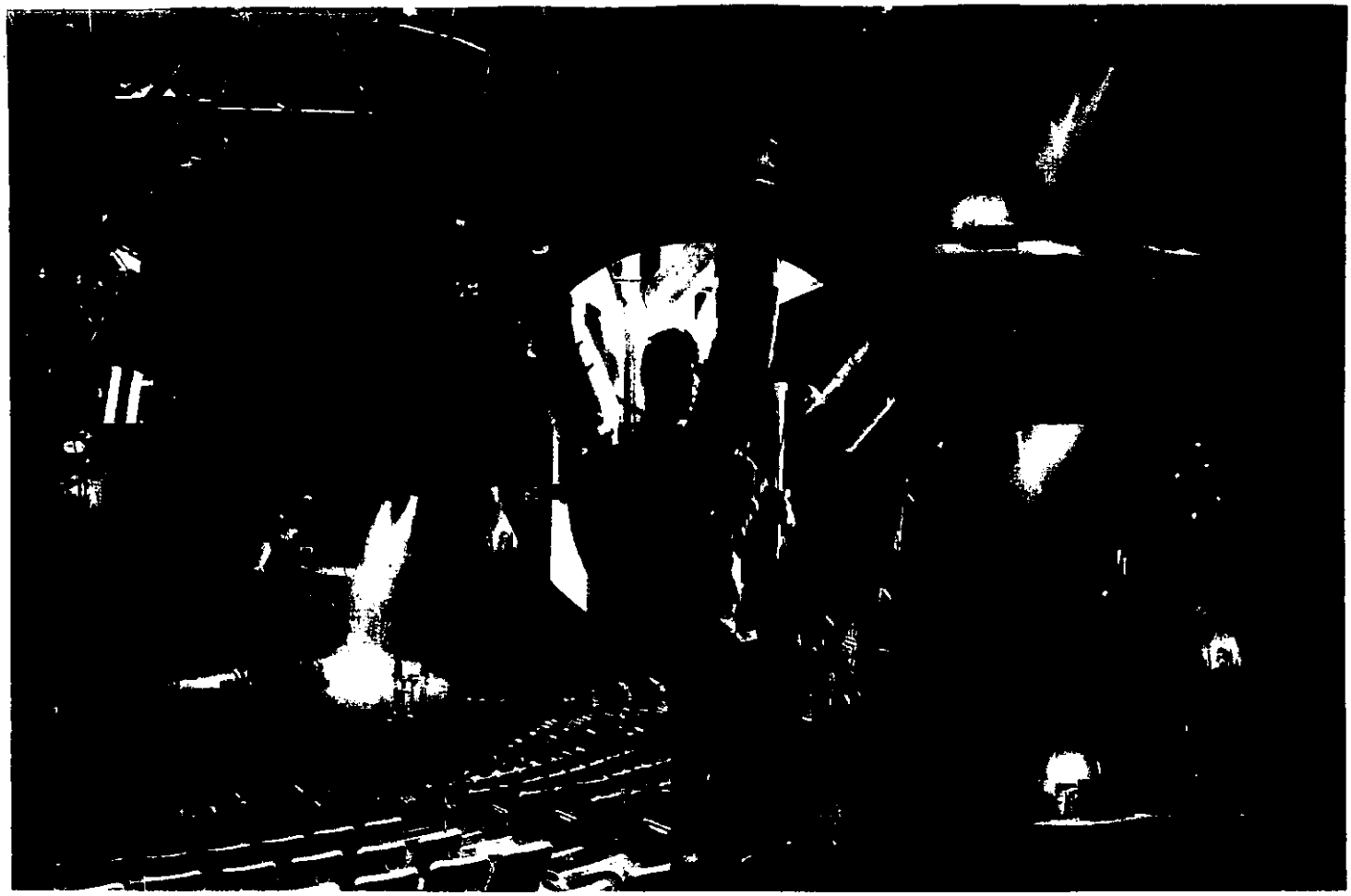
PERFORMANCE ART

By Keith Clark

Meeting the demanding systems integration needs of the Blue Man Group's latest installation at the Luxor Theater, Las Vegas.

"Now that Las Vegas has expanded its cultural palette and embraced Broadway-style legitimate theater, it feels like a good time to introduce some illegitimate theater," said Chris Wink (co-founder with Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton of Blue Man Group) about the recent launch of their latest creation at the Luxor Theater.

For those who have not seen a Blue Man show, illegitimate is only one of thousands of adjectives to describe an experience that defies categorization. With roots stretching back to New York street theater in the late 1980s, the Blue Man concept eventually transferred Off-Broadway at Astor Place Theatre, expanded to productions in Boston, Chicago and now the Vegas strip—the most elaborate creation to date.



The center cluster in the surround system (upper left) consists of EAW SuberSubs and ASV series loudpeakers, one firing to each quadrant of the theater. Various perspectives of the theater (upper right, lower left and right). The EAW SB10000e subwoofers are stacked at both sides of the proscenium.

An overview: Three bald and, of course, blue performers present a childlike romp that offers a thought-provoking and at times poignant take on art, science, society and life in the information age. By the time it is over, there's also a big mess—paint splattered, marshmallows thrown, Cap'n Crunch cereal spilled and miles of paper. At several points, scrolling commentary is displayed on LED signs that are part of the set, with an evocative, original soundtrack, heavy on haunting tribal rhythms, performed by a live band in tandem with recorded tracks and effects. A *New York Times* headline aptly coined the spectacle "High Tech Meets Goo with Blue Man Group."

Original elements and routines from the other productions maintain a key role in the new show but with the addition of facets and alterations that take things to a whole new level. For example, a backdrop of an enormous neon-like landscape is brought to life on stage, evolving into an intense techno-tribal ritual.

"When Blue Man takes the neon sign and turns it into something else, something primal, exciting and unexpected, this mirrors our goal of transforming the Las Vegas scene by bringing an uncharacteristic and innovative experience to the Strip," said Stanton.

Music, too, plays an even larger role in the new production, featuring a number of musical instruments developed by Blue Man Group, including backpack tubulums (a musical application of PVC pipe), airpoles and a three-story high drum wall. The band, usually made up of a trio of musicians, has been expanded to seven. They are split between two platform areas above stage left and right, visible to the audience through a scrim. By the way, Blue Man does not speak at any point in the production, letting the actions do the talking.

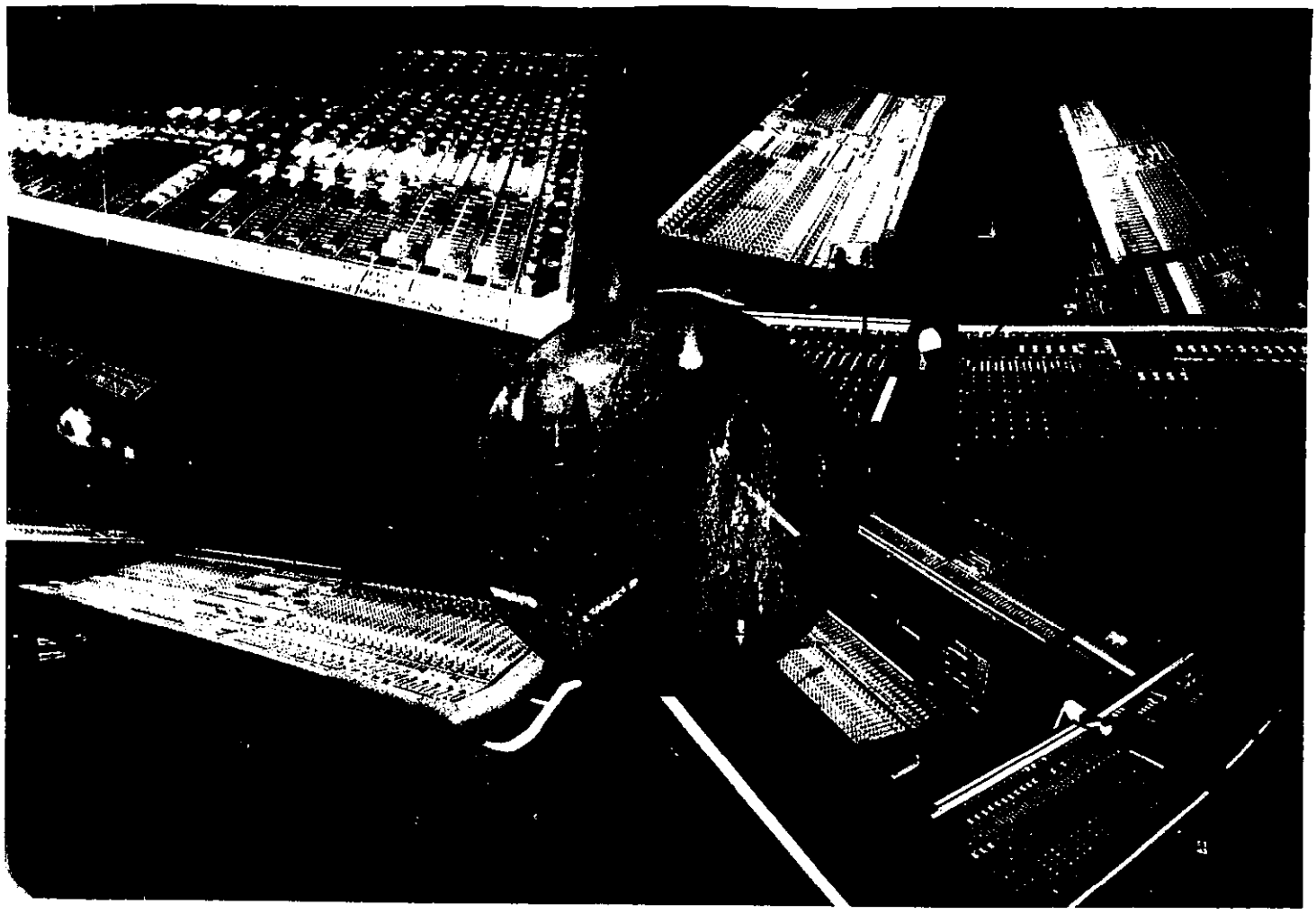
Club PA

The sound design for the production, officially titled "Blue Man Group Live at Luxor," comes from Blue Man Group's Todd Pearlmutter and Ross Humphrey. They conceived two discrete systems working in tandem, one with a standard left-right stereo configuration, the other offering a unique twist on the surround-sound format. Overall, their concept was creation of a club PA type of sonic signature—full, solid, warm and in your face—rather than going with a more esoteric theatrical sound design.

Specialized Audio-Video, Inc. (SAVI), Clifton Park, NY, veterans of nearly a dozen major systems projects with Las Vegas entertainment venues, played the key role in implementing this conceptual design. Headed by Michael Cusick, SAVI worked closely with Pearlmutter and Humphrey to translate their vision into a technical reality. They also provided system installation, a process headed up by Tod Butler, and performed in-depth tuning and analysis.

"The sound design strips away layers of system complexity that had been building up with each new production. It's back to basics, based in large part on analog components," Cusick said. "Blue Man Group's sound, at its essence, is more about drums and rock and roll rather than ethereal sounds moving all over the place."

The project presented SAVI with a unique creative opportunity, much more freestyle than usual for an effort of this type. The goal was to keep the design as open, undefined and flexible as possible while still



Mixing needs for the Blue Man Group are met by two Soundcraft K3s (upper left and right, lower right), a Midas Heritage 200 (upper right, lower right and left) and a Yamaha 03D and PM3500 (upper and lower right).

providing the requisite structure of any large-scale sound reinforcement system.

"The evolving creative process was fascinating to work with," Cusick said. "It begins with the three founders and then disseminates down through the entire organization. It's challenging to try to make something solid and real, like a system, out of a process that is ever-changing, ever in flux and for its own sake, refuses to settle down.

"Unlike Broadway and other theatrical situations, where you're trying to nail something down completely, put it on paper and get it finalized, the Blue Man approach is one of continuous adaptability. The tendency is to try to force conformity, to say 'this is what the system is, and this is what the system does; it's what you're getting, so deal with it.' We disciplined ourselves against this urge and adapted to their more open-ended mentality."

Near-field quality

Originally designed to resemble Grauman's Egyptian Theater in Hollywood, the 1,200-seat Luxor Theater, owned and operated by Mandalay Resort Group, underwent a rather radical transformation for the new production, taking on a more spartan, industrial look and feel. Virtually all wall and ceiling spaces are black, either painted or covered by draping fabric, with the sole focal point being the large front stage. The fan-shaped seating configuration sweeping up and back from the stage is divided into two main sections, upper and lower, separated by a wide continuous aisle.

Cusick, already quite familiar with the space as the designer of the venue's original system, noted that its acoustic signature has always been acceptable, saying that it was not too live, not too dead. Some of the previous system's Eastern Acoustic Works (EAW) loudspeakers were retained, such as SB-600s housed in special chambers under the stage to supplement the new system's rather prodigious low-end performance.

Another important design concept is providing every seat with sound of near-field monitoring quality, as much as that is possible in a large theater. The personal nature of the performance lends itself to this approach. At the same time, the solid sonic presence needs to be balanced by controlling levels, ensuring things do not get too loud amid the show's chaos and that the audience is not plagued by ear fatigue.

Mix and match

Both the main/stereo and surround loudspeaker systems are fueled by close to 200 inputs supplied by no less than five consoles at the house mix position, located centrally just behind the primary aisle. Basically, the main system provides playback of the band, while the surround system handles myriad tracks and effects that enhance a particular mood or environment. There is some mix and match to the approach as well.

Cusick, who regularly uses EAW loudspeakers, noted that they are one of the cornerstones of this project.

"The issue of loudspeakers was settled early in the process. Blue Man Group wanted to get back to its essence, an honest rock music signature, and they were pretty adamant about using EAW

loudspeakers to achieve this," he said. "As it played out, we used EAW exclusively for the entire project."

The stage is flanked by left and right arrays made up of EAW KF700 series loudspeakers that provide complete coverage of the lower seating section. Each array includes three KF750 three-way loudspeakers above three KF755 specialized downfill modules. Below each array, four SB1000e subwoofers are subtly stacked vertically on stage incorporated into a custom concrete bunker to reduce low-frequency resonance. At the midpoint of the room, approximately above the main aisle, two more stereo arrays are flown left and right. They include four SB750 subwoofers topping four KF755 downfill boxes.

"With its 30° downfiring angle, the KF755 is an outstanding speaker for projects like this. You can build normal array structures while automatically getting the right dispersion to the desired coverage area just by adjusting the height of the array," Cusick said. "It looks misleading but works extremely well. Coverage is better and with less hassle."

He added that the delay arrays would not ordinarily be necessary with the KF750s easily able to reach the back rows in rooms of this scale where throw distances are not even 100 feet (2.5 m). They were, however, deemed crucial to foster the desired near-field sense of intimacy expected of the system.

Cross-firing zones

The surround system takes a unique twist on the 5.1 format. Rather than offering a center channel at the front of the listening area, this channel is fed to a grouping of loudspeakers flown from the ceiling at the mid-point of the theater. The group includes four EAW ASV7923 three-way loudspeakers, each firing diagonally across each quadrant of the listening area.

These loudspeakers are mounted together with four EAW BH822 SuperSubs configured in a block and firing straight down. The other surround channels are fed to pairs of EAW ASV series loudspeakers (one long-throw, the other short-throw) flown in each corner of the theater. Obviously, there is some cross-firing between these loudspeakers in their respective coverage zones, but this was done on purpose. The soundtrack was carefully engineered to work with the loudspeaker layout. In fact, mixing was done in a studio set up to emulate the actual sound design as much as possible.

"This is a prime example of the creativity this project exudes," Cusick said. "Yet another example is the number of subwoofers that are deployed, which would seem to be way too many. However, at times they want an effect where low-frequency energy literally lifts audience members out of their seats, which dictates a lot of air moving and, therefore, requires a significant number of subs distributed in the house."

SAVI worked with a structural engineering company to fabricate custom steel mounting structures for the grouping of center loudspeakers. The facility offered plenty of amenities for flying and rigging the other loudspeakers and arrays.

All loudspeakers are driven by Crown Macro-Tech Series amps, exclusively, which are distributed among six locations, putting them as close to the loudspeakers as possible. "We used the entire MA line. Reliable power and plenty of it," Cusick says. "They also offer good reserve power, which is handy in this application because you're dealing with transient drum sounds."

Mondo Channels

The soundtrack and surround system is mostly intended to create an environment that tells an understory to what's happening on stage. It's also a big part of the finale, where a dynamic disco-dance number called "KLF" is really slamming while strobe lights are going off and paper streams down through the audience.

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Circle (27) on Reader Service Card

With roots stretching back to New York street theater in the late 1980s, the Blue Man concept eventually transferred Off-Broadway at Astor Place Theatre, expanded to productions in Boston, Chicago and now the Vegas strip—the most elaborate creation to date.

An Otari Radar multitrack unit, backed up by a Tascam DA-88, delivers the surround soundtrack to a Yamaha 03D digital mixer, one of the few digital pieces incorporated into the design. Located at the front of the mix position, the 03D drives the surround system, handling levels, distribution and programming. Its preset section is a particularly welcome feature. Presets of both main and backup programming can be accessed and switched back and forth quickly.

The main system offers a rather extensive mix situation, with two Soundcraft K3-32 consoles and a Midas Heritage 2000-48 console working in tandem with a Yamaha PM3500-48 console that essentially functions as a master section for all of these channels. The Heritage 2000 is dedicated to drums only, with the K3s handling all other instruments and performing auxiliary submix capability. All of these channels are essentially grouped down to specific stereo subgroups, with the PM3500 outfitted with 24 stereo modules in order to supply enough inputs.

"The 48 channels of the Heritage 2000 are dedicated exclusively to four drum kits only, each with 12 microphones," Cusick said. "Todd and Ross really like the analog sound of this board's preamps and EQ section, particularly because it's friendly to drum sounds. They wanted drums to be as fat as possible."

An ample amount of Drawmer DS-404 gates play an influential role with the drums as well. In general, their sonic signature led to their use, along with an additional benefit of being tuneable, which fit well with the flexibility concept. An Aphex 9000 series modular processing frame also plays an important role, able to be loaded with a wide range of modules supplying compression, limiting, gating and other processing as needed.

A foldback system for the stage includes four 56-pair splits to an AMI K Recall console retained from the previous system. In addition to 16 submixes derived from the mix position, every stage input is available with a number of other feeds supplied discretely.

The three Blue Man performers are outfitted with Shure in-ear monitoring systems, with additional foldback support supplied by a few stage wedges concealed in the set. Band members usually rely upon David Clark Silencer headphones outfitted with Sony ear pieces to supply as much isolation as possible from the often considerable ambient noise. Headphones are driven by several Miles Technology MPR-450 six-channel power amps.

Sparsely Digital

The only other concession to digital technology came in the form of XTA DP226 processors, used for all house loudspeakers. Distributed among the amp racks, the DP226s are networked (via RS-485) on a loop established in the multicable subsystem. Cusick pointed out that there just is not an analog equivalent to this approach.

"In terms of both wiring infrastructure and complexity, as well as processing capabilities, there really isn't an analog tool that can do the job," he said. "But everything else is kept analog, without any A-D or D-A conversion. Their feeling is that digital conversion doesn't lend itself to the sonic signature of the show."

Additional main system tailoring can be done at any time with a Klark-Teknik DN3600 digitally controlled analog EQ inserted at front of house. This can be done within specific zones or system-wide.

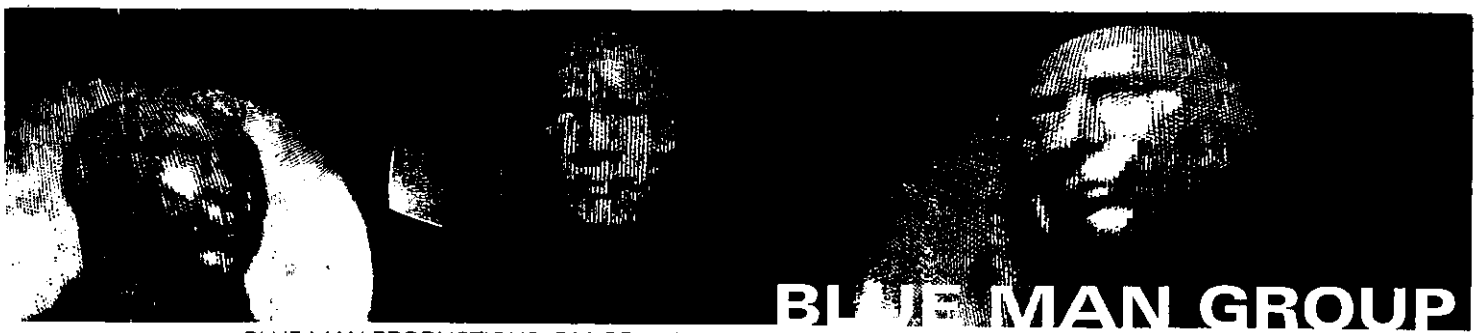
The XTA network also proved beneficial during the system tuning process following installation. A laptop PC was linked to the network, allowing parameter tailoring from the front of house position as SAVI performed acoustical measurement and analysis with SIA Smaart Pro v4.0 software on another laptop PC.

With various mic positions established throughout the room, Smaart helped analyze the output of each loudspeaker with performance optimized painstakingly over several days. The overall objective was delivering a system with response as flat as possible, and then letting the Blue Man staff take it from there with the DN3600.

"They brought about a certain change and alteration in color that we couldn't have necessarily done," Cusick said. "Our scientific approach served as the foundation, and they added the emotion. It was an interesting combination, an ideal marriage of the two methods.

"This was a very rewarding project, feeding off of the sheer creativity of the Blue Man organization—Ross and Todd in particular—and helping them transfer their vision into these systems. The results have been equally rewarding. Often in your face, but never too loud, with the overall soundscape hallmarked by superior clarity and presence, enhancing what's happening on stage. It's analog. It's warm. It's in your face, but mostly, it's just good." SVC

Clark is with Immediate Resource Group. He may be reached via e-mail at kclark@qtm.net.



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15-21 november 2002 • las vegas review-journal

Blue Man Group thrives on the Strip

Creative approach toward comedy, music and interaction with the audience fuels popularity

By MIKE WEATHERFORD
REVIEW-JOURNAL

The best show in Vegas? That's always debatable, based on personal tastes.

But the most successful show in Vegas? In terms of cold, hard cash — and what speaks louder on the Strip? — it is without question "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor."

Cirque du Soleil has to staff each of its two productions with more than 60 performers, and an even larger crew. A big nut to cover, even with 10 shows a week.

Danny Gans has only his band and some stagehands on the payroll, but does only five shows a week.

The Blue Man Group is up to 14 shows per week in its 1,200-seat theater at the Luxor. There are three guys onstage in each show, and a seven-piece band. Tickets were $55 and $65 when the show opened in February 2000. They now go for about $79 and $90. That's a weekly potential gross of $1.4 million.

Except for the consumer paying the price of success (that's capitalism for you), this is great news for the town. Why? Simply look at the show.

what: "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor"
when: 7 and 10 p.m. Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays through Fridays; 7 p.m. Tuesdays; and 4, 7 and 10 p.m. Saturdays
where: Luxor, 3900 Las Vegas Blvd. South
tickets: $78.95-$89.95
grade: A

For once, something original, with a uniquely defined point of view, came to town and didn't close the next month. Instead, it became the most lucrative show on the Strip without compromising its vision.

Almost three years into its run, "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" is almost the same show it was on opening night. The difference is in the audience, which now borrows a page from "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" and happily drapes itself in tissue-paper headgear and sashes, eager to join the fun.

Plastic ponchos, distributed to ticket holders in bottom rows, rustle in anticipation before the lights go down, as a reader board engages the audience in conversation.

The show they're waiting for is more of a known commodity now, thanks to a groundswell of national exposure — prime-time Intel commercials, the Grammy Awards — that those sequined Luddites who cling to ancient magic tricks will undoubtedly use to explain the Blue Men away as a fluke.

But familiarity should not detract from the brilliance of a perfectly balanced formula. The three bald Blue Men, glistening laboratory clones draped in Frankenstein monster frocks, lumber onstage and proceed to become the envy of every grown-up preschooler in the audience.

They pour luminescent paint into drumheads, then pound and splash away.

One throws marshmallows — some of which seem to be filled with paint — into the waiting mouths of the other two, who proceed to create modern art.

They chew Cap'n Crunch cereal into microphones so loudly amplified that it sounds like "Earthquake" in SenseSurround.

"And for this we pay $90?"

▶ SEE **BLUE** PAGE 8

The Blue Man Group performs at the Luxor, 3900 Las Vegas Blvd. South.

▶ **BLUE:** *Some of the subtle humor is lost from distant seats*

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

you ask.

No, the physical comedy is but one component. There's also the weird science (a recurring gag on the overload of the information age, the Internet likened to a city's sewer system) and a demonstration of how 3-D animation is made possible by the brain fooling the eye).

Then there's the music. The Blue Men hammer on tuned percussion sculpted from PVC pipe. They're joined by more drumming in a band that provides whacked-out surf guitar and spaghetti Western music for the rest of the show.

Finally, there are a couple of big moments you can't see in any other Blue Man city, including a neon wall that comes to life.

Some of the subtle humor is lost from the more distant rows. The three performers, uncredited, but rotating [illegible] to offset this by venturing into the audience, sometimes by walking right on the arms of your theater seat.

And the finale envelops the crowd, in paper, like no other show in town. The interactive element, along with the seriously loud soundtrack, help make "Live at Luxor" the rare Las Vegas show that sells tickets to a sub-baby boomer audience.

Yes, Las Vegas has been kind to Blue Man creators (and original cast) Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink. Maybe they will return the favor next year by installing some new segments to reward the repeat customers.

But so far, their gift to Las Vegas remains mostly unwrapped. Those who stage the magic, girlie shows, costumed impersonations and Irish step-dancing have yet to see that true creativity can and does pay off on the Strip.

Las Vegas Review-Journal

Las Vegas Life
Est. 1949
FEBRUARY 2000

Vegas Goes *Blue Man*

"It's so easy for this to all crumble down," says Chris Wink, with a sweeping gesture that takes in his partners, Phil Stanton and Matt Goldman. The path of his hand demonstrates how large "this" has become. It also indicates how risky the next move might be.

What's at stake here is the *Blue Man Group*, one of the latest entries in what is shaping up to be a pivotal moment in Las Vegas entertainment. Founded by Wink, Stanton and Goldman in New York in the late '80s, *Blue Man* is a percussion-driven, imagination-bending audio-visual feast. Giving weight to music, mime, humor, theater and just about any art form imaginable, the show is a postmodern rock opera and existential exploration of the intersections of art, science, pop culture and being. Not to mention a helluva lot of fun.

A series of vignettes featuring shorn, archetypal, royal-blue-painted men as they curiously explore music and the nature of their existence, *Blue Man Group* draws on an art history that zigzags from abstract impressionism through the dadaists, and dips into wells of good acting and rock 'n' roll.

It's unlike anything that Las Vegas—entertainment capital or not—has ever seen.

The show, which opens in March at Luxor, has a proven track record. What began as a roughly hewn performance-art act and demonstration in New York City—in 1988 the group hosted a funeral for the '80s in an attempt to hasten that decade's demise—has since grown into an off-Broadway smash, with ongoing shows in New York, Boston and Chicago. But the move to Las Vegas for *Blue Man's* fourth installment marks the group's biggest venture yet, to a theater that seats 1,200 for a show that has prided itself on intimacy with audiences.

"For this to work, by our standards, we have to actually change Las Vegas," Wink says. "We've never presumed to change a city, but the truth of the matter is, if we're viewed [as] *Blue Man* has gone 'Vegas,' then that will not be success for us."

While the notion of "going Vegas" has signaled the denouement of entertainment careers in recent decades, stages in this city catapulted such preeminent showbiz legends as the Rat Pack, Elvis and beyond.

But it's not as if the *Blue Man Group* is trying to reinvent Las Vegas' entertainment wheel. If anything, the group is attempting to position itself in a shifting market currently vying to be one of the best and most varied entertainment hubs anywhere. As Las Vegas and its many visitors reach to embrace Broadway shows and an extensive palette of music, and as the venerable Vegas variety show declines, the trio who founded *Blue Man* believes this city provides the perfect opportunity to play to sophisticated audiences who know entertainment.

"We're a show for people who don't like a lot of types of shows," Wink says. "The spirit of this project was three people mad as hell and not going to take it anymore."

— *Todd Peterson*

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LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

MARCH 24 - 30, 2000

Visually stunning Blue Man Group what Vegas needs

By Mike Weatherford
Review-Journal

It's fairly obvious from any TV commercial or print ad: "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" isn't for everyone.

The surprise — if you can call it that — is that it's for more people than it might seem.

Certainly, there were clues that the Blue Man Group isn't as avant-garde or off-putting as the trademark skullcaps and cobalt-blue greasepaint of its three silent stars would suggest.

Weird for weird's sake might play for a few months in the East Village. Here in the West, we've heard of stranger ways for city folks back East to make money than to splatter paint on stuff or chomp Cap'n Crunch into a microphone.

But to play New York for 12 years running, there's got to be something universal and populist at work. If the Blue Man show didn't make any sense at all — or if it wasn't so darn funny — it wouldn't be a long-running enterprise in three cities.

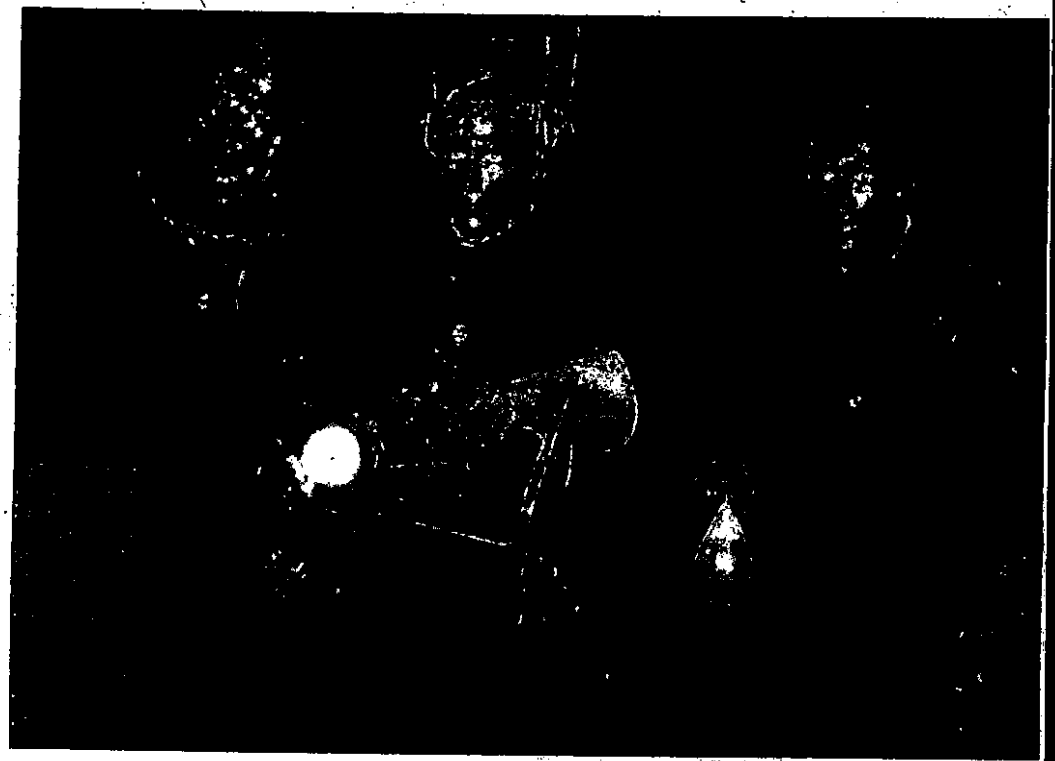
And the troupe wouldn't have been invited to town by Mandalay Resort Group, which used to have a pretty uptight corporate image. After all, the Luxor's 1,200-capacity showroom previously hosted a show called "Imagine," which didn't.

The Blue Man Group does, and as a result, you'll never look at PVC pipe in quite the same way. That it's a hard show to describe says a lot in itself. Like Cirque du Soleil before it, the Blue Man Group focuses its music and visuals into a unique point of view that supplants any single element.

That unified vision combines contradictory elements in a fast hour and a half. There's highbrow humor and schoolyard play-with-your-food tricks. Old-fashioned sleight-of-hand, and genuine efforts to explain science and nature.

Think of the Blue Man Group as three people who understand technology better than most of us, but who prefer humanity. They could have been engineers or software designers, but chose to create their own low-tech playground instead.

After a two-week soft opening period, the show's founders — Chris Wink, Phil Stanton and Matt Goldman — put the greasepaint back on for a March 14 "world premiere" in front of an invited audience that included fellow mischief-makers Penn & Teller and writer-performance artist Spalding Gray. (A rotating repertoire of Blue Men will perform most future shows.)



The blue-faced Blue Man Group performs their wierd show at the Luxor.

A moody overture from the seven-piece band, working on upper levels left and right of the stage, begins a hammering barrage of percussion that continues for much of the show, accented by angular spaghetti Western guitar.

Emerging from behind a screen where they've been "animated" in silhouette by hand-held strobes, the three curious, slightly robotic Blue Men perform a first-half of "greatest hits" segments from humbler days in smaller venues.

This includes squirting flu-

Please see GROUP/27

BLUE MAN GROUP

Group

From 4

orescent paint into drum heads, the microphone-enhanced Cap'n Crunch-ing, and some stuntwork in which you find out how many little cream cheese balls a Blue Man can catch and hold in his mouth. Without giving away the punchlines, there's a running satire on abstract art as well.

Insights into modern plumbing, information-age overload and an audience member's mouth lead to more basic comedy when an audience "volunteer" is dragged to the stage to share Twinkies with the trio.

The second half reveals the bigger, more expensive toys the Blue Men built to fill the 50-foot stage. They use foam-rubber paddles to play their PVC version of a vibraphone — the notes determined by the length of each pipe segment — before the stage reveals a two-story "drum wall" with seven percussion stations.

Two stunning set pieces follow: A wall of neon that makes a two-dimensional cartoon vista come to life, and an amazing display of how our eyes are tricked into the process of animation every time we watch a film. Two turntables (zoetropes, to be exact) on each side of the stage spin faster and faster until a circle of statues begin a tribal dance.

By the time the crowd sang "White Rabbit" and participated in a finale that brings back high school memories of papering the popular girl's yard, the opening night audience had bonded into a tribe of its own.

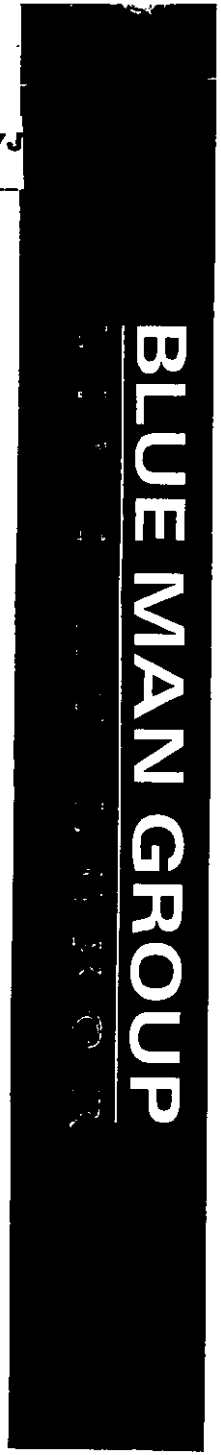
The question is, can it happen every night? Not everyone is going to be enamored of the aggressive, persistently percussive music. And then there's the size of the theater. Despite a sincere effort to take the action to the back rows, the low-budget segments from the early days don't carry all the way to the cheap seats.

And "cheap" means $55 for the back of the room and $65 for the front, which is $10 more than tickets for the cozier New York production. The Blue Men will learn whether Las Vegas audiences still expect more production value for that price than the stark lighting and minimalist, black warehouse vibe they offer.

But the Blue Men are here to challenge old notions of Las Vegas entertainment. And after decades of revues that were spliced together from other sources, assembled by committee or updated piecemeal over the years, an inspired imagination may just prove to be the real commodity after all.

"The Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" is presented at 7 and 10 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays and at 7 p.m. Sundays and Mondays in the Luxor Theater at the Luxor, 3900 Las Vegas Blvd. So. Tickets are $55 and $65.

Grade: A

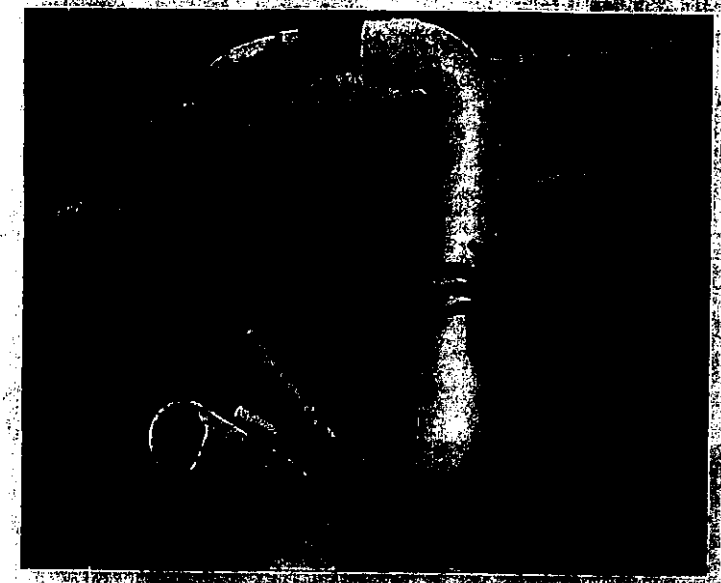


BLUE MAN GROUP

LIVE AT LUXOR

Thursday,
February 24, 2000

Las Vegas Sun



Making music with plastic tubes is part of the act for (from left) Chris Wink, Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton.

BLUES in the night

The Blue Man Group paints a picture of noncomformist entertainment

By John Katsilometes
LAS VEGAS SUN

Fittingly, the last name of one of the Blue Man Group's original members is that of an unspoken gesture.

Wink.

A full scope of facial expressions, broad body language, assorted soaring objects, flying paint and tubular tunes are the collective trademark of the visual and tempo-driven carnival that is the Blue Man Group. Founded by New York buddies Chris Wink, Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton in 1988, "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" opens Friday at the Luxor Live Theatre.

The Blue Men step in for the quickly forgotten "Imagine," which occupied the theater until the end of December. The Blue Man Group is scheduled for an extended run. The night-to-night lineup of the alternating cast has yet to be determined, although Wink, Goldman and Stanton will be performing once they feel comfortable with the show's progress.

"We'll be working on details through the summer," Goldman said this week prior to rehearsal at the Luxor. "It takes a lot of attention to detail."

For the uninitiated, the Blue Man Group is made up of three men dressed entirely in cobalt blue suits, their faces and heads gleaming under wet blue paint. Their act consists of pounding on tubes to make pulsating music, creating abstract art with a semi-regurgitated marshmallow globule (it's actually pretty funny) and crafting surreal paintings as multi-colored paint splashes off snare drums.

It's not necessarily comedic, but the audience never stops smiling. It's a free-flowing performance executed with machine-like precision that takes months to master.

Relating the preparations to bring the category-defying performance art production to the hotel's revamped 1,200-seat theater, Wink said it's like having a leash on a dinosaur.

Which is both good and bad.

"We've got a leash on it, but now what do we do with it?" Wink said. "We're constantly working on how to utilize all the space we have here."

In doing so, Wink, Goldman and Stanton — all of whom

See Blue, 2E

Blue

from page 1E

remain as fervent and meticulous as new parents in the handling of the show — have had to make changes in presentation.

"We want to make each piece (of the act) to be the center point on stage at any time," said Goldman (who, incidentally, bears an uncanny and eerie observing resemblance to a young David Brenner). "We'll have to have a lot of movement behind the scenes to set up different pieces and it's very, very time moving sensitive. We have to make sure we have the audiences at the right place at the right time."

Also in place are $1.3 million sound system and 11 digital projectors to help stress the visual experience. The Blue Men also plan to make the show entirely interactive, inviting audience members, the crowd and the very theater itself part of the act. Tubes will descend from the ceiling and the trio will shoot 200 to a day 16-piece paint.

Pulling it all together in the cramped theater is no small endeavor. The Luxor Live Theatre poses a challenge because the Blue Man Group is quite a step up. Last played out of more intimate Off-Broadway venues, the Blue Man Group debuted Off-Broadway in 1991 at its 298-seat Charles Playhouse in Chicago (where the Blue Men have appeared since 1995) and 624-seat Astor Place Theatre in New York (where the Blue Men have been performing since 1996). The Broadway-style show, like Notre Dame de Paris, is hoping to be a definite trend toward unique entertainment.

"All three theaters sell out regularly and it can take weeks to obtain a choice seat. But in Las Vegas the Blue Man Group has thrust its production into a highly competitive entertainment region and is playing in a venue roughly double the seating capacity of its largest hall.

And, at $71.50 and $60.50 per ticket, the Las Vegas production is the highest-priced of the Blue Man productions. But the group is optimistic it can succeed mightily at the Luxor.

"We're looking at how other shows are doing that are different and unique like ours," Wink said. "The Broadway style show, like Notre Dame de Paris, we hope does well because it means that there is a definite trend toward unique entertainment."

The Blue Men can be encouraged by similarly surreal, vocal free-for-all going Strip productions such as Cirque du Soleil's "Mystère" at Treasure Island and "O" at Bellagio, which have been widely accepted in large theaters at plump ticket prices.

"I think Cirque du Soleil did (pave the way somewhat for Blue Man)," Wink said. "I think people who do enjoy Cirque can also enjoy what we do.

While they costume to direct and fine tune the Luxor show, the original Blue Men will also continually be part of an eight- to nine-week rotation of performers to stay in the Las Vegas production.

Three new Blue Men are already in place: Jerred Brown, Matthew Banks and Scott Kinworthy. The three are alike in age (ranging from 24-28) and size (about 5-foot-11).

They also share a passion for performing.

A friend had told me about the group and it sounded a little off to me, but he was saying I should try out for it," said Brown, who was living in Oakland, Calif., and playing in a club band when learned of the Blue Man Group. "I was kind of searching for something different, and my background as a musician and someone who strolled acting, it definitely was something I knew I'd enjoy."

Like Brown, Banks contacted the Blue Man Group's casting department during one of the group's send-a-Blue-Man-to-Las-Vegas talent searches. Banks was living in Milton, Ontario, when he noticed a Blue Man Group flyer posted at a small neighborhood theater.

What sets Banks apart is his background. He was a singer, having taken part in two musicals, but was seeking a change.

"I was looking for some deep acting jobs but I kept getting singing jobs," Banks said. "But that's very rewarding. Taking on a character so pure, so heroic in its intensity and genuine awareness of what's going on around him.

It can be difficult shedding the (character) however, Banks said.

"In what people tell me, you're acting very Blue Man today.

Banks said he doesn't know what that means. "I'm definitely not wearing a blue wig. Maybe it's the way I'm walking."

Kinworthy was also a musician, a drummer working throughout Florida when he was "discovered" by Blue Men casting officials while walking through a music fair.

"I had the size (5-11, about 155 pounds) and the look, I guess," Kinworthy said. "They asked me to audition and I thought about it for a few days and said, 'Why not?' "

The audition process is never easy. Some potential Blue Men try out repeatedly, some for more than a year, before earning acceptance. What follows is an intensive training period, lasting up to eight weeks, which is tailored to each performer's skills.

For example, if you're a fine actor and display an innate ability to catch marshmallows in your mouth, but wouldn't know a drum stick from a pork chop, you will learn to play drums.

"My training lasted 7 1/2 weeks, exactly," Kinworthy said. "It was very demanding."

Banks said, "If you don't know how to drum, they'll teach you to drum, believe me. It's a major part of the show."

Having expanded from the original three, the Blue Men remain an exclusive club. To date, about 30 Blue Men in our productions, Wink said, have auditioned between 5,000 and 6,000 and only 30 have made it.

The resulting collection of eclectic performers makes for a like-thinking society. It's natural that anyone connected with the show is going to be very creative and be open to new ideas, Brown said.

"It's a job, yeah, but it's also some what like a family. It's a happy show because we're all sharing the same unusual experience."

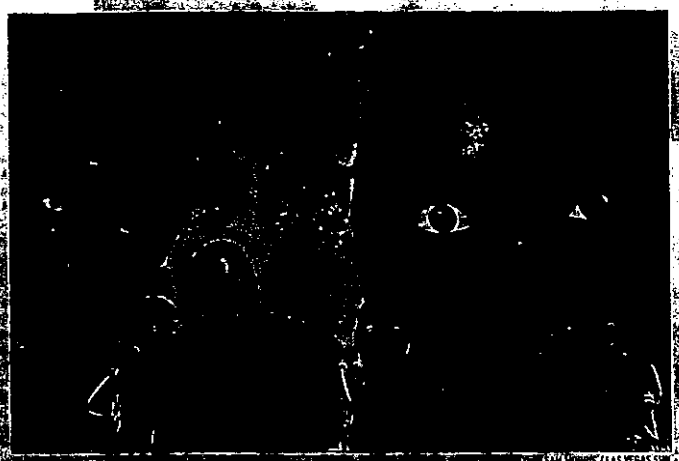
Playing the role of a sage mentor, Wink then seized the comment and said, "See, we've got their minds under very firm control."

Then Wink asked the three new Blue Men, "How do you like being a Blue Man?"

In unison, the trio responded in monotone: "We love Blue Man."

"See?" Wink said, laughing. "We're very much into conformity."

Yeah, right.



Blue Man Group founders Chris Wink (left) and Matt Goldman explain the concept behind their performance at the Luxor Live Theatre.

JIM LOGAN/LAS VEGAS SUN

Blue Man basics

So you want to be a Blue Man? It takes more than the willingness to stick your noggin in blue paint and move around in eerie robotic movements to be a Blue Man. Following is the Blue Man Group's criteria for anyone wishing to audition for the show:

- Height between 5-foot-10 and 6-foot-1.
- Weight proportionate to height.
- Excellent drumming skills.
- Excellent emotional range, meaning the ability to communicate fear, joy, great wonder and great sadness.
- Charisma.
- Presence.
- Eye-hand coordination.
- Agility to catch things in your mouth.

BLUE MAN GROUP

THE LAS VEGAS GUIDE TO ENTERTAINMENT

Renowned Blue Man Group opens new show at Luxor in March

Blue Man Group brings its new show to the Luxor, 3900 Las Vegas Blvd. South, March 1. The show, titled "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor," takes place in the 1,200-seat Luxor Theater.

The production features a hybrid of new material as well as "signature" pieces from Blue Man Group productions in New York, Boston and Chicago.

The critically acclaimed Blue Man Group creates experiences that defy categorization. Blue Man Group is best known for its theatrical performances that feature three bald and blue characters.

Blue Man Group is accompanied by a live band whose tribal rhythms help drive the show to its unforgettable climax.

Three longtime friends — Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink — founded Blue Man Group in 1987 with a series of "happenings" that stemmed from salon-style meetings in New York City. These events developed into the award-winning show that opened off-Broadway at the Astor Place Theatre in 1991.

After winning both the Obie and Lucille Lortel Award, the Drama Desk Committee also presented Goldman, Stanton and Wink with an award for their production. To do this, they had to invent a new category: Unique Theatrical Production.

Following the success of the New York show, Blue Man Group has opened equally successful productions in Boston (since 1995) and Chicago (since 1997).

Goldman, Stanton and Wink performed the first three years of the New York run without understudies.

Since then, the company has expanded to include 30 additional Blue Men and 50 musicians, all of whom rotate into the current shows and work on other Blue Man Group projects in various combinations.

What began as a group of friends has grown into a 350-person organization that reaches beyond the world of theatrical productions. Blue Man Group's major ongoing projects include: "Tubes," the long-running theatrical productions in New York, Boston and Chicago; Blue Man Vegas, which produced the latest show, "Live at Luxor"; Blue Man Group Records, which produced, promotes and sells Blue Man's CD "Audio" and Blue Man Marketing, which handles all areas of marketing from design to production.

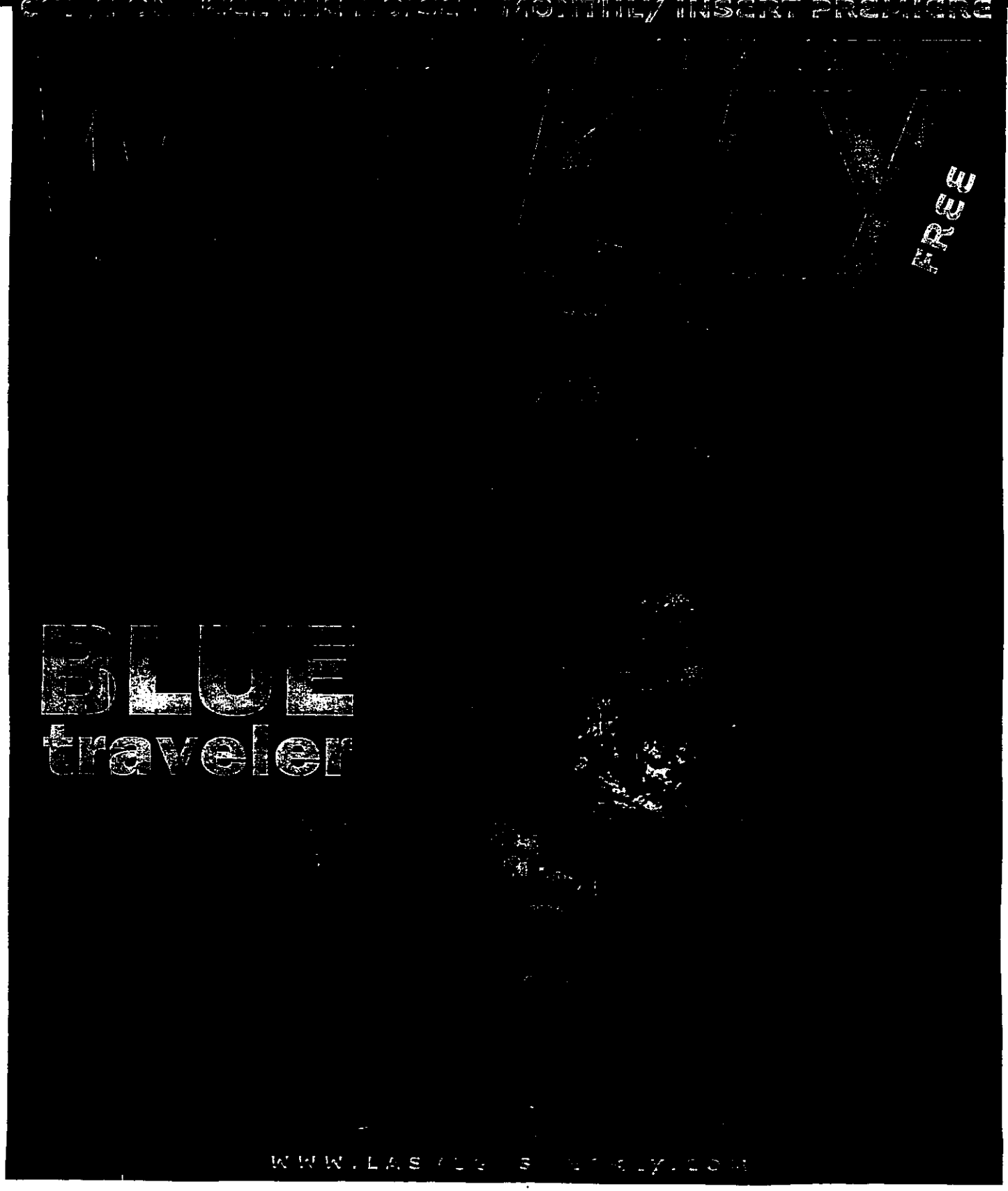
Blue Man Group's mission in Las Vegas is exemplified by one of the new pieces; in it, the Blue Man character brings an enormous neonlike landscape to life, and transforms it into the site of an intense, "techno-tribal" ritual. Stanton explains, "When the Blue Man takes the neon sign and turns it into something else, something primal, exciting and unexpected, this mirrors our goal of transforming the Las Vegas scene by bringing an [illegible] artistic and innovative [illegible] once to the Strip.

Music will play an even larger role in the Las Vegas production than it has in previous Blue Man Group shows. "Live at Luxor" will feature a number of the new musical instruments developed by Blue Man Group, including Audio Monolithic Bad Ass Tubulums (pronounced "tube-you-lums"), Aluminesium and the three-story Arch Drum.

Wall. "Blue Man Group [illegible] which runs on [illegible] musicians read [illegible] and the sounds [illegible] clude the latest in [illegible] Surround sound technology. The result, says Wink, is that "the music in the Vegas show will reach a level of tribal density that until now, Blue Man Group has only hinted at."

Tickets are available and can be purchased by calling 262-4400 or (800) 557-7428. Show times are 7 p.m. Sundays and Mondays and 7 and 10 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays.

BLUE MAN GROUP



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BLUE MAN cometh

The hieroglyphs have been removed from the walls of the Luxor Theater and workers are putting on the finishing touches as they prepare the facility for its newest show.

The front of the stage has 1,000-gallon water tanks set up near its two corners, each surrounded by a zoetrope. The rotating disk has gold leafed figurines around the perimeter that form animated imagery when the wheel spins. A member of the local construction crew renovating the stage notes that, while every Las Vegas show has it's own unique features, this one has some "really weird props."

THE DARLINGS OF OFF-BROADWAY SAY THEY'RE READY FOR LAS VEGAS. IS LAS VEGAS READY FOR THEM?

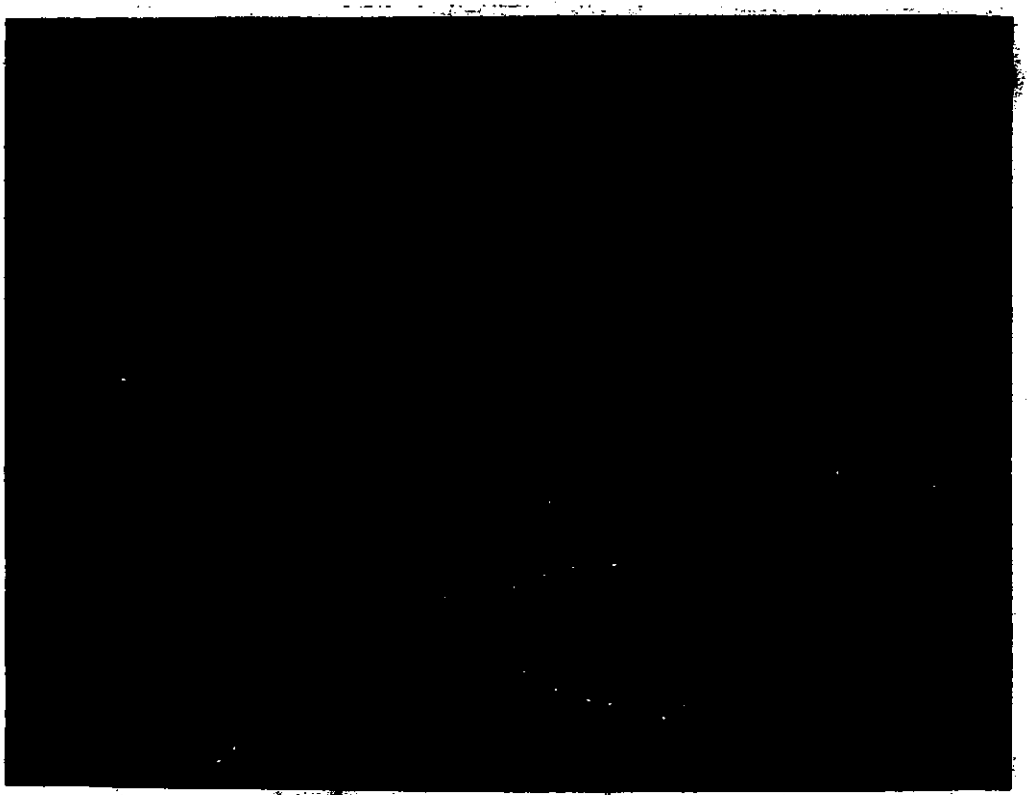
As a group of producers and directors, huddled in the aisle near the top of the front section, discuss fine-tuning a transition between scenes, a series of staccato grunts breaks out during the conversation. PVC pipes hang down from the ceiling, dangling above the seats, while unrolled toilet paper is strewn up and down the middle aisle.

And then the blue men take the stage.

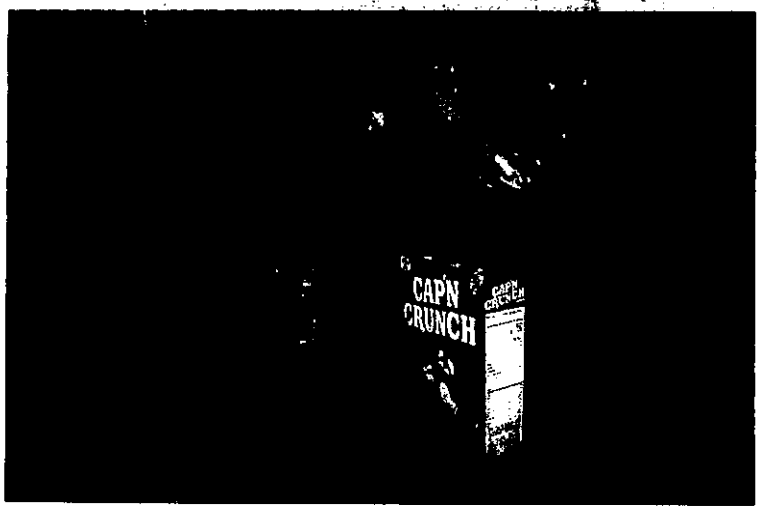
Continued on page 16

By Rob Bhatt

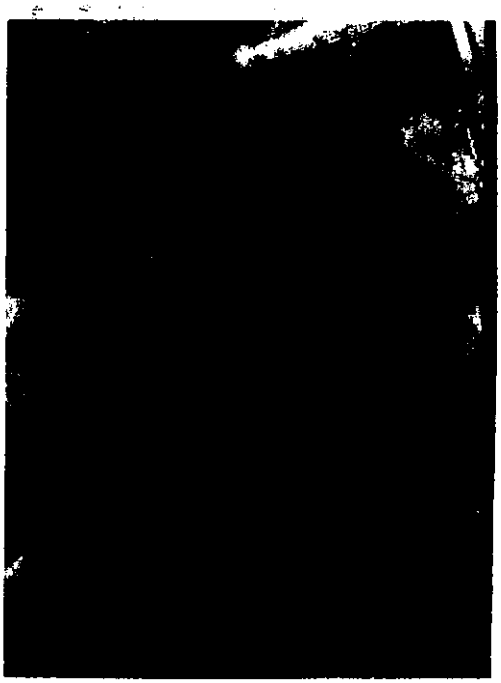
photographs by Jenna Bodnar



Only three to four men and women out of hundreds of candidates make it through auditions to reach the eight-week Blue Man training program. Performer Director Chris Bowen (left), the first understudy to founders Chris Wink, Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton, instructs Jason Campbell (middle) and Ryan Gerard (right) on the proper technique for the paint drums during training in New York. While Gerard will be a Blue Man cast member for the Vegas show, Campbell did not graduate from the training program.



(L to R) Chris Bowen, Jason Campbell and Ryan Gerard rehearse the Cap'n Crunch bit where the crispy nature of the famous cereal creates unique sound bites.



Blue Man Performer Director Jeffrey Doornbos spends about 45 minutes becoming bald and blue. The extensive process includes bald caps, thick blue makeup and dyed gloves. It takes almost as long to remove it after the show.

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Continued from page 16

It's hard to assimilate the diverse multimedia experience of a Blue Man show, especially when seated in the poncho seats wrapped in plastic to protect garments.

Glaab, then a recent graduate of the Rochester (N.Y.) Institute of Technology, set up one such performance in 1989 at the art studio he operated in Rochester. "Matt, Phil and Chris stayed at my place that weekend," Glaab says. "That's the kind of place it was."

Glaab moved to New York City a few months later, at about the same time that the blue men were preparing for an engagement at the La MaMa Experimental Theater Club, a space that's considered the pinnacle for performance artists. Along with homemade instruments, the video playback system that accompanied the show at La MaMa consisted of Glaab's camcorder and a television set taken from Goldman's bedroom. Some of the early props included hats with transistor radios on top of them that made electronic humming noises (what Goldman calls "read-your-mind hats"), which they passed out to audience members.

"Right from the beginning, there was an element of high-tech/low-tech," Wink says. "One of the first things we did was get an LED sign and hit a drum with it. It didn't take that much, we just went to the hardware store and got it and smacked the drum with it. We couldn't afford a lot of gadgetry, so we built things."

The *New York Times* ran a favorable review of the show at the La MaMa, generating enough public interest to eventually get them onstage at Astor Place in 1991. Even so, Wink, Stanton and Goldman say that they couldn't imagine their show having an extended engagement. "We thought doing a couple of months off-Broadway would give us credibility to do the college circuit," Stanton says.

But the Astor Place show caught on like wildfire, prompting the *Village Voice* to create a new category for its prestigious Obie (off-Broadway) Awards for the group. Critics and celebrities embraced the production. One of the early spectators of the off-Broadway version of Blue Man was Branford Marsalis, shortly after he became the band leader for "The Tonight Show." Marsalis arranged Blue Man Group's subsequent appearances on the show.

When they started, Wink, Goldman and Stanton performed 1,285 straight shows—six nights a week for nearly three years—before Stanton cut his hand so badly that he had to sit out for three weeks. It was only then that the blue men realized that they could add other actors to the cast and give themselves time to regroup, refocus and refine Blue Man. These days, the group has talent scouts that scour the national music-conference and acting-class circuit looking for new, blue talent. Despite having more than 5,000 people show up for the year-round open-call auditions that regularly take place across the country and in Canada, there are still only about 30 Blue Men. Most of the eight Blue Man actors scheduled to perform at Luxor—only three appear onstage during any one performance, and each performs about four shows a week—have performed *Tubes* in other cities. Wink, Goldman and Stanton intend to rotate in and out of the blue cast themselves.

The three co-founders say they were more interested in developing a concept that they believe in than in creating a lucrative, entertainment venture. They have done both. They are very guarded with their revenue numbers, but selling out shows in three cities is said to generate millions of dollars for the group each year. Goldman points out that the size of the operation has grown comparable to that of a Broadway production, while the venues they play are much smaller than their Broadway counterparts. Thus, most of what they do earn tends to go right back into the project. They still build their own instruments and props, but they also now have the resources to invest in technology, like the custom-made zoetropes and the $1.5 million sound system they brought in for the Luxor show.

Are the size and resources available at their new venue comparable to giving the Blue Man the keys to the Porsche? "We wrote this material in our warehouse in New York," Wink says. "This material wasn't written on a Porsche. It's absolutely great to have this facility, but I think it's more of a Humvee. It's still like an expensive car, but it's rugged, and it can go onto the backroads."

Meanwhile, the three co-founders credit their success as much to a series of good breaks as they do to developing a concept that resonates with a lot of people. Wink says that early media coverage and the "Tonight Show" appearances helped fuel their popularity and created opportunities that haven't been afforded to other talented performance artists.

"The cream doesn't always get a chance to rise to the top," Wink adds. "We've seen some really good things that haven't had a chance to succeed. We've gotten a series of great breaks, and we've been riding this great wave."

And the time has come to let it ride in Las Vegas. LVW

Continued from page 14

While Blue Man Group's *Live at Luxor* may not be the first new Strip show of the new millennium, it promises to be like no other. In this respect, the timing of its debut is fortuitous, as it allows the group to usher in what could be another new era for Las Vegas resort entertainment.

During its 1:15-minute running time, the show will literally expose its audience to flying Jell-O, Twinkies and Cap'n Crunch cereal. The percussion-heavy music relies on, at last count, at least 50 drums. Most are DIY contraptions made of microphoned PVC tuned to specific musical notes and pounded on by an assortment of paddles, mallets and, in at least one instance, an electric sign. Like the group's original production, *Tubes, Live at Luxor* is driven by an eclectic instrumentation. In this case, the band has been expanded from three members to seven, each pounding out melodies on drum kits, a zither, an alternatively-tuned Chapman Stick played with a bow plus—for the first time in Blue Man's onstage evolution—and an electric guitar. This ensemble, combined with the rythmic experimentation of the blue men themselves, sets a tribal, post-apocalyptic tone that borders on techno at some points and New Age at others. And the lead characters—the three skullcap-adorned men with their heads painted cobalt blue—make their strongest statements without saying a single word.

Bizarre would be an understatement. But the strangest thing about Blue Man Group's Luxor stint may be the fact that it is playing Las Vegas at all.

The announcement last year that the troupe had decided to open its new show on the Strip generated surprise among its fans. Loyal followers had to grapple with the dichotomy of a concept spawned by disillusionment with the entertainment establishment coming to what has long been perceived as the capital of mainstream entertainment. With apologies to Siegfried and Roy, there's just not much daring or edgy in Strip showrooms.

"Will Vegas lure [the Blue Man] away from his higher calling with easy money and loose women?" pondered one fan in the group's online chatroom (www.blueman.com). "Does it even matter, as long as it works?"

It's hard to gauge who's taking the bigger gamble as Blue Man Group begins its run on the fabulous Las Vegas Strip. The troupe's stint at the Astor Place Theater in New York's East Village continues to experience unprecedented success for an off-Broadway production. And that run spawned equally successful engagements in Chicago and Boston.

But Las Vegas is a completely different animal.

Luxor is gambling that it can fill its 1,200-seat theater on a nightly basis with a show that lacks the feather-headdressed dancers, gold-chained crooners or marquee names that have long been de rigueur for Strip showrooms. (Blue Man began its run of previews on Feb. 25 and officially opens on March 14.)

Mystere, *O* and *Lord of the Dance* have shown that there is room for success outside of the box. But the blue men are not just outside the box. They're standing around the box and pounding on it with paddles, mallets and whatever else they can get their blue hands on to the rhythm of a completely different beat.

"It's kind of a neat proposition to go to a place like Vegas and prove people can do something like this," says Chris Wink, one of the group's three co-founders. "Our mission is to take our show and not make it Vegas-y at all; prove that there is a different market segment that is interested in this type of show."

Wink, co-founders Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton, and the Blue Man community—which has grown into an organization of more than 350 actors, musicians and technicians—are taking a fairly large risk of their own. When the group opened at the Charles Playhouse in Boston in 1995 and Chicago's Briar Street Theater in 1997, it was a matter of putting the instruments, routines and sets from Astor Place into new venues. But the stage and capacity at the Luxor is double anything that the group has ever done before.

"It's a little scary, and it's a blessing," says Todd Perlmutter, one of the sound designers for the Luxor show. "We'd never be able to get this large of a band and some of these instruments onstage at the other venues. This band would be the width of the stage in Boston."

That's exactly what attracted Blue Man to Las Vegas in the first place.

The blue men purchased a warehouse in the East Village in 1997 and were experimenting with new instruments and sounds for their then-

Blue Man co-founder Chris Wink playing an early version of the backpack tubulum.

forthcoming album. (They released the compact disc, *Audio*, last fall, and it is said to be making its way up the college charts.) On some days, the experimentation involved jumping up and down on a dumpster "to get the right sound," Perlmutter explains. On other days, research and development involved trying to record samples of breaking glass by repeatedly dropping light bulbs.

With success in three cities under its belt and work on the album winding down, the group was also looking for a larger venue to try out the new equipment and material when Joel Fischman, the former executive entertainment director for Luxor's corporate owners, approached them in 1998.

Fischman was impressed when he first saw Blue Man in the early '90s while producing shows for Atlantic City casinos. He tried to bring Blue Man to the Strip while working for Bally's Las Vegas about six years ago. The circumstances weren't right that time, but he contacted the blue men again in 1998, shortly after he became vice president in charge of entertainment for Circus Circus Enterprises, now called Mandalay Resort Group.

This time, things clicked.

The blue men needed space, and Las Vegas resort operators were trying to expand the scope of casino entertainment. Mirage Resorts had experienced success with Cirque du Soleil productions, and Circus Circus' new resort, Mandalay Bay, was scheduled to open with the Broadway hit *Chicago* in its showroom. Mandalay's parent company was looking to light a fire with a new offering in the showroom of its pyramid-shaped sister resort as interest in it's previous show, *Imagine*, fizzled. (Fischman left Mandalay Resort Group last month, and Chicago's run at Mandalay Bay ended Feb. 27.)

Fischman and his former boss, Mandalay President Glenn Schaeffer, offered Blue Man a big stage and the type of creative and logistical control that the group sought. Las Vegas' large visitor base and the dynamics of Strip entertainment also offered a potentially longer engagement than the group could get in Los Angeles or San Francisco. That alone was an important factor behind the move to Las Vegas.

"We haven't written a show that's portable," Wink explains. "Our approach to theater is that it's an installation."

The stage at Astor Place, which seats close to 300 people, is about 24 feet wide and about 15 feet deep, allowing the Blue Man performers to take on a larger-than-life appearance. The stage at the Luxor is about 60 feet wide and at least 40 feet deep, which dramatically changes Blue Man's sense of proportion.

"The challenge we're acting on is to be big enough and still be faithful to the character so people can read what's going on onstage," says Scott Kinworthy, one of the actors for the Las Vegas production. "We really don't intend to do any acting that's not real."

The expanded band and new routines were designed specifically for Blue Man's new, larger habitat. And it gives the crew an opportunity to debut the new instruments. The "drumbones" are PVC pipes made longer or shorter via a sliding motion—similar to that used for a trombone—to change their pitch. Similarly, PVC is affixed to a bass drum to alter its sound on the "drumulum." And the "tubulums" are a set of tom drums whose pitch is modified through PVC that stretches for several feet off the top of the new, three story "drum wall," anchored by a roughly 10-foot-wide bass drum that doubles as a projection screen.

"We like to build stuff," Wink explains.

The enlarged space also forces/allows Blue Man to include extra animation, lighting and props like the zoetropes, 19th century animation devices. The zoetropes and the water tanks, equipped with motorized propellers, come into play during a portion of the show that experiments with persistence of vision.

One of the other new elements that Blue Man Group introduces in the Las Vegas production is the spaghetti-western guitar riffs inspired by *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* composer Ennio Marricone. "The Blue Man character is always experiencing something new," explains Perlmutter. "We liken it to a cowboy coming into town."

But it's not the Old West where the Blue Man roams. Rather, it's modern, media-blitzed American society.

If you took any man, or everyman, and stripped him or her of all preconceptions, hypocrisies, insecurities, prejudices and superficialities, you'd get a Blue Man. That's the Blue Man, as he tries to appreciate what the box of Cap'n Crunch cereal has to offer. The most exciting thing about it is the sound it makes as he chews it in his mouth.

"There's a neutrality that allows for the character to express himself in a way that most people don't," says Carl Glaab, an associate director and video developer. "When you watch the Blue Man experience something that's familiar to us for the first time, you experience it in a whole new way."

The challenge of defining the Blue Man concept with words is part of the design. "There are certain kinds of work that are not verbal, and they exist to evoke associations or get to some sort of emotional area," says Wink. "We're not trying to have Blue Man be a symbol for anything literally. We're trying to have it evoke something that you connect with."

It's that connection that has helped Blue Man evolve from a group of disillusioned tricksters in late '80s New York into a pop culture phenomenon.

Wink, now 39, grew up in New York, playing the drums in punk bands. He was at "the end of his rope" as far as the music business goes as the mid-'80s arrived. In 1986, he was supporting himself by writing synopses of articles for a Japanese publishing company and working for a catering company, where he met Stanton, now 40. Stanton, who grew up in Savannah, Ga., and studied acting at a small, denominational college in Missouri, had just moved to New York to pursue his acting career. Wink's boyhood chum and roommate at the time was Goldman, now 38, who had obtained his MBA and was enjoying a successful career in computer software development. The three were united by their lack of excitement over New York's cultural landscape.

"In the 1980s, there was nothing going on," Wink says. "New York was a place with a huge heritage, but there was nothing going on. We were very disgruntled."

Exploring the New York art scene "as a gang," the threesome hooked up with like-minded individuals. Together they staged events like "Funeral for the '80s" in Central Park in 1988. With about a dozen people donning blue paint, they staged a ceremonial burial of new wave, punk rock and other things that symbolized the barrenness of '80s culture. "MTV News" covered the mock funeral. Later, they set up "Club Nowhere" on the streets outside some of New York's trendiest nightclubs, capturing the attention of *Details* magazine. As club goers waited for security officers to let them into the real club, the blue men roped off their own area of sidewalk and let passersby come and go according to their own codes of style. And their evolving routine of non-dialogue, percussion-aided skits became popular on the not-for-profit performance art circuit.

Continued on page 18

BLUE MAN GROUP
LIVE AT LUXOR

LAS VEGAS
REVIEW-JOURNAL & SUN
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OUR VIEWS

Winners and losers in 2000

3755

Our millennium year, 2000, produced a bumper crop of both winners and losers in Las Vegas and in Nevada. Pruning the possible selections to those that fit in this space wasn't easy, with so many deserving candidates on both ends of the scale. It also was hard because some were impossible to place in a single, tidy category. For instance, Steve Wynn lost his treasured Mirage Resorts' empire. But how could Wynn be considered a loser since he pocketed $500 million from the MGM Grand in the acquisition deal? That's a nice sum that allowed him to purchase the Desert Inn and start over without having to answer to pesky shareholders. But we shouldered the difficulties aside and made our list, which we herewith share with you.

Winners: Nevada Republicans. John Ensign ended a 12-year dry spell for the GOP as the party once again captured a U.S. Senate seat. In addition, Rep. Jim Gibbons and Gov. Kenny Guinn lent their political muscle to help George W. Bush capture the state's four electoral votes in the razor-thin-close presidential election.

Losers: Nevadans who live in the shadow of Yucca Mountain. While Guinn & Co. basked in the glow of Bush's victory, there already has been an ominous stirring that Bush's election will hasten the selection of Yucca Mountain as a burial site for this nation's high-level nuclear waste. Guinn, Gibbons and other top Republicans may come to rue the day they embraced Bush.

Winners: Assembly Democrats. Richard Perkins of Henderson will be the next speaker of the lower house and Barbara Buckley of Las Vegas will be its majority leader. The Democrats in the Assembly also maintain their iron grip, holding 27 seats out of 42. Their policy acumen and political deftness have the potential to tie both Guinn and the Republican-controlled Senate in knots.

Loser: Gov. Kenny Guinn. The governor personally has campaigned against many Assembly Democrats, even some that he had worked closely with during the 1999 Legislature. His bid came up empty, though, and certainly earned Democratic enmity. The governor's prescription drug plan for seniors also was ridiculed by Rep. Shelley Berkley, D-Nev., and top national Democrats. Guinn was angered by the criticism and made it his mission to defeat Berkley, but she coasted to re-election, handing Guinn another public relations loss. Guinn entered the year strong, but these tactical errors will weaken him as the 2001 Legislature approaches.

Winner: Oscar Goodman. The Las Vegas mayor continues to defy conventional wisdom. He says whatever is on his mind, and no matter how off the wall it may be, his popularity ratings still soar. Maybe Goodman's rise will lead more eccentric, yet gifted, men and women to seek office. It certainly would be more interesting than the poll-tested, vanilla-style variety we've grown accustomed to.

Losers: Las Vegas City Councilman Michael McDonald was once dubbed the "shadow mayor," but his ethical lapses have left him simply a shadow. Once feared by fellow council members and City Hall staffers, he now commands little respect, fatal for a politician. Lance Malone, who also had ethical lapses as well as an unfortunate way of putting things, lost his County Commission seat. Now he is said to be seeking a job in local television. If he lands one, who knows, maybe it could lead to his political resurrection.

Winner: Blue Man Group. The offbeat trio that plays at the Luxor added to the growing, and eclectic, mix of entertainment offered for both local residents and tourists.

Loser: Las Vegas' 2000 New Year's celebration. The "Entertainment Capital of the World" ushered in 2000 with a whimper, not a bang. Despite the amazing pyrotechnics around the world, Las Vegas didn't have any fireworks displays. The New Year's dud was amplified by the greed of casinos, whose high room rates helped keep tourists away. Now, one year late, Las Vegas plans on putting on a $500,000 fireworks display tonight.

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2000 THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Dawn of a Blue Era

By MIKE WEATHERFORD
REVIEW-JOURNAL

No one took this symbolic "dawn of a new era" business more seriously than the people who bring you Las Vegas entertainment.

There were more new shows (four) in the first two months than in some years all told, including some daring new ideas — the success of which will influence what we see down the road.

Listing this year's 10 best is tricky, arguably even dicey, for a couple of reasons: First, it focuses on production shows that arrived in 2000 at the expense of older ones that are probably still better than anything on this list.

And because this was a transitional year at the Review-Journal as well, I came on the showroom beat too late to review a couple of the most worthy contenders, including Harrah's Las Vegas headliner Clint Holmes.

Also, any list likely to be exploited in advertising makes me a bit crankier; yo still see ads proclaiming "Show of the Year," even if t year was 1985. So I'm puttin in a "mitigating factor" to remind people that nothing' perfect, especially in Vegas

1. "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" (Luxor) — More universal than it perhaps seemed at first, the show features three silent

► SEE SHOWS PAGE 32A

Luxor's boys in blue brought Las Vegas showrooms the beat of a different drummer.

TOP 10 SHOWS

1. "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" (Luxor)
2. "Cabaret" (MGM Grand)
3. "Always, Patsy Cline" (Silverton)
4. Danny Gans (The Mirage)
5. "Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus" (Flamingo)
6. Penn & Teller (MGM Grand)
7. Rita Rudner (MGM Grand)
8. De La Guarda (Rio)
9. "At the Copa" (Rio)
10. "Footloose the Musical" (Rio)

▶ SHOWS: *Blue Man Group offered eye-opening insight into high-tech society*

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30A

pranksters in cobalt blue skullcaps who offer lowbrow humor along with eye-opening insight into our confused high-tech society.

Mitigating factor: With tickets at $55 and $65, the theater is a little large to pull everyone into the fun, and the show could be a little longer.

2. "Cabaret" (MGM Grand) — The gritty update was allowed to play at the MGM in its full, two-act glory.

Mitigating factor: Former Miss America Kate Shindle wasn't quite a big enough name or presence to fill Sally Bowles' stockings.

3. "Always, Patsy Cline" (Silverton) — This charming two-woman show dodged audiences at the Silverton, but it would be nice to see its exceptional value (at $27.50) spark a trend in 2001.

Mitigating factor: Sally Struthers wasn't sure if she was appearing in a drama or "Greater Tuna."

4. Danny Gans (The Mirage) — He elevates the impressionist genre above the variety-show level at his gorgeous custom theater at The Mirage.

Mitigating factor: If movies such as "Forrest Gump" give you cavities, keep your mouth shut tight.

5. "Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus" (Flamingo) — A first-rate ensemble cast offers a classy departure from magic shows and impressionists.

Mitigating factor: The creators couldn't decide if the show was a "book" musical or a revue, and met somewhere in the maddening middle.

6. Penn & Teller (MGM Grand) — A literate magic show for people who hate illiterate magic shows.

Mitigating factor: The boys set their own benchmark so high, it's disappointing when they repeat themselves.

7. Rita Rudner (MGM Grand) — A classy comedian who surprised everyone — perhaps even herself — with her drawing power on the Strip.

Mitigating factor: Success breeds a $10 price increase within three months.

8. De La Guarda (Rio) — The warehouse fun house antics offer something really different for people looking for something really different.

Mitigating factor: It exhausts its bag of gimmicky tricks even before its 70 minutes are over.

9. "At the Copa" (Rio) — David Cassidy's attempt to reinvent himself in a retro musical proved too expensive to continue next year, but Sheena Easton and a live band made it one to root for.

Mitigating factor: Cassidy proved that Sinatra et al. only made finger-popping swing *look* easy.

10. "Footloose the Musical" (Rio) — This serious reworking of a dopey '80s movie was better than summer reruns.

Mitigating factor: The star was Kevin Burns, not Bacon.

TOUR GUIDE MAGAZINE
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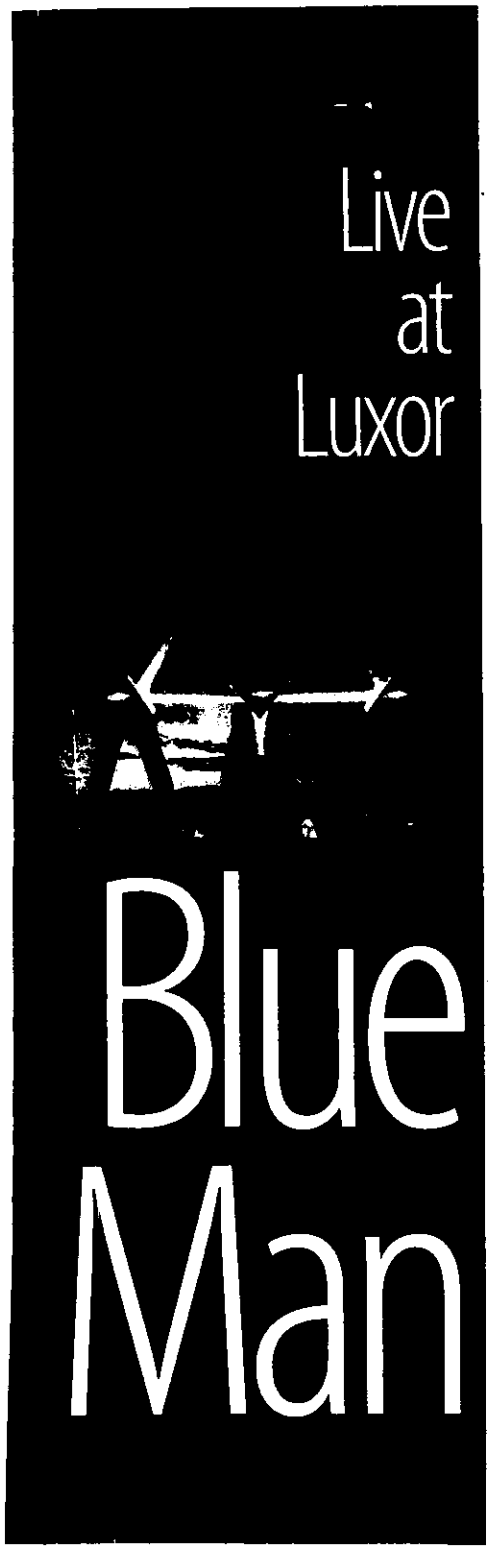


"Blue Man Group – Live at Luxor", takes place at the 1,200 seat state-of-the-art Luxor Theatre and features a number of the new musical instruments including Back Pack Tubulums (pronounced "tube-you-lums"), Airpoles and the three-story high Drum Wall.

Blue Man Group features three enigmatic bald and blue characters who take the audience through a multi-sensory experience that combines theatre, percussive music, art, science and vaudeville into a form of entertainment that is like nothing else. People from all over the world, from all walks of life and from all age groups have become fans of Blue Man Group's show.

Three long-time friends Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink founded Blue Man Group in 1987 with a series of "happenings" which stemmed from salon-style meetings in New York City. These events developed into the award-winning show that opened Off-Broadway at the Astor Place Theatre in 1991.

Following the success of the New York show, Blue Man Group has opened equally successful productions in Boston (since 1995) and Chicago (since 1997). All three shows continue to play to sold-out audiences.

Blue Man Group founders headed West with the ambitious goal of taking both their show and the city of Las Vegas to a whole new level. Blue Man Group's mission in Las Vegas is exemplified by one of the new pieces; in it, the Blue Man character brings an enormous neon-like landscape to life, and transforms it into the site of an intense "techno-tribal" ritual. Stanton explains, "When the Blue Man takes the neon sign and turns it into something else, something primal, exciting and unexpected, this mirrors our goal of transforming the Las Vegas scene by bringing an uncharacteristic and innovative experience to the Strip."

Blue Man Group's debut album, AUDIO has been released on Virgin Records and has been nominated for a Grammy in the category of "Best Pop Instrumental Album."

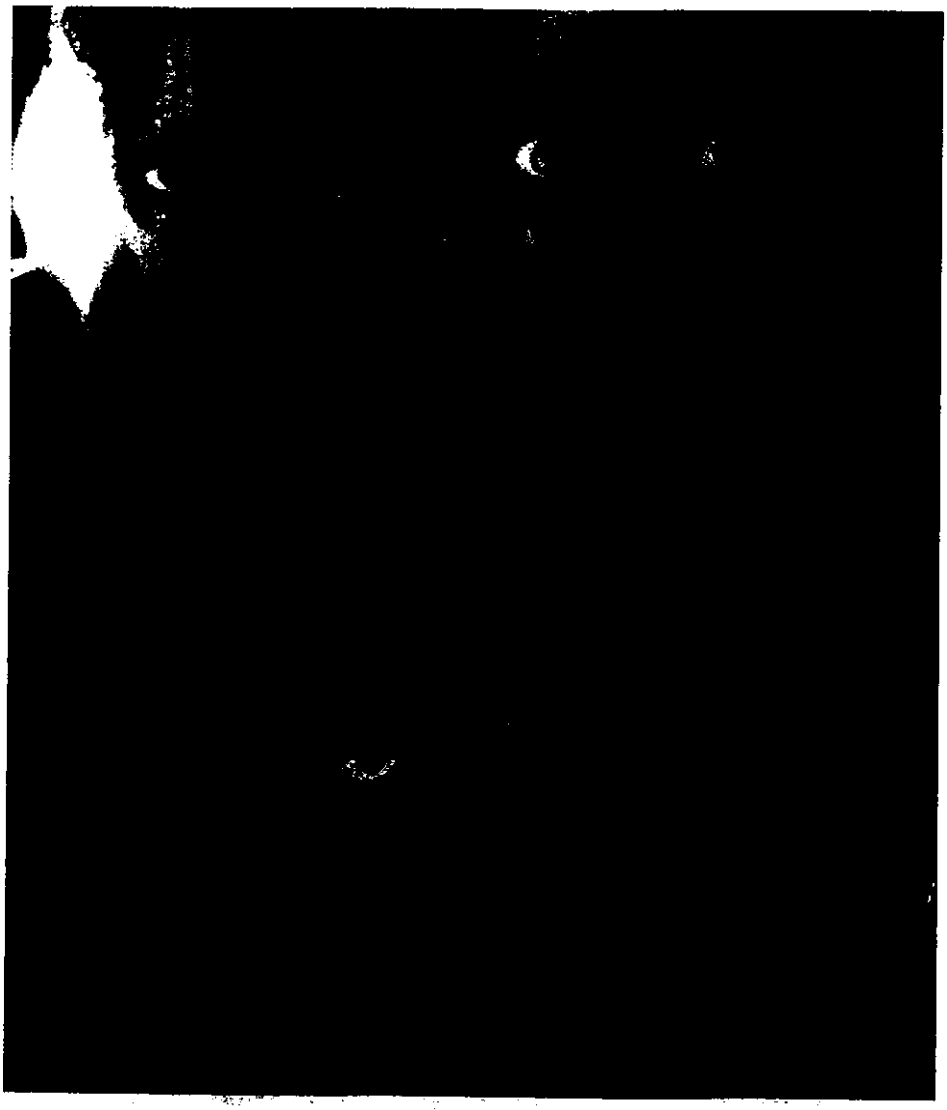
Experience Blue Man Group nightly at 7 and 10 p.m. in the Luxor Theater. Tickets cost $59.50 and $69.50 and are available by calling (702) 262-4400 or online at www.luxor.com.

BLUE MAN GROUP

INSIST

SHOWBIZ Weekly
MARCH 5, 2000

'BLUE MAN GROUP: LIVE AT LUXOR' BUSTS OUT



They were courted by San Francisco. They were courted by Los Angeles. But "Blue Man Group"–the avant-garde production that has spawned an entirely new genre of theater–chose the Luxor in Las Vegas as their new home. Why?

"Luxor's size and technical capacity are just right for our new material and we have excellent chemistry with Glenn Schaeffer (President/CFO of Mandalay Bay Resort Group) and the management of Mandalay Bay Resort Group," said Matt Goldman, co-creator of "Blue Man Group."

The intention of "Blue Man Group" founders Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink, is to take both their show and Las Vegas to a whole new level of entertainment. The new production, "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor," will be a hybrid of new material, as well as signature pieces from the standing productions in New York, Chicago and Boston.

The 1,200-seat Luxor Theater will allow the group to feature some new instruments they have invented, including a three-story-high "Drum Wall," and include the latest innovations in surround sound technology.

So don't miss the new leaders in performance art. Check out "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor." You'll be the hippest person in your hometown.

"Blue Man Group"
- ***Where*** **• Luxor**
- ***When*** **• Wed.-Mon.**
- ***Information*** **• 262-4400**

ON INDIGO

The Blue Man

It's More Than Child's Play

By Lynn Collier

It's about art. It's about philosophy. It's about the human tribe. It's about music. They don't like to call it a food fight, but the thought does cross your mind several times when things come flying into the audience. One thing is for sure—"Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" is a lot of fun. Hey, what other Las Vegas act toilet papers its audience at the end of the show?

Take any small child to see this show and listen to their shrill giggles rise above the adults' huskier laughs (sometimes you think they're getting the jokes better than a devoted National Public Radio listener). At one recent show two toddlers (one sitting in her mother's lap) particularly liked the farting sounds emitted when the three men squirted Twinkie cream filling from a hidden compartment in the chest of their black industrial suits.

Yes, art can be messy. The Twinkie tea party is a good reason they have plastic coverings for audience members in the first four rows. Then there's the paint spitting (which results in a very fine piece of artwork) and the marshmallow sculptures. Don't forget the Cap'n Crunch melody (it'll make you think of your 1-year-old nephew's food follies).

National Associate Director and Las Vegas Associate Producer Carrie Hanson recalls one night when a three-year-old was leading the crowd's wave of laughter with her cheerful shrieks. "She got every joke."

Anthony Parrulli, who opened the Las Vegas show two years ago, and performed in other cities ("Blue Man" shows run in New York, Chicago and Boston), recalls a 94-year-old woman who attended the show with her 60-year-old daughter. Afterwards, she told him she'd never laughed so hard in her whole life.

Blue Man Group is described on its Web site (www.blueman.com) as "a creative organization dedicated to creating exciting and innovative work in a wide variety of media."

The show's creators, Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink, opened in New York 11 years ago. They created unique percussion instruments (mostly made of polyvinyl chloride plumbing pipes), which create the deep, reverberating heartbeat of the Blue Man Group throughout the 80-minute show.

This time last year the Blue Man Group's debut album *Audio* was nominated for a Grammy in the category of Best Pop Instrumental. This fall they will release a new CD that may include vocals.

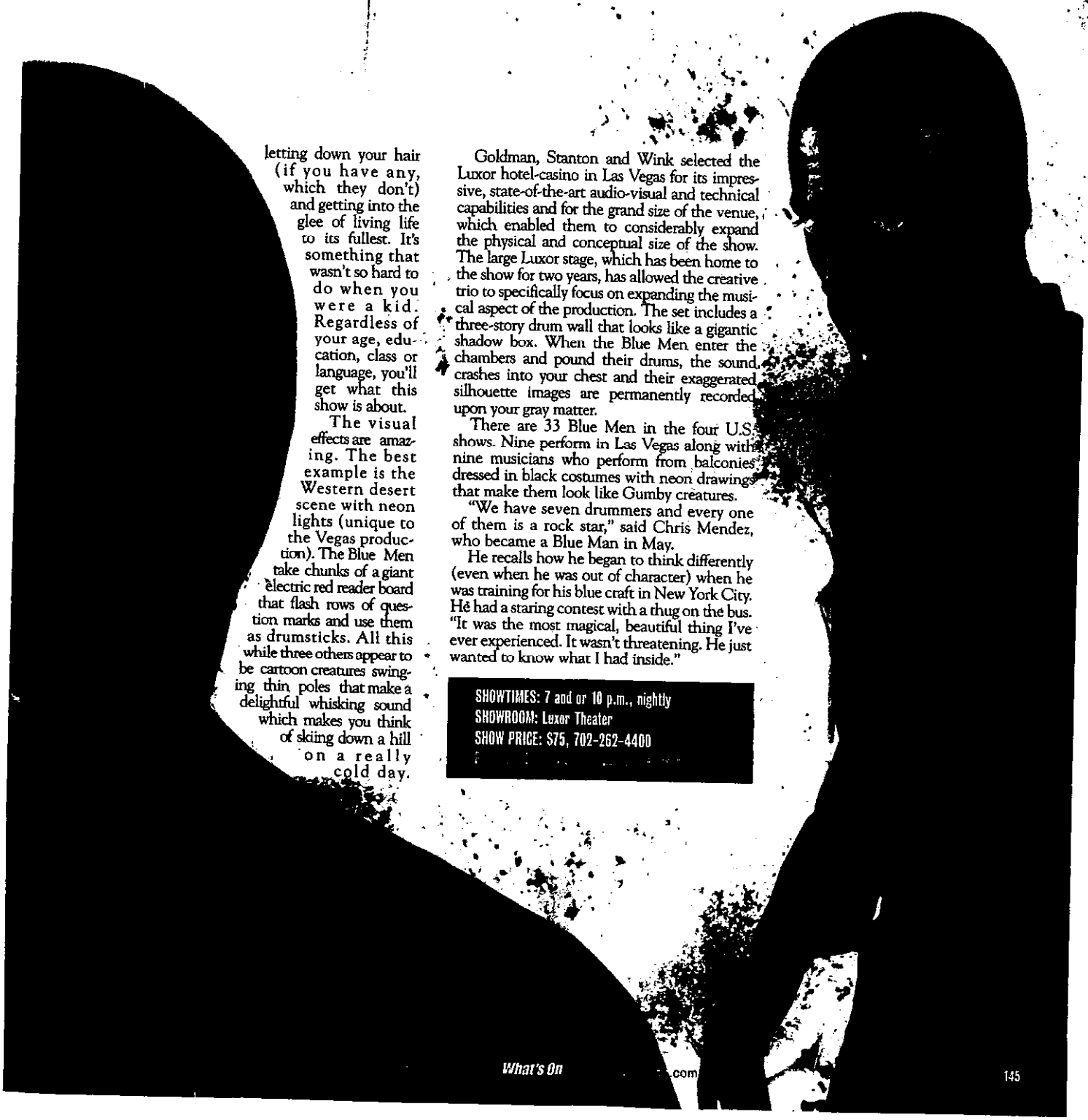
It's all about the Blue Man character, said Marcus Weiss, a Las Vegas Blue Man. "He is very innocent, very childlike."

Indeed, the wide-eyed wonder of the men exploring and discovering simple things like the sound of Cap'n Crunch and the touch of Jell-O are reminiscent of a newborn child or an alien who has landed on a new world.

"One of the prerequisites of auditioning is drumming skills. The first audition is short, a series of single stroke rolls and a brief interview—getting a sense of you, looking for that spark of passion. Callback auditions are more performance intensive," said Eric Gebow, who performs in the Las Vegas Blue Man Group show.

The performers peer into the audience with their bewildered eyes and huge cobalt faces. Their blue hands often rise into the air in praise for themselves and others. They never use words to communicate. They must rely on their body language. And the message comes through loud and clear: This is about

Group



letting down your hair (if you have any, which they don't) and getting into the glee of living life to its fullest. It's something that wasn't so hard to do when you were a kid. Regardless of your age, education, class or language, you'll get what this show is about.

The visual effects are amazing. The best example is the Western desert scene with neon lights (unique to the Vegas production). The Blue Men take chunks of a giant electric red reader board that flash rows of question marks and use them as drumsticks. All this while three others appear to be cartoon creatures swinging thin poles that make a delightful whisking sound which makes you think of skiing down a hill on a really cold day.

Goldman, Stanton and Wink selected the Luxor hotel-casino in Las Vegas for its impressive, state-of-the-art audio-visual and technical capabilities and for the grand size of the venue, which enabled them to considerably expand the physical and conceptual size of the show. The large Luxor stage, which has been home to the show for two years, has allowed the creative trio to specifically focus on expanding the musical aspect of the production. The set includes a three-story drum wall that looks like a gigantic shadow box. When the Blue Men enter the chambers and pound their drums, the sound crashes into your chest and their exaggerated silhouette images are permanently recorded upon your gray matter.

There are 33 Blue Men in the four U.S. shows. Nine perform in Las Vegas along with nine musicians who perform from balconies dressed in black costumes with neon drawings that make them look like Gumby creatures.

"We have seven drummers and every one of them is a rock star," said Chris Mendez, who became a Blue Man in May.

He recalls how he began to think differently (even when he was out of character) when he was training for his blue craft in New York City. He had a staring contest with a thug on the bus. "It was the most magical, beautiful thing I've ever experienced. It wasn't threatening. He just wanted to know what I had inside."

SHOWTIMES: 7 and or 10 p.m., nightly
SHOWROOM: Luxor Theater
SHOW PRICE: $75, 702-262-4400

DIVERSION

VOL. 28/NO. 4 ①
MARCH 2000

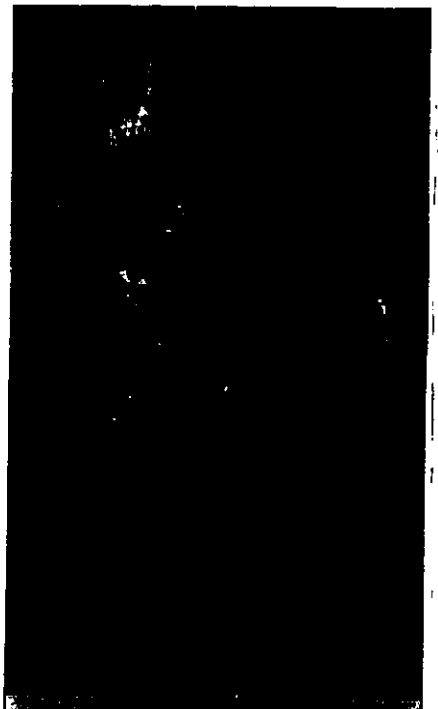
diversionary tactics

BY JIM GULLO

We'll take it as a downtown Manhattan prank of epic proportions that Blue Man Group, that trio of wordless, blue-headed performance artists from New York, is opening a new show this month at the kitschy Luxor hotel in Las Vegas. The production promises to have all of Blue Man's trademarks—geysers of paint, percussive music, wild imagery, and yummy paint-dipped marshmallows—but with a Vegas audience. *The New York Times* called the original show "a postmodern romp in a lunatic nursery school." How that will play in the ultimate nursery-school town of lounge lizards, Elvis impersonators, and topless dancers is anybody's guess, but we'll put our chips on the Blue Man. Call 702/262-4400.

BLUE MAN GROUP

LIVE AT LUXOR



What's On

THE LAS VEGAS GUIDE

February 8-21, 2000 What's On

[illegible]

The countdown is under way to the Feb. 23 debut of "Blue Man Group at the Luxor." Those who've had an early glimpse credit that "Blue Man" will [illegible] Vegas Style [illegible].

"Blue Man Group" are in Luxor [illegible] of theatre, comedy, original music, [illegible] and some unforgettable [illegible] and makeup design to keep audiences spellbound. Originally presented in New York City, recent "Blue Man" productions have been a big smash in [illegible] and elsewhere.

Las Vegas casinos today are on the lookout for cutting-edge entertainment as the public demands more than the old style showgirl and feather offerings. Rest assured that "Blue Man Group" is a [illegible] from the Vegas shows your grandparents or great grandparents saw in the 1950s.

Because of its originality, "Blue Man Group" is a show that reviewers have a hard time describing with the English language. Time magazine called it "a sensation."

Circle your calendar for Feb. 23, when "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" premieres in the Luxor Theater. The show will be presented Wed.-Mon. and tickets will be priced at $55 & $65. Call 702-262-4400 for show schedule information.

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BLUE MAN GROUP

L U X O R

BLUE MAN GROUP GOES WEST

The Off-Broadway sensation Blue Man Group will open a new show in Las Vegas March 15, 2000. The show, titled "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor," will take place at the 1,200-seat state-of-the-art Luxor Theatre. The new production will contain a hybrid of new material as well as "signature" pieces from Blue Man Group productions in New York, Boston and Chicago.

Blue Man Group founders Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink are heading West with the ambitious goal of taking both their show and the cityof Las Vegas to a whole new level. Blue Man Group's mission in Las Vegas is exemplified by one of the new pieces; in it, the Blue Man character bringsan enormous neon-like landscape to life, and transforms it into the site ofan intense "techno-tribal" ritual.

Music will play an even larger role in the Las Vegas production than it has in previous Blue Man Group shows. This production will feature a number ofthe new musical instruments developed by Blue Man Group for their debut album, "Audio," including "Back Pack Tubaiums" (pronounced "tube-you-lums"), "Airpoles" and the three-story high "Drum Wall." Blue Man Group's band, which currently consists of three musicians, will expand to seven and the sound system will include the latest innovations in surround sound technology.

Tickets are available now and can be purchased by calling (702) 262-4400 or (800) 557-7428 or through any TicketMaster outlet. For more information, visit

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Dose of Dada

By Meredith McGhan

"Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" is much more than entertainment. An intense spectacle of avant-garde performance art, "Blue Man Group" answers the needs of modern culture for felt experience and community with primal drumming, audience participation and humor that is countercultural without being inaccessible.

The show is the brainchild of three longtime friends from New York — Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink. It opened at the Astor Place Theatre in 1991 and has since evolved to include long-running shows in Boston, Chicago and now, with its largest production to date, in Las Vegas. For this show they added a new set piece — a Wild West landscape in neon that is transformed into the site of an ecstatic techno-ritual. This mirrors "Blue Man Group's" goal of transforming the Vegas scene by bringing something innovative to the Strip.

Las Vegas is ready. The artistic community here is growing along with the rest of the city. People are hungry for the immediacy and intensity of involvement that comes with art — witness the rise of local art organizations. "Blue Man Group" couldn't have chosen a better time to invite Las Vegans and visitors into their unpretentious, no-holds-barred dialogue about art.

What is art, really; and how does the information-overload nature of modern life fragment us? "Blue Man Group" poses these questions without preaching and answers them in the spirit of absurdism. And you don't have to know anything about Dadaism (the early 20th century art movement embracing irrationality), Jackson Pollock or surrealism to get it. All you have to do is be a member of "Blue Man Group's" two-hour community — audience — for an evening that passes by all too quickly.

Three bald men with blue faces and hands, clad in black industrial-looking uni-

forms, are the center of the show. Backed by a live band of 17 plugged-in musicians and augmented by a group of laser artists, these techno-shamans manage to involve hundreds of individuals in group activities during their performance.

"And you don't have to know anything about Dadaism (the early 20th century art movement embracing irrationality) . . . to get it."

They poke gentle fun at "The Art World" by making marshmallow sculptures and creating paintings by spitting fluorescent colors out of their mouths. They even create human relief art by swinging an audience volunteer, suspended from the ceiling with cables attached to his feet. The volunteer wears a white jumpsuit splattered with paint, which leaves an abstract impression of a torso on the giant canvas. The Blue Men spurt creme filling from their chests after an earnest — humorously touching or touchingly humorous — Twinkie Light tea party with another audience member. Screams of delight are heard from those seated in the front row (who are garbed in plastic just in case something splatters on them) to the back row seats.

One gets the impression that many of these audience members have returned more than once. The atmosphere is at times as cult-filmesque as *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* was back in the Eighties, with people anticipating what will happen next and calling out encouragement.

The show relies on sound as much as visual effect. Though no words are spoken during the entire performance, there is music throughout. The sounds are percussion-based and have a tribal rhythm. Though conventional instruments such as drum kits, guitars, and synthesizers are used, it is the group's own inventions that stand out.

The PVC Instrument combines percussion with wind. It is made out of polyvinyl chloride pipes (that's right, the same stuff they use in indoor plumbing) and is played by being struck with foam-rubber paddles. The Drumbone, also made of PVC, is a sliding tube-within-a-tube. Pulling it out or pushing it in horizontally or vertically creates a number of harmonious pitches.

"Blue Man Group" has released a CD, which is for sale outside of the theater. The CD contains a mixture of songs that were used in the performance and some that were left out due to time and space constraints.

In fact, a message on the back of the CD reads: "This is not a soundtrack. This is better." The songs are not announced by name during the performance, so one can get an idea of some of the musical inspirations behind the trancelike, tribal sounds of "Blue Man Group" by looking at the CD's song list.

There is a constant point-counterpoint dance of comparison between the human brain and the computer as information processors, both in the CD and the performance. This is reflected in the names of songs like "Rods and Cones" and "Endless Column" (referring to the visual processors in the human eye and the DNA double helix) and three songs with the word "Mandelbrot" in the title. (A Mandelbrot Set is a fractal equation that, when expressed visually, is a beautiful, infinitely repeating symmetrically-appearing image.)

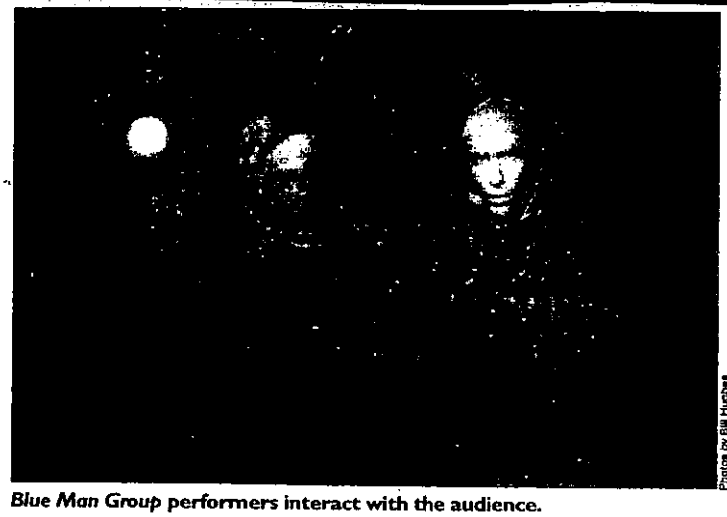
The finale forces everyone in the audience to work together. At the very back of the theater rolls of durable white paper are released so that streamers cascade down the seats. To avoid being covered by this paper, audience members must pass it quickly down to others seated in the rows in front of them. The plaintive question: "What makes us human?" That is a constant undercurrent throughout the show. "Blue Man Group's" answer is: "We are more than information processors. We are a community."

- **SHOWTIMES: Wednesday-Saturday at 7 & 10 p.m., Sunday & Monday at 7 p.m. Dark on Tuesday.**
- **SHOWROOM: Luxor Theater**
- **SHOW PRICE: $55 & $65. Call 702-262-4400 for tickets.**

BLUE MAN GROUP

LAS VEGAS CityLife FREE
MARCH 23-29, 2000 NEWS AND CULTURE W

By Anthony Del Valle



Photos by Bill Hughes

Blue Man Group performers interact with the audience.

Postmodern vaudeville

Blue Man Group is like wonderfully irresponsible entertainment at a kid's mammoth birthday party

Even some of the people who enjoyed the official opening performance last week have trouble describing exactly what *Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor* is. On one hand, the imported-from-off-Broadway production is unlike anything you're likely to have seen before. But the show's soul is rooted in one of the oldest traditions of American theater. What's so ingenious about this 90-minute salute to the intersection of science and art is that it's maybe the first nationally successful postmodern version of vaudeville this country has produced.

It's great stuff but it ain't brain surgery. Three bald men sporting cobalt-blue heads play instruments, do wordless comic sketches, set up special effects segments, interact with the audience. The "aliens" are like wonderfully irresponsible entertainers at a kid's mammoth birthday party (meaning they like to make messes). The finale engulfs the audience in a sea of white crepe paper. The auditorium is bathed in strobe-light madness offering a surreal look at other audience members fighting off the mounds of material. When the show is over, the Luxor Theater looks like an indoor playground bombed with kiddie litter. It's this child-like sense of play that gives *Blue Man Group* its sense of wonder. The production has all the right attitudes.

Our trio—played by a rotating list of 19 performers, including the three authors—has one character trait in common: an insatiable curiosity about color and images and the physical world. A discovery of three Captain Crunch boxes filled with cereal becomes a symphony of munch. A drumhead filled with paint spurts carelessly onto a canvas and becomes an abstract work of art. Sounds are visualized into color. Gold figurines sitting beneath a 1,000-gallon water tank suddenly start spinning and give the illusion of animated clubgoers dancing frantically. A neon landscape becomes alive with two stick-figured animated images celebrating the environment in movement. A couple in the audience arrives after the start of the show, and an onstage cameraman throws their image onto a stage screen as a voiceover warns of the presence of latecomers. (It's every frequent theatergoer's dream come true, this "humiliation" of inconsiderate latecomers.)

At the center of the event is music. Nineteen rotating musicians make up a seven-piece band whose members, when not part of the action, are tucked high above the extreme right and left of the stage. About 50 different kinds of drums create pulsating lines of tension. Air poles underscore happenings with unexpected "swooshes." Tubulums add emphasis with massive doses of bass. And shaker gongs punctuate moments with mad, metallic bursts of rattle.

Blue guys get jiggy with paint.

If there's a theme to this mishmash of activity, it may simply be that art and science are amazing. This is a show filled with passion for the physical rules of the world and the uncharted creative territories of the brain.

This once-intimate entertainment fits well onto the huge Luxor stage. The directors/producers/authors and co-designers—longtime friends Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink, all in their mid-30s—came up with a small-scale, intimate revue in 1987 (originally played out on New York City sidewalks). Its scope remained small when it moved indoors and eventually to off-Broadway in 1991. No wonder that some predicted the performance piece would be swallowed up by the 1,200-seat, state-of-the-art Luxor. But things have been seamlessly upscaled. There are video images that cry out for a big stage, and the show's physical comedy benefits from an extended playing area.

The script could still use fine-tuning. There are some needless repetitions in the comedy routines, and the evening could use three or four more unexpected moments. You're stunned when those figurines start "dancing," and the production needs more stun. If you go expecting nonstop dazzle, you'll likely be disappointed. *Blue Man Group* is not a series of awesome physical feats in the tradition of *Mystere* and *O*. It's simply an entertaining barrage of sound surrounded by occasional visual images and simple comic routines. But overall, the show need not apologize for not being what it isn't. What it is is entertaining enough.

It may surprise some that the script doesn't have much holding it together. It's a series of sketches. But that's what gives it its vaudeville connection. Vaudeville thrived in theaters all across pre-television America. Audiences were treated to jokes, a few songs, maybe a juggling act. Today, entertainment is much more visual and larger scaled. Some bemoan the change, but *Blue Man Group* embraces it. It dumps language as the foundation for drama and substitutes it with image and sound that hit at the heart in a powerful but different way than do words. It maintains the vaudeville tradition in that it wants nothing more than to have audiences leave the theater smiling. No big morals here, no life lessons worth mulling over in psychology class. In this regard, this show may be revolutionary. It entertains on modern audiences' terms without condescension. It just might be good enough to encourage traditionalists to embrace modern theater's emphasis on the visual. There's great value in great traditional entertainment, but there's also value in adjusting communication methods to appeal to the times. There's little point in trying to communicate if no one's listening.

Blue Man Group: Live at the Luxor is another leap forward for Vegas theater. While shows like MGM Grand's *EFX* and the Paris' *Notre Dame de Paris* try to play it safe by cowardly repeating old formulas, this production takes old formulas and reinvents them. Its structure acknowledges the past, but its detail—rooted in the personal vision of three young men mesmerized by popular culture—makes it a modern entertainment. It's an exciting evening of communication. ⊞

Blue Man Group: Live at the Luxor plays Wednesdays through Sundays at 7 p.m. and Fridays and Saturdays at 10 p.m. at Luxor, 3900 Las Vegas Blvd. South. Tickets are $55-$65. Info: 262-4400.

BLUE MAN GROUP

e-Vegas Exchange
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Entertainment

Tuesday March 21, 2000

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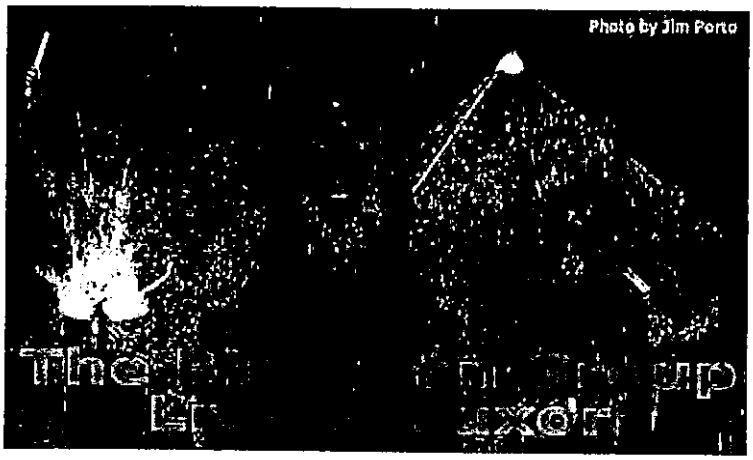
Tubular Balds, The Blue Man Group Live at Luxor.

By Peter Huender



There is a new show in town, and with the irresistible guitar melody of a Spaghetti western this show makes it presence known and heard. The guitar sound made popular by Italian film scorer Ennio Morricone in such classics as "Once upon a time in the West", "The Good The Bad and the Ugly", "For a few Dollars More" comes from another classic American sound that embodies the traditional sport of Surfing. The beach Boys come to mind but that is not what I intend to describe. Anyone familiar with "Wipe Out!" the sixties heavy on the drums guitar tune that has only one line of lyrics, which is also the title, is a favorite for many drummers to show off their chops. And the basis of the new show in town, called "The Blue Man Group Live at the Luxor" follows this theme for their music throughout the show. Add to this a Punk element that the creators of this show grew up on, and array of self created percussion instruments the Blue Man group has created a sound of their own. Although most of the show draws on the heavy energetic sound, it also allows for some beautiful songs that draw very close to the new age and progressive sounds of one of my all time favorite artist Mike Oldfield, and his endless doodling with musical styles, overdubs, and percussive rhythms. All in all the Blue Man group creates the perfect soundtrack, even if their CD "Audio" refuses to state that it is a Soundtrack, the music fits the act like a glove.

experimentation.

Originally the Blue Man performed without additional musicians, their sound was exclusively produced on their self made creations, which include a variation on a "Cimbalom" an antique instrument from Hungary similar to a hammer dulcimer, "Airpoles" which are fiberglass rods that produce a swooshing sound when swung through the air. The "Drumbone" a play on drum and trombone, are pieces of PVC pipe that slide in and out of one another while hit with sticks. It changes the pitch of the sound equal to a trombone. The Blue Man website is a virtual encyclopedia that explain all the instruments used, and lets visitors listen to sound bytes of each instruments in samplings from their first CD "Audio". It also gives a great overview of their career, reviews of their shows, and lets you shop in their store. There is also a bulletin board if you have questions or like to express your sentiments about the show. (Http://www.blueman.com) You also can purchase tickets to their shows online.

One of the visual wonders in the Luxor show is the Zoetrope creation on either side of the stage. Not that the concept is new, Zoetropes were the first moving picture creations well over 100 years ago. A group of mummy-like creatures hold hands around a 1,000-gallon water tube; it is lit from the bottom and changes color. As well as the contents are able swirl around in a tornado like fury. But when the creatures are spun around and hit with a fast moving strobe it seems that the Mummies come to live and gyrate to the percussion sounds of the music, dancing to ecstasy. A riveting visual experience that is cheered on by the audience.

The Blue Man experience really draws on audience participation, and with the tribal fury it does not take long to drop the barrier between the performers and the audience. On many occasions the Blue man come into the audience, either to pick unsuspected audience members for some show participation, like the Twinkie eating experiment. One of the most hilarious bits in the show is the eating of the earthly delicatessen...the Twinkie. Not able to divide it into equal pieces becomes a problem, that is only overshadowed by the fact that their stomach can't handle the Twinkie, and gets rejected through a tine hole in their chest. "Twinkie-Spaghetti" does taste good, however disgusting it may seem it is hilarious to watch.

At the conclusion of the show, Neon tubes fall from the ceiling and swirl above the audience heads, as it sees that miles of crepe paper is pulled from massive rolls in the back of the theatre, and eventually covers the entire audience. The Blue Man have a large crew working for them, that include the help of the theatre ushers who are encouraged to interact with audience members, to get their enthusiasm up to match the high spirit of the show. Encouraged to cheer and wear crepe headbands that glow under blacklight brings the attention to the audience as the Blue Man dance on the arms of Theatre chairs. Participation spells inclusion.

More excitement than the Mirage Volcano.

When the Blue Man hit tom toms that have fluorescent paint on the drumheads the paint splashes into the air, similar to a volcanic explosion. The harder they hit the heads the higher the paint splashes, in bright primary colors...Red, Blue and yellow. Simple, but highly visual, dramatic and comical as the Ultramarine faces wear welding masks at times, but once they uncover their big wide open eyes speak volumes of pure giddiness.

It seems that Goldman, Stanton and Wink are divine actors, besides talented inventors and instrumentalists, their study of the alien come to earth, or child's first experience are spellbinding moments of happiness and enjoyment. When they look at each other studying their actions it becomes impossible not to snicker, but after awhile as the tears roll down your cheeks you realize why this show has come so far. And though Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink have taken a their talents to oversee their operation, and teach new Blue Man their craft, they will step in when least likely. And since the height, look, and ability are requirements for auditioning for the cobalt blue faced ones, it is hard to distinguish who is the performer at any given night, and unlike a regular Broadway or Vegas show Blue Man group will not announce who is performing. The Show founders are currently in Vegas, and performed the show I saw during the preview run. All three in their late thirties are concerned that the audience gets the best show possible, the training of a blue man takes about eight weeks, and at the yearly auditions 5,000 interested drummers show up, only to find out they are not qualified to be a Blue Man. There are currently only 30 blue man, including the original three. But Matt, Phil and Chris find that their talents are better served overseeing the large corporation they have created, and to give their stamp of approval wherever the word Blue Man is cast. With their seal of approval no matter what Blue Man you will see, it is guaranteed to be the best.

Is the Blue Man group for everyone?

As a parent living in Las Vegas the question as to the right age group for kids to see a show is a valid one. Although I firmly believe that children should be exposed to live theatre, Las Vegas does not always offer the all around family entertainment. In general the shows that are not child friendly are far and few in between, it is a concern for other guests as to how interuptive a bored child can be. Limitations on age should be placed, and Blue Man group although very easily one of the most child friendly shows, is also very loud, which may hurt a child ears. The comical bits will send have a child laugh out loud, equal to their elders. The Music is hip, and right up any kids alley. There are some areas where the audience is forced to read for a comical affect, in these instances kids will get bored. And some of the video elements in the show, like the journey down a guest's throat are similar to the cable channel that airs medical operations. A disgusting element of the show, which on my part could have been left out, but is part of the wickedness of the founders trio.

I would set an age limitation of 7, but during the performance I saw I felt that the age limitation works in the opposite way as well. An elder man in his seventies was sitting in his wheelchair behind me, his hearing aid plugged in, meanwhile two family members who obviously

had seen the show before explained to him how great the show was, and how much he would like it.

Would you take your dad or grandfather to see a rock concert, with bright flashing lights, and ear piercing music, even if the slow and comical Parts of the show are a must see? You would think about it twice, wouldn't you?

Well do the same for Blue Man; both for children and adults whose last concert may have been Lawrence Welk, or Sinatra. This is not their show, no matter how much you believe they will like it.

A look behind me saw the old man covering his ears, while his hearing aid had been pulled out of his ears, as the strobe light send pulsating rhythms across his pained face..."this is not your fathers Oldsmobile, Folks." So make sure elderly are in good health, are aware of the high volume, the bright pulsating lights and bass that thumbs deep in your chest, they may much rather see Clint Holmes. Anyone else will love the Show, as it is versatile, enigmatic, colorful, mesmerizing, hilarious, and addictive.

The price of Art!

The blue man offer various items for sale at the Blue Man Store just behind the Luxor Box Office, but also on the internet. The items for sale range from their impressive debut CD "Audio" which is as addictive as the show, the sound quality of the CD is extra ordinary, and defines all the different percussive sounds in detail. Those with a good surround system, and amplified bass with certainly feel the 16 foot big Drum as it vibrates everything around you. Furthermore there are T-shirts, baseball caps, and sweatshirts. If you like something more personal, something that is created on stage during the shows. One can purchase the paintings that the Blue Man create in their initial part of the show. One Blue Man throws paintballs in the mouth of one of the other Cobalt faces, and using the air pressure from his lungs he spray paints abstract images on the canvas. These works of art are sold, and though they may resemble the spin art created in the seventies, they will be the points of conversation in any household, or at any party.

At one moment in the show, as one sprays paint on canvas the third Blue Man is on the receiving end of about 25 similar balls as mentioned above, except that these are not filled with paint but I assume a "marsh-mellowy" substance. He collects the 25 balls, from a great distance and while the first Blue Man proudly shows of his creation of painted abstracts, the other creates a cone type statuette of the 25 collected balls taken from out of his mouth. Sick...maybe, but a hilarious and difficult task that spells the versatility of the Blue Man group.

While looking through the program I also noticed that an old theatre buddy of mine from my Summer Repertory Theatre days was one of the Stage Managers of the Luxor Show, Hey J.R. are you introducing the Blue Man to "Eggs in Hell"?

Ticket Information

Tickets for the Blue Man Group can be obtained from the Blue Man website at Http://www.blueman.com, or by calling the Luxor box office at (702) 262-4400, or 1-800-557-7428. Also take a look at the Luxor webpage, Http://www.luxor.com. Ticketmaster also sells tickets to the show at Http://www.ticketmaster.com or (702) 474-4000. Price for the show is $55, and $65, - dollars without tax. ShowTime's for "les Monsieur Bleux" are Sunday and Monday at 7PM, and Wednesday through Saturday they perform two shows nightly at 7PM an 10 PM. Tuesdays the show is dark, the off abuse day for the Blue Man skin.

My grade for the show is an "A", a must for most* visitors to the city (* see note on elderly).

Photos use with permission from the Blue Man group, photos taken by Jim Porto.

SPOTLIGHT

primary colors

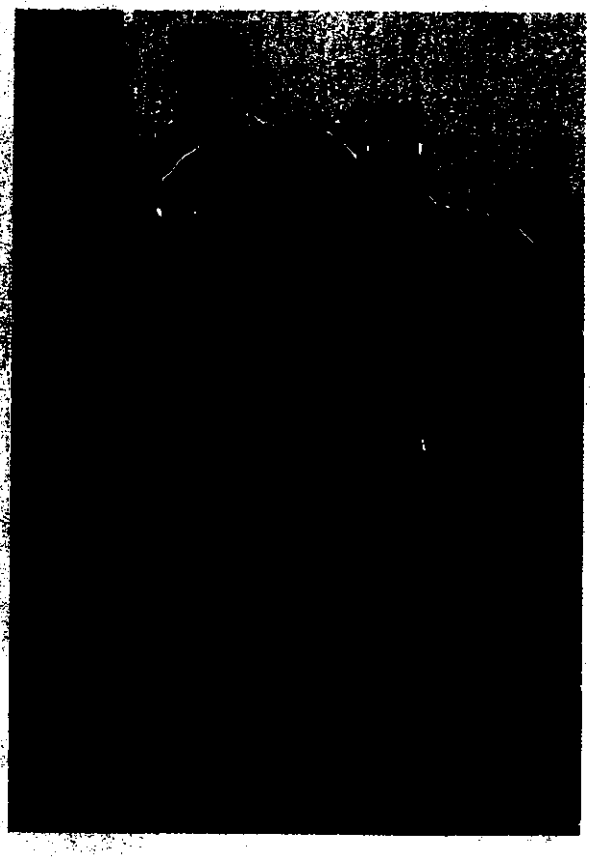
'BLUE MAN GROUP' EXPLORES THE CANVAS OF PERFORMANCE

Musical extravaganza, post-modern art project, intellectual exploration, emotional catharsis, evolutionary experiment–"Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" is all of these things.

Try to define it with language and you limit the experience. "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" testifies to the loneliness of the Information Age, while simultaneously offering the solution: bringing human beings together through the media of art and play.

While its co-founders Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink seek to evoke an ecstatic experience from the audience, they avoid the idea of promoting any sort of dogma. Rather, individual audience members should leave the theater with a sense of wonder and wealth of questions while having had the feeling of connection with the rest of the people with whom they shared the show.

A completely original genre of performance art, "Blue Man Group" enjoys successful, established runs in New York, Boston and Chicago. Las Vegas is honored to have this innovative production enhance its title as Entertainment Capital of the World. For captivating music, technological splendor and just plain fun, "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" is the show to see.



"Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor"
- ***Where*** **• Luxor**
- ***When*** **• Wed.-Mon.**
- ***Information*** **• 262-4400**

BLUE MAN GROUP

March 2000

Seeing StarS

Exclusive Celebrity Interviews

This month, Rich Friedland chats with:

Blue Man Group

"Blue Material" of a Different Kind

Wait until you see, no, wait until *you experience this!!* Let me go on record as predicting that Blue Man Group is going to change Las Vegas entertainment for the new millennium! I can't even begin to describe this show, you've simply got to see it for yourself! You'll be intrigued, you'll laugh, you'll wonder, you'll go into deep thoughts and philosophize about mankind and when it's all over you'll probably want to find a designated driver to take you back home! This unique show started several years ago with three founders, Chris Wink, Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton. Since then there have been many segment and cast changes which add more and more dimension to the act. The "Blue Men" that I spoke with (Chris Bowen, Jeffrey Brown, Ryan Gerard, complete with their very accommodating director of publicity and marketing, Laura Camien) were four of the nicest people I could ever want to meet. They had no visible egos, and were very humble about the metamorphosis they are about to stir in *The City of Entertainment*. Generally I like to know what I'm talking about when I do an interview, but I have to admit, this was one time that I had to go into this blindly as I would not see **The Luxor's** Blue Man Group show until an hour *afterwards*. Although I read every article, press release and website page I could get my hands on, it seemed like the more I studied for this, the less I understood about what I was about to see. This is why each question I asked was based on raw curiosity, and simple ignorance! I could only surmise that I was about to experience something really different for Las Vegas, or for that matter, anywhere else! At press time, the show was still in it's preview stages but is scheduled to open to the public in the **Luxor Theater** on March 14, and will continue for at least the next five years.

FRIEDLAND: You've only been here in Vegas a couple weeks now, I would imagine this would have to be quite a big change for you. I believe the roots of the show were in New York, is that right?

BOWEN: Yeah, it's definitely a much, much larger stage than we're used to performing in. And we've done a lot of adjustments for that but from the reaction from the crowd, the show is really working.

FRIEDLAND: With the bigger stage, I understand you've been able to expand more, and do more with the show.

BROWN: Yeah, we've expanded the band, it's more than twice the size. There's a lot of instruments, Blue Man has developed over the years that didn't make it into the first version, which is the one in New York which also was modified a bit to go [illegible] Boston and Chicago but those instruments are larger and more exciting, there's a lot more low end in the show. Blue Man *likes bass!*

FRIEDLAND: To be involved in the show obviously drumming is one of the many prerequisites. Is this complex drumming or...

BOWEN: I think it's really, it's own style. I mean it's varied for performance. Kudu drumming, [illegible] know Japanese, you know really, big strokes seems to be the closest, for me at least the closest influence.

BROWN: It's about the ensemble, They style you're talking about is very minimal kind of style because it's tribal drumming, parts interlock, parts are played together, but it's not like virtuoso drumming, you shouldn't recognize any particular style except for the group dynamic of it. You have to be able to listen very well and play where your part fits into the whole. And that's a theme that runs throughout the whole show, not just in the drumming but where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

FRIEDLAND: So are some of the drumming patterns African influenced then?

BROWN: Yeah, the music doesn't sound African, but it has that sensibility, in our approach to it... We don't notate any of the music really. We pass it all down mouth to mouth, from person to person.

BOWEN: Or videos or whatever. Or sort of a modern day version of passing it down over the campfire. So the music itself is a little bit more like what Jeffery was saying, a little more punk, rock and roll in it's background.

GERARD: But very tribal.

BOWEN: Yeah, but you're not gonna hear African rhythms. But our approach is kinda the same way.

FRIEDLAND: I guess we're talking about *basic man*, now. Does this show have any kind of message or social comment?

GERARD: Absolutely. I'd have to dismiss it as just one message that you get from the show because everybody that sees the show, in one given night, the twelve hundred seats in this theater, everyone will have a different experience. I myself would like to refrain from answering by saying just one message but I think, one of the themes is certainly the importance of communion. You'll probably be able to answer that question a lot easier after you see it.

BOWEN: From the beginning of the show, there's a image of DNA, and that is very symbolic of what the show has to say. In light of recent technological developments and just what life is like in the modern age there's a lot of information out there that...It's about having a real experience and not succumbing to information onslaught. We're desensitizing of the individual through media. So it's about, the more we can be connected to the internet and all these other things, and almost at the same time, not having real flesh to flesh, I mean person contact. So it's about a communion in that way. It's about the DNA to me is about, you know the Blue Man is like anyone who comes to the theater with stripped involvement to the social masks that one has developed with oneself. You know it's sort of a pure being in that way.

VEGAN MARCH 2000

FRIEDLAND: That's sort of the impression I got from things I've read about the show. So the Blue Man, if you'll pardon the pun is sort of "green" to whatever is out there and is sort of experiencing everything maybe for the very first time...

BOWEN: Ah ha, and. through him we get to see how similar we are to each other.

BROWN: Really one of the coolest things for me is that the show is so applicable to today's world, I mean there's so many theatrical pieces and things out there that are like period pieces. The messages that you get from this show, you can apply to real life in *today's world* with where today's world is going.

BOWEN: We can't forget about that basic human contact. and what it means to be human. It's about being human.

GERARD: I guess the best way I can say it is when the show starts, there are twelve hundred seats, twelve hundred people, and when the show ends, there's one seat. everybody's in one seat.

BOWEN: Right. When we start out the show. it's three guys and twelve hundred different people that come from different places to get there and yeah, it's like a two character play or something, by the end we want it to...

BROWN: The audience is the show.

FRIEDLAND: This is making me want to see the show all the more but what is it about the show that draws people that don't get to talk to you like this to want to come see the show? What is your drawing card?

GERARD: Because people can't dismiss it. You know if you go see, I don't want this to sound like I'm putting down other forms of theater, but if you can dismiss something a dance show, there was good dancing or the dialog was really funny...

BOWEN: Put a box around it or something.

GERARD: Yeah if you put it in a box, file it away you never have to talk about it again. This, you can never describe it. You can never like say, "Blue Man is this", and people go "Oh, okay". They can't understand it, they can't describe it so the only way to know how is to say, "You gotta go see it. because I can't tell you..."

BOWEN: Right. they get a definite feeling from it, but trying to put it into words does not express it so there's a bit mystery.

FRIEDLAND: I would think this would have to be sort of a scary experience for you three since Vegas has a reputation for, let's face it, showgirls, certain types of music, certain types of comedy. You're doing something that that this town has never seen before.

BROWN: I think it's really exciting. I mean one of the things we talked about when we came here. I mean Chris Wink was you know, he said it a million times For this show to work out here, we have to *change Vegas*. I mean it is completely different. *I* mean I see these audiences out here since we've been doing previews. These people have *no idea what's going to happen!* The reaction that I've been seeing in the lobby, seems to be a t least from my perspective, greater than the other cities because people seemed starved for something different out there. You know, it's just amazing because after you and you come out and people are just like. "You know I've been in this town for, you know I guy came up to me, "for thirty five years, it's the best show I've seen here..."

BOWEN: It gives them something they haven't seen before but also a feeling that they've been familiar with if they've ever been exhilarated with in their lives before. You know when they were younger so that really relates to everybody.

FRIEDLAND: Do you anticipate any future changes that will make the show more different than it already is?

BOWEN: That always happens. that's always under discussion and what those things are. only time will tell but that has been the process of the group since the inception. It's been an evolving piece and it changes and grows with each year.

BROWN: With each show really we talk about the show, after every show we, "Okay,' it's getting a little too far. this side, let's bring it back in here." We're always calibrating, we're always adjusting it. it's never finished.

The Changing Face of Entertainment in Las Vegas

By David Stratton

as Vegas always finds a way to reinvent itself, just when it seems the rest of the civilized world is about to catch on. Nowhere is that more evident than with the city's production shows.

The original stage productions were called "floor shows." And when Sophie Tucker or Jimmy Durante hit the floorboards in the 1940s and 1950s, they were always preceded by a line of girls, a comedian and a specialty act such as a juggler or ventriloquist.

In 1958, the dynamics of the floor show changed radically with the introduction of the stage spectacular, Lido de Paris, at the Stardust. It was all production and no headliner. The show was the star.

With its big spectacle and topless showgirls, the Stardust packed them in and, equally important, set the stage for other productions to follow: Folies Bergere, Jubilee!, City Lites, Splash, Enter the Night, to name a few.

The trend continued through the 1980s and 1990s, even with other genres added to the mix — magicians (Lance Burton, Spellbound, Siegfried & Roy), impersonators (Legends in Concert, American Superstars, An Evening at La Cage) and even a medieval spectacular, Excalibur's Tournament of Kings, complete with jousting knights and Merlin the Magician.

Victor Hugo's classic tale comes to life in Notre Dame de Paris at Paris Las Vegas

While the stage show with the frivolous theme, over-amped music and showgirls still attracts audiences, it is no longer the etched-in-stone formula for a successful production. In fact, if there's any commonality that marks today's production show, it's that there is no formula at all.

For instance, one of the most popular and innovative shows now running is Mystere at Treasure Island. An offshoot of the genre-stretching Cirque du Soleil, the show is a surrealistic celebration of music, dance, acrobatics, gymnastics, mime and comedy. In a specially-built theater, Mystere takes audiences on a metaphorical journey that starts at the beginning of time — symbolized by a blast of Japanese Taiko drums sent from the heavens — and follows with a blend of music, dance and stunning displays of athleticism.

Highlights are the mesmerizing aerial bungee ballet, the dazzling Korean plank, the precision Chinese poles performance and some awe-

some trapeze artists.

It's hard to imagine Cirque du Soleil out-doing itself, but its production of "O" down the street at Bellagio comes close. The spectacular production showcases a cast of 74 synchronized swimmers, trapeze artists, contortionists and others who navigate an unbelievable stage that transforms from an Arctic Ocean to an African watering hole practically instantaneously. The use of water — as a character and not a theatrical prop — gives fluidity to a show that is like a parade of haunting images with a slightly Fellini-esque quality. It has the feel of climbing inside a Salvador Dali painting.

Broadway-based shows are nothing new in Las Vegas. The city has seen road versions of such popular shows as Sweet Charity and West Side Story, and more recently, Starlight Express, Rent and Chicago — The Musical.

But none of those great productions has enjoyed the offbeat popularity of Forever Plaid at the Flamingo Hilton. In fact, this former off-Broadway show had everything going *against* it when it opened in 1994 — no showgirls, no magic acts, no pyrotechnics, outdated music and a quirky, if not bewildering, plot. To wit: four glee clubbers — the Plaids — return from the dead (they died in a car collision with a bus carrying girls from a Catholic school) and seek to perform the perfect show while overcoming their own shortcomings. Perhaps inevitably, the show is now a cult hit. Part of the allure is the late 1950s and early 1960s music, performed live in the intimate, 200-seat Bugsy's Celebrity Theater.

Headliners are a tried and true genre on stage, as witnessed by the return of Wayne Newton to the spotlight at the Stardust. Another is Clint Holmes, who stars in his own show at Harrah's.

The idea behind Clint Holmes and his "Takin' It Uptown" production at Harrah's may not be a new one, but it certainly has been given new life by the multi-talented entertainer.

A throwback to the old-time song-and-dance man, Holmes has a unique blend of vocal style, improvisation, humor and excitement. His live musical selections, backed by a 12-piece band, range from contemporary to classic with jazz and samba tossed into the mix.

Complementing his endearing stage persona is singer Natalie Reiter, who from the get-go has been a harmonious match for the sometimes domineering Holmes. Either singer can stand alone on stage and carry the show, but together their alliance is an engaging one and audiences typically respond with enthusiastic approval.

Holmes has been performing for just a couple of months at Harrah's, but based on early returns, including

rave reviews from critics, his rendition of the stand-alone headliner is one that should endure for quite awhile.

The latest of the Broadway-style shows to capture the city's imagination has been Notre Dame de Paris, The Musical Spectacular at Paris Las Vegas. Opening to rave reviews earlier this year, Notre Dame De Paris is a 21st century pop-rock adaptation of Victor Hugo's classic, The Hunchback of Notre Dame. This, of course, is an English-speaking version of the musical that has taken Paris by storm and has set box office records.

More than a red hot musical, Notre Dame de Paris is a compelling story with real characters who give life and emotion to the musical score and unforgettable lyrics. The international cast of 50 singers and dancers were selected for their raw vocal and physical abilities — and it shows in the quality of their performance.

Finally, if there were a show that had to mark the pinnacle of the city's evolution, then Blue Man Group is that show. Scheduled to open this month at Luxor, Blue Man Group is an eclectic blend of music, comedy, dance, mime and surrealism. The group features three bald and blue characters who take the audience on a multi-media journey that is both entertaining and visually stunning.

Blue Man Group was founded in New York, and later opened shows in Chicago and Boston. The founders — Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink — will open the Las Vegas show, along with a live band and other performers.

The "performances" will include bringing an enormous neon-like landscape to life and transforming it into the site of an intense "techno-tribal" ritual. Music will play a larger role in the Las Vegas production than in previous Blue Man Group shows. The group actually invented its own musical instruments, including some made from PVC pipe and a three-story wall of drums.

Clearly, Blue Man Group is the boldest attempt so far at tantalizing the show-goer's interest. But if its successes in other cities are a barometer, the avant garde group should find satisfied customers in Las Vegas. After all, who doesn't enjoy an atavistic freak-out every now and then?

Gymnastics with a surreal twist are featured at Mystere at Treasure Island

National Airlines employee recalls "Blue" days in NYC

When the Blue Man Group staged its symbolic "burial" of the 1980s nearly 13 years ago, Sally Freeman Barnes of National Airlines was on hand to help lay the decade to rest.

"We were all pretty disenchanted with the decade" Barnes says. "We were looking for more texture in our lives."

Barnes, a manager in information systems development at National Airlines, participated in the mock funeral procession through Central Park, which sort of kicked off the Blue Man Group's public presence.

Since then, the Blue Man Group has evolved into an entertainment institution in New York and other locales. The Group opens in Las Vegas in March for an indefinite run at the Luxor Hotel.

Barnes, who was working on Wall Street at the time, didn't remain in New York long after the funeral.

"I returned to Texas to pursue my CPA," she says. "But I've remained in contact with Phil Stanton, Matt Goldman and Chris Wink, the group's founders over the years."

Barnes adds that she doesn't know whether she would have played more of a role with the group if she had remained in New York, but she is happy to have had the chance to turn blue.

Sally Barnes, right, prepares for 'Funeral for the 80's'

BLUE MAN GROUP

Voted #1-City's Most Informative Visitor Guide

Today

in Las Vegas

BLUE MAN GROUP! TAKING LAS VEGAS SHOWDOM TO A NEW LEVEL AT LUXOR

Mini Reviews of all Shows & The Resort Restaurants

■ Map ■ Special Events ■ Buffets
■ Places to See ■ Where to Shop
■ Sports Betting ■ Spas–Fitness
■ Golf ■ Tennis ■ Poker ■ Bingo
■ Children's Places ■ Dancing

COVER: BLUE MAN GROUP HITS LUXOR STAGE WITH A FUN, FRESH, GROUND-BREAKING SHOW The wait is finally over - the phenomenally inventive *Blue Man Group* is here, in the Luxor Theatre at the Luxor Hotel and foisting a nightly showcase of their virtual revolution in the world of entertainment. With a backdrop of stirring tribal music, combined with startling sets, harnessed principles of light and space, offbeat humor and, of course ,those enamel blue faces, the trio creates a world quite apart from the one we know. The show began off Broadway and progressed to long-running sold-out performances in New York, Boston, and Chicago, in the process becoming one of the most acclaimed productions ever. All in all, a totally unforgettable experience. 262-4400.

WEEKLY

Blue in the face

By Erin Auerbach

The Blue Man Group has created a community as unique as its skin tone

It's extraordinary to think that an experience can awaken the senses so acutely that you leave the theater with a heightened awareness of everything surrounding you, feeling elated, as if given a jolt of vibrant air. It's like having some ER doc shock you with a defibrillator. Sitting through the Blue Man Group's show is like being recharged and reacquainted with the world of sound, color, light and music that embraces us. If a single picture is worth a thousand words, then the images and sounds of the Blue Man Group could not possibly be described in a single language. There simply aren't enough words.

The long-running off-Broadway show premiered on March 14 at the Luxor Hotel, and filled with humor, music, edible props and movement, it's the most unique experience on the Strip. It's spectacular in every sense of the word. The special effects—from the "guts" of the Blue Men spilling out of their chests to a movie scrim with neon images that literally spring to life then turn back into mere neon on the screen—are intelligent, engaging and tremendous fun. Whether simple or elaborate, each effect serves to enhance the senses. At one point, three screens display a concept of frequency as influenced by sound. But it isn't just this small display that enables the audience to visualize sound; it's the use of the stage, actors and musicians as tools, and often that's an intense beat that makes the whole room throb with energy.

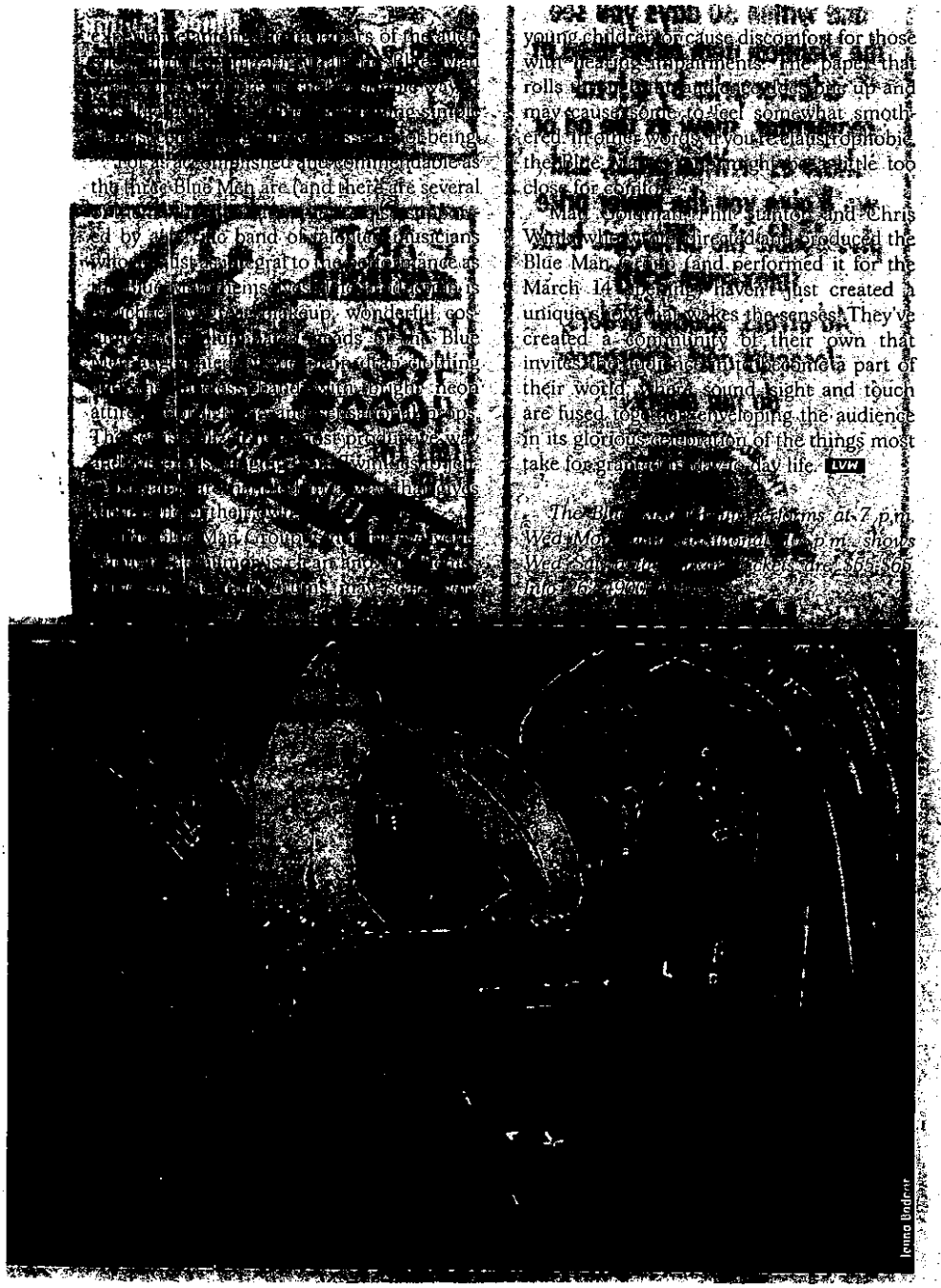
This synergy is so impressive because it appears effortless. For all of its intense structure, there's a looseness to it that defies the percussive theme of the show. There are several small improvisations that not only provide humor, but keep the pace of the show from feeling too pedantic and falling prey to cliche. There's a scene where a screen shows several connecting tubes while a voice-over talks about the one true connection in today's world with its diverse population. But instead of announcing that this connection is the computer or the Internet, it declares that it's nothing more than plumbing that unites an otherwise isolated society. It's sewage that binds people, not information. Aside from its jocularity, this is somewhat true. Getting rid of the waste, pushing it away, that's a part of the Blue Man Group humor: the sheer predictably of what people do.

The production is incredibly balanced, with quiet moments amidst the louder and more intense. At one point, each of the men has a his own "drum set" (which looks like a series of plumbing tubes arranged into a keyboard). They take turns softly playing a few measures each, and as the audience recognizes them it becomes a sing-along of Jefferson Airplane's "Go Ask Alice." It was full-blown karaoke by the end of the song, like a drunken night at your favorite bar, with the most unique DJs imaginable.

In fact, there's a lot of audience participation throughout the show. The first four rows of the theater are given plastic ponchos to protect them from potentially messy flying props. (But this was merely a precaution as those of us in these rows, looking like we'd been wrapped in human-sized condoms, didn't even come close to getting splashed by anything.) The Blue Men venture into the auditorium several times and touch people. They sometimes just pull audience members to their feet and raise their arms in the air, at which point the drummers onstage play a "ta da" sound to present this person. It evoked applause every time, symbolic of the sense of everyone in the theater being an important contributor to the moment.

This sense of community and camaraderie most powerfully came together when large rolls of paper started unraveling at the back of the theater and every row was on its feet, scrolling the paper down to the front. One of the things that few theatrical experiences are successful at accomplishing is a sense of shared

BLUE MAN GROUP



BLUE MAN GROUP
LIVE AT LUXOR

MARCH 26, 2000 | SHOWBIZ WEEKLY

THREE'S COMMUNITY

'Blue Man Group': A Symbol for Consciousness

By Cheri Renée Watkins

Symbols permeate human recognition. They can have negative or positive connotations and they can change with the course of history: to some, the cross of the crucifixion signifies death, resurrection, eternal life–to others, it means a cool piece of jewelry; the swastika, an ancient symbol that once represented the elements and balance in nature, now conjures visions of madmen and the most heinous crimes in history. When any "thing" has been elevated to the level of a symbol, it communicates to people across language, cultural, ethnic, and socio-economic boundaries.

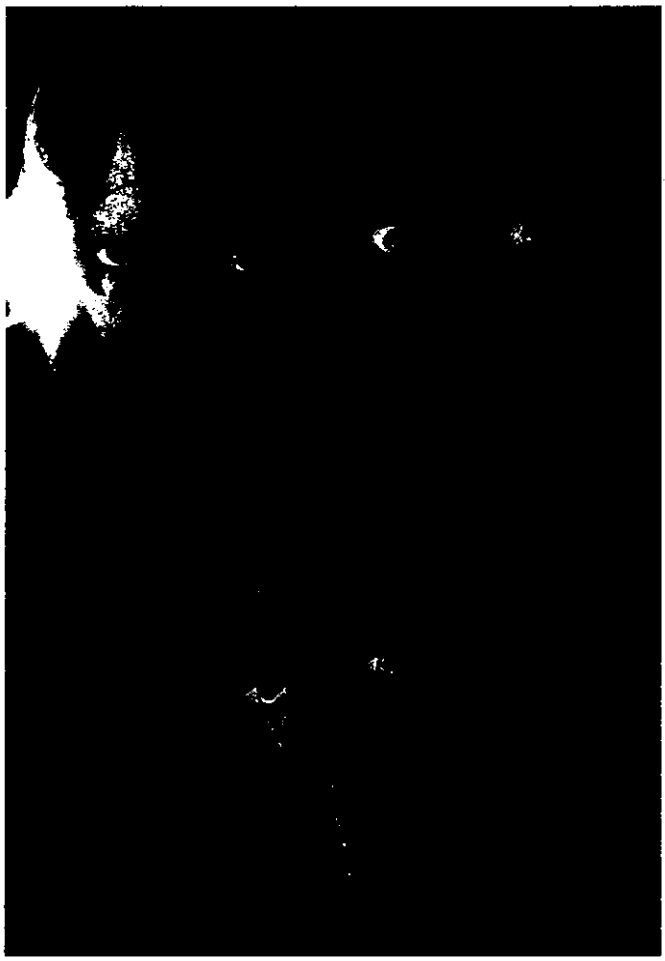
"Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" attains the level of symbol by both its purpose and nature. The production accomplishes this communication by reaching out to the audience in all four areas of space–public, social, personal and intimate; by provoking the senses, particularly visual and auditory; and by concious body language.

Three sensitive blue men beat and splatter paints of primary and glow-in-the-dark shades upon unusual canvases; neon cowboys somersault through a neon desert, then catapult to the stage to play Sword Air Poles. Sound pervades this and the rest of the experience. From the soul-pounding opening number of "Live at Luxor," to the one-and-only "bathroom" song, to the technologically ethereal tracks on their album, *Audio*, "Blue Man Group" insists that you remember them as chaotic harmony.

Since melody is but one aspect of joy, Blue Man also reaches out to the audience, literally. As a genuine person in search of friendship, Blue Man first builds trust with the audience, then becomes playful in that newfound relationship. Starting from a public distance of greater than 10 feet, "Blue Man Group" plants the seed of jubilation; as Blue Man moves into social space (4'-10'), the audience is infected with laughter; and by the time Blue Man has achieved personal and intimate space, the audience has surrendered to the show, and is absorbed in feelings of acceptance, comfort and elation.

The show, as a whole, elicits and communicates these sentiments through music, color, technology and artful play. The Blue Man also relies heavily on body language to express emotion. With childlike wonder, Blue Man peruses the audience; with teenage fervor, he competes for the loudest "crunch"; with romantic sincerity and touching innocence, he courts a potential love interest. Blue Man expresses the gamut of emotion without uttering a word or altering his facial expression.

These methods prove unique and inspiring as a model for communication. Blue Man is without race, social rank, income bracket, religious or ethnic association. In a technological age that promises to increase the distance between people, Blue Man brings together 1,200 individuals that span this human spectrum. The Blue Man's conscious acts–having fun while recalling a sense of community and investigating the humanness that connects us all–serve as tools for better understanding ourselves and others.



READ MY EYES — "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" takes art to a new level with their experimental communication skills

"Blue Man Group"
- ***Where*** **• Luxor**
- ***When*** **• Wed.-Mon.**
- ***Information*** **• 262-4400**

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Blue Man Group Goes West

March 4th Show to Benefit KNPR

Blue Man Group has unveiled plans to open a new show in Las Vegas in March 2000. The show, titled "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor," will take place at the 1,200 seat state-of-the-art Luxor Theatre. The new production will contain a hybrid of new material as well as "signature" pieces from Blue Man Group productions in New York, Boston, and Chicago.

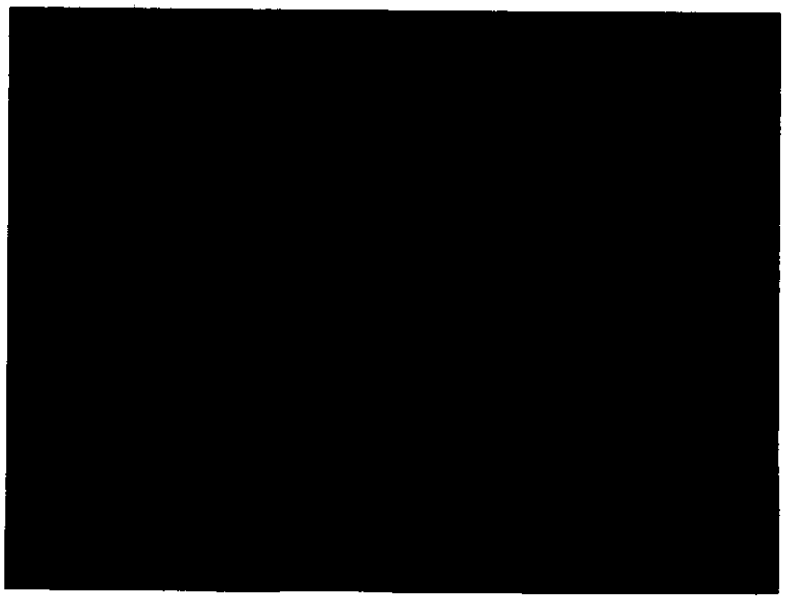
On March 4th, Blue Man Group will perform a benefit show for KNPR at 7:00 pm. Tickets are $89.50. Call KNPR at 258-9895 for more ticket information.

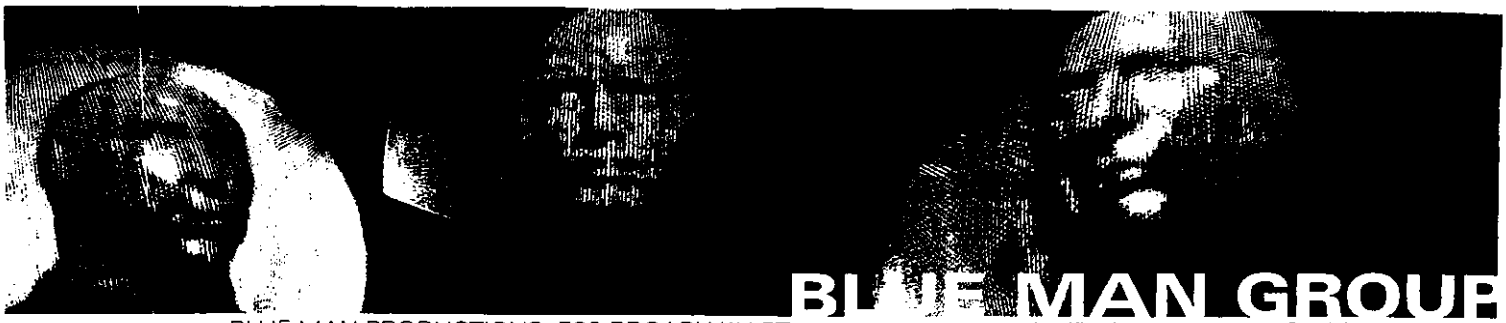
Blue Man Group founders Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink are heading West with the ambitious goal of taking both their show and the city of Las Vegas to a whole new level. Blue Man Group's mission is Las Vegas is exemplified by one of the new pieces; in it the Blue Man character brings an enormous neon-like landscape to life, and transforms it into the site of an intense "techno-tribal" ritual. Stanton explains: "When the Blue Man takes the neon sign and turns it into something else, something primal, exciting and unexpected, this mirrors our goal of transforming the Las Vegas scene by bringing an uncharacteristic and innovative experience to the Strip."

Music will play an even larger role in the Las Vegas production than it has in previous Blue Man Group shows. "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" will feature a number of the new musical instruments developed by Blue Man Group for their debut album, "Audio," including "Back Pack Tubulums", "Airpoles" and the three-story high "Drum Wall." Blue Man Group's band, which currently consists of three musicians, will expand to seven and the sound system will include the latest innovations in surround sound technology. The result, according to Wink, is that "the music in the Vegas show will reach a level of tribal density that until now, Blue Man Group has only hinted at."

Goldman, Stanton and Wink chose Luxor after considering dozen of theaters throughout North America. "The timing feels right; Las Vegas has shown it is ready to move in new directions. Wink added, "Now that Vegas has expanded its cultural palette and embraced Broadway-style legitimate theater, it feels like a good time to introduce some illegitimate theater." ■

BLUE MAN GROUP




BLUE MAN GROUP

BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 6609

WEEKLY

SCOPE

[illegible] 11/28/01 - 12/5/01

[illegible] Group [illegible] full of color

As a young [illegible] enjoyed making a mess. No just any mess [illegible] the kind of mess that often forced Mommy Dearest to take me to the nearest pastor for a quick dip in holy water to exorcise the demons she claimed under the pastor's watchful eye. Mommy Dearest would hoist me up, dip my toddler's head in the water and keep me submerged just long enough to scare me half to death.

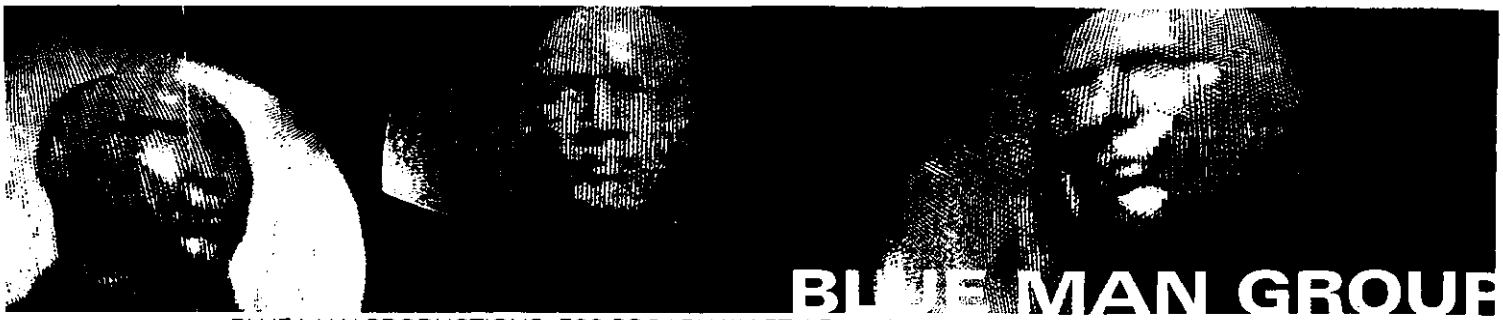
Eager to return to my pig pen ways, I soon mastered the art of underwater breathing. Man, I just loved making a mess. You name it, I played with it: Paint. Toilet tissue. Gum. Marshmallows.

Seeing the **BLUE MAN GROUP AT THE LUXOR** kind of reminded me of those childhood years sans the near-death experiences at the hands of good ole mum [illegible]

Equal parts [illegible] art show and [illegible] liar's brick [illegible] offers [illegible]

dudes do a masterful job of involving the crowd, convincing unsuspecting dolts to take part in food gags and stunts. Plastic covering for those seated in the first few rows provides protection from the assorted gobs of goo periodically launched into the crowd. The show concludes with a toilet paper job of the 1,200-seat theater that would elicit a chortle from the most hardened prankster.

So if you like paint, lots and lots of paint, toilet paper, lots and lots of the stuff and music of the heart-rattling, eardrum-ending variety, then the Blue Man Group is for you. Even if you don't go anyway, just [illegible]



BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 660

LAS VEGAS WEEKLY

07.11.02–07.17.02

Blue Man Group goes for the green while on tour with Moby this summer.

Blue surprise

For Blue Man Group, hearing is believing

by **RICHARD ABOWITZ**

After more than three years as one of the most successful shows on the Strip, it is hard to remember just how radical and risky the Blue Man Group's arrival was at first. After all, the New York theater group painted itself blue, blared the Sex Pistols from a boom box and risked covering the first few rows in everything from food to paint. Of course, Vegas loved the show, in part for just those reasons; Blue Man Group managed to be both sophisticated enough for adults and huge fun for kids.

But outside of Las Vegas, Blue Man continues to associate itself with a more edgy aesthetic than Wayne Newton. This summer the troupe is going on tour as part of Moby's Area 2 festival. "The thing about Moby is that I think he likes my dog better than he likes me," Matt Goldman, one of the original members of Blue Man, jokes. "He comes over for dinner and just plays with the dog. My wife and I have never discussed this with him. It is easy not to discuss things with Moby since he is such a quiet guy."

Appropriately, Goldman is in New York working on Blue Man's sophomore music release, "Audio," the troupe's first disc, which featured Blue Man's trademark rhythms on PVC pipes, was a surprise success. In fact, it reached world and beat music audiences who were only vaguely aware of the group's theater work. That was, in part, the strategy.

"We were very clear Audio wasn't a soundtrack to the show. It had a lot of extra music on it, and we gave ourselves permission to veer off in different directions. But at the end of the day its roots were in the show. For this one we've stayed with the Blue Man vocabulary of instrumentation and sounds, but it's taken some very interesting twists and turns."

Among the surprises is the inclusion of vocals. But don't worry. Blue Man will not be singing. "The Blue Man doesn't sing," Goldman says. "The Blue Man sort of goes to the roof of a building and plays. The theme is that people who hear the music are inspired to sing along with it. We have a couple singers who we just sort of recruited into the Blue Man band."

There are also some guest vocalist such as Dave Mathews and the singer of nu metal heroes Staind. "He's (Aaron Lewis) got an incredible and beautiful voice; it's got an uncanny resonance to the PVC pipes. His voice blends so well with our music that it is kind of freaky, actually."

Goldman hopes to have the album finished soon and released by February. "We are very close to it right now, so it is hard to get a perspective. There will definitely be things on there that sound like the band that did 'Audio.' So I think our hardcore fans will be really happy with that there. But there is some other stuff that is such a left turn and yet it has our instruments on it. We'll see."

And we'll hear. LVW

WHAT'S ON
LAS VEGAS, NV
BI-WEEKLY 170,000
AUG 21 2001

Being BLUE

BY DONNA YAHNER

Big, bold, often strikingly opulent, the grand hotels of Glitter Gulch offer a dizzying array of entertainment choices, all spewing superlatives and packaged to entice. It's like Hollywood and Las Vegas merging—distorting the lines between hype and real invention. Rarely does one leave a showroom with a drug-like elation or a grin bigger than that on the Cheshire Cat. To experience "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" proves one very notable exception.

"One of the tenets of the Blue Man Value Statement is to treat everyone equally, whether it's a janitor or the owner. Being a Blue Man changes your life."

— Blue Man Eric Gebow

The Blue Man phenomenon developed simply from the passion of three young friends living in New York. Each had varying talents and shared a powerful drive to perform without compromise to the pervasive corporate powers permeating art, music and theater that might steal their artistic soul and turn them into, God forbid, snobs. Mystical genius had its way with these guys and they took to the streets, called their stage "Club Nowhere" and sported the weirdest look anyone had ever seen. Decked out in identical black androgynous industrial work clothes, their heads sprouted above their collars, bald and the brightest, wet-looking blue—brilliant blue like the sky from whence they came or the ocean that delivered them.

"I had heard about them, but when I'd pass by the theater in 1995 on my various acting jobs, I thought it was like this strange haunted house with creepy things going on."

— Blue Man Marcus Weiss

What's more, they performed non-verbal sketches using odd bits of the ordinary—Twinkies, Captain Crunch cereal and Jell-O—then they pounded on drums made of plastic plumbing. They caught marshmallows in their mouths from great distances, and without gulle spat out artwork of great beauty. Percussive beats exploded on garbage cans topped with vibrant paint creating visual masterpieces. Never a smile or other emotion ruffled their cobalt faces, except inquisitive wonderment—and that only with their eyes. People took notice of these bright, yet childlike beings, and laughter erupted from the audience's chests, their bodies and collective memories reverberating to the ancient language of the drums. Matt Goldman, Paul Stanton and Chris Wink were onto something. It was 1987 and the Blue Man Group had no way of knowing just how big that something was going to be.

"When I first saw the posting for a casting call, I wondered, 'Is that a paying job?' The auditions ended up stretching into weeks and months. They knew what they were doing. The anticipation becomes explosive, like reaching a summit peak about to look over."

— Blue Man Matthew Banks

Their self-marketing was sheer brilliance. Spoofing the contemporary art scene, they rewrote art history with themselves as the catalysts for the great paintings of Vincent van Gogh, Picasso, Toulouse-Lautrec and Jackson Pollock, then reproduced the artists' famous paintings with images of their blue selves tucked neatly in the brush strokes or in photographs with the painters. Playbills pronouncing their great influence on the art scene flooded the mono-

lithic city as they rented space so the tribe could gather. Musicians were hired. By 1991 they had their own off-Broadway theater. By 1995 they had another in Boston, and another in Chicago by 1997. New Blue Men were sought, and auditions and training workshops evolved. They reproduced themselves and a huge cult formed paying them tribute.

"One of the prerequisites of auditioning is drumming skills. The first audition is short, a series of single stroke rolls and a brief interview—getting a sense of you, looking for that spark of passion. Callback auditions are more performance intensive."

— Gebow

The power of percussion, on an ever-widening array of PVC piping, took hold of the Blue Man Group. The idea of a compact disc with original Blue Man music was the inspiration for acquiring a 5,000-square-foot studio with 28-foot ceilings. An entourage of musicians worked to bring the live Audio to magnificent percussive life and rave reviews, receiving a Grammy nomination and performance by the now-famous trio at the awards show.

"We were so lucky opening in Las Vegas. We got to work and train with Goldman, Stanton and Wink, who played here the first three months. It was awesome."

—Weiss

In a daring move to reach out to more of the tribe, the Men in Blue made a landing at the Luxor Hotel in Las Vegas in the millennium year 2000. It's larger theater provided a freedom to expand the show and create greater winsome spectacle. More musicians and colorful high-tech innovations appeared and the crowds roared their approval. They haven't stopped since.

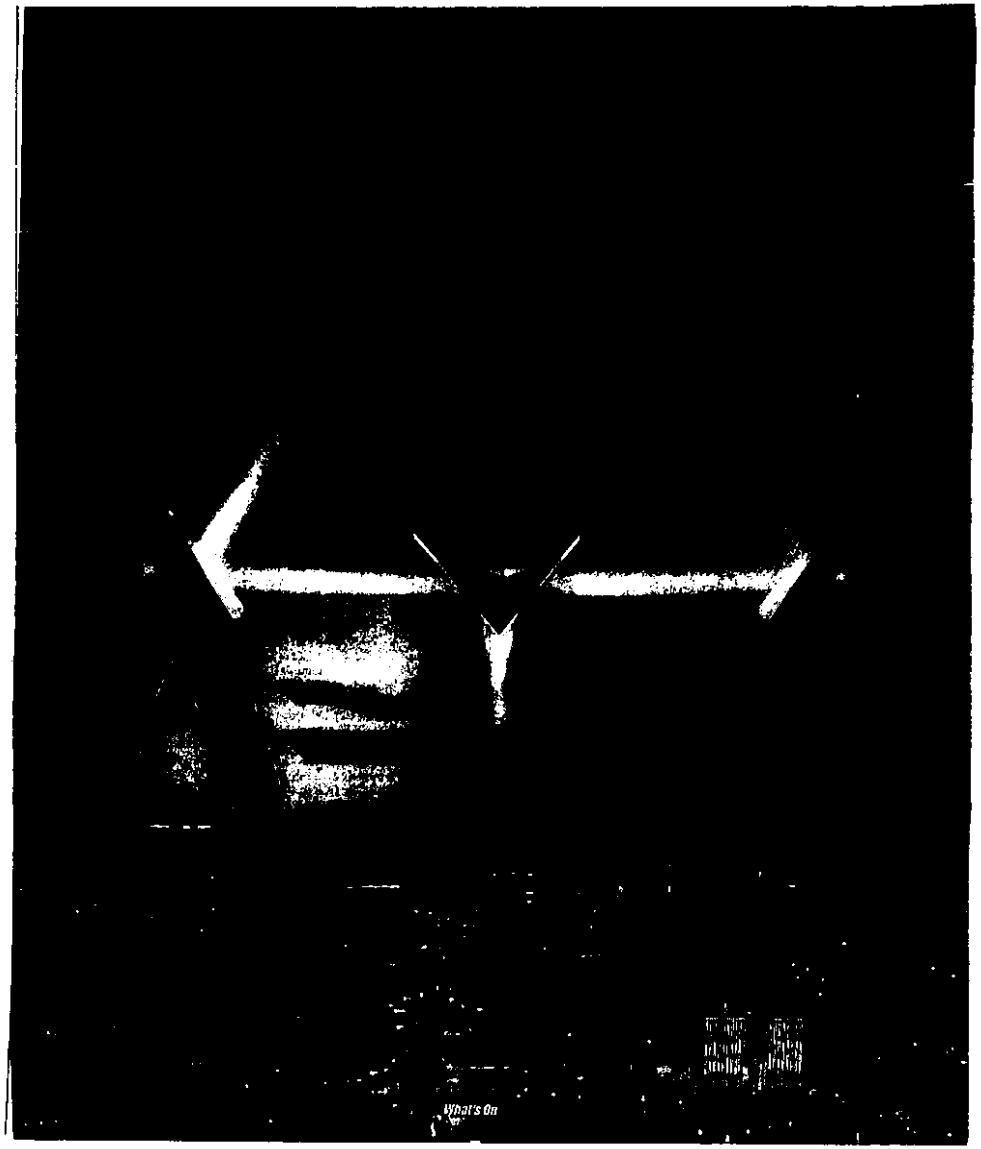
There are now 33 Blue Men in all, nine in Las Vegas with nine musicians who rotate shows. Intel commercials have brought these talented, gentle spirits into everyone's home. The demand for "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" continues to expand. Added shows will take place during the Labor Day weekend to accommodate the crowds hungry for the Blue Man Group experience.

"Being a Blue Man and working within the organization is a fantastic experience. There is so much support. They invest themselves in you. And it's so much fun."

—Banks

In a world gone awry with its own self-importance, the Blue Man Group cleverly delivers a huge hit of spontaneous combustion threaded by the passion of the heart. Laughter and music are indeed potent medicine. When we, the audience, get toilet papered at the show's closing in a phantasmagoric spree of light and sound, hopefully we, too, will see the joke.

SHOW TIMES: 7 & 10 p.m., nightly; plus 4 p.m. matinees, Sept. 1 & 2
SHOWROOM: Luxor Theater
SHOW PRICE: $59.50 & $69.50, 702-262-4400
For more info go to www.[illegible].com



TRAVEL WEEKLY

LAS VEGAS

3755

VOLUME 61 ■ NUMBER 20 ■ MAY 20, 2002 ■ TRAVEL WEEKLY

Pull-out Section

LV3 The art of Fine Art
LV4 Stardust is reborn
LV8 Allegiant Air
LV16 Gutsy Women
LV18 For adults only
LV26 Vegas Nuggets

Family fun ... minus the gambling

Age-appropriate shows for families, such as the Blue Man Group at the Luxor, aren't hard to find in Las Vegas.

News and opinion editor Bill Poling, his wife and 15-year-old son set off for Las Vegas last month to test the city's claim that there's plenty to do for the nongambler. His report follows:

Can two gracefully aging baby boomers who don't gamble find happiness over spring break by taking a bored TV and video game jockey to the gaming capital of the world?

We did.

We started with air, four nights' accommodations, a few discount coupons and a rental car — the sort of off-the-shelf package any travel agent can find.

Thanks to the Internet, we ran up a nice tab on the credit card by booking Las Vegas shows before we left home; however, the advantage of using the phone is that you can ask where the good seats are.

We didn't.

Age-appropriate shows for families aren't hard to find. We settled on Lance Burton's magic act and a performance of the Blue Man Group at the Luxor, which left us determined to fill out the rest of the time with some of southern Nevada's cheap thrills.

It was all too easy.

• Did you know that Boulder Dam and Hoover Dam are the same dam? We didn't. The names Boulder, for the canyon, and Hoover, for the 31st president, competed for the naming rights until Congress stepped in in 1947 and laid down the law — Hoover Dam.

An easy half-day trip by car, the dam and Lake Mead are a good and popular diversion from the flash and glitter of the Strip.

> Sometimes you feel the urge to kick around in the desert for a few days.

The visitor center now has a security checkpoint, but you can still take the long elevator ride down, look at the big generators and, yes, you can walk across the dam.

We did.

There are nice art deco touches here and there, including a pair of striking bronze statues by sculptor Oskar Hansen representing the "Winged Figures of the Republic."

If you plan ahead, you can do outdoorsy stuff on the lake. We didn't.

In nearby Boulder City, you can stop at a local eatery advertising the "best food by a dam site." We did.

• Sometimes you feel like surrendering to the urge to kick around in the desert for a day. We did.

The Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area has a looping, 13-mile road that offers several Kodak moments and easy access to a number of hiking trails of varying levels of difficulty. The area also has a good visitor center.

We chose the Ice Box Canyon trail, a poor choice (way too rocky). It is said that from time to time you will encounter wild burros and bighorn sheep. We didn't.

• The biggest cheap thrill in Las Vegas is walking the Strip and gawking at hotels. We did.

We also did some of this by car. Every one of the large hotel-casinos on the Strip has a huge, free parking garage, and they don't limit access to guests only.

(Continued on Page LV10)

Nongaming activities abound for families

(Continued from Page LV1)

If you're from a congested city where parking is expensive or a hassle — or both — you'll be pleasantly surprised by this. We were amazed; we had never seen so many free parking spaces in one place. What a waste!

Because of the ease of parking, a car is not an encumbrance — although the traffic and daredevil jaywalkers on the Strip can be.

The elevated monorails, or trams, take some of the pedestrian traffic off the street, but not enough.

• Any standard guidebook will cover the Strip's cheap thrills, such as the lions in the MGM Grand, the tigers and dolphins at the Mirage, the floral displays at the Bellagio's conservatory, the goings on at Circus Circus, etc.

What they don't tell you is that the Bellagio's musically synchronized fountains are equally as impressive from the front, back and side, as well as from the top of the Eiffel Tower at Paris Las Vegas across the street.

The sidewalk pirate show at Treasure Island is best viewed if you're closer to the pirate ship than the British ship. And don't try to view the volcano at the Mirage from a moving car. We did.

• The Freemont Street Experience was worth the short drive to downtown. The milieu is interesting for about five minutes and the sound and light show is good for another two or three.

After that, you can get easily diverted by performers and sidewalk artists and blow away an hour. We did.

• A note for New Yorkers: On the day of our visit to the fake stretch of the Brooklyn Bridge at New York-New York, you could look down and see brackish water with trash floating in it. Nice touch.

• Car buffs shouldn't pass up the Imperial Palace Auto Collection, an understated museum tucked away in the parking garage of the hotel of the same name.

In addition to a number of classic Rolls-Royces, Dusenbergs and other exotic cars, the collection includes a heartbreaking, cherry-red 1958 Chevy. Guys, be prepared for spousal puzzlement. We weren't.

• Under "other attractions" or "elsewhere in the region," many guidebooks will mention Ethel M's chocolate factory and cactus garden, located in a low-rise office park in Henderson, about 15 minutes from the Strip. Most visitors to Las Vegas will take a pass. We didn't.

Ethel's M, as it turns out, stands for Mars, as in the Mars Bar and M&Ms. She was the Mars family matriarch.

After a self-guided walk through the factory (30 seconds if you walk really fast), you find yourself picking out free chocolate in the retail store, an establishment with no flashing lights and whose only bustle happens when the occasional tour bus pulls up outside.

The little cactus garden outside, however, is the real font of serenity here.

The Fremont Street Experience was worth the short drive to downtown.

When there are no tour groups around, the botanically inclined can take a leisurely walk through and bone up on the subtle differences between the flora of Mohave and that of Sonora. Who knew? We didn't.

• For the record, we put five quarters into an airport slot machine as our flight home was boarding, and the machine spit out $3.75 — a $2.50 profit.

You know that old saying, "Take the money and run?"

We did.

For a complete listing of attractions in and around Las Vegas, see Page LV20.

The cactus garden outside of Ethel M's offers a serene and welcome respite from the Strip.

At Hoover Dam visitors center, bronze statues by sculptor Oskar Hansen represent the "Winged Figures of the Republic."

CONTACTS

ATTRACTIONS

Blue Man Group
Phone: (800) 557-7428
Web: www.blueman.com

Lance Burton
Phone: (877) 386-8224
Web: www.lanceburton.com

Hoover Dam
Phone: (866) 291-8687
Web: www.hooverdam usbr.gov

Lake Mead Recreation Service
Phone: (702) 293-8906
Web: www.nps.gov

Red Rock Canyon
Phone: (702) 875-4141
Web: www.travelnevada.com

Fremont Street Experience
Phone: (800) 249-3559
Web: www.vegasexperience.com

Imperial Palace Auto Collection
Phone: (702) 731-3311
Web:www.imperialpalace.com

Ethel M's Chocolates
Phone: (702) 433-2500
Web:www.ethelm.com

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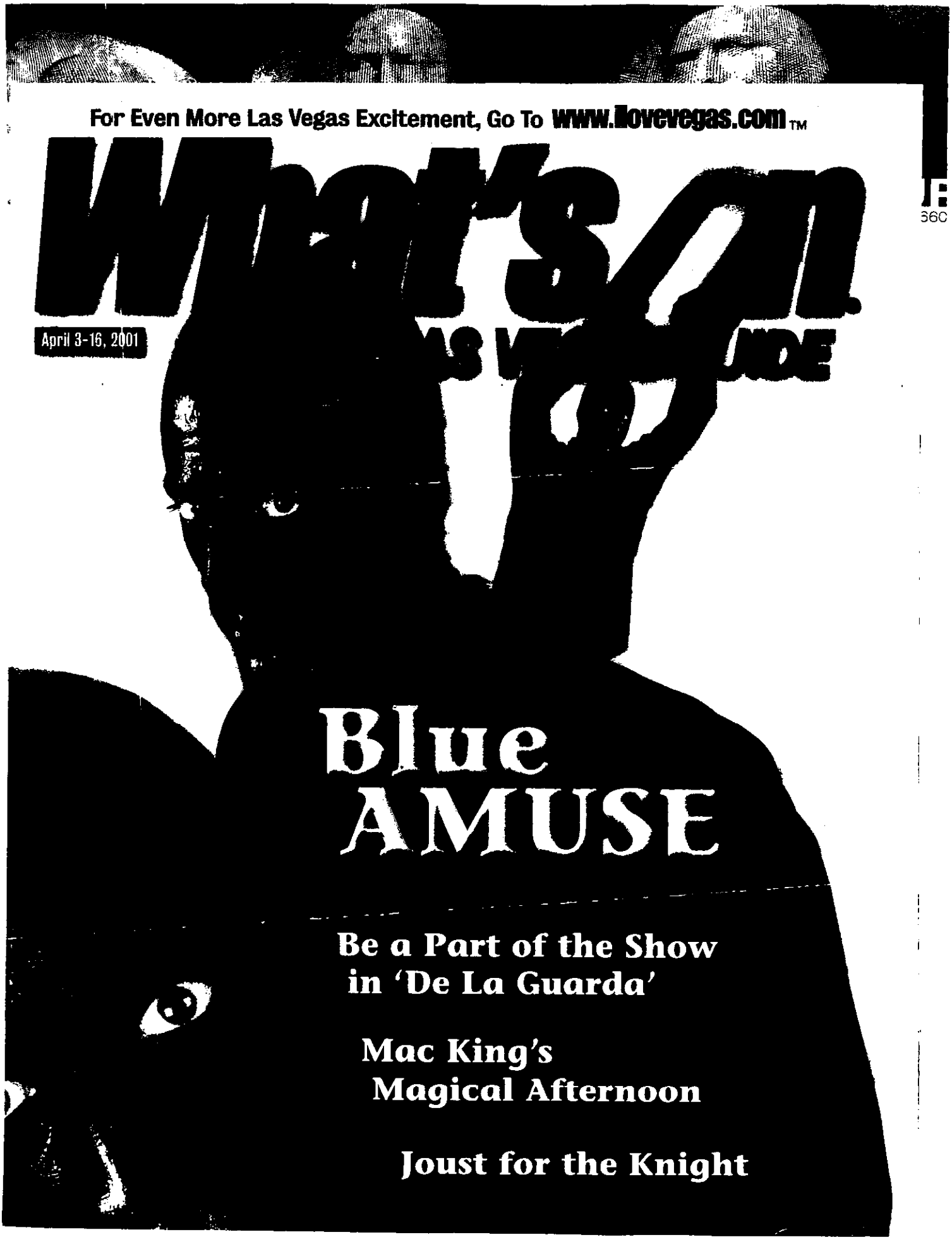
What's On

April 3-16, 2001



Blue AMUSE

Be a Part of the Show in 'De La Guarda'

Mac King's Magical Afternoon

Joust for the Knight

What's Black and White and BLUE All Over?

Feeling blue? What you need is a good dose of "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor." Your definition of "feeling blue" will never be the same, nor will you ever look upon the color blue in the same way, after you've seen this show. The color blue is often associated with feeling sad (singing the blues) or cold (as ice). The Blue Men, however, are on the opposite end of the emotional scale. They embody positive energy and are very warm and welcoming to their audiences. For all the lofty ideas, high-tech shenanigans and intellectual implications in the show, what "Blue Man Group" gives us in the end is a multi-sensory evening of live theater, upbeat percussive music and a lot of fun. Part philosophers, part clowns and part teachers, the Blue Men take the audience on a simple journey through a myriad of complex ideas, concepts and the contradictions of life. Find out how the Blue Men perceives being Hu-man.

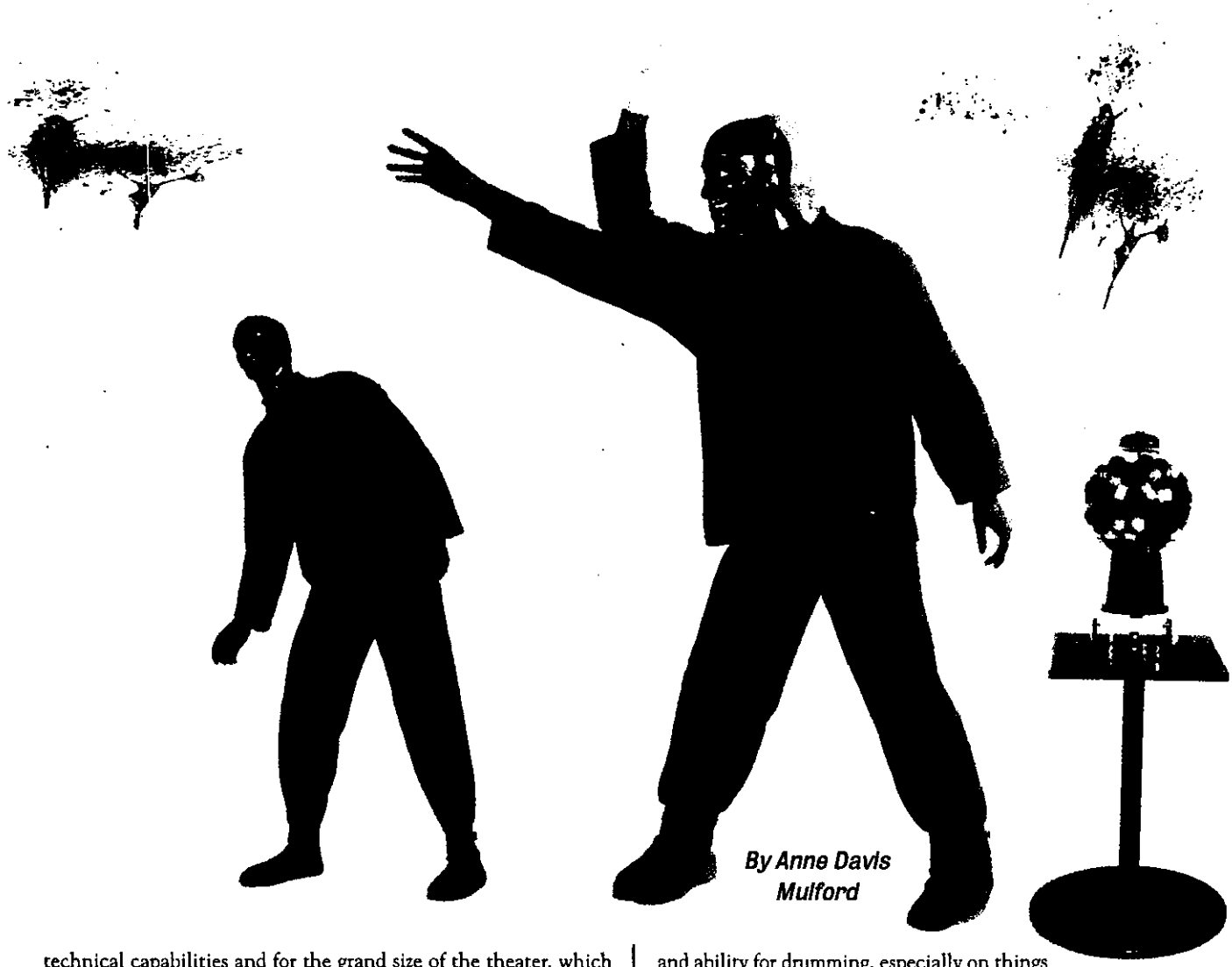
Some topics they revisit throughout include the interconnectedness of humanity and the opportunities and danger technology offers. They also look at the gorgeous, daunting beauty of DNA's double helix, which reappears (as a symbol of our individuality and our similarity) in many forms throughout the evening.

Their subtle, yet highly effective, methods of non-verbal communication will leave you with the reassurance that we all are interconnected. It also shows us that we can depend on and communicate with one another and that we are all capable of laughing at and understanding something about ourselves, each other and even modern art.

You will feel the music, both literally and figuratively. Long after you've left the theater, the powerful reverberation of the unique percussion instruments will throb in your chest, reminding your heart of Blue Man's message. The show's creators, Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink, created a veritable plethora of unique percussion instruments (mostly made of Polyvinyl Chloride plumbing pipes), which create the deep, reverberating heartbeat of the Blue Man throughout the 80-minute show.

Blue Man Group is described on its website (blueman.com) as "a creative organization dedicated to creating exciting and innovative work in a wide variety of mediums." Blue Man Group premiered in New York City's performance art scene nearly 10 years ago. Long-running shows, with continuous rave reviews, are also in Boston and Chicago. Blue Man Group's most recent achievement is their debut album Audio, which was nominated for a 2001 Grammy in the category of Best Pop Instrumental. They also appear in a series of clever national Pentium 4 TV commercials.

Goldman, Stanton and Wink selected the Luxor hotel/casino in Las Vegas for its impressive, state-of-the-art, audio-visual and



By Anne Davis Mulford

technical capabilities and for the grand size of the theater, which enabled them to considerably expand the physical and conceptual size of the show. The large Luxor stage, which has been home to the show for more than a year, has allowed the creative trio to specifically focus on expanding the musical aspect of the production. The set includes a three-story-high drum wall that looks like a gigantic complicated shadow box. When the Blue Men enter the chambers and pound their drums, the sound crashes into your chest and their exaggerated silhouette images are permanently recorded upon your gray matter.

What does it take to be a Blue Man? Well, according to three of the current Las Vegas Blue Men, Jeffrey Brown, Scott Kinworthy and Marcus Weiss, it's a long, introspective, fun, educational, challenging and entirely worthwhile haul. Each of them auditioned several times, trained for months, individually and in special workshops designed by the original Blue Men, and patiently waited their turn to have the honor of wearing the blue mask.

Their job for several hours each night is to communicate about the human experience without uttering a word. They teach us something about the intimacy of collaboration—the subtle effectiveness of a glance or a shrug.

What are the job requirements for a Blue Man? Height and body type must be similar to the original Blue Men. Must have a love of and ability for drumming, especially on things that most people don't consider drums. And acting skills come in handy. But above all, there must be that indescribable thing called "the Blue Man charismatic fire." You know it when you see it, and you certainly feel it when you see the show. "It's not that you can just drum and act, it's that you are able to communicate the essence of Blue Man," Las Vegas Blue Man Weiss said.

There is one female Blue Man in the Boston show. She was selected based on the same criteria used to select all Blue Men. Carrie Hanson, national associate director and Las Vegas associate producer, was the original casting director and mentioned that the show was always open to and actively sought women applicants. It is important to note here that Blue Men are androgynous entities. Perhaps Wink sums up the Blue Man experience best by stating, "This is a celebration of the act of creation."

SHOWTIMES: Wed.-Mon. at 7 & 10 p.m.; Tue. at 7 p.m.
SHOWROOM: Luxor Theater
SHOW PRICE: $55 and $65, call 702-262-4400.
For more info go to www.ilovevegas.com

BLUE MAN GROUP

REFRESHINGLY DIFFERENT

It's Not Your Typical Broadway Show

SHOWBIZ
July 16—22

By Carla J. Zvosec

Intense, innovative and invigorating, "The Blue Man Group" has been blowing audiences away since 1991 with their eccentric and vibrant theater production. First performed off-Broadway in New York, the show was such a huge success that the group expanded their production to Boston in 1995, Chicago in 1997, and Las Vegas this past March. As well-received and successful in Vegas as back East, "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" performs six nights out of the week in the state-of-the-art Luxor Theatre.

The men responsible for this theater production brainchild are longtime friends Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink, who founded "Blue Man Group" in New York City in 1987 after attending a series of salon-type meeting-of-the-minds.

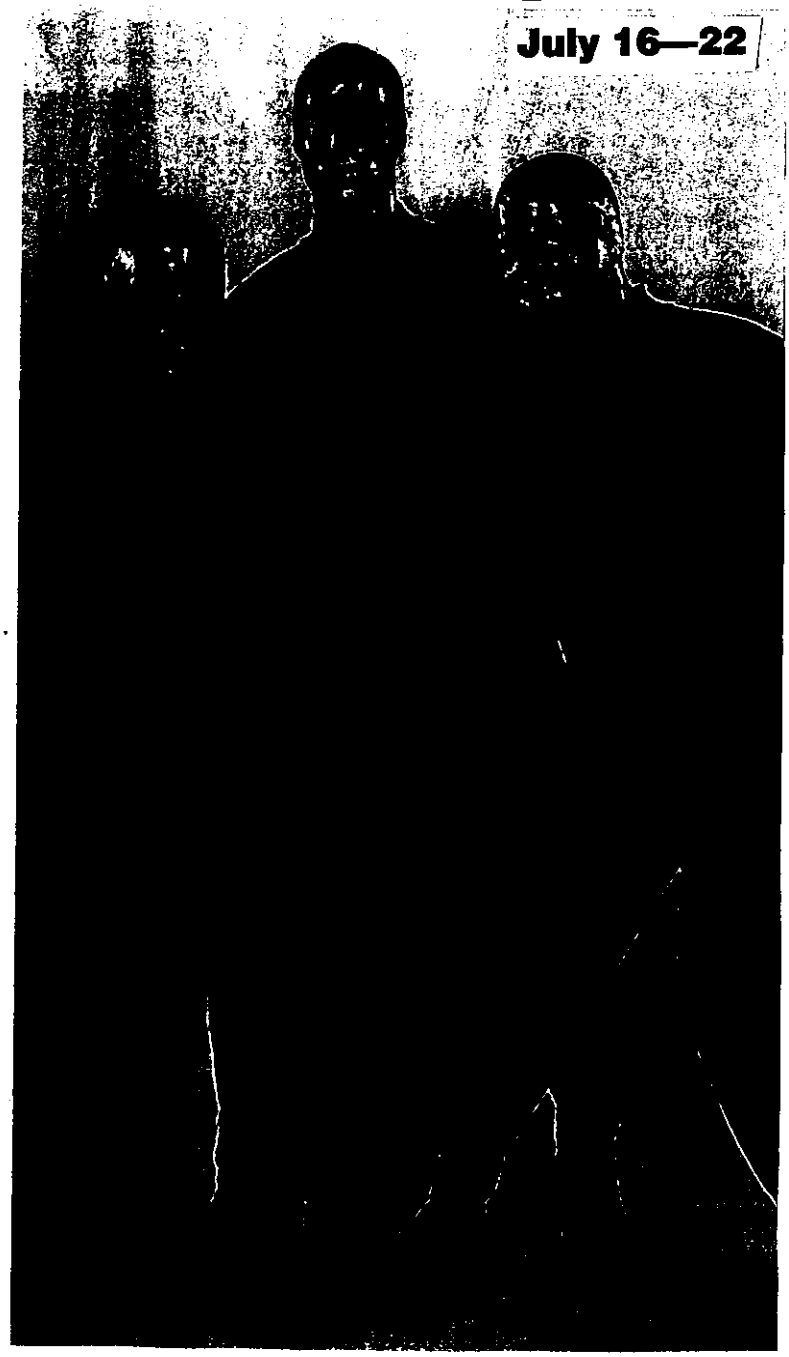
Curiously strange and fascinatingly inventive in so many aspects and on so many levels, "Blue Man Group" is truly in a class of its own. Originally featuring the avant-garde trio of Goldman, Stanton and Wink as the show's three nontalking, bald-headed, cobalt blue characters who thrill audiences with an exciting and unusual blend of comedy, music and visual experiences, the production has now grown to include a total of 30 blue men who rotate into the current shows.

Whether hammering away at kettledrums whose heads have been doused with bright paints to produce volcanic eruptions of color, or playing their unique, strapped-on percussion instruments created from various-sized plumbing and ventilation tubing, the blue men make music that's visceral, powerful and distinctly their own.

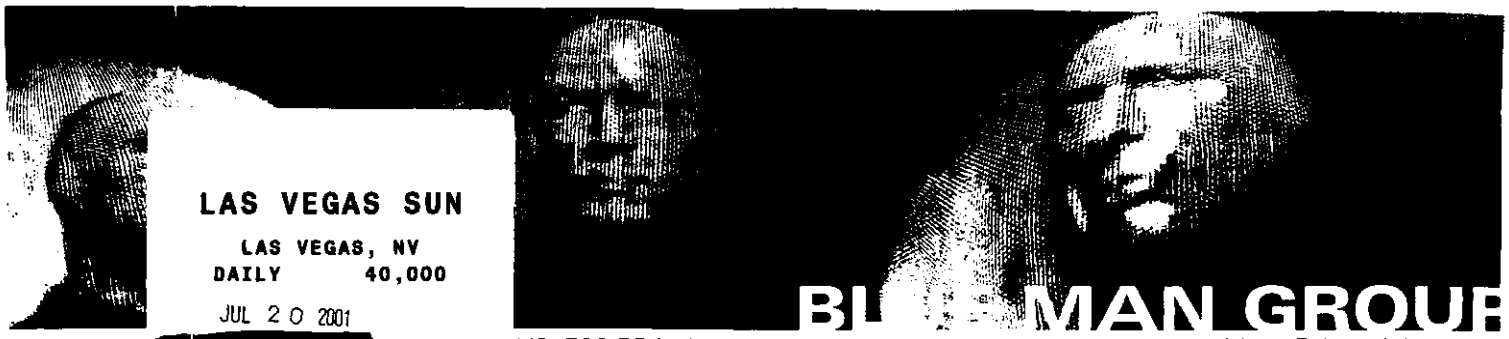
But the distinction doesn't end there; everything the blue men do is distinctly their own. From creating a regurgitated marshmallow "sculpture" after one of them catches way too many of the puffy little delights in his mouth, to taking an unsuspecting audience member backstage, hanging him upside down, rolling him with paints and swinging him into a giant canvas to create a "body" painting, the blue men are unparalleled in the theater world.

Original in content, party like in nature and hallucinatory in its visuals, "Blue Man Group" is a must-see for those desiring a truly amazing sensory experience.

"Blue Man Group"
- ***Where*** **• Luxor**
- ***When*** **• Wed.-Mon.**
- ***Information*** **• 262-4400**



SO CURIOUS — "Blue Man Group" look to the audience for lessons on the behaviors of humanity



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It's high time to take a gander at the production shows that call the Strip home. At left, the Blue Man Group perform on the "drumbone," a homemade percussion instrument, in their self-titled show at Luxor, top. Next door, at Excalibur, Patrick Sprouse, left, plays the King of Ireland, and Ryan White is the King of France who battle during "Tournament of Kings." A little bit of Las Vegas history is staged at the Sahara during "The Rat Pack is Back," starring, from left, Steve Lippia, Doug Starks, Mark Cohen and Rick Michel.

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Blue Man Group: Live At Luxor Is Hottest New Show In Las Vegas 3755

Blue Man Group has become the most exciting entertainment phenomenon to arrive in Las Vegas in years with its newest production, "Blue Man Group: Live At Luxor." Since its opening in March 2000, the show has received critical raves from press nationwide and has played to standing ovations from sold-out houses in the 1,200 seat Luxor Theater.

"Blue Man Group: Live At Luxor" is a hybrid of new material as well as signature pieces from Blue Man Group productions in New York, Boston and Chicago. The enormous stage at the Luxor Theater has allowed Blue Man Group to expand the scope of their work, including the addition of a three story high Drum Wall, an expanded seven-member band and an arsenal of new musical instruments developed for their debut album, "Audio." Blue Man Group's Las Vegas expansion is also exemplified by one of the new pieces in which the Blue Man character brings an enormous live wire desert landscape to life, complete with a roadside diner and tumbleweeds.

Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink, the creators and original performers of Blue Man Group, are proud of their new productions and its impact on Las Vegas. "Vegas is a place that reinvents itself every six years," Chris Wink said. "We like the idea of being part of the next reinvention."

Richard Zoglin of *Time Magazine,* who reviewed Blue Man Group's first production in New York, recently caught up with Blue Man Group: Live At Luxor and wrote, "... the hippest show in Las Vegas. The show has become Vegas-big ... the crowd reaction is bigger too – wild and happy, like a rock concert. Blue Man Group is a milestone."

Blue Man Group is dedicated to creating and developing exciting and innovative work in a variety of mediums. The group's theatrical productions in New York, Boston, Chicago and now Las Vegas feature three enigmatic bald and blue characters who take the audience through a multi-sensory experience that combines theater, percussive music, art, science and vaudeville into an incomparable form of entertainment.

In December, 1999, Blue Man Group released a CD entitled "Audio," which continues to climb the record charts.

Showtimes are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday at 7 and 10 p.m., Tuesday at 7 p.m. and Friday at 10 p.m. Tickets can be purchased at the Luxor Box Office or by calling 262-4400 or through TicketMaster.

/isually stunning Blue Man Group what Vegas needs

Mike Weatherford
view-Journal

It's fairly obvious from any / commercial or print ad: lue Man Group: Live at ixor" isn't for everyone. The surprise — if you can ll it that — is that it's for ore people than it might em.

Certainly, there were clues at the Blue Man Group n't as avant-garde or off-itting as the trademark ullcaps and cobalt-blue easepaint of its three silent ars would suggest.

Weird for weird's sake ight play for a few months the East Village. Here in e West, we've heard of ranger ways for city folks ick East to make money an to splatter paint on stuff chomp Cap'n Crunch into a icrophone.

But to play New York for ? years running, there's got be something universal id populist at work. If the lue Man show didn't make y sense at all — or if it asn't so darn funny — it ouldn't be a long-running nterprise in three cities.

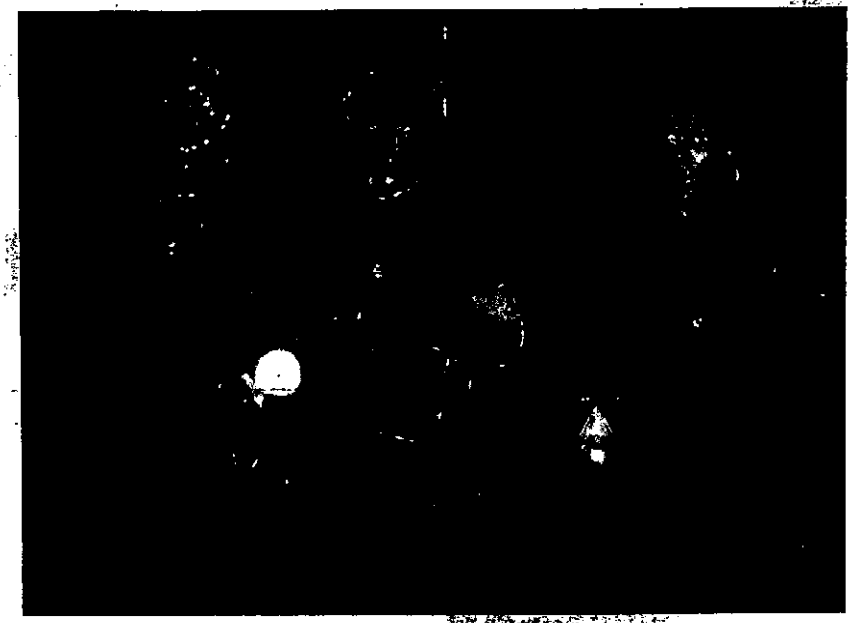
And the troupe wouldn't ave been invited to town by fandalay Resort Group, hich used to have a pretty ptight corporate image. Af-r all, the Luxor's 1,200-capacity showroom previously hosted a show called "Imagine," which didn't.

The Blue Man Group does, and as a result, you'll never look at PVC pipe in quite the same way. That it's a hard show to describe says a lot in itself. Like Cirque du Soleil before it, the Blue Man Group focuses its music and visuals into a unique point of view that supplants any single element.

That unified vision combines contradictory elements in a fast hour and a half. There's highbrow humor and schoolyard play-with-your-food tricks. Old-fashioned sleight-of-hand, and genuine efforts to explain science and nature.

Think of the Blue Man Group as three people who understand technology better than most of us, but who prefer humanity. They could have been engineers or software designers, but chose to create their own low-tech playground instead.

After a two-week soft opening period, the show's founders — Chris Wink, Phil Stanton and Matt Goldman — put the greasepaint back on for a March 14 "world premiere" in front of an invited audience that included fellow mischief-makers Penn & Teller and writer-performance artist Spalding Gray. (A rotating repertoire of Blue Men will perform most future shows.)



The blue-faced Blue Man Group performs their weird show at the Luxor.

A moody overture from the seven-piece band, working on upper levels left and right of the stage, begins a hammering barrage of percussion that continues for much of the show, accented by angular spaghetti Western guitar.

Emerging from behind a screen where they've been "animated" in silhouette by hand-held strobes, the three curious, slightly robotic Blue Men perform a first-half of "greatest hits" segments from humbler days in smaller venues.

This includes squirting flu-

Please see GROUP/2

Group

rom 4

escent paint into drum eads, the microphone-nhanced Cap'n Crunch-ing, nd some stuntwork in which ou find out how many little eam cheese balls a Blue lan can catch and hold in his outh. Without giving away ne punchlines, there's a run-ing satire on abstract art as ell.

Insights into modern umbing, information-age verload and an audience ember's mouth lead to more asic comedy when an audi-nce "volunteer" is dragged to ne stage to share Twinkies ith the trio.

The second half reveals the igger, more expensive toys he Blue Men built to fill the 0-foot stage. They use foam-ubber paddles to play their VC version of a vibraphone – the notes determined by he length of each pipe seg-ent — before the stage re-eals a two-story "drum wall" ith seven percussion sta-ions.

Two stunning set pieces fol-ow: A wall of neon that akes a two-dimensional car-oon vista come to life, and an mazing display of how our yes are tricked into the process of animation every time we watch a film. Two turntables (zoetropes, to be exact) on each side of the stage spin faster and faster until a circle of statues begin a tribal dance.

By the time the crowd sang "White Rabbit" and participated in a finale that brings back high school memories of papering the popular girl's yard, the opening night audience had bonded into a tribe of its own.

The question is, can it happen every night? Not everyone is going to be enamored of the aggressive, persistently percussive music. And then there's the size of the theater. Despite a sincere effort to take the action to the back rows, the low-budget segments from the early days don't carry all the way to the cheap seats.

And "cheap" means $55 for the back of the room and $65 for the front, which is $10 more than tickets for the cozier New York production. The Blue Men will learn whether Las Vegas audiences still expect more production value for that price than the stark lighting and minimalist, black warehouse vibe they offer.

But the Blue Men are here to challenge old notions of Las Vegas entertainment. And after decades of revues that were spliced together from other sources, assembled by committee or updated piecemeal over the years, an inspired imagination may just prove to be the real commodity after all.

"The Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" is presented at 7 and 10 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays and at 7 p.m. Sundays and Mondays in the Luxor Theater at the Luxor, 3900 Las Vegas Blvd. So. Tickets are $55 and $65.

Grade: A

BLUE MAN GROUP

KNPR 89.5 FM
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npr news

Blue Man Group is AWESOME!

Mar 30, 2000

"Awesome" is the word we've used the most to describe Blue Man Group after the benefit performance at the Luxor for the KNPR Endowment Fund.
Here's what others had to say...

Being that I'm deaf, I especially liked the part where they made sound "visible" through its magnified eyes "electronic sound-waves"...that certainly would be fantastic for deaf folks! Loved the paint-drums and wanted more! - Natalie Grupido

Thanks for asking, and yes we laughed and laughed at the Blue Man Group benefit. Thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. Especially geared to us Baby Boomers! What a way to have a fundraiser. Do it again. And I especially enjoyed Mr. "Late Arrival" - Mayor Goodman, my boss! (I work at City Hall.)
Have always thought about going over to the Amargosa Opera House for a performance. Next time you run a bus over, let me know. Would love to go along.
Thanks again, Annie Macomber

"My nephew and I were very much entertained by the performance. It was his 10th birthday treat from me. It sure helped change his impression of "old Aunt Susie". I had to keep telling him not to eat the dirty marshmallow he found on the theater floor on the way out! Thanks to Luxor/BMG for donating the tix. I'm happy to help sponsor KNPR." - Susan Kent

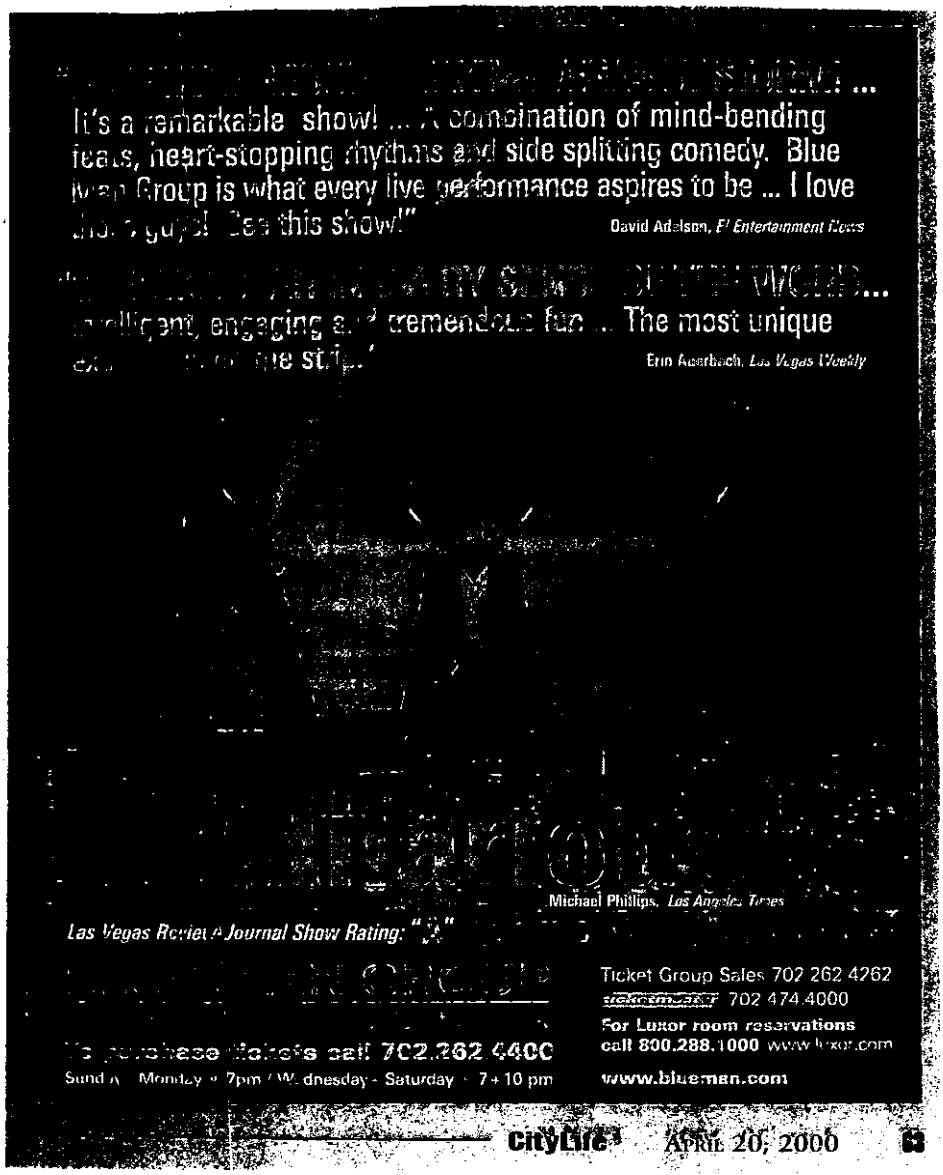
"Great show. Do it again." - Ercelia D. Rosen

"Great show, we had a lot of fun and were impressed by the originality." - Christian & Jeri

"I didn't know they were the original performers! They were outstanding. I had a great time. It was like being at a rock concert with some skits thrown in and audience participation. What a blast! Thanks!" - Kristin Cooper

"The Blue Man Group was SPECTACULAR...or was it a spectacle? Perhaps both. I must tell you that, even though I had purchased my tickets weeks in advance in the Poncho section, by the time Saturday evening rolled around, I had little interest in going as I had been up since 5:00 AM that day, had worked until 5:00 PM and I just wanted to go home. (I think I need some cheese with my "whine," don't you?) If I hadn't had a dear friend whom I had invited to go with me and who wouldn't let me bow out, I would have gone home, put my tired feet up and missed the niftiest evening I have had in ages!
Twinkies, Captain Crunch, Marshmallows...all the basic food groups covered.
Thanks for making such a magical and zany evening available." - Jo Ann Angerson

BLUE MAN GROUP


It's a remarkable show! ... A combination of mind-bending feats, heart-stopping rhythms and side splitting comedy. Blue Man Group is what every live performance aspires to be ... I love those guys! See this show!"
David Adelson, *E! Entertainment News*

... intelligent, engaging and tremendous fun ... The most unique ... the strip."
Erin Auerbach, *Las Vegas Weekly*

Michael Phillips, *Los Angeles Times*

Las Vegas Review Journal Show Rating: "[illegible]"

Ticket Group Sales 702 262 4262
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www.blueman.com

To purchase tickets call 702.262.4400
Sunday - Monday • 7pm / Wednesday - Saturday • 7 + 10 pm

CityLife April 20, 2000

Vegas gets predictable slap from *New Yorker*

You had to know it was coming. When the *The New Yorker* noticed that the Blue Man Group had launched a new version of its show in Las Vegas, it was only a matter of time before the condescension would ensue.

In the April 10 issue, writer Emily Nunn notes that the Blue Men (the original three are Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink), who got their start in the East Village's Astor Place Theatre, have expanded to the Luxor in Las Vegas.

Immediately, Nunn plays the snob card.

"Some might argue that, by playing Vegas, Goldman, Stanton and Wink are embracing the very kind of consumer-driven success that contradicts the Blue Man values, the trio like to talk about—the idea that Blue Man is a blank slate that sardonically reflects the foibles of contemporary popular culture."

The Blue Men play along. "We still have that New York City prejudice. Is it uncool to be here? Will we *become* that thing?"

It turns out the Blue Men are on a mission to save Vegas from itself. Says Wink:

"If someone could come here and do something good, it could attract another kind of audience. Vegas needs us. Superman isn't affected when he's around the bad guys. We won't be, either."

G.S.

CityLife
Editor and Publisher ..... Rod Smith
Editorial
Managing Editor ..... Geoff Schumacher

3900 Las Vegas Boulevard South Las Vegas, NV 89119 (702) 262 4000 Group Sales (702) 262 4262 Fax (702) 262 4825
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April 2000

advertisement

To Advertise on these pages call Michele Fenno @ 602.444.8084 or e-mail: michele.fenno@phi.com

Innovative Blue Man Group headline Luxor Theater

By Jackie Brett
Special to Las Vegas

Beginning with the show's title "Blue Man Group" and its promotional pictures of three men in skullcaps covered with cobalt-blue greasepaint, the hint that this isn't a typical show, Vegas or otherwise, is made perfectly clear. It's also a difficult show to describe because it's a one-of-a-kind experience.

A simple one line description might be the show is The Three Stooges without hostility. Blue Man Group is now playing in the Luxor's 1,200-seat theatre.

Innovative, childlike play, are captured throughout this performance. For example, one bit is a simple experience like three blue men and a lady "volunteer" from the audience eating four twinkies. Sounds mundane but it's very effective, especially when you consider that the trio of blue men are silent, yet expressive.

Other entertaining childlike staged activities are releasing cream cheese balls from a gumball machine and throwing them so a partner can catch as many as possible in his mouth. Sounds stupid; however, it's actually very imaginative and entertaining.

In numerous segments, the trio brings art into the forefront like with the spin paint art section. Crepe papering the entire 1,200-seat theater is one of the group's signature pieces. The billowing crepe paper is dropped from the ceiling and as the audience participates in passing it from over their heads to the row below, the creep paper forms giant globs that eventually work their way to the stage. After watching the trio's antics and enjoying their surprise humor, the audience realizes they are now reverting back to their own childhood play.

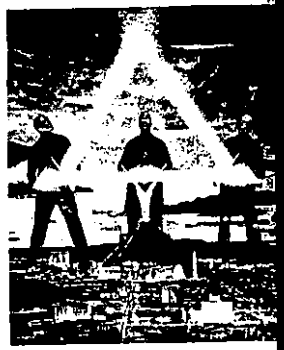
Another signature Blue Man piece features three drums, and different color florescent paint that is squirted into the drum heads. When the robotic-like animated men bang their drums, the paint artfully flies through the air.

The showroom and 50-foot stage setting is rather stark with an almost warehouse feeling. This surrealistic tone lends itself to being a canvas for a non-traditional show. The seven-piece band works on upper levels to the right and left of the stage. The musicians dress in black body suits with neon lines that make them look unreal and similar to stick figures.

At one point in the show, the blue men introduced huge fascinating, almost modern tribal-like instruments made entirely of white PVC pipes. The sounds they generate from the home-made instruments are unique and inviting.

Aiding and solidifying the strangeness of the whole experience, the show's heavy percussion and aggressive music is hypnotizing and acts similar to background music in a movie.

While the show sounds weird, it is actually very funny, engrossing and entertaining. Tickets to Blue Man Group are $55 for the top section and $65 for lower seats. Shows are 7 p.m. nightly except Tuesday and also at 10 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday; call the Luxor at 1-(702) 262-4400 or visit www.blueman.com.



Luxor

The exciting, unusual Blue Man Group brings their show to the 1,200-seat Luxor Theatre.

BLUE MAN GROUP

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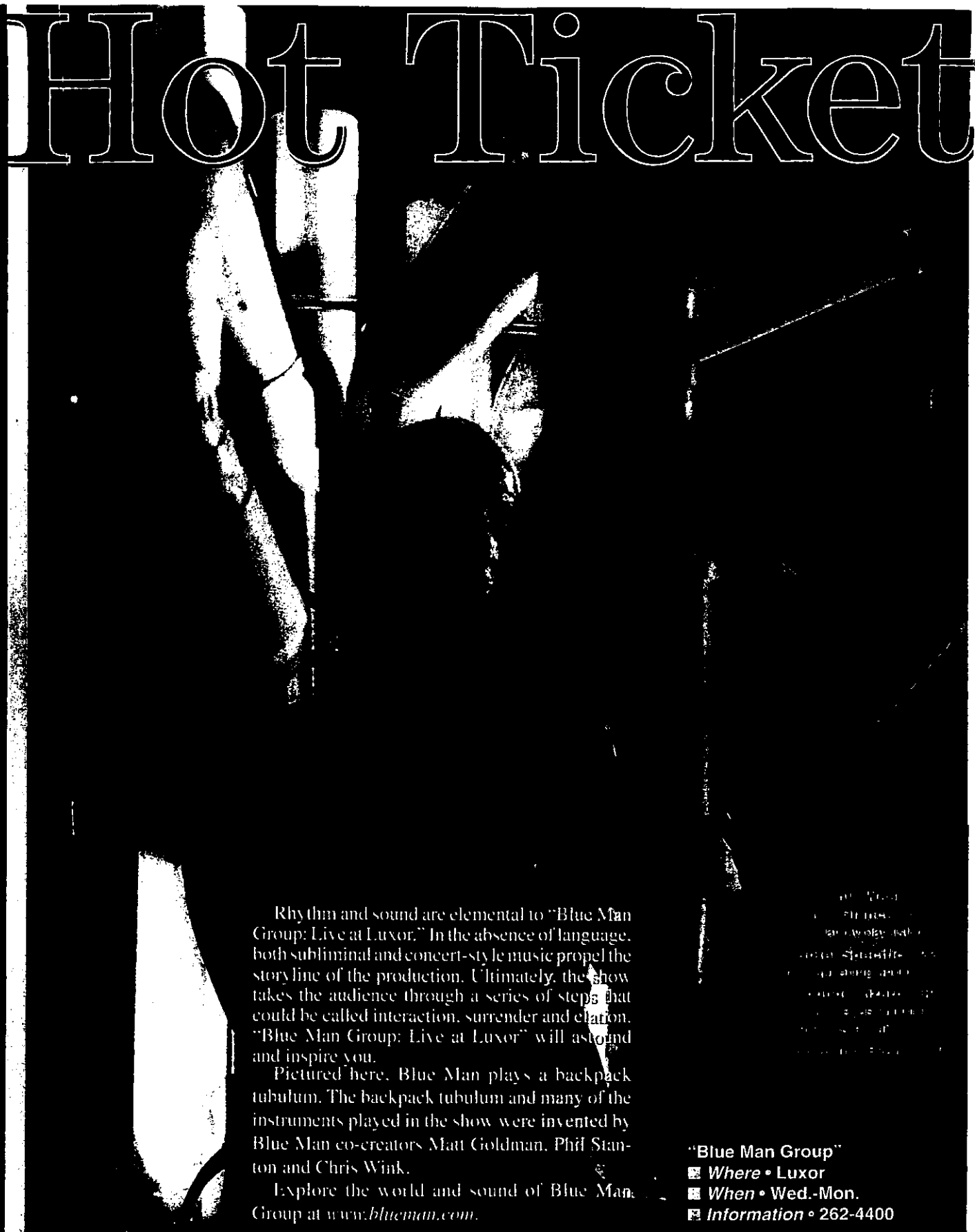
Hot Ticket



Rhythm and sound are elemental to "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor." In the absence of language, both subliminal and concert-style music propel the storyline of the production. Ultimately, the show takes the audience through a series of steps that could be called interaction, surrender and elation. "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" will astound and inspire you.

Pictured here, Blue Man plays a backpack tubulum. The backpack tubulum and many of the instruments played in the show were invented by Blue Man co-creators Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink.

Explore the world and sound of Blue Man Group at *www.blueman.com*.

"Blue Man Group"

- ***Where*** **• Luxor**
- ***When*** **• Wed.-Mon.**
- ***Information*** **• 262-4400**

BLUE MAN GROUP
LIVE AT LUXOR

Paint poured on garbage-pail drums bursts into showers of color as a Blue Man Group member strikes a beat. The demonstration was part of a press preview Thursday announcing a new show, "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor," which will begin public performances in February.

Jeff Scheid/Review-Journal

Blue Man Group newest act to redefine Strip entertainment

By Michael Paskevich
Review-Journal

Having accepted spectacularly staged animal-free circuses and legitimate musical theater, Las Vegas entertainment fans will take a fresh cultural litmus test – in early 2000.

That's when the avant-garde Blue Man Group brings its experimental blend of comedy, music, visual and visceral thrills into the Luxor. "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" will open for three weeks of previews starting Feb. 23 and will be followed by an indefinite run.

Tickets will cost $65 for the front part of the house and $55 for seats in the mezzanine, said Joel Fischman, vice president of entertainment for Mandalay Resort Group after a Thursday media preview at Mandalay Bay of the off-Broadway theatrical sensation. Tickets go on sale today at the Luxor.

"We think Las Vegas is finally ready for the Blue Man Group, and that Blue Man Group is finally ready for Las Vegas," Fischman said.

Media members viewed about 15 minutes of oddly humorous and colorful excerpts from the show by the troupe's three founding members, easily distinguished by their bald-look skullcaps and faces covered entirely in luminous cobalt blue paint. A septet of percussive support musicians — to be expanded to 16 players by opening night — were easily visible in neon-glow costumes as the core trio pounded away on garbage-pail drums with lids doused in green and red paint.

Each beat sent geyserlike spurts of paint into the air, and paint-drenched marshmallows helped create an unusual artwork.

That number remains part of the group's original show, which continues to play New York City since garnering rave reviews as a postmodern masterpiece when it opened in 1991. Co-founders Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink have since trained blued-coated counterparts to play their roles in Boston (since 1995) and Chicago (since 1997) in theaters ranging from just more than 300 seats to about 600 capacity. The three stars intend to rotate into the Las Vegas cast occasionally.

Moving into the Luxor's 1,200-seat theater, home of the "Imagine, A Theatrical Odyssey" production show until the end of the year, has presented the troupe with the challenge of enlarging its scope.

"There are six times in the (current) show where we are able to fill the entire proscenium," Wink said, "and we're taking a chance because the entire show is a bit of a non sequitur.

"Maybe some people won't like us," he added, "but we're happy to give it a try and see what happens."

The trio invented its own musical instruments, including some made of PVC pipe, and a three-story "wall of drums" will be added to a show that will combine earlier signature scenes with new material geared for the larger venue.

"We've got a lot of tricks up our sleeves (for Las Vegas,)" noted Wink, adding that 10 projectors are on the way along with a surround sound system to replace the theater's existing one because "it just didn't rock like we wanted."

"We think this addition is perfect for the evolution of the city," Fischman said.

THE COLOR OF PERCEPTION

'Blue Man Group' Challenges The Status Quo

"Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" is like nothing that has ever played Las Vegas before. Conceptually, the production is an avant-garde theatrical and musical spectacle that reshades the color blue, reshapes modern art and redefines the purpose of live performance. The prestigious Drama Desk and Obie Awards created new categories when they chose to honor "Blue Man Group's" "Tubes" show in New York City. Thus, to try and categorize "Blue Man Group" is to limit the experience.

"Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor," revels in breaking the mold (they even explode Jell-O in their act). As soon as you think you know which direction "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor" is headed, the Blue Men will undoubtedly catapult you into a completely new experience.

And a totally unique experience is what "Blue Man Group" founders Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink are striving to bring to Las Vegas. For example, in one sequence of the show, the Blue Man character brings an enormous neon desert to life and transforms it into the site of an intense techno-tribal ritual complete with neon cowboys. Says Stanton, "When the Blue Man takes the neon sign and turns it into something else, something primal, exciting and unexpected, this mirrors our goal of transforming the Las Vegas scene by bringing an uncharacteristic and innovative experience to the Strip."

The triad of bald blue boys came to life on the sidewalks of New York City in 1988. They later moved indoors to various venues in Manhattan. Since the days of "Club Nowhere" (the sidewalk across from a New York nightclub where the Blue Men would invite passers-by to dance for free), "Blue Man Group" has opened standing productions in Boston, Chicago and now, Las Vegas. Goldman, Stanton and Wink chose the Entertainment Capital of the World above San Francisco and Los Angeles because of the creative freedom available to them at Luxor, and the opportunity to bring a totally unique production to Las Vegas.

DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE?—Blue Man Group is changing the face of Las Vegas entertainment

Do not leave town without experiencing the most cutting-edge, exciting live performance of the 21st century.

"Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor"

- ***Where*** **• Luxor**
- ***When*** **• Wed.-Mon.**
- ***Information*** **• 262-4400**

Sin City gives Broadway another roll

3755 p.44

By ROBERT HOFLER

Las Vegas is back in the legit picture.

Old-timers will remember back three years to 1999, when Mirage Resorts' Steve Wynn held much ballyhooed negotiations with a slew of creatives — Jerry Herman, Hal Prince, Marvin Hamlisch, Frank Galati — to conceive new 90-minute stage musicals for his newest hotel, Bellagio, as well as others.

It was also the year of "Chicago," which opened the new theater at the just-opened Mandalay Bay. Unlike the truncated "Starlight Express" or the limited run of "Rent" (both played the Las Vegas Hilton), the Kander & Ebb revival, starring Chita Rivera and Ben Vereen, happened to be the first sit-down production of a Broadway show in the town's history.

Unfortunately, Wynn's first 90-minute tuner, "Miss Spectacular," by Herman, fell by the wayside when the MGM Grand acquired Mirage. And even more ominous, "Chicago" lasted but a year at the Mandalay Bay Theater, which soon went back to business as usual with its own very Vegas extravaganza, "Storm."

Has this desert town learned not to gamble on theater?

Absolutely not.

"Las Vegas is giving legit another shot," says Ben Sprecher, producer of such recent Gotham fare as "The Unexpected Man" and "Fortune's Fool." He and producer Kenneth D. Greenblatt ("Nine," "La Cage aux Folles") have picked up the sequined trains of "Miss Spectacular" to plan a fall 2003 debut at a Vegas venue to be announced. The two producers will be making their Vegas bow with the new Herman show about a Glitter Gulch showgirl.

All color, no critics

For now, Sprecher calls Vegas very hospitable, with its less restrictive unions and the virtual absence of critics, "which you don't have to factor into the equation," he says.

As for "Miss Spectacular," "It's not about the underbelly," Sprecher says, comparing it to "Chicago." "On the contrary, it's hopeful, redemptive, colorful and bubbling."

Except for the $15 million pricetag attached to "Miss Spectacular," Sprecher could be talking about his major competition, "Mamma Mia!," which will follow "Storm" into the Mandalay Bay Theater in February.

After the misfire of "Chicago," Mandalay Resort Group prexy Glenn Schaeffer calls "Mamma Mia!" the perfect Vegas show. Apparently, "Chicago" was not. "For a number of customers, it was dark," he says. "Its theme is tongue-in-cheek, and people didn't exactly leave the theater singing."

No problem there with the Abba tuner, which will find most of its patrons singing the hit songs as they go into the theater.

While Broadway audiences continue to appreciate the elegantly spare "Chicago" production, Vegas theatergoers found it a little too reminiscent of an old movie.

"There's no question it is done in black-and-white," says Schaeffer. "It didn't have the spectacle that people come to expect with Las Vegas."

"Mamma Mia!," with its gaudy disco fashion, could have been created with Vegas in mind, although it was not.

"Broadway has been the focus for such a very long time," says Judy Craymer, lead producer on the Abba tuner. "Las Vegas was not in the strategic planning."

Better by the Bay

In fact, Mandalay Bay approached Craymer & Co., not the other way around. And why should they be thinking Vegas, given the town's history of rejecting 2½-hour book musicals with (where's the craps table?) an intermission?

"Las Vegas doesn't naturally take full-scale Broadway productions," Craymer says with an edge of understatement. Surprisingly, no one ever considered an abridged version of the Benny Andersson-Bjorn Ulvaeus show.

"You can't edit 'Mamma Mia!,'" Craymer insists. "If you do, it becomes an Abba concert, which is not allowed. It isn't a tribute show."

As for any possibility that "Mamma Mia!" will follow in the ill-conceived footsteps of "Chicago," Craymer demurs. "I leave it to Mandalay Bay to know Las Vegas," he says. "I only know 'Mamma Mia!'"

With four "MM!" productions already playing in North America, another in Las Vegas may only assist the others. "Everything is about brand," says Schaeffer. "The important thing is, we can't give you almost 'Mamma Mia!' This is 'Mamma Mia!'"

Craymer puts the capitalization in the $7 million range, slightly less than Broadway because, well, Gotham is just plain more expensive.

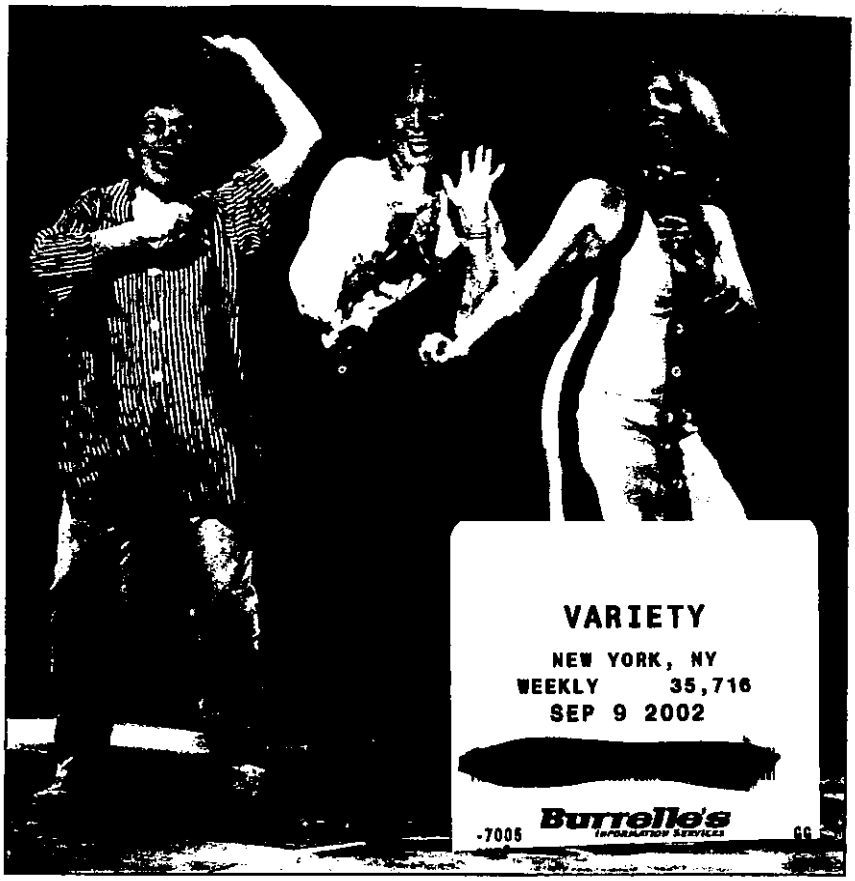
"Las Vegas is about production value," Schaeffer says. "The facility is better, from the flies, the traps and the lighting."

If "Blue Man Group" in Vegas is any precedent, "MM!" at Mandalay could end up looking even bigger than its Broadway incarnation.

Where such theatrical experiences as "Stomp" and "De La Guarda" had short runs in Vegas, "BMG" continues to sell out well into its third year at the Luxor Theater, also owned by Mandalay Resort Group. It's an infinitely glitzier cousin to what plays at the tiny Astor Place Theater in the East Village. And so is the pricetag: $6 million.

For Vegas, the "BMG" creatives beefed up the special effects and lighting, added lots of video and doubled the three-member band to help fit the Luxor's 1,200-seat theater, twice the size of any venue the show previously played. "They brought Las Vegas into the act," says Schaeffer.

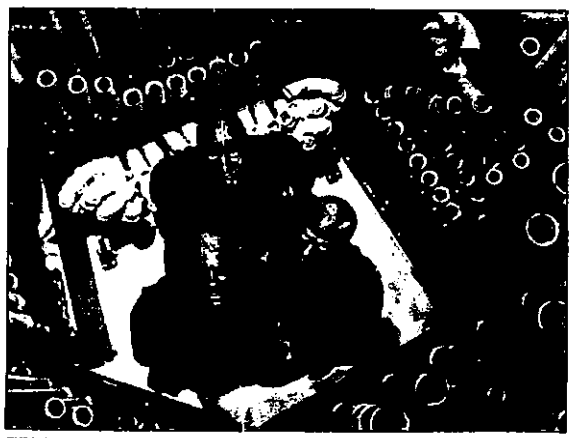
Which seems to be the key: If you can't bring theater to Vegas, bring Vegas into the theaters.



MONEY MONEY MONEY: *Vegas' experience with full-length stage musicals has been strictly snake eyes, but "Mamma Mia!" hopes to cash in on a possible resurgence of Broadway on the Strip.*

'Las Vegas doesn't naturally take full-scale Broadway productions. You can't edit "Mamma Mia!" If you do, it becomes an Abba concert, which is not allowed. It isn't a tribute show.'

— Judy Craymer, lead producer, "Mamma Mia!"



FEELING BLUE: *Blue Man Group will be dealt some "Spectacular" competition next year.*

3755 p.174

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Off the Beaten Path

FROM EXTREME SPORTS TO EXTREMELY BIZARRE, VEGAS IS FULL OF UNUSUAL ADVENTURES. BY BETH SVINARICH

WHILE YOU'RE IN LAS VEGAS, there are certain things you have to do: gamble, see at least one glitzy show and explore the amazing nightlife, of course. But you should also expand your horizons with something you never thought you'd do. Try at least one of these unique adventures:

Imagine off-roading through the desert in a specially equipped "Hummer" Deep Desert Exploration Vehicle on a tour of the gorgeous Nevada landscape. Or, if you'd rather do your own driving, take a tour on an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) and spot snakes, lizards, burrows, wild Spanish mustangs and bighorn sheep. Not a fan of dust? Try a river-rafting trip down the Colorado River. An extreme adventure like this is sure to get your adrenaline pumping! Call **Rebel Adventure Tours** at (800) 817-6789 for reservations and more info.

If flying through the air is more your thing, take a deep breath and try skydiving. Free falling from a plane—if your eyes are open—is a great way to take in the Strip, hotels, casinos, Hoover Dam, Lake Mead, the Colorado River, the Canyons and four states simultaneously. Now that's something you don't do everyday. A tandem jump takes about an hour of preparation, including training, practicing and readying for the actual jump. After a 15-minute plane ride, you leap into 10 seconds of free-fall, then the ripcord is pulled. After five to seven minutes of floating, your feet will be back on the ground. The whole process takes about two to three hours—even the most serious of MAGIC-goers should be able to sneak off for that long. Call **Skydive Las Vegas** at (800) U-SKYDIV and then brag to all of your friends.

If you don't have the guts to actually jump, but still wonder what it would be like, try indoor skydiving at **Flyaway Indoor Skydiving** (call (702) 731-4768 just off the strip. Using an indoor vertical wind tunnel, you can simulate the free-fall experience without ever having to leave the ground.

OK, not everyone is into extreme adventures, so here's one for the faint of heart. Take a night flight over the Strip in a helicopter. This way you can do *something* daring in the comfort of a million-dollar, state-of-the art machine, complete with surround sound stereo, climate controlled cabin, forward-facing seats and personalized narration from highly experienced pilots. You can book a flight with **Maverick Tours**, (888) 261-4414.

Still skeptical? Don't worry, there's plenty of other interesting stuff left to do in Las Vegas even if you want your feet to stay firmly planted. If you're in the mood to be really cheesy, have your picture taken with more famous people than ever imagined at **Madame Tussaud's Celebrity Encounter**. These wax figures are so lifelike you'll swear that Frank Sinatra is staring at you from across the room. For a fun afternoon or just a quick glance, this place is worth a visit.

Maybe you'd rather see living attractions? Go to the **Dolphin Habitat** behind the Mirage Hotel. A simple exhibit designed for education and appreciation, these creatures are a sight to see, especially in the middle of the desert!

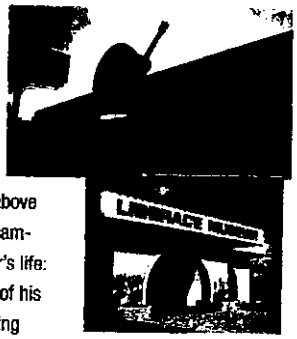
Consider yourself a bit of a wine connoisseur? Visit the **Pahrump Valley**

Culture, Vegas Style

THE MET AND MOMA THEY'RE NOT, BUT THERE'S NO SHORTAGE OF QUIRKY TIDBITS IN THIS TOWN'S MUSEUMS. BY BETH SVINARICH

If you are a museum person, you're in for a rare treat in Las Vegas. None of that historical mumbo-jumbo is found (well, not very much) at the **Las Vegas Art Museum, The Las Vegas Natural History Museum** (with a live shark exhibit), the **Lost City Museum of Archeology** or the **Jurassic Chinasaur Exhibit** in the China Town Plaza. But these are not the attractions that distinguish Las Vegas' museums. The real museums are more in sync with the fell of the city itself. The glitz, the glamour, the gambling, the money, the...sequins and rhinestones.

Perhaps the best examples are the **Liberace Museum** and the **Elvis-a-Rama Museum.** Displaying pearl and rhinestone cloaks he wore on stage, the Liberace Museum also features a mirror-paneled Rolls Royce limousine, diamond jewelry and cases of gifts, medals and plaques the star owned and received. There's also a collection of 13 full-size pianos, including a 1788 Broadwood piano (one of the oldest in existence), a French Pleyel owned by Chopin (the most expensive) and a Chickering once owned by George



The Elvis-a-Rama Museum houses a $3.5 million exhibit that goes above and beyond the expected. Here's just a sampling of the artifacts that trace the singer's life: all 729 of his songs; posters from all 29 of his movies; original handwritten lyrics; clothing worn on stage and during his tour of duty in the Army; his American Express card and application (on which he listed an annual income of $3 million in 1969); and a letter written to a former girlfriend denying he was romantically involved with Priscilla Beaulieu. The museum is completed, of course, by an Elvis impersonator who gives regular shows.

Another museum that fits right in with Vegas ambiance is the **Imperial Palace Auto Collection.** Three hundred fifty classic cars are all for sale—if you can afford them— at this interactive exhibit. Each time a car is sold, another is brought in to take its place. Racing cars, muscle cars, touring roadsters, rare factory and one-of-a-kind models provide enough to overwhelm any auto-lover, but there are cars to interest the average

There's much more Las Vegas culture to be found, like **The Casino Legends Hall of Fame** and "the world's largest gambling museum" in the Tropicana Hotel and Casino. With 15,000 items on display, the museum presents every aspect of casino life— entertainment, gaming, dining—consisting of memorabilia from 738 casinos, 550 of which no longer exist. **The Guinness World of Records Museum** is another unique addition to this eclectic array. Visitors are first greeted by a life-size replica of Robert Wadlow, the world's tallest man, and then proceed into 5,200-square-feet of exhibits, collections, hands-on displays and life-size replicas. Wander around and be amazed at what people will do to hold a world record!

And don't forget what the city is famous for—the lights of the Strip. So it goes that in Las Vegas there is a **Neon Museum, The Fremont Street Experience,** with eight neon signs that have been rescued from destruction. The original Aladdin's Lamp, an Indian who was the

Vineyards, Nevada's only winery. A producer of award-winning wines, a tour or wine-tasting here offers a classy alternative to tacky life on the strip. It's about an hour's drive northwest of Las Vegas, but for free tours and tastings, it's worth it. The vineyard also has an excellent gift shop and restaurant that's a perfect setting for visitors in need of a break from the city.

Make sure you're not so preoccupied with MAGIC that you miss an alien encounter. Take a tour of Area 51, where it's rumored the government is housing UFOs and alien bodies recovered from the Roswell, NM, flying saucer crash. This area in Rachel, NV, abounds with tales of numerous sightings of foreign and unexplained flying objects. Though the U.S. government denies the existence of this base, **Adventure Photo Tours,** (702) 885-8687, will take you to the infamous "Black Mailbox" Area 51 Research Center, UFO Sightings Area, and the Little A' Le' Inn (a local café).

If none of the above options are exiting enough for you...well, you can always get married.

Dining Out

FROM FRENCH TO FUSION AND SUSHI TO STEAK, VEGAS HAS ALL SORTS OF OPTIONS TO TEMPT YOUR TASTEBUDS.
BY SOPHIA CONSTANTINIDES

WHILE THE BLACKJACK TABLE is never a sure thing in Vegas, the food sure is. Apart from New York and Atlanta, Vegas is the only U.S. city with more than one five-star restaurant. So grab a seat and enjoy the fabulous food and impeccable décor of some of Vegas' best:

FRENCH • If you can get into **Picasso** during your stay in Vegas, you're in for a good time. Not only does it get five stars, but Chef Julian Serrano recently won a regional James Beard award, ensuring a great meal. From the ceiling set with terra cotta pottery to the art of the restaurant's namesake, it's like dining at the Met.

For those who still don't get the whole Cubist thing, there's also **Renoir**.

Playing Through

GORGEOUS GOLF COURSES THAT WILL KEEP YOU GROUNDED THROUGH THE STRESS OF THE SHOW. BY JULIA MARTIN

Four! Las Vegas is one of the premier golfing spots around, so if you're looking to grab some fresh air and outdoor activity, be sure to visit one of these courses:

If you want a traditional desert-style course, **The Badlands Golf Club** is your best bet. This well-maintained 18-hole course sprawls through canyons and arroyos—and

what a beautiful view! This club has an open guest policy, a driving range and rental clubs. What more could you ask for? It's at 9119 Alta Drive; call (702) 242-4653 for more information.

Wouldn't you love to play on the same course as the pros? You can, at the **Las Vegas National Golf Club**, former host for the PGA Tour's Las Vegas International. Beautiful palm trees, lush greens, wide fairways and spacious lakes add plenty of natural beauty to this par-71 course. At 1911 E. Desert Inn Road. For more information, call (702) 382-4653.

Wildhorse is a traditional 18-hole, par-72 course with rolling greens, bunkers and shimmering lakes. And don't plan on playing only nine holes because the finishing 18th

hole is a sight to see! Check out Wildhorse for yourself, at 1 Showboat Club Drive. Call (702) 382-4653 for more information.

If you're looking to save a little green on the green, the **Legacy** is a perfect choice. This classic, Scottish-style 18-hole, par 72 course is cheaper than most Vegas courses. Multiple-tier fairways blended with natural desert terrain make this course a top spot for tranquil serenity (in case you need to get away from Vegas' glitz 'n' glam). The course, which is fully equipped with a 30-station driving range and an on-course beverage service, is at 130 Par Excellence Drive. For further details, call (702) 897-2187.

Who would expect pine trees in the middle of the desert? But that is, in fact, what you'll find at the **Desert Pines Golf Club** (4,000 pine trees, to be exact), which gives you a taste of a California-style course. You will definitely receive first-class treatment at this club. The Desert Pines Golf Club, fully equipped with a lighted practice center and custom club fitting, is at 3415 East Bonanza Road. Call (702) 450-8000 for more information.

798-7151.

ITALIAN • If you're a fan of Italy's fare, Vegas is the place to be. *The New York Times* recently claimed that the food in the Venetian's restaurants **Valentino** and **Zefferino** is better than anything you can get in Venice.

Zefferino owner Gian Paolo is an import, as he has until recently been running his family's Genoan restaurant. Remaining true to his roots, Paolo also brought over a slew of Italians to run the place, as well as one to be its executive chef. So just put your dinner in their Italian hands and enjoy.

Valentino is also certain to arouse taste buds. As it should, because it might be one of the most expensive Italian restaurants this side of the Atlantic (dinner entrees from $40 to $60).

For those who love the Maccioni family's ventures, there is **Osteria del Circo**. The circus-themed décor and the great view of the Bellagio's lake will make this dining experience a fun one. This Northern Italian food will transport you straight to Tuscany.

Zefferino: At the Venetian, (702) 414-3500. **Valentino:** At the Venetian, (702) 414-3000. **Circo:** At the Bellagio, (702) 693-7223.

FUSION (or Wolfgang Puck's Restaurants) • Wolfgang Puck started

restaurant.

For those who don't have to see the work of a master during dinner, there is always **Le Cirque**. This is the perfect spot for anyone in the dress business, as jacket and tie are required.

If you want an interesting dining

prices, you might as well fly to the real tower.

Picasso: At the Bellagio, (702) 693-7223. **Renoir:** At the Mirage, (702) 791-7223. **Le Cirque:** At the Bellagio, (702) 693-8100. **Eiffel Tower Restaurant:** At the Paris, (702) 948-6937. Other Top

the Vegas restaurant craze with his fusion restaurant **Spago** in 1992. He continued his fusion trend with **Chinois**, a French/Asian/California restaurant serving everything from sushi to foie gras. There is an informal café area in the lower level of this restaurant and a formal dining room with an open kitchen upstairs. Several vegetarian options are offered as well. **Spago:** At the Palace's Forum shops, (702) 369-6300. **Chinois:** At the Palace's Forum shops, (702) 737-9700.

ASIAN AND SEAFOOD • If you want the best Japanese food in Vegas, go to **Nobu**. Those brave and smart enough to trust the chef can order the omakase, or chef's choice dinners.

But for those who think their meat should spend some time in the oven, there is the fabulous **Aqua**. The fare is excellent and interesting, with choices like lobster pot pie.

Nobu: At the Hard Rock, (702) 693-5090. **Aqua:** At the Bellagio, (702) 693-7111. Other Top Choices: **China Grill:** At Mandalay Bay, (702) 632-7404.

STEAK • Who can go to Vegas and pass up a great steak? Luckily Vegas offers some great options beyond the cheap eats in the casinos. At **Prime** in the Bellagio, Chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten will serve you fabulous prime aged filet with three house-made sauces. What's more, you can watch water dance at the Bellagio while having dome dessert on Prime's patio.

For those who like a traditional steak house, the **Palm** is a perfect stop. Be sure to try some of the sides in addition to the steak, especially their excellent creamed spinach.

Even though his sitcom wasn't a hit, Emeril Lagasse's steakhouse, **Delmonico**, has certainly found fans in Vegas. Whether meat or seafood, Lagasse's Cajun flare will keep you wanting more. If there's still room, try the bread pudding.

Prime: At the Bellagio, (702) 693-7223. **Palm Restaurant:** At the Palace's Forum shops, (702) 732-7256. **Delmonico:** At the Venetian, (702) 414-3737. Other Top Choices: **Smith & Wollensky:** (702) 862-4100. **The Steak House:** At Circus Circus, (702) 794-3767. **Morton's of Chicago:** (702) 893-0703.

GREAT WINE • For wine lovers, **Aureole** is like a little piece of heaven in Vegas. This winner of a Grand Award from *Wine Spectator* features a 42-foot tower that houses thousands of bottles of wine. Black-clad "wine angels" scale the walls of the tower to retrieve the bottles. The only difficulty here will be making a selection, but to help in that process, there is an eWine book, a printed list for the techno-deficient and of, course, the sommelier. At Mandalay Bay, (702) 632-7401.

OFF THE STRIP • Rosemary's is one restaurant luring people away from the bright lights of the strip. Run by husband-and-wife team Michael and Wendy Jordan, the inventive food, including Maytag slaw and barbecued shrimp, is garnering rave reviews. Located at 8125 West Sahara, (702) 869-2251.

EASY ON THE WALLET • For those who don't want to choose between having a great meal and sending their kids to college, there are some moderately priced restaurants. The **Cheesecake Factory**, in the Forum Shops at Caesar's Palace, offers an exhaustive menu of over 250 items. The prices are reasonable, the food is good, and there's some great people-watching. For those who are just looking for a quick bite, there's **Fatburger** . Now that the news is out that fat is good, stop in for a burger and a milkshake without the guilt. And if you're looking for a great meal during the day, the best of the Vegas buffets is at the **Bellagio**. From 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on weekends, this buffet has everything from hand-carved meats to sushi and made-to-order Belgium waf-

CHECK THESE OUT, IF YOU CAN SNEAK IN SOME FREE TIME AT MAGIC.
BY SOPHIA CONSTANTINIDES

WHAT IS VEGAS FOR, if not to entertain? And if the food, casinos and spas aren't enough, there are always those Las Vegas shows. Here are some to check out:

THE FREEBIES

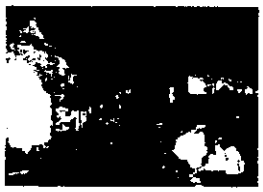
Buccaneer Bay at Treasure Island: Whether with children or by yourself, this show is a Las Vegas staple. For a decade, pirates and British officers have been duking it out aboard their ships with explosions galore. You can either stand by the lagoon to see the fun or grab a table at the hotel bar and watch the drama unfold. But if you don't get a good view early, you might as well wait for the next show. Shown every 90 minutes from 3:00 to 10:30 p.m.

The Forum Shops at Caesars Palace: The Forum Shops are the place to go to do some shopping, featuring everything from Gucci to FAO Schwarz. But that's not the only fun to be had at the shops. Every 45 minutes visitors to the Palace can watch the "sky" turn from dawn to dusk and back again. And if that isn't impressive enough, every hour the Roman statues come to life for an eight minute show. The fun begins at 10:00 a.m. every day.

The Fountains at the Bellagio: If you've see the recent hit "Ocean's 11," you've seen the fountains at the Bellagio. And if you noticed just how gorgeous they looked on screen, imagine what they look like up close. Hear some classic tunes and watch the water dance outside the Bellagio weekdays twice an hour from 3:00 to 8:00 p.m. and every 15 minutes from 8:00 p.m. to midnight. On weekends, the show starts at noon.

THE NOT-FREEBIES

"O" by Cirque du Soleil at the Bellagio: Cirque du Soleil's first venture into aquatic theater, this show is sure to leave you breathless. Eighty-one artists perform on, above, or in a 1.5 million gallon pool of water as they tell the tale of theater through the ages. Tickets are $90 or $110. Shows are Friday through Tuesday at 7:30 and 10:30. Call (702) 796-9999 for reservations.

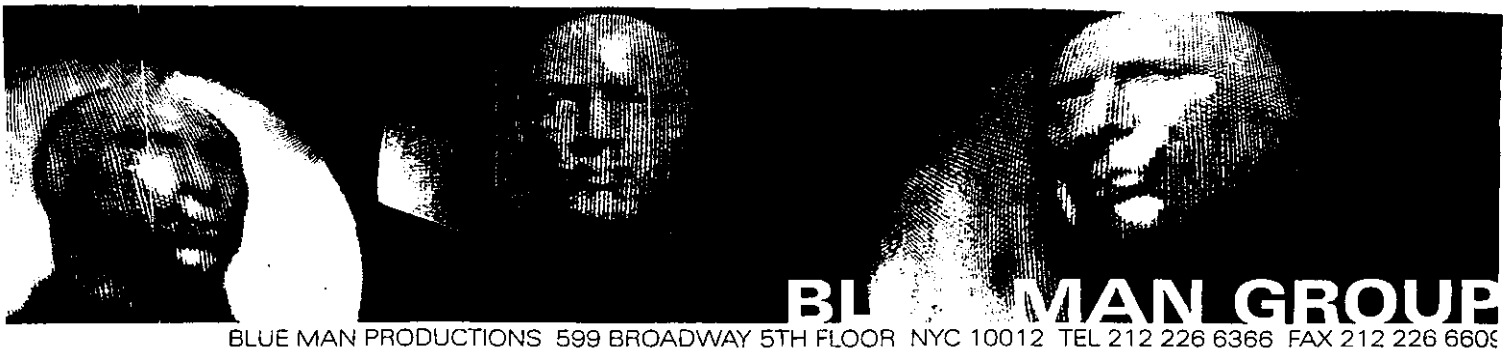


"Mystere" by Cirque du Soleil at Treasure Island: This fantastic circus performs every night except Monday and Tuesday at 7:30 and 10:30. Tickets are $88, but the experience of this free-wheeling circus is worth every penny. Call (702) 796-9999.

"Blue Man Group" at the Luxor Hotel and Casino: If you haven't seen "Blue Man," you haven't had one of the most interesting experiences possible in a theater. Three blue men will keep you entertained and guessing as their antics unfold onstage. If you're not afraid of jumping into the fray, get seats in the front. Shows Wednesday through Monday at 7:00 and 10:00 p.m. and Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. Call (702) 262-4400.

The Rat Pack is Back at the Sahara Hotel and Casino: OK, there are certainly better things to do in Vegas. But if you're still sad about never being able to see the Rat Pack, and feel like Vegas isn't Vegas without dinner theater, at least you can see some look-alikes trying to sing like the greats. For information call (702) 737-2515.

Melissa Etheridge at the Hard Rock: Grab some tickets to see Melissa Etheridge perform on Sunday, August 25 at 7:30.



BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 660

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LAS VEGAS

The Blue Man Group A Colorful Hit At The Luxor

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A major new New York production has come to the Las Vegas strip. It's a multi-media must-see, "Stomp" with a high-tech edge. It's The Blue Man Group, now at the Luxor Theatre inside the Luxor Hotel. It's interactive with the audience.

Most people in the theater put on paper decorations and customize their own look to become a part of the Blue Man experience.

To reinforce this tribal event, the audience is encouraged to participate in group readings and chants to welcome different people in the audience just before the beginning of the show.

The show opens with a back lit percussion number. The drums are a major portion the unique performance—its powerful.

As the Blue Men do things. Often, these are extraordinary, athletic and magical things. Blue Man Group has wonderful mix of dance, modern art, music, touch, jokes, and sounds. It is a complete sensory event.

For reservations or more information, call 800-288-1000.

BLUE MAN GROUP

Chicago Tribune, Tuesday, May 30, 2000 Section 5 3 Tempo

Taking a gamble

Blue Man Group gets bigger to play the larger Luxor in Las Vegas

By Gary Dretzka
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

LAS VEGAS — Experienced California motorists, always prepared to brake for hallucinations, have been known to encounter such rare sights as giant tortoises, wild burros and sun-bathing rattlesnakes on their sprints to Nevada.

Blue Man Group, however, is a visage of a different color.

There they are, though, staring out from a billboard alongside Interstate Highway 15, beckoning tourists to the giant pyramid-shaped Luxor. As strange as it may seem to outsiders, Blue Man Group — branches of which already exist in Manhattan, Chicago and Boston — has become a big-money chip in the ever-expanding high-stakes game being played by increasingly daring resort owners here.

Stripped of context, Blue Man Group's presence on the Strip would seem to be as improbable as a lounge act featuring E.T. and Phyllis Diller. But anything is now possible in a town where 10-story-tall marquees also promote Cirque du Soleil's otherworldly "O" and "Mystere," Tommy Tune tapping his way through "EFX," the seemingly ageless Siegfried & Roy, an exhibit of artifacts from the Titanic and more world-class magicians than you can shake a wand at.

Blue Man Group's original digs in New York held 280 people, the size of many keno parlors in Vegas. The Chicago venue, Briar Street Theater, seats a relatively intimate 600 people.

Thus, when the much-celebrated trio of performance artists first considered setting up shop at the immense Luxor resort at the south end of the Strip, they knew the move would require them to pay serious attention to the increased scale of their act.

"To me, the Luxor was a palatial-size house ... it felt as if you could put in 2,000 seats, if you really tried," the group's New York-based production manager, Steven Ehrenberg, says. "Because of the balconies, a thousand seats in a Shubert house can be wonderfully intimate, but, in Las Vegas, the sheer volume of the space makes it feel so much bigger. Our biggest challenge was to retain intimacy and audience connection."

Blue Man Group's change of scale and conception to accommodate its Las Vegas venue is such that the experience likely will seem fresh and exponentially more crazy.

'We wanted the audience to concentrate on the stage — which is roughly twice the visible size of Briar Street's — rather than the room, so we made drastic changes in the décor.'
Steven Ehrenberg

Merely to be able to compete financially with all of the other high-profile attractions on the Las Vegas Strip, many entertainers have been forced to sacrifice intimacy for economic opportunity. Cirque du Soleil — familiar as much for trademark striped circus tents, as for its elfin acrobats and surrealistic clowns — opened the doors here for other upscale artists by demonstrating it could win legions of new fans while not alienating those who were there from the beginning.

Instead of having a theater built to its own unique specifications, as did Cirque and the MGM Grand's "EFX," Blue Man Group would take over a theater that previously housed "Imagine," a family-style show that combined large-scale illusions with dance and acrobatics. Playing off the pyramid-shaped Luxor's overall motif, the walls were filled with Egyptian iconography and other theme art.

"We wanted the audience to concentrate on the stage — which is roughly twice the visible size of Briar Street's — rather than the room, so we made drastic changes in the decor," says Ehrenberg. "About 15,000 yards of fabric were used to blacken the room. In addition to the other theater modifications, we 'deglyphed' the walls."

While Blue Man's loyal Chicago-area fans shouldn't expect to see a completely foreign show in the Las Vegas venue, the difference in scale and conception is such that the experience likely will seem fresh, exponentially more crazy and entirely worth their investment in time and money.

"There's a huge amount of similar material from the 'Tubes' shows in New York, Boston and Chicago," Ehrenberg says. "However, a certain amount of new material and scenery — as well as some technology — was created in the two years leading up to Las Vegas. And, pieces like 'The Feast' were modified to enhance movements for people sitting in back rows to see."

One striking addition has been the Live Wire Wall, which borrows from the musical piece "Utne," but uses LED signs as percussion instruments and drum beaters, and to also pass messages. Another new feature is the Drum Matrix, a wall of percussion instruments and video screens designed to provide more kinetic energy than the unit sets in the small theaters.

Moreover, a half-dozen more video projectors and screens are deployed in the Las Vegas show, compared to the other venues, and three times as many spin tubes are hung above the audience.

The spinning-water vortex machines, which are surrounded by the dancing zoetrope sculptures, are considerably larger, as well.

The band contains seven musicians, up from three in other cities, to accommodate the scale of the room and the basic evolution of the group's music.

As for the trademark barrage of crepe paper that caps each night's performances, 200 rolls are used each time in Las Vegas, while 100 are expended in Chicago.

And, yes, the flame-proof material is recycled.

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LOS ANGELES TIMES
(NATIONAL EDITION)
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SUNDAY 5,500
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SUNDAY 1,391,076
JUL 29 2001

Endurance Training

Creativity keeps Vegas shows fit for the long run

By SUSAN PRICE-ROOT
Contributing Writer

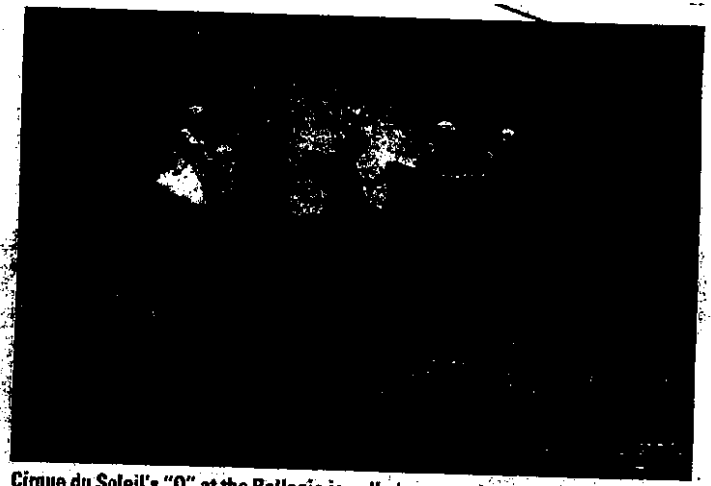
There are three of the hottest shows in Las Vegas—"Blue Man Group" and Cirque du Soleil's "Mystere" and "O"—yet nothing has been left to chance to ensure their longevity.

"Mystere" debuted in December 1993 at Treasure Island, Cirque du Soleil's first permanent theater in Las Vegas. Franco Dragone, who founded Cirque du Soleil in 1984 in Montreal, describes it as "a celebration of the varieties of life forms in a context of remembrance of time past, and through the present, weaving through death and rebirth to survive into the future."

"Blue Man Group" features three men with Keatonesque mannerisms. The show plays at the Luxor.

"O" premiered Oct. 15, 1998, in its own spectacular aquatic theater at the Bellagio. Phonetically speaking, "O" is the French word for water (spelled *eau*), and Dragone wrote and directed it as "an aquatic celebration of life, love and death." It's sort of Fellini meets Esther Williams and "The Ancient Mariner" in your dreams. (Obviously, neither of these shows lends itself to a one-line-pitch description.)

Blue Man Group, a relative newcomer, opened March 2000 at the Luxor. The off-Broadway show debuted in 1991 and has had an uninterrupted run ever since, and it's clear it's going to be the same story in Las Vegas. Blue Man Group consists of three enigmatic bald and blue men with whimsical, somewhat robotic, Keatonesque personalities who take the audience through a multisensory experience that combines theater, percussive music, art, science, vaudeville and huge PVC instruments of their own invention. You may have seen their gig on The Grammys or glimpsed them in a luxury car ad on TV, a sure sign of their entrance into the mainstream of popular culture.



Cirque du Soleil's "O" at the Bellagio is called an aquatic celebration of life.

It's a challenge to keep any hit show fresh and on course performance after performance. ("O" had been revamped somewhat this past winter with the integration of new clowns and a new principal character, for example.) Artistic director Pavel Brun, whose job it is to do just that for both "O" and "Mystere," explained how he does it and how the shows have evolved over the years. "We've changed a lot but it's not change for change's sake," he says. "It's only a way of being sensitive to the performers. The show is like a live being, and there are some spontaneous influences from the inside we must be sensitive to. We need to be faithful to the concept of the show and still allow those evolutions."

Even when new actors replace others in existing roles, their artistic integrity is respected. "We never try to squeeze new people into the frames and clichés of their

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This section was edited by the Special Sections staff of the Advertising Department of the Los Angeles Times.

SHOWS

Continued from page 1

predecessors," says Burt. "But now people have ownership of the show too."

Burt emphasizes that the artistic collaboration is "a process of a lot among the people onstage and the creative coordinators, coaches and stage managers.

"We give these people a lot of responsibility and also the freedom to facilitate their creativity," he says. "We allow them to make mistakes and learn from them, and have room for experiments. As long as those are in place, it gives us freshness. If a show becomes fatigued, then you have to shake up some key players of the music or the lighting, or other external aspects of the show to give people new creative energy to deliver the best."

"Mystere" has gone through major revamping in 1998 when 70% of the show was changed. "It wasn't that anything bad was happening but by that time after opening in '93 we had learned more about being onstage in that particular theater – this was the first Cirque du Soleil production that was in a traditional theater," he explains. "So to do that it was performed in a circus style tent and in the round.

One change that came out of it was that "Red Bird," a male was reconceived as a female. "It was a major reconstruction of the character," says Burt, "but there was also a lift in the shows as an original cast member who over the years started to show signs of major talent. It would've been a major drain for the cast to find another male. That's a way to keep people alive and directors keep the show alive."

Freed, Red Bird is a strong character. It isn't just the real silliness that makes his gymnastic antics stand out, it's this kind of character acting that makes Cirque du Soleil the rare and engaging.

As the sexy Mata Gordiani, Phil Nanton and Chris White, creators of "Blue Man Group," bridge the vast chasm between performance art "happenings" in New York and the mass audience requirements of Vegas production show success. They present serious ideas in childlike ways in what is widely regarded as "the hippest show in Vegas."

The show opens with the dramatic image of a man in a harness on a huge storyweigh Drum Wall, bearing a giant "alien" style drum. It sets the theme of the haunting and intense tribal rhythms that drive the energy of the show. Blue Man's minimalist beats, fast and industrial work and is played on original instruments, including Air Pipes, a series of fiberglass rods that "swoosh" as they slice through the air and the Snake Gong, a metal encased mass of ball bearings that is suspended from tightly stretched surgical tubing.

The men's large personalities are remarkably engaging even as their silver-painted faces remain expressionless and their movements oddly robotic. In the end, they use childlike delight in "toilet papering" the audience by raining down miles of recycled crepe paper and the entire audience is covered.

As intelligent as the show really is, the Blue Men are pure id – their children playing with no edit expression.

Susan Swedlow is a Los Vegas based freelance writer.

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...describes erupting volcanoes ...parks and indoor rock climb... ...bungee jumping, laser light ...ada can you catch a ride on a ...as Vegas Strip or retrace the ...right family at the Ponderosa ...Tahoe. In the end, there is ...many times will you be back?

SOUTHERN NEVADA

LAS VEGAS

...Best shows are known for their ... ...performers, gymnasts, and club ... ...magic sequences and sets.

...ake at the top of Las Vegas' ... ...list of shows is the world-renowned ... ...Cirque du Soleil, now at ... ...Treasure Island. Each of Cirque's ... ...which plays to sold-out ... ...audiences at its emerald shared ... ...tents, blends gymnastic ... ...and acrobatic prowess ... ...with the extraordinary props ... ...such as the ... ...and the theatrical ... ...presentations. There is absolutely ... ...none of the Excalibur or the past ... ...Luxor show "Entertainment of ... ...Vegas" which has showcased many ... ...of the tables while dressed for ... ...their acts in the lounges.

...among the traditional Las Vegas ... ...style shows are "Jubilee!" at Bally's, ...Les Folies Bergère at the ... ...Tropicana, and "Splash" at the ... ...Flamingo. The three long-running ... ...musicals are known for their stately ... ...feathered, sequined, and topless ... ...showgirls. The latest topless import ... ...from the Crazy Horse in Paris is "La ... ...Femme" at the MGM Grand, the ... ...same hotel that features rock star ... ...Rick Springfield in the special-effects ... ...show "Live." ... ...look for headliners like Garrot...

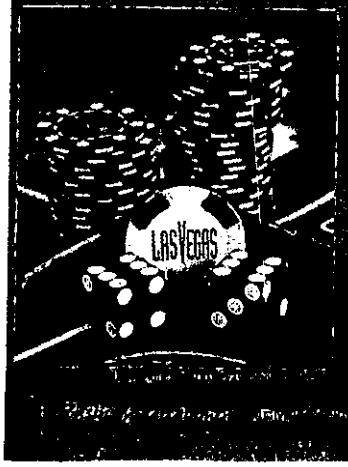
In a recent trend, more hotels are offering afternoon and early evening shows of comedy, magic, and music. Comedy magician Mac King is enjoying a successful run in his afternoon show at Harrah's Las Vegas, as is magician Rick Thomas at the Tropicana. At Caesars Magical Empire, close-up magic shows are offered before the dinner-magic shows. Circus Circus presents free circus acts beginning at 11 a.m., and the Flamingo hosts "Bottom's Up," a vaudeville-style revue. During the summer, the Imperial Palace offers an early evening poolside Polynesian revue with a buffet dinner. On Sundays, visitors can find a Gospel Brunch at Mandalay Bay, and the granddaddy of afternoon shows, "Viva Las Vegas," plays at the Stratosphere. Excellent free shows include "The Birdman of Las Vegas" at the Tropicana and the "Masquerade Show in the Sky," a carnival-themed parade at the Rio Suites Hotel.

The Riviera fills its showrooms with a rotating variety of shows from early afternoon till late night. The Riviera's "An Evening at La Cage" is a female impersonator revue starring Frank Marino as Joan Rivers. Other well known celebrity look- and sound-a-like productions are "Legends in Concert" at the Imperial Palace, "American Superstars" at the Stratosphere, and "Honky Tonk Angels" at the Gold Coast. Impressionist Danny Gans appears in his own room at the Mirage.

...Top, the Doobie Brothers, David Spade, Louie Anderson, Wayne Brady, Tony Bennett, Tower of Power, Debbie Reynolds, Wayne Newton, Jim Conway and Harvey Korman, Tom Jones, Johnny Mathis, Kenny Rogers, Wynonna, Sheena Easton, and Rita Rudner to play regular engagements at such hotels as the Las Vegas Hilton, MGM, New York-New York, Orleans, Suncoast, Mandalay Bay, Paris, Stardust, and Sunset Station in Henderson.

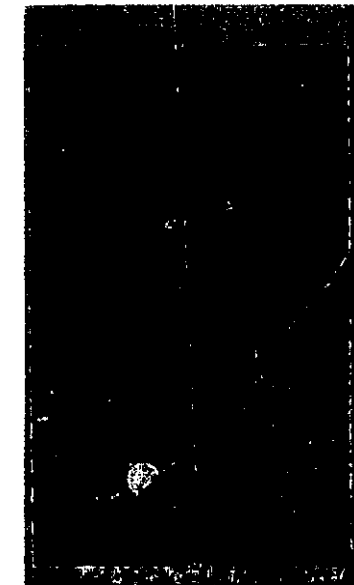
...If your entertainment tastes favor Broadway plays, the Aladdin offers touring companies of "Beauty and the Beast," "Jesus Christ Superstar," "Grease," and "Miss Saigon," among others.

Magic is big in Las Vegas, with several hotels featuring long-running shows as well as others booking David Copperfield or Penn and Teller for frequent appearances. "Siegfried and Roy" continue their run at the Mirage and are sponsoring an afternoon show with Darren Romeo, a singing magician. Lance Burton continues to fill the showroom at the Monte Carlo with his illusions, and Steve Wynick plays the Sahara.



...Impersonators appear frequently in Las Vegas - Photo by LVCVA

"Mystère" at Treasure Island - Photo by LVCVA



NORTHERN NEVADA

LAKE TAHOE

lively revues created by top producers such as Greg Thompson. Comedians perform at the Silver Legacy's Catch a Rising Star comedy club.

The Reno Hilton presents "Kalin and Jinger's Illusionarium," a magic revue that features a jumbo jet—which disappears on stage. In summer and fall the outdoor Hilton Amphitheater hosts many top acts such as James Taylor, Bonnie Raitt, Sting, Tom Petty, and Earth, Wind, and Fire. Another place for big-name entertainers is Lawlor Events Center on the University of Nevada campus, where Van Halen, Bob Dylan, Dire Straits, and Crosby, Stills, and Nash have appeared.

Visitors in Carson City and Carson Valley also will find nightly lounge entertainment—and occasional special concerts—at the Carson Nugget, Carson Station, Piñon Plaza, and Carson Valley Inn.

RURAL NEVADA

From Jackpot to Yerington, Elko to Fallon, Nevada's rural towns offer lounge and sometimes headliner acts. In fact, big-name entertainment in the state dates back to 1941, when bandleader Ted Lewis and his band played the Commercial Hotel in Elko—and packed in crowds of music-loving customers. Later the Commercial lured Sophie Tucker and other stars to Northeastern Nevada.

Today another hotel-casino is bringing headliners to the state's northeastern corner. Cactus Petes in Jackpot, on the Idaho border, has presented stars such as Kenny Rogers, Crystal Gayle, Diamond Rio, Randy Travis, Michael Bolton, and the Smothers Brothers. The hotel's Gala Showroom offers a dinner show, and some concerts are held under the starlit Nevada sky.

Nevada stores offer fine jewelry - Photo by Jeffrey Dow

NEVADA Shopping

Everybody loves to shop. And what better place to shop than in one of the newest and largest shopping meccas in the world, Nevada. While you're here you'll find everything from quaint boutiques to hotel gift shops to mega factory outlet malls to shopping as divine as Fifth Avenue or Rodeo Drive. That's right, Nevada has it all.

Las Vegas has some of the most spectacular high fashion shopping at resorts such as Bellagio, Caesars Palace, the Venetian, Paris Las Vegas, and the Aladdin Resort and Casino, not to mention giant shopping malls with the top-notch department stores such as Neiman Marcus, Saks' Fifth Avenue, Bloomingdale's, and Nordstrom's. Find true glamour and the latest trends from Gucci, NikeTown, FAO Schwarz, Louis Vuitton, Fendi, Hugo Boss, and Christian Dior, just to name a few.

Reno's shopping scene is growing rapidly. You'll find a surprising number of specialty boutiques, art galleries, and antique stores in and about the area. Reno also offers shoppers Meadowood Mall, Northern Nevada's largest and most contemporary array of over 100 stores. From fine cigars to candles and unusual kitchen gadgets and luxurious bath and beauty products, Reno can be the perfect shopping stop to treat yourself or find great gifts.

And don't count out rural Nevada or you'll be missing some of the best authentic Western arts and crafts in the state. Pottery, jewelry, and leathers are among a few of the accessories found and displayed in some of the historic ghost and mining towns throughout Nevada. Special handcrafted products are one-of-a-kind with a dedication to superior craftsmanship. And for a true taste of Nevada, don't forget to pick up some fudge or candy cooked in old-fashioned copper kettles.

The possibilities are endless, so don't go home empty handed. Whether it's that great new must have handbag, the perfect gift, homemade jewelry or a fine piece of Silver State heritage, Nevada has something for every shopper.

LAS VEGAS

SHOPPING HIGHLIGHTS

Appian Way Shops
(Inside Caesars Palace)
3570 Las Vegas Blvd. S.
702-731-7110

Atrium Shopping
(Inside Tropicana Resort & Casino)
3801 Las Vegas Blvd. S.
702-739-2222

Bally's Avenue Shoppes
(Inside Bally's Las Vegas)
3645 Las Vegas Blvd. S.
702-739-4111

Belz Factory Outlet World
[illegible] Las Vegas Blvd. S.
[illegible]

Boulevard Mall
[illegible]
[illegible]

Desert Passage
(Inside the Aladdin Resort & Casino)
[illegible] Las Vegas Blvd. S.
[illegible]

Fashion Show Mall
[illegible] Las Vegas Blvd. S.
[illegible]

Forum Shops at Caesars
Inside Caesars Palace
[illegible] Las Vegas Blvd. S.
[illegible]

Giza Galleria
(Inside Luxor Hotel & Casino)
[illegible] Las Vegas Blvd. S.
[illegible]

The Grand Canal Shoppes
(Inside the Venetian)
[illegible] Las Vegas Blvd. S.
[illegible]

Masquerade Village
(Inside the Rio [illegible] Hotel)
[illegible]
[illegible]

Palm Promenade
(Inside the Regent Las Vegas)
[illegible] Paradise Blvd.
[illegible]

Starlane Shops & Studio Walk
(Inside the MGM Grand Hotel & Casino)
3799 Las Vegas Blvd. S.
702-891-1111

The Shopping Promenade
(Inside Treasure Island)
3300 Las Vegas Blvd. S.
702-894-7111

The Street of Shops
(Inside the Mirage)
3400 Las Vegas Blvd. S.
702-791-7111

The Tower Shops
(Inside the Stratosphere)
2000 Las Vegas Blvd. S.
702-383-4790

Via Bellagio
(Inside Bellagio)
3600 Las Vegas Blvd. S.
702-693-7111

LAUGHLIN

SHOPPING HIGHLIGHTS

Horizon Outlet Center
905 S. Casino Dr.
702-298-3003

PRIMM

SHOPPING HIGHLIGHTS

Fashion Outlet of Las Vegas
32100 Las Vegas Blvd. S.
702-874-1400

RENO

SHOPPING HIGHLIGHTS

Meadowood Mall
5000 Meadowood Mall Circle
775-827-8450

Park Lane Mall
310 E. Plumb Lane
775-825-9452

Reno Hilton Shopping Mall
(Inside the Reno Hilton)
2500 E. 2nd St.
775-789-2000

RURAL NEVADA

ELKO

SHOPPING HIGHLIGHTS

J.M. Capriola & Garcia Bit and Spur Company
500 Commercial St.
Elko, 89801
775-738-5816

GERLACH

SHOPPING HIGHLIGHTS

Planet X Pottery
8100 Highway 447
Gerlach, 89412
775-557-2500

ROUND MOUNTAIN

SHOPPING HIGHLIGHTS

D&S Shopping World
Highway 376
Round Mountain, 89045
775-377-2490

WASHOE VALLEY

SHOPPING HIGHLIGHTS

Nevada Lynn's Emporium
435 Highway 395 N.
Washoe Valley, 89704
775-849-3333

NEVADA Art Galleries

CARSON CITY

Brewery Arts Center

Home of the Artisans' Store offering craft and folk art, a pottery studio, art galleries, exhibits, classes, music, and theater. Phone 775-883-1976; fax 775-883-1922; www.breweryarts.org; 449 W. King St., Carson City, 89703. Hours: 9am-5pm Mon.-Fri.; Artisans' Store, 10am-4pm Mon.-Sat.; 11am-4pm Sun. Season: Year-round. Admission: None.

LAS VEGAS

Donna Beam Fine Art Gallery

Year-round changing exhibitions in all media featuring invited national and regional artists, faculty, and students. Phone 702-895-3893; fax 702-895-3751; www.unlv.edu; University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 4505 S. Maryland Pkwy., Las Vegas, NV 89154-5002. Hours: 9am-5 pm Mon.-Fri.; 10am-2pm Sat. Season: Year-round. Admission: None.

Bellagio Gallery of Fine Art

Home to touring exhibitions as well as works by Picasso and Lichenstein. Phone 702-693-7871 or 877-957-9777; Gallery Store 702-693-7919; www.bellagio.com or 3600 Las Vegas Blvd S., Las Vegas 89109. Hours: 10am-6pm Sun.-Thurs., 10am-9pm Fri.-Sat. Season: Year-round. Admission: Adults $12; students $10; children 12 and under $6.

Guggenheim Hermitage Museum and Guggenheim Las Vegas

The Guggenheim Hermitage Museum features "Art Through the Ages: Masterpieces of Painting from Titian to Picasso," as well as impressionist, post-impressionist, and early modern paintings. The Guggenheim Las Vegas presents special exhibitions. Phone 702 414-2440 or 866-GUGG-TIX; fax 702-414-2442; www.guggenheimlasvegas.org or 3355 Las Vegas Blvd S., Las Vegas 89109. Hours: 9:30am-8:30pm daily. Season: Year-round. Admission: Adults $15; students $11; children 6 to 12 $7; children under 6 free.

The Wynn Collection

Original art by Gauguin, Van Gogh, and other masters. Phone 702-733-4444; 3145 Las Vegas Blvd. S., Las Vegas 89109. Hours: 10am-5pm daily. Season: Year-round. Admission: Non-Nevada residents adults $10 and children 6 to 12 $6; Nevada residents $5 and children 6 to 12 $3.

RENO

Nevada Museum of Art Underground

Museum is in temporary downtown quarters until new museum opens in 2003. Phone 775-329-3333; fax 775-329-1541; www.nevadamuseumofart.org or 100 S. Virginia St., Reno 89501. Hours: Tues.-Sun. Admission: Call for rates.

Sheppard Fine Art Gallery

Contemporary fine art exhibitions in a diversity of media, featuring regional to national artists. Yearly lecture series. Phone 775-784-6658; fax 775-784-6655; www.unr.edu/arts&sciences/art; University of Nevada, Reno, Department of Art #224, Reno, NV 89557-0007. Hours: 8am-5pm Mon.-Fri. Season: Year-round. Admission: None.

Sierra Arts Gallery

Gallery and offices in the Riverside Artists Lofts, part of the renovated Riverside Hotel next to the Truckee River. Phone 775-329-ARTS; fax 775-329-1328; www.sierra-arts.org; 17 S. Virginia St., Reno 89501. Hours: 8:30am-5pm Mon.-Fri., 11am-3pm Sat. Admission: None.

Dining IN NEVADA

Years ago, dining in Nevada meant grabbing a bite to eat in a casino coffee shop or chowing down at a bargain buffet.

In recent years, however, Nevada has become a virtual home away from home for many of the world's best known chefs.

The trend can be traced to the opening of Wolfgang Puck's Spago restaurant in the Forum Shops at Caesars in Las Vegas in 1992. A year later, noted Santa Fe chef Mark Miller opened the Southwestern-themed Coyote Café in the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. More recently, celebrity chefs including Emeril Lagasse, Eberhard Muller, Charlie Palmer, Alex Stratta, Joachim Splichal, and Julian Serrano have opened branches of their popular restaurants or brand-new ventures in Las Vegas.

The result is that for the first time, people who know food are talking about Nevada as one of the culinary centers of the world. In the past year, no fewer than 15 Nevada restaurants have earned either four or five diamonds from the *AAA Tourbook* or four or five stars from the *Mobil Travel Guide*—meaning they have earned the highest level of excellence in dining. In Las Vegas, the top-ranked restaurants included Aqua, Le Cirque, and Picasso at the Bellagio; 3950 and Aureole at Mandalay Bay; Renoir at the Mirage; the Eiffel Tower Restaurant at Paris Las Vegas; Lutece at the Venetian; Nobu at the Hard Rock Hotel; and Michael's at the Barbary Coast. At Lake Tahoe, the Summit at Harrah's, Llewellyn's at Harveys, and Glissandi at the Resort at Squaw Creek earned top travel guide honors. In Reno, Harrah's Steakhouse and the White Orchid at the Peppermill were cited for their excellence.

The culinary excitement generated by this new wave of celebrity chefs—who have brought a new spirit of adventure to dining—has helped to put Nevada on the world dining map. On any given night it's possible to enjoy anything from tempura prawns with a light truffle cream to pan-roasted lobster with caramelized fennel or broiled prime filet mignon in a Portobella mushroom cap with a Roquefort cheese and cabernet sauce.

Doesn't it make your mouth water just thinking about it?

Nevada is home to many fine dining establishments - Photo by Jeffrey Dow

NEVADA Cruises

BOULDER CITY

Lake Mead Cruises/ Desert Princess

Daily cruises aboard the *Desert Princess* and exhilarating eco-adventure tours aboard *Velocity*. Phone 702-293-6180; fax 702-293-0343; www.lakemeadcruises.com or Lake Mead Cruises, P.O. Box 62465, Boulder City 89006. Hours: Cruises depart daily; call for schedule. Season: Year-round except Thanksgiving and Christmas. Admission: Call for rates.

LAKE TAHOE

M.S. Dixie II

Tahoe's spacious paddlewheeler offers breakfast, brunch, sightseeing, and dinner/dance cruises for up to 570 passengers. Phone 775-589-4906; fax 775-588-5021; www.tahoedixie2.com or 760 U.S. Hwy. 50, P.O. Box 1667, Zephyr Cove 89448. Hours: 9am-11pm daily. Season: Year-round. Admission: Adults $24 to $49; children 11 and under $7 to $29; group rates available.

Tahoe Boat Cruises

The *Tahoe* is restored with state-of-the-art electronics and 550 HP. Available for charter. Phone 775-588-1855; 888-867-6394; fax 775-588-7391; www.tahoe.cruises.com or P.O. Box 1375, Hwy. 50 at Zephyr Cove, Zephyr Cove 89448. Hours: 9am-7pm daily. Season: April-Oct. Rates: From $300 per hour.

LAUGHLIN

Del Rio Cruises

One-and-one-half-hour narrated cruises, weddings, or charters on the *Del Rio* luxury yacht. Phone 520-754-4391; 800-74-BEACH; fax 520-754-3355; www.delriobeachclub.com or 2900 S. Casino Dr., P.O. Box 29010, Laughlin 89029. Hours: 10am-4pm daily. Season: Year-round. Admission: Adults $10; children $5.

London Bridge Jet Boat Tours

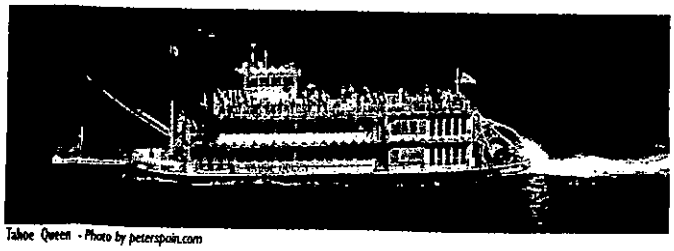
Six-hour round-trip jet boat tours from Laughlin to the London Bridge. Phone 702-298-5498 or 888-505-3545; fax 702-298-5498; www.jetboattour.com or P.O. Box 508, Laughlin 89029. Hours: 10am-4pm, daily. Season: mid-Feb.-Nov. Fee: $52 per person; over 65, $47; children under 12, $32.

Laughlin River Tours

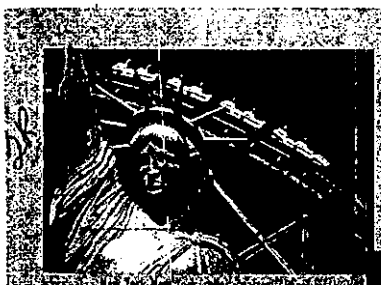
Steamboat weddings, cruises, dinner cruises, parties, sightseeing cruises. Phone 702-298-1047; 800-228-9825; fax 702-298-8259; www.steamboatwedding.com or P.O. Box 29279, Laughlin 89029. Hours: 10:30am-7:30pm daily. Season: Year-round; winter hours may vary. Admission: Adults $11; children $6; children under 3 free.

U.S.S. Riverside

The only 119-passenger luxury cruiser designed to pass under the Laughlin Bridge; available for special events, weddings, and 80-minute tour cruises of the Colorado River. Phone 702-298-2535; 800-227-3849; fax 702-298-2680, www.riversideresort.com or Riverside Resort Hotel/Casino, 1650 S. Casino Dr., Laughlin 89029. Hours: 10:30am-6:30pm daily. Season: Year-round. Admission: Adults $10; children under 12, $6; children under 3 free; call for charter rates.



Tahoe Queen - Photo by peterspoin.com



NEVADA Attractions

AMUSEMENT PARKS

LAKE TAHOE

Ponderosa Ranch — Western Studio and Theme Park

[illegible] Hours: 10am-10pm, Sun.-Thurs.; 10am-midnight, Fri.-Sat. Season: Year-round, except Christmas. Admission: $4.95 per ride, five tickets for $22.50.

Race for Atlantis

IMAX 3-D motion simulation ride system. Phone 702-733-9000; 888-910-RACE (7223); 702-733-9292; or 3500 Las Vegas Blvd. S., Ste. N26, Las Vegas 89109. Hours: 10am-11pm, Sun.-Thurs., 10am-midnight, Fri.-Sat. Season: Year-round. Admission: Adults $10; seniors $9; children 12 and under $7.

Scandia Family Fun Center

Number one family fun center for over 10 years with miniature golf, go-karts, bumper boats, arcade, and snack bar. Phone 702-364-0020; fax 702-364-0511 or 2900 Sirius Ave., Las Vegas 89102. Hours: Daily. Season: Year-round. Admission: Pay per activity or package; call for prices; group rates available.

The Sports Center

Amusement center with sports theme: batting cages, go-karts, climbing wall, and an arena. Phone 702-317-7777; fax 702-492-9344; 121 E. Sunset Rd., Las Vegas 89119. Hours: 3pm-9pm, Fri.; noon-9pm, Sat.; 2pm-8pm, Sun. Season: Year-round. Fee: All-activity pass $25; various costs for single activities.

Wet 'n Wild

A 26-acre waterpark on the Las Vegas Strip. Fun for all ages with thrilling slides and relaxing rides. Phone 702-765-9700; 800-565-0786; fax 702-765-9777; www.wetnwildlv.com or 2635 Paradise Rd., Las Vegas 89109. Hours: Open at 10am daily. Season: April-Sept. Admission: $26.99 general; $20.99 child; Free for children under 3.

LAS VEGAS

Adventuredome at Circus Circus

[illegible] Circus Circus Hotel Tower, featuring the world's largest indoor double-loop, double-corkscrew roller coaster, called the Canyon Blaster. Phone 702-794-3939; 877-224-7287; www.circuscircus.com; or 2880 Las Vegas Blvd. S., Las Vegas 89109. Hours: Open at 10am daily. Season: Year-round. Admission: All-day pass $16.95; regular $13.95 junior.

Cinema Ride

Three-dimensional motion simulator ride with six different exciting action-packed films. Phone 702-369-4008; fax 702-369-8748; www.cinemaride.com or 3500 Las Vegas Blvd. S., Ste. J1, Las Vegas 89109. Hours: 10am-midnight, daily. Season: Year-round. Admission: call for rates.

Las Vegas Mini Gran Prix

Three exciting go-kart tracks, Gran Prix, roller coaster, super-fun slide, arcade, restaurant and party room. Phone 702-259-7000; 888-259-7223; fax 702-259-7001, www.lvmgp.com or 1401 N. Rainbow, Las Vegas 89108.

RENO

Boomtown's Family Fun Center

Features nine-hole indoor miniature golf, 3D Motion Theater, carousel, Ferris wheel, Rodeo Rider, over 200 video and redemption games, and a party room. Phone 775-345-6000; 800-648-3790; fax 775-345-8693; www.boomtownreno.com or I-80 at Boomtown (Garson Exit), P.O. Box 399, Verdi 89439. Hours: 10am-10pm, Sun.-Thurs.; 10am-midnight, Fri.-Sat. Season: Year-round. Admission: Unlimited passport $14; junior passport $6; single round of golf $2.75; individual ticket $1.

Wilbur D. May Great Basin Adventure

An educational outdoor recreation center for family fun. Phone 775-785-4844; fax 775-785-4707; www.maycenter.com or Rancho San Rafael Park, 1502 Washington St., Reno 89503. Hours: 10am-5pm, Tues.-Sat.; noon-5pm, Sun. Season: June through August and Labor Day Weekend (Sept. 7-8). Admission: Adults $3.50; seniors and children $2.50.

Ultimate Rush Speed and Thrill Park

Three great go-kart tracks, bumper cars, 18-hole miniature golf, and an 180-foot giant swing. New this summer, the 170-foot human slingshot. Phone 775-786-7005; or Reno Hilton, 2500 E. Second St., Reno 89595. Hours: Open at 11am daily. Season: Year-round. Admission: None; pay by the ride.

SPARKS

Wild Island Family Adventure Park

Northern Nevada's largest family amusement park featuring a waterpark, miniature golf course, go-kart track, roller coaster, and game arcade. Phone 775-359-2927; fax 775-359-5942; www.wildisland.com or 250 Wild Island Ct., Sparks 89434. Hours: Vary with the season, daily. Season: Waterpark, May-Sept.; golf courses and raceway, year-round. Admission: Waterpark, general $18.95; junior $14.95; senior $4.95; children 3 and under free.

ATTRACTIONS

FALLON

Top Gun Raceway

NHRA drag racing, bi-monthly racing events. Phone 800-325-7448; fax 775-423-8410; www.topgunraceway.com or P.O. Box 2590, Fallon 89407. Hours: 10am-10pm, Sat.-Sun. Season: March-Nov. Admission: $5-15.

GENOA

David Walley's Resort, Hot Springs and Spa

Hot springs, hotel, restaurant, weddings, deli, and spa located 20 minutes from Lake Tahoe and Carson City. Phone 775-782-8155; fax 775-782-2103; www.davidwalleysresort.com or 2001 Foothill Rd., P.O. Box 158, Genoa 89411. Hours: 7am-10pm, daily. Season: Year-round. Call for admission.

HENDERSON

Ethel M Chocolate Factory and Cactus Garden

See 3.6 acres of cactus, receive a complimentary chocolate, and take a tour of the Ethel M Chocolate Factory. Phone 702-435-2655 or 800-4-ETHELM; fax 702-451-8379; www.ethelm.com or 2 Cactus Garden Dr., Henderson 89014. Hours: 8:30am-7pm, daily except Christmas. Season: Year-round. Admission: Free.

ATTRACTIONS (continued)

HENDERSON (continued)

Ron Lee's World of Clowns

View sculpture manufacturing, and visit the Ron Lee Gallery before enjoying lunch at the Carousel Café. Phone 702-434-1700 or 800-829-3928; fax 702-434-4310; www.ronlee.com; 330 Carousel Pkwy., Henderson, NV 89014. Hours: 8:30am-4:30pm Mon.-Fri., 10am-4pm Sat. Season: Year-round. Admission: Free.

LAKE TAHOE

Heavenly Gondola

The new gondola whisks you 2.4 miles to the mountain to an observation deck at 9,100 feet. Enjoy panoramic views of Lake Tahoe and the snow-capped Sierra. Phone 775-586-7000 or 800-2HEAVEN; fax 775-586-7090; www.skiheavenly.com; 4th floor, 4101 Harrison Blvd., P.O. Box 2180, Stateline 89449. Hours: 9am-sunset on summer weekends and 10am-sunset during the week; 8:30am-3:30pm on winter weekends and 9am-4pm during the week. Season: Year-round. Admission: Adult $20, children 6-12 $7.

Zephyr Cove Resort

Overlooking Lake Tahoe's West Shore, this resort offers rental boats, jet skiing, parasailing, fishing charters, a campground, and a restaurant. Phone 775-588-6644; fax 775-588-0627; www.tahoedixie2.com; or 760 U.S. Hwy. 50, P.O. Box 830, Zephyr Cove 89448. Hours: 24 hours daily. Season: Year-round. Admission: Call for prices.

LAS VEGAS

Bellagio Water Show

The fountains of Bellagio feature an outdoor music and light show with a dancing waterfall. Phone 702-693-7111; 888-987-6667; fax 702-693-8546; www.bellagiolasvegas.com or 3600 Las Vegas Blvd. S., Las Vegas 89109. Hours: Weekdays every half hour 3pm-8pm; every 15 minutes thereafter until midnight. The fountain shows begin at noon on weekends and holidays. Season: Year-round. Admission: None.

Buccaneer Bay Sea Battle

View a full-scale pyrotechnic battle to the finish between the British frigate *H.M.S. Britannia* and the pirate ship *Hispaniola*. Phone 702-894-7111; 800-944-7444; fax 702-894-7780; www.treasureislandlasvegas.com or 3300 Las Vegas Blvd. S., Las Vegas 89109. Hours: Every 90 minutes daily, 5:30pm-11:30pm. Season: Year-round (depending upon weather). Admission: None.

Caesars Magical Empire

Mystery, fine dining, and grand-scale illusions are yours to explore in awe-inspiring surroundings. Phone 702-731-7333; 800-445-4544; fax 702-731-7643; www.caesars.com or 3570 Las Vegas Blvd. S., Las Vegas 89109. Hours: 4:30pm-9:30pm, Tues.-Sat. Season: Year-round. Admission: $75.50 inclusive.

Fremont Street Experience

An exciting pedestrian promenade located in the neon center of downtown Las Vegas. One-of-a-kind light and sound show derived from over two million lights and 540,000 watts of concert-quality sound. Phone 702-678-5600; 800-249-3559; fax 702-678-5611; www.vegasexperience.com or 425 Fremont Street, Las Vegas 89101. Hours: Dusk to midnight, nightly. Season: Year-round. Admission: None.

GameWorks Las Vegas

The ultimate entertainment experience where guests can eat, drink, party, and play with a full-service restaurant, bar, and over 200 games and attractions. Phone 702-432-4263; fax 702-895-7599; www.gameworks.com or 3785 Las Vegas Blvd. S., Las Vegas 89109. Hours: 10am-1am weekdays; 10am-2am weekends. Season: Year-round. Admission: None.

Las Vegas Motor Speedway

NASCAR/Winston Cup racing, Craftsman Truck series, NHRA Nationals, and drag racing. Phone 702-644-4444; 800-644-4444; fax 702-644-7774; www.lvms.com or 7000 Las Vegas Blvd. N., Las Vegas 89115. Hours: 8am-5pm, Mon.-Fri.; 9am-3pm, Sat.-Sun. Season: Year-round. Admission: Call for information.

M&M's World

Interactive shopping and retail store featuring "M&M's" merchandise and a free attraction starring Red and Yellow in their first 3-D movie and adventure. Phone 702-736-7611; fax 702-740-2550; www.m-ms.com or 3785 Las Vegas Blvd. S, Las Vegas 89109. Hours: Open at 9am, daily. Season: Year-round.

Madame Tussaud's Celebrity Encounter

Exceptional showcase of more than 100 exquisite wax figures of famous celebrities; combines legendary and contemporary stars from the world of film, sports, and entertainment. Phone 702-367-1847; fax 702-862-7850; www.madametussauds.com or The Venetian Resort Hotel Casino, 3377 Las Vegas Blvd. S., Las Vegas 89030. Hours: 9:30am-10:30pm, daily (summer); open at 11am daily (winter). Season: Year-round. Admission: Adults $14.95; children 3-12, $9.95.

Star Trek: The Experience

Be transported to the Enterprise bridge, plunge down a turbo lift, and brave a shuttlecraft mission through space and time; also enjoy dining, shopping and gaming during your visit to the 24th century. Phone 702-697-TREK; 888-462-6535; fax 702-697-8787; www.startrekexp.com or Las Vegas Hilton, 3000 Paradise Rd., Las Vegas 89109. Hours: 11am-11pm, daily. Season: Year-round. Admission: $24.99.

OLD NEVADA

Bonnie Springs Old Nevada

Horseback riding, petting zoo, western town, gunfights, hangings, train rides on weekends and holidays. Phone 702-875-4191; fax 702-875-4424; www.bonniesprings.com or 1 Gunfighter Lane, Old Nevada 89004. Hours: 10am-5pm, winter; 10am-6pm, summer. Season: Year-round.

Siegfried and Roy and one of their big cats in Las Vegas • Photo by the Mirage

Admission: $5 per car on weekdays; $7 per car on weekends. Horseback rides are $25 per hour.

PAHRUMP

Pahrump Valley Vineyards

Visitors enjoy free tours, tasting, and a gourmet restaurant. Phone 775-727-6900; 800-368-WINE; fax 775-727-9533; www.pahrumpwinery.com or 3810 Winery Rd., Pahrump 89048. Hours: 10am-9pm daily. Season: Year-round. Admission: None

RENO

Fleischmann Planetarium

A public science education and entertainment facility specializing in astronomy, space and earth programs, and exhibits. Phone 775-784-4812; fax 775-784-4822; http://planetarium.unr.nevada.edu or University of Nevada, Reno, 1664 N. Virginia St., Reno 89557. Hours: Depends on time of year; Call for times and days. Season: Year-round.

Reno Arch – Current

A unique entryway sign proclaiming "The Biggest Little City in the World" is located on Virginia Street in the downtown area to welcome everyone to Reno. Featuring neon lighting, the arch is recognized worldwide. Phone 775-334-2077; fax 775-334-3815; www.cityofreno.com or Reno Redev-elopment, P.O. Box 1900, Reno 89505.

Reno Arch – Original

Erected in 1926 to commemorate the completion of the Lincoln Highway, the original arch was refurbished and re-erected on Lake Street near the National Automobile Museum. Phone 775-334-2077; fax 775-334-3815; www.cityofreno.com or Reno Redevelopment, P.O. Box 1900, Reno 89505.

Wingfield Park Amphitheater

Open-air amphitheater, located by the Raymond I. Smith Truckee River Walk in downtown Reno, offers concerts, theater, ballet, storytelling, children's programs, films and more. Phone [illegible]-2414; fax 775-33[illegible]-7598; www.cityofreno.com or P.O. Box 1900, Reno 89505.

SPARKS

Victorian Square Interactive Fountain

Step inside [illegible] fountain that performs eight-minute shows [illegible] to choreographed music. Shows operate throughout the day in warm weather. Located in the Victorian Square Plaza. Admission: None

WADSWORTH

Numana Hatchery Visitors Center

Photo display of Pyramid Lake Paiute Indian Reservation featuring the land, the lake, the people, and the Fisheries Restoration [illegible]. Located 8 miles north of Wadsworth on State Rt. 447. Phone [illegible]; fax 775-574-0261; or Pyramid Lake Fisheries, Star Route, Sutcliffe [illegible]. Hours: 9am-5pm [illegible] 2pm Sat-Sun. Season: [illegible]. Admission: None

Zoos and Animal Attractions

LAS VEGAS

Las Vegas Zoo

250-plus species of rare plants and animals. Also operates Desert Eco Tours. Phone 702-647-4685; fax 702-648-5955; www.lasvegaszoo.org or 1775 N. Rancho Drive, Las Vegas 89106. Hours: 9am-5pm daily. Season: Year-round. Admission: Call for rates.

MGM Grand Lion Habitat

Features multilevel areas for the pride of lions to play and interact with the public. Visitors are encircled by lions via a see-through walkway tunnel that runs through the habitat. Phone 702-89[illegible]; 800-929-1111; fax 702-89[illegible]; www.mgmgrand.com or 3799 Las Vegas Blvd. S., Las Vegas 89109.

[illegible]

Shark Reef at Mandalay Bay

[illegible]

Siegfried and Roy Secret Garden and Dolphin Habitat

[illegible]

[illegible]

RENO

Animal Ark

[illegible]

Sierra Safari Zoo

[illegible]

Zephyr Cove Resort & Marina

Call Zephyr Cove Resort & Marina to plan your trip to Lake Tahoe.

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Located right on the shores of Lake Tahoe, our comprehensive Marina offers every kind of water fun including:

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The Resort boasts opportunities for:
- Horseback Riding
- Volleyball
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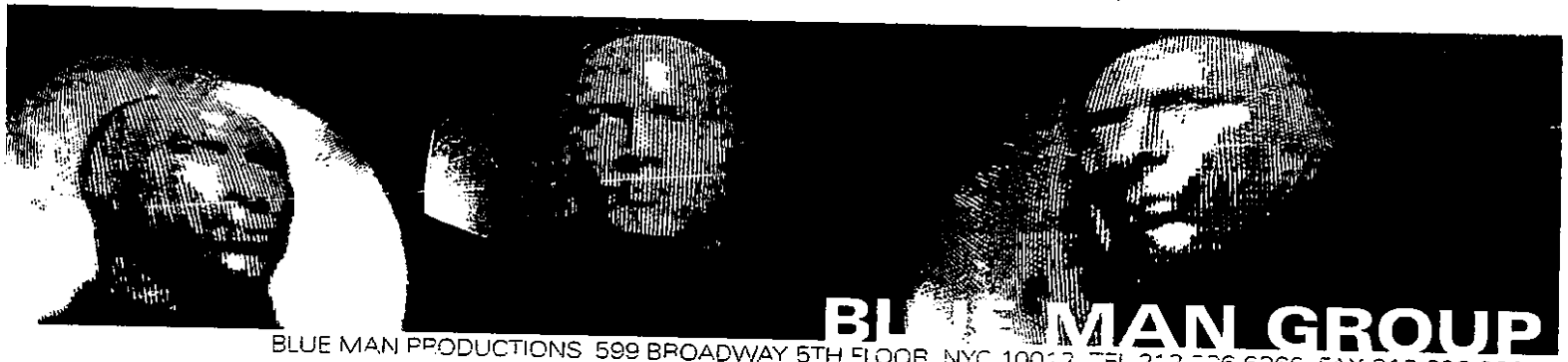
- [illegible]

When it comes to finding a resort with all the amenities and all the activities in the best location [illegible]

Zephyr Cove Resort & Marina is operated on U.S. Forest Service lands by ARAMARK Convention & Tourism Services.



THE DENVER POST

Wednesday, August 7, 2002

Blue Man Group paints music of a different color

Blue Man Group can turn just about anything into performance art, even an interview. To prove their point, at the beginning of a phone conversation with the group's three founding members, Chris Wink made a suggestion:

"Why don't we start off your piece like it's an advance of our show in Denver? And then, as we get into it, you start to review how it's going. At some point we can get into a fight, even though that's not really our style, and then as we get to the end, you can review how the whole conversation went."

OK. So the show starts . . . now.

By John Moore
Denver Post Theater Critic

Just when the theater world started to get a handle on its biggest fringe phenomenon of the past decade, there goes Blue Man Group, morphing into a new area: The Area:2 Festival, to be exact. And now it is the music world that is trying to get a gooey grip on one of pop culture's most malleable performance-art sensations.

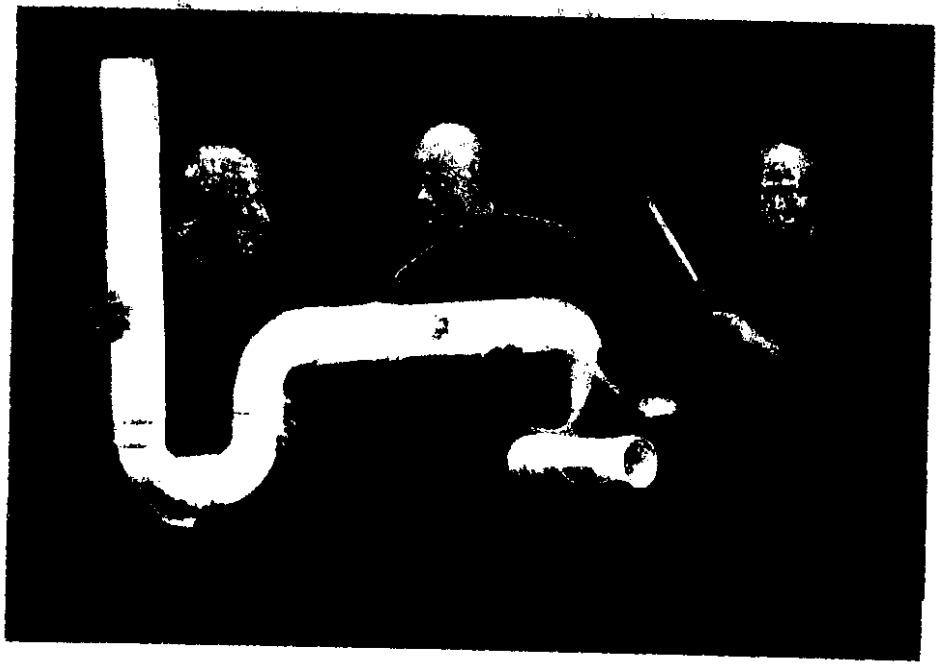
Area:2 marks the bald and the beautifully blue's full-fledged entry into the rock world.

■ **INSIDE:** Info for Blue Man Group's Denver appearance./**5F**

"We're trying to do what we've always done, which is to stay ahead of the curve," said Chris Wink, who co-created Blue Man Group 14 years ago with buddies Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton. "We don't want to be pigeonholed as a theater play. We want to keep doing the unexpected."

When Blue Man Group joins David Bowie and Busta Rhymes on Saturday af-

Please see **BLUE MAN** on 5F



Special to The Denver Post · Ken Howard

Among the invented musical instruments Blue Man Group will be playing at the Area:2 Festival on Saturday is the PVC: vinyl pipes struck with rubber paddles.

Blue Man Group puts focus on music for Area:2 shows

BLUE MAN from Page 1F

"ternoon at the CityLights Pavilion for Moby's second annual eclectic music festival, it will be BMG's first appearance of any kind in Denver. That means Wink's latest cast of bluebloods will be up against the obstacle of virtually no expectations.

BMG plays just before 5 p.m. for an audience that either will be finding its seats, or planting them firmly on their hands. But by the end of a 13-song set, Wink defies the paint-splattered patrons not to be sucked into a Blue Man groove.

"The deck is stacked up against us in so many ways, but that's what makes it fun," Wink said. "For one thing, these aren't our fans per se. They're here to see Moby and David Bowie and Busta Rhymes. But they've seen the hype about us. Before people were like, 'I have no idea what I've gotten myself into here.' And now they're like, 'OK, Win me over.' More than anything else, we don't have the recognizable songs everyone else has. So by doing all-new material, we've got to fight for their approval right from the get-go."

Maybe at this point I had better tell people what the heck we are talking about.

Most people know BMG from their frequent appearances on NBC's "Tonight Show," a guest spot on "The Drew Carey Show" or from national Intel Pentium television commercials. But Wink, Stanton and Goldman formed the group in 1988 by creating a multisensory experience on the sidewalks of New York that combined theater, percussive music, art, science and vaudeville.

Their first big break was in 1990, when BMG was booked for a breakout run at LaMama, New York's most prestigious experimental theater. The group mocked the pretension of modern art, so naturally modern art embraced them. In 1991 BMG moved to the Astor Place Theatre, where it has run uninterrupted for 11 years, and since have added permanent companies in Boston, Chicago and, of all places, Las Vegas. Yes, the former buskers have a five-year contract at the Luxor, the nation's second-largest hotel.

"We went to Vegas because we thought opening a company there would be the most bizarre choice we could make," Wink said. "We think of the Blue Man as a bit of a trickster, and that going there was a way of creating a little bit of cognitive dissonance, a little bit of mayhem. Everyone thought, 'That doesn't fit.' And our success there has — in a small way — helped redefine Vegas entertainment."

Today Blue Man Group is a franchise of 350 employees including 30 performers and 50 musicians.

Am I Blue?

- **What:** Area:2 Festival, featuring Blue Man Group
- **When:** Doors open at 2 p.m. Saturday
- **Where:** CityLights Pavilion (moved from the Pepsi Center)
- **Mainstage lineup:** Ash 3:50 p.m., Blue Man Group 4:55 p.m., Busta Rhymes 6:15 p.m., David Bowie 7:30 p.m., Moby 9:15 p.m.
- **Dance tent:** Dieselboy 2:30 p.m., Avalanches 3:15 p.m.; DJ Dan 4:15 p.m., DJ Tiesto, 6 p.m., DJ Tim Skinner 8 p.m., John Digweed 8:30 p.m.
- **Tickets:** $44.50-$79.50 (Ticketmaster, 303-830-8497 or www.ticketmaster.com)
- **Note:** Persons holding reserved tickets to the Pepsi Center show should go to the Pepsi Center box office on Saturday between noon and 2 p.m. to exchange their tickets for CityLights Pavilion seats.

Special to The Denver Post / Blue Man Group

Blue Man Group, which appears live in trios but has 30 cast members nationally, has brought its paint-splattering drumming act to Las Vegas, where it has a five-year contract at the Luxor Hotel.

But from the beginning, the trademark has been those wet, sticky, cobalt faces. That's grease paint that never dries, and it takes an hour to apply.

"For us the goo and the paint and the masks on one level is just fun and playful and comedic, but on a level below that is meant to be a reminder that there's still something essentially human and gooey that we have to stay attached to," Wink said. "It's essentially primal and tribal. And what we're doing is part of a larger sentiment that's been around for a century, including everything from dadaists, abstract expressionists, Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton and the Marx Brothers."

Wink is talking too much. Are the other two guys off buying doughnuts? Maybe we should get back to the music.

At Area:2, BMG will be paring down the theatrics and letting their music do the talking because they want audiences to decide whether their music can stand on its own. That means none of the lights, videos, skits or performance-art contraptions of its theater shows.

Goldman calls it throwing away the safety net. "If Blue Man Group is going to make it in the rock world, it's going to have to be on the strength of the music," he said.

And that music is unlike anything rock audiences have heard before. Call it anything you want — except a gimmick. The music is percussive, invigorating, inventive and most of all, legitimate. BMG's debut album, "Audio," was Grammy-nominated for best pop instrumental album. It combines passionate drums with electronic dance rhythms set against a traditional backing band.

But while lots of bands say their music is impossible to genre-fy, BMG means it. Their repertoire includes 13 instruments of their own invention. Their signature sound, featured on the opening track of "Audio," comes from air poles that make "swoosh" sounds as they slice through the air. The "tubulum" is a series of pipes struck with sticks or paddles.

Three Blue Men will play Area:2 with a backing band of eight, but four will be drummers. BMG has played with as many as 15 drummers, all playing not interlocking rhythms but the exact same part.

"What we're trying to bring to the rock genre is a level of drumming that has never been seen before," Wink said. "The power chord has been realized. But it doesn't feel like drums have been as fully explored."

Reaction to their Area:2 shows so far has run the gamut, from those who derive social commentary from the spectacle to kids walking away saying, "I don't know what I just saw, but I liked it."

"It's great to reach people on both levels, because our message is still the same," Wink said. "On the intellectual level it's, 'Don't forget to keep the playfulness, the joy, the primal.' But if an 8-year-old kid goes and says, 'That was really fun,' that's the ultimate. The intellectual dialogue is the same; he's just not being self-referential about it."

But there is a serious side to the BMG. "I hope it's not pretentious to say this, but there is an undercurrent of meaning," Wink said. "But in a sense it's dangerous to talk about it because that's when it starts to sound like a bunch of (bleep).

"We are drawn more to the abstract expressionists of the '50s, and those emotional bursts, our sublime kind of playful moments of Orosco or Jackson Pollock. When it comes to the rock setting, I think Blue Man is kind of a manifestation of the loss of the tribe. There's kind of a yearning for the primal in our work, whether that be getting sullied with paint, or drumming. There's that tribal element lurking underneath."

I wonder if Wink knows I have no idea what he's talking about. Time for the fight. "I have a problem with the way things are going," Stanton says. "We'll have to break up, have an intervention, and maybe we'll make a comeback as hosts of some cable show."

But there will be an Area:2 show in Denver first.

"I would just ask the people who are going to get there early and have a taste," Wink said. "We're going to be back (in Denver) at some point in a more theatrical way, but for now we're just trying to do the rock thing in a different way. So if anyone feels like what they are hearing on the radio is a little homogenous or hasn't stretched any boundaries, then give this a try."

You know, this was fun. I'm kind of blue, man, that it all has to end.

SHOW PREVIEW

ENTERTAINMENT

Manhattan Express Roller Coaster

Located on the second floor of the Coney Island Emporium at the New York-New York Hotel & Casino, the Manhattan Express roller coaster provides thrill seekers with an exhilarating, heart-stopping ride. It is the first coaster to feature a 180-degree headline twist and dive maneuver. (888) 693-6763.

Manhattan Express

Siegfried & Roy

With a lifetime contract at the Mirage Resort & Casino, Siegfried & Roy have become a virtual institution in Vegas. With lavish costumes, dramatic stage effects and their beloved white tigers and lions, Siegfried & Roy present a fantastical show full of magical wonders. Performances run Sunday through Tuesday at 7:30P.M. and Friday and Saturday at 7:30P.M. and 11P.M. (800) 963-9634.

Everyone knows that Vegas really heats up after dark. Not much of a gambler? Don't worry—there are plenty of other fun and amusing options to keep you busy. From the hottest shows to pure Vegas shtick, we've put together the highlights you won't want to miss.

● **Blue Man Group Live at Luxor** Featuring three bald and blue characters who take the audience on a multi-media journey, Blue Man Group first gained notoriety in New York City. The group later launched successful shows in Boston and Chicago with its largest production to date, Blue Man Group-Live at Luxor, in Vegas. Playing to standing ovations from sold-out audiences in the 1,200-seat Luxor Theater, the production invites audience participation with its original blend of avant-garde entertainment. Nightly performances are at 7P.M. and 10P.M. (800) 557-7428. **Lance Burton Master Magician** Providing Vegas with a bit of magic, master magician Lance Burton takes center stage at the Monte Carlo Resort & Casino in the $27 million theater built and named in his honor. With a cast of 60 doves, a few ducks, and Elvis the parakeet, Burton captivates audiences with sleight-of-hand tricks and grand illusions. Performances run Tuesday through Saturday at 7P.M. and 10P.M. (877) 386-8224. **Michael Flatley's Lord of the Dance** Bringing the excitement of Broadway to New York-New York Hotel & Casino, Michael Flatley's Lord of the Dance showcases the talents of more than 40 dancers and musicians in a dazzling 90-minute extravaganza. Set in the 1,000-seat Broadway Theater, the show combines haunting Irish music with fancy footwork. Performances run Tuesday and Wednesday at 7P.M. and 9:30P.M., Thursday and Friday at 9P.M., Saturday at 8P.M., and Sunday at 7P.M. (888) 693-6763. **Danny Gans** He sings, acts, does impressions and stand-up. A master impersonator and crowd pleaser, Gans is one of the most popular acts on the Strip. With original performances that are always changing to reflect current events, his brand of humor is not only contagious but also generally leaves audience members rolling in the aisles. Gans performs at The Mirage Resort & Casino Tuesday through Thursday and Saturday through Sunday at 8:00P.M. (800) 963-9634. ● **EFX Alive** This $45 million music and special effects extravaganza at the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino currently stars Grammy and American Music Award-winner, blast-from-the-past Rick Springfield. A mix of theater and music, the production is set in the EFX Theater, which features 6,000 lights, 85,000 watts of computer controlled multi-channel surround sound, and NASA computer technology. Performances run twice nightly Saturday at 7:30P.M. and 10:30P.M., and once at 7:30P.M., Tuesday through Friday. (800) 929-1111.

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EFX Alive

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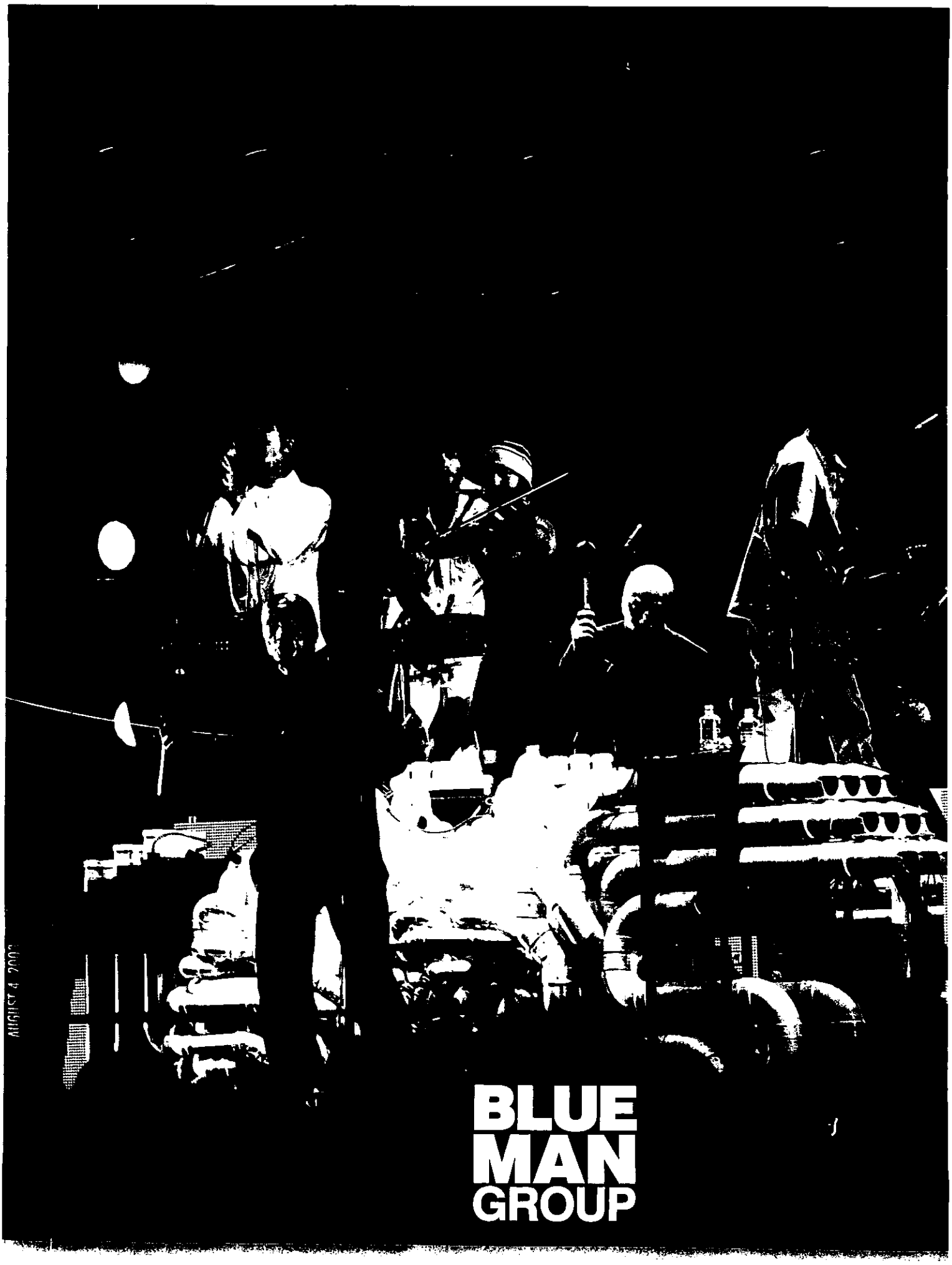
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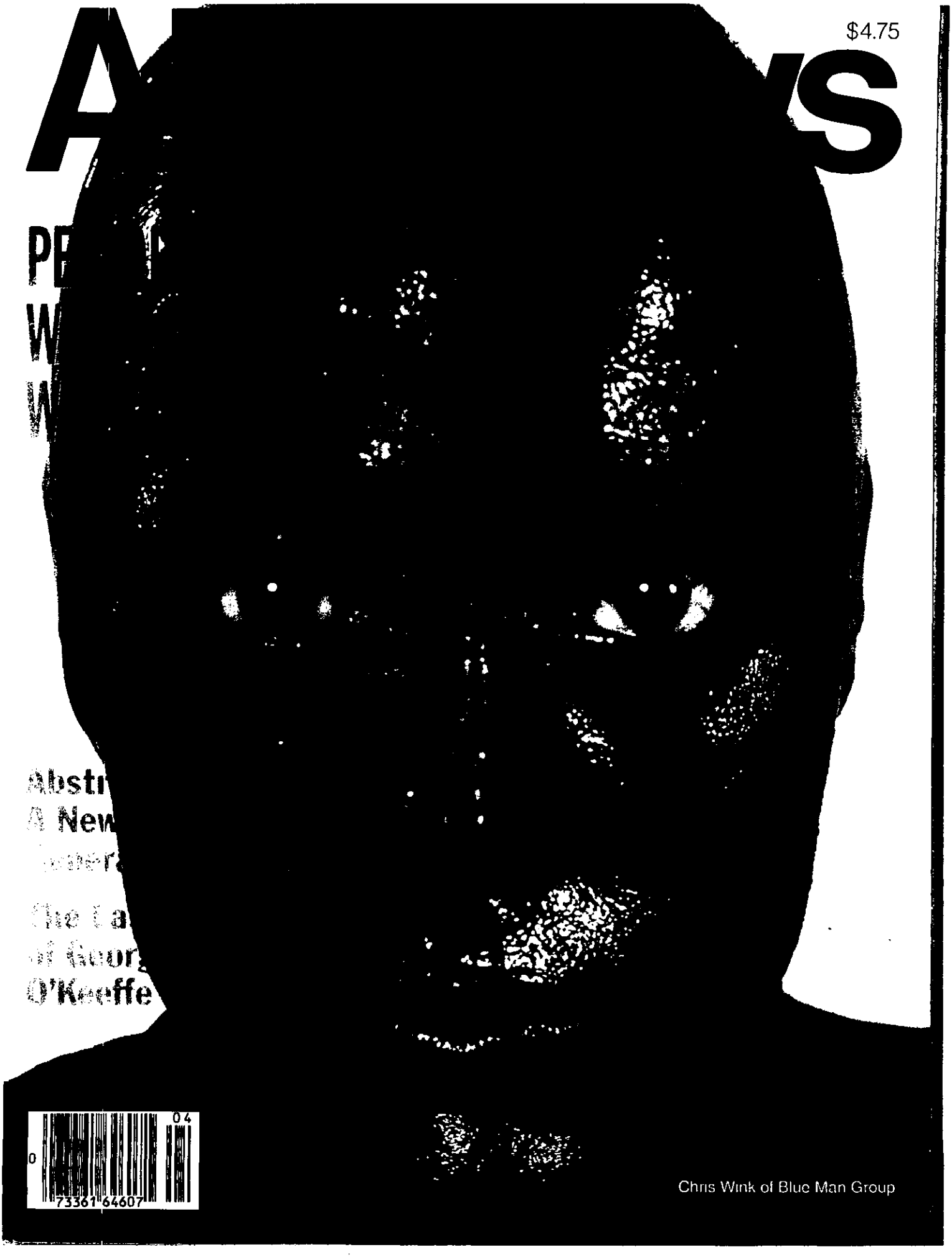

Chris Wink of Blue Man Group

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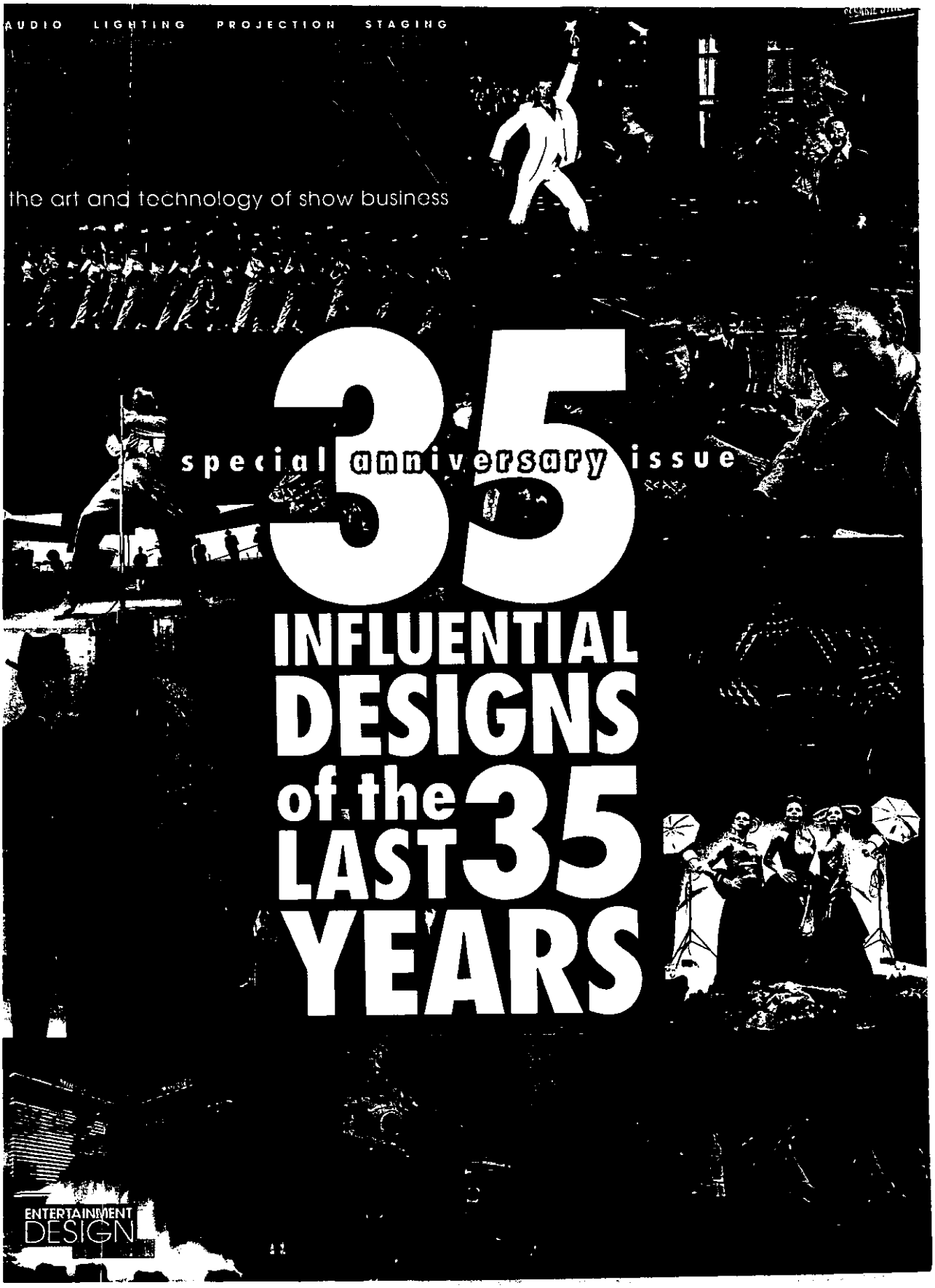
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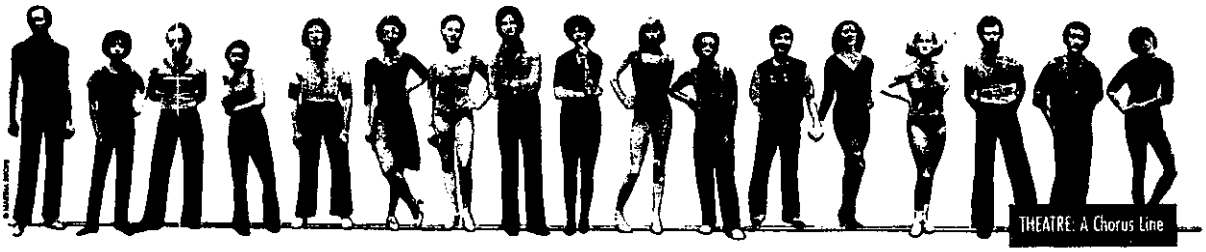
INFLUENTIAL DESIGNS of the LAST 35 YEARS
ENTERTAINMENT DESIGN

ENTERTAINMENT DESIGN

35

YEAR ANNIVERSARY

A lot has changed since 1967.



THEATRE: A Chorus Line

Influences

Entertainment Design Picks 35 Designs That Have Had a Significant Impact on the Way We Work and Live

A CHORUS LINE

Do you need to ask? The first collaboration on our list between director Michael Bennett and his dream team (Robin Wagner, Theoni V. Aldredge, Tharon Musser) appeared to be an act of stunning simplicity—the hardest thing to achieve in the theatre. Bennett and his authors pulled their show—in which a group of Broadway gypsies spill their guts at an audition—out of taped sessions with real chorus dancers. His designers created a stripped, spare look that became a theatrical icon—the line of dancers, in their work clothes, standing—nervously, expectantly, defiantly—in a black void that summed up every empty Broadway theatre that ever was. There were other brilliant touches—the mirrors that descended for one dancer's angry solo, the gleaming gold tuxedos for the finale, the Mondrian light patterns on the floor. Otts Munderloh's sound design played a crucial role too—as the lead character, the director, Zach, existed only as a Godlike voice. And lest we forget—the automated lighting console made its debut with this show; this is where modern performance lighting begins.

ALL IN THE FAMILY

The groundbreaking content is what everyone recalls, but *All in the Family* also had a major impact on television production techniques. Designed by Don Roberts (who also did *Archie Bunker's Place* and *Good Times*), the show revived the live-audience model of 50s shows like *I Love Lucy*, and was the first sitcom to record this theatrical presentation style on videotape, which helped give the very timely debates between Archie Bunker and his liberal son-in-law a you-are-there quality. Creator Norman Lear's preference for a flat, "up" lighting style also became the standard—a more regrettable development, some would argue. Archie and Edith's armchairs, the ordinariness of which is itself iconic, are on view at the Smithsonian Institution.

TV: All in the Family

THEATRE: Blue Man Group

APOCALYPSE NOW

Francis Ford Coppola's hallucinatory cinematic portrait of the Vietnam War is the one that caught on, a simultaneously bad and beautiful acid trip shot by Vittorio Storaro and designed by Dean Tavoularis, both channeling Bosch. And to an unprecedented and, many think, unsurpassed degree, Walter Murch's multilayered sound design contributed just as much to a film as its images; in fact, the term sound design was pretty much coined by *Apocalypse Now*, just as production design was by *Gone With the Wind*. The movie was the first wide release with a Dolby Stereo 70mm soundtrack and discrete stereo-surround channels, which meant that signature audio components like Wagner, the Doors, and an infinite variety of helicopter sounds enveloped the viewer in the aural equivalent of 3D. But the technology Murch employed never became an excuse for mere volume; switching according to design between mono, stereo, and six-track, he made every rotor whirl count.

FILM: Apocalypse Now

FILM: Blade Runner

FILM: Bonnie & Clyde

BLADE RUNNER

Ridley Scott's futuristic noir thriller was a box-office flop, but it became a seminal cyberpunk text, and its portrait of a rainy, polluted, humanity- and replicant-clogged LA, circa 2019, heavily influenced urban nightmare cinemascapes from *Brazil* to *Batman* to *Seven* (and, some would argue, looks ever closer to reality). Lawrence G. Paull's production design, with a big assist from "visual futurist" Syd Mead and cinematographer Jordan Cronenweth, sees the neon-lit future, and its name is Tokyo. Giant LED screens fill the skyline of a city where it's always night, with fog diffusing artificial light in the trademarked Ridley Scott style.

BLUE MAN GROUP

Who would have thought that three downtown dudes with cobalt blue heads would take over the world? Blue Man Group founders Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton, and Chris Wink are well on their way, having created an entirely new performance experience combining their own brand of live music, a sophisticated use of video and projection technology, and the latest in surround-sound techniques. Following permanent and touring versions of their hit show, *Tubes*, the trio has taken Sin City by storm, with an even more amazing production, *Blue Man Group: Live At Luxor*. They can be credited for putting performance art on the map and for successfully translating "downtown" art into a successful Las Vegas spectacle, opening the door for other "avant gardists" to zoom to headliner status.

BONNIE AND CLYDE

Costume designer Theadora Van Runkle's 1930s/60s hybrids—featuring Faye Dunaway in beret, maxi skirt, and machine

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SPOTLIGHT

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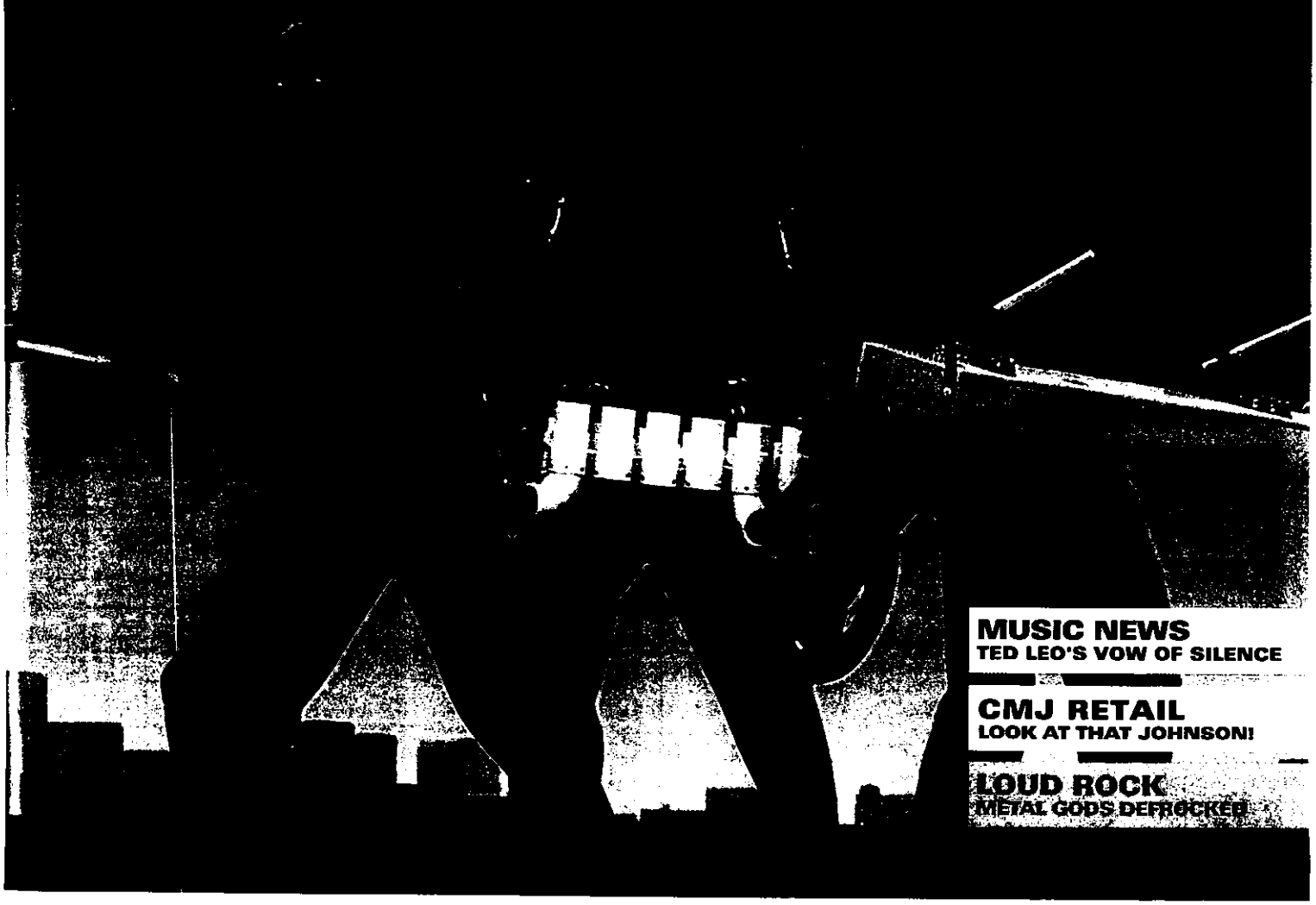
BLUE MAN GROUP
BRAVE BLUE WORLD



MUSIC NEWS
TED LEO'S VOW OF SILENCE

CMJ RETAIL
LOOK AT THAT JOHNSON!

LOUD ROCK
METAL GODS DEFROCKED

RADIO 200: **WHITE STRIPES** STILL ROCKIN' NO. 1, **YEAH YEAH YEAHS** MOST ADDED

ENTERTAINMENT DESIGN
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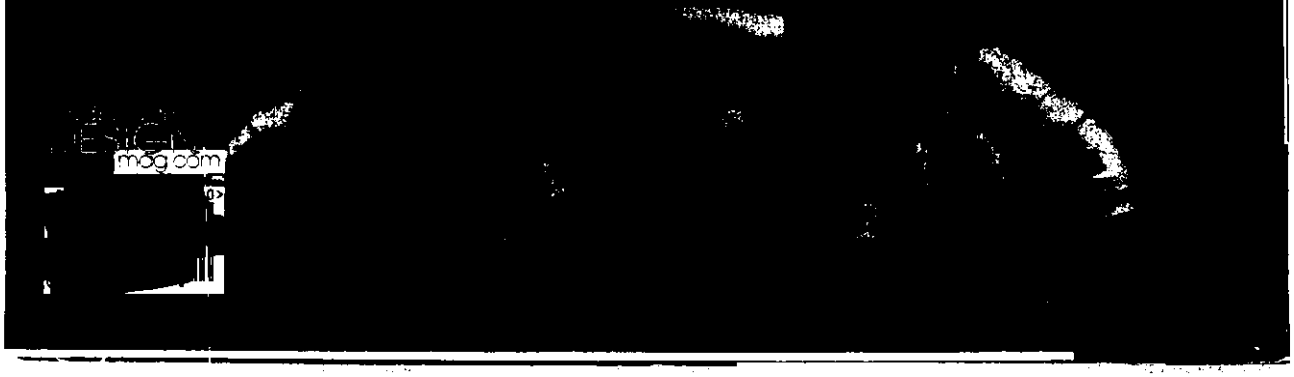
Group Therapy



CREATING GROUP PAGE 50

FORTUNE SMALL BUSINESS

THE JESSE JAMES STORY

TV STAR.
AND HE SELLS CUSTOM MOTORCYCLES TO THE LIKES OF
AND
HOW THE HECK DID HE PULL THAT OFF?

PAGE 32

Skechers: At the Crossroads

PAGE 84

Marc Benioff: Is He the Next Larry Ellison?

PAGE 42

MARCH 2003

The *Monster Garage* host tells how to build a gangbuster business.

AOL keyword: FSB

fsb.com

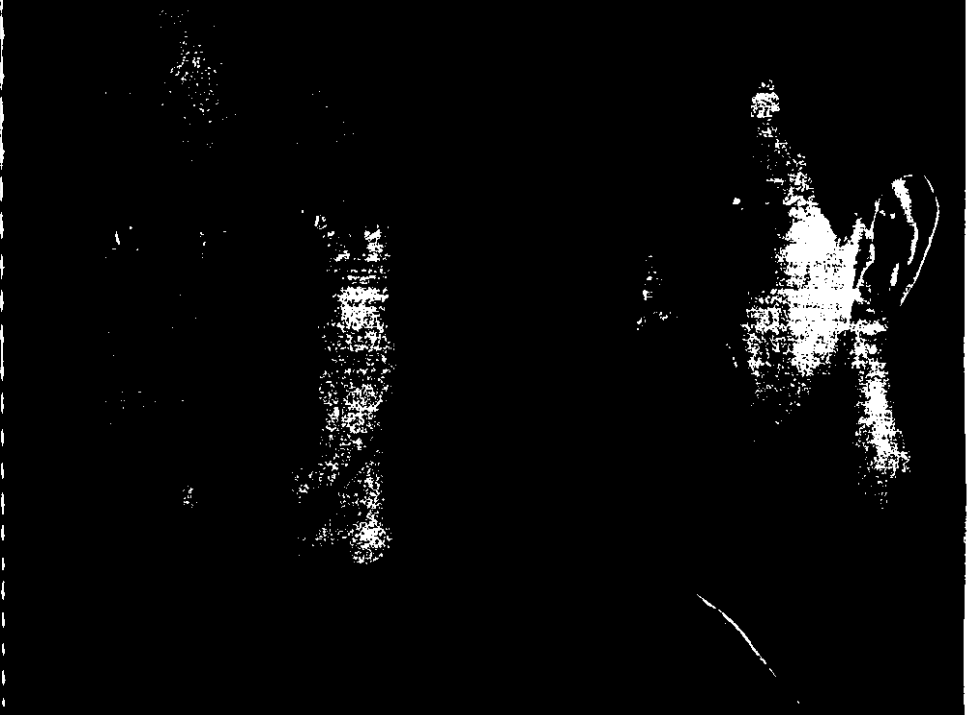
After early success Blue Man Group could have cashed in (think Disney rides and blue cola). Instead, it found a way to grow without selling its soul.

Brand

Photograph by Michael Cogliantry

FOUNDERS Stanton, Webb and Goldman in [illegible] makeup

FSB



FORTUNE SMALL BUSINESS

MARCH 2003

WHEN CHRIS WINK TALKS ABOUT the challenges facing his organization, he doesn't quote from *Who Moved My Cheese?* but rather from the Detroit rock duo the White Stripes. He points to the song "Little Room," whose lyrics run in full: "Well, you're in your little room, and you're working on something good. But if it's really good, you're gonna need a bigger room. And when you're in the bigger room, you might not know what to do. You might have to think of how you got started, sitting in your little room."

Sometimes the best management ideas are found in the unlikeliest places, and that lesson comes up often in the business that Wink and partners Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton founded in 1988, Blue Man Group. Aside from their appearance in some Intel ads, you might not know what Blue Man Group is, but plenty of people do: Its unique style of performance art is now permanently established in four U.S. cities, its first CD just went gold, and it's about to release a second this spring. The three founders manage more than 500 employees, and while they politely decline to give any financials, Blue Man Group performers put on 38 shows a week for more than 20,000 people paying $43 to $88 a ticket. So by one rough estimate, if every show sells out, that's about $1.4 million in revenue every week from the performances alone.

For the benefit of those who haven't seen a Blue Man show, this might be time for a primer. It's nothing like traditional theater. There's no obvious plot. The three performers are slathered in brilliant blue greasepaint and never speak. Instead they do things like twirl a canvas while spitting paint on it, creating a small work of art. Sometimes they play music by drumming on homemade instruments built from PVC pipe. They make rhythmic noises by chomping on Cap'n Crunch cereal, and in a bit involving Twinkies they split one in half with a jigsaw. It's hard to describe, but the most important thing is this—it's fun.

Of course, if you are familiar with Blue Man, you might be puzzled to be reading about it here. As entertaining as the shows are, why would a business magazine care? In fact, Blue Man is a powerful case study in how to grow a brand without losing focus. We've all heard stories about companies that start off like a rocket—then crash and burn because they didn't stay in control of their original vision. Fifteen years after bursting onto the cultural scene, Blue Man has managed to avoid that fate, largely by making smart choices and turning down opportunities that a lot of entrepreneurs might have jumped at.

To hear exactly how they did it, I came to New York City to meet Wink, Stanton, and Goldman. Not surprisingly, they don't use words like "branding," but while we talk, it becomes clear that they've thought a lot about how to define their enterprise, stretch it, and reach a larger audience without losing the things that made Blue Man Group special when they were starting out, a problem any growing business deals with. Nobody mentions Tom Peters or Peter Drucker, but at times they do cite Penn & Teller and Francis Ford Coppola. It is pretty much what I'd hoped for.

Like the founders of Hewlett-Packard, who started a company without any idea of what they would make, the creators of Blue Man Group began by tinkering. Instead of a garage, they shared a Manhattan apartment with no furniture. All three were in their mid-20s. Wink and Stanton worked for a catering company, and Goldman, Wink's childhood friend, was a software designer. In 1988 they put on bald wigs, painted themselves blue, and held a "funeral for the '80s." With friends (also blue) they carried a coffin of objects representing the worst aspects of the

FOUNDERS
Stanton, Wink, and Goldman *avec* makeup

Big World

There are now 38 Blue Man Group performers (thousands more have tried out), which has allowed the three founders to expand their show into a mini-empire. Here's what it looks like.

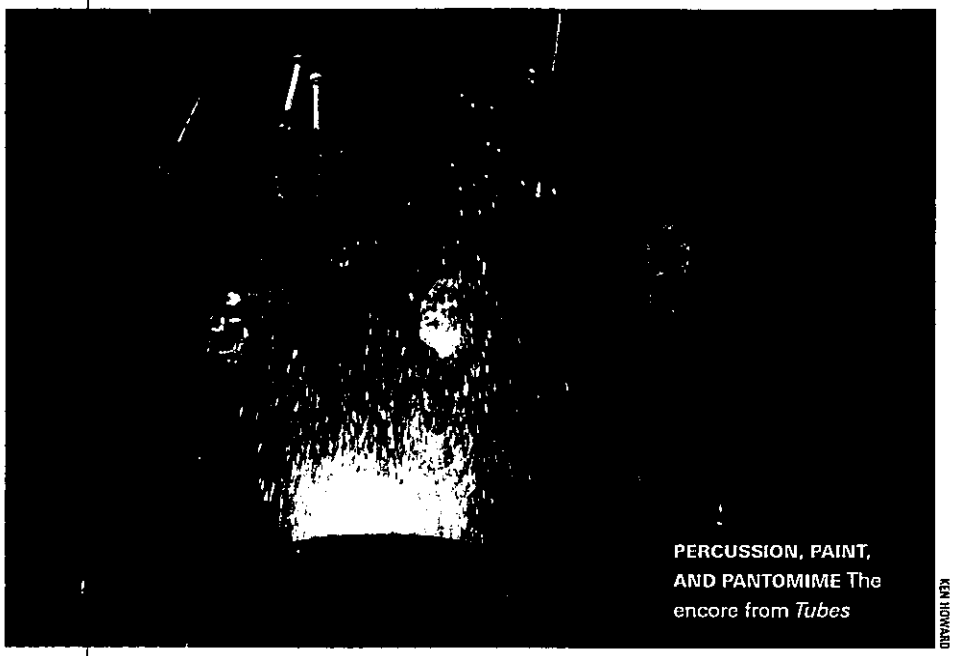
The group has permanent bases in four locations: New York, Boston, Chicago, and Las Vegas, with more than 20,000 ticket-holders a week. International [illegible] London, Berlin, and Tokyo [illegible]

Its first CD, *Audio* [illegible] the Grammy and [illegible] sold copies. The second, *The Complex*, debuted at No. [illegible] Top 200 chart.

Alt-rock performers with [illegible] Moby, Air, 2 Live Crew, tour and [illegible] Blue Man [illegible] including [illegible] and its own tour that [illegible] with [illegible] Dave Matthews [illegible] throughout the U.S.

decade—such as a yuppie effigy and a Rambo doll—into New York City's Central Park and burned them in a barrel. MTV recorded the event for posterity. They've never quite known how to answer the oft-asked question "Why blue?" but it seemed to work. Soon after, with a notable lack of formal training in music or acting, the trio started staging small performances. Just three years later they had an off-Broadway hit called *Tubes* and were spitting paint on *The Tonight Show* and *Live! With Regis & Kathie Lee.*

Their first real breakthrough didn't come until several years later, when they belatedly saw the wisdom of advice they received from noted business philosopher Penn Jilette, half of the irreverent Penn & Teller comedy-magic duo.



PERCUSSION, PAINT, AND PANTOMIME The encore from *Tubes*

KEN HOWARD

"He saw the show in, like, the first month," says Goldman, who has a recurring grin that suggests he just got away with something. Jilette is a big man, and to recreate the moment, Goldman stands and looms over me, waving his hands. "He said, 'Oh, my God! You guys can do what Teller and I can never do! You can clone yourselves!' And we said, 'No, you don't get it, we're more like a band.' I actually thought he was, like ..." he searches momentarily and finally settles on, "a wackhead."

So they continued on, three friends, doing their show. Six days a week, three years without a break, more than 1,200 consecutive performances. There was one understudy, to satisfy the group's financial backers, but while he'd studied the show, he never so much as rehearsed it. The three began to feel like prisoners of their success. They weren't creating new material, just performing *Tubes* over and over. Finally Stanton cut his hand one day while fooling around with a router. The understudy stepped in—and it worked.

"It was a catalytic event," Goldman says. Blue Man Group wasn't a cult of personality. The founders could oversee the show without necessarily being *in* the show. That allowed them to take time off at last, but, more important, it gave them time to think about how to expand on what they'd started.

All along they'd had opportunities. After their initial success they were offered product endorsements and a bigger theater on Broadway. Disney talked of not just a movie but a related theme ride. Wink, Stanton, and Goldman rejected almost all of it. There was a conscious effort, they say, not to grab the quick payoff and risk becoming the next *Cats*. As Goldman puts it, they knew they wanted to create with the Blue Man character over decades, and they also knew that a steep growth curve—he holds his arm at about an 80-degree angle—"can come down on this kind of slope"—he tilts his arm so that it looks like an Enron stock chart.

Instead, they decided in 1995 to start a second show in Boston. The early rehearsals were fine, but the production ran into problems soon after opening. Wink, Stanton, and Goldman were alternating with new Blue Man performers, shuttling between New York and Boston, and the more they stepped away, the more flaws they noticed. The music, for example, had never been formally scored—it was only discussed in terms of the emotion it was supposed to evoke. One tune, "Tension Song," was meant to convey fright, but the founders discovered that "tension" can mean different things to different musicians, especially when there's no sheet music to refer to. Trying to solve all the problems, they found themselves in another prison: the prison of meetings.

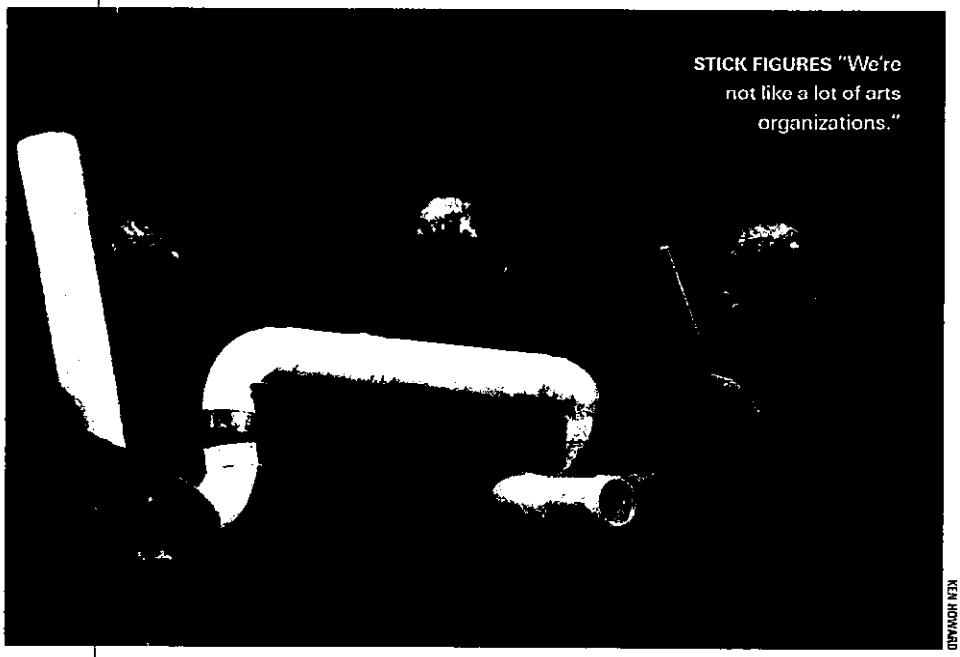
So they did what a lot of businesses never get around to—they wrote a detailed, 132-page operating manual. Based on notes taken over a year, the document came into being when the three founders locked themselves in an apartment with one of their creative directors, Michael Quinn, and a tape recorder. The journal is an edited transcript of the tapes they made.

Basically, it tells the story of the show step by step, but from the point of view of the Blue Men. Some explanations are straightforward—"The Blue Men are not aliens"—and others are more subtle, with references to everything from *Being There* to George Bernard Shaw to the caves of Lascaux. It's a nontraditional set of instructions, but writing it down forced the founders to articulate ideas that had always simply been understood among them. It also taught them not just about their brand but also about a basic concept of management. Goldman cites Francis Ford Coppola's theory that what makes the difference between a good movie and a bad movie is getting everyone involved to make the *same* movie.

These days Blue Man regularly holds open calls in cities across North America, and over the years thousands of people have auditioned to join a club that currently has just 38 members (counting the original three). Certain physical attributes are important, such as height and build,

but other than that it's wide open. One of the current Blue Men is African American, and for a few years there was a Blue Man in Boston who was actually a woman. The most important factor is not just memorizing a set of movements but truly understanding the character, which was only defined and recorded during the period when the manual was born. Looking back, Goldman says, "Everything in our project lives either before that moment or after that moment."

In 1997 they launched a third show in Chicago, which opened without the problems they had encountered in Boston. And it was at this point that the three finally started thinking about marketing. Early on, Blue Man ran almost no ads. Its philosophy was to create great shows and hope word would spread. (A few television appearances helped—Blue Man is a favorite of Jay Leno's, and the founders have appeared on *The Tonight Show* 11 times.) But with their shows now running more independently, the founders could afford to look outward. They started slow, running a few clever print spots to help promote the Chicago show, but their most aggressive foray into advertising was actually in someone else's ads—Intel's.



STICK FIGURES "We're not like a lot of arts organizations."

KEN HOWARD

They had turned down offers to tout credit cards, soft drinks, breath mints, a line of paints—almost any campaign that relied on the color blue—and they did the same when Intel first came calling. "We weren't like, 'Oh, we want to do it, but let's negotiate,' " Goldman emphasizes. "We said, 'No, we don't want to do it.' They said, 'What would it take?' "

That gave them pause.

They thought it over and went back to Intel with some key terms. First, the ads had to say "Blue Man Group," and the three founders had to be actively involved, working with the ad agency on ideas and committing only after the storyboards were approved. (Of the seven commercials that eventually aired, five were based on ideas that originated with Blue Man Group; none of the ad agency's original ideas made the cut.)

Two series of TV spots were produced, each a clever 23-second skit in which the Blue Men interacted with an Intel logo. In one spot a Blue Man covers himself in paint and slides down a wall to create the third stripe in the Pentium III logo. They come across as ads almost as much for Blue Man as for the chipmaker.

It's worth noting that the three founders have not only managed their growth better than most creative groups, but they've managed it better than most businesses of any kind. "We're not like a lot of arts organizations," Stanton says. "What takes place while you're gone is just as important as what's on stage—the management of it, the business of it. It's not like we were ..."

Wink jumps in, "crazy artists, with some manager taking care of us ..."

"And then later we realized, 'Oh, we better get into this *business* thing,' " Stanton resumes.

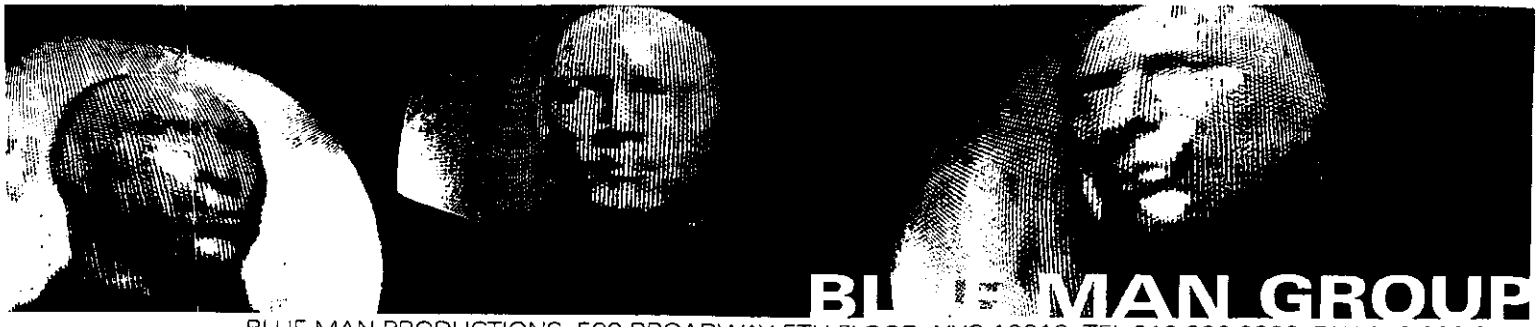
Blue Man Group definitely operates in a "bigger room" these days, yet the founders make a concerted effort to stay in touch with their original, little-room vision. All decisions are still made by unanimous agreement. (In fact, they still share a single office.) And they know that every step toward a larger audience brings with it the problem of potential overexposure. While they're a long way from Disney-level ubiquity, there's no question that Blue Man's core audience has always liked the show's nonmainstream status.

Wink compares the struggle not to betray their vision to that of a recovering alcoholic who at any moment could make one wrong move and wreck years of careful discipline. The trick is to avoid the safe path of repeating themselves—but without straying too far and losing focus. It's the same "Preserve the Core/Stimulate Progress" yin-yang that James B. Collins and Jerry I. Porras describe in *Built to Last*.

For example, the group is putting out its second CD this spring, *The Complex*, which features actual lyrics—a pretty big departure for the until-now silent Blue Man. It could put off some purists among the group's fans, but with singing by artists like Dave Matthews and others, it's also likely to attract new ones. Some of the material on that CD will be the centerpiece of the first-ever Blue Man tour, scheduled to start winding through 35 cities this April.

The founders still occasionally put the blue paint on—they'll do their 12th *Tonight Show* appearance that same month—but they won't be performing in the tour. Instead, it will feature a rotating set of senior Blue Men, as well as a lot of video elements and what Wink calls "flying jellyfish." And the group is carefully exploring new shows in Berlin, London, and Tokyo.

With each new project, though, they confront the same decisions they've faced since the beginning. As Wink says, "We're gonna have to go through each idea and say, 'Okay, that's all good and well, that's a nice thought—but is it Blue Man?' " □



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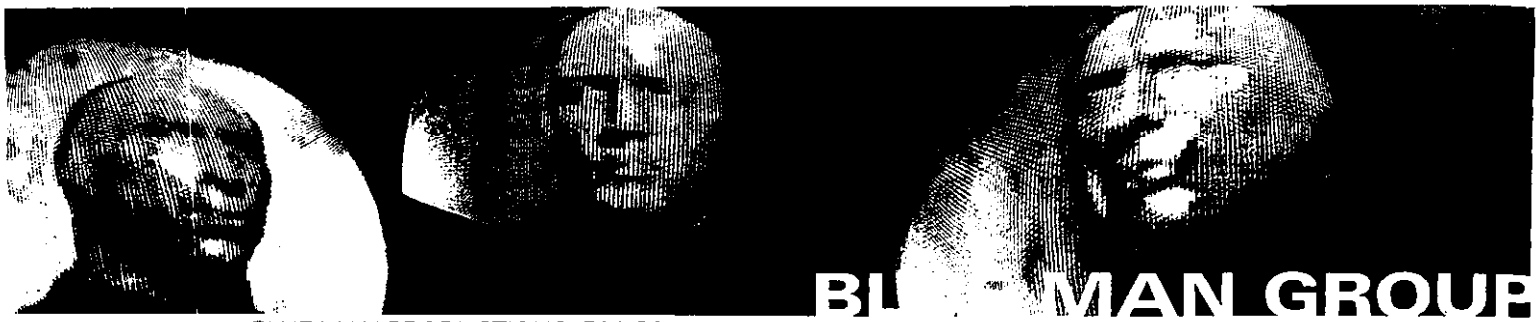
Is the Blue Man Group a sellout?

Getty

Over 1 million served

Once upon a time the Blue Man Group specialized in subversive art, said Sarah Hampson in the Toronto *Globe and Mail*. The three members painted themselves blue, played unusual percussion instruments, and staged wacky performance-art events like a mock funeral for the '80s in Central Park. "Like all good artists, they produced something that was not a shrewd pitch to an audience." But not anymore: The Blue Man Group has gone corporate. Instead of just three edgy performers, the empire now employs some 450 people—including 38 Blue Men, who take turns re-creating the vision of the original three. Raking in millions in revenue, the artists who once decried the evils of corporate America have themselves become "the McDonald's of the music world." The group has permanent shows in Manhattan, Boston, Chicago, and Las Vegas. Switch on the TV and you're bound to see one of the commercials they do for Intel. The three original Blue Men don't even perform anymore; they hire people to do it. It's these surrogate Blue Men who may be the greatest victims of this corporate travesty. After all, they're "just faceless artists moving to someone-else's rhythm."



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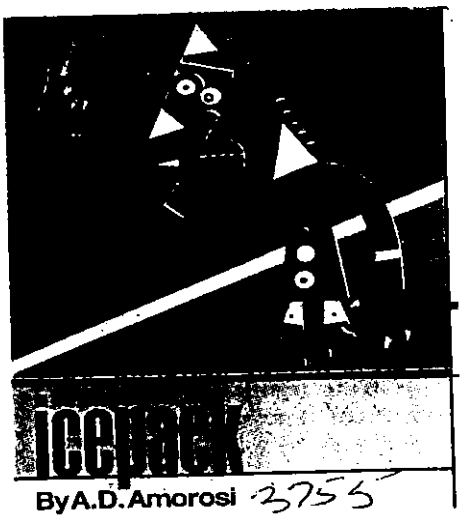

Icepack

By A.D. Amorosi 3755

Who got new gigs. Stylist/fashion shaper **Michele DiMercurio** now at Walnut Street's Tony Clothier Joan Shepp. **Brett Brasler** moved from the Kimmel to the corporate food biz at Max & Me Catering. They also tackle backstage foodstuffs for DJs like recent gigs with Blue Man Group and **Jane's Addiction**.

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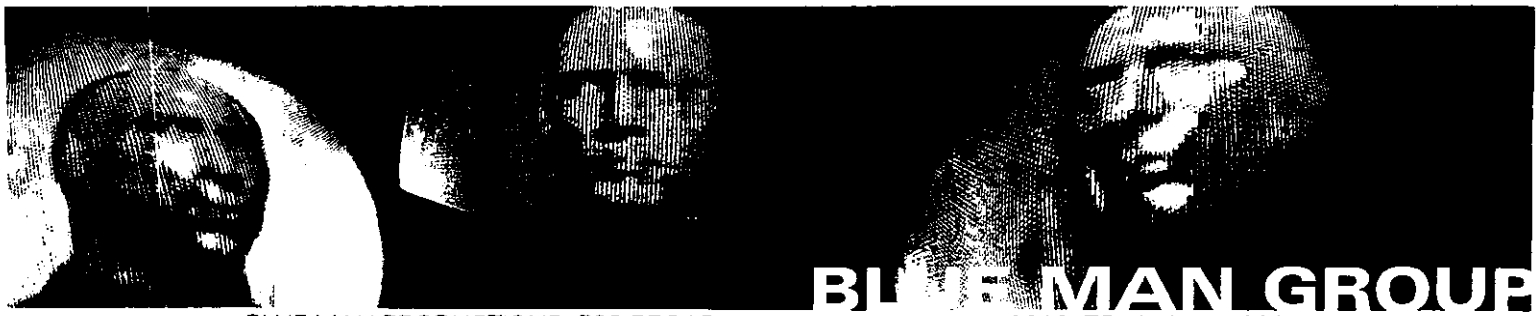

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This week off-Broadway

BY MICHAEL KUCHWARA
AP Drama Writer

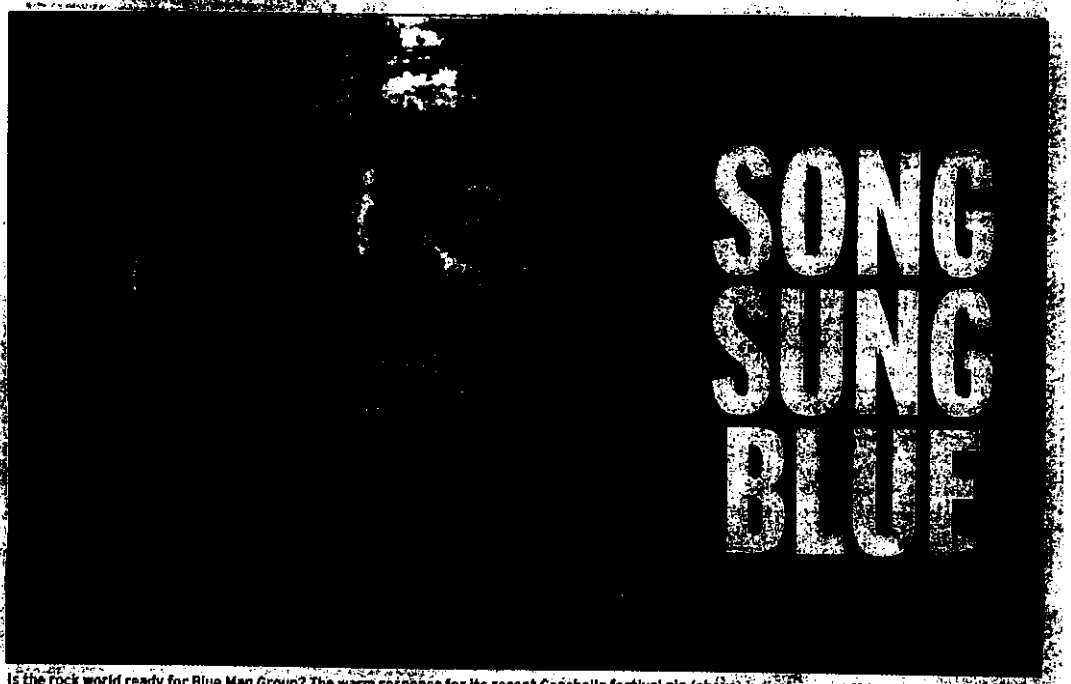
"Blue Man Group"

They paint each other. They paint the audience. They unroll toilet paper. Foreign tourists love this long-running new vaudeville show. Astor Place. Ticketmaster.

currents
Weekend

FRIDAY
August 8, 2003

THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE



Is the rock world ready for Blue Man Group? The warm response for its recent Coachella festival gig (above) indicates yes. *K.C. Alfred / Union-Tribune*

Group sets own rules with amalgamation of surreal art, rock

By George Varga, POP MUSIC CRITIC

NEW YORK — Blue Man Group thrives on contradictions, the more and bigger the better.

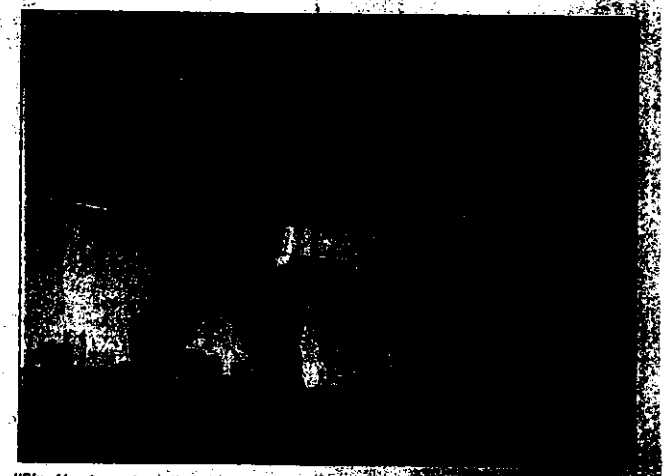
"Our work is influenced by two kinds of gifted people, Einstein and Forrest Gump," said Chris Wink, only half in jest, as group co-founders Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton nodded in agreement during an interview at their Lower East Side rehearsal studio.

A happy confluence of low art and high art, BMG mixes surrealism and dada-inspired imagery with tribal drumming; rock 'n' roll power chords; Japanese comic book-inspired imagery; vaudeville; the collision of art and technology; junk-food-consumption-as-live-theater; elaborate homemade percussion instruments; and more.

These unlikely ingredients have improbably helped transform BMG, which began 15 years ago as a fledgling Big Apple guerrilla theater troupe with no budget and murky dreams, into a major pop-culture sensation.

The group now boasts an annual operating budget of nearly $30 million and a staff of almost 500 to mount its

SEE **Blue, E2**



"Blue Man Group is really not about the three of us. It's about the [illegible]," co-founder Chris Wink, who may or may not be in this picture. *Union-Tribune*

DATEBOOK

Blue Man Group, with Tracy Bonham and Venus Hum
8 p.m. tomorrow; Cox Arena, 5500 Canyon Crest Drive, SDSU; $28.25-$43.25 (plus service charges); (619) 220-TIXS

BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 660

ATLANTIC CITY WEEKLY
PLEASANTVILLE, NJ
WEEKLY 45,000
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Blue Man Group unleashes rock 'n' roll performance art

Aug. 31, the Arena. The world-famous Blue Man Group will perform Sunday, Aug. 31 at Trump Taj Mahal. The showtime is 8pm. Tickets for this one-of-a-kind show cost $55 and $45, and are on sale at the Trump Taj Mahal box office, ticketmaster.com or Ticketmaster at 1-800-736-1420.

Since its inception, Blue Man Group has been a theatrical sensation, stunning audiences across the globe. Legions of dedicated fans come time and time again to experience Blue Man Group's unique combination of percussion, theatrics, lights and avant-garde artistry.

According to George Vega of the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, "BMG mixes surrealism and dada-inspired imagery with tribal drumming; rock 'n' roll power chords; Japanese comic book-inspired imagery; vaudeville; the collision of art and technology; junk-food-consumption-as-live-theater; elaborate homemade percussion instruments; and more."

Their newly released album, *Audio*, has been touted as a "glorious wall of sound." For years, the intriguing blue-skinned trio has captivated and perplexed both fans and critics alike. ■

BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 6609

BLUE MAN GROUP

One of the most exciting theatrical presentations of the season is the world-famed Blue Man Group, coming to the Taj Mahal's Mark Etess Arena next Sunday night. Part performance art, part "Spinal Tap" satire, with a touch of retro arena rock and a high-tech light and sound sensory overload, The Blue Man Group — dressed entirely in black with shaved heads and hands painted an acrylic cobalt blue — performs their bizarre percussion act on PVC pipes, rubber paddles, an open piano turned on its side, and their own drumbone and air pole.

The Blue Man Group was the creation of three New Yorkers in the 1980s. Their quixotic, multimedia cult project has taken off to where there are today dozens of Blue Man members performing nightly at theaters in Boston, Chicago, Las Vegas and New York.

Their current "Complex Rock Tour" features audience interaction, and the group pulls unsuspecting victims from the audience, their mime performances "interpreted" through a disembodied "voice-over" and a massive video screen mounted behind the band. Over the years, Blue Man Group has established a devoted cult following who return time and again to become a participant in their ever-evolving spoofs.

Tracy Bonham is guest artist on the current tour, and her vocals include a rousing take on The Who's "Baba O'Reilly" and Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit."

Showtime Sunday night at the Etess Arena is 8 p.m. Tickets are $55 and $45, available through the Taj box office or Ticketmaster at (609) 449-5150 or (800) 736-1420.

Caesar's invites visitors to celebrate one of the favorite traditions of summertime at the shore and have "Fun, Fun, Fun" with The Beach Boys next weekend.

Ever since their explosive debut with the 1961 hit "Surfin'," the sounds of The Beach Boys have been synonymous with summertime fun. Their greatest hit, the multi-platinum "Kokomo," went on to a second round of popularity in the Tom Cruise movie "Cocktail." "It's a great thing when you can have a #1 record 27 years after you started!" reflects co-writer Mike Love.

Still riding their wave of stardom, The Beach Boys continue to thrill crowds with singalongs of hits like "Surfin' Safari," "Good Vibrations," "California Girls" and "Help Me Rhonda." Their timeless classics have earned them induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Grammy's Lifetime Achievement

STATEN ISLAND SUNDAY ADVANCE

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BLUE MAN PRODUCTIONS 599 BROADWAY 5TH FLOOR NYC 10012 TEL 212 226 6366 FAX 212 226 660

simply red

written and illustrated by Harmon Leon

Well tickle my red ass! The ad reads: "Open Auditions For The Blue Man Group. The off-Broadway sensation is searching for performers for an upcoming production."

This once underground, blue, New York-based performance group has not only annoyed us on countless computer commercials and a joint venture with Moby on the Grammys, now they're franchising the operation like Starbucks, The Gap, or *Gallagher II*, expanding their blue mirth to a multitude of cities. Launching in Las Vegas, Boston and Chicago, Blue Man Groups are providing coast-to-coast, crowd-pleasing entertainment that would make any "Stomp" fan go gaga. Just think, now in several cities, you can eat at McDonald's, see The Blue Man Group, and then go for a nightcap at T.G.I. Friday's.

Reading this ad over my morning coffee and stale blueberry muffin, I propose to do what any sane person would in the circumstance. That's right, I put on a red jumpsuit, paint my face red and venture to the audition posing as a guy whose life's ambition is to be part of a colored rhythmic clan, despite his crimson confusion. Yes, for fucksake, I'm auditioning for the Blue Man Group dressed as a Red Man.

When I arrive at the audition, taking place at a theater in downtown San Francisco, a dozen potential Blue Man Groupers are seated in chairs. Some drum on tables, getting into the spirit of the BMG. All

"Don't we get to do a schtick? Or hit some things?"

are clad in some sort of blue shirt, making the semi-conscious decision to say, "Hey, judging by my blue sweatshirt, you can easily see me as part of your group, my Blue Man brethren!"

As I make my red entrance, they all look up like I just ate a live cat. "Is this the audition for The Blue, or the Red Man Group?" I ask, concerned, pointing to the Blue Man audition poster.

"It's the Blue Man Group," clarifies the snooty woman behind the desk.

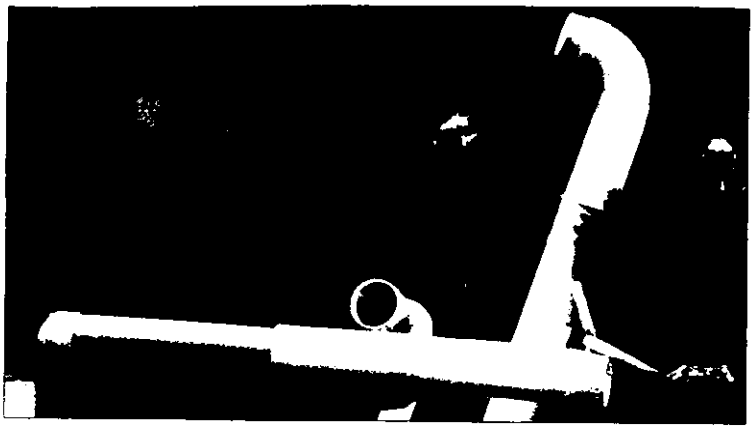
"Oh man, I could've sworn it said red," slapping my palm against my head.

"Well, you can sign in anyway," the woman barks, unamused.

"Will it ruin my chances by being red?"

"I think they'll love it," she adds with non-subtle sarcasm, shoving some forms into my red hands.

"I could have sworn the ad said 'red,'" I whine. "Maybe they need to have some red in the group?"



She doesn't give me the benefit of an answer, so I begin the task of filling out The Blue Man Group application:

NAME:
Chas Redmon

PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCE:
• Leader of the performance group He Said/We Red!
The Festival of Red, Gilroy, the Garlic Capital of California
• *Little Red Women*, Louise May Alcott adaptation, Gilroy High School

ACTING EXPERIENCE:
I'm a frequent viewer of "Inside The Actors Studio," hosted by James Lipton. The one with Ben Affleck is my favorite.

A professional woman in glasses comes in and greets the group. "Hand me your papers and stand in the order you give them to me." She calls our names, telling us to line up.

"What they're going to do is give you a bald wig and take a picture of you."

"Will there be optional blue and red bald wigs?" I ask.

"No!"

"Okay everyone, line up against the wall next to the red guy," a person who I assume is in charge says mockingly.

"I told them in the lobby, I could've sworn the ad said 'red.'"

Once we enter the audition room, he distributes bald wigs.

I pull my bald wig over my red stocking cap, making it look like yet another cap. I'm told I'm not doing it right. It looks as pathetic as my red makeup. On one side of me is a very serious actor-type, seething the attitude, "I am actor, hear me roar!" He methodically gets into the role of blue, bald person, completely absorbing the character with grave seriousness.

"What we're doing now is the physical requirements of the character," states the man in charge. The second in command snaps some photos of each of us, then adds, "That's it for today!"

What? That's all there is to auditioning to be a blue fucking man? I feel betrayed. "Don't we get to do a schtick? Or hit some things?"

Continued on page 78

Harmon Leon is a comedian/writer living in San Francisco. He has written for *Details*, *Black Book*, *Maxim*, *Salon*, and *Might*. Harmon has performed around the globe including the Edinburgh and Melbourne Comedy Festivals. Harmon is low in sodium and perfect for the elderly.

Harmon Leon continued from page 25

"No, that's all we need for today."

I pull out two pairs of scissors. People look at me like I just did such at an airport security checkpoint. "This is kind of a rhythmic, 'Stomp'-like thing I had worked out." I say, snipping away like Edward Scissorhands, dancing the robot.

"That's great, but the audition's over for today," snaps the man in charge.

Putting away my implements, I ask, "What time do we call to see when we start rehearsing with the group?"

"We'll make calls this afternoon and let you know," he says.

"Great! So I can call later and find out!"

"Don't call us, we'll call you."

"It's because I'm red, isn't it!"

When I get to the lobby, there's a brand new group waiting to audition. Just as I'm about to walk out, a friend of mine, with whom I planned a synchronized arrival at the theater, walks into the lobby. He too is in a red jumpsuit. He blurts, "Is this where the Red Man Group auditions are held?" Turning to the snooty woman behind the desk, I proclaim, "See, I told you I'm not crazy!" Those blue-faced fascists!

Regardless, I'm not going to give up. No. Look for me next week, putting on a gorilla suit and auditioning for a choice role in the musical "Cats"!

CMJ NEW MUSIC REPORT
NEW YORK, NY
WEEKLY 2,700
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RETAIL

Section by Gerry Hart • ghart@cmj.com

POINTS OF IMPACT

	GARAGE A TROIS *Emphasizer* Tone-Cool Catalog No. 751165 Dist.: RED	BLOOD BROTHERS *Burn Piano Island, Burn* ARTISTdirect Catalog No. 01070 Dist.: BMG	BLUE MAN GROUP *The Complex* Lava Catalog No. 83631 Dist.: WEA	LISA GERMANO *Lullaby For Liquid Pig* iMusic Catalog No. 01117 Dist: BMG
Retail	Programs: MMN (June/July *Monitor This!*), AIMS (May listening stations), ISIS (adult stores), Tower (Student Advantage), Virgin (JazzFest programs), Borders (GLS), B&N (May listening wall), Newbury Comics (Sounds From The Underground), other listening posts and P&P in key markets.	AD first released a low priced DVD ($7.98 list) featuring new track, live Seattle and peripheral footage. Vinyl piece (through different dist.).Art-dev approach with a let-it-happen-organically label mentality. Initial ship goal of 15k met—micro-mrktg with indies and regional chains.	Shipping 150k with programs at all national accounts, as well as key indies and regional chains. Aggressive marketing with all the indie coalitions. In-store appearances are in the works—we'll keep you posted. Markets will include Boston, NYC, Chicago, LA.	Ship goal is 10k. There's an Amoeba LA in-store on street date (4/15) with advertising in the *LA Weekly* and programs with M. Millennium, Newbury Comics, more indies and Borders (GLS). Breakout markets: NY, LA, SF, Boston, Mnpls., Seattle, Portland.
Radio	Add date 4/22. Servicing College, specialty shows, Jazz, Triple A non-comm., XM, Sirius. Focus tracks: "A-Frame," "Sprung Monkey," "Hardheaded Rio a.k.a. Rio Cura Dura". NPR *Weekend Edition*'s Ned Wharton will mention GAT and their JazzFest appearances in his interview with Charlie Hunter airing in April.	Focus track is "Ambulance Vs. Ambulance," but there are so many great ones. Debuted this week at No. 5 on the Loud Rock college charts and at No. 26 last week on the Top 200. Commercial specialty support has been great, growing organically toward adds that way.	*The Complex* was the No. 2 most-added record at college radio last week and this week is the greatest gainer on the Top 200 (154* - 45*) and No. 14 on Triple A. Going for adds at Triple A/Hot AC 4/14.	Focus tracks include "It's Party Time" and "Dream Glasses Off," but *make sure you listen* to "From A Shell"—one of the most gorgeous moments on the disc. Going for adds at college, non-comm. and Triple A 3/31. Dauntless is working promo.
Video	Live tune, "Jimi Was From Seattle," featured as bonus enhanced content on CD, in addition to video footage of recording sessions, creative process outtakes, etc.	Video for "Ambulance Vs. Ambulance" being edited at press time, will be serviced shortly. By Laurent Briet, young director who recently directed Mellowdrone.	Video for "Sing Along" (featuring Dave Matthews) to all outlets 3/31.	No video... yet.
Press\TV	Features and reviews in CMJ *NMM, Relix, Down Beat, Jazz Times, Jazziz, OffBeat, An Honest Tune, Billboard* and local papers everywhere. Live in-studio performance on WVIL-TV (LA) morning show week of release. CNN Music Room performance week of release.	Press is all over this—huge support from *Alternative Press, Blender, CMJ* (both *Monthly* and *Weekly*), *Spin, Rockpile, Revolver, Heckler, Lollipop, Rolling Stone*, weeklies, dailies and fanzines everywhere. And it's got no end in site. Press really helping drive the buzz on *Burn*.	Press support is rolling out everywhere from *Billboard* to *CMJ* (*Monthly* coverage, plus *NMR* cover 5/26) to *Rolling Stone, Alternative Press, Village Voice*, even *Men's Health*. Dailies and weeklies countrywide. TV includes: *The Tonight Show* (4/22), *Carson Daly* (5/5).	Lisa is a press darling—4 stars on every one of her records in *Rolling Stone* (this is her fifth). Press from *Billboard*, to *CMJ* (both *Monthly* and *Weekly*), *Big Takeover, Magnet, Spin, Time Out New York, Resonance, Rockrgrl, Performing Songwriter*, dailies, weeklies everywhere.
Tour	Current dates already sold out at New Orleans Jazz And Heritage Festival and Bonnaroo main stage. Touring "east of the Mississippi" in May and June, "west of the Mississippi" in September and October. Nice buzz at SXSW after their performances in March.	In Europe through 4/5. Then SLC (4/8), Denver (4/9), Mnpls. (4/11), Chicago (4/12), Detroit (4/13). Also hitting Houston, Austin, Phoenix, Vegas, San Diego, LA, SF, Portland, Seattle, back to Europe and then to the U.S.	After performing on Moby's Area2 tour last summer, BMG headlining DC, NYC, Chicago, Mnpls., Denver, LA, SF, Seattle and Portland from 5/18 to 6/2. Now finalizing 40-city summer tour. Check out site below for updates.	Headlining two LA dates with Maria McKee and Eleni Mandell. Then she's off to Europe with John Doe and back to the US with a full tour in June/July (final dates TBA).
Internet	Garage A Trois E-cards, newsletter, listserv, chat room, live streams, downloads, bios, tour dates, pics, news updates, etc. available at www.tonecool.com/artists/garageatrois.html. Also, E-Blasts galore and programs with Amazon.	E-card, mp3 download at eye-poppingly well-designed official site: www.thebloodbrothers.com. Insound.com promos, drill team marketing online. BMG E-mail player on Hottopic.com. ARTISTdirect doing RIYL E-mail blasts.	Best site is blueman.com, where fans can get tour and ticket info, enter contests and shop the Blue Man Group store for merch, accessories, collectibles and more. Lava working with Scott Perry and Sperry Media for CIMS jukeboxes. Pre-orders at Amazon give fans exclusive streaming video.	Best site is lisagermano.com. E-cards, MP3 downloads, E-mail blasts to many RIYL artists via iMusic/ARTISTdirect and Lisa'a official E-mail list. Amazon Tier 5 program in place. Sperry Media is also working *Lullaby* online for CIMS.
Notes	For POP and in-store play copies contact Glen Lodovico, glenl@tonecool.com. GAT is collabo between jazz/funk superpowers 8-string guitarist Charlie Hunter, Galactic drummer Stanton Moore, percussionist/vibraphonist Mike Dillon (Critters Buggin', Les Claypool) and saxophonist Skerik (Critters Buggin', Tuatara, Les Claypool, Roger Waters). In-store play "A-Frame."	Display materials include posters and stickers. In-store play copies available to all. For more info, hit up your local BMG-er or E-mail Jason.Whittington@ARTISTdirect.com. Debuted this week on the CMJ Retail Top 100 at No. 33. Also came in just under the In-Store Play radar at No. 22. This record is hardcore at it's most creative, worth your time and support.	BMG's debut album sold over 500,000 copies and was nominated for a Grammy. The first single, with Dave Matthews, is gaining steam and the next single, "The Current" featuring Bush's Gavin Rossdale, will be the featured single/video for *Terminator 3*. Word has it BMG's theatrical show performs for 1,118,000 people a year! This record will win customers with in-store play—these guys are not just for show.	This album needs your discretionary posts and programs. We know retail gets those requests for just about every record released, but this is an absolutely beautiful record. One that, no matter how many times you listen to it, can still surprise you. Songs like "From A Shell" can move—please lend this one your support. Let customers hear it. This is one of those records.

SPECIALTY CHARTS

For more Specialty Chart information, visit *www.cmj.com*

TRIPLE A

Period Ending 3.25.2003 — www.cmj.com

Contributing reporters this week: 40 • See page 43 for a complete list of Triple A airplay reports.

TW	LW	2W	PK	WKS	ARTIST • TITLE	LABEL
					UP 18 POSITIONS	
★	19	–	1	2	**BEN HARPER** Diamonds On The Inside	Virgin
★	8	37	2	3	**ANI DIFRANCO** Evolve	Righteous Babe
3	2	5	2	5	**CALEXICO** Feast Of Wire	Touch And Go
4	1	1	1	7	**MASSIVE ATTACK** 100th Window	Virgin
5	4	4	2	8	**RY COODER AND MANUEL GALBAN** Mambo...	Perro Verde-Nonesuch
6	3	2	2	6	**CAT POWER** You Are Free	Matador
★	10	11	7	6	**BE GOOD TANYAS** Chinatown	Nettwerk
★	9	3	3	6	**PATTY LARKIN** Red=Luck	Vanguard
9	5	7	5	9	**DAR WILLIAMS** The Beauty Of The Rain	Razor And Tie
10	7	16	7	4	**MINUS 5** Down With Wilco	Yep Roc
★	11	8	8	6	**SUPERGRASS** Life On Other Planets	Island-IDJMG
★	13	10	3	9	**SONNY LANDRETH** The Road We're On	Sugar Hill
★	17	33	13	3	**FOLK IMPLOSION** The New Folk Implosion	Imusic-ARTISTdirect
					#1 DEBUT	
★	–	–	14	1	**BLUE MAN GROUP** The Complex	Lava
★	30	–	15	2	**LES NUBIANS** One Step Forward	Omtown-Higher Octave
16	6	6	6	7	**GO-BETWEENS** Bright Yellow Bright Orange	Jetset
★	18	19	17	6	**JOHN HAMMOND** Ready For Love	Back Porch
★	–	–	18	1	**IDLEWILD** The Remote Part	Capitol
★	20	13	9	8	**POSTAL SERVICE** Give Up	Sub Pop
20	12	12	10	9	**KATHLEEN EDWARDS** Failer	Zoë-Rounder
★	–	–	21	1	**STEPHEN MALKMUS** Pig Lib	Matador
★	26	23	22	5	**ELENI MANDELL** Country For True Lovers	Zestone
★	23	–	23	2	**ROOMFUL OF BLUES** That's Right!	Alligator
★	35	–	24	2	**JOAN ARMATRADING** Lovers Speak	Telstar
25	16	14	12	4	**FISCHERSPOONER #1**	Capitol
★	–	–	26	1	**IGUANAS** Plastic Silver 9-Volt Heart	Yep Roc
27	15	17	15	5	**SOUNDTRACK** Amandla!	ATO
28	14	9	1	9	**NICK CAVE AND THE BAD SEEDS** Nocturama	Anti-Epitaph
★	36	–	29	2	**JOE JACKSON** Volume 4	Rykodisc
★	–	–	30	1	**BETTIE SERVEERT** Log 22	Palomine-Hidden Agenda
★	–	–	31	1	**DAN BERN** Fleeting Days	Cooking Vinyl
★	–	–	32	1	**ROSANNE CASH** Rules Of Travel	Capitol
★	–	–	33	1	**BOB HOLROYD** Without Within	Six Degrees
34	24	18	8	11	**TIM EASTON** Break Your Mother's Heart	New West
★	–	–	35	1	**CAVE IN** Antenna	RCA
★	39	32	1	15	**JOSEPH ARTHUR** Redemption's Son	Enjoy-Real World-Universal
37	21	28	21	4	**DJ KRUSH** The Message At The Depth	Red Ink
★	R	20	2	17	**DAVID GRAY** A New Day At Midnight	ATO-RCA
★	–	–	39	1	**BOBI CESPEDES** Rezos	Six Degrees
40	31	–	31	2	**THROWING MUSES** Throwing Muses	4AD-Beggars Group

Chart information is based on combined airplay reports of AAA releases from CMJ's panel of college, commercial and non-commercial radio stations. A digest version of this chart reaches over 100,000 active music consumers in CMJ New Music Monthly. Visit www.cmj.com/nmm.

ADDS

1	**DANIEL LANOIS** Shine	Anti-Epitaph
2	**VENUS HUM** Big Beautiful Sky	MCA
3	**TOMMY GUERRERO** Soul Food Taqueria	Mo Wax-Beggars Group
4	**MARTIN'S FOLLY** From Hope	Johnson's Wax
5	**SAHARA HOTNIGHTS** Keep Up The Speed (EP)	Jetset

★ : Signifies upward movement

RPM

Period Ending 3.25.2003 — www.cmj.com

Contributing reporters this week: 216 • See page 56 for a complete list of RPM airplay reports.

TW	LW	2W	PK	WKS	ARTIST • TITLE	LABEL
★	2	14	1	4	**APHEX TWIN** 26 Mixes For Cash	Warp
2	1	1	1	6	**DJ KRUSH** The Message At The Depth	Red Ink
★	3	3	3	5	**FISCHERSPOONER #1**	Capitol
★	9	13	4	3	**VIKTER DUPLAIX** International Affairs V2.0	Hollywood
★	10	10	5	4	**DJ SMASH** Phonography 2	Blue Note
6	4	4	3	8	**MASSIVE ATTACK** 100th Window	Virgin
★	14	40	7	3	**P'TAAH** Staring At The Sun	Ubiquity
8	7	7	7	5	**VARIOUS ARTISTS** Requiem For A Dream Remixed	Thrive
★	11	11	9	5	**MR. C** Change	End Recordings
★	12	6	5	7	**VARIOUS ARTISTS** Rewind 2	Ubiquity
11	6	5	5	7	**PAUL VAN DYK** Global	Mute
12	8	8	5	11	**GROOVE ARMADA** Lovebox	Zomba
★	23	27	13	3	**JORI HULKKONEN** Different	PIAS America-F Communications
14	5	2	2	10	**VARIOUS ARTISTS** Classic And Rare...	PIAS America-F Communications
15	13	9	9	7	**TOSCA** Dehli9	!K7
★	16	19	16	3	**KAZUFUMI KODAMA A.K.A. ECHO** Stars	Sony Japan-Red Ink
					#1 DEBUT	
★	–	–	17	1	**WEEKEND PLAYERS** Pursuit Of Happiness	WSM
18	15	17	12	7	**AALACHO** Sugar	Self-Released
19	17	18	17	6	**NOBUKAZU TAKEMURA** 10th	Thrill Jockey
★	32	24	20	5	**VARIOUS ARTISTS** One Thousand...	Ark 21-Mondo Rhythmica
21	18	21	18	3	**VARIOUS ARTISTS** United Nations Of Future Music Volume 1	Om
★	27	22	3	11	**VARIOUS ARTISTS** Dub Selector 2	Quango-Palm
★	28	20	17	6	**ERLEND OYE** Unrest	Source-Astralwerks
24	20	26	19	7	**PIGFACE** Easy Listening For Difficult Fuckheads	Invisible
					UP 14 POSITIONS	
★	39	37	19	7	**NEGATIVE FORMAT** Cipher Method	Sector 9 Studios
★	36	–	26	2	**VARIOUS ARTISTS** Six Records Breaks Your Heart Again	Six Records
27	22	23	20	6	**DECODED FEEDBACK** Shockwave	Metropolis
28	25	31	25	4	**ECHOBOY** Giraffe	Mute
29	26	36	26	3	**KASKADE** It's You, It's Me	Om
30	24	–	24	2	**DJ SPOOKY** Dubtometry	Thirsty Ear
★	–	–	31	1	**FUNKY LOWLIVES** Cartouche	Stereo Deluxe
32	29	25	25	4	**VARIOUS ARTISTS** Cybonetix 2002	DSBP
★	40	–	33	2	**MUGGS** Dust	Anti-Epitaph
★	R	29	26	4	**USER** Symphony #2 For Dot Matrix Printers	Asphodel Ltd.
35	31	33	31	3	**BOB HOLROYD** Without Within	Six Degrees
36	21	12	10	6	**VARIOUS ARTISTS** Dream Therapy	Quango
★	–	–	37	1	**DETROIT EXPERIMENT** Detroit Experiment	Repeadope
38	37	35	35	3	**VARIOUS ARTISTS** Sonig.ilation	Sonig
39	19	15	1	11	**CUICA** City To City	Ubiquity
★	R	–	6	12	**ROYKSOPP** Melody A.M.	Astralwerks

Chart information is based on combined airplay reports of RPM releases from CMJ's panel of college, commercial and non-commercial radio stations. A digest version of this chart reaches over 100,000 active music consumers in CMJ New Music Monthly. Visit www.cmj.com/nmm.

ADDS

1	**CODEC AND FLEXOR** Tubed	Emperor Norton
2	**ORTZ** We Don't Talk	Big Star Records
3	**BOBBY HUGHES COMBINATION** Nhu Golden Era	Stereo Deluxe
4	**EVERYTHING BUT THE GIRL** Like The Deserts Miss The Rain	Rhino
5	**DISCO D** A Night At The Booty Bar	Tommy Boy

BLUE MAN

G

NOT-SO-SLOPPY JOES
(SEE PAGE 97)

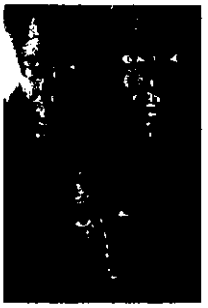
Family Fun

FEBRUARY 1999

Are the cool cats in your family ready for the stage? Find out at Sears Theater Fever in Chicago this month.

Get In the Act

ON SATURDAY, February 27th, answer the casting call, as Sears Theater Fever kicks off its second year in **Chicago**. As a prelude to National Family Week at the Theater, more than 50 area theaters will host a variety of open-house activities designed to get families not only in the audience but also on the stage, behind the scenes, and in the limelight. Puppet workshops, improvisation classes, and a "do-it-yourself *Romeo and Juliet* balcony scene" are just a few of the choices. The events are free, and participating families will receive discounted tickets to performances in the Windy City through October 1st. Call 312-554-9800.



Blue Man Group will share its stage secrets

Families can also take advantage of discounted hotel rates throughout February as part of Chicago Winterbreak. Call 888-FUN-EVENT.

Blue Man Productions, Inc. 434 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10003 (212) 387-9415 Fax (212) 674-4754

APRIL 1999

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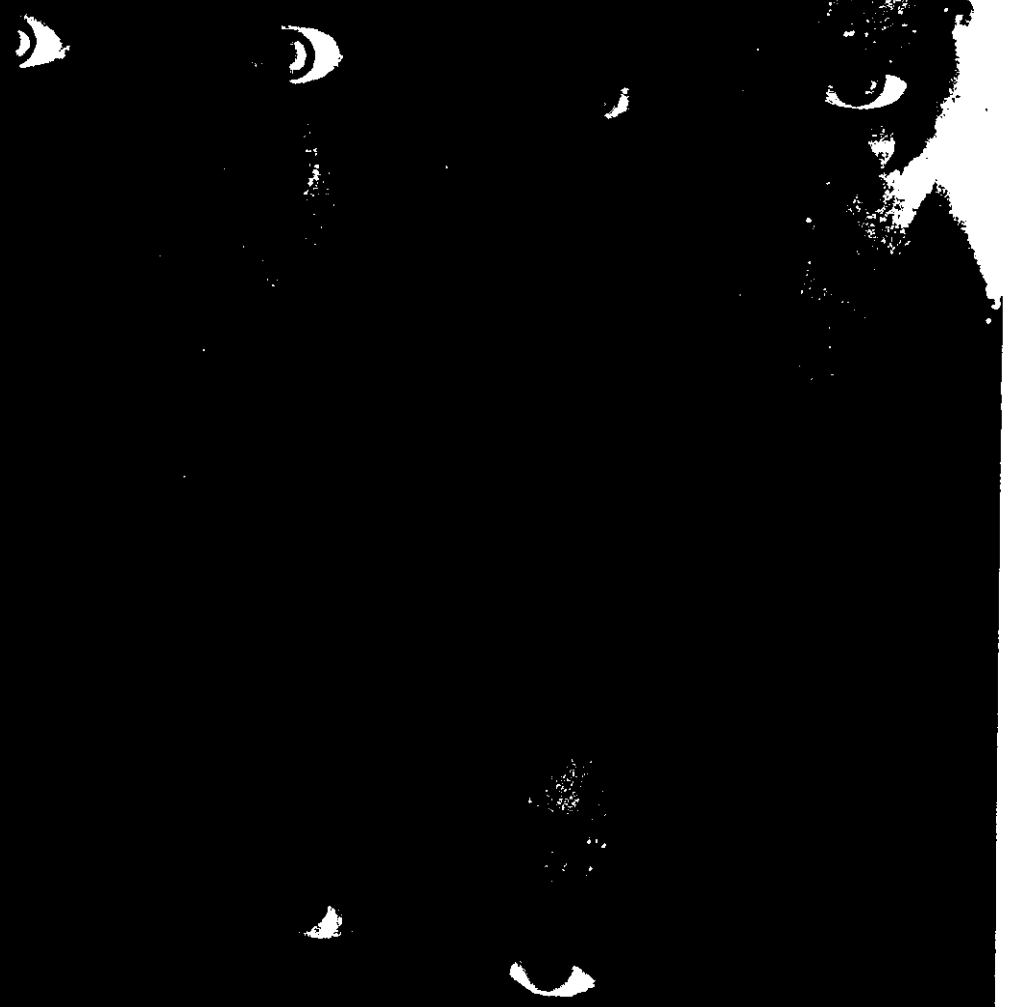

DON'T JUST SIT THERE
Theatre that crosses the border between actor and audience

FIVE EASY PIECES
Quick, inexpensive character caps

FORTY MINUTE FINISH
A new short play by Jerome Hairston

TRUE ACTING
Larry Silverberg on the actor's fuel

GETTING INTO THE PLAY

He may not have known the deceased well, but an audience member (left) joins widow Kathleen (Susan Gildea) and Rory Finn (Sean McGrath) onstage to mourn in Lafferty's Wake *at Society Hill Playhouse in Philadelphia.*

In interactive theatre, everybody's a character

By Tony Vellela

GRANDMA SYLVIA didn't really die. She just went on the road.

After more than two thousand performances in New York and Los Angeles, the original production of *Grandma Sylvia's Funeral* closed last fall, leaving behind thousands of audience members who, night after night, joined in the event as "mourners," "cousins," and "friends of the family." The show has attracted audiences in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Coral Springs, Florida, and other U.S. and overseas bookings are in the works. An acting edition of the script published by Samuel French will guarantee regional and community productions for years to come.

The successful comedy is one more example of the growing popularity of interactive theatre, in which audience members are encouraged to become participants in the performance. "Interactive" is a catchall category that includes, in addition to commercial works like *Grandma Sylvia*, such divergent forms as theme park "streetmosphere," Civil War battle re-enactments, competitive improv games, murder mysteries staged in hotels and restaurants, street theatre, productions that delve into audience participation in conventional theatre spaces, and political, social, and educational work based on the theories of Augusto Boal and others. (See the sidebar on page 30.)

Interactive theatre entered the commercial mainstream with *Tony n' Tina's Wedding*, which opened in Greenwich Village in February 1988 and is still running. In the nomenclature of the form, *Tony n' Tina* is an event-centered environmental piece: guests arrive at a church; are handed "wedding invitations," and witness the ceremony. Then everyone traipses three blocks to a banquet room, where the reception, including a baked ziti dinner, takes place. During the evening, actors play out scenes in various parts of the hall, sit down at the audience's tables, and float around from group to group, engaging audience members in a mixture of improvised conversations and scripted material. Other examples of interactive theatre enjoying successful runs in New York include *Late Nite Catechism*, in which audience members become religious instruction students hectored by a domineering Roman Catholic nun, and *Murder by the Mob*, a murder mystery set in a restaurant.

Even in more traditional theatre spaces, the audience often becomes part of the action. Bill Irwin's *Fool Moon*, in which volunteers are recruited from the audience to help shape and perform a comedy sequence, has had two successful runs on Broadway in recent years. In long-running New York, Boston, and Chicago productions by Blue Man Group of *Tubes*, a pyrotechnic display of antics grows out of the premise that the actors are aliens. Audience members are offered the option of wearing white crepe paper headbands to indicate their willingness to participate in the proceedings. Those who do may be doused with brightly-colored liquid or hauled onstage for a physical entanglement. At *Villa Villa*, audience members are aware ahead of time that they will be drenched with water during the performance.

These New York shows are only the most visible manifestations of the new popularity, both across North America and around the world, of interactive forms that blur and in some cases erase the line between performer and audience.

Theatre began as an interactive form, observed Jeff Wirth, author of a handbook for interactive performers and editor of a newsletter on the subject. "It was a form of communication between people. It was a way of sharing what has happened on the hunt, when everyone was gathered around the fire. It was a way of passing on stories, of history." And of course all theatre is still, in the larger sense, an interactive medium, but over the centuries the role of the audience has been reduced and ritualized into a relatively passive one, merely commenting on the work with laughter and applause.

"We are all playful creatures," Wirth said. "Interactive work gives a place and permission for people to rediscover the playful impulses within them. They can be whomever they choose."

Wirth trained as an actor, graduated from the Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Clown College, and worked as a circus clown and as artistic director of a professional touring company before beginning to explore interactive forms. "I wanted to do theatre that was going to make an impact, that was going to have a positive effect on people's lives," he said.

A funeral always brings a family together: the cast of Grandma Sylvia's Funeral, *with co-creator Glenn Wein (center, wearing tie).*

BLUE MAN GROUP

For immediate release, please
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Blue Man Group
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Paul Speirs
Luxor Las Vegas
(702) 597-7118

OFF-BROADWAY SENSATION BLUE MAN GROUP TO HEADLINE AT LUXOR LAS VEGAS

LAS VEGAS, June 10, 1999— Circus Circus Enterprises Inc. has entered into agreement with one of the world's most sought-after theatrical productions, Blue Man Group, to debut at Luxor in March 2000. Blue Man Group currently has long-running sold-out shows in New York, Boston, and Chicago.

The opening will mark the first full-scale Blue Man production mounted west of the Mississippi, despite being heavily recruited in the west, particularly in Los Angeles and San Francisco.

"The one-of-a-kind, innovative feel of Blue Man is a perfect fit with Luxor, a one-of-a-kind property," said Glenn Schaeffer, president and CFO of Circus Circus Enterprises Inc. "Their arrival in Las Vegas will be a huge step forward for entertainment in Las Vegas."

Created by Matt Goldman, Chris Wink and Phil Stanton, Blue Man Group set the theatrical world on fire in 1991 when their first production opened Off-Broadway in New York City. The off-beat humor, tribal music and stunning visual effects performed by the three non-speaking blue-headed men sparked a revolution in the theatrical community and won Blue Man Group numerous honors including an Obie Award and a Drama Desk Award. Their success led to the creation of an entirely new genre in theater, paving the way for the creation of other non-conventional productions, such as "Stomp," "Tap Dogs," and "De LaGuarda."

"The success of the musical *Chicago* at Mandalay Bay proved Las Vegas is ready for legit theater, and now Blue Man Group will prove Las Vegas is ready for illegitimate theater," said Wink jokingly.

Luxor's state of the art theater will be the largest permanent home to a Blue Man Group production. "We are excited about the possibilities the larger venue presents," said Stanton, "We now have the space to accommodate more musicians and larger instruments. We will be custom-fitting some of our favorite pieces to Luxor proportions, as well as creating new visual effects and comedic character work specifically for this show."

Goldman, Stanton and Wink will also produce the Luxor show. Goldman said, "We have an unusual situation in that we are the authors, directors and the producers. Circus Circus has been nothing but supportive to our unique creative process and the results are already showing up in the quality of the planned production."

Blue Man Group's current productions continue to enjoy unprecedented success. Blue Man Group recently celebrated its 3500th performance in New York City, and has sold out more than 2,000 performances between their Boston and Chicago productions.

Blue Man Group's television credits include six appearances on the "Tonight Show with Jay Leno," six appearances on "Live with Regis and Kathy Lee," and performances and profiles on various television shows including "CBS Sunday Morning," NBC's "Today Show," and "Entertainment Tonight."

For more information on Blue Man Group, visit www.blueman.com. For information on Luxor Las Vegas, visit www.luxor.com.

###

BLUE MAN GROUP

"GAMING TODAY" JUNE 22, 1992

More Producer Juicies

And the news is mixed for some other local producers.

One of the classiest guys in the Las Vegas production business, **Dick Foster**, almost lost both of his shows here in one fell swoop.

Fortunately, he was granted a last-minute reprieve and the final curtain did not ring down on "***Spellbound***" at **Harrah's** in February as expected. It has, quite the contrary, been granted an extension to the millennium.

And though the **Luxor** folks have already announced they will replace "***Imagine***" with "***Blue Man Group***" next March, the cast of real troupers plays on.

Mark Callas and **Donny Moore's Springtime Productions** ("***American Superstars***") is casting for a production set to open soon in Greece.

ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

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Blue Man Group

Blue Man Group — the award-winning, off-Broadway entertainment phenomenon currently playing to sold-out houses in New York, Boston and Chicago — is scheduled to open a Las Vegas show in March 2000. The new show, tentatively titled "Blue Man Group: Live at Luxor," will mark the first full-scale Blue Man production west of the Mississippi.

Auditions are being held July 15 and 16. Interested male and female performers must have solid acting and drumming skills, be between 5' 10" and 6' 1" with weight proportionate to height, and be willing to relocate. For more information, call (212) 849-2799.

Blue Man Group is a trio of cult figures who blend offbeat deadpan humor, tribal drumming and a karaoke sing-along amid the visual hanging of industrial tubes. You can learn more about the group on its Web site: www.blueman.com.

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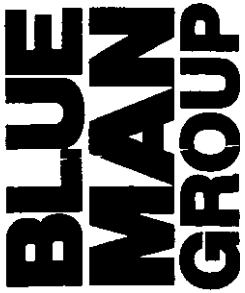
NEWSPAPER

THE INTERNATIONAL NEWSWEEKLY OF MUSIC, VIDEO, AND HOME ENTERTAINMENT

NOVEMBER 20, 1999

POPULAR•UPRISINGS™

BILLBOARD'S WEEKLY COVERAGE OF HOT PROSPECTS FOR THE HEATSEEKERS CHART • BY CARLA HAY



GOT THE BLUES: **Blue Man Group** is a quirky character act whose three members do not speak when performing and whose heads are disguised by skintight blue-colored masks. Think a '90s group inspired by cult favorites **the Residents**. Blue Man Group—the brainchild of **Matt Goldman, Chris Wink**, and **Phil Stanton**—has been winning over live theater audiences with avant-garde sounds. The group has already made appearances on several national TV shows, including "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno," "Live With Regis & Kathie Lee," and "Entertainment Tonight."

Blue Man Group will release its first album, "Audio," Dec. 7 on Virgin Records.

Having staged a theater show in New York, Chicago, and Boston, Blue Man Group will take its stage production to Las Vegas this March. The act will also be featured Dec. 14 on "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno."

Blue Man Productions, Inc. 434 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10003 (212) 387-9415 Fax (212) 674-4754

BLUE MAN GROUP

LIVE AT LUXOR

Fending off the compelling urge for a 'Blue' Christmas

You shouldn't buy Blue Man Group's "non-soundtrack" CD "Audio." Not yet. Rather, you hould stalk it for a while.

Breeze right past the rack hold- ng the CD, feigning complete dis- nterest. Visit the official web site f the New York-based performance rt group (http:// /ww.blueman.com) and read up on s critically acclaimed, nearly inde- cribable stage show, taking care to void the "purchase CD now" link. nticipate the opening of "Blue lan Group — Live at Luxor" in larch 2000 with every cell of your ody ... but do not, by God, buy the D yet.

You'll want to acquire "Audio" as lose to the opening of the Luxor ow as possible, for this reason nd this reason alone: Your antici- ation for the live show will soar pon hearing it. I've listened to Audio" several times this morning lready, and I have to tell you — ne next 3 1/2 months are going to e murder. I want to see Blue Man roup right now. Truthfully, I want o *join* Blue Man Group right now.

They might even have room for ne. "Audio" is just the latest step n BMG's bid for world domination, campaign that has seen highly uccessful New York, Boston, and hicago incursions; the next evolu- ionary step, playing Vegas, should ush them over the summit. Not ad work for a bunch of guys in hiny blue makeup and modified lack Nehru suits. At the rate BMG s growing, they'll need an army of lue Men — beating out melodies n varying lengths of PVC pipe, ettin' jiggy with the Utne Drums nd noshing on airborne marshmal- ows.

So how much of the BMG comes cross on CD? Surprisingly, quite a it. For a "group" as dependent pon every one of your senses, Audio" packs a strong visual unch. It's possible to enjoy Audio" simply as an album of kick- utt instrumental rock, with the all ne colors and definition the lis- ener might bring to such an enter- rise. With repeated listening, how- ver, the sounds change.

The nationally renowned Blue Man Group opens at Luxor in March.

The change seems subtle at first — after all, the instrumentation is fairly eccentric. (A small sampling of the instruments used, from the "PVC Instrument" to the ultra-cool "Backpack Tubulum," are pictured — and pithily described — in the CD booklet.) Eventually, however, the entire affair seems off-kilter — as if alien beings had picked up the instruments and figured out their individual sounds through trial and error. Which is, of course, the point of the show.

The path through "Audio" requires you to crawl on your belly, metaphorically-speaking. Bubbling jungle percussion supports faraway-sounding, heavily distorted guitars; imagine traversing a soft, blue velvet passageway with breathing walls. And oh yes, you're wearing suit made of feathers, with cleated shoes.

"Audio" is dance music for those who have never been to a disco, who have no fear of being ridiculed for dancing intuitive, absurd-looking jigs. If there was ever a time to take the old saying "Dance like nobody is watching" to heart, it's over the course of these 14 tracks.

You'll find all this out for yourself, of course, when you get around to purchasing "Audio" ... sometime in late January or early February. Wait for it, wait for it ...

SOUND CHECK

Geoff Carter

LV Sun 12/13/99 41225 c.2c

Fending off the compelling urge for a 'Blue' Christmas

The nationally renowned Blue Man Group opens at Luxor in March.

You shouldn't buy Blue Man Group's "non-soundtrack" CD "Audio." Not yet. Rather, you should stalk it for a while.

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They might even have room for me. "Audio" is just the latest step in BMG's bid for world domination, a campaign that has seen highly successful New York, Boston, and Chicago incursions; the next evolutionary step, playing Vegas, should push them over the summit. Not bad work for a bunch of guys in shiny blue makeup and modified black Nehru suits. At the rate BMG is growing, they'll need an army of Blue Men — beating out melodies on varying lengths of PVC pipe, gettin' jiggy with the Utne Drums and noshing on airborne marshmallows.

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PPLEMENT TO VARIETY

OCTOBER 12-18, 1998

VARIETY

THE INTERNATIONAL ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

Shows that run forever

Continued from page 37

"Line" has played for 23 years an average of three times a week, but artistic director Edith O'Hara keeps the hour-long show alive more as an actors' proving ground and schedule-filler than as profit-maker.)

The shows are wildly different: "Stomp," a mesmerizing celebration of percussion, and "Blue Man," an indescribable, subversive show that gets laughs both with satire and with toilet paper, are much more ambitious and innovative theatrical productions than "Tony & Tina," which borders on caricature and revels in its tacky wild party while providing a unique interactive theater experience; "The Fantasticks," which is, on many levels, the most elemental of romantic musicals; and "Perfect Crime," the live equivalent of a formulaic TV show like "Murder, She Wrote" or "Matlock."

Russell sees solutions to both mysteries in the same place: the audience. There are varying demographics, but all these shows reach the audience on a primal, visceral level and therefore attract people who don't normally attend theater, creating a more diverse audience than a typical play or musical.

Unique take on the world

Marc Routh, co-producer of "Stomp," which recouped its $400,000 investment within six months and is heading toward the five-year mark in February, says his show also offers something fresh, and has the advantage of being accessible to non-English-speaking tourists. " 'Stomp' has a unique way of looking at the world, providing a point of view most people have never experienced before," he says.

"Stomp" producer Richard Frankel says his show's audience at the Orpheum Theater in the East Village also has remained consistently young and hip: "Our audience has not changed that much; it seems like we're getting people's younger brothers. There are a lot more people who don't go to the theater than do, so if we plug into some small percentage of that," the show will keep selling out.

STAMINA KING: *Forget the big budget. "Blue Man Group" gets laughs with satire and toilet paper.*

Two shows, "Tony & Tina" and "Perfect Crime," have gone the opposite route, appealing to the "bus drivers, cops and sanitation workers," Russell says.

"Tony & Tina" producer Joe Corcoran says he initially brought his family from Long Island to the show 11 years ago because "they represent the masses." When they loved it, "Bells went off." (The show earned back its $112,000 cost in eight weeks and has now grossed about $20 million, Corcoran says.)

Both shows have, in recent years, moved to Times Square — the wedding takes place at St. Luke's Church, while "Crime" is at the Duffy Theater — lengthening their lives by reeling in those tourists who want something personal and intimate after seeing the blockbuster musicals but aren't interested in something as intense as current hit "The Beauty Queen of Leenane."

These shows have not only proved invincible but also difficult to copy. "Tony & Tina" has endured the most ripoffs, from obvious ones like "Joye &

Turn to next page

BLUE MAN GRO

Mickey Hart's Planet Drum · Hans Zimmer Scores Prince of Egypt · Denny Purcell Interview

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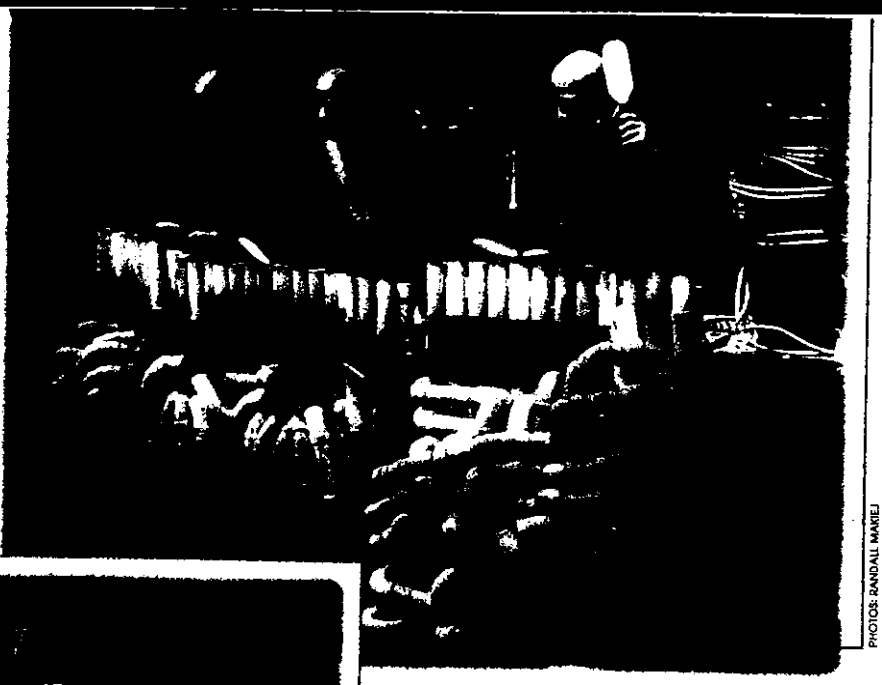


PHOTOS: RANDALL MARTIN

Above: Steve White, John Grady and Jeffrey Doornbus play PVC tubing in full Blue Man regalia. Left: Todd Perlmutter at the board

BLUE MAN GROUP

THE OFF-BROADWAY SENSATION'S FIRST RECORD

by Dan Daley

The Blue Man Group's award-winning off-Broadway show, *Tubes*, debuted in 1991 and has had an uninterrupted run ever since. It's quite an achievement in Manhattan's notoriously fickle alt-theater scene. In the show, an eerily engaging trio of blue-tinged figures wordlessly roams a small stage, turning every item imaginable into a percussive musical instrument and point of philosophical inquiry. It's musical, it's dramatic, it's funny and serious. And popular: It's now expanded with simultaneous satellite shows in Boston and Chicago.

As fundamentally musical as the show is—much of it centers around instruments created from polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipe—Blue Man Group is high concept. The three founders—Chris Wink, Phil Stanton and Matt Goldman, all veterans of fringe theater in New York—speak of "Blue Man values," a social code that transcends the rules of theater, and media in general. Like their mute, Buster Keaton-esque stage personalities, they regard technology with a graceful combination of bemusement, skepticism and child-like joy. These same values have come to the rescue over the years as they found that, as musically powerful as *Tubes* is, it did not necessarily translate beyond the edge of the stage.

"We've done *The Tonight Show* six times, and the first two times we did pieces from the show, and it just didn't work," recalls Goldman, the quiet, studious one of the three, and a steady foil for Wink's hyperkineticism. "We realized we had to write

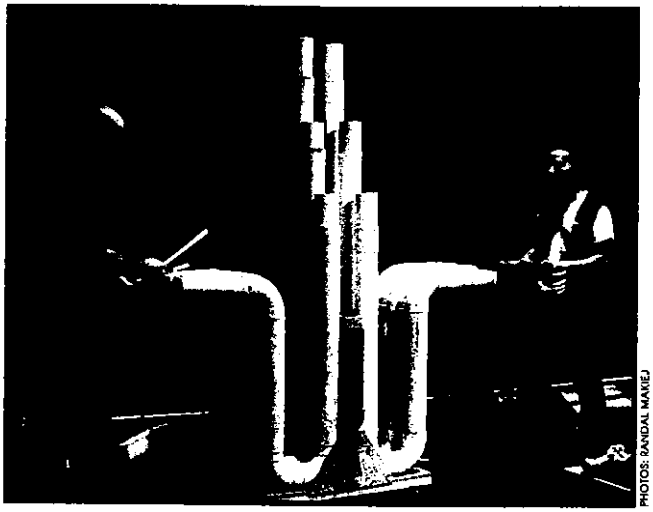
—*CONTINUED ON PAGE 185*

BLUE MAN GROUP

—FROM PAGE 169, BLUE MAN GROUP
something that worked for television, not the stage."

Similarly, they also learned that they had to reformulate the message to fit the medium when it came to recording the show. For the past five years, Blue Man had been through several studios trying unsuccessfully to capture the show's essence on tape for a commercial recording. "This doesn't work as a cast album," Wink says. Rather, they found that a live recording would have to have Blue Man values applied to new music that didn't rely on visuals. So, in the same manner in which they have adapted society's raw materials into found instruments, this past fall they began converting the bare-walled space of their personal theater on East 3rd Street into a recording studio, one that will be as mutable as the show itself.

"The thing about doing this in a regular recording studio is that we couldn't find one that would also let us set up a machine shop in it," jokes Wink. Indeed, their performance-rehearsal space is littered with their musical instrument experiments. For instance, the Tubulum is a more complex version of the PVC musical instrument used in the show at the Astor Place Theater. Where the latter's multiple tubes (one for each note, hit with a flat-sided mallet on one end to produce sound) converge in front, allowing it to be miked sufficiently with just four mics, the Tubulum is more like a calliope, requiring a Shure SM98 lavalier microphone to be lowered down each of its dozen or so pipes. Then there's the DrumBone, which has sliding components that produce thunderous, funny glissandi. The Star Spangled Rocket Backpack is part musical instrument, part urban assault vehicle, with PVC tubes arching over the wearer-player's head and fireworks loaded into the non-music tubes like bazookas. Not everything is centered around low- and mid-frequency blasters. There is the Shaker Gong—an aluminum plate suspended by rubber bungees in a frame—whose sharp racket is attended by coiled aluminum strips that, when released, make a fast, crisp attack sound. Less original but equally exotic instruments like a Hungarian cymbalum (a sort of zither) are also part of the arsenal.



PHOTOS: RANDAL MAKIEJ

Randall Makiej (L) and Aron Sanchez playing the Snake Tubulum

All this and more (plus a three-piece band that plays along during the show) will play for the recording, once an iso-

BLUE MAN GROUP

lated control room area is built at one end of the 110x40-foot space. Pro Audio Design in Boston is designing the room-within-a-room. Blue Man co-producer Todd Perlmutter (a musician who has played in various incarnations of the show as a drummer) originally considered renting a console and other pieces of equipment, but then suggested purchasing a 56-input Neotek Elite console with DiskMix automation and Otari MTR-90 MkIII 24-track deck, with the intention of reselling them after this initial project is complete.

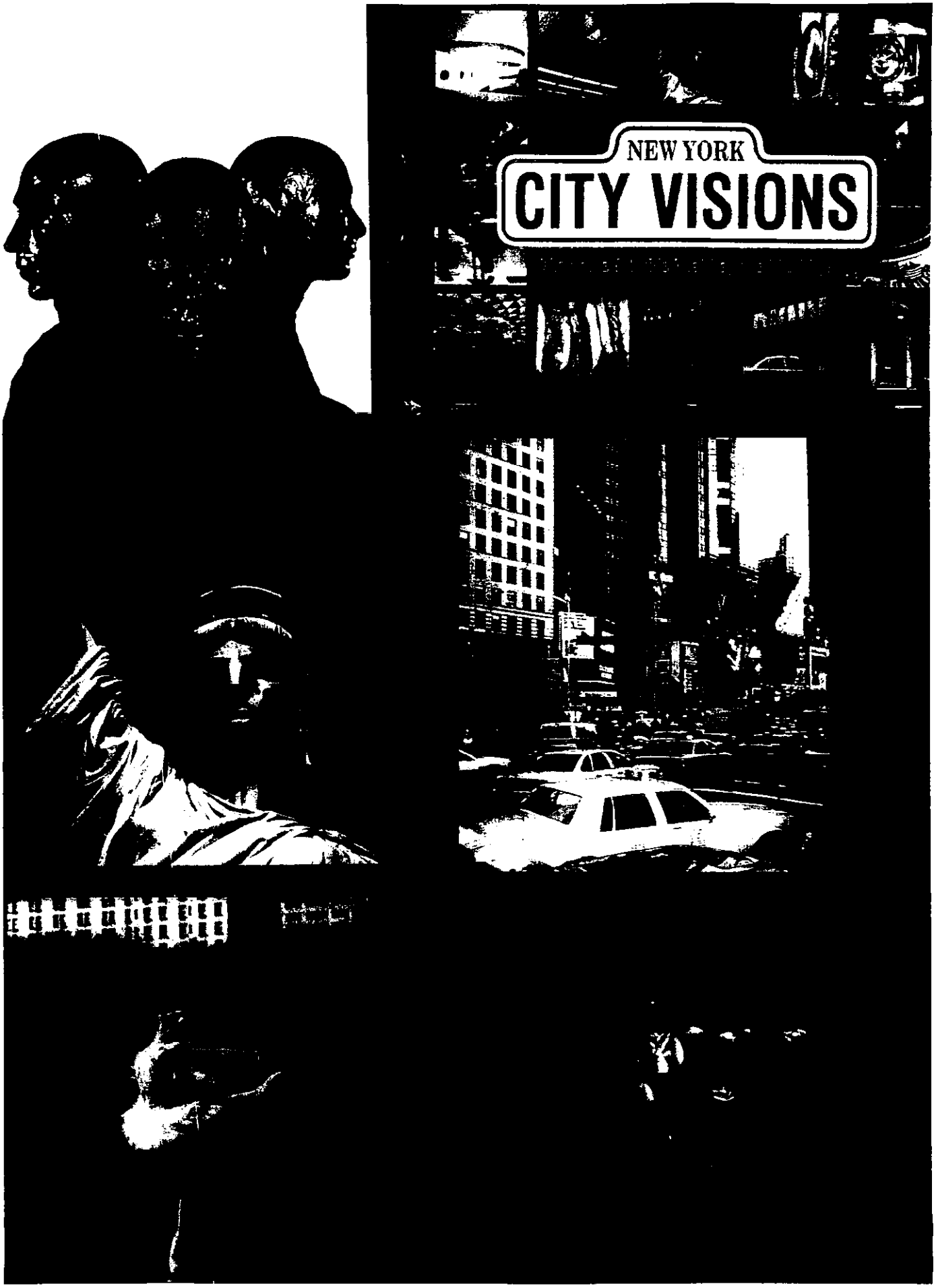
"The console will give them the large number of inputs they need at a cost-effective price," says Dave Malekpour, vice president of Pro Audio Design. "The control room is going to be 18x24 with a typical LEDE design approach oriented for rear diffusion and designed with good sight lines. And all the acoustical treatment is modular, so they can take it down and put it back up somewhere else if they want to."

"We don't want to own a recording studio," says Wink. "Our initial attempts to record ourselves in other studios somehow diminished what we were trying to accomplish—partially, I guess, because we couldn't fit half this stuff through the door! I think the kind of freedom that recording it here will give us is what we really need. It doesn't have to look nice; in fact, it's good that it still looks a little rough. It's more what we're used to."

The Blue Men all agreed to record using analog tape. Perlmutter says they had tried using Tascam DA-88s, but "[digital] wasn't really a good match for how much percussion there is. We really want to play the tape like a musical instrument on this project." The Blue Man group and Perlmutter will bring in Boston recording engineers Carl Plaster and Andrew Schneider, as well as live sound engineer Ross Humphrey, who will mix some of the sound through a P.A. system with EAW speaker components, which in turn will be miked and recorded. "That's being done to give the recording a sense of being a live performance," says Perlmutter. Humphrey engineered a recent live Blue Man performance in New York, supervising 130 inputs, mostly of percussion instruments. "That was like a dress rehearsal for this," says Perlmutter, who adds that the MTR-90 MkIII version was specified because he expects to do some backward recording.

Regardless of how much of the studio remains after the project is completed, this has been a learning process for Blue Man. Perlmutter says that they are experimenting more with microphones and mic placement. "We've been trying these Shure 98s on the PVC musical instrument," he says. "The thing we're trying to get is as much gain-before-feedback as possible. When they perform, they're right at the edge of the stage and right in front of the monitors."

Blue Man's approach also illustrates the business side of this proposition. There is no record company involved in this project, just Blue Man's own production company. But the economics are compelling: Three theaters in three cities seat 600 people for about ten performances per week. If even one tenth of them buy the finished CD, Blue Man will be selling in excess of 30,000 units annually. And that's for only three markets; they also plan to sell the CD via other conduits, such as the Internet and Tower Records. One-off events such as film and television synch licenses sweeten the deal even further. Wink and Goldman are quite aware that any of the major record labels might gladly give them substantial sums to get in on the ground floor of this deal. But in the years they have been doing this, they have learned that what you give up in return for celebrity and money is artistic control, and they're not at all ready to do that. "We really just don't need the money," Goldman says, "not in a way that would cause us to lose control over what we've put together here." ■


NEW YORK
CITY VISIONS

ENTERTAINMENT & CULTURE

1. Are these three men part of the Big Apple Circus or Blue Man Group?
2. The Blue Man Group are housed at the Astor Place Theatre; in what section of New York are they located?
3. What is the name of the Hostess™ cream filled cakes the Blue Man Group have a "banquet" with, including a volunteer from the audience?

ANSWERS: 1. Blue Man Group; 2. Greenwich Village; 3. Twinkies™

BLUE MAN GROUP . ASTOR PLACE THEATRE . 434 LAFAYETTE ST. MHTN.: 212.254.4370 Photo: Blanche Mackey

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Open the box, draw a card and your discovery begins...looking at a photograph, how many answers can you guess? The team to score 100 points first wins!

With 80 beautiful photographs and hundreds of fascinating questions & facts. City Visions will show you New York as never before...Taste the juicy steaks at Peter Luger's and play ball at Yankee Stadium; stroll through Central Park and dance with the New York City Ballet. From the Cloisters to Coney Island, there's plenty to discover. So play the game, peruse the guide and enjoy the journey. Each card contains a name, address & phone number to help bring it to life!

ISBN 0-9654538

80 playing cards
Score Pad
Pencil

GONE FISHING

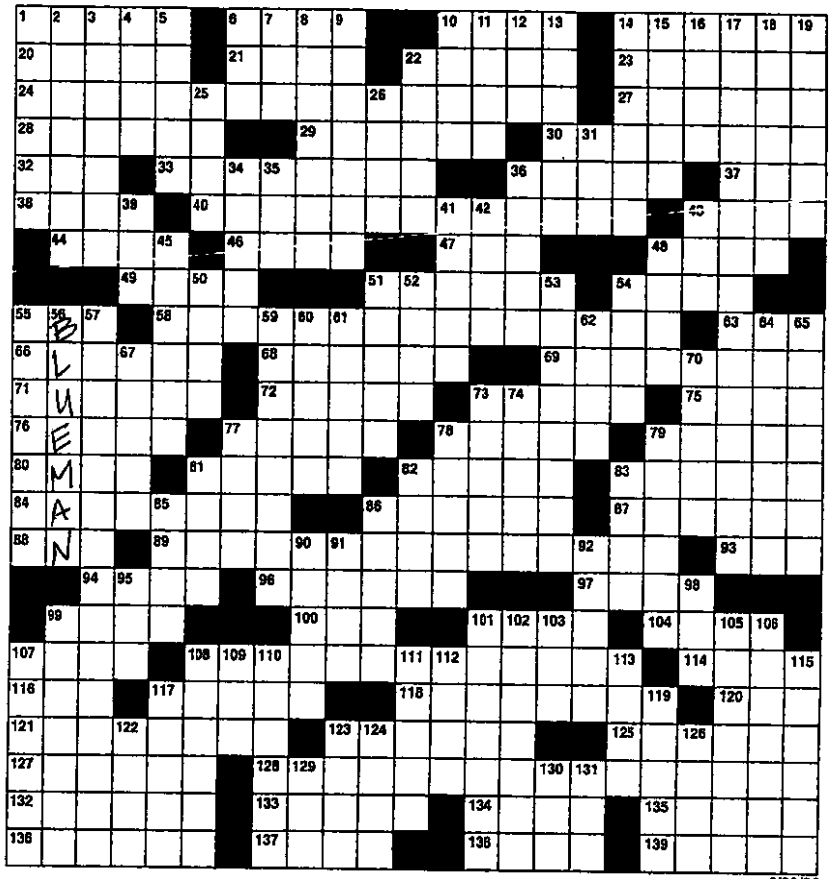
BY RICH NORRIS / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

ACROSS

1 Fruit beverage
6 Nap
10 Muddle
14 Contorted
20 "What's in ——?"
21 Classification in human evolution
22 Finely ground quartz used as paint filler
23 Intended
24 Spoiler
27 Two-time Pulitzer-winning journalist
28 Dentist's target
29 Discomfort
30 Went beyond
32 Atty.'s org.
33 Using for subsistence
36 Boorish
37 Biblical suffix
38 A or B, e.g.
40 Marketing ploy
43 Advantage
44 Bona fide
46 Incline
47 Bulgarian monetary unit
48 Golf shot
49 Rambler, for one
51 Hunk
54 Ruin
55 Overseas network
58 Without planning
63 Auto industry regulator: Abbr.
66 Mt. Blackburn locale
68 Egg-hatching elephant of children's lit
69 Waterproof: England :: ——: U.S.
71 O. J. Simpson, once
72 Sen. Hatch
73 Features
75 —— importance
76 Some radioactive electrons
77 Asparagus unit
78 Expands
79 Thick waterproof fabric used in cold climates
80 Love, overseas
81 Fat Albert's creator
82 Plant appendage
83 Schoolmaster's rod
84 First president of the Continental Congress
86 "Johnny Get Angry" singer Sommers
87 Cobbler's tool
88 "Wheel of Fortune" purchase
89 Whatever it takes
93 QB's try to get them
94 Goblet feature
96 Party concerns
97 More than impressed
99 Modeler's medium
100 Evidence in a paternity case
101 Poker holding
104 Arp's movement
107 Plain of Jars locale
108 Prepare for unpleasantness
114 "Edward Scissorhands" star
116 Mtn. stat
117 First name in choreography
118 Dressed to the nines
120 Dernier ——
121 Currently
123 Mania starter
125 Bungie, with "up"
127 Alarm respondent
128 Matt Dillon, e.g.
132 1963 N.F.L. passing leader
133 Broadway aunt
134 Actress Thurman et al.
135 Register
136 Bounced back
137 Procter & Gamble brand since 1947
138 Subject
139 Puts back

DOWN

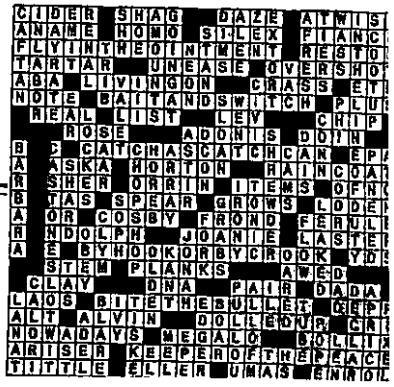
1 Full-length garment
2 Expecting momentarily
3 Contractor's quote
4 Let off
5 Kind of artery
6 Library sound
7 Weed
8 Is equivalent (to)
9 Attacking
10 Turns down
11 Opposite of aweather
12 Kind of master
13 Wrest by force
14 From the top
15 Stadium divisions
16 Ted of TV's "Blossom"
17 While officially working
18 Climb like a squirrel
19 Metric increments
22 Position
25 Tampa paper, familiarly, with "the"
26 Brightly colored
31 Payroll record abbr.
34 Restaurant employee
35 Jr.'s Jr.
36 Like some responsibilities
39 Attention
41 "Backyards, Greenwich Village" artist
42 Traveled
43 Campus letter
45 Empiricist John and others
48 Didi of "Grease"
50 River to the Moselle
51 Up and about
52 Raid alternative
53 More astute
54 Honoree's spot
55 Santa ——
56 Off Broadway's —— Group
57 Join, for better or worse
59 Car thief's destination, often
60 Biblical peak
61 Lineup
62 Engine parts
64 Covered, in a way
65 Former sinners
67 Fragment
70 The Rockies' —— Field
73 O. Henry technique
74 Picker-upper
77 College student, for short
78 Takes without warning
79 Got out
81 —— Yeobright (Hardy's native)
82 Divide
83 Run
85 Word from a hypnotist
86 One with quite a fish story
90 Bygone
91 "Kritik der reinen Vernunft" author
92 Sculled
95 —— in tango
98 Pop
99 Like French fries and ice cream
101 Retreat
102 1984 Steve Martin film
103 Québec's —— d'Orléans
105 Keep secret no longer
106 Brandy flavoring
107 Woolly
108 Was loud
109 Brown, e.g.
110 Nursery rhyme word
111 Lawn-care equipment
112 Old English Christmas dish
113 Narrow conduit
115 Image components
117 40's-50's actress —— Mara
119 Religious leaders
122 Regarding
123 Pinochle play
124 Foil relative
126 Advanced
129 New Haven collegian
130 Assess
131 Presidential monogram



r any three answers, l from a touch-tone one: 1-900-884-CLUE t each minute.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES

OF JUNE 30, 1996



BLUE MAN GROUP

FEBRUARY 15, 1994

AMERICAN WAY

Biting Into The Big Apple

New Old New York. "There is a small theater at 434 Lafayette Street, the Astor Place [Theatre]. You can see a show called *Tubes* with the Blue Man Group. Ah. I love that. It's very entertaining, very funny, very out-of-nowhere. Three men doing all kinds of silly things with paint, music, light [shaving cream, Cap'n Crunch cereal, marshmallows, Wonder Bread, and more]. ... It's near Cooper Square, the center of New York in the Twenties. When Carnegie Hall [156 West 57th Street] was completed in 1907, it was on the outskirts of the city. The center in 1920, 1930 was Fourteenth Street. So to go to Carnegie Hall, you'd take the horse and buggy outside of the city."

BLUE MAN GROUP

child

APRIL 1994

BROADWAY'S BEST A FAMILY GUIDE TO TERRIFIC THEATER

"Going to the theater is one of the most enriching experiences a parent and child can have," says Deena Rosenberg, chair of the Musical Theater Program, at the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University in New York City. "A good show enhances a child's enthusiasm, expands his imagination, and helps him get in touch with his feelings." This spring, Broadway shines with myriad family shows. If you can't make it to New York City, many shows have road companies that tour. Here are some must-sees:

■ **Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat** *Minskoff Theater; (800) 223-7565.* **Ages 5 and up.** As the title suggests, this show is a colorful, grandiose production that, technically, never ceases to amaze. Andrew Lloyd Webber's music will satisfy at least three generations of family members: There are Fifties-style Elvis takeoffs, calypso, country-western, and Nineties club music. Based on the Old Testament story of Joseph, the show is more of a circus than a musical, so kids may be distracted from the plot by all the hoopla on stage.

■ **My Fair Lady** *Virginia Theatre; (800) 432-7250.* **Ages 6 and up.** What better show to introduce kids to Broadway than this revival of the 1956 megahit based on George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*. Tots will be transfixed by the so-articulate Professor Henry Higgins, who tries to turn a Cockney flower girl into an upper-class "lady." Every song is a winner.

■ **She Loves Me** *Brooks Atkinson Theater; (800) 755-4000.* **Ages 6 and up.** The pleasures of old-fashioned romantic comedy are alive and well in this show. The plot is simple: Boy meets girl at work; boy and girl don't like each other; boy and girl discover that each has been the pen pal the other has been writing to—and, of course, with whom they've fallen in love—via the mail. The production is charming, the songs are hummable, and the ending is happy.

■ **Blue Man Group in "Tubes"** *Astor Place Theater; (212) 254-4370.* **Ages 9 and up.** This is one of the most entertaining and unusual events to hit the stage in a long time. Three blue, alien-like characters catch flying marshmallows in their mouths and make music by munching on Cap'n Crunch cereal. Sound like a day at nursery school? Well, it is—but that's the point: These actors have captured the carefree, messy, and innocent quality that appeals to children, and to the child in most adults.

PARENTS, TUNE IN!

For cutting-edge information on raising children ages 2 to 4, watch *Your Baby and Child With Penelope Leach* Lifetime. Mon., Wed., Fri. 9 a.m., Sat. 11:30 a.m., Sun., check listings. *Child* contributing editor Penelope Leach, Ph.D, hosts.

Tubes

Reconectando redes de comunicación

MÓNICA AMOR

A pesar de su sólida trayectoria, el performance continúa proyectándose en los años noventa como una de las artes más controvertidas y con mayores ramificaciones conceptuales y formales. Esto se debe en parte a su potencial subversivo basado principalmente en una persistente crítica a la sociedad consumidora y en un desafío constante a los sistemas de producción, distribución y circulación de la obra de arte. En efecto, la simple imposibilidad de comercialización inherente al performance (en un sentido rutinario que involucra la apropiación y el intercambio material) le confiere a este arte una capacidad crítica singular. Adjetivos como anárquico, íntimo, gestual, catártico, ritual, son generalmente relacionados con este medio. Sin embargo, hablar de *Tubes*, la exitosa producción de Blue Man Group, constituido por una triada de artistas estadounidenses que aparecen en el escenario totalmente pintados de azul, obliga a mencionar otros términos como festivo, divertido, hilarante. En efecto, el factor humor es fundamental dentro de la obra que, además, parece carecer de una estructura estable que permita definirla pues incorpora música, video, baile, arte y mucho más.

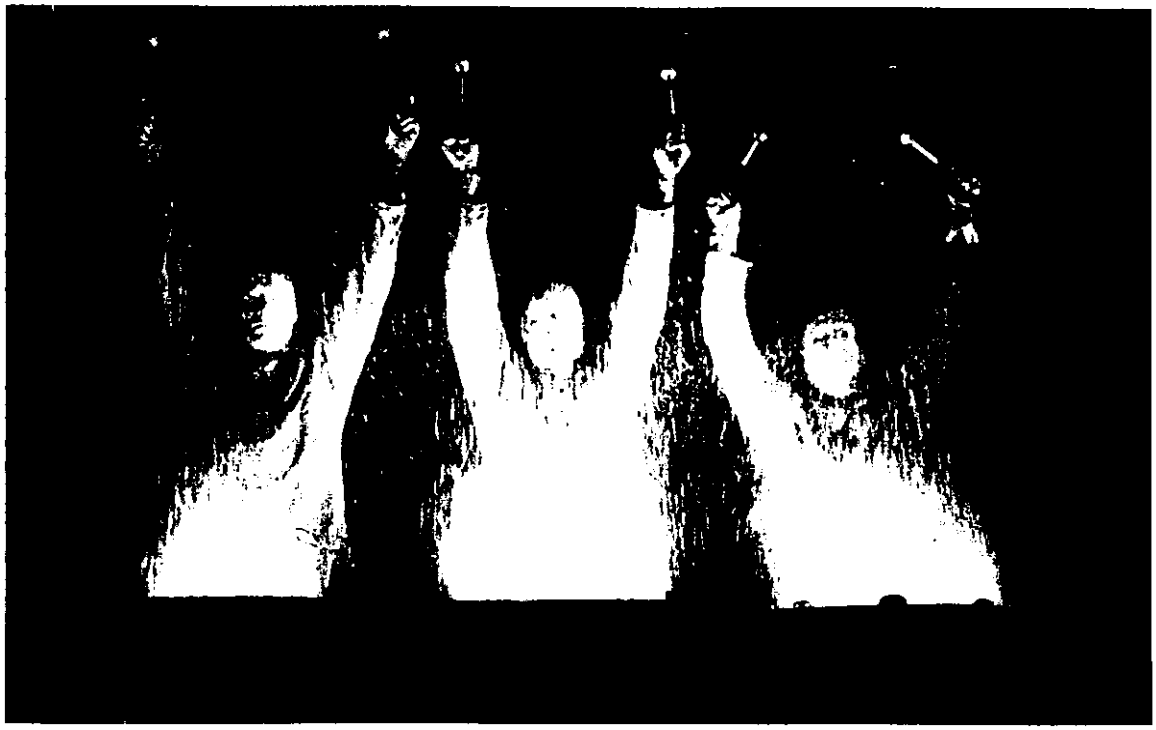
He is now only a pure screen, a switching center for all the networks of influence.

J.B.

El grupo se constituyó de una manera más bien espontánea a finales de los años ochenta como respuesta a lo que el mismo considerara un estereotipado y predecible panorama artístico. Como consecuencia, durante los cuatro años siguientes Chris Wink, Matt Goldman y Phil Stanton desarrollarían una obra bastante fragmentada a modo de comentarios sarcásticos en torno al establecimiento artístico y un sistema social totalmente supeditado a la tecnología y las obsesivas redes de comunicación productoras de excesos informativos. La peculiaridad de su obra radica principalmente en el planteamiento de una aguda crítica por medio de formas novedosas y de gran impacto visual. En principio. lo más notable es la utilización de un espacio nada convencional. Al entrar al teatro, penetramos una especie de sótano cuyas paredes, pisos y techos están totalmente rodeados de tubos de plástico de diferentes grosores. Antes de empezar la obra, el espectador puede hablar por medio de los tubos (colocados entre las butacas del teatro) y comunicarse con el equipo de apoyo y los protagonistas de la obra que se encuentran entre bastidores. La metáfora de la comunicación parece estar implícita a lo largo de toda la producción. Los tubos actúan en este sentido como redes transmisoras no de información, sino de sonidos, voces, sensaciones táctiles evocadas por la innegable solidez y volumen de los mismos. Igualmente los tubos se contraponen a la funcionalidad del cable, que conecta de una manera ultraeficiente redes múltiples de terminales que supeditan la comunicación humana y los encuentros sujeto-sujeto y hasta sujeto-objeto a lo que Baudrillard denominara *poder telemático*:la capacidad de controlar todo a distancia.

Es básicamente en torno a la idea de exceso (discursivo, informativo, consu-

Blue Man Group. De la obra *Tubes*. Nueva York.1994. Cortesía de David Rothenberg Associates.



acentúan cierto dramatismo. Hay una falta de pudor en cuanto a las partes pudendas de los desnudos. Predomina una atmósfera de deterioro en oposición a las posibles celebraciones. Freud, nieto del otro Freud, no es un personaje apacible ni contento y tampoco es alguien a quien le parezca interesar nada que se relacione con algo de índole cultural o colectiva.

Pero Freud logra una cosa notable y ésta es que la transmutación de pintura en representación en sus cuadros se produce a una distancia de alrededor de cinco metros. Un híbrido entre Ticiano y Soutine, Freud logra una secuencia casi cinematográfica de lecturas para un espectador que se va acercando a la tela, en la cual la realidad se va desintegrando lentamente hasta explotar en la pintura pura.

Freud, quien nació en Berlín en 1922, se hizo ciudadano británico en 1939 (la familia había emigrado en 1933) y es parte de la generación inglesa de pintores que incluye a Bacon y Auerbach. Pero de los tres es quizá el artista más hermético en virtud de la falsa fachada que presenta. Tanto Bacon como Auerbach funcionan dentro de los discursos vanguardistas, ya sea a través del expresionismo o del expresionismo abstracto, elucidando las posibilidades de una nueva solución al problema de la figuración y encajando en el modernismo del siglo XX. Otra referencia usada con respecto a Freud, no inglesa, pero europea, es la obra de Balthus. Este es un pintor antimodernista --o al menos uno que busca una alternativa al modernismo--, uno que promete compartir con Freud su pedofilia y comparte la proclamación de ser "el pintor figurativo más importante del siglo" en el contexto de sus muestras personales en el mismo Museo.

Freud, sin embargo, es un caso aparte de los tres artistas mencionados. Parece seducir al espectador con un discurso subjetivista, agresivo y casi insultante en su morbosidad y aparente desprecio por el ser humano, cosa que incluye inclementemente a su propia persona y su familia. Pero en la realidad toda esta apariencia posterga (o esconde para el observador distraído) un acto de magia sumamente controlado, regido por un cálculo sereno. Mientras que hace algunos años su discurso aparente le creó rechazos y enemigos (no solamente es el vello lo que se ve en el pubis que pinta Freud), la alquimia pictórica que aparece más allá de lo "narrado" le hizo merecer un espaldarazo unánime de la crítica de hoy con gran cantidad de comentarios acertados. Como dice incluso el folleto del Museo: *...no es un retrato sino una naturaleza muerta de la piel, de la membrana que cubre la forma humana.* Pero esta frase, que en el texto se aplica concretamente a la descripción de *Naked Man, Back View* (Hombre desnudo, vista posterior), obra de 1991-1992, en realidad se aplica a toda la pintura de Freud. Todo es piel, el mimbre de una silla, la alfombra de una plataforma, el cubrecamas o lo que se ve a través de la ventana. Tanto que, una vez que ese hecho se aclara, la calidad con que Freud trata la piel humana termina siendo menos satisfactoria. Casi un prisionero de su propia insistencia en querer indicar que la piel humana es "distinta", insiste en lo que se convierte en una nomenclatura estereotipada: piel=óleo texturado. Es un recurso que funciona maravillosamente en su autorretrato de 1990-91, pero que en otros cuadros llega a fatigar un poco.

La alquimia pictórica que aparece más allá de lo "narrado" le hizo merecer un espaldarazo unánime de la crítica de hoy con gran cantidad de comentarios acertados.

Inesperadamente, el pariente filosófico de Freud parece ser Paul Klee. Ambos creen que la realidad no se describe, sino que se revela en la obra de arte. Ambos crían y nutren la imagen en el cuadro, la hacen crecer orgánicamente como la naturaleza hace crecer una planta. Mientras en Klee la imagen revelada refleja las leyes de crecimiento con el acento en la pureza de las leyes, en Freud la imagen logra también coincidir con la realidad visual. Pero es una coincidencia no inspirada por la documentación, sino por el acierto en la recreación de las leyes.

Cuando aparecen dos versiones del mismo retrato, las caras son casi idénticas no porque Freud recoge los mismos datos, sino porque en ambos casos "hace crecer" el cuadro de la misma manera y por lo tanto llega al mismo resultado.

Es debido a estos procesos casi biológicos con que los cuadros de Freud enfrentan al observador que uno termina con los ojos pegados a la tela, buscando el origen de las cosas. El que una reproducción no le hace justicia a la obra de arte es un lugar común gastado y muchas veces mal usado para dar prioridad a la información primaria en contra de la secundaria (siempre hay que ir a Europa o a Nueva York en lugar de mirar libros y revistas). En Freud, sin embargo, la frase se queda corta. Ver su obra en foto no tiene sentido. Es como recibir la línea final de un chiste sin saber cual era el chiste, con el agravante de que aquí la línea final no importa, porque no es más que un estímulo que le permite al artista empezar a hacer su obra. Es obra, por lo tanto, que hay que ver directamente para comprenderla.

Al margen de la discusión de la obra de Freud, hay que mencionar la labor del Museo que introdujo por lo menos dos innovaciones en política museográfica. Una consistió en dejar un espacio vacío para una obra que Freud no había terminado cuando se inauguró la muestra. La gran expectativa fue satisfecha hacia la mitad de la duración de la exposición, cuando la obra fue enviada desde Inglaterra. El truco logró convertirse en evento con la correspondiente publicidad en la prensa. La otra innovación sucedió en la librería del museo donde se podían adquirir grabados expuestos en la muestra (4.000 dólares). Hasta ahora la comercialización de los museos se había limitado a la venta de catálogos, postales, camisetas y rompecabezas alusivos a las exposiciones. La inclusión de obras expuestas y con ello la entrada en competencia directa con las galerías comerciales establece la desaparición oficial de las fronteras entre la cultura y el comercio. El museo Metropolitan marca así un nuevo jalón en la historia del arte.

Luis Camnitzer:
Artista uruguayo. Profesor en el Departamento de Artes Visuales de la Universidad del Estado de Nueva York, College at Old Westbury.

mista, por mencionar los más evidentes) que las diferentes acciones del performance toman lugar. No por casualidad cada puesta en escena implica enormes cantidades de materiales y comida que el grupo utiliza para plantear sus ideas. En una escena, por ejemplo, los tres participantes devoran desesperadamente una caja de cereal, típico desayuno de la clase media norteamericana que trabaja y requiere del mayor rendimiento posible, alimentándose de la mejor forma (con los hierros y vitaminas que el cereal alega tener) en el menor tiempo posible. Un coro casi musical de mandíbulas masticando, amplificado por la tecnología sonora utilizada, convierte la escena en algo divertido e irónico a la vez. Otras escenas hacen una alusión más directa a los excesos de la tecnología actual sublimada a través de la computación y más específicamente a través de la llamada realidad virtual. En ellas nuestros azules amigos se valen de la pantalla y el video para reproducir sus propias imágenes en agitados movimientos de abandono corporal que, paradójicamente, se generan por medio de la percepción visual y mental de una realidad ficticia que sólo tiene lugar dentro del computador. Una mecanizada *voz en off* explica todo el proceso, mientras tanto la pantalla nos muestra al trío ejecutando simuladas experiencias en donde las posibles mediaciones entre el sujeto y el mundo externo quedan reducidas, comprimidas en el plano de la pantalla. Encerrado en su realidad virtual, el cuerpo se desplaza por medio de *comandos electrónicos* Sólo el queda efecto, sin riesgo. A cambio un *cuerpo inutilizado, desierto, condenado... Microprocesiones de tiempo, cuerpos, placeres.* (Baudrillard, 1983)

En un gesto contestatario la obra carece de palabras, las referencias textuales son mínimas y esto involucra una vez más una preferencia por un tipo de comunicación alternativa. Aún cuando las actuaciones del grupo no se caracterizan por ser particularmente gestuales, no deja de haber un énfasis en la mirada y en movimientos delicados que permiten que cada uno de los artistas proyecten personalidades muy individuales. Al principio del performance la apariencia externa (pintados de azul y con camisa y pantalón negro) los hace casi indistinguibles, pero a lo largo de la obra la ausencia de palabras nos empuja a percibir actitudes proyectadas sutilmente que sugieren modos de comunicación no convencional. Esta misma idea es promovida por medio de la música generada a través de la percusión producida por tubos y tambores que Wink, Staton y Goldman manipulan sofisticadamente. Así mismo, el apoyo de una pequeña banda de músicos y el uso descontrolado de colores líquidos, refuerza los momentos musicales de la obra, convirtiéndolos en verdaderos actos de comunicación y transgresión.

Blue Man Group. De la obra *Tubes*.
Nueva York.1994.
Cortesía de David Rothenberg Associates.

La preferencia por el impacto visual no impide que la crítica del grupo hacía las artes visuales sea menos fuerte o menos directa. La inmediatez del gesto y la banalidad reflexiva del arte son el blanco principal del sarcasmo azul. Así, el *Action Painting*, uno de los movimientos modernistas más heroicos de nuestra era, es despojado de su discursividad filosófica, reducido al simple trazo producido por escupitajos de colores brillantes que los Blue Man descargan sobre el lienzo. Es quizá debido a un paralelismo formal notable entre la mixtificación gestual del arte moderno y la celebración catártica de *Tubes*, que la crítica del grupo se disuelve en una explosión de energía motora y sensible. Esta es, sin embargo, dice Chris Wink, una de las motivaciones principales del acto, evocar a través de la música, el color, el movimiento y el contacto con el público la intensidad creadora del arte. Es esto, y no las pretensiones didácticas e intelectualistas del discurso artístico, lo que interesa al grupo en esta primera etapa de crítica y cuestionamiento del sistema. Una etapa que si bien se ha prolongado bastante dado el continuo éxito comercial de la obra, los *Blue Man* esperan seguir desarrollando con nuevos medios (se habla de un film), nueva música (se habla de un disco) y nuevas ciudades (se habla de una gira).

Tubes no carece de pocas contradicciones y sus integrantes están conscientes de ello. La anulación de individualidades geniales y heroicas en la obra a través de tres idénticas apariencias parece invertirse tan pronto los Blue Man aparecen en escena y una entusiasmada audiencia los aclama como a estrellas del rock. El mismo circuito del espectáculo que ellos satirizan los ha absorbido considerablemente en su deseo permanente por domesticar la creatividad y el arte. El casi absoluto rechazo discursivo tampoco les ha permitido profundizar ciertas ideas de gran potencialidad que aparecen en la obra. Por otra parte, a veces la resistencia al sistema enfatiza demasiado la crítica negativa, la cual es difícil entonces trascender. A pesar de esto, una exitosa interdisciplinariedad se pone en práctica en *Tubes*, su carácter fragmentario y experimental le permite mezclar diferentes estéticas y categorías estilísticas, incorporar numerosos medios y reformular inteligentemente ciertos cuestionamientos. Como indica Andreas Huyssen en otro texto: *cómo articular la resistencia en la obra de arte de manera que pueda satisfacer las necesidades... de los productores y los receptores, no se puede predecir y permanecerá abierto al ensayo, el error y el debate;* y agrega, *es hora de eliminar falsas dicotomías e intensificar tensiones, redescubrirlas y llevarlas a foco en el arte y en la crítica.* (Huyssen, 1986).

Mónica Amor:
Candidata al Doctorado en Historia y Teoría del Arte del Graduate Center of the University, Nueva York. Miembro de la AICA, Venezuela.

BLUE MAN GROUP

Italian Tribune News, January 23, 1992

On and Off Broadway

By Marjorie Gunner

Unusual for this red and green holiday season, without a white Christmas, for theatre productions to come up strong on the color blue . . . There's The Blue Man Group whose "Tubes" at the Astor Place is for audiences of youth in blue jeans and blue denim. Loud music accompanies words telegraphed to them above the stage before and during performance. Messages like "Cheer up Nicol Johnson" create peals of laughter from pockets of audience. Roaming ushers ask for volunteers among these amused onlookers, unaware they must be not only good sports but brave.

One tall chap is placed in a white coverall by the wild and crazy speechless Blue Man Group, a trio. They smear his coverall with fresh blue paint. He is then hung upside down dangling from a rope and slammed against a canvas three or four times till the canvas resembles not a finger paint but a body paint. The entire ingenious, crazy evening runs on popping surprises for enthusiasts clamoring for more. The inventive group never fail them. Behind their blue faces they throw marshmallows at a parnter's mouth, who is able to catch and hold ten or so until they are spat out to create another art piece on canvas. They stop to clean each other's faces though no one would call the strewn stage immaculate. They climb over audience seats and run back on stage where they use paddles to play on the tubes in xylophone fashion.

The Marx Brothers were not nuttier. They consume food and it seems to emerge from body parts. No one is more surprised than a startled female volunteer. All the while we are listening to interspersed music but the shenaningans are so riveting one hardly notices what expert musicians these blue faced nerds are. For finale, hold onto your hats or wigs. We are bombarded by enormous quantities of paper tape passing above and on us in a furious tangled white spaghetti-like mass. The onslaught is accompanied by ear-splitting recorded music, so loud that if one is being choked to death by the tape, no one would hear one's last protest. You must use both hands to stave off the possibility, a new form of audience participation. This wacky comment on today's modern art world is far funnier after the anxiety subsides. For audience participation aficionados, it's perfect.

BLUE MAN GROUP stars from left, Phil Stanton, Chris Wink and Matt Goldman, at the Astor Place Theatre.

BLUE MAN GROUP

OCS ニューヨーク生活情報誌
Vol. 16 No.421 Feb. 24, 1992 Bi-Weekly $1.50 © 1992 OCS America, Inc. 5 East 44th St., New York, NY 10017 (212) 599-4508

パフォーミングアーツ

女の魂と「ブルーマン」の魂

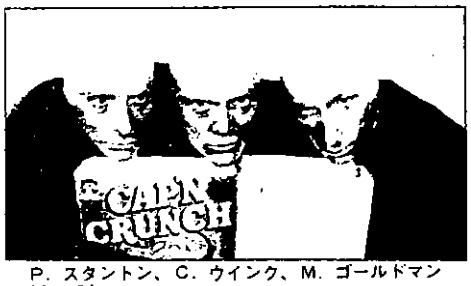
"The Visit"
Friedrich Dürenmatt
"Tubes"
Blue Man Group

松本永実子

「訪問」の主人公クレアは、十七歳の時、恋人アントンの子を宿す。が、アントンは町の雑貨屋に婿入りするために用のなくなった貧しいクレアを裁判にかけて堕胎呼ばわりし、町中で追い出す。三十八年後、世界一の金持ちとなって町に戻ってきたクレアは、今や落ちぶれた故郷の復興のため巨額の寄付をする条件として、正義を貫いたいと申し出る。それはアントンを死に追いやることであった。初めは理不尽だととりあわなかった町民も、ひとりふたりと彼女の金をあてにして贅沢品を買うようになり、ついにアントンを袋叩きにして殺してしまう。

舞台では、主人公ふたり以外は顔半分を面で覆って一人何役も演じわけ、様式化した物言いと仕草で作品のもつグロテスクな色合いを強調・凝縮して表現している。

クレア役のジェイン・アレグザンダーは、昨シーズン『シャドウランズ』のジョイ役で、知性とけなげさを合わせもった女性を演じた。この舞台では、ドン底に落ちて目覚めた金の力を利用し、復讐を遂げるため、町の人々のモラルが自分と同じ次元まで下がってくるのを冷静に待つ、という恐ろしい女を演じている。



P. スタントン、C. ウインク、M. ゴールドマン（左から） Photo/ Martha Swope

青春の日の甘い恋に端を発したクレアの極度に虚無的な考えが、今や金の力のおかげで絶対の力を持ってしまったところに、この人物の悲しい矛盾がある。アレグザンダーはそれをリアルに描くというより、むしろ一歩ひいて観客の想像力がそれを自然に感じ取るような演技をしている。

この女優はどんな形式の演技をしても可愛さ、切なさ、ずるさ、弱さ、怖さ、といった内的要素を豊かに内包し、クレアが哀足を引きずりながら舞台を大股で縦横に横切るように、女の魂を以て芝居のリズムや共演者の存在を底の方からグイグイ引っ張り突き動かし、舞台のスケールを大きく見せる。今回は夫、エドウィン・シェリンの演出とあって、特別な意気ごみも感じられた。

オフのアスター・プレイス・シアターでは今評判の『チューブズ』が公演を続けている。舞台も客席もロビーも掃除機のホースのようなチューブで壁を埋めた劇場に、律動感のあるBGMで迎えられた観客は、青いペンキで顔を厚く塗り込めた三人の男が激しく太鼓を叩くシルエットでブルーマンの世界にはいっていく。そして、時折電光掲示で示される以外はせりふ無しで、幾種類ものスケッチをつなぎ合わせたパフォーマンスを次から次へと見せられる。

それらは、現代抽象画や、ファーストフード、ハイテクや科学などを甘受し、過大評価している現代の「お手軽・自己満足文化」の諷刺である。例えば、観客のひとりを宙吊りにして大きなキャンバスにからだをぶつけて模様をつけ、偶然画よろしく観客に意味ありげに見せるスケッチは、抽象芸術の欺瞞性を笑っているのだろうし、理論数学の幾何学模様を不明瞭に映し出したスクリーンに、単調な動作で白いセメントのようなものを塗りたくって画面をより明瞭に見せるのは、先端科学の導き出す結論が意外に原始性と結びついているという矛盾を指摘しているように見える。

また、それとは対照的に、舞台にしつらえたパイプの穴を靴底でたたいて出る音や異種の人声音による音楽の演奏、また口に入れたカスタード・クリームが胸にあけた穴からダラダラとユーモラスに出てくるしかけや、ライトに照らし出された紙のテープが後から後から落ちてきて劇場いっぱいに散乱し、それが細雪のようにしんしんと降り積もる音を聞かせたりして、単純さや汚さ、混乱といった嫌われものが、洗練、おかしみ、美しさといった豊かさを創造する様も見せる。

それは、上段から見下したりシニカルに冷やかすのでなく、観客参加やプラカードの使用など、サイーブなほど単直にプレヒト的な異化効果を用いて観客の意識を喚起し、楽しませてくれる。また、二人のブルーマンには幼な子の如かい魂を感じさせる目とユーモラスなからだの動きをさせ、バランスがよい。ちなみに、プロデューサーのひとりはサークル・レパートリーで勉強していた日本人の出口一（まこと）氏である。

The Visit: Roundabout Theatre, 1530 B'way at 45th St., 869-8400

Blue Man Group, Tubes: Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St., 254-4370

Blue Man Productions, Inc. 434 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10003 (212) 387-9415 Fax (212) 674-4754

BLUE MAN GROUP

N.Y. BROADWAY RIGHT NOW

Sotoshi Mori

Blue Man Group "Tubes"

East Village の Off B' way、Astor Place Theatre で Blue Man Group による "Tubes" が昨年 11 月 17 日開演以来評判を呼び今なお好調だ。ロビーも通路も客席もステージも白い tubes だらけの劇場、座ると Village らしく客層は若く騒々しい。"Hello, hello, can you hear me?" と tubes の端を口にあて女子高生達がはしゃいでいる。写真の通りの three bullet-headed, blue-colored actors (Phil Stanton, Chris Wink, Matt Goldman)が a three piece band comprised of Brian Dewan (electric parlor instrument)、Larry Heinemann (music coordinator)、Ian Pai (drum& percussion)の Hi-Tech sound で登場。そして、せりふなしの（途中、電光掲示板が彼らのメッセージを伝える）パフォーマンスがステージに抽象画のように次から次と創造されていく。

次にいくつかの情景を描写するので、Blue Man Group とディレクター、Marlone Swartz による NY East Village Contemporary Art を感じ、摑んで欲しい。

■blue man　3 人がドラムを叩き始めると胸からドラムヘッドに赤、青、黄色の液が流れドラム上で volcanic eruption of color が create される。

■観客の一人が blue man と並んで jelly を食べると胸からだらだらと tube 状になって出てくる。blue man はそれを再び食べるが客は躊躇し食べられない。

■客一人を舞台地下に連れて行って逆さ吊りにし体中青くペイント。大きな白い canvas に揺さ振りながらぶつけ、どうだ、芸術絵ができたと言わんばかり自慢する。観客はこの様子をビデオ・カメラを通して舞台上スクリーンで見て拍手喝采。

■最後に劇場一杯にテープが落ちてきてそれがライトに照らされ色づく。blue man がそれを集め大きく波のように観客頭上で揺さ振る。

同パフォーマンスは 1990 年冬、Off-Off LaMama 劇場で 2 週間上演され Obie Award を獲得したもので、これを Off に格上げしたのがプロデューサーの一人、出口一（でぐち　まこと）さん (32 歳) だった。出口さんはもう一人のプロデューサー、Mark Dunn と奔走、何とか½ million dollors を掻き集め渡米 4 年間で夢かなったという所。その出口さんは「日本の show business 界は年功序列でほとほといやになった。こちらは誰でも力があれば認めてくれる。今回でも、もし日本企業がスポンサーになるとかならず会社名を前面に出してくる。それが絶対嫌だった。アメリカ企業は単に投資として、または個人的投資が基本でやりやすくうまくいった。僕は昔の遣唐使、遣隋使のように文化を吸収しにやってきた日本人で、やっとスタートに着いた所、これからが勝負。この blue man は NY の若者 trend-tracking, MTV, Disco, Hi-Tech, Graphic,等を写し出したものと思ってもらえばいい。あと 3～6 カ月ここで上演し、それから world tour、その後日本へ持って行く予定。将来の夢はやはりアメリカで映画を撮ってみたいですね。」と目を輝かせていた。

"Their bizarre Art Playground is a sensation" (*TIME*)、"Blue Man Group Grips NY" (*Theater Week*),"High Tech Meets Goo With Blue Man Group. Amazing!" (*NY Times*)と批評もこぞって絶賛。Blue Man と出口さんに乾杯!!。

◆出口一さんは次週の P 8・9「世界へチャレンジ」にグラビアで登場します。お楽しみに

Droll Commentators on the Contemporary Cultural Scene

BLUE MAN GROUP

COSMOPOLITAN
EDITORIAL APRIL 1992

THEATER

Sevilla – heißester Treffpunkt der Welt! Prag – hinfahren und Oper gucken! New York – jetzt auf die Tube drücken!

Sie zeigen die beste Off-Broadway-Show der Saison: „Blue Man Group"

DAS BLAUE WUNDER VON NEW YORK

„TUBES", DIE SENSATION

Die drei stahlblauen Rundköpfe bewegen sich auf der Bühne steif wie Wachsfiguren, füttern sich gegenseitig mit trockenem Müsli, geben freche Statements über Kunst und Politik zum besten, umwickeln ihre Zuschauer mit Kreppapier, feiern ausgiebig Happenings mit Farbtuben und riesigen Röhren. „Tubes" heißt die 80minütige Performance des Trios „Blue Man Group". Es ist das sensationellste Off-Broadway-Ereignis der Saison in New York. Die drei Blauköpfe, allesamt dreißig Jahre alt, heißen Chris Wink, Phil Stanton und Matt Goldman. Sie experimentierten zuerst als Straßentheater-Truppe ganz in Blau und spielen seit Anfang des Jahres im „Astor Place Theatre" (434 Lafayette Street, Tel. 001/212/254-4370). Wegen des großen Erfolges ist die Show dort bis Herbst zu sehen.

Astor Show Productions, Inc. 434 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10003 (212) 387–9415 Fax (212) 673–8424

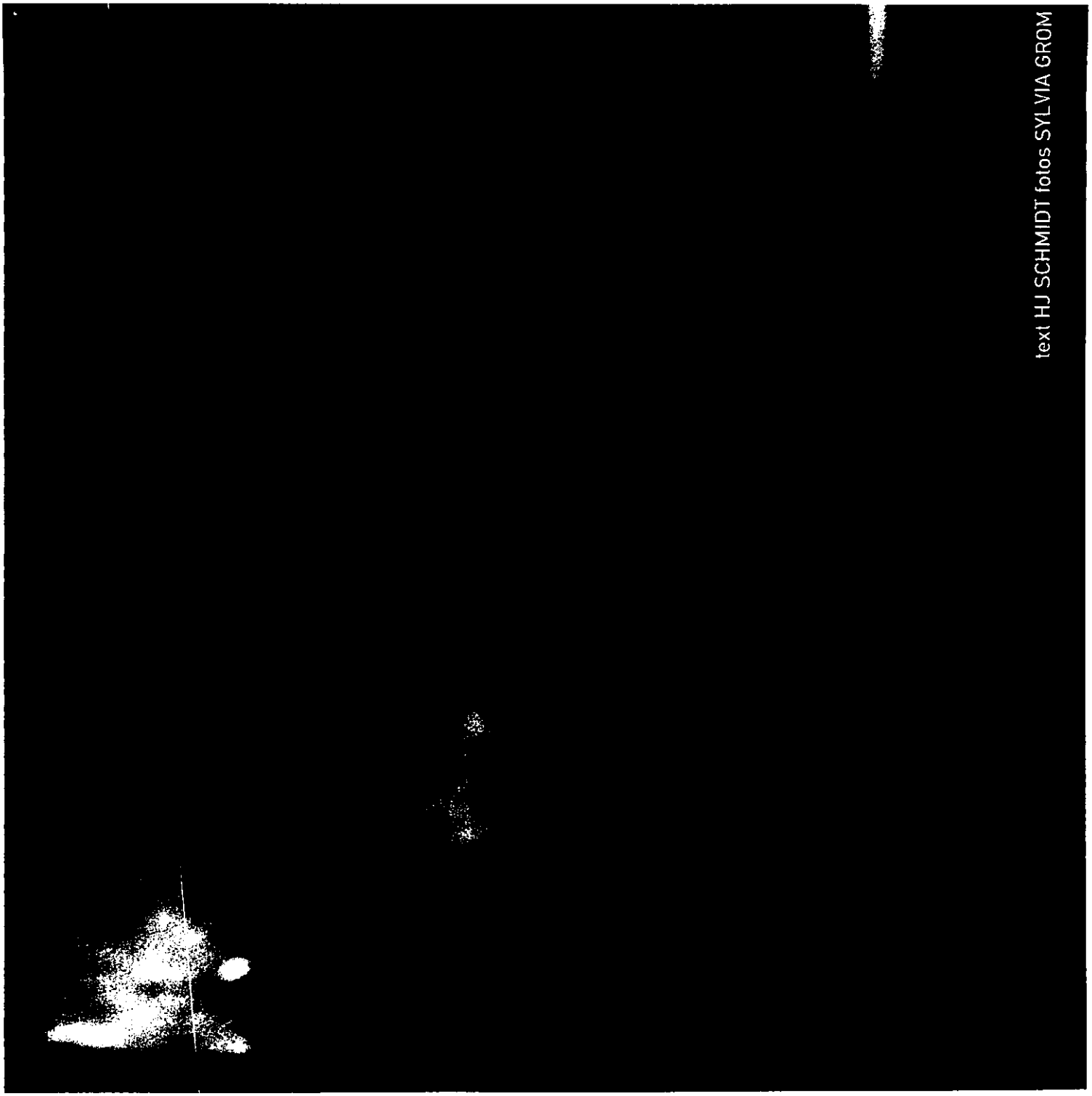
BLUE MAN

An der Schwelle eines blauen Zeitalters bemalt Blue Man die Welt mit den Graffiti der Seele, trommelt sie zu Klang und setzt die Chaostheorie in die Praxis um. Off-Broadway läuft die aberwitzigste Performance des Jahres: der Cyber-Comic Tubes der New Yorker Blue Man Group. Und Blue Man ist schon mitten unter uns!

blue man

Auf dem PVC-Xylophon trommelt und morst der Blue Man seine Botschaft: *Get connected!* Findet wieder zusammen!

(Oben:) Blue Man macht sich ein Bild von sich. – *(Links:)* Trommelfeuer aus Farbe und Leidenschaft Kunst als Suche nach der „reinen Emotion" und einer neuen Universalsprache.



text HJ SCHMIDT fotos SYLVIA GROM

tumm und ausdruckslos bewe-
en sich die drei Wesen „der drit-
n ART" durch ihre Welt aus far-
igen Röhren. Kobaltblau glänzen
ie Glatzköpfe im Widerschein
er von innen beleuchteten Trom-
ieln. Aus der Brust ihrer dun-
len Overalls quillt Farbe auf die
elle und ein sprühender Funken-
egen schießt hoch aus dem Ge-
itter der Trommelschläge.

Dies ist *Blue Man,* die Spezies
n der Schwelle zum neuen Jahr-
ausend. Hervorgegangen aus den
Virren der Evolution, erst Affe, dann Mensch und postmodern mutiert zum Alien in seiner eigenen Zeit. Dem Affen zu nah, um Cyber zu sein und doch viel zu weit schon im Reich virtueller Realität. Deformiertes Kind des Informationszeitalters: verbunden mit aller Welt und doch allein wie nie zuvor. Schräubchen in der Wirklichkeitsmaschine. Zappelndes Modul im Datennetz. Der Sprache verlustig. Wie zur Maschine erstarrt und ohne Gefühl. Doch etwas in ihm ist lebendig, rumort, will hinaus. Setzt Blue Man in Aktion. Schlägt auf die Trommel. Schlägt durch als Blau, so als hätte da was zu lange den Atem gehalten. Springt von der Trommel als Farbe. Blue Man bekleckert die Welt.

Schon in der Vorhöhle zu seinem Reich ragen Plastikschläuche in den Raum. Aus ihnen dringt ein Gemurmel von Stimmen und einzelne vernehmbare Rufe: Hallo, wer da?! Einige nehmen Kontakt auf mit der Stimme „am anderen Ende des Tunnels". Müllmänner in Schutzanzügen geleiten die Besucher zu ihren Plätzen und verteilen weiße Armbinden an mögliche Freiwillige. Für die ersten beiden Reihen werden weiße Capes mit Kapuze ausgegeben. Die Plastikschläuche verdichten sich zu einem Gewirr an Decke und Wänden. Der ganze Raum ist „verkabelt". Auch zwischen den Sitzreihen schlängeln sich sprechende Schläuche. Oder nur das Rauschen in der Leitung... Vorn auf der Bühne laufen bunte Installationsrohre aus PVC zu drei Xylophonen zusammen. Auf ih-

Keine Angst vorm Blauen Mann

WER IST *BLUE MAN?*

CHRIS: „Wir wollten keine Maschinen sein wie Kraftwerk. Wir suchten nach einer Form des Ausdrucks, die auf Percussion, Farbe und Bewegung aufgebaut war. Es ist aber auch kein Schritt zurück in die Stammesgeschichte, sondern ein Mutationsschritt nach vorne. Blue Man ist gleichzeitig unsere vergangenste Vergangenheit und unsere zukünftigste Zukunft."

MATT: „Im Blue Man steckt ein Stück von jedem von uns, wie er auch selber ein Teil von uns allen ist."

Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton und Chris Wink *(v.o.n.u.:)* mutieren zum Blue Man.

PHIL: „Blue Man ist kein Spaceman aus einer anderen Welt, sondern jener vergessene Mensch, der Alien in uns."

WO FINDE ICH *BLUE MAN?*

Die Blue Man Group in *Tubes*. Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette Street, New York. Dienstags – freitags 20.00 Uhr; samstags 19.00 und 22.00 Uhr; sonntags 15.00 und 19.00 Uhr. Montags *keine* Vorstellung. Eintritt: Di, Mi, Do $ 30.00 und 22.50; Fr, Sa, So $ 35.00 und 22.50. Reservierungen: (001) 212-254-4370.

Praktischerweise fällt am Schluß jede Menge Klopapier vom Himmel, und man kann die Sauerei sofort wieder aufwischen *(oben)*. – Blue Man nimmt Verbindung auf *(links)*.

schießt ein Funkenregen aus Farbe aus dem Gewitter der Trommelschläge.

Blue Man ARTikuliert sich in einer neuen Sprache. Die „Farbausbrüche" seiner Gefühle nehmen die Gestalt von Zeichen an.

ge international derart gestiegen, daß der Blue Man wohl ab nächstem Jahr seinen unaufhaltsamen Weg über Japan nach Europa antreten wird.

Tubes ist eine Aneinanderreihung von kleinen Szenen, Slapstickeinlagen, skurrilen Gags und eine einzige große Sauerei aus Farbe und anderen ekelhaften Substanzen – fragmentiert wie die gespiegelte Welt. Zusammengehalten vom Percussionsgewitter des Blue Man-Trios und einer ebenfalls dreiköpfigen Band. Unter so massiver wie gefürchteter Einbeziehung des Publikums. Die *material world* als Spielmaterial. Alles, was man fressen kann oder muß. Kunst, Fast Food, Information. Wissenschaft und Zukunftstechnologie.

Ein Zuschauer wird in einen weißen Overall gesteckt, behelmt und hinter die Bühne entführt. Auf dem Videoscreen erlebt man mit – „live from backstage" –, wie er an den Füßen aufgehängt, mit blauer Farbe bestrichen und als quasi lebender Pinsel gegen eine Leinwand geschleudert wird. In einer schwarzen Box wieder hereingerollt, steckt sein Kopf unter einem wabbeligen, halb durchsichtigen und leuchtend orangen Pudding aus *Jell-O* – reinste Götterspeise.

Eine Dame aus dem Publikum wird zum Bankett geladen. Menü des Tages ist eines jener herrlichen Erzeugnisse der amerikanischen Süßigkeitenindustrie: *Twinkies*, fischstäbchenartige Riegel mit gelblich-weißer Füllung. Plötzlich erbricht sie ein Blue Man als gelbe Masse, die wurstförmig aus seiner Brust austritt, und verteilt sie zum Weiterverzehr, bis alle erbrechen – auch aus dem Schutzlatz der Frau quillt eine nimmer enden wollende gelbe Wurst.

Marshmallows und mit Farbe gefüllte Bällchen werden akrobatisch mit dem Mund aufgefangen und jeweils auf eine Leinwand gepreßt oder gesabbert und geprustet. Die Kunstwerke des Blue Man können im Foyer für $ 20 das Stück erstanden werden.

Botschaften auf elektronischen Spruchbändern gleiten durch den Raum, viel zu schnell, um sie zu verarbeiten. Große, schnell wechselnde Schrifttafeln fordern zum Lesen auf. Man muß sich entscheiden – nur um sich belehren zu lassen: „Sie haben sich genau für die falsche Tafel entschieden. Jede Entscheidung für *eine* Option schließt notwendig alle anderen aus."

Blue Man ist die Spezies, die die Zukunft überleben wird, noch tastend und suchend und alles abklopfend nach einem neuen, gemeinsamen Lebensgefühl. Nach der Symbiose aus den emotionalen Qualitäten des „Primitiven" und den rationalen des Cyberspacers. Blue Man schaut in die Großprojektionen vom Tanz der Fraktale und anderer sich zu immer neuen Mustern gebärender Mikroorganismen hinein wie in eine Landschaft oder eine virtuelle Zukunft – und wie gebannt von dem bei allem Fortschritt doch nur immer wieder neu eröffneten Rätsel unserer Existenz. Er eignet sich die Welt an, indem er sie bekleckert. Er definiert sie neu in einer alten Sprache. Und er will nicht allein sein: Seine Buschtrommeln rufen uns alle.

Im großen Finale ertrinkt alles im Strobelight und den Papierfluten sich von der Decke stürzender, entfesselter Klopapierrollen. Draußen in der Lobby gibt's Blue Man zum Anfassen. Und wer Glück hat, der kommt mit 'nem blauen Flecken davon. ●

Esquire Upbeat

Australian Chris Dimarsal

erforming arts

怪人「ブルーメン」。

河北洋一 アート研究室、自分工
text by Yoichi Kawakita
photograph by Raul Vega

真っ暗な闇の中に静けさが支配する。と突然ドラムの響き、飛びちる色しぶき。ブルー、赤、黄、下からスポットを浴びて青く光る3人の男たちが怪しく浮かび上がる。

ローリー・アンダーソン、ロバート・ウィルソン――いずれも'80年代に大活躍したパフォーマンス御三家だが、「青い男」は'90年代のニュー・ヒーロー。前者が玄人好み、コンセプチュアルで難解な仕上げなのに対し、後者は知的だが誰でも楽しめる気楽さを持ち合わせている。'80年代に天井知らずに値上った美術相場をからかうブラックユーモアもあり、思わず笑ってしまう。

彼らのもうひとつの特徴はテクノロジー。パフォーマンスの最中に劇場を抜け出し、屋外でアートショーをはじめたりして観客の度肝を抜くのだが、これらはビデオで劇場内の特大スクリーンに写し出される。お客のひとりを屋外に連れ出し、イブ・クラインの有名な人体プリントを'90年代風に――つまり人の体にペイントをぬりたくって、キャンバスにぶつける――やっているところが屋内スクリーンで見える。こうやって、観客をどんどんひっぱり出し、気がつくと、あら全員がパフォーマー。クライマックスは、客席の後ろにつり下げられた無数のロールペーパーが観客の手でステージへ向かって順送りされ、やがて客席がすべてロールペーパーで埋めつくされてしまう！ ◎

BLUE MAN GROUP

NOVEMBRE 1992

VOGUE PARIS

Le Blue Man Group distribué dans le spectacle "Tubes", de New York. Le peintre Christian Bouillé et le poète Alain Jouffroy, réunis, sur papier Vélin.

Astor Show Productions, Inc. 434 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10003 (212) 387–9415 Fax (212) 673–8424

EXPEDITION KUNSTWELT

Matt, Chris und Phil: Stars des New Yorker Th

TROMMLER
wider den glatten Zeitgeist

sie von Talk with tomorrow.

ÜBER MORGEN

BLUE MAN GROUP

SCHAUSPIELER

Kobaltblau bemalt. Kahlköpfig. Große dunkle Augen. Besessen hämmern diese Gestalten, die aussehen wie von einem anderen Stern, auf PVC-Schläuche ein. Sie entlocken ihnen unvermutet harmonische Töne, beginnen eine Konversation via elektronischer Spruchbänder und inszenieren schließlich ein spritzendes Feuerwerk aus leuchtenden Farben. Das Publikum in den ersten Reihen geht unter großen Plastikplanen in Deckung. Happening? Performance? Dada? High-Tech-Theater? Blue Man Group ist alles in einem. Die drei Blaumänner Chris Wink, Matt Goldman und Phil Stanton avancierten mit ihrem Stück „Tubes" („Röhren") zur Sensation der New Yorker Theater-Avantgarde. Alles wird geboten: Zitate aus dreißig Jahren Theater- und Kunstgeschichte, Slapstick, Comedy, Graffiti-Kunst, ein wildes Gemisch aus Gegensätzen. Das Astor Place Theatre, in dem die blauen Männer auftreten, ist täglich ausverkauft. Matt, Chris und Phil bezeichnen sich selbst als Medizinmänner und Informationsverbreiter. Ihr Prinzip: Sie zerstückeln das Wissen unserer Gegenwart und bauen es in postmoderner Sample-Manier neu zusammen. Nachdem in der 90-minütigen Show kein einziges Wort verloren wird, ist der Zuschauer hinterher selbst sprachlos. Das Blue-Man-Trio öffnet ihm den Blick für die Sinnlosigkeit unserer alltäglichen Rituale, nimmt das Kunst-Business aufs Korn und hinterfragt den Fortschritt. Nichts ist heilig. Der Welt wird der Spiegel vorgehalten. Auch der Zuschauer bleibt nicht ungeschoren: Die drei blauen Gestalten laden ihn zum Dinner ein und offerieren Twinkies, fischstäbchenartige Riegel mit gelblich-weißer Füllung. Warum dabei nicht alles glatt abläuft, werden wir an dieser Stelle nicht verraten. In einer Hommage an den Maler Yves Klein sieht man auf einer Videowand, wie ein Zuschauer voll blauer Farbe wie ein Pinsel gegen eine Malfläche geschleudert wird. Wirklichkeit oder Illusion? Bei der Blue Man Group wird Theater wieder zum Erlebnis – selbst in unserer multimedial verwöhnten Gesellschaft.

Fotos: Alfred Steffen, Sylvia Grom

BLUE MAN GROUP

ILTA-SANOMAT

KESKIVIIKKONA 13. TAMMIKUUTA 1993

PÄIVYRI/KULTT.

Phil Stanton, Chris Wink ja Matt Goldman, siniset miehet, halusivat haudata tylsän kahdeksankymmentäluvun. Heidän performanssinsa Tuubit tekee sen riemastuttavasti, hyvästä mausta piittaamatta mutta taidokkaasti ja oivaltavasti. Esitystä pidetään viime vuosien merkittävimpänä tapahtumana New Yorkin teatterielämässä.

Maailmanennätys

Off-Broadwayn varsinainen vetonaula on Blue Man Groupin esitys *Tuubit, Tubes*.

Teatterin mainoslauseessa sanotaan, että näin hauskaa teillä ei ole ollut sitten lastentarhan. Se kyllä pitää paikkansa, meno on kuin villiintyneessä lastentarhassa.

Esitys on kolmen sinisen miehen show. Vuorosanoja ei tarvita, vain muutama tekstitys välillä. Musiikilla on tärkeä osuus, kuvaa käytetään runsaasti ja videokamera tuo jopa näyttämön takaiset tapahtumat nähtäviksi.

Siniset miehet ovat myös sirkusmaisen taitavia. Tämä postmodernistinen happening on tappaa yleisön nauruun, katsomo villiintyy tuon tuostakin huutamaan suoraa huutoa.

New York osaa myös ottaa ilon irti.

Blue Man Productions, Inc. 434 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10003 (212) 387-9415 Fax (212) 674-4754

BLUE MAN GROUP

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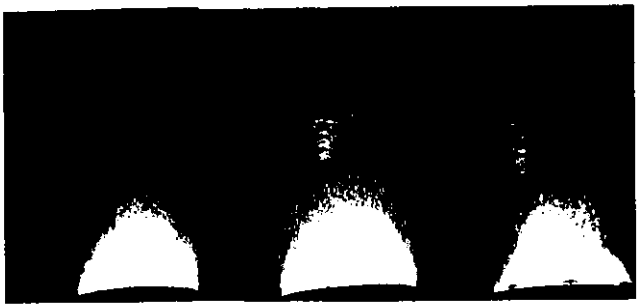
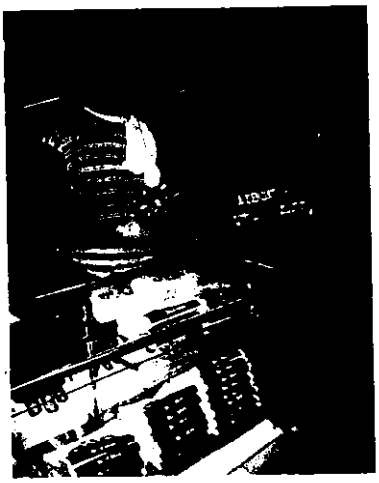


『ブルーマン・グループ・チューブス』
日本人プロデューサーが手がけたオフ・ブロードウェイのヒット作。
ひと言も発しない3人のブルーマンがとても滑稽。
ビデオや電光掲示板を使ったハイテクな舞台装置、
チューブで飾られた劇場内は、まさに"アートの遊び場"。
フィナーレはあっと驚きの……
→P.48地図参照



劇場内のショップ。
オフ・ブロードウェイの
『ブルーマン・グループ・チューブス』では
ブルーマンの顔写真入りの
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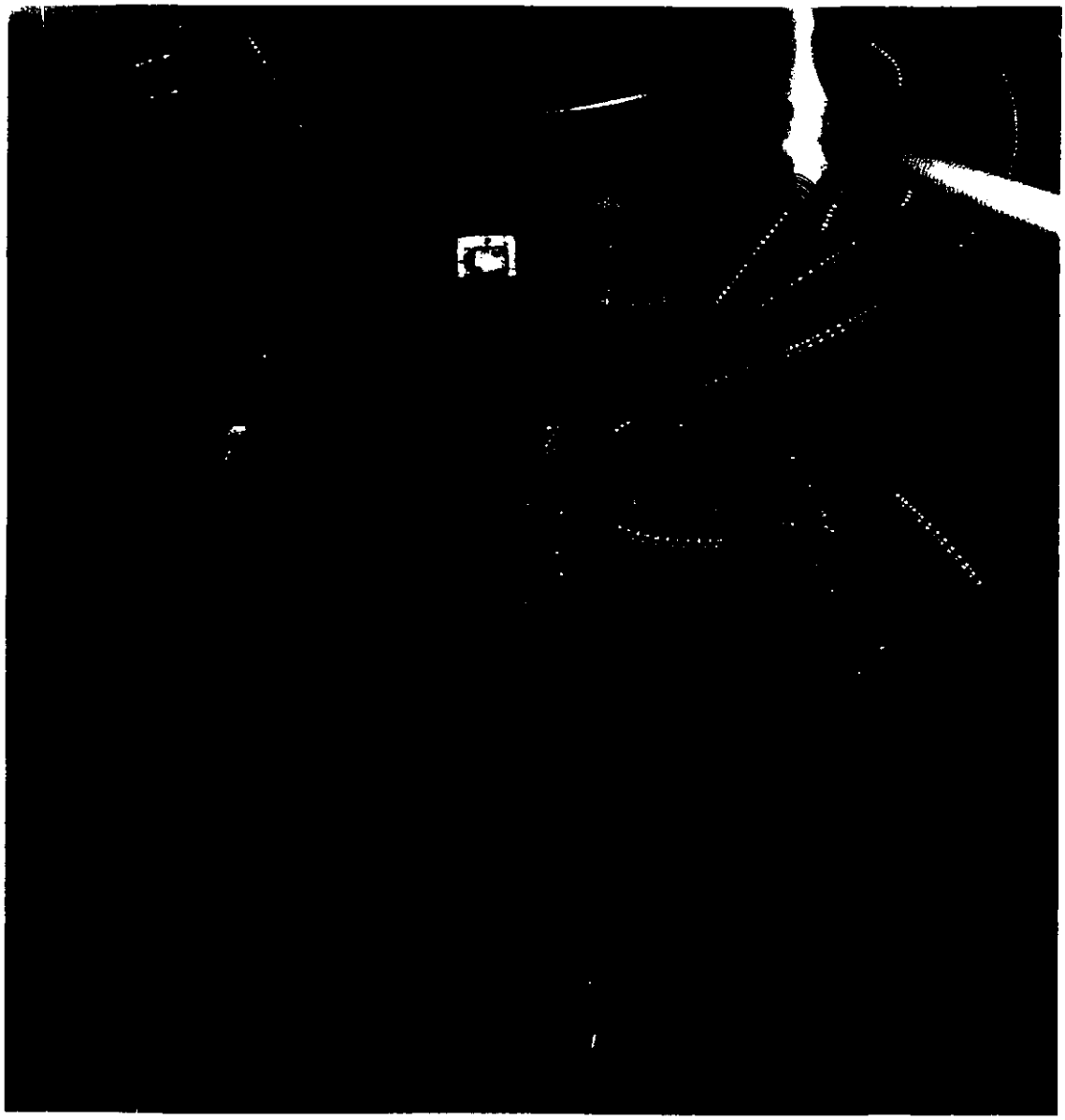


裸形のことばを演じるパフォーマー ブルー・マン登場

ある日突然ニューヨークの街角に出現した3人のBLUE MAN。彼らの異様な風貌はせかせかと道を急ぐニューヨーカー達の足を止め、その場に釘づけにする。今では彼らはマンハッタン全体を侵略し、さらにその不思議なエネルギーをアメリカ全土に発信しつつある。ぴったりしたゴムのキャップをかぶり、肌をすべてブルーに塗り固め、ジャンプ・スーツを着た男達。コバルト色に光るその皮膚の奥から不釣合に優しい目が光る。彼らは一体何者なのか、そしてどこからやってきたのか

文●田村明子
写真●押本龍一

体が取り残された観念だけのアートは、もう人々に必要とされていない」と語るBLUE MANは違っていた。三人の力強いドラムの演奏で始まる一瞬の静寂の中に予気味に漂かせた緊張感、動きを止めた一瞬をぼんやりと待ちうけるような観客の顔。チューニングの上にたちこめる煙。ステージがすべて無しBLUE MANというユニットの流れは、肉体と心理の両方を使ったコミュニケーションと言える。

そのような流れをつくりはたキーマンズを見つめる、彼らの頭の中には電光掲示板があるのだ。それはそれぞれがもっているのだが文字にすると同じ内容を組み合わせてゆくことになる。

「ここはどこ」「私は誰」「何しに来たのか」「ここは地球」「私は男」「私は女」「ここはどこ」「私は誰」「何しに来たのか」「ここは地球」「私は男」「私は女」

それぞれの文字は、ほぼ同じ速さでスクロールしていく。

ただ、おなじみのパントマイムだけでは半分だという。

「人々を笑わせるには破壊という形を表現する」

はだかになった彼らは観客のコミュニケーションの一つの形でしかない。自分達のショーはコミカルな要素を取り除いても楽しめる物でありたい」と開幕前からチューブを通して始められるコミュニケーションは、彼らのステージのメインテーマの一つであると言える。ステージの途中で、彼らは客席に降りてくる。その様子は異文化の中で道しるべを失った異星人が助けを求めにやってくる姿そのものだ。後ろの隅から、一番のパルコニーまでオロオロと歩き回ったBLUE MAN達は、ようやく二人の地球人の女性を見つけると、そして彼女の手を引いて、再びステージの上に戻る。

「僕達は単にステージの上にお客をあげて、物真似をやらせて見せるんじゃあない。これは違う背景を持った者達が、お互いの文化の代表として出会う情景なのだ」

四人が並んで座ったテーブルの上に、ビニールに包んだ菓子パンが置かれる。ゆっくり同りを見回しながら、おそるおそる袋を開けて口に運ぶ観客の女性。カシャカシャと音をさせていじり回しながらも、どうして良いのかわからない三人のBLUE MAN。見かねた女性が、隣のBLUE MANの袋を取り上げて開けてやる。文字にすると一見単純って答えるんだよ」

「僕達の劇場では、ステージから一番後ろの客席まで、僕達と観客の間に壁が存在しない。劇場という形は、古代からある意味で差別を作りあげる場でもあったと思う」というのはマットの言葉だ。「ステージの上に役者がいて、ロイヤル・ボックスがある。良い席は常に貴族や上流階級で占められていて、庶民は後ろの奥か天井桟敷。でもBLUE MANは違

80年代、アートは人々の手の届かない、やたら気難しくて難解なものになっていった。ソーホーはアーティストの手を離れて評論家達のものになった。そして皆が通を気取った消費者になって、自分で何かを創造していくというエキサイトメントがどこにもなかった。90年代は、人間本来の姿に戻っていく時代だと思う。みせかけだけのかっこ良さや、体が取り残された観念だけのアートは、もう人々に必要とされていない。

なこれらの動作の一つ一つが、BLUE MANの不思議な動きと、間の取り方、そして無表情の中にある奇妙な表情により、魅力的に味付けされている。こうして毎日アトランダムに選ぶ飛び入りの観客によって、その日のステージの雰囲気は大きく左右される。「毎日同じショーをやっていて飽きないか、とよく聞かれるんだ。けれども僕らは今まで一日だって同じショーをやったことはありません。うことをやりたかった」。このコメントからもわかるように、彼らの人気の根源は、ステージ全体に流れるあまりおかれさまではないとユーマニズムによって支えられている。写真を見てその異様さにある怖さを感じる人々は、ステージの上の彼らの目の意外な優しさ、動きの可愛らしさに予想を裏切られるのだ。「物事は見かけによらない、というのも僕らが表現したいことの一つなんだ。でもBLUE MANは本当は怒ると怖いんだよ。タフな存在が外とのコミュニケーションを求めるっていうのが大切なんだ」と語るクリスが以前に演奏していたグループはポスト・パンクのバンドだった。ショーの最後の方に、のりの良いリズムにのってはね回る彼らのエネルギーは、まさにこの世の者とは思えないほど妖しくまぶしい。

ショーが終わると、三人のBLUE MAN達はロビーに出て観客達一人一人と握手をし、短い会話を交わす。緊張のにじみはじめた笑顔を見せない彼らも、この時にはそのコバルト色の下にある温かい表情を垣間見せてくれるのだ。三年三人で演員になるこの劇場の半分は、裕福そうなアップ・タウン・ピープルで満たされている。上品なスーツに身を固めた初老の男性が、頬を上気させていやすっごく面白かった」と言って彼らの一人に握手を求めた。その後メイクを落とした二人は、今でもスタッフと一緒に会場を片付けてから、反省会を開く。本人達も、ほとんどのスタッフも、そしてプロデューサーさえも、無名のしろうと達が始めたこのBLUE MANは今ではニューヨークで九〇年代の一つの伝説を作りあげた。

彼らはニューヨークでの公演を二段落させたあかつきには、世界ツアーを計画しており、その候補地の中には勿論日本も入っている。代役をけして使わない彼らには、ロンドンやロスや東京でオーディションで選ばれた何人もの復元されたBLUE MAN達が「TUBES」を演じる状況は考えられないだろう。生みの親である二人が演じてこそ、このBLUE MAN達はその魅力的な表現をあらわしてくれるのだ。この優しい目をした二人のBLUE MAN達の日本侵略が実現する日が来るのが待ち遠しい。

ニューヨークで成功したならば　世界のどこでもやっていけるという歌詞が昔の映画の主題歌にあった。この街で毎日起きているドラマをすべてカバーすることは不可能だ。ニューヨーク・ウォッチャーたちは、毎週発売される雑誌や新聞に目を通す。今起こっている面白いこと、先端を行く流行の誕生を目撃しなければならないと、あちこちのパーティーを渡り歩くのだ。時には、チャンスを得るために、こうした場所に顔を出すことも重要だ。これはニューヨークの真の姿をつかむための一歩にすぎない。

一九八一年一月七日、イースト・ビレッジにあるアーティスト・コレクティブ・グループ「BLUE MAN GROUP」による「TUBES」がスタートした。まさにスーパーボウルが行われたその日に、この三人の男達は幸運で時には悪意に満ちたニューヨークの批評家達から絶賛され続け、オービー、ドラマ・デスクを初めとする賞を受賞してきた。現在も週に何回かの公演を続けている。

劇場の中は暗く天井のあらゆる部分に太いチューブがからまっている。所々にはちょん切れたチューブの先端が無造作にシートの背にかけられ、またバルコニーからぶらさがる。低い音で鳴り続けるバーカッションが、巨大な宇宙生物の体内に入りこんだような異様な雰囲気をさらに高めていく。観客上には、緊急時にニュース速報を流す電光掲示板のミニチュアがつるされていて、すでにメッセージが流れているこれから「リボンを配ります

このパフォーマンスに真剣に参加しても良い、と思う方は白いリボン、少しだけ協力をしても良い、という方はピンクのリボンを受け取り、体につけて下さい」

一体何が始まるのだ、何をやらされるのだろう？　パフォーマンスを観にきた観客の間で、一瞬ざわめきが起こる。客席係が、幅の広い紙のリボンを配り始めた。ほとんどの客は白いリボンを受け取り、勇ましく頭に巻きつけていく。まるでこれから仇討ちにでも行くようだ。場内の音楽のボリュームが徐々に上がり、ドラムのビートにのって、次第に人々のテンションが高まってくる。そこここのチューブの切れた端から、くぐもったような声が聞こえてくる。「ハロー、ハロー、誰かそこにいる？」。ある者は二階から、ある者は舞台裏から、このチューブを電話がわりにして話しかけてくるのだ。

マット・ゴールドマン、フィル・スタントン、クリス・ウィンク。この三人がBLUE MANの中身である。BLUE MANは宇宙人を意識した訳ではなくて、従来のどのカテゴリーにも属さないキャラクターなんだ。このイメージは少しずつ考えて出来たものじゃあない。彼らが突然ここに来たんだ」。グループのスポークスマン、クリスは自分の胸を押さえる。

現在三二歳のクリスは、美術史を学んだ後、ウェイターとして生活費を稼ぎながら、夜はアマチュア・バンドのドラマーとして活動をしてきた。彼と学生時代からの親友であるマットは、MBAを修得後七年間コンピュータのソフトウエアの製作に従事。ジョージア州出身のフィルは二人より一歳年上の三二歳。彼は学生時代シアターを専攻して、ニューヨークでウエイターの仕事をしている最中にクリスと知り合った。彼ら三人は、六〇年代、七〇年代とそれぞれの時代で様々なことが起きているのを見て育った。「けれどもようやく自分が何かをやれる、という年齢に達した八〇年代には何も残っていなかったんだ」

八〇年代のニューヨークは、ウォール街のヤッピー、ゲイ・パワー、アフター・アワー・クラブ、コカインなどで彩られていた。一少数の例外を除くと、アートは人々の手の届かない、やたら気難しくて難解なものになっていった。ソーホーはアーティストの手を離れて評論家達のものになった。まるで一般の人々がアートを理解したらいけないみたいに。音楽は一部のニューウェーブを除いては、すべてMTVになった。ライブを観に行っても、立体的なビデオそのものだったり、録音にリップ・シンクするのが嘘をきかせるようになったのはそれからだ。そして皆が適当な消費者になって、自分で何かを創造していくというエキサイトメントがここにもなかった」

「面白いものがどこにも無かったから、自分達でやるしかない」と思った彼らがBLUE MAN GROUPを結成したのは一九八八年のことだった。一番初めは、友人達を招いて自分達のロフトで日曜日のサロン風にパフォームしていた彼らは、やがてストリートに飛び出して行く。さらにイースト・ビレッジの小さなクラブ、ラ・ママでそのパフォーマンスが話題を呼び始め、アンダーグラウンドのカルト的存在と成り始めた。

「今でこそBLUE MANはミス・サイゴンやオペラ座の怪人などと同じレベルで語されるようになった。けれども僕達の持っている背景は全く毛色の違うところから来たんだよ。BLUE MANが僕達の表現をする乗り物であるのはすぐにわかったけれど、これが一体どこに行くのか、全くわからなかった」

普通一つのプロダクションが完成するまでにたどるプロセス、プロの書いた脚本の選択そして買い上げ、脚本を持ち歩いてのスポンサー企業さがし、役者のオーディションによる配役の選択。このうちのどれもBLUE MANには無縁のものだった。

この「TUBES」の二人のプロデューサーのうちの一人、出口一（でぐち、まこと）氏は八七年に渡米した日本人だ。奈良県出身の彼は、学生時代から演劇を学び、日本では劇団四季に在籍していた。彼がBLUE MANと達に出会ったのは九一年の一月、ラ・ママでの公演中のことだ。ここから彼らの才能に惚れたんです、何て面白いことをやっているのだろう、と。もともと俳優志望の青年だった彼が、プロデューサーをかって出たのは、「こんなに一生懸命やっている彼らがなかなか売れないのを見るに見かねて」だったという。友人であったアート・ディーラーのマーク・デン氏にハーミナーになってもらう事を得て、出口氏の資金集め活動が始まった。

「でも自分のように実績が無い者が、日系の大手の企業を回っても、誰もまともに取り合ってくれませんでした」

このままではいつまでたってもらちがあかない、と思った彼は最終的に日本にいる自分の親戚や知人達から資金を集めた。「昔の飲み仲間達です。皆捨てる覚悟で投資してくれたと思います」。こうして半年あまりの間に集めた資金は約五〇万ドル。「日本の企業は相手に名前さえあれば、莫大な投資をしてきました。そして出来上がった物が信じられないようなお粗末なもので大失敗したケースはこれまでにも沢山ありました。彼らは内容に興味が無いし、調べようともしない。資金を捨てているようなものです」と語る出口氏も、BLUE MANのここまでの成功は予期していなかったと言う。「今でこそ、パーティーなどで背冷たくあしらわれた相手に握手を求められ、一体どうやってここまで成功したんだ、と聞かれますって笑う彼は、「結局運が一個の年代の相違ですね」と締めくくる。

このBLUE MANに関わっている人々のほとんどは三〇年代の前半で占められている。「九〇年代は、人間本来の姿に戻っていく時代だと思う。みせかけだけのかっこ良さや、

Segundo Caderno

Sexta-feira, 7 de maio de 1993 O GLOBO

Blue Man Group explica ao GLOBO por que seu show escatológico faz tanto sucesso entre

Palhaços do apocalip

EDNEY SILVESTRE
Correspondente

NOVA YORK — Eles encan-am ou enojam. Criando pintu-as feitas com cuspes em telas, sculturas com material que cabaram de mastigar (às vezes epositadas nas mãos dos espec-adores), música com o ruído mplificado de cereal com que ntopem suas bocas, comédia om uma cena em que o prê-o mais disputado — e oferecido alguém da platéia — é um aterial gosmento que acabou e ser ejetado de seus corpos, o lue Man Group é o mais inusi-ado dos sucessos teatrais de anhattan. O inusitado também ca por conta da platéia que há m ano e meio vem lotando to-as as noites o pequeno teatro ff-off-Broadway onde se apre-entam: uma mistura de nova-orquinos com turistas japone-es, israelenses e, especialmente, rasileiros.

— Não tenho a menor idéia de omo brasileiros começaram a parecer. Mas o número é cada ez maior. Quer ver? — pergun-a Matt Goldman, um dos três apazes do grupo.

Ele pega um dos tubos de plás-tico (o nome do espetáculo é, jus-amente, "Tubes") que, ligando oxia à platéia, permitem con-ersas com o público antes do spetáculo; na terceira tentativa ncontra um grupo composto or uma moça de Santos, seus ais e um amigo de Campinas ue mora aqui há três anos — e ue está vendo o espetáculo pela uarta vez. Phil Stanton, outro ntegrante do trio, chama para uvir as vozes jovens que vêm le outro tubo. São duas cariocas, studantes da PUC. Ele tenta ma explicação: "Tubes" não em palavras. Não existe a bar-eira da língua, como no teatro radicional.

— Tudo o que um espectador ecessita para usufrir de "Tu-es" é se deixar levar e partici-ar da festa. E os brasileiros pa-ecem especialmente à vontade m fazer isso — completa Chris Wink, o terceiro Blue Man.

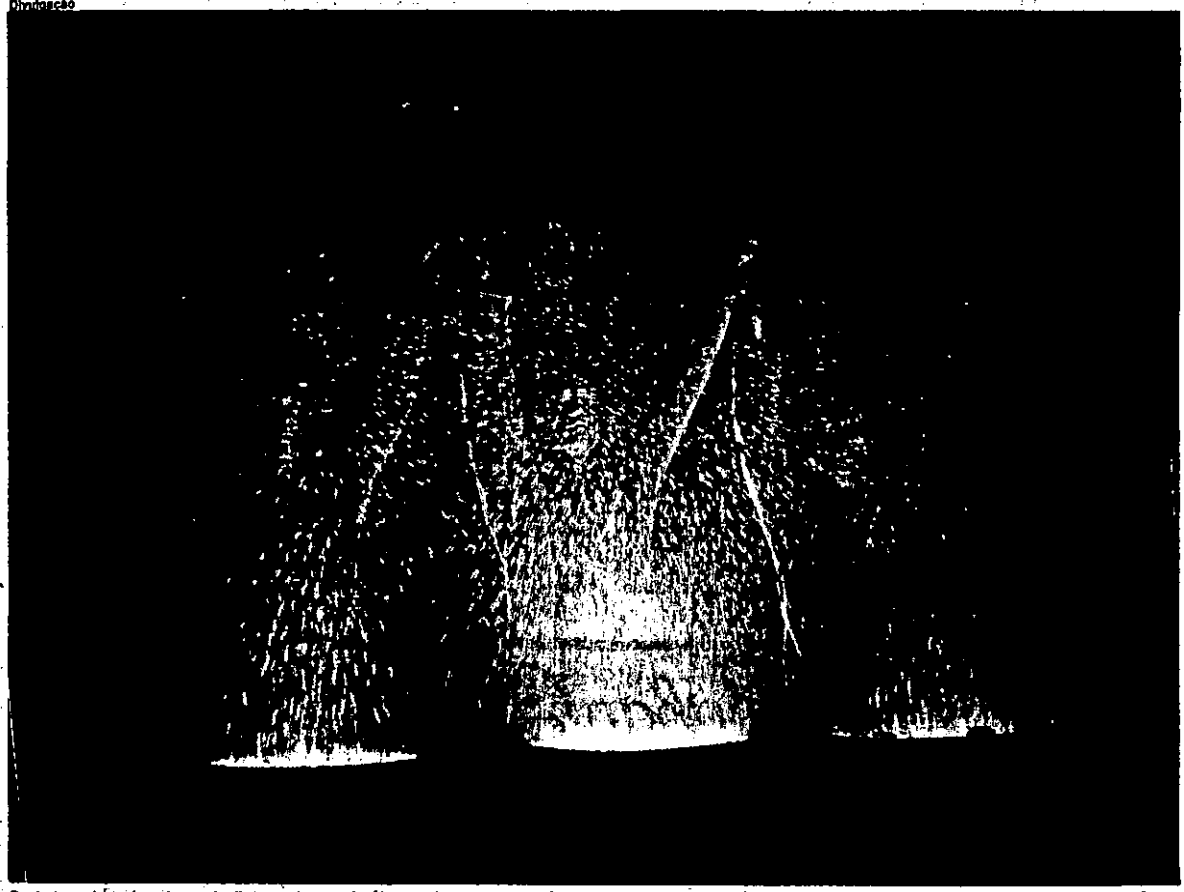
Os ingressos dão direito — pa-a aqueles que se sentam nas uatro primeiras filas — a uma apa plástica com capuz. Os de-avisados que não as vestem te-ão razão para se arrepender: uita coisa (inclusive uma gela-ina do tamanho de uma cabeça umana) vai chover do palco. Quem quer participar mais ati-amente amarra na cabeça uma lta de papel branco, igualmente ferecida antes do show.

— Atraímos gente que está pronta para experimentar algo especial — opina Wink.

É bota especial nisso. Dez mi-nutos antes da entrada dos ho-mens azuis, "Tubes" já vai ani-mando a platéia com letreiros eletrônicos que a incitam a gri-tar desde comemorações de ani-versário de (supostos) espectado-res presentes até parabéns a in-ventores da fusão a frio. Quando Phil, Chris e Matt surgem em si-lhueta, retumbando tambores, a excitação já está bem construí-da. Levantada a tela, o trio está por trás de máscaras de solda que, subindo automaticamente, revelam seus rostos azuis "de extra-terrestres normais" (defi-nição deles). O que fazem em se-guida — com tinta amarela, ver-melha e roxa jogada sobre os tambores que tocarão alucinada-mente — parece efeito de filme de Spielberg. As erupções de cor resultarão numa tela.

— Começamos a experimen-tar com action art em 1988 e fi-zemos nossa primeira mostra em maio de 89. Mas o homem azul surgiu um pouco antes — conta Wink ao GLOBO.

Divulgação



O trio toca baterias, jogando tintas sobre a platéia e sobre uma tela. Para eles, o sucesso está em realizar em cena as mais sujas fantasias do público

O personagem nasceu em "Fu-neral for the 80s", um happe-ning que pretendia expressar tanto o enterro da arte comer-cializada como o tédio dos anos 80. O que estão fazendo no Astor Place Theatre há 640 noites já foi classificado por alguns como "travessuras escatológicas". Gente revoltada saindo no meio do espetáculo é algo comum.

— Nosso trabalho é visceral. Ao longo de milênios, palhaços perpetraram atos que são ou fo-ram tabu. E o bom palhaço sem-pre provoca reações misturadas. Acreditamos em forçar o limite. Apreciamos o que é iconoclasta, o que é um tanto anárquico — diz Wink.

A "experiência catártica" in-clui desde uma sinfonia mastí-gante ao vômito que forma um objeto de aspecto indefinido — mas logo dito "de arte". E apenas uma dos muitos deboches que fazem do mundo artístico.

— Talvez sejamos os palhaços dos anos 90 — acha Goldman.

No palco, gelatina e preservativos

NOVA YORK — "Tubes" con-some uma boa quantidade de in-suspeitados objetos de cena: 20 quilos de bananas, 35 de gelati-na, três caixas de cereal, cinco galões de tinta, 63 rolos de papel não inflamável e 225 preservati-vos. O que resulta dessa mistura ninguém se atreve a explicar. Na bilheteria do teatro sugerem: "É preciso ver para crer". A revista "People" avisa que ninguém de-ve ir "esperando ver alguma ex-periência estética sofisticada".

— As informações contidas no "New York Times" em um único dia são em número maior do que uma pessoa do século XVII rece-beu na vida inteira. Isso está presente no nosso trabalho. Daí ele ser relevante para qualquer um que viva no mundo indus-trial, bombardeado por informa-ções, rodeado por uma paisagem de ícones pop — diz Goldman.

No palco, apoiado por uma banda, o Blue Man realiza as mais porcalhentas fantasias in-fantis e estraçalha dogmas sa-grados. Como aqueles que esta-belecem fronteiras entre teatro, circo, show musical e discoteca ou celebração tribal. Não tentar entender, aqui, é a melhor ga-rantia de divertimento.

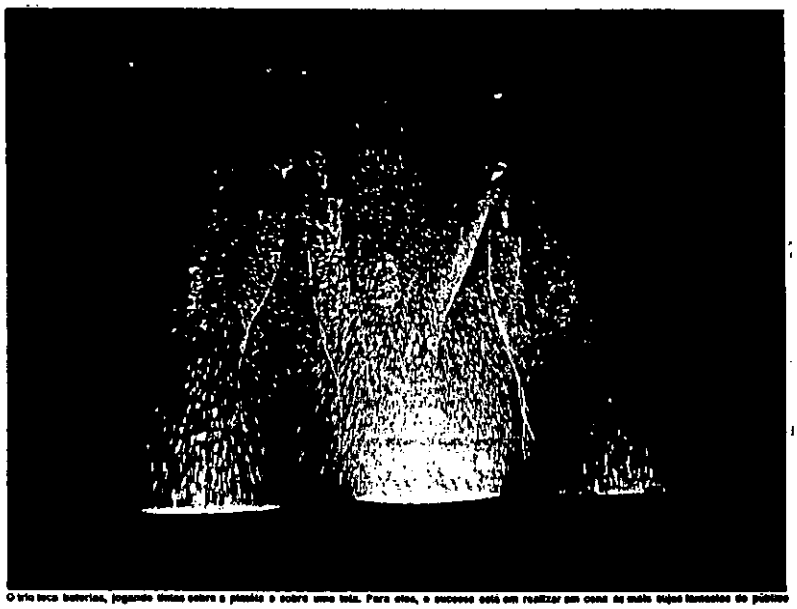
David Rothenberg
Associates

Segundo Caderno

oda-feira, 7 de maio de 1993 O GLOBO Rio de Jane

Blue Man Group explica ao GLOBO por que seu show escatológico faz tanto sucesso entre brasileiros em N

Palhaços do apocalipse



O trio toca baterias, jogando tintas sobre a plateia e sobre uma tela. Para eles, o sucesso está em realizar um dos mais raros fenômenos do público

EDNEY SILVESTRE
Correspondente

NOVA YORK — Eles encantam ou enojam. Criando pinturas feitas com cuspes em telas, esculturas com material que acabaram de mastigar (às vezes depositadas nas mãos dos espectadores), música com o ruído amplificado de cereal com que entopem suas bocas, comédia com uma ceia em que o prato mais disputado — e oferecido a alguém da platéia — é um material gosmento que acabou de ser ejetado de seus corpos, o Blue Man Group é o mais inusitado dos sucessos teatrais de Manhattan. O inusitado também fica por conta da platéia que há um ano e meio vem lotando todas as noites o pequeno teatro off-off-Broadway onde se apresentam: uma mistura de novaiorquinos com turistas japoneses, israelenses e, especialmente, brasileiros.

— Não tenho a menor idéia de como brasileiros começaram a aparecer. Mas o número é cada vez maior. Quer ver? — pergunta Matt Goldman, um dos três rapazes do grupo.

Ele pega um dos tubos de plástico (o nome do espetáculo é, justamente, "Tubes") que, ligando coxia à platéia, permitem conversas com o público antes do espetáculo; na terceira tentativa encontra um grupo composto por uma moça de Santos, seus pais e um amigo de Campinas que mora aqui há três anos — e que está vendo o espetáculo pela quarta vez. Phil Stanton, outro integrante do trio, chama para ouvir as vozes jovens que vêm de outro tubo. São duas cariocas, estudantes da PUC. Ele tenta uma explicação: "Tubes" não tem palavras. Não existe a barreira da língua, como no teatro tradicional.

— Tudo o que um espectador necessita para usufrir de "Tubes" é se deixar levar e participar da festa. E os brasileiros parecem especialmente à vontade em fazer isso — completa Chris Wink, o terceiro Blue Man.

Os ingressos dão direito — para aqueles que se sentam nas quatro primeiras filas — a uma capa plástica com capuz. Os desavisados que não as vestem terão razão para se arrepender: muita coisa (inclusive uma gelatina do tamanho de uma cabeça humana) vai chover do palco. Quem quer participar mais ativamente amarra na cabeça uma fita de papel branco, igualmente oferecida antes do show.

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E bota especial nisso. Dez minutos antes da entrada dos homens azuis, "Tubes" já vai animando a platéia com letreiros eletrônicos que a incitam a gritar desde comemorações de aniversário de (supostos) espectadores presentes até parabéns a inventores da fusão a frio. Quando Phil, Chris e Matt surgem em silhueta, retumbando tambores, a excitação já está bem construída. Levantada a tela, o trio está por trás de máscaras de solda que, subindo automaticamente, revelam seus rostos azuis "de extra-terrestres normais" (definição deles). O que fazem em seguida — com tinta amarela, vermelha e roxa jogada sobre os tambores que tocarão alucinadamente — parece efeito de filme de Spielberg. As erupções de cor resultarão numa tela.

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O personagem nasceu em "Funeral for the 80s", um happening que pretendia expressar tanto o enterro da arte comercializada como o tédio dos anos 80. O que estão fazendo no Astor Place Theatre há 640 noites já foi classificado por alguns como "travessuras escatológicas". Gente revoltada saindo no meio do espetáculo é algo comum.

— Nosso trabalho é visceral. Ao longo de milênios, palhaços perpetraram atos que são ou foram tabu. E o bom palhaço sempre provoca reações misturadas. Acreditamos em forçar o limite. Apreciamos o que é iconoclasta, o que é um tanto anárquico — diz Wink.

A "experiência catártica" inclui desde uma sinfonia mastigante ao vômito que forma um objeto de aspecto indefinido — mas logo dito "de arte". É apenas uma dos muitos deboches que fazem do mundo artístico.

— Talvez sejamos os palhaços dos anos 90 — acha Goldman.

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FRIDAY, JUNE 12

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Наталья Козлова

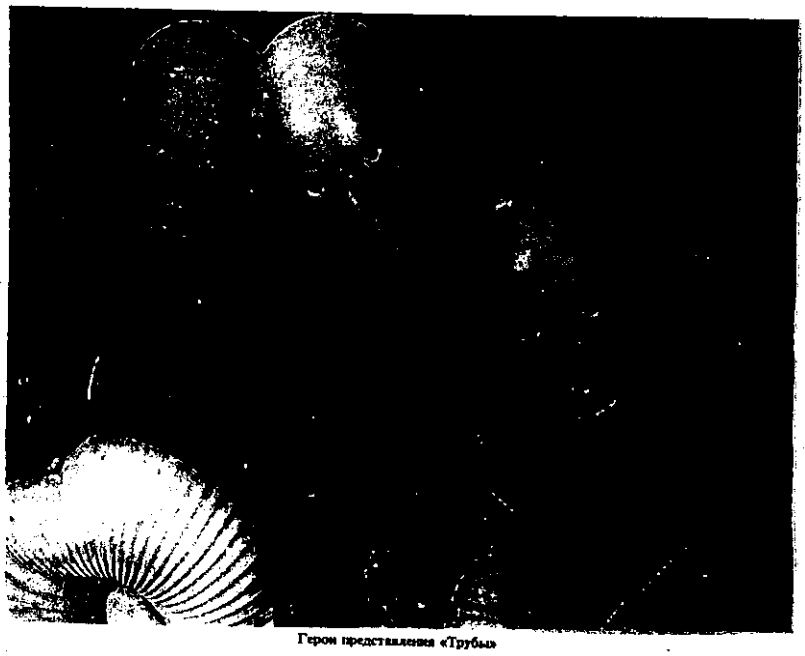
ФАКИРЫ АВАНГАРДА

Еще не начался спектакль, но нам уже интересно... К стулу прикреплена широкого диаметра труба (в программе мы прочитали) для того, чтобы можно было поговорить с теми, кто за кулисами. Кто-то неизвестный выслушает вас и постарается ответить в жанре начатого вами разговора. Если вам весело и вы хотите подурачиться, на другом конце трубы ответят шуткой на шутку. Хотите пожаловаться на жизнь? Невидимый незнакомец пострадает вместе с вами.

Разминка, разговор в трубу, длится недолго. Вот уже побежали красные неоновые слова на длинном, вытянутом лентой экране. Мы только успеваем читать и смеяться взахлеб вместе со всеми зрителями — все, что нам сейчас сообщают, очень смешно. И вот, почти не замечая того, мы становимся участниками действия, придуманного группой «Синий человек», которая еще не появилась на сцене. Закончился пролог и теперь они (их трое) прогуливаются по зрительному залу. Именно, зрительному залу, а не по сцене, так как им очень важно, чтобы мы поняли: они — это часть нас, они не собираются показывать нам представление, а хотят, чтобы и мы участвовали в нем.

Кто же эта троица, только что прошедшая мимо нас? На их головы натянуты тонкие резиновые чехлы, а поверх чехлов наложен толстый слой синей краски. Все пытаются разгадать, кто они. Про эту группу писали самые знаменитые критики ведущих американских газет, но и они, так же как и вы, не сразу приняли и оценили фантасмогорические проказы создателей и участников спектакля. Условно можно назвать происходящее на сцене театра Астор-Плейс спектаклем, но скорее, это нечто, не укладывающееся в рамки принятых жанровых категорий — это эксцентрическое, дадаистского типа шоу, захватывающее вас и не оставляющее в покое ни на одну минуту.

«Синий человек» — это группа, сформировавшаяся в 1988 году. В прошлом Крис Уинк работал в японском журнале, составляя краткие обзоры напечатанных там статей. Его школьный друг Мэтт Голдман был программистом, а Фил Стентон — барабанщиком. В жизни они выглядят очень просто и скромно. Уриc Уинк сын профессо-



Герои представления «Трубы»

Линкольн-центре. С ноября прошлого года шоу идет в театре Астор-Плейс (434 Лафайет-стрит, Сохо). В связи с лишлагами продюсеры не объявляют дату последнего представления. «Нас приглашают во все концы земного шара», — говорит один из них — Дэвид Ротенберг.

Условно мы уже назвали «Трубы» шоу. Можно называть это представление спектаклем или авангардистской клоунадой. Но как бы мы его ни называли, невозможно не признать, что мы попали на нечто новое, невиданное раньше, на воплощенное на сцене произведение синтетического искусства, опередившего время и посягнувшего на будущее. «Это самое замечательное, что произошло в американском театре», — говорит театральный критик Роберт Брустайн. «Трубы» — это экстраординарная комбинация технологий, комедии, искусства, критики искусства, социальных комментариев, философии, псевдофилософии, сатиры, драматического искусства, игры со зрителями, студенческого юмора и дюжины других вещей, не вошедших в этот список», — пишет критик Джерри Таллмер.

Крис Уинк называет себя «разочаровавшимся футуристом», «Трубы», в свою очередь, мы можем назвать футуристическим шоу, тем самым, которое зарождалось еще в 10-

зрители тогда становились участниками мистико-религиозного действа, которое, по мнению В.Э.Мейерхольда, должно было создать в театре «расцвет мифотворчества и подлинной импровизации», а зрители на представлении «Трубы» в 1992-м году вовлекались в футуристический «машкерад» и вовсе не подозревали ни о каком «мифотворчестве», ни о мейерхольдовской «Студии доктора Дапертутто», ни о тех экспериментах русских режиссеров, которые вполне могли бы сойти за предтеч новаторски-экспериментального шоу «Трубы».

Когда американские театральные критики назвали трех «синих» мужчин мимами, они очень обиделись. Крис Уинк сказал: «Мы не выражаем никакой экспрессии и никогда не пользуемся языком тела. Когда на репетициях кто-нибудь говорит, что нас выглядит как мим, мы очень сердимся и кричим: «Ты шагаешь против ветра». «Мы — антимимы, противоположность искусству пантомимы», — говорит Мэтт Голдман.

Режиссер шоу Марлен Шварц впервые увидела Криса Уинка, когда он выступал с сольным номером в Сохо два года назад. «Я остолбенела. Это было даже не знаю что, все, начиная от Чаплина, Китона, Любича до Стивена Джея Голда и Луни Тьюнс. Все, перед чем я преклонялась

ма определенно фаллического содержания. Цена ее — 4 тысячи долларов— высвечивается неоновыми огнями в воздухе.

«Синие» мужчины никогда не заставляют зрителей выходить на сцену и участвовать в их фокусах. Они заранее просят тех, кто хочет «поиграть» с ними, надеть на руку белую повязку. В какой-то момент они совершают свои путешествия в зрительный зал и тащат за собой очередную жертву. Одна из этих «жертв» стала невольной создательницей большого полотна в духе Франца Клайна или Марка Ротко. На молодого человека натянули комбинезон, а потом поташили его за кулисы. (Будьте осторожны, если вы не хотели бы его участи, не вешайте на себя белые повязки). Несчастного героя представления поливали как газон из шланга, а потом вывалили его на белый экран. Когда «творческий процесс» был закончен, любитель острых ощущений, тяжело дыша и на ходу стягивая с себя еще мокрый комбинезон, водворился на свое место.

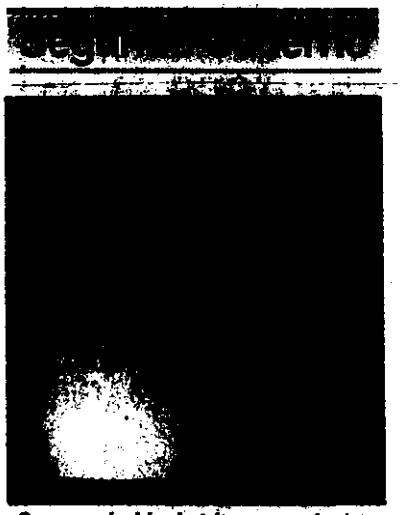
Шоу идет под музыку. Флюоресцирующие лица музыкантов не только звуками, но и красками обрамляют все представление. Прекрасная группа музыкантов — постоянная участница «Труб». Трудно поверить, что всего три человека (Брайан Деван, Ларри Хейнеманн и Ян Пэй) создают та-

BLUE MAN GROUP

O GLOBO

Fundador: **IRINEU MARINHO** Diretor-Redator-Chefe: **ROBERTO MARINHO**

ANO LXIII — RIO DE JANEIRO, SEXTA-FEIRA, 7 DE MAIO DE 1993 — Nº 21.716



O som colorido do trio percussionista

Blue Man Group, o pastelão do futuro

O Blue Man Group explica ao GLOBO por que seu show — uma mistura de pastelão com tecnologia — faz sucesso há quase dois anos off-Broadway. O trio bombardeia a platéia com música, vídeos, tinta e misturas gosmentas. **Página 1**

Astor Show Productions, Inc. 434 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10003 (212) 387-9415 Fax (212) 673-8424

BLUE MAN GROUP

RZECZPOSPOLITA

Warszawa, wtorek 2 lutego 1993 r.

Show niebieskich ludzi

Wojciech Matuszewski z Nowego Jorku

Teatralna sensacja sezonu w Nowym Jorku, czyli The Blue Man Group, podbijająca publiczność swym show „Tubes" („Rury"). Fot. Martha Swope

Sztukę rodzimą popiera się w USA olbrzymimi dotacjami przeznaczonymi także na rozmaite eksperymenty artystyczne. Tak było w przypadku zespołu baletowego znanego choreografa Marka Morrisa, który w tym sezonie wystawił w Brooklyn Academy of Music nową wersję „Dziadka do orzechów" Piotra Czajkowskiego pod tytułem „Twardy orzech". Pomysł przeniesienia baletu klasycznego w lata 60. naszego wieku stwarzał wiele możliwości dla dowcipnych sytuacji scenicznych. Niestety, chociaż Morris jest utalentowanym choreografem i chociaż sala śmiała się często, zabrakło rzeczy najważniejszej: wyrafinowanego tańca, co też momentalnie podkreśliła nieubłagana krytyka nowojorska.

Bo pod tym względem nic się w tym mieście nie zmieniło. Jedna recenzja w „New York Timesie" może zniweczyć wielomiesięczne przygotowania i milionowe inwestycje, jak było w przypadku muzycznej wersji „Anny Kareniny". Imprezę wyśmiano, doprowadzając znany tutejszy teatr — Circle in the Square do bankructwa, a inscenizację uznano za najświetniejszą klapę 1992 roku.

Tak więc tutejsza prasa dyktuje teatralną modę. Trudno zatem przewidywać, co właściwie będzie wielkim sukcesem (czytaj — kto otrzyma pozytywne recenzje) i zyska możliwość realizacji następnych planów, a długie występy sprawią, że wyłożony kapitał się zwróci, i to z zyskiem.

Co zatem miało dobre oceny w tym sezonie? Przede wszystkim farsa przedstawiona w „cygańskiej" dzielnicy Greenwich Village przez Ridiculous Theatre Company pod tytułem „Brothers Truckers", w której większość ról męskich grały kobiety, a aktorzy zaś role żeńskie. Ciekawostką dla nas jest to, że bohaterami sztuki są dwaj bracia, Polacy prowadzący interes transportowy. Ale tak naprawdę „Brothers Truckers" to farsa wyśmiewająca kiczowate szablony Hollywoodu, a publiczność zaśmiewa się do rozpuku oglądając parodię takich gwiazd ekranu, jak Betty Davis czy Barbara Stanwyck.

Z zupełnie innego powodu uznaniem cieszy się obecnie w Nowym Jorku sztuka wybitnego dramaturga Larry Kramera „The Destiny of Me" („Moje przeznaczenie") w Lucille Lortel Theatre. To opowieść o ostatnich dniach aktywisty ruchu gayowskiego, umierającego na AIDS. Autor najwyraźniej pisał o tematach mu doskonale znanych, bo dzieło proste w formie „obezwładnia siłą wyrazu" („New York Times"), jest wspaniale wyreżyserowane oraz grane. To naprawdę wielki kawał prawdziwego teatru.

Zupełnie czym innym i zupełnie nowym pomysłem jest parodia wyśmiewająca mody w pseudosztuce nowoczesnej, czyli show The Blue Man Group zatytułowany „Tubes" („Rury"). „Grupa niebieskiego człowieka" to po prostu trójka aktorów występująca w niebieskich maskach, prezentująca szaleńczy ciąg artystycznych nonsensów. Ich spektakl w Astor Place Theatre to jednocześnie przykład odkryć plastycznych i muzycznych. Oni wprost zalewają widza pomysłami wizualnymi i dźwiękowymi (tradycyjny tekst słowny jest tu umieszczony jedynie na ekranach), nie dając publiczności odetchnąć ani na chwilę.

Niebiescy mężczyźni są tak błyskotliwi i świetni, że bardzo trudno dostać bilety na tę sensację sezonu. Bo jak się coś w Nowym Jorku spodoba, to publiczność walczy o bilety bez względu na to, czy są one drogie czy tanie, czy wieje czy leje, czy jest upał czy siarczysty mróz.

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He is now only a pure screen, a switching center for all the networks of influence.

J.B.

A pesar de su sólida trayectoria, el performance continúa proyectándose en los años noventa como una de las artes más controvertidas y con mayores ramificaciones conceptuales y formales. Esto se debe en parte a su potencial subversivo basado principalmente en una persistente crítica a la sociedad consumidora y en un desafío constante a los sistemas de producción, distribución y circulación de la obra de arte. En efecto, la simple imposibilidad de comercialización inherente al performance (en un sentido rutinario que involucra la apropiación y el intercambio material) le confiere a este arte una capacidad crítica singular. Adjetivos como anárquico, íntimo, gestual, catártico, ritual, son generalmente relacionados con este medio. Sin embargo, hablar de *Tubes*, la exitosa producción de Blue Man Group, constituido por una triada de artistas estadounidenses que aparecen en el escenario totalmente pintados de azul, obliga a mencionar otros términos como festivo, divertido, hilarante. En efecto, el factor humor es fundamental dentro de la obra que, además, parece carecer de una estructura estable que permita definirla pues incorpora música, video, baile, arte y mucho más.

El grupo se constituyó de una manera más bien espontánea a finales de los años ochenta como respuesta a lo que el mismo considerara un estereotipado y predecible panorama artístico. Como consecuencia, durante los cuatro años siguientes Chris Wink, Matt Goldman y Phil Stanton desarrollarían una obra bastante fragmentada a modo de comentarios sarcásticos en torno al establecimiento artístico y un sistema social totalmente supeditado a la tecnología y las obsesivas redes de comunicación productoras de excesos informativos. La peculiaridad de su obra radica principalmente en el planteamiento de una aguda crítica por medio de formas novedosas y de gran impacto visual. En principio, lo más notable es la utilización de un espacio nada convencional. Al entrar al teatro, penetramos una especie de sótano cuyas paredes, pisos y techos están totalmente rodeados de tubos de plástico de diferentes grosores. Antes de empezar la obra, el espectador puede hablar por medio de los tubos (colocados entre las butacas del teatro) y comunicarse con el equipo de apoyo y los protagonistas de la obra que se encuentran entre bastidores. La metáfora de la comunicación parece estar implícita a lo largo de toda la producción. Los tubos actúan en este sentido como redes transmisoras no de información, sino de sonidos, voces, sensaciones táctiles evocadas por la innegable solidez y volumen de los mismos. Igualmente los tubos se contraponen a la funcionalidad del cable, que conecta de una manera ultraeficiente redes múltiples de terminales que supeditan la comunicación humana y los encuentros sujeto-sujeto y hasta sujeto-objeto a lo que Baudrillard denominara *poder telemático*: la capacidad de controlar todo a distancia.

Es básicamente en torno a la idea de exceso (discursivo, informativo, consu-

Blue Man Group. De la obra *Tubes*. Nueva York.1994. Cortesía de David Rothenberg Associates.

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mista, por mencionar los más evidentes) que las diferentes acciones del performance toman lugar. No por casualidad cada puesta en escena implica enormes cantidades de materiales y comida que el grupo utiliza para plantear sus ideas. En una escena, por ejemplo, los tres participantes devoran desesperadamente una caja de cereal, típico desayuno de la clase media norteamericana que trabaja y requiere del mayor rendimiento posible, alimentándose de la mejor forma (con los hierros y vitaminas que el cereal alega tener) en el menor tiempo posible. Un coro casi musical de mandíbulas masticando, amplificado por la tecnología sonora utilizada, convierte la escena en algo divertido e irónico a la vez. Otras escenas hacen una alusión más directa a los excesos de la tecnología actual sublimada a través de la computación y más específicamente a través de la llamada realidad virtual. En ellas nuestros azules amigos se valen de la pantalla y el video para reproducir sus propias imágenes en agitados movimientos de abandono corporal que, paradójicamente, se generan por medio de la percepción visual y mental de una realidad ficticia que sólo tiene lugar dentro del computador. Una mecanizada *voz en off* explica todo el proceso, mientras tanto la pantalla nos muestra al trío ejecutando simuladas experiencias en donde las posibles mediaciones entre el sujeto y el mundo externo quedan reducidas, comprimidas en el plano de la pantalla. Encerrado en su realidad virtual, el cuerpo se desplaza por medio de *comandos electrónicos*. Sólo el queda efecto, sin riesgo. A cambio un *cuerpo inutilizado, desierto, condenado... Microprocesiones de tiempo, cuerpos, placeres.* (Baudrillard, 1983)

En un gesto contestatario la obra carece de palabras, las referencias textuales son mínimas y esto involucra una vez más una preferencia por un tipo de comunicación alternativa. Aún cuando las actuaciones del grupo no se caracterizan por ser particularmente gestuales, no deja de haber un énfasis en la mirada y en movimientos delicados que permiten que cada uno de los artistas proyecten personalidades muy individuales. Al principio del performance la apariencia externa (pintados de azul y con camisa y pantalón negro) los hace casi indistinguibles, pero a lo largo de la obra la ausencia de palabras nos empuja a percibir actitudes proyectadas sutilmente que sugieren modos de comunicación no convencional. Esta misma idea es promovida por medio de la música generada a través de la percusión producida por tubos y tambores que Wink, Staton y Goldman manipulan sofisticadamente. Así mismo, el apoyo de una pequeña banda de músicos y el uso descontrolado de colores líquidos, refuerza los momentos musicales de la obra, convirtiéndolos en verdaderos actos de comunicación y transgresión.

Blue Man Group. De la obra *Tubes*. Nueva York. 1994. Cortesía de David Rothenberg Associates.

La preferencia por el impacto visual no impide que la crítica del grupo hacía las artes visuales sea menos fuerte o menos directa. La inmediatez del gesto y la banalidad reflexiva del arte son el blanco principal del sarcasmo azul. Así, el *Action Painting*, uno de los movimientos modernistas más heroicos de nuestra era, es despojado de su discursividad filosófica, reducido al simple trazo producido por escupitajos de colores brillantes que los Blue Man descargan sobre el lienzo. Es quizá debido a un paralelismo formal notable entre la mixtificación gestual del arte moderno y la celebración catártica de *Tubes*, que la crítica del grupo se disuelve en una explosión de energía motora y sensible. Esta es, sin embargo, dice Chris Wink, una de las motivaciones principales del acto, evocar a través de la música, el color, el movimiento y el contacto con el público la intensidad creadora del arte. Es esto, y no las pretensiones didácticas e intelectualistas del discurso artístico, lo que interesa al grupo en esta primera etapa de crítica y cuestionamiento del sistema. Una etapa que si bien se ha prolongado bastante dado el continuo éxito comercial de la obra, los *Blue Man* esperan seguir desarrollando con nuevos medios (se habla de un film), nueva música (se habla de un disco) y nuevas ciudades (se habla de una gira).

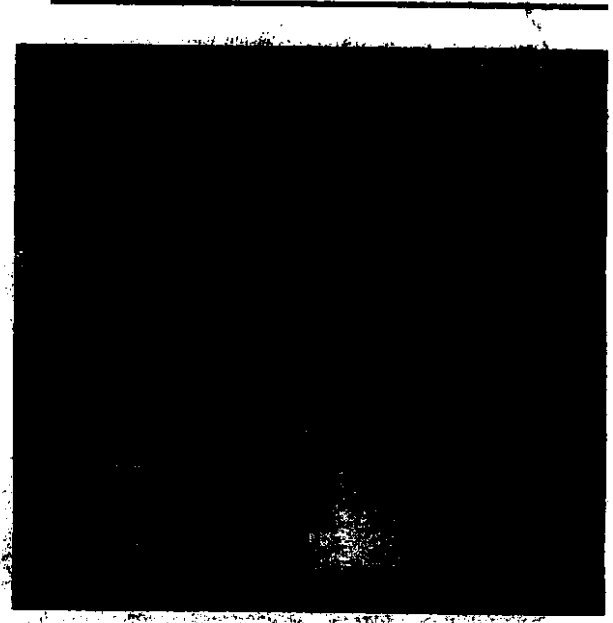
Tubes no carece de pocas contradicciones y sus integrantes están conscientes de ello. La anulación de individualidades geniales y heroicas en la obra a través de tres idénticas apariencias parece invertirse tan pronto los Blue Man aparecen en escena y una entusiasmada audiencia los aclama como a estrellas del rock. El mismo circuito del espectáculo que ellos satirizan los ha absorbido considerablemente en su deseo permanente por domesticar la creatividad y el arte. El casi absoluto rechazo discursivo tampoco les ha permitido profundizar ciertas ideas de gran potencialidad que aparecen en la obra. Por otra parte, a veces la resistencia al sistema enfatiza demasiado la crítica negativa, la cual es difícil entonces trascender. A pesar de esto, una exitosa interdisciplinariedad se pone en práctica en *Tubes*, su carácter fragmentario y experimental le permite mezclar diferentes estéticas y categorías estilísticas, incorporar numerosos medios y reformular inteligentemente ciertos cuestionamientos. Como indica Andreas Huyssen en otro texto: *cómo articular la resistencia en la obra de arte de manera que pueda satisfacer las necesidades... de los productores y los receptores, no se puede predecir y permanecerá abierto al ensayo, el error, y el debate;* y agrega, *es hora de eliminar falsas dicotomías e intensificar tensiones, redescubrirlas y llevarlas a foco en el arte y en la crítica.* (Huyssen, 1986).

Mónica Amor:
Candidata al Doctorado en Historia y Teoría del Arte del Graduate Center of the University, Nueva York. Miembro de la AICA, Venezuela.

EL GLOBO Caracas, domingo 8 de enero de 1995

Off-Broadway de larga vida

Cuatro años de azules tubazos en New York



Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton y Chris Wink son los integrantes del "Blue Man Group", colectivo experimental neoyorkino que este mes cumple cuatro años de presentaciones ininterrumpidas de su espectáculo "The Tubes" (Los Tubos), extraño performance lúdico que sigue agotando las entradas en el Astor Place Theatre de la calle Lafayette de la ciudad de la manzana

OMAR KHAN I.
El Globo

"Blue man group", un terceto de amigos y artistas conformado por Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton y Chris Wink, salió de la esquina más recóndita de la vanguardia artística que crece como el pasto en los espacios no-convencionales del Soho y el Village en la ciudad de la manzana, y consiguieron un éxito insospechado con su espectáculo "The tubes" (Los tubos).

Después de varios performances y presentaciones un tanto clandestinas, que incluyen participación en el evento "Funeral para los ochenta" en el Central Park, un trabajo montado para "The Cucaracha Warehouse Cabaret" y actividades dentro de la exhibición "Chaos-science" que tuvo lugar en el Museo de Arte Moderno de Nueva York, este trío experimental montó un trabajo que les fue comisionado por el Teatro "La MaMa ETC", cuyo éxito les permitió estrenar en enero de 1991 en ese mismo espacio su espectáculo multi-media "The tubes", que hoy revisado y cambiado de escenario, se ha convertido en uno de los espectáculos de los llamados "off-Broadway" con mayor resonancia en los últimos años.

Este mes, "Blue man group" está celebrando el cuarto año de presentaciones ininterrumpidas de "The tubes" con funciones diarias, más doble tanda los fines de semana. Y en la taquilla del "Astor Place Theatre" de la calle Lafayette que los viene albergando después de su salida triunfal de "La MaMa", siguen colgando diariamente el cartel de "sold-out" que indica que las entradas permanecen agotadas, para decepción de cientos de visitantes, en su mayoría turistas, que acuden cada noche al pequeño local con la misma devoción y entusiasmo que se ve en los famosos teatros del Music Hall en Broadway.

Y es que, los cuarenta dólares que cuesta el boleto, son el pasaporte a un mundo particular, que sobrepasa lo teatral y musical, y que es muy distinto a la oferta que ofrece cualquier otro espectáculo de los tantos que existen en esta ciudad.

A liberar el niño escondido

Aún cuando "The tubes" acusa una deuda inequívoca con los ochenta en su gesto y hechura, y más allá de las obvias referencias a pasados movimientos gracias a la aplicación de técnicas propias del teatro pánico de Arrabal y de la tradición del performance acuñada por los artistas plásticos de principios de la década pasada, este "neo-happening" está todavía en capacidad de sorprender y divertir, en buena medida por la dosis de ingenio en su construcción pero también por el indudable talento de estos tres chicos azules que lo hacen posible.

Lúdico y participativo, agresivo y transgresor, "The tubes" no es propiamente una obra de teatro, tampoco un concierto. Se trata más bien de una cadena de alocados sketchs, que producen al unísono la risa y el asco.

A los espectadores de las primeras cuatro filas, se les presta un impermeable para evitar ser manchados con la gran cantidad de líquidos y porquerías que llueven desde la escena, mientras que un modesto cartel en la entrada invita a los espectadores a vestir de manera deportiva y cómoda.

Aunque menos agresivo que los performances del colectivo catalán "A fura dels Baus" conocido en Venezuela, el show de los "Blue Man Group" presupone provocaciones inusuales. El segmento de los vómitos producido por intoxicación de "twinkies", el número de los "marshmallows", el inicio en ritmo percutivo que baña de pintura tricolor la platea y aún el final, con esa lluvia inacabable de rollos de papel que envuelven y prácticamente sepultan a los espectadores, dan cuenta de ello.

Una perfecta maquinaria con precisión de relojería pone en funcionamiento el espectáculo, que echa mano indistintamente a recursos audiovisuales como el video y derivados de la electrónica, así como también una puntual sincronización de las acciones y sugerente interpretación de música en vivo.

Sin embargo, hay algo inocente y cautivador en "The tubes" porque en el fondo se trata de una cordial invitación a jugar, una convalidación de la añorada y siempre reprimida liberación del "yo-niño", a la que el público responde más que gustoso. Y al final de la jornada, después de las dos horas de teatro más descabelladas que haya vivido espectador alguno, da verdadero placer saludar a estos tres tipos que, vestidos de negro y con la cabeza rapada y totalmente pintada de azul, se plantan en la puerta para saludar y agradecer la visita a los entusiastas espectadores.

Cuatro años de presentaciones no son poca cosa y sin embargo, este tiempo no ha hecho perder frescura a este espectáculo, al que todavía se le augura larga vida en el desventurado Astor Place Theatre de la calle Lafayette de Nueva York.

O ESTADO DE S. PAULO

Keanu Reeves fala de seus mais recentes trabalhos. Pág. 10

O filme americano 'Quiz Show' é exibido no Festival de Berlim. Pág. 2

CADERNO 2

ANO IX NÚMERO 2.923 ◻ QUINTA-FEIRA, 9 DE FEVEREIRO DE 1995

Blue Man atrai platéia para ritual high tech

Grupo formado por três atores faz sucesso há três anos em Nova York com 'Tubes', um show interativo e bem-humorado que já se transformou em must para turistas brasileiros

CARLOS GRAIEB

Se você for capaz de ler isto, grita. A frase aparece assim, em português, no meio do pandemônio de signos visuais que a cada apresentação o Blue Man Group leva ao palco em Nova York. É uma homenagem aos brasileiros, que transformaram o espetáculo *Tubes* em must: turístico, hoje mais disputado que pérolas da Broadway como *Cats* e *O Fantasma da Ópera*. Os nova-iorquinos também adoram. Há três anos mantêm lotado o Astor Place Theatre, onde o Homem Azul conduz seu rito tribal apoiado em alta tecnologia.

PERFORMERS ESPALHAM TINTA NO PÚBLICO

Chris Wink, Phill Stanton e Matt Goldman formam o grupo. Conheceram-se na boemia e, foi para um pub do bairro boêmio Soho, compuseram o repertório de artistas plásticos, músicos e outros solteirões que animaram as primeiras performances no final dos anos 80. Já nessa época entraram em cena dois personagens centrais de seus shows: o rumor e o tambor. "O humor une, a percussão incendeia o público", diz Wink, que falou ao *Caderno 2*.

As proezas físicas ganharam importância crescente, bem como as projeções de imagens que usam até a tecnologia dos fractais. Mas foi no show interativo que o Blue Man Group encontrou a fórmula mais saborosa para atrair a pla dia — às vezes para cima do próprio palco. Mesmo o espectador que resolva ficar anônimo não escapa ao vigor — quase violência — da atuação dos performers que espalham luzes, tintas e suor pelo público. "Enquanto dum o espetáculo representamos a criança, o selvagem", diz Wink. "Tentamos seduzir o público para que aja como nós."

★

Caderno 2 — Como nasceu o Blue Man Group?

Chris Wink — Nasceu de uma amizade de longos anos e de conversas variadas em mesa de bar. Eu e Phill tínhamos formação teatral, embora trabalhássemos como garçons. Matt era técnico de uma empresa de computação. A primeira coisa a surgir foi o personagem, o Blue Man. Antes mesmo de pensar em um grupo, já nos chamávamos de "homens azuis". Quando decidimos desenvolver um projeto artístico, foi desse personagem que partimos.

Caderno 2 — Mas há alguma linhagem artística com a qual vocês gostariam de se associar?

Wink — Talvez a desses comediantes reflexivos, como Chaplin ou Jacques Tati. O que é importante para nós é aperfeiçoar a técnica e as habilidades que um espetáculo basicamente engraçado como *Tubes* exige. É um aperfeiçoamento que poucas produções em Nova York se dão ao trabalho de buscar atualmente. O fato de *Tubes* ter se transformado em espetáculo de longa carreira tornou-se importante justamente porque permitiu seu refinamento.

Caderno 2 — Quais são os temas de *Tubes*?

Wink — Tentamos borrar a noção de tempo durante o espetáculo, não deixar claro se tratamos do presente ou do passado. Dito de forma bem simples: não importa o quanto modernos ou "pós-modernos" sejamos, os traços de tribalismo permanecem. Se você esquece este fato básico, inevitavelmente cria estragos no cotidiano, como mostra tão frequentemente a arquitetura de cidades como Nova York ou São Paulo. Nosso homem azul, em uma de suas máscaras, é o solitário que se torna estranho nos espaços modernos — frios e desolados —, que ele criou. De outro lado, quer resgatar o valor da experiência viva.

O Blue Man Group, no espetáculo 'Tubes': proezas como a pintura com tambores que lembra, com cinismo, o poder da action painting

Caderno 2 — Quais as relações do espetáculo com as artes plásticas?

Wink — Nossa primeira audiência foi de artistas plásticos e muito de nosso show é um diálogo com esse meio. Tentamos manter o equilíbrio entre a sátira e a homenagem. Fomos muito inspirados pela obra de Ives Klein — não só por causa do azul que predomina em suas obras, mas pelo entusiasmo e liberdade que estão implícitos nelas. Também nossa pintura com tambores não é apenas uma piada, mas uma lembrança do poder do action painting. Mas somos bastante críticos com a linguagem cifrada que os artistas e críticos inventaram para si.

Caderno 2 — E a relação com a tecnologia?

Wink — Ela está presente em várias partes da produção, mas é também um assunto para nós. A questão é como usar a ciência para que ela não construa um dia-a-dia mais solitário.

Caderno 2 — Como é a relação com o público após três anos?

Wink — Perdemos alguns espectadores que acreditam que *Tubes* não passa de um show molhado e bagunçado, mas isso faz a audiência melhor. Na verdade, temos grande preocupação em proteger o público que se sente desconfortável por ser trazido para o palco ou estar próximo dos artistas. Só não eliminamos todo o "perigo" porque ele faz parte do show, é importante estar na fronteira. Cabe ao artista impedir que o mundo se torne rígido.

Grupo faz crítica a exageros da arte conceitual

Espetáculo é um comentário sério sobre o esgotamento desta linguagem estética

HELENA KATZ
Especial para o Estado

De-construction, desestetização, arte em processo, action painting, estruturalismo, earthwork, performance, arte povera, minimalismo, action plastic, arte plana, instalação, body art, arte engajada, e tantos outros cortes epistemológicos fatais na teoria e na prática da arte: este é o assunto dos três homenzinhos azuis que hipnotizam Nova York, noite após noite (e casas lotadas num teatrinho do Village.

ESPECTADOR É USADO COMO PINCEL

Sem proferir uma única palavra dicionarizada em cena, constroem uma delícia de discurso sobre o beco sem saída da arte conceitual e sua reflexão. Elaborado na forma de arte, como espetáculo (aí começa o metatexto, para quem quiser escavar sob a superfície do prazer sensorial).

Sim, porque *Tubes* é sutil. Se apresenta como um comentário dos mais sérios sobre os principais embates da arte plástica no nosso século. Mas, como a arte mais radical nunca chegou ao grande público, quando ele toma contato com aquelas angústias ("arte tem significado", deve-se privilegiar a forma ou o conteúdo?, a superfície plana deve ser expandida?, etc), simplesmente não as reconhece como problemas e as digere como piadas. Bakhtin aplaude de pé!

A legião da arte conceitual brigou ferozmente, nos anos 60. Robert Morris, aquele escultor-performer maravilhoso, que teve uma exposição de tirar o fôlego no Guggenheim/Soho no ano passado, chegou a procurar um tabelião, no dia 5 de novembro de 1963, para validar um documento chamado Declaração de um Departamento de Conteúdo Estético, no qual retirava de *Litanies* (uma escultura sua em metal) "toda qualidade e todo conteúdo estético".

Os artistas desejavam encontrar uma materialidade que revelasse a sua verdade com tal força, que converteria todos os infiéis. Arte pela arte e ponto. Ninguém mais ousaria desacreditar da retórica formalista que lengalengava sobre a exaustão da arte que pretendia "retratar" a realidade. Todos concordariam que arte pra valer, só aquela que se voltasse sobre si mesma, que cuidasse das suas especialidades, que abandonasse os artifícios. Fosse para super-refinar o formalismo ou para mostrar que a forma final importava muito pouco.

No lugar da tinta marrom, sujar com terra. Em vez de confeccionar "ambientes e materiais, ir lá, abrir fossos no solo, pegar o lixo e pôr na tela, deixar o obturador da máquina fotográfica aberto ao acaso, plantar grama dentro do trabalho para chamar a atenção para a ação das forças biológicas, usar ferrugem e lebres mortas (como Beuys). Se as qualidades estéticas pertencem às coisas, tanto faz se elas são obras de arte ou não.

Na época, Harold Rosenberg (famoso crítico de arte da revista *The New Yorker*) e Clement Greenberg (colaborador de todas as outras publicações importantes, tipo *The Nation*, *Partisan Review*, *Art News*, *Arts*, etc) se tornaram os principais cruzados por estas artes.

É do esgotamento delas que *Tubes* trata, refazendo seus procedimentos (daí o metatexto). O Blue Man Group usa um espectador como pincel, escatologicamente processa tintas e chicletes numa tela, transforma tambores de percussão em palhetas que jorram cores nas primeiras filas da platéia.

Quem viveu as erudições da arte de 30 anos atrás, que buscava em si mesma seus assuntos, desfrutará de tudo, mas provavelmente, temperará o prazer com uma pitada de sadismo (a quantidade vai depender do tipo de relação com estes tópicos). O risco é levar para casa o programa acreditando ter em mãos um manual de modernismo. Nem pensar. Senão, a gente acaba como aquele comercial brasileiro de tim refrigerante que tenta copiar (desavergonhadamente) o Blue Man Group. Por essa, nem Greenberg & Rosenberg esperariam, a uma altura destas.

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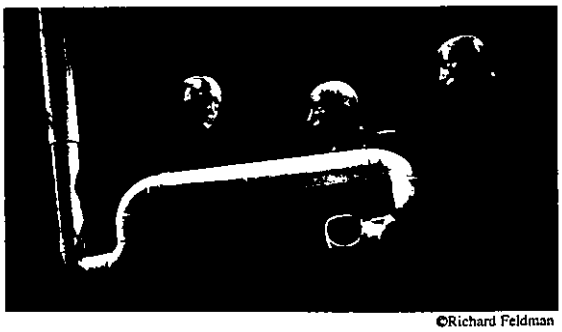
BLUEMAN GROUP IN TUBES



©Richard Feldman

最近では知らない人がいないくらい有名になったブルーマンの「チューブ」。台詞は一切なく、パフォーマンスのみなので、英語がわからなくても安心して見ていられるはずなのだが…。席に着くなり紙テープを頭につけるように言われるし、最前列に座るとなぜかレインコートを渡される。終了後はブルーマンたちと写真を撮ったり、話もできるので彼らの声を聞きたい人は待っていることをお勧めする。

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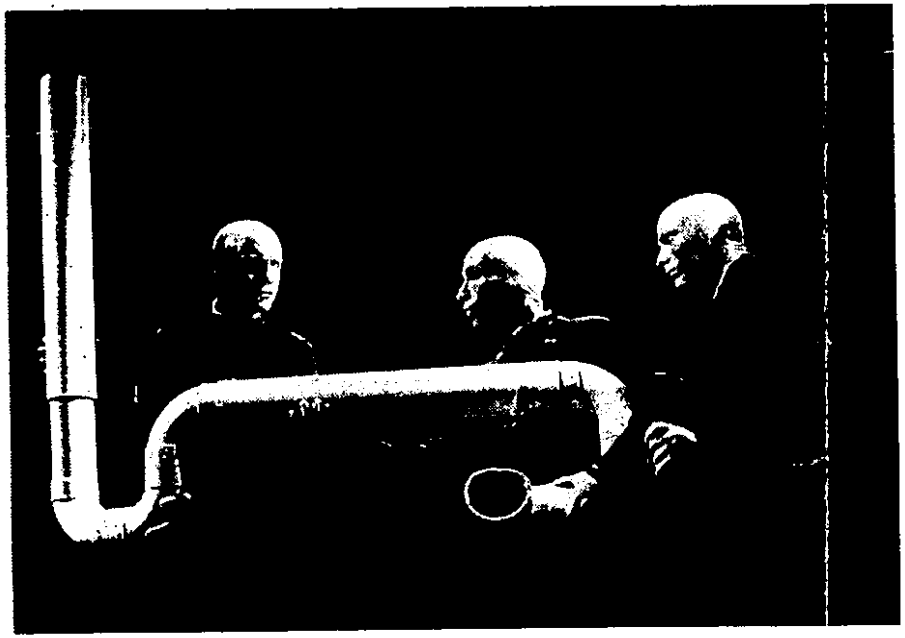
Divadelní noviny Nr. 16, October 1, 1996

New York v létě tančí



Blue Man Group - Tubes (Trubky). 17. listopadu to již bude pět let a 2500 představení této inscenace v Astor Place Theatre. Jeden z největších úspěchů off-broadwayských scén vůbec. Snímek archiv

New York - the melting pot - začátkem letošního léta: první, co mě již na ulici zaujalo, tím spíš, že jsem přijela z Vídně, v tomto ohledu zvláště provinciálního a konzervativního města, je nezvyklá otevřenost, živelnost, komunikativnost a zejména kosmopolitismus. Hned první představení, které jsem v New Yorku zhlédla, bylo výmluvným potvrzením mého přesvědčení, jak stimulující roli hraje prostředí, umožňující vědomí vlastní identity a nezakomplexovanosti příslušníků menšin - a to z všeobecného hlediska, nejen rasové či občanské příslušnosti - pro kreativitu v jakékoli a zejména umělecké tvorbě.

Reggie Wilson a jeho skupina **Fist and Heel Performance Group** uvedli svou novou premiéru *Love* v prostředí starého kostela St. Mark's Dansprojekt. Mladý Afroameričan Wilson se kromě tance (interpret a choreograf) již léta zabývá antropologií a etnografickým filmem. Znepokojen »západním« způsobem vidění a prezentace jiných etnických skupin a jejich kultury, chápe svou tvorbu jako osobní a přímou reakci na nepravdivý obraz afroameričanů - jejich lásek, víry, vnitřních konfliktů, atd. - prezentovaný v amerických společenských vědách, masových médiích i v současném umění. Nedogmatickým a srozumitelným způsobem se snaží artikulovat zejména složitý vztah jednotlivců a komunit k rituálu. Svůj výrazový slovník čerpá z kultury otroků a tradice blues a spirituálu na americkém kontinentě, jež, mísí s prvky postmoderního tance a s vlastním tanečním stylem.

Love, Wilsonova nová celovečerní produkce, je koncipována jako »skupinová zkušenost členů jeho souboru, diváků a nefyzických jednotek« (čili různých duchů a nadpřirozených bytostí). Prostřednictvím specifického způsobu vyprávění, kombinujícího scénami fyzické a vokální výrazové prostředky, se ce Love, obdařené darem nesmrtelnosti. Střetávají se tu africká, afro-karibská a afro-americká tradice, jež splývají v jedinečné divadelní představení, silně čerpající z rituálu a současně vykazující velmi inovativní prvky nového tance. Dominantní motiv vzývání lásky se silným náboženským podtextem v dnešní době ohrožení a násilí (soubor zjevně patří k příslušníkům afrobaptistické církve) vůbec nevylučuje humornou a v jistém smyslu odcizenou scénickou formu, hojně využívající charakteristické rysy afrického tance, divadla, muzikálnosti, dynamiky, erotiky a barvité vizuální stránky.

Umělci, jejichž tvorba je plodnou symbiózou vlastní tradice se soudobou kulturou, jsou bohužel velmi vzácní. Reggie Wilson k nim patří: vycházeje ze svých kořenů, inspiruje se svým současným prostředím a dobou, vytvořil osobitý incenační styl, který není pouze vysoce originální, ale - a to bych chtěla podtrhnout - zároveň velmi zábavný a komunikativní. Není náhodou, že premiéra Love se konala v newyorském off divadle, vyznačujícím se otevřenou a invenční dramaturgií (umělecké vedení Laurie Uprichard).

Proti skromně dotovanému *Danspace Projekt* představuje *Dance Theater Workshop*, v němž jsem zhlédla představení **David Dorfman Dance,** jednu z nejvýznamnějších a nejvelkorysejí subvencovaných institucí v oblasti současného tanečního a divadelní-

vaný, byť v Evropě prakticky neznámý, americký tanečník a choreograf David Dorfman zde uvedl během dvou týdnů hned dva programy. Ten první, jehož součástí byl i tzv. rodinný projekt jako výsledek choreografovy práce s vybranými - v tomto případě - newyorskými rodinami, jsem bohužel zhlédnout nestačila. Druhý program sestával z Dorfmanova vlastního sóla *Brace*, dvou choreografií pro jeho šestičlenný soubor *(Sky Down, Hey)* a závěrečné performance *Blow*, humorného duetu s hudebníkem Danem Frootem. Dorfman zkoumá ve svých choreografiích »intimitu a neobsažitelnost« lidských vztahů, užívaje osobitého slovníku, kombinujícího riskantní atletické pohybové sekvence se subtilní gestikou. Navíc mne zaujal i jako charismatická jevištní osobnost s velmi fyzickým, zemitým výrazem a inteligentním humorem. Jeho roztančené sólo s tahací harmonikou, na kterou místy i virtuózně hraje, patří k nejvýraznějším sólovým výstupům posledních let vůbec.

New York je ovšem multikulturní: nejsilnější taneční zážitek pro mě znamenalo vystoupení jednoho hostujícího španělského souboru. **Noche Flamenca** je název vynikajícího programu manželského páru z Madridu, Soledad Barriové a Martina Santangela, kteří se letos do New Yorku vrátili po nadmíru úspěšném hostování v loňském roce. S kongeniálními hudebníky - dvěma kytaristy, dvěma zpěváky - a dvěma přizvanými tanečníky předvedli nejautentičtější a nejpůsobivější flamenco, jaké jsem kdy měla možnost zhlédnout. Večer, sestávající z tanečních i hudebních sól, duet a sborových výstupů, se vyznačoval - zejména ve srovnání s podobnými atrakcemi vesměs na festivalových prknech - jedinečnou uměleckou čistotou a neokázalou virtuozitou. Každý účinkující se představil jako výrazná umělecká osobnost, strhávající diváky fantastickou technikou a silou výrazu stejně jako nevídaným nasazením a nakažlivou radostí ze hry. Z homogenně působícího souboru mě přesto nejvíce upoutala famózní tanečnice **Belén Maya,** jejíž nevídaně plnokrevná jevištní prezentace, plná smysIné výrazové síly, ji řadí ke špičce interpretů flamenca v celosvětovém měřítku.

Týdenní pobyt v New Yorku umožňuje bohužel zhlédnout pouhý zlomek celé masy divadelních produkcí. Z nedostatku času jsem musela vzdát i muzikály, jakkoli by mne zvláště oba současné broadwayské hity velmi zajímaly: *Rent* (aktuální přepracování La Boheme, zasazené do dnešní newyorské East Village, za který v den generální zkoušky na AIDS zesnulý skladatel a komponista v jedné osobě, Jonathan Larson, posmrtně obdržel Pullitzerovu cenu za drama 96 - *psali jsme o něm v DN 12/96 - pozn. red.)* a britský rockový muzikál *Stomp*. Jednu, dnes již kultovní produkci jsem ale přece jen viděla - před-

založené třemi přáteli, Mattem Goldmanem, Philem Stantonem a Chrisem Winkem v New Yorku koncem osmdesátých let, jež vzniklo v rámci dílny ve slavném off-broadwayském divadle La MaMa. Po nečekaném diváckém úspěchu bylo v listopadu 91 v rozšířené verzi, ve které tři původní interpreti alternují s novým obsazením, přeneseno do většího off-divadla, Astor Theatre, s kapacitou tří set míst, kde se pravidelně osmkrát týdně hraje před vyprodaným sálem. Vtipně subversivní, vizuálně nápaditá, technicky vynalézavá a v pravém slova smyslu hravá němá osmdesátiminutová show je plná skurilních scénických gagů, kaskadérských akcí a vtipných interakcí s (mimochodem velmi různorodým) publikem. Tři téměř identické mužské postavy s modrými holými hlavami se pohybují po jevišti beze slov, bez výrazu a bez emocí, za živého a hlasitého doprovodu rockové kapely. Průmyslové umělohmotné trubky, jež se jako hadi táhnou celým divadelním prostorem - a čas od času šeptají divákovi do ucha podvratná sdělení - slouží na scéně i jako hudební nástroje a malířské štětce. V nejlepší tradici němé filmové grotesky zde tři aktéři žonglují a hrají si s potravinami (marmeláda, banány, ovesné vločky atd.) či barvou a vodou - diváci v prvních řadách obdrží pláštěnky. V extatickém finále tancují ještě stále hrozivě působící modří muži na opěradlech sedadel, zatímco nekonečné role papíru za doprovodu stroboskopického světla zaplavují auditorium.

Trubky jsou v první řadě originální a inteligentní zábava: skutečnost, že publikum - které nic nemá radši - je v různých rovinách aktivizováno, přispívá pochopitelně k jeho atraktivnosti. Představení, inspirované vaudevillem, televizní show i pop kulturou, a užívající high technologie, je příjemně osvobozené od pseudointektualizování a umělecké spekulace. Přesto absurdní a satirická poselství, vysílaná elektronickým zařízením na jevišti, představují jednoznačný komentář k naší smutné digitální skutečnosti, k éře informatiky, jež tolik trpí nedostatkem mezilidské komunikace.

Na závěr ještě jedna poznámka, úzce související s úvodem článku: za umělecky nejhodnotnější představení mého letního newyorského pobytu považuji jednoznačně koncert mladého afroamerického Newyorčana **Dona Byrona.** *Musik for Four Musicians and Poet/Hudba pro čtyři hudebníky a básníčku*, jak nazval svůj nový projekt tento vysoce talentovaný klarinetista/multiinstrumentalista a skladatel. V Evropě na sebe upozornil před dvěma lety svým *Mickey Katz-projektem:* geniální interpretací klezmer-hudby slavného poválečného newyorského židovského kabaretisty. V jeho novém představení se střetává a vzájemně dopiňuje vlastní, expresívně přednášená, vokálně rozehraná poezie pozoruhodné autorky, afroameričanky Julie Pattonové, s - řekněme - free jazzem, velmi osobitým hudebním doprovodem virtuózního Byrona, favorizujícího »směle intelektuální improvizační gestus«, a jeho hudebníků.

Tímto programem potvrdil Don Byron svou příslušnost k vzácnému druhu umělců, navazujících na velké hudební novátory tohoto století a současně chápajících svou tvorbu jako příspěvek k vlastní (v jeho případě afroamerické) kultuře. Stranou módních, často tak impotentních cross-culture-manifestací, čerpá tento vysoce vzdělaný hudebník z plodného klimatu multikulturní metropole a v interakci se současností vytváří inovativní, komunikativní a v nejlepším slova smyslu soudobou hudbu, překračující žánrové i geografické hranice.

TÁŇA LANGÁŠKOVÁ

Astor Show Productions, Inc. 434 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10003 (212) 387–9415 Fax (212) 673–8424

PAULA

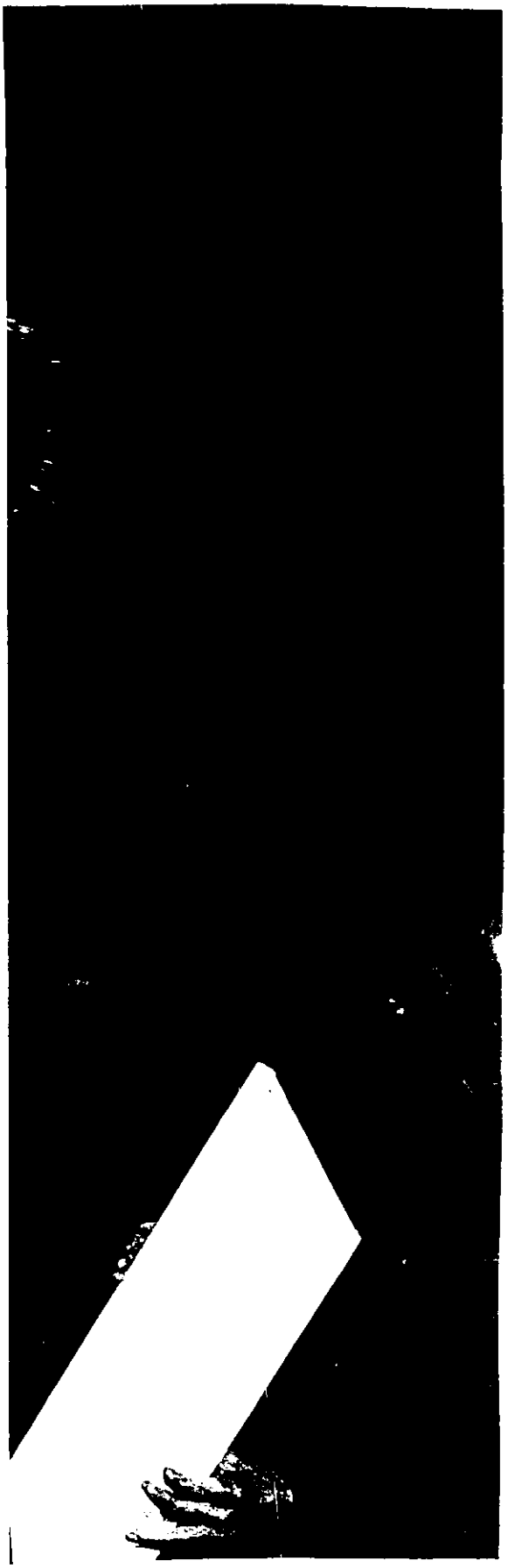
Pocos se atreverían a discutir que Nueva York es, para este fin de siglo, lo mismo que París en los años 20: un efervescente epicentro del arte. Pero dos meseros y un creador de software (Chris Wink, Matt Goldman y Phil Stanton) se cansaron de oír hablar tanto de esta supuesta movida artística, cuando ellos se sentían totalmente decepcionados, como si estuvieran siempre "en una galería equivocada". Para este trío, Broadway no era otra cosa que una oruga autorreferente. Y la ciudad entera, un páramo cultural.

De este crítico sentimiento nació la compañía Blue Man Group, creadora de *Tubes*, uno de los espectáculos más singulares de la noche neoyorkina. *Tubes* es una rapsodia en azul, donde tres hombres (que forman un solo y pegajoso personaje, Blue Man) chorrean color a diestra y siniestra desde unos tambores iluminados. Rumas de papel crepé vuelan por los aires. Treinta kilos de plátanos, cereales y gelatina se suman a la escena, mientras un arsenal de marshmellows es disparado hacia la boca de Blue Man, que traga y traga más allá de lo humanamente posible. La atmósfera, totalmente high-tech, está tapizada por una imponente tubería industrial que emite fugaces mensajes subversivos, muy al estilo de la artista visual Jenny Holtzer. Y el público –que puede ser un simple observador o participar casi como un actor más– queda tan fascinado que sobran los reincidentes.

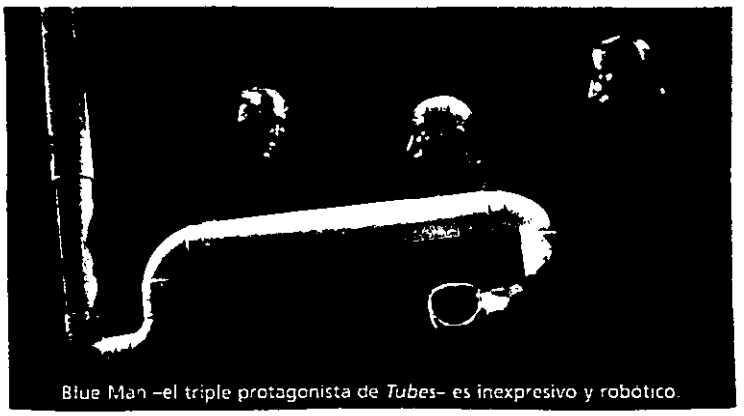
El resultado es un espectáculo que, según Chris Wink, se acerca mucho a una ceremonia pentecostal: un rito, antes que nada, emotivo. Y su mensaje –si es que lo tiene– es criticar el arte moderno ("un pescado muerto colocado sobre una tela es una clara señal de esto", dice la revista *Time*) y hacer una indiscutida sátira a la era electrónica y su avalancha noticiosa. En suma: reírse del arte, desde el arte. Y en un lenguaje básicamente no-verbal, donde la música –más que nada, de percusión– es mucho más que un telón de fondo.

La obra lleva cinco años en cartelera y ha sido vista por unas 500 mil personas. Partió en la escena callejera, subió a las tablas del teatro experimental La MaMa a principios de 1991 y antes de terminar ese año se consolidó en el Astor Place Theatre, donde permanece hasta hoy.

Blue Man Group ha recibido ofertas para llevar su espectáculo prácticamente a todos los países del mundo, incluido Chile. Pero los realizadores del exitoso montaje (que partieron siendo tres y hoy son doce) optaron por crecer dentro de su país: desde octubre de 1995 están también en el Charles Playhouse de la cercana ciudad de Boston. Su proyecto más cercano es sacar un CD y –por supuesto– seguir luchando contra el gris. Con una creatividad inagotable. □



PARA VER A BLUE MAN:
Hay que apurarse: las entradas suelen estar agotadas con meses de anticipación. El Astor Place Theatre está en el Off Broadway, 434 Lafayette Street. No hay funciones los lunes. Puede comprar sus tickets a través de cualquier agente de viajes, llamando a Theatre Service Americana, teléfono 1-212-5816660, o directamente al teatro, al 1-212- 2544370. Hablan castellano.



Blue Man –el triple protagonista de *Tubes*– es inexpresivo y robótico.

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まるで火花のように見える赤・黄・緑の閃光は、下からライトを当てたストロムの上にペンキを撒き、思い切り開くことで生まれる。記者会見の翌日は、ヒューストンの会場を訪れる。 MARTHA SWOPE

BLUE MAN GROUP "TUBES"

オフ・ブロードウェイで超人気の奇妙なパフォーマンス「ブルーマン・グループ〝チューブ〟」。

オフ・ブロードウェイの劇場は、ブロードウェイに比べて外観も地味。看板が電灯に照らされているだけで、気をつけていなければ見落としてしまいそうなたたずまい

ブルーマンの広報を担当する会社の事務所に来たマーク・ダン氏。右手の青い顔のアップのポスターがブルーマンのもの。プロデューサーはいると思わせないのが名プロデューサーだと語った

ブロードウェイとは違う熱気が会場全体を包む。

ニューヨークの演劇界には、ブロードウェイに対してオフ・ブロードウェイと、さらにオフ・オフ・ブロードウェイとがある。これらは必ずしもブロードウェイの予備軍ではないが、若くパワフルな演劇人が多いのは確かなようだ。

中でもいちばん人気がこの〝ブルーマン〟。その名のとおり全身ブルーの男たち3人組が、舞台をはみ出して客席にまで独自の世界を繰り広げる。

台詞はなく、その代わり電光掲示板がときおり使われる。食べ物は食い散らす、ペンキは撒き散らす、大きな音はたてる、観客を笑い者にする。お世辞にも上品な舞台とは言えないが、それがいやみにならないのは、ブルーマンが、まるで生まれたばかりの赤ん坊のようにピュアなキャラクターだからだろう。

プロデューサーのマーク・ダン氏は、「友人の出口最一(もとかず)氏と3年前にオフ・オフ・オフ……の劇場で上演されていた20分ほどのパフォーマンスを見て、どうしてもそれをフルのショーにしたいと思ったんです。それがこのブルーマンで、私はそれまでのアート・ディーラーの仕事をやめてプロデューサーになりました。ブルーマンは、人生で2、3回しか経験できない、すべてを忘れて夢中になれる〝楽しみ〟なんです」

と言い切る。出口氏は、劇団四季を経た後、ニューヨークの小劇団で舞台のすべてを学び、この〝チューブ〟再演では日本人として初めて、個人で制作を担当した。

「映画化の話も出ています。ブルーマンを演じられるのがこの3人だけなので、肉体的に厳しいんですが、いずれ日本公演も実現したいと考えています」

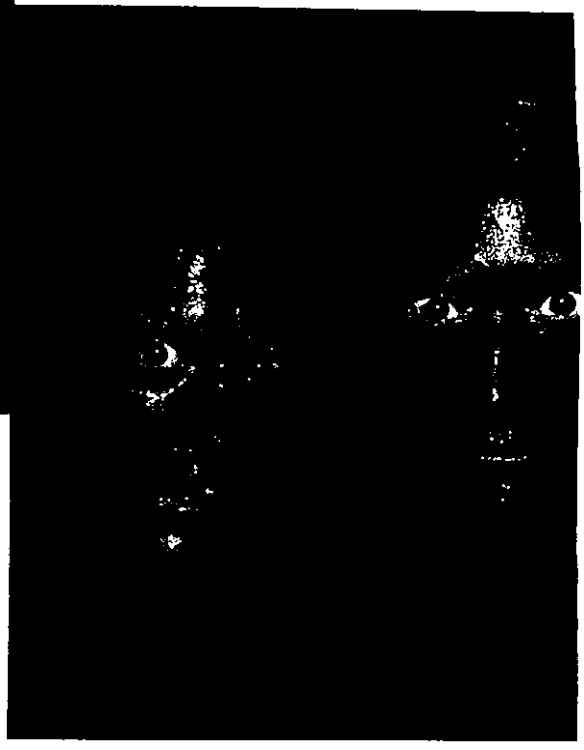
ダン氏の目には、ブルーマンの舞台にも劣らぬ強い力が宿っていた。

BLUE MAN GROUP

SKY LINES

-15% Duty Free
ZIGARETTEN/CIGARETTES

Nr. 1/1997



BLUE MAN GROUP *The spectacular shows which the "Blue Man Group" puts on have long since acquired cult status. Their performances, a blend of acrobatics, visual gags, music and public participation, are often sold out weeks in advance. Astor Place Theater, 434 Lafayette Street. Reservations: tel. (212) 254-4370.*

BLUE MAN GROUP

Mit ihren spektakulären Performances hat die „Blue Man Group" unter Kennern längst Kultstatus erreicht. Ihre Vorstellungen, eine Mischung aus Akrobatik, optischen Gags, Musik und Publikumsbeteiligung, sind oft Wochen im voraus ausverkauft. Astor Place Theater, 434 Lafayette Street; Reservierungen: Tel.: 212 254 4370.

BLUE MAN GROUP

Persian Heritage
Mirass-e-Iran

Summer 1997

Leave your stress at the door of 'Blue Men Group'

Blue Man Group now playing at the Astor Place Theater did not recently open but is still bringing in capacity crowds. One cannot write an in-depth review without giving away the plot and its secrets. Is it a musical, drama, comedy, tragedy . . . ? All of the above and much more. For those frustrated by the work day, for those who love to live on the far side of life, or for those who have an inner yearning to live on the far side of life but have been afraid to do so and for those who just want an evenmg of fun, **Blue Man Group** is a must see. The production staff is impressive. Enthusiasm is exhibited from the moment you enter the theater to your exit where there will be a 'Blue Man' bidding you farewell.

There are specific instructions that must be given before attendance: do not wear expensive clothing, it will inhibit your enjoyment, check your inhibitions at the door (chances are you may not want to pick them up at the end) and bring ear plugs if you are not partial to loud music. **Blue Man Group** will appeal to most age groups, each will have a different level of understanding but all will leave the theater a little less stressed. *(4 Curtains)*

Blue Man Productions, Inc. 434 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10003 (212) 387–9415 Fax (212) 979–6142

By ANITA PELTONEN

Blue Wings
Finnair Magazine
Dec. 97 - Jan. 98

Off Broadway

EVERYTHING TO PLAY FOR

Next time you go to New York, consider witnessing a Greek tragedy; a silent commentary on the state of art, information, and science at the end of the millennium; or even, an Italian-American wedding. All of which is possible without costing the Earth – *off* Broadway.

Today's Broadway is a place of large performances. It offers up colourful extravaganzas, elaborate musicals, and fancy sets.

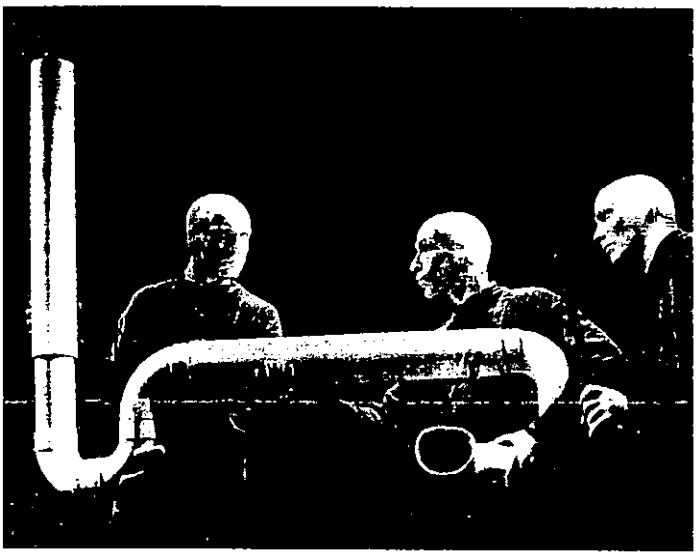
The tickets are a major expenditure, usually about $80 per person and up. Still, unless you've booked tickets long in advance, your seat may be so far back or the view so limited, you'll wish you had binoculars or a periscope.

And in the end, is it really theatre you will have experienced – or more a 'show'?

A show is fine, if that's what you want. But if you want to experience original drama, comedy, children's theatre, or music and dance, up-close and inexpensively?

Go off Broadway.

'Off Broadway' refers to theatre size rather than location. Step into any theatre that seats fewer than 400 and you're off-Broadway. (If the house holds 99 seats or fewer, you're technically off-off Broadway.)



Blue Man Group, in performance at the Astor Place Theatre.

You also step into a new range of ticket prices off-Broadway: from $10 to $60 a ticket, versus $75 and up, up, up.

What will you get for that reduced price? Here are some hints.

One: You'll get a more intimate theatre experience. You'll be closer to the stage, the set, the actors – and the intensity of the dramatic moment.

Two: Although quality varies off- as well as on-Broadway, the smaller theatres breed a unique class of drama. New York City is, after all, stage capital of the U.S.. Everyone who loves theatre wants to act, direct, design, light, or produce here. So competition is healthy, and the results rich: the most prestigious drama prize in the U.S., the Pulitzer, was awarded 13 times to off-Broadway productions in just the last three years.

Three: There's a chance you might see a film or TV actor off-Broadway. Many actors started here – Kevin Kline and Glenn Close to name but two – and off-Broadway is the spiritual home they return to between screen projects.

Four: You'll end up in neighbourhoods with lots of character, like Manhattan's East or West (Greenwich) Village.

Off-Broadway, you'll find not just new or experimental drama. The small theatres are also the best places to see the great classics staged – or modern classics-in-the-making.

No more vivid example exists than Rent, the La Boheme-based musical about struggling artists in New York's East Village. About two years ago, Rent was launched at East 4th Street's New York The-

atre Workshop (NYTW), on a stage decorated mostly with metal scaffolding.

This lively musical ended up on Broadway, where it's doing exceedingly well. But while at the NYTW, it offered something Broadway can't: the feeling that you were in the middle of the whirlwind of emotion, scuffling, and dancing that makes up this play.

NYTW recently premiered Many More Mansions, an autobiographical family saga by U.S. drama giant Eugene O'Neill. But in December, NYTW goes crazily sci-fi with Brides of the Moon, set in the year 2069.

Meanwhile, just a few blocks north on E. 13th St., the Classic Stage Company (CSC) elegantly reinterprets classic dramas for contemporary audiences – with gorgeous, but minimalist, stage sets.

The works of Spanish playwright Federico Garcia Lorca, and Frenchmen Moliere, Voltaire, and Corneille have recently received intriguing treatments here. But from December 9-January 4, CSC stages Alexander Vvedensky's early 1900s Christmas at the Ivanovs – about a Russian family's unconventional Yuletide experience. In early '98, CSC puts on the Greek classic Phaedra, the tale of a woman in love with her stepson, originally dramatized by Euripides. Tentatively set for later 1998 is Irishman Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot. Its handling of questions about God and human existence by two tramps makes it an absurdist classic.

Tubes, staged by Blue Man Group at the Astor Place Theatre is a wordless critique of modern art, pop culture, technology, and science. There are loud drums, digital read-out screens, bananas, and junk food involved. And lots of blue body paint. It's a rowdy play, yet the actors are sweet-faced and silent

Erin Quinn Purcell and Gregory Jackson in Duet! A Romantic Fable, at the Ohio Theatre.

Tony n' Tina's Wedding, an interactive comedy, and the third-longest running show in Off-Broadway history.

What's on and where

Brides of t he Moon, New York Theater Workshop (79 E.4th St.) tel 212 460 5475.

Phaedra or Christmas at the Ivanovs, Classic Stage Company (136 E. 13th St.) tel. 212 677 4210.

Duet! by Adobe Theater Company (no fixed address) tel. 212 352 0441.

Tubes by Blue Man Group, Astor Place Theatre (434 Lafayette) tel. 212 254 4370.

Tony & Tina's Wedding by Artificial Intelligence Players (St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St.), tel. 212 239 6200 for tickets only (Telecharge). Or you can go to Ticket Central at Playwrights' Horizon daily from 1pm-8pm, 416 W. 42nd St. (near 9th Ave.) tel. 212 279 4200 (information only; no phone sales). The $65-$75 ticket price inlcudes a meal – with sparkling wine.

Grandma Sylvia's Funeral by Soho Playhouse (15 Vandam) tel. 212 691 1555.

Many smaller theatres have made agreements with local restaurants, so if you show your ticket stubs, you will get a discount on a pre- or post-theatre meal. Ask at individual theatres.

and their messages humorous and thoughtfully sophisticated.

The off-off Broadway Adobe Theatre Company has recently produced Duet!, a spoof of 1950s Hollywood monster films and cocktail lounge entertainers. There's comedy, slapstick, and subtle moments, too; the play also manages to pull off a serious love story with tragic undertones. And a tight budget didn't keep Adobe from creating vibrant stage sets.

Tony&Tina's Wedding explores the kitsch of Italian-American weddings. This parody starts uneventfully in a church, with a priest officiating, then moves to a banquet hall, where things liven up.

Corny toasts, fights between wedding party members, and a striptease by a drunken stepmother are all part of the mix. Audience members, seated at banquet tables, get a pasta and salad supper, sparkling wine and wedding cake, and a chance to dance. There's a cash bar, too.

There's a lot of action on the dance floor, but the play's most interesting moments are its smallest – like the whispered or hissed conversations between jealous bridesmaids, mostly improvised; audience interaction is encouraged. It may all become a bit bewildering at times, and Tony&Tina certainly doesn't pay Italian-Americans any compliments. But how else would you get invited to a New York wedding?

Grandma Sylvia's Funeral also has catering – a 'light bagel buffet', where the audience mixes with the players. The subject of this tragicomedy is a large Jewish family's reactions to the death of its matriarch Sylvia.

Off-Broadway theatre specializes in pushing down the stage's 'fourth wall' between actor and audience. This is partly possible because the smaller theaters often simply use open spaces instead of

ASKO

key figures

Operating profit, %

8.2

Return on equity, ROE%

16.2

Return on investment, ROI%

12.2

Foreign operation's share, %

72.0

Manufacturing facilities

in 14 countries

Personnel in avarage

7.888

Investments, FIM million

258

The figures are based on interim report jan.-aug. 1997

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conventional platform-style stages.

Audience participation also pushes down the 'wall'. (You are never obliged to participate, by the way.) And some off-Broadway companies invite audiences to question the director or meet actors after the show.

Either way, a demystification takes place: the actors are no longer unknowable figures, and the audience is no longer a faceless blob sitting in the dark on the other side of that fourth wall. The result: an experience of theatre you will have nowhere else.

A free publication called Hot Seats a good guide to all current non-Broadway theatre in NYC. It handily divides performances by location and genre (e.g. comedy, drama.). Get a copy by calling or faxing the Alliance of Resident Theatres (ART): tel. 212 989 5257; fax. 212 989 4880; or stop by or write to ART/New York at 131 Varick St. Room 904, New York, NY 10013-1410. (If you want a single issue of Hot Seats mailed to you outside the U.S., ART will send it for free; if you want to subscribe, $5 is requested to cover overseas postage costs.) ART represents about 350 theatres; it is a non-profit company that helps to publicize the theatres' work.

Pick up the weekly Time Out New York magazine at any newsstand. It has good listings of off-Broadway and off-of Broadway theatre – and just about everything else going on in New York. Or look at the Internet's www.playbill.com, or www.sidewalk.com's theatre site.

Tickets for off-Broadway can sometimes be obtained on the same day of performance, or on relatively short notice. (Advanced notice is always better if you want to be certain of a seat, however.) Below is information for making reservations for the plays mentioned in this article. Most are in Manhattan's East or West (Greenwich) Village. *BW*

Finnair flies daily to New York's JFK airport, with cooperation partner, Delta Air Lines.

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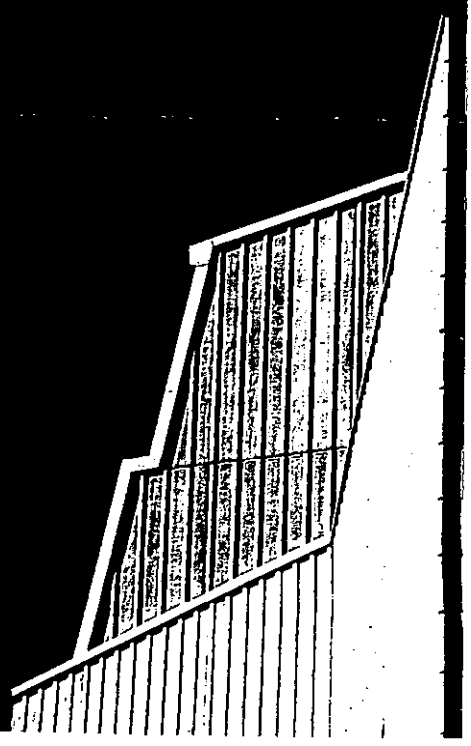

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FAX : 01 45 44 39 45

Blue Man Group
Public Relations Dept.
434 Lafayette Street
New York, N.Y. 10003

Paris, 7th January 1998

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are happy to inform you that the New York travel guide was published in France last October. The English edition should be published in the US next March.

Enclosed within are the 2 paper photos and 1 color slide you very kindly lent us and for which we would like to thank you and apologize for this late return.

Within is a black & white print of the page in which the reader can find your establishement. Please let us know what you think of it and if the information given are correct. In prevision for the updated edition, would it be possible for you to let us know of any changement in facts and prices.

All my best wishes for the New Year

Yours,

Sophie Lenormand
Editor

Aller

ARN 098-099/Off-Broadwa - copie 5/01/98 16:57 Page 2

Loin de Broadway et du Theater District, petits budgets et publicité réduite : les scènes Off-Broadway ne sont pas de tout repos mais la liberté artistique y est à la mesure des risques. Des spectacles disparaissent alors que d'autres se montent et ce renouvellement permanent crée un paysage théâtral aussi vivant que varié. Certaines

Sortir

Stomp (44)
Orpheum Theatre, 126 Second Avenue N.Y. 10003 ☎ (212) 477-2477

(8th St.) M *Astor Place* ***Musique*** *mar.-ven. 20h00 ; sam. 19h00, 22h30 ; dim. 15h00, 19h00* ● *$ 24,50-49*

Ce spectacle très branché est en train de conquérir le monde. La pratique de l'anglais est facultative car il s'agit en fait d'un stupéfiant concert de "percussions" : les artistes utilisent toutes sortes d'objets métalliques ou usuels et mettent leur corps en mouvement pour produire une gamme incroyable de bruits. Un spectacle unique et drôle.

Blue Man Group Tubes (45)
Astor Place Theater, 434 Lafayette Street N.Y. 10003
☎ (212) 254-4370

(entre 4th et 8th Sts) M *Astor Place* ***Théâtre*** *mar.-jeu. 20h00 ; ven.-sam. 19h00, 22h00 ; dim. 16h00, 19h00* ● *$ 39-49*

Nul besoin de parler une quelconque langue pour assister à ce spectacle avant-gardiste qui défie toute description : il ne comporte ni dialogue ni chansons mais une quantité d'objets volant à travers la scène. Curieusement, le public participe toujours avec enthousiasme apportant ainsi une autre dimension à l'ensemble. Allez-y, c'est le meilleur moyen de vous en faire une opinion !

The Fantasticks (46)
Sullivan Street Theater, 181 Sullivan Street N.Y. 10012
☎ (212) 674-3838

(entre Bleecker et Houston Sts) M *Washington Square* ***Comédie musicale*** *mar.-ven. 20h00 ; sam. 15h00, 19h00 ; dim. 15h00, 19h30* ● *mar.-jeu. $ 35 ; ven.-dim. $ 37,50*

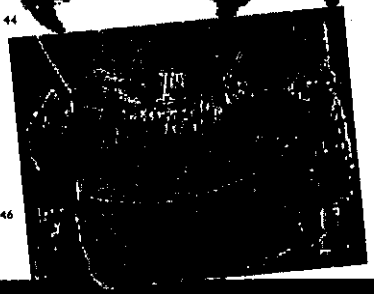
Cette fable d'amour musicale qui échappe au schéma classique je-t'aime-je-te-quitte peut se vanter d'avoir tenu l'affiche plus longtemps qu'aucun autre spectacle musical américain. Elle a légué à la postérité d'inoubliables chansons comme "*Try to remember those days in September...*" de Harry Belafonte. N'espérez pas assister à une production de luxe : The Fantasticks se joue désormais dans un petit théâtre aux décors minimalistes.

Sans ou Bien

Tony & Tina's Wedding (47) Cérémonie : St. John's Church, 81 Christopher Street (entre Seventh Ave et Bleecker St.) N.Y. 10014 ; Réception : Vinnie Black's Coliseum, 147 Waverly Place (entre Sixth et Seventh Ave) N.Y. 10014 ☎ (212) 279-4200 *Si vous avez toujours rêvé d'assister à une noce italo-américaine, c'est le moment ou jamais. Un ticket vous donnera le droit d'assister au mariage et à la réception nuptiale de Tina et Tony. Aucun détail (contre-temps, plats de pâtes et calamités diverses) ne manquera à la fête. Amateurs de théâtre interactif, enfilez vos plus beaux atours et rejoignez les invités à l'église !* **Grandma Sylvia's Funeral (48)** SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam Street (entre Sixth et Seventh Aves) N.Y. 10013 ☎ (212) 691-1555 *Grâce à ce spectacle interactif, vous pourrez suivre les funérailles d'une mère juive despotique régnant sur une famille new-yorkaise haute en couleur. Le prix comprend le "bagel buffet bonanza".*

productions réussissent à accrocher le public et poursuivent leur carrière saison après saison. Repérez les nouveautés dans les publications hebdomadaires *Time Out New York*, *Theatre Week* ou *New York Magazine*.

44



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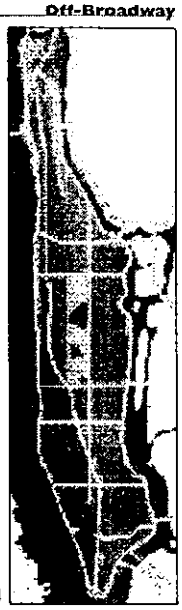

45

48

Des funérailles sont rarement une partie de plaisir ! Mais dans ce spectacle, la famille et les amis de Sylvia vous feront mourir de rire !

Merci à Ted Hardin, au *New York Convention & Visitors Bureau (NYCVB)*, à Christine Silva et à tous les établissements présentés dans ce guide pour leur coopération.

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194 Gall.-B. Lenormand

Per loro il blu
è una
passione
assoluta.
Si chiamano
"Blue Man
Group", sono
tre attori che si
esibiscono
ad Astor
Place, in uno
dei più famosi
teatri off di
New York.
Il loro
spettacolo
"Tubes" è una
performance
tra body art
e teatro ed
è uno dei
più grandi
successi di
Broadway.
Con un unico
protagonista,
il blu

iO donna

1

Le facce blu di un gruppo di attori off, ma anche i ritratti di pacifici signori o di grandi star. In tutto 10 mila scatti per raccontare la storia di una città attraverso le facce dei suoi abitanti. Così è nata «Faces of New York», ultima mostra di Antonio Guccione, ora esposta a Soho.

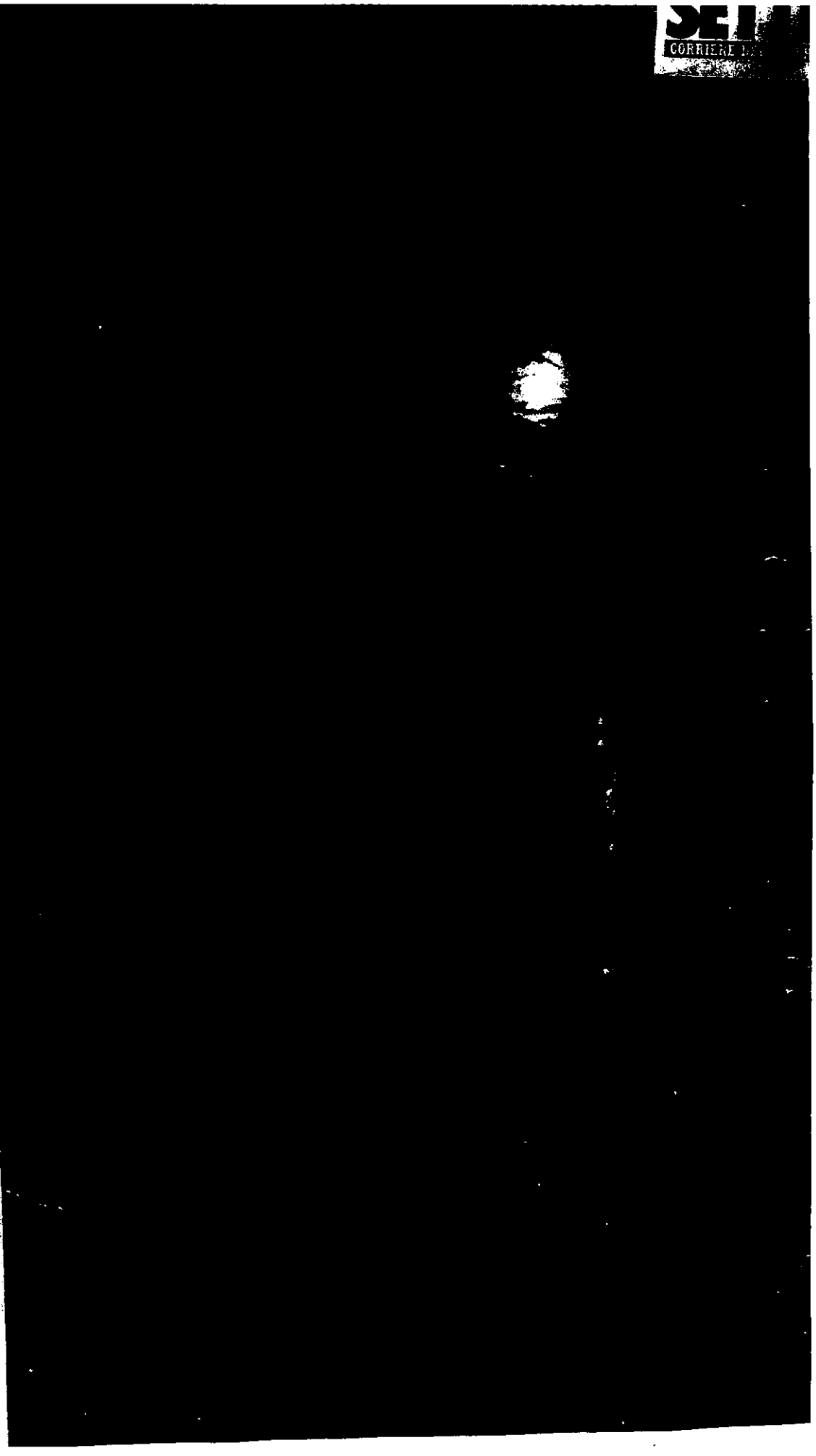
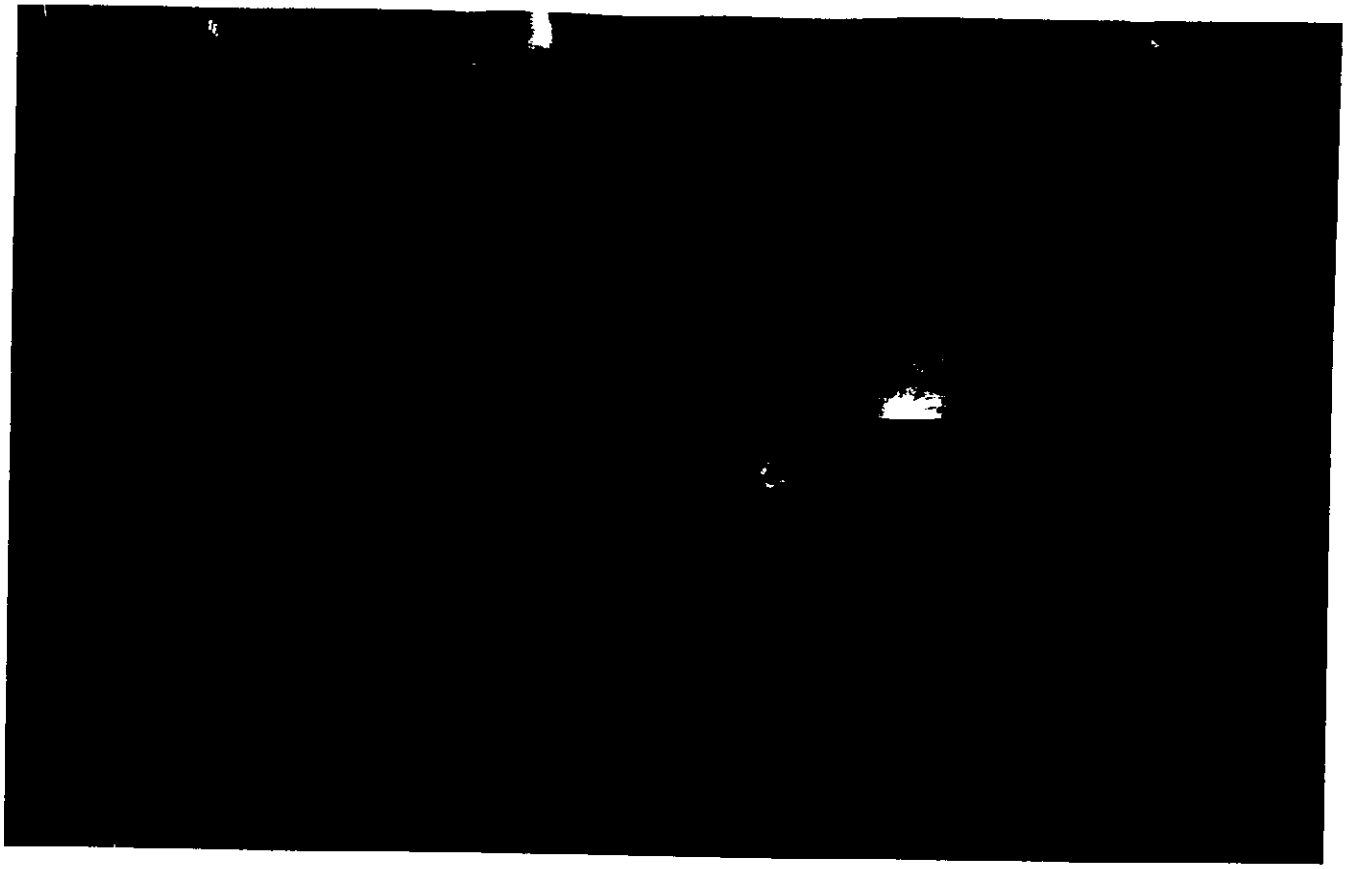


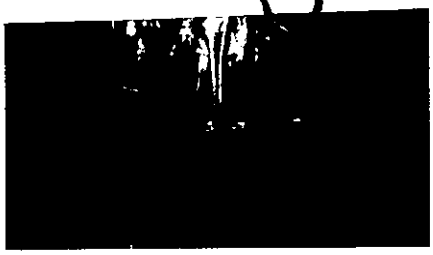
Foto di Antonio Guccione



εφημερίδας "New York Times" περιέχει τόσες πολλές πληροφορίες, όσες θα διάβαζε ένας άνθρωπος του 17ου αιώνα στη διάρκεια ολόκληρης της ζωής του»), πελώρια κρουστά που οι μεμβράνες τους περιχύνονται με διαφορετικά χρώματα και στους φρενήρεις τυμπανισμούς τινάσσουν τα χρώματά τους στα ύψη, βιντεοθόνες που προβάλλουν τη δράση των «Μπλε Ανθρώπων», όταν αυτοί εγκαταλείπουν κάποιες στιγμές τη σκηνή και αποσύρονται στα παρασκήνια και, τέλος, ένας... διονυσιακός χαρτοπόλεμος με την ενεργό συμμετοχή του κοινού, καθώς το φινάλε της παράστασης περιλαμβάνει το ξετύλιγμα χιλιομέτρων ανακυκλωμένου χαρτιού, με το οποίο «περιτυλίγεται» το κοινό σε πλατεία και εξώστη.

Οι «Μπλε Άνθρωποι» γεννήθηκαν πριν από έξι χρόνια μέσα από τις δημιουργικές αναζητήσεις τριών φίλων, των Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton και Chris Wink, και παρουσιάστηκαν για πρώτη φορά από τον γνωστό για τους πειραματισμούς του θίασο La Mamma. Οι θετικότατες κριτικές που δέχθηκαν έκαναν την ομάδα να τολμήσει το μεγάλο άλμα: η παράσταση στεγάστηκε σε ένα ιστορικό θέατρο του East Village και σύντομα αναδείχθηκε σε μια από τις περισσότερο συζητημένες παραστάσεις της νεοϋορκέζικης θεατρικής πιάτσας. Το περιοδικό «Time» έγραψε γι' αυτούς: «Πρόκειται για ένα ντελιριακά αστείο μίγμα μουσικής, χρωμάτων και παντομίμας, που δημιουργεί μια ανάπαντεχη αίσθηση στον θεατή».

Η μοναδική αυτή αίσθηση μεταδί-



ΘΕΑΤΡΟ ΣΕ ΧΡΩΜΑ ΜΠΛΕ

Κείμενο - Φωτογραφίες: Άρης Μαλανδράκης

Είναι η μεγαλύτερη επιτυχία στην off - Broadway θεατρική πιάτσα! Το στέκι τους, στην οδό Λαφαγιέτ 434 στο Μανχάταν, έχει προπωλημένα όλα τα εισιτήρια δύο μήνες πριν από την κάθε παράσταση. Οι ενθουσιώδεις κριτικές στις στήλες των περιοδικών και των εφημερίδων είναι ανάλογες με τα βραβεία που έχουν μέχρι στιγμής δεχθεί για τη σύλληψη και εκτέλεση αυτής της πρωτοποριακής παράστασης. Ο θίασος των «Μπλε Ανθρώπων», που συνεχίζει για πέμπτη χρονιά να «σπάει τα ταμεία» στο Astor Place Theatre, αποτελεί την πεμπτουσία αυτού που οι σύγχρονοι θεατράνθρωποι ονομάζουν performance art.

Βαμμένοι ολόσωμα με τα χρώματα του μπλε κοβάλτιου, βουβοί και ανέκφραστοι μπροστά στους θεατές, δημιουργούν μια εκρηκτική ατμόσφαιρα κάθε βράδυ με τα όσα... διαπράττουν στη σκηνή! Παράξενα αυτοσχέδια μουσικά όργανα κατασκευασμένα από σωλήνες ύδρευσης, ηλεκτρονικές οθόνες με μηνύματα πού περιέχουν αφορισμούς και ευφυολογήματα περί της καθημερινής ζωής («Η κυριακάτικη έκδοση της

ΘΕΑΤΡΟ ΣΕ ΧΡΩΜΑ ΜΠΛΕ

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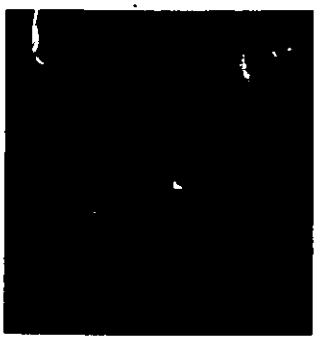
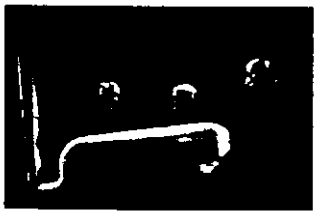
εφημερίδας "New York Times" περιέχει τόσες πολλές πληροφορίες, όσες θα διάβαζε ένας άνθρωπος του 17ου αιώνα στη διάρκεια ολόκληρης της ζωής του»), πελώρια κρουστά που οι μεμβράνες τους περιχύνονται με διαφορετικά χρώματα και στους φρενήρεις τυμπανισμούς τινάσσουν τα χρώματά τους στα ύψη, βιντεοθόνες που προβάλλουν τη δράση των «Μπλε Ανθρώπων», όταν αυτοί εγκαταλείπουν κάποιες στιγμές τη σκηνή και αποσύρονται στα παρασκήνια και, τέλος, ένας... διονυσιακός χαρτοπόλεμος με την ενεργό συμμετοχή του κοινού, καθώς το φινάλε της παράστασης περιλαμβάνει το ξετύλιγμα χιλιομέτρων ανακυκλωμένου χαρτιού, με το οποίο «περιτυλίγεται» το κοινό σε πλατεία και εξώστη.

Οι «Μπλε Άνθρωποι» γεννήθηκαν πριν από έξι χρόνια μέσα από τις δημιουργικές αναζητήσεις τριών φίλων, των Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton και Chris Wink, και παρουσιάστηκαν για πρώτη φορά από τον γνωστό για τους πειραματισμούς του θίασο La Mamma. Οι θετικότατες κριτικές που δέχθηκαν έκαναν την ομάδα να τολμήσει το μεγάλο άλμα: η παράσταση στεγάστηκε σε ένα ιστορικό θέατρο του East Village και σύντομα αναδείχθηκε σε μια από τις περισσότερο συζητημένες παραστάσεις της νεοϋορκέζικης θεατρικής πιάτσας. Το περιοδικό «Time» έγραψε γι' αυτούς: «Πρόκειται για ένα ντελιριακά αστείο μίγμα μουσικής, χρωμάτων και παντομίμας, που δημιουργεί μια αναπάντεχη αίσθηση στον θεατή».

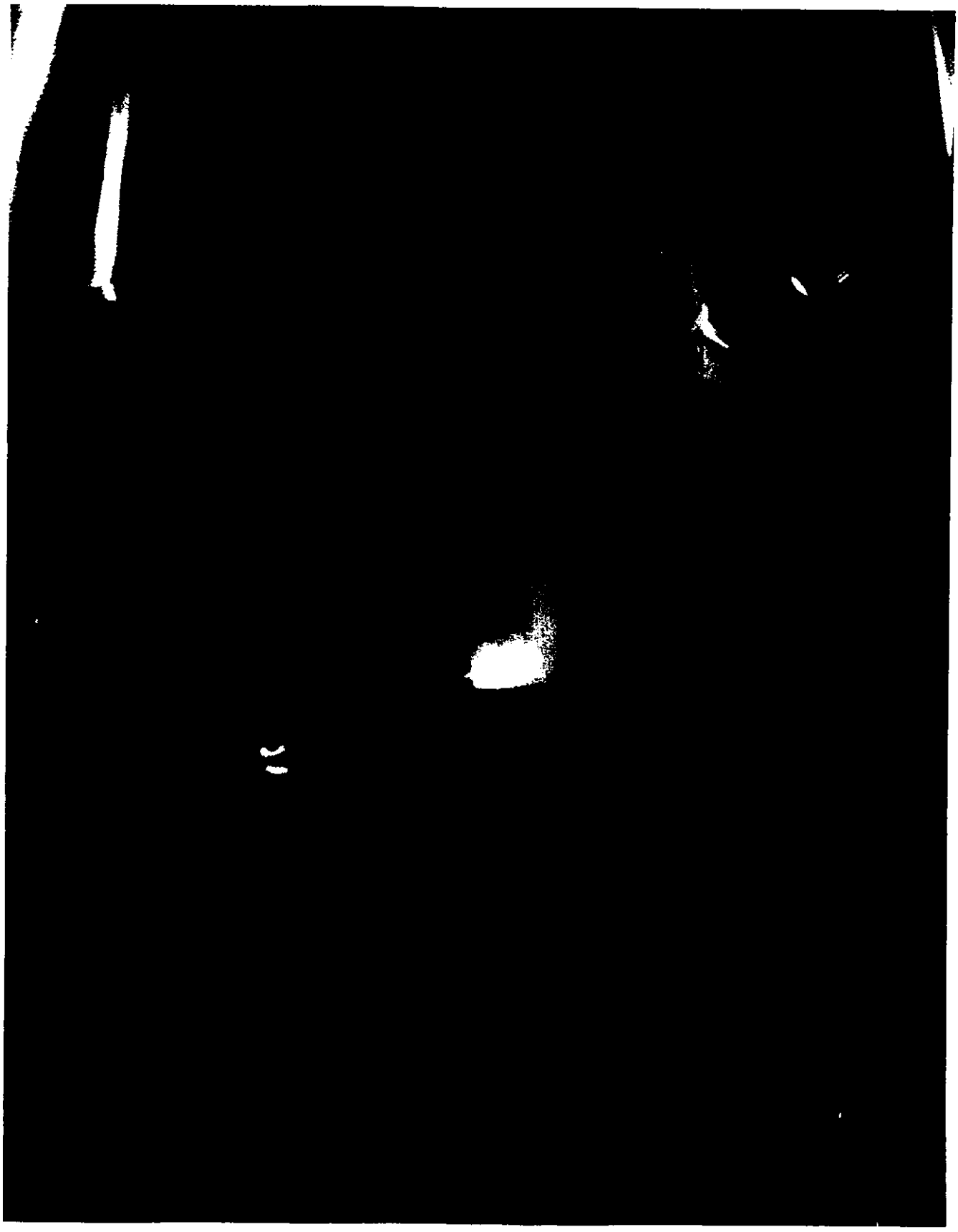
Η μοναδική αυτή αίσθηση μεταδί-

δεται στο κοινό με τους πιο πρωτότυπους τρόπους. Βλέποντας, για παράδειγμα, τους ηθοποιούς να σε υποδέχονται έχοντας βαμμένα τα γυμνά μέρη του σώματός τους με ένα διάλυμα μπλε μπογιάς σε πολτό από λιωμένα... προφυλακτικά! Βρίσκοντας στο κάθισμά σου έναν από τους δεκάδες πλαστικούς σωλήνες με τους οποίους είναι διάσπαρτο το θέατρο, που χρησιμεύουν για να δέχεσαι (ή να στέλνεις) ανώνυμα μηνύματα από και προς το υπόγειο του θεάτρου, σε μια πρωτότυπη εκδοχή... ενδοσυνεννόησης! Βιώνοντας, στη διάρκεια της ωριαίας παράστασης, μια απίστευτη ενέργεια που απελευθερώνεται χάρη στους φρενήρεις ρυθμούς του έργου.





Πρόθεσή μας, λέει ο Randall James, ένας από τους ηθοποιούς του θιάσου, είναι να επιχειρούμε την κατάργηση των «διαχωριστικών» ανάμεσα στο κοινό και σ' εμάς και να βρίσκουμε τα καλύτερα μονοπάτια που οδηγούν στη θεατρική μέθεξη - λέξη ελληνική, αν δεν κάνω λάθος! Ένα φιλόδοξο σκηνικό πείραμα, που τα ευτυχή αποτελέσματά του επιβεβαιώνονται κάθε βράδυ στα επιφωνήματα ενθουσιασμού, στην ενεργό συμμετοχή και στο ζεστό χειροκρότημα των θεατών, που... παραδίδονται άνευ όρων στη θεατρική αλληγορία του μπλε. Μια παράσταση που, αν τα σχέδια και οι φιλοδοξίες των συντελεστών της ευοδωθούν, δεν αποκλείεται να τους δούμε στην Ευρώπη («ίσως και στην Ελλάδα», όπως μας υποσχέθηκε ο επικεφαλής της θεατρικής ομάδας Chris Bowen) το 1998.



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[illegible] worden argeloze aanwezigen naar het podium ontboden. Om als [illegible] dienen, om een maaltijd van Twinkies te nuttigen of om te eindigen met het [illegible] Jelly-pudding. Voor ons is het zo op een prettige manier ook riskant. [illegible] zijn die je aanvalt of de boel in de war stuurt. Want interactie is volgens [illegible] het medium theater. Aan het begin van onze optredens voelt het publiek [illegible] onze verschijning. Aan het eind van de show hebben we ze zo ver dat zij [illegible] zijn!

[illegible] staat aan de zijkant van het podium een schildersdoek met [illegible] drie blauwe mannen komen op en hebben alledrie een [illegible] hun hoofd. Kijkend naar de vis verschijnen hun gedachten als [illegible] in letters op de lichtkrant. Terwijl de één denkt: 'Deze vis [illegible] van de moderne mens', denkt de ander: 'He, dat zijn [illegible] in de etalages van Japanse restaurants' [illegible] contact maak met mijn [illegible] Asshole'.

[illegible] geeldende kunst. Een [illegible] gegoten zijn. De ander [illegible] expressief schilder [illegible]

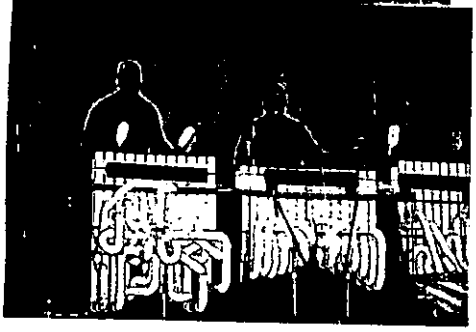
[illegible] zelf [illegible] mensen [illegible] iedereen [illegible] hebben [illegible] hier in Amer[illegible] heeft [illegible]

De Blue Man Group ziet [illegible] opzich[illegible] willen we graag de mens [illegible] belachelijk, met het idee [illegible] En dan laten we zien [illegible]

Voor de jaren negentig heeft C[illegible] het tijdperk Reagan-Bush, is eind[illegible] tellen hoe verblind[illegible] all Street [illegible] meeste [illegible]

[illegible] Astor P[illegible]

[illegible] al spelen ze dezelfde voorstelling nu al bijna twee jaar, de groep maakt nog geen aanstalten iets nieuws te bedenken. 'We blijven plezier hebben in deze voorstelling. Zo langzamerhand vervangen we scènes waar we genoeg van hebben door andere. En we sleutelen nog steeds aan de techniek. Zo is er de act dat ik met mijn mond marshmellows opvang die Matt me toegooit. Die moeten dan later ergens tegenaan worden geplakt. Het laatste jaar hebben we ons beziggehouden met het zoeken naar de juiste temperatuur voor de marshmellows. Opdat ze de optimale plakkracht hebben.'



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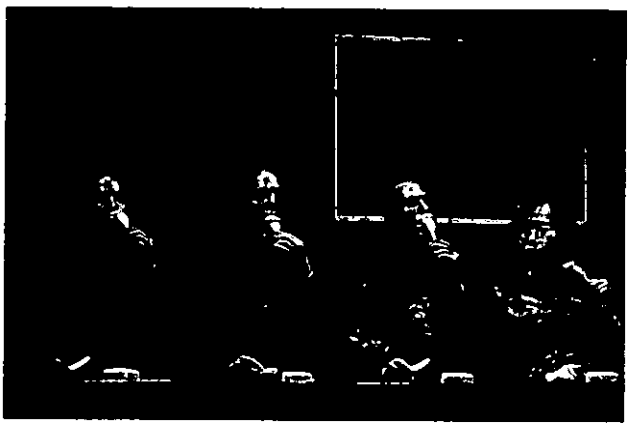
Kobaltblau glänzen die blauen Glatzköpfe im Schein der Trommeln. Sprühe.

So kann man sich täuschen: Die Gedankenlesegeräte dokumentieren den klassischen Fall einer gescheiterten Kommunikation.



Freiwillige vor: Noch ist der heiß umworbene Dinnergast guter Dinge. Doch bald schon wird er die Marsriegelpampe erbrechen.

nen spielt, trommelt, morst Blue Man seine sprachlose Botschaft. *Let's get connected:* Laßt uns die abgerissene Verbindung wiederherstellen und die „losen Enden" zusammenfügen.

Tubes (Röhre, Schlauch, Tunnel) heißt der Renner des New Yorker Performance-Trios The Blue Man Group im Astor Place Theatre Off-Broadway – seit über einem halben Jahr tagtäglich ausverkauft. Vor ihrer fast zweistündigen Mutation zum Blue Man sind Chris Wink, Matt Goldman und Phil Stanton, alle um die 30, erst einmal nur langjährige Freunde. Sich ihre Brötchen nach dem College bei einer Catering-Firma (Chris, Phil) und in der Computerbranche (Matt) verdienend, begannen sie schon 1988 sich blau anzumalen. Zusammen mit sechs weiteren Gleichgesinnten „begruben" sie die 80er Jahre in ihrem Straßentheaterstück *Funeral for the Eighties.* In jener Blütezeit des Yuppietums wurde Blue Man geboren, aus dem ganz persönlichen Fremdheitsgefühl in einer Gesellschaft, die alles und jeden über den Marktwert bestimmte. Ohne Zukunftsvision für den Menschen in seiner menschlichen Form.

Die aktionistische Kunst war für Chris, Matt und Phil die geeignete Form, ihre Bedürfnisse wie ihre Kritik spielerisch zu ARTikulieren und in den Dialog mit anderen einzutreten. Die Devise hieß, Fragen zu provozieren statt zu beantworten in einer Gesellschaft, die übersättigt ist mit Antworten. Wieso blau? Wieso stumm? Wieso überhaupt? Sie stehen damit in der Dada-Tradition und den vielfältigen Spielformen der europäischen und amerikanischen Avantgarden der 50er und 60er Jahre.

Chris, Matt und Phil arbeiteten allein weiter am Konzept des Blue Man. Im Winter 1990 debütierten sie mit *Tubes* an der Experimentalbühne LaMama, kassierten 1991 dafür den Obie-Award und wurden von der Stelle weg fürs Astor engagiert, wo im November vergangenen Jahres die Premiere stattfand. Der Erfolg ist inzwischen so groß, die Nachfra-

Keine Angst vorm Blauen Mann

Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton und Chris Wink *(v.o.n.u.:)* mutieren zum Blue Man.

WER IST *BLUE MAN?*

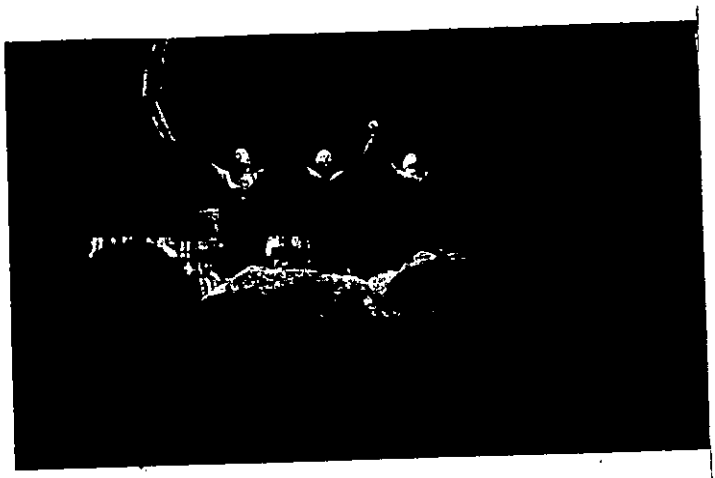
CHRIS: „Wir wollten keine Maschinen sein wie Kraftwerk. Wir suchten nach einer Form des Ausdrucks, die auf Percussion, Farbe und Bewegung aufgebaut war. Es ist aber auch kein Schritt zurück in die Stammesgeschichte, sondern ein Mutationsschritt nach vorne. Blue Man ist gleichzeitig unsere vergangenste Vergangenheit und unsere zukünftigste Zukunft."

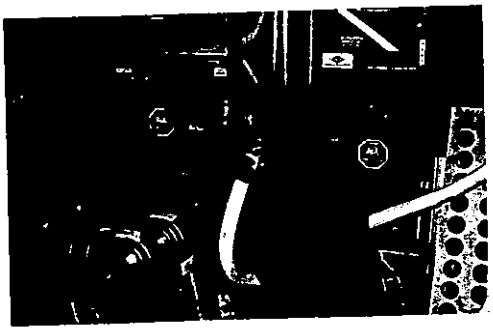
MATT: „Im Blue Man steckt ein Stück von jedem von uns, wie er auch selber ein Teil von uns allen ist."

PHIL: „Blue Man ist kein Spaceman aus einer anderen Welt, sondern jener vergessene Mensch, der Alien in uns."

WO FINDE ICH *BLUE MAN?*

Die Blue Man Group in *Tubes*. Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette Street, New York. Dienstags – freitags 20.00 Uhr; samstags 19.00 und 22.00 Uhr; sonntags 15.00 und 19.00 Uhr. Montags *keine* Vorstellung. Eintritt: Di, Mi, Do $ 30.00 und 22.50; Fr, Sa, So $ 35.00 und 22.50. Reservierungen: (001) 212-254-4370.





Praktischerweise fällt am Schluß jede Menge Klopapier vom Himmel, und man kann die Sauerei sofort wieder aufwischen *(oben)*. – Blue Man nimmt Verbindung auf *(links)*.

schießt ein Funkenregen aus Farbe aus dem Gewitter der Trommelschläge

Blue Man ARTikuliert sich in einer neuen Sprache. Die „Farbausbrüche" seiner Gefühle nehmen die Gestalt von Zeichen an.

ge international derart gestiegen, daß der Blue Man wohl ab nächstem Jahr seinen unaufhaltsamen Weg über Japan nach Europa antreten wird.

Tubes ist eine Aneinanderreihung von kleinen Szenen, Slapstickeinlagen, skurrilen Gags und eine einzige große Sauerei aus Farbe und anderen ekelhaften Substanzen – fragmentiert wie die gespiegelte Welt. Zusammengehalten vom Percussionsgewitter des Blue Man-Trios und einer ebenfalls dreiköpfigen Band. Unter so massiver wie gefürchteter Einbeziehung des Publikums. Die *material world* als Spielmaterial. Alles, was man fressen kann oder muß. Kunst, Fast Food, Information. Wissenschaft und Zukunftstechnologie.

Ein Zuschauer wird in einen weißen Overall gesteckt, behelmt und hinter die Bühne entführt. Auf dem Videoscreen erlebt man mit – „live from backstage" –, wie er an den Füßen aufgehängt, mit blauer Farbe bestrichen und als quasi lebender Pinsel gegen eine Leinwand geschleudert wird. In einer schwarzen Box wieder hereingerollt, steckt sein Kopf unter einem wabbeligen, halb durchsichtigen und leuchtend orangen Pudding aus *Jell-O* – reinste Götterspeise.

Eine Dame aus dem Publikum wird zum Bankett geladen. Menü des Tages ist eines jener herrlichen Erzeugnisse der amerikanischen Süßigkeitenindustrie: *Twinkies*, fischstäbchenartige Riegel mit gelblich-weißer Füllung. Plötzlich erbricht sie ein Blue Man als gelbe Masse, die wurstförmig aus seiner Brust austritt, und verteilt sie zum Weiterverzehr, bis alle erbrechen – auch aus dem Schutzlatz der Frau quillt eine nimmer enden wollende gelbe Wurst.

Marshmallows und mit Farbe gefüllte Bällchen werden akrobatisch mit dem Mund aufgefangen und jeweils auf eine Leinwand gepreßt oder gesabbert und geprustet. Die Kunstwerke des Blue Man können im Foyer für $ 20 das Stück erstanden werden.

Botschaften auf elektronischen Spruchbändern gleiten durch den Raum, viel zu schnell, um sie zu verarbeiten. Große, schnell wechselnde Schrifttafeln fordern zum Lesen auf. Man muß sich entscheiden – nur um sich belehren zu lassen: „Sie haben sich genau für die falsche Tafel entschieden. Jede Entscheidung für *eine* Option schließt notwendig alle anderen aus."

Blue Man ist die Spezies, die die Zukunft überleben wird, noch tastend und suchend und alles abklopfend nach einem neuen, gemeinsamen Lebensgefühl. Nach der Symbiose aus den emotionalen Qualitäten des „Primitiven" und den rationalen des Cyberspacers. Blue Man schaut in die Großprojektionen vom Tanz der Fraktale und anderer sich zu immer neuen Mustern gebärender Mikroorganismen hinein wie in eine Landschaft oder eine virtuelle Zukunft – und wie gebannt von dem bei allem Fortschritt doch nur immer wieder neu eröffneten Rätsel unserer Existenz. Er eignet sich die Welt an, indem er sie bekleckert. Er definiert sie neu in einer alten Sprache. Und er will nicht allein sein: Seine Buschtrommeln rufen uns alle.

Im großen Finale ertrinkt alles im Strobelight und den Papierfluten sich von der Decke stürzender, entfesselter Klopapierrollen. Draußen in der Lobby gibt's Blue Man zum Anfassen. Und wer Glück hat, der kommt mit 'nem blauen Flecken davon. ●

BLUE MAN GROUP

중앙일보 1998년 4월 4일 토요일 9

쇼킹한 작품 진행 방식으로 눈길을 끄는 '블루 맨 그룹'

버라이어티쇼 '블루맨 그룹'

파란 얼굴 외계인의 갖가지 묘기

신나는 드럼 연주와 함께 나타난 파란 얼굴의 외계인 3인은 갖가지 묘기와 음악으로 관객들을 매료시킨다.

지난 91년 11월17일에 첫 공연을 시작한 버라이어티쇼 '블루 맨 그룹'은 타악기의 기본적인 리듬과 록 음악을 접목시킨 음악을 들려주며, 관객들의 직접적인 참여를 이끌기도 한다.

작품의 시작부터 끝까지 한 마디의 말도 하지 않는 파란 얼굴의 외계인들은 길다란 컴퓨터 전광판을 이용, 자신들의 생각을 표현하기도 하고 관객들에게 노래를 따라해 달라는 부탁을 한다.

형광색의 플라스틱 파이프를 실로폰처럼 사용한 이들은 제퍼슨 에어플레인의 노래를 연주하며 노래에 대한 설명과 가사를 동시에 보여주기도 한다.

이들은 관객들을 무작위로 선정해 케익을 나눠먹고, 관객들에게 나눠준 조끼에서 사과 소스가 뿜어져 나와 놀라게 한다.

또 일회용 보디수트를 입힌 한 관객에게는 보디 페인팅을 시키고, 투명한 젤로 속에서 튀어나오게 해 다른 관객들의 박수갈채를 받는다.

이 작품은 일정한 스토리 라인을 가지고 있지는 않지만 일반 연극이나 텔레비전 방송에 지친 사람들이라면 한 번쯤은 꼭 관람해야할 작품.

▶장소: Astor Place Theater, 434 Lafayette St., bet. 4th & Astor Pl., ▶일시: 화~목요일 오후 8시, 금 & 토요일 오후 7시, 10시, 일요일 오후 4시, 7시, ▶문의: (212) 254-4370, ▶티켓가격: $49, $39

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tras BASTIDORES

Un polifacético llamado Manuel Iglesias

JAVIER GOMEZ

[illegible] Manuel Iglesias [illegible]

[illegible] *Blue Man Group* [illegible]

[illegible] Manuel Iglesias [illegible]

[illegible] *Tubes* [illegible]

[illegible] Astor Place [illegible]

Pero también hace otras cosas.

"Soy la 'voz' de *Blue Man Group* por el mundo", dice el publicista de 50 años de edad.

Iglesias es además coordinador de eventos y apariciones especiales de los actores en la obra de Filadelfia. Últimamente es portavoz en Nueva York de las otras producciones de "Tubes" (Boston, Anaheim y Chicago).

"Recibo llamadas de todas partes. Todos [illegible] Me han llamado hasta dueños de teatros de todos los estados que desean que la obra se presente en sus locales [illegible] por tiempo limitado", comenta.

Para resumir, si se trata del grupo de tres hombrecillos azules y su obra teatral con música, es a Iglesias a quien llamar y escribir no importa cuál sea el asunto.

Hablando de sus raíces, algo de latino tiene el relacionista en su sangre. Es portugués nacido en Newark, Nueva Jersey, pero la familia de su padre es de Galicia, España. Sus padres fueron los fundadores y primeros propietarios del popular restaurante *Iberia* en Newark.

Iglesias, que de pequeño aprendió a hablar español aunque ahora lo domina muy poco —no siempre trabajó detrás de la escena. Durante su juventud fue actor y dramaturgo. Ha actuado en varias producciones en Nueva York y Newark, pero tiene si su haber una obra larga y 5 obras en un acto.

Se inició en la publicidad en los años 80, cuando trabajó para una compañía publicitaria de obras de Broadway. A su cargo tuvo producciones como *"Agnes of God"*, *"Torch Song Trilogy"*, *"Crimes of the Heart"*, *"night Mother"*, entre otras.

Pero no le gustó la experiencia y dedicó 15 años de su vida a la venta de utensilios de cocina a restaurantes en Nueva Jersey.

"No había quien me ganara vendiendo estufas y refrigeradores", comenta riéndose el residente de Montclair, que pasa la semana en un apartamento de Manhattan.

Foto: José Rosario/EDLP

El fin una vez empleado de la radiodifusora WBAI, regresó a la publicidad cuando David Rothenberg, lo invitó a su firma publicitaria. Allí la tocó "*Mambo Mouth*", la pieza de John Leguizamo y una nueva obra titulada "*Tubes*", entre otras tantas. "*Tubes*" no tuvo muerte y cuando los 3 hombres azules quienes a su vez son los productores, decidieron independizarse y tener su publicista en el mismo teatro, se llevaron a Iglesias consigo.

"Estoy encantado. Somos una familia", comenta.

En su tiempo libre, Iglesias hace publicidad para la compañía de danza de Elizabeth Streb y Richard Foreman. No piensa retirarse, pero algún día le gustaría dedicarse al movimiento ambientalista como su hijo de 26 años de edad, quien trabaja para un grupo de interés público.

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SUMMER 1998

cine

Eva Pe

Por Pedro Zurit
Especial para EDL

En la historia latinoamericana ninguna muje -antes o después- ha poseído el magnetism y carisma de la legendaria Eva Duarte de Pe rón. Por seis deslumbrantes años la espos del presidente argentino Juan Perón, fue l mujer más poderosa en el continente ameri cano, capturando el alma y corazón de los co muneros o como ella llamaba sus "descami sados", la empobrecida clase trabajadora cu yas causas lideró hasta antes de su repentin deceso a la edad de 33 años.

El filme argentino "Eva Perón" es una in teresante crónica acerca de la atormentada di rigente y su apasionada vida que llevó gra esperanza a millones de -otrora desesperan zados- argentinos de las clases marginadas.

Esta película narra la historia de la muje que más influencia ha tenido en Américc Latina. El comienzo del filme muestra a un Eva en la cima de su gloria y poder, en oca siones retrocediendo en la historia recrean do su pasado para dar a conocer a esta com una más de la llamada "clase baja", su as cendencia hacia la fama como estrella de ra dio y su noviazgo con el coronel Juan Do mingo Perón.

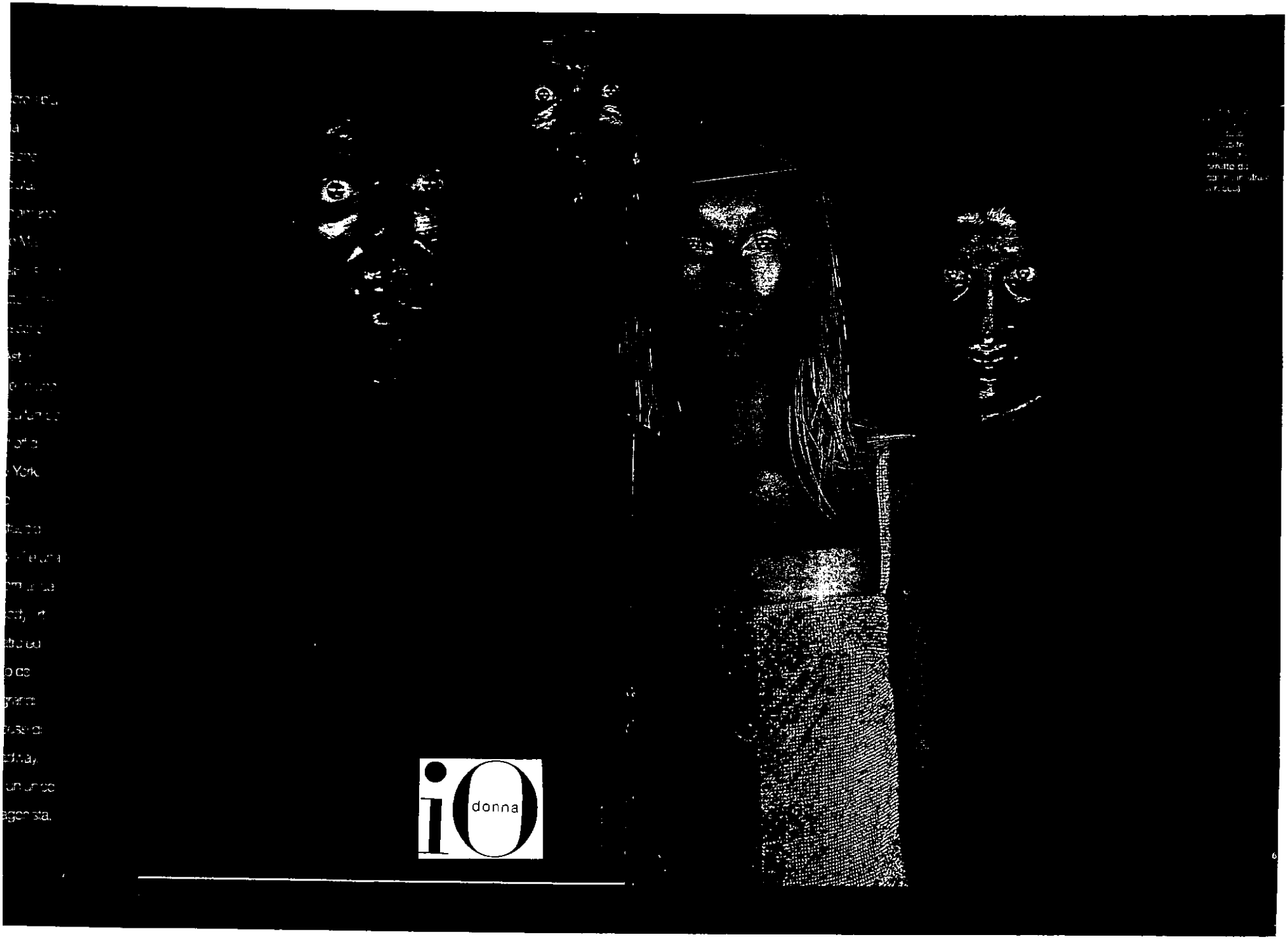
La película también muestra el apasiona do esfuerzo de Eva por traer esperanza a l clase trabajadora argentina, durante sus lu chas políticas, los intentos de golpe de esta do, la opresión militar y la incertidumbre económica. Esta obra también da a conocer la desagradable opinión que tiene la clase di rigente y los militares hacia la pareja Perón. Pero es precisamente por la popularidad de Eva que la élite falla al tratar de derribar la di nastía peronista. Este drama histórico trans porta a la audiencia a la Argentina de la déca da de los cincuenta donde Eva Perón deslum bra con su poder, su presencia y la complejidad de su corazón.

"Eva Perón" dirigida por Juan Carlos De sanzo, es el filme argentino que representó a su país oficialmente para la nominación al Mejor Filme Extranjero en la pasada compe tencia de la Academia de Hollywood. No obstante esta pásará desapercibida -empaña da en parte por *"Evita"* producción del reali zador británico Alan Parker- el gran honor para su director fue la oportunidad de revivir la vida de la más celebre e influyente heroína en la historia no tan solo de su país sino de to do el hemisferio oeste, como él asevera.

La puesta en cine de la vida de la Perón fue una ambición de largo tiempo para el director Desanzo, quien en 1974 se destaca ra como director de fotografía de "La tre gua", primer filme argentino en ser nomi nado al Oscar. Con "Eva Perón" este logró satisfacer su anhelado sueño -como el mis mo reconoce-, como argentino y como ci neasta. Desanzo se confiesa un profundo devoto de Eva, y que al realizar este pro yecto trató de alejarse de cualquier partidis mo de la vida o sus acciones.

No obstante en su puesta no escapa a su fervor por la carismática Eva, lo que queda evidenciado en el énfasis puesto en la intér prete Esther Goris, la que practicamente hace suyo el filme. O como se dice en jerga popu lar "se roba la película".

La actriz Esther Goris tuvo que rebajar más de diez libras para personificar los últi-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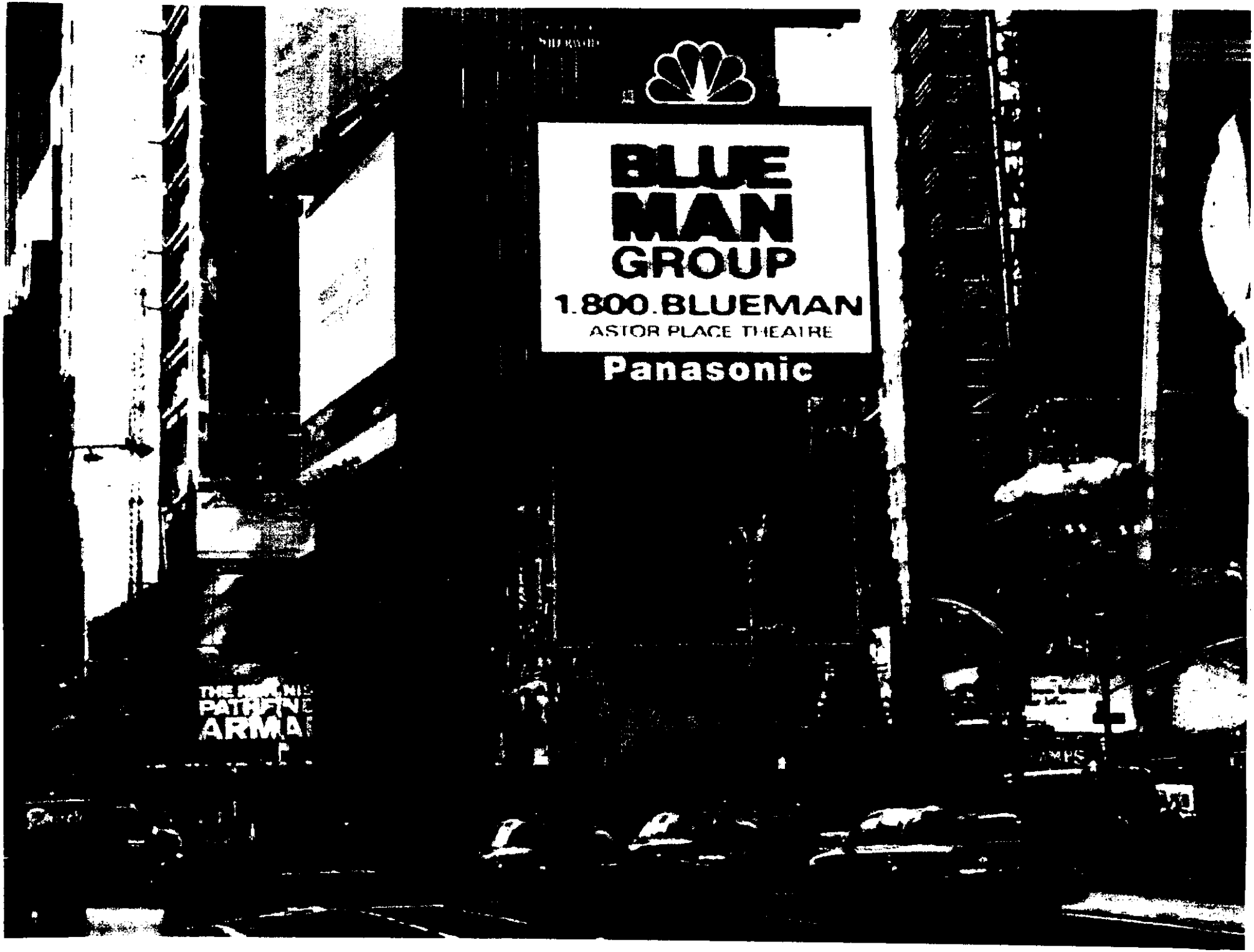
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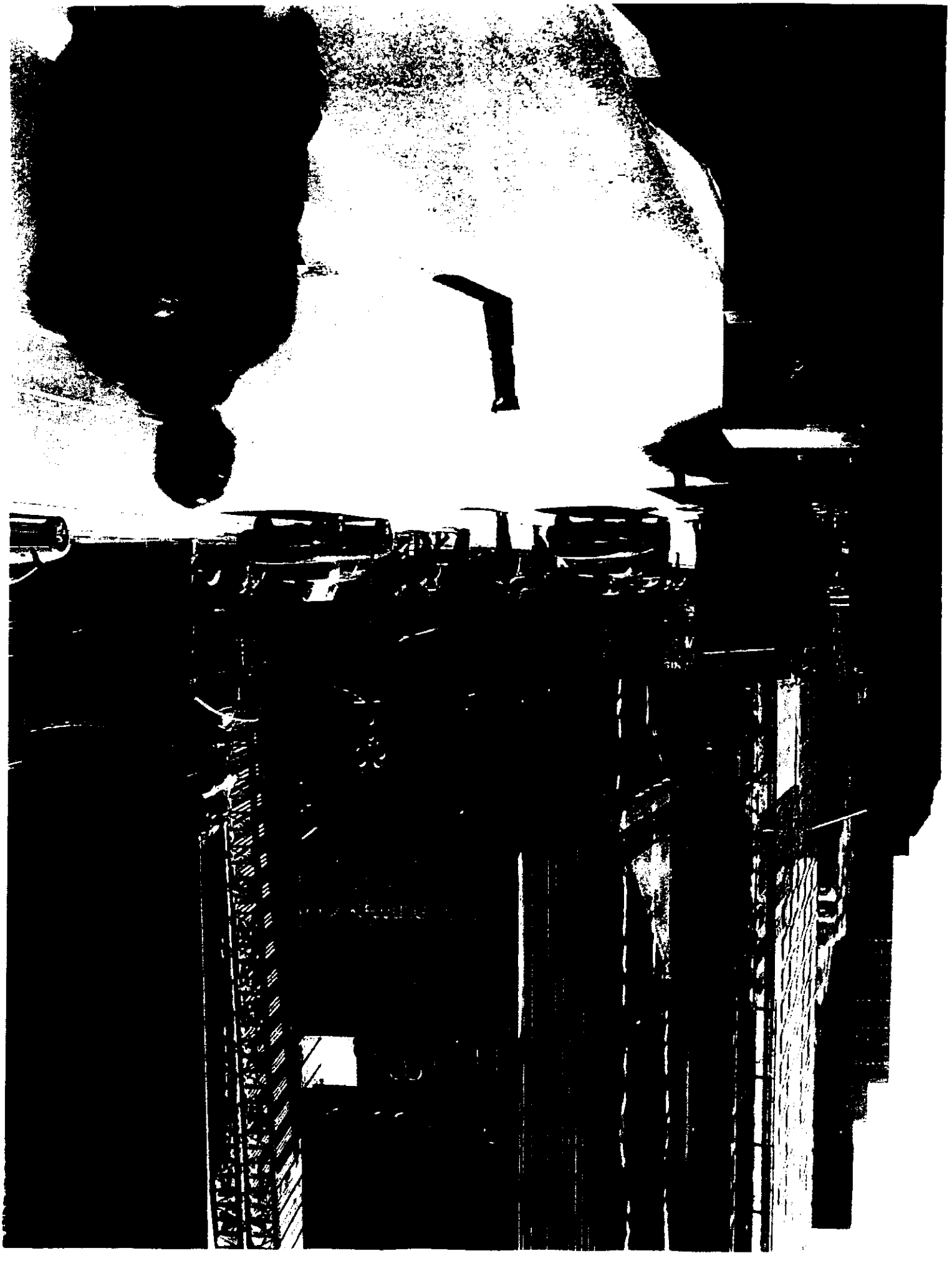

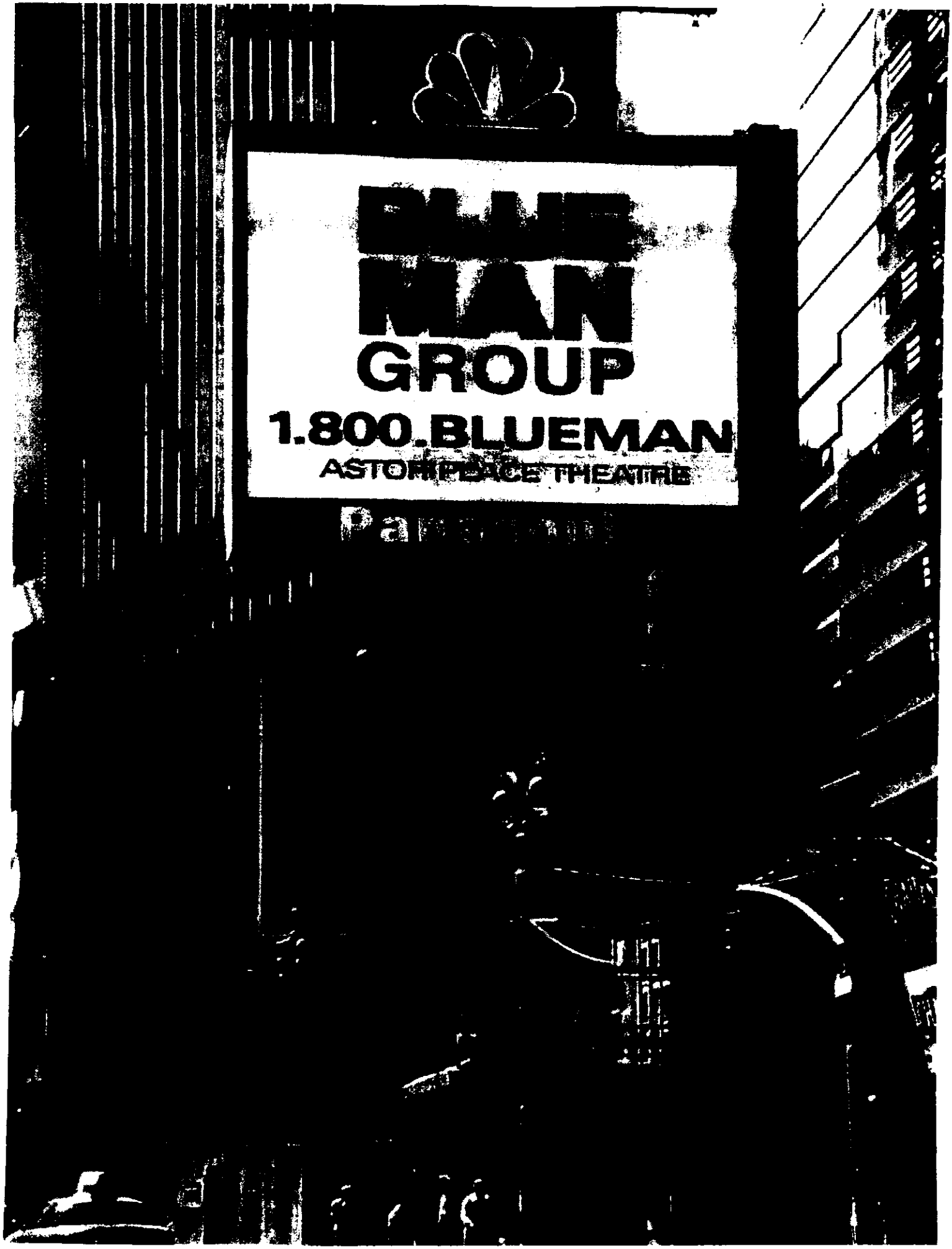
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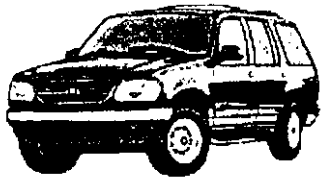

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5:17	5:19	6:00L	12:45	12:47	1:35L
5:45	5:47	6:28L	1:45	1:47	2:35L
6:14	6:16	7:00L	2:45	2:47	3:35L
6:46	6:48	7:35L	3:45	3:47	4:35L
6:58	7:00	7:52L	4:50	4:52	5:42L
7:16	7:19	7:57E	5:45	5:47	6:36L
7:22	7:24	8:19L	6:45	6:47	7:35L
X 7:39	X 7:41	8:21E	7:45	7:47	8:35L
7:44	7:46	8:40L	8:45	8:47	9:35L
X 8:14	X 8:16	8:56E	9:45	9:47	10:35L
8:41	8:43	9:20E	11:24	11:26	12:14L
9:01	9:03	9:49L	12:26	12:28	1:16L
9:49	9:51	10:39L	---	---	---
10:45	10:47	11:35L	---	---	---
AM	AM	AM	AM	AM	AM

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AM	AM	AM	PM	PM	PM
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5:45	5:47	6:35L	4:45	4:47	5:35L
6:45	6:47	7:35L	5:45	5:47	6:35L
7:45	7:47	8:35L	6:45	6:47	7:35L
8:45	8:47	9:35L	7:45	7:47	8:35L
9:45	9:47	10:35L	8:45	8:47	9:35L
10:45	10:47	11:35L	9:45	9:47	10:35L
11:45	11:47	12:35L	11:24	11:26	12:14L
12:45	12:47	1:35L	12:26	12:28	1:16L
1:45	1:47	2:35L	---	---	---
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6:20L	7:05	7:07	5:37L	6:23	6:26
7:13L	7:59	8:01	5:54E	6:29	6:33
8:13L	8:59	9:01	X 6:18E	6:53	6:55
9:20L	10:05	10:07	6:20L	7:05	7:07
10:20L	11:05	11:07	6:53L	7:38	7:40
11:20L	12:05	12:07	7:20L	8:05	8:07
12:20L	1:05	1:07	7:57L	8:39	8:41
1:20L	2:05	2:07	8:20L	9:05	9:07
2:20L	3:05	3:07	9:20L	10:05	10:07
3:20L	4:05	4:07	10:20L	11:05	11:07
3:36	4:11	4:13	11:20L	12:05	12:07
4:15L	5:00	5:02	12:20L	1:05	1:07
4:47L	5:31	5:33	1:20L	2:05	2:07
PM	PM	PM	AM	AM	AM

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AM	AM	AM	PM	PM	PM
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6:20L	7:05	7:07	5:23L	6:08	6:10
7:20L	8:05	8:07	6:23L	7:08	7:10
8:20L	9:05	9:07	7:20L	8:05	8:07
9:20L	10:05	10:07	8:20L	9:05	9:07
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12:20L	1:05	1:07	11:32L	12:17	12:19
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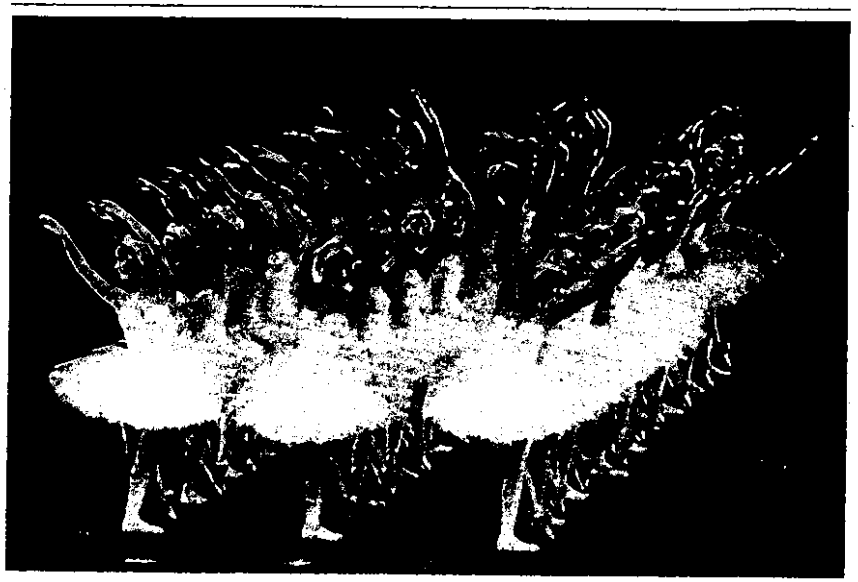

Cover photograph of the Grand Tier at the Metropolitan Opera House by Peter Mallow. 14

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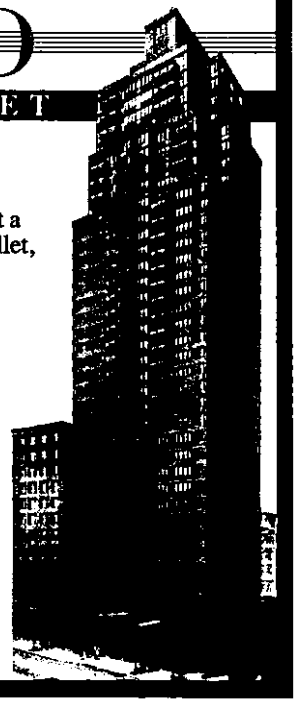

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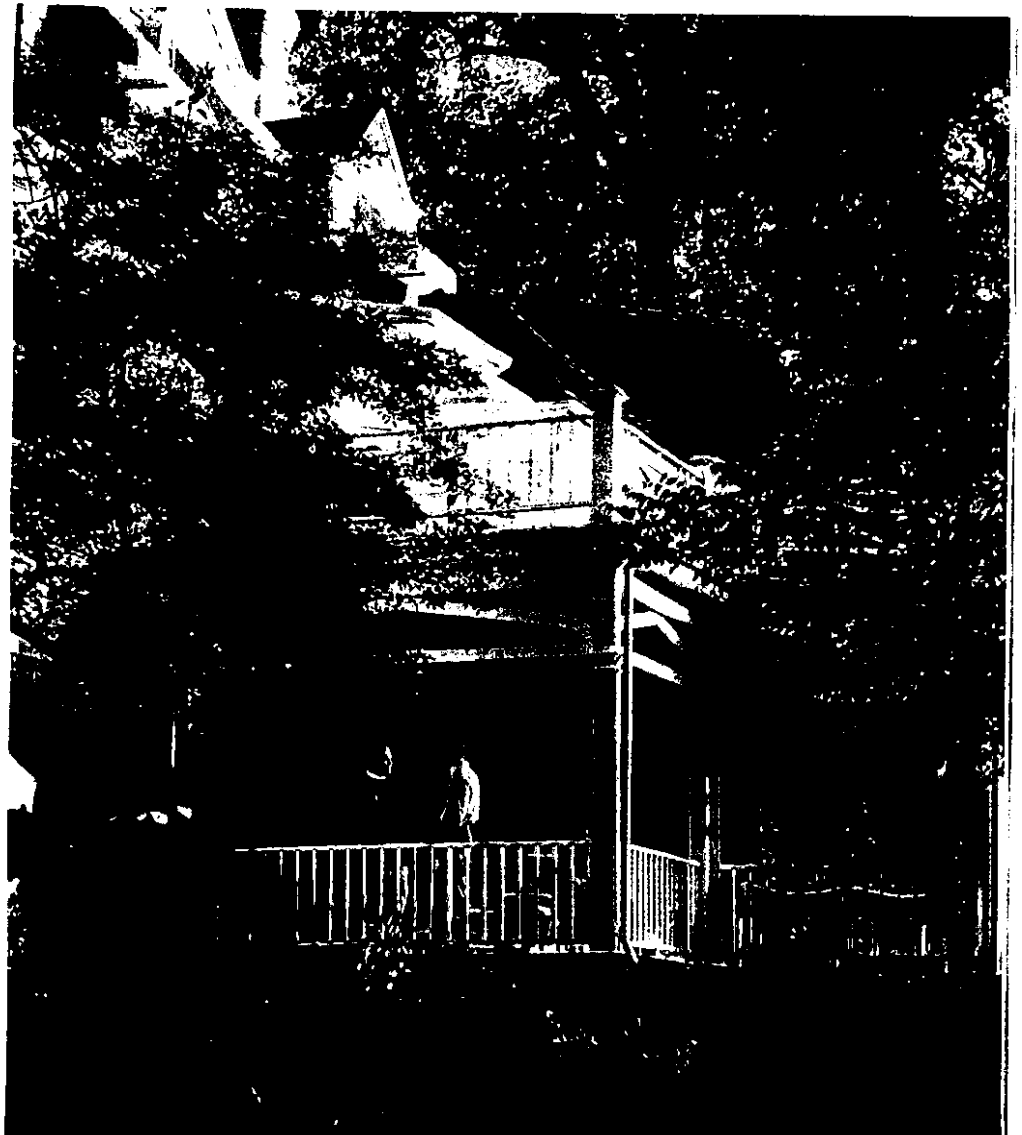

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Friday Evening, July 19, 1991, at 8:00

HARRY KIPPER

in

Big Bad God

This piece is the culmination of my performance life to date. It is an ongoing process that changes as often as I change my underwear. It is my search for meaning and soul and the humor that manifests itself whilst interpreting my discoveries. The character on stage is an extension of my persona. There is a disturbing twist and a glimpse into the horror of life that manifests itself in this performance. Although non religious with an interest in spiritual gnosis, I am in total awe of the death of my body and the prospects of having to live without one. The stories that I tell deal with the fear of death, the search for God/Meaning, the discovery of humility, and the realization of the fact that we really know nothing of things beyond our egos.

—Harry Kipper

It is time to move among the bushes,
to isolate the rooms
To close up the gaps,
out of the lapse
Forget the clouds that gloomily hang
around the centers
Stopping the breath from passing freely.
To be alone we all must be,
as in birth and death.
It is time for me to be.
To check myself alone within my spaces
of walking
down the avenues of trees
that bend their branches up and down,
their children leaves richly green,
drinking mother's sap,
detaching themselves
and falling to the ground.
Antagonizing moments
of heart's despair,
in air,
on ground.
To breathe a sound
all alone
in darkness,
hollow sound
echoing back to sender.
Remember the passion
of the garden dreams
wearing the ceremonious garments.
The making of vows,
God!
Esteem and glory!
Out from it,
away, free, has to be,
or else all will wither.
No more sound.

—Harry Kipper

Intermission

BLUE MAN

in

A Tribute to Alice Tully

Created and Performed by

BLUE MAN GROUP

Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton, and Chris Wink

Musicians
Brian Dewan, Larry Heinemann, Ian Pai

Animism	Caryl Glaab
Vibrance	Lori E. Seid
Radiance	Howard Theis
Directive Consultant	Daisy Mayer
Costume	Juliann Kroboth, Deborah Tennenbaum, Pat Murphy
Recording Engineering	David Fleming
Sprinkler Song Mixed by	Alan Friedman
Operatic Voice	Stephen Goldstein
Sound Technology Consultant	Carl Goodman
Jello	Chef Jean-Claude Nedelec, Glorious Food

The majority of this evening's performance and all of "Tubes" was originally produced by and premiered at La MaMa E.T.C.

Tonight's performance is based on "Tubes," which was originally produced by and premiered at La Mama E.T.C. in January 1991. Blue Man Group would like to thank Ellen Stewart, Executive Director and Artistic Director of La Mama E.T.C. for commissioning "Tubes" and also for providing rehearsal space, all other resources, love and support to help make this work possible. Blue Man would also like to thank Meryl Vladimir, Associate Director of La Mama for initiating this process and overseeing the entire project. Also, Howard Thies whose technical assistance and collaboration went far beyond lighting design and tech. Blue Man offers its total appreciation to the entire staff of La Mama for making the run at the Club such an incredible experience.

The Blue Man Group thanks Mark Russell, Director of PS 122 for his long term and unyielding support. In addition, Andrea Most, Ain Gordon, and the staff of PS 122 for a wonderful year and a half of field trips and numerous PS 122 shows.

Blue Man also thanks Marlene Swartz and Julien Weber, Executive Directors of Soho Repertory Theater for including Blue Man in their "Yes, But Is It Theater?" Festival and for providing rehearsal space, equipment, and Lori B. Seid.

The Blue Man Group would like to give special thanks to: Howard Gillman, Charles Milhopf and the staff of the Howard Gillman Foundation, Sean Driscoll and Jean-Claude Nedelec and the staff of Glorious Food, Theresa Bohn, Carla Stimer, Susan Vaughn, Vince and Mary Mallardi, and the staff of Alcone Paramount, Ellie Covan and Dixon Place, Gusto House, Cucaracha, David Fleming, Kathy Russo, Bob Sikoriak, Isabel Samarus, Marcos Sorenson, Ken Weaver, Hugh Palmer, Jim Kendal, Omni Resources, Tom Murrin, Chris Bowen, Paul Zaloom, Don Macoy, Matthew Badger, Deborah Tennenbaum, Pat Murphy, Juliann Kroboth, Marrianne Weams, Jeff Hoovitch, Art Matters, Materials for the Arts, Susan Glass, Dr. Heinze-Otto Peitgen, Laura Trippi, Susan Kappa, James Godwin, Videogenix, Dennis Diamond, Christian Rifai, Lori B. Seid, Martha Wilson, Bob McDonnald, Steven Ruff, Alan Bryce, Mike Taylor, Dean Chachere, Kate Valk, Mark Dickter, Steven Harris, Desmond Shaw, Alex Metcalf, Carl Goodman, Greg Durgin, Samaya Foundation, Louis Psihoyos, Mark Seliger, Stephen Goldstein, The Goldman Family, Caleb Oglesby, Ian Hunter, Jed Wheeler, Laura Aswad, IPA, The Wink Family, The Stanton Family, The Glaab Family, Vigal and Shimon Elbaz from Superflex, Marc Warren, Aaron Copp, Larry Atkinson of Data-Light, Dan Kotlowitz, Mark Dunn, Makoto Doguchi, John Rizzo, Liz Rheese, Dona McAdams, Michael Stiller, Alan Friedman, Jo Andres, Gini Sikes, Mabou Mines, Michael Peranteau, Eileen McMahon, Stephen Dart, Jackie Jones, Christine Murray, Alden Tucker.

Meet the Artists

Harry Kipper, one half of the well-known "Kipper Kids," is a performance artist, painter, video artist, lecturer, and teacher. He has performed throughout the United States, Europe, and Africa for the past 20 years. He has lectured at the University of Munich, UCLA, UC Irvine and San Diego, the San Francisco Art Institute, and the Chicago Art Institute. Mr. Kipper has taught performance work and performance video classes both in the United States and England and also works with patients suffering from psychiatric disorders, physically and mentally handicapped children and adults. Mr. Kipper has exhibited his paintings and videos at galleries in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Italy, and Germany. He has appeared in numerous comedy shows on network television as well as Cinemax and HBO and is featured in several films including *The Spirit of '76, UHF, Dress Rehearsal,* and *Forbidden Zone.*

Blue Man Group staged its first happening, "Funeral For The '80s" in Central Park in May 1988. Their next event, "Club Nowhere" took place in a roped-off section of the sidewalk across from the Copacabana.

Since then Blue Man has performed at different venues in New York City including P.S. 122, La MaMa, The Performing Garage, Franklin Furnace, The New Museum, Cucaracha, Gusto House, and Dixon Place. The Group has also performed in places such as The Walker Arts Center, Minneapolis; Cleveland Performance Art Festival, Park West; Chicago; Diverseworks, Houston; Pyramid Arts Center, Rochester; Movement Theater International, Philadelphia; Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans; The Milwaukee Arts Museum; The Green Room, Manchester, England; Brighton Festival, England; and "Mayfest" in Glasgow, Scotland. Blue Man performed in many of these shows as part of the "P.S. 122 Fieldtrip" program.

In 1990, La MaMa E.T.C. commisioned Blue Man Group to create a new piece. It was this commission that led to the development of "Tubes," which premiered at The Club at La MaMa in January/February of 1991. In May of 1991 the *Village Voice* awarded an Obie to Blue Man Group for "Tubes." In June 1991, Blue Man Group performed "Red" at Soho Repertory Theater as part of their "Yes, But Is It Theater?" Festival. On October 10, 1991, Blue Man Group will be opening their latest show at the Astor Place Theater.

The Band for Blue Man Group: Brian Dewan (electric zither) builds his own instruments and performs with them in groups and solo projects. He has appeared at P.S. 122 and the Knitting Factory and most recently at Town Hall in David Byrne's *The Forest.* **Larry Heinemann** (chapman stick, talking drum) has been making music with The Blue Man Group since shortly after The Group's inception. He is also the bass player for the band Spring House whose album "Land Falls" was recently released on Caroline Records. **Ian Pai** (percussion) is a painter and art student at the Pratt Institute and is also the bass player for the band "The Unbelievable Truth."

Saturday Evening, July 20, 1991, at 8:00

Nosferatu

Directed by
Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau

Screenplay by
Henrik Galeen

After "Dracula" by
von Bram Stoker

Director of Photography
Fritz Arno Wagner

Scenery and Costumes
Albin Grau

Workshop
JOFA

Production
Prana Film, 1921

Cast

Nosferatu	Max Schreck
The Estate Agent	Alexander Granach
Nina Harker	Greta Schroeder-Matrey
Harker's Friend	Karl Etlinger
Lucy Westenra	Ruth Landshoff
The Innkeeper	Guido Herzfeld
The Captain	Gustav Nemetz
The First Mate	Wolfgang Heinz
A Sailor	Albert Venohr
The Doctors	Gustav Botz, Haryvon Francois, John Gotthart
And others	Heinrich Witte
Licensor	F.W. Murnau-Stiftung

ART ZOYD

Patricia Dallio, *Pianos, Keyboards*
Gérard Hourbette, *Viola, Violin, Keyboards, Percussion, Tapes, Samplers*
Andre Mergenthaler, *Cello, Alto Sax*
Thierry Zaboitzeff, *Cello, Bass Guitar, Vocals, Keyboards, Tapes, Samplers, Percussion*
Richard Castelli, *Lighting Design*
Philippe Colpin, *Sound Design*

Music composed by Gérard Hourbette & Thierry Zaboitzeff

This evening's performance is an American premiere.

Nosferatu is co-produced by Art Zoyd and Le Manège/Maubeuge
with help from: Conseil Régional Nord/Pas-De-Calais, Conseil Général du Nord,
Ville de Maubeuge, Fondation Gan pour la Cinema.

Notes on the Program

An excerpt from the diary of Dr. Johann Cavallius, the eminent Bremen historian: "Nosferatu! The very name makes my blood run cold. Nosferatu, was it he who brought the Plague to Bremen in 1838?" Thus opens the first masterly film by Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau (1888-1931), whom Charlie Chaplin hailed in his memoirs as the man who carried the art of silent movies to perfection.

On stage, a triptych: the film *Nosferatu* in the center, flanked on both sides by musicians on several levels. Keeping within the expressionist idiom, the film is in black and white, the musicians in black and white.

The Master is Coming,
The Master is Here

Murnau's *Nosferatu* is instinctively modernist, and still strikes a chord in today's world. So it's not surprising that it spurred Art Zoyd to link Murnau's poetry, generosity, and spirit of discovery with the group's own emotive universe of sound and technology.

"In working more closely on *Nosferatu*, we found that a natural complicity sprang up between the images and our music. Thus we came to realize that the instinct which compelled us to penetrate Murnau's world (and *Nosferatu* in particular)—rather than that of another filmmaker—was the right one." (Art Zoyd)

Paradoxically, *Nosferatu* is a film full of intense and dynamic life. It carries a vigorous and stimulating urgency, for Murnau expresses the essence of things by juxtaposing joy and unhappiness, humor and sorrow. At the outset of the story, Jonathan Harker is a lad, whereas at the end—a few weeks later—he has become an old and scarred man.

Nosferatu, as you will see, appears in turn distressing and ludicrous, monstrous and moving. At the end of every performance there are girls in the audience (and even some old cynics) with tears in their eyes. Should you inquire whether they cry over the death of Nina or of Nosferatu, what do you think their answer will be?

Meet the Artists

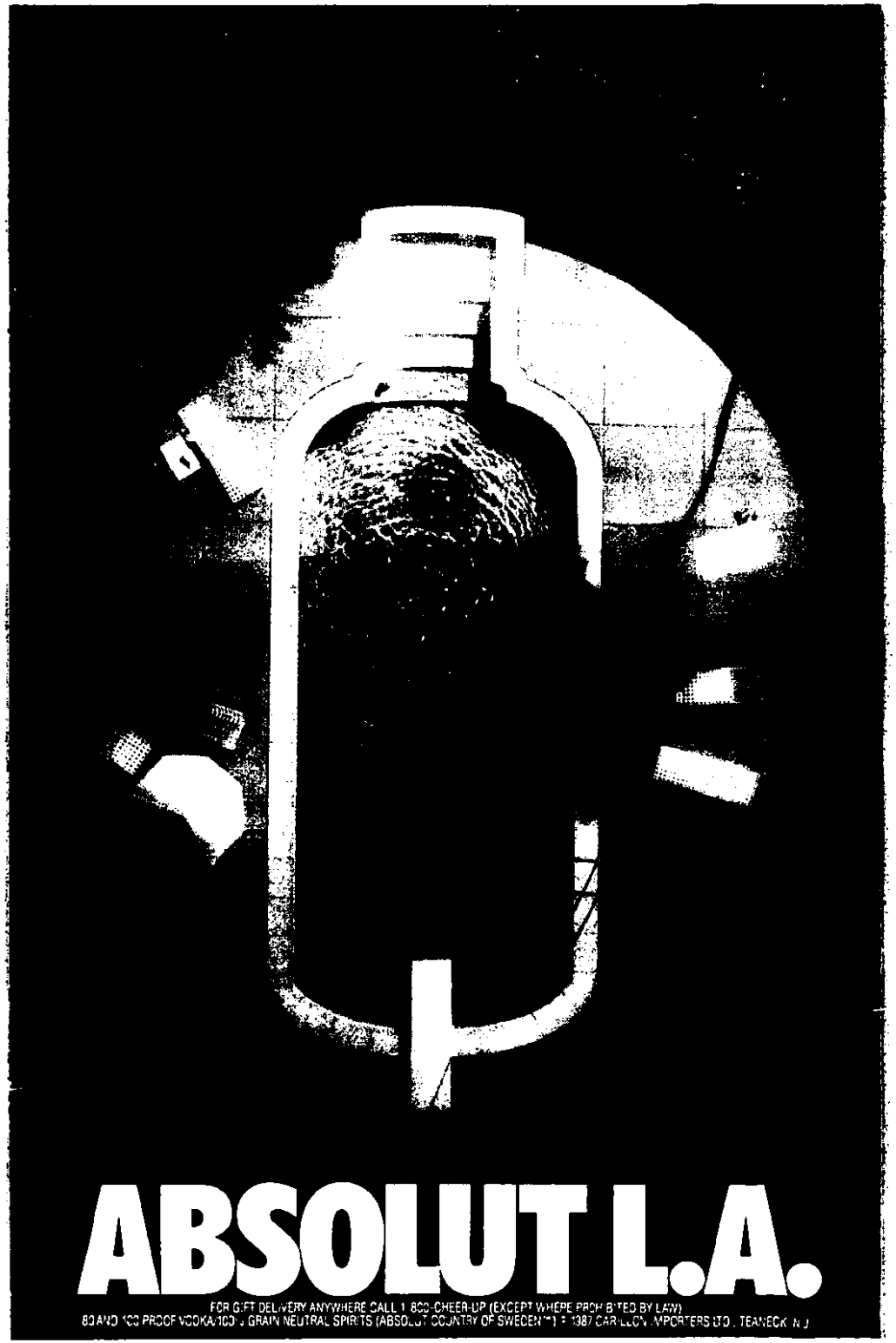
Art Zoyd has completed numerous tours in 18 European countries. They have performed in various festivals in Berlin, Hamburg, Munich, Moers, Documenta 8 in Kassel, Frankfurt, Salzburg, Linz, Graz, Zurich, Milan, Amsterdam, Paris, Montpelier, Printemps de Bourges, Maubeuge, and Strasbourg.

Art Zoyd was the opening act for festivals in Darmstadt, Lugano, Rome, and Aarhus (in the presence of Queen Margrethe II of Denmark).

They have composed music for two ballets by Roland Petit, both with Art Zoyd on stage. The first was premiered by Il Corpo di Ballo della Scala in Milan, the second by Le Ballet National de Marseille—Roland Petit with performances in France, Italy, Japan, and the United States. The group has also composed music for the inauguration of the largest hall in Europe; the Stockholm Globe Arena to an audience of 200,000 spectators.

Art Zoyd has performed the music to *Nosferatu* throughout Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, Spain, and the U.S.S.R.

Works in progress include music for *Faust's Travels* and *Makbeth*. The group has released seven CD's, and eight music films and videos, broadcast throughout Europe, Japan, Canada, and the United States.



METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE

RETURN OF THE ROYAL

With Anthony Dowell at the helm, England's Royal Ballet is renewing its stature as one of the world's great classical companies.

ALASTAIR MACAULEY catches the Royal on the rise.

The 1980s were the years in which great male dancers became artistic directors. Mikhail Baryshnikov, Rudolf Nureyev, Peter Martins, Peter Schaufuss, Helgi Tomasson, Edward Villella, and, the least likely, Anthony Dowell. Dowell is neither teacher nor choreographer; he had not done any extensive work in coaching; he was not known for spending his spare time watching ballet performances. He was, however, the peak product of Royal Ballet schooling, and in certain respects male dancing has never excelled his achievements. Since the Royal Ballet reached the worst doldrums of its history in the early and mid-1980s, the news of Dowell's appointment as artistic director was met with considerable relief. Here was a dancer who embodied the Royal Ballet pedigree at its finest; here was a man to restore lost fortunes.

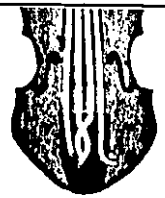
On what kind of artist were these hopes pinned? In Dowell and in his famous ballerina partner Antoinette Sibley, the Royal Ballet could take justified pride. They rose to stardom when the company was 30 years old, and their training—unlike that of Margot Fonteyn, Svetlana Beriosova, or even Lynn Seymour—was almost entirely British, and wholly Royal Ballet. Sibley and Dowell had all the hallmarks of Royal Ballet style: lucid musicality, flowing line, rigorously focussed placement, crisp footwork, vivid upper-body motion, and sheer old-fashioned theatrical know-how.

Dowell surely learned much from Rudolf Nureyev, but more remarkable was how much he resisted Nureyev's influence. The thrilling essence of Nureyev was self-assertiveness and force; the ineffably beautiful center of Dowell was humility and lyricism. Dowell could dance a hero's solo in *The Sleeping Beauty* or *Swan Lake* in a single sure phrase, with endless finesse of dynamic inflection. The Russians consider melodic fluency—*cantilena*—to be one of the sovereign characteristics of their ballet style; Dowell had it, and in a way that no one could call Russian. The English tradition of musical lyricism that began so marvelously in the 1930s, with Margot Fonteyn's dancing to Constant Lambert's conducting, was still true in him. And it was, in part, describable: it involved—discreetly but powerfully—simultaneous fidelity to the music's pulse, phrase, and tone. Dowell conferred importance upon a minor vehicle like Hans van Manen's *Four Schumann Pieces* (made for him and the Royal Ballet in 1975) by unparalleled qualities of phrasing—legato, diminuendi, and effortless attack. In a great ballet such as *The Dream*—which Frederick Ashton made on him, Sibley, and other Royal Ballet dancers in 1964—he had material worthy of his gifts. For many of us today, to hear the Scherzo from Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* is to feel again how Dowell would circle the stage in jumps and turns, hammering steps down

First New York engagement in over a decade:
The Royal Ballet performs for two weeks in the Metropolitan Opera House, July 8 - 20.

Swan's way: Darcey Bussell as Odette

LESLIE E. SPATT



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into the beat without ever breaking the long, whirling line of the dance.

Dowell's dancing—its peak lasted until 1978—represented line in every sense. He is the only male dancer I have seen whose stretched bodily line in arabesque was as sumptuously beautiful as that of a ballerina. He was a '60s dancer in the degree to which he absorbed feminine ballet technique into his own masculinity. The penchée arabesque, the manège of piqué turns: you can see how Ashton took these traditionally female steps and made them Oberon's when he choreographed Dowell's role in *The Dream*. Does this suggest he was some heartless master of perfect virtuoso effects? Nobody took him for that. He had stillness, mystery, ardor, danger, canniness; and all of it was in the service of his role.

In describing Dowell at his peak, I don't mean to indulge in nostalgia. Dowell never showed the appetite for adventurous new choreography that Nureyev or Baryshnikov did. Though he danced in some choreography by Kenneth MacMillan, he was never in the most controversial or unconventional MacMillan works. He and Sibley were always classicists, and for that reason they could sometimes seem just Beautiful People.

To understand Dowell the artist is to begin to understand Dowell the director. In charge of the Royal Ballet, he has done nothing radical. His taste has tended towards a late '50s and early '60s romanticism, reviving such Ashton ballets as the twirling-tulle ballroom of *La Valse* and the water-nymph-loves-mortal three-acter *Ondine*. Natalia Makarova's three-act production of the 1877 ballet *La Bayadère*, which she first staged for American Ballet Theatre in 1980, with Dowell as Solor, joined the Royal repertory in 1989 and has become regular fare. Other 19th-century classics remain as basic a part of the Royal Ballet as ever. In his mild way, Dowell has been trying to make classical dance values central again to the Royal Ballet.

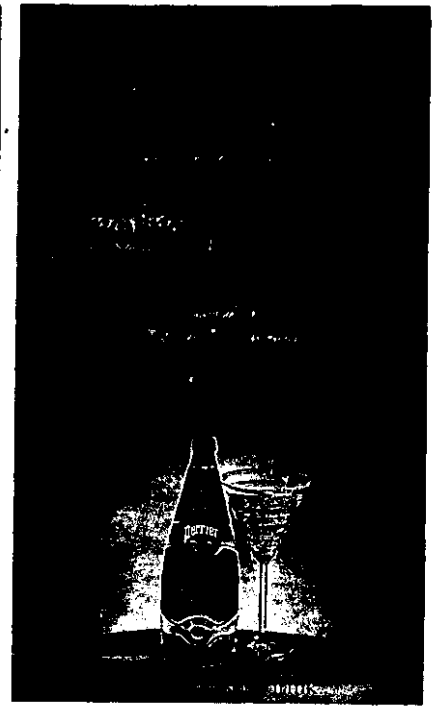
One of Dowell's first acts as director was to mount a new production of *Swan Lake*, the 1987 staging that will be seen in the company's return to New York. It tries

RETURN OF THE ROYAL

to present several different concepts of *Swan Lake* at once; some of those concepts are important, and all of them—even Yolanda Sonnabend's controversial designs—reveal Dowell's tastes. Most of its choreography, with special success in the fourth act, is a return to the text of the 1895 St. Petersburg original by Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov. This is the most "authentic" staging of the Petipa-Ivanov text to be seen this side of Leningrad, and it restores such fascinating, long-lost features as the use of children as part of the corps de ballet in Act Two, child-swans who twice form suppliant circles around Odette. Dowell has also coached the pas de deux in the great tradition he learned in the 1960s, the tradition that once made the Royal's way with this international warhorse more affecting than any other.

Lincoln Center audiences will see several young dancers who have ascended, swiftly and with assurance, into leading roles. I will mention just one. Her name is Darcey Bussell, and she is now 22. In 1989 Kenneth MacMillan created on her the leading role of his ballet *The Prince of the Pagodas*. Like every important ballerina, she has learned something from her predecessors and bears no particular resemblance to any of them. Bussell is unusual among British dancers in that she does not employ much facial charm. But she has reserves of technique, unusually strong feet, high-sweeping legs, and a happy confidence onstage. And she has time for everything. Her role in *Pagodas* is that of Belle Rose, a role challenging enough to lure foreign ballerinas; already the Parisian Sylvie Guillem and the Bolshoi's Nina Ananiashvili have danced it. Bussell herself has gone on to claim other ballerina roles with her own sure ease and decisiveness. It may well be found that when the next history of the Royal Ballet is written, her ascent marks a turning-point in the company's fortunes.

Alastair Macaulay reviews dance, theater, and music for The Financial Times *of London.*



CLASSIC LINE

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INTERVIEW

Time: 1791
Place: Lincoln Center

"The Mozart Experience," a weekend immersion in the master's final year, is a Mostly Mozart highlight conducted by Roger Norrington.

JAMES M. KELLER gets him talking about the festival within The Festival.

Thanks to the Lincoln Center Mostly Mozart Festival, New York audiences have been guaranteed a rich summer sampling of the master's works for the past 25 years. Mozart at Lincoln Center is an institution. This year, he's more than that. With the Mozart Bicentennial at Lincoln Center offering every piece that the composer wrote, Mostly Mozart's silver anniversary, sponsored by the Jerome L. Greene Foundation and the Peter Jay Sharp Foundation, falls in the middle of the unparalleled 18-month-long commemoration. All of which posed Mostly Mozart with a programming challenge: How can a festival that dedicates itself to Mozart summer after summer outdo itself in a manner befitting this celebratory year?

Roger Norrington has an answer. On July 27 and 28, the eminent British conductor will guide a Lincoln Center audience through "The Mozart Experience," a total-immersion confrontation with the works Mozart composed during the year preceding his death in December 1791. Norrington greeted the prospect of a conversation about Mozart with relish—in the spirit of chatting about a dear, old friend. We asked him about what audiences might expect from this festival within a festival within a festival.

STAGEBILL: *How much ground does "The Mozart Experience" intend to cover?*

ROGER NORRINGTON: Our previous "Experiences" at Historic Arts in London have always focussed on a single piece. So this "Mozart Experience" is something new, since it addresses an entire year's production. That opens up new questions to explore. What went on in the last year of Mozart's life? Why did he write the particular pieces he did? In the course of the weekend we'll perform all—or at least part of all—the works he wrote in 1791. That includes *The Clemency of Titus* and *The Magic Flute*, which we obviously don't have time to perform complete. But we're doing all the other major works—the final piano concerto, the clarinet concerto, the *Requiem*, as well as more obscure masterpieces: an unfinished string quintet, music for mechanical organ, pieces for the glass harmonica. Then there are a lot of lesser works, like the more than forty dances he wrote in January, February, and March of 1791 for the court. When we perform them (by which I mean play *and* dance) we'll explore what they tell us about the social structure of Mozart's world.

STAGEBILL: *It's a shame he couldn't spend all of his last year working on masterpieces. If only he could have used the time to finish the* Requiem *instead!*

NORRINGTON: But, from Mozart's point of view, 1791 was certainly not his "last year." He kept a catalogue in which he entered each of his works as he finished them, and he had the pages labelled year by year going up to 1801. He had no idea that he was going to die until just a couple of days before, when he suddenly thought, "Good heavens, I may not make it through this!" So we'll embark on the "Experience" with the understanding that this is not "Mozart's Last Year" and these are not "late works." When you're 85, you know that the works you're composing are late; but when you're 35, as Mozart was in 1791, you're just composing—period.

STAGEBILL: *Who will be performing?*

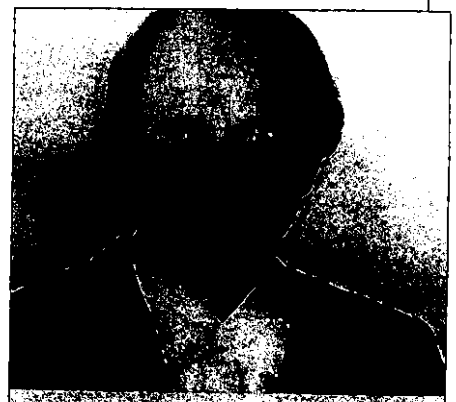
NORRINGTON: The instrumentalists are members of the London Classical Players, which is a project-oriented period-instrument group. We get together nine or ten weeks each year to work on specific projects, like this "Experience" or our recordings for EMI (which is helping to sponsor the weekend). The Choir of Corpus Christi Church will sing the liturgical and Masonic works, and we have fine soloists, including fortepianist Melvyn Tan, plus dancers from the Early Dance Project, directed by Kay Lawrence and Alison Pooley.

STAGEBILL: *Is this simply a highly-concentrated concert series?*

NORRINGTON: No, indeed. We'll spend the afternoons in Alice Tully Hall alternating lectures by distinguished teacher-scholars with chamber music performances and free-style tea-and-conversation breaks. In the evenings we move to Avery Fisher Hall for large-scale concerts, but even in these we'll provide enough background to ensure that people understand how the pieces fit into the scheme of things.

STAGEBILL: *I count in the Köchel catalogue some 30 entries for 1791. Will you perform them in the order they were written?*

NORRINGTON: Things don't always work so straightforwardly as that. When we do the opera bits, for example, we do them in the order in which Mozart wrote them, which was helter-skelter. He'd scribble down an aria for *Titus* and then he'd get another bit of text to set for *Magic Flute*, and then go back to more *Titus*. So here we can actually reproduce—or at least allude to—that process in our performances. Mozart worked as a craftsman, not unlike a tailor or a carpenter, somehow squeezing all his commitments into a tight schedule. And he had to work fast and efficiently because economically it was a time rather like ours: a recession. People were pulling in their horns, reducing the size of their bands.



Naturally Norrington: conductor Roger Norrington

ALEX VON KOETTLITZ/ANGEL-EMI

STAGEBILL: *What sort of audience has attended your past "Experiences"?*

NORRINGTON: Intellectually curious people, from sophisticated concertgoers to—surprisingly—people who never go to concerts, but feel less intimidated by this format. We provide guidance for the audience, and we stimulate them with information, humor, interaction with the performers. We will even teach the audience to contredance in the Alice Tully Hall lobby. It's rather like going on a weekend cruise, but with a great composer as host. ■

"The Mozart Experience" has been made possible in part by the generous support of E. Nakamichi Foundation. The Lincoln Center Mostly Mozart Festival, now in its 25th Anniversary season, is sponsored by the Jerome L. Greene Foundation and the Peter Jay Sharp Foundation. Additional support is provided by Annie Laurie Aitken Charitable Trust, The Aaron Diamond Foundation, Eleanor Naylor Dana Charitable Trust, Friends of Mostly Mozart, The Shubert Foundation, Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation, The Harkness Foundations for Dance, Charles E. Culpeper Foundation, S.H. and Helen R. Scheuer Family Foundation, New York State Council on the Arts and National Endowment for the Arts.

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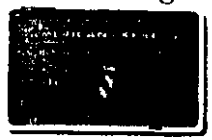

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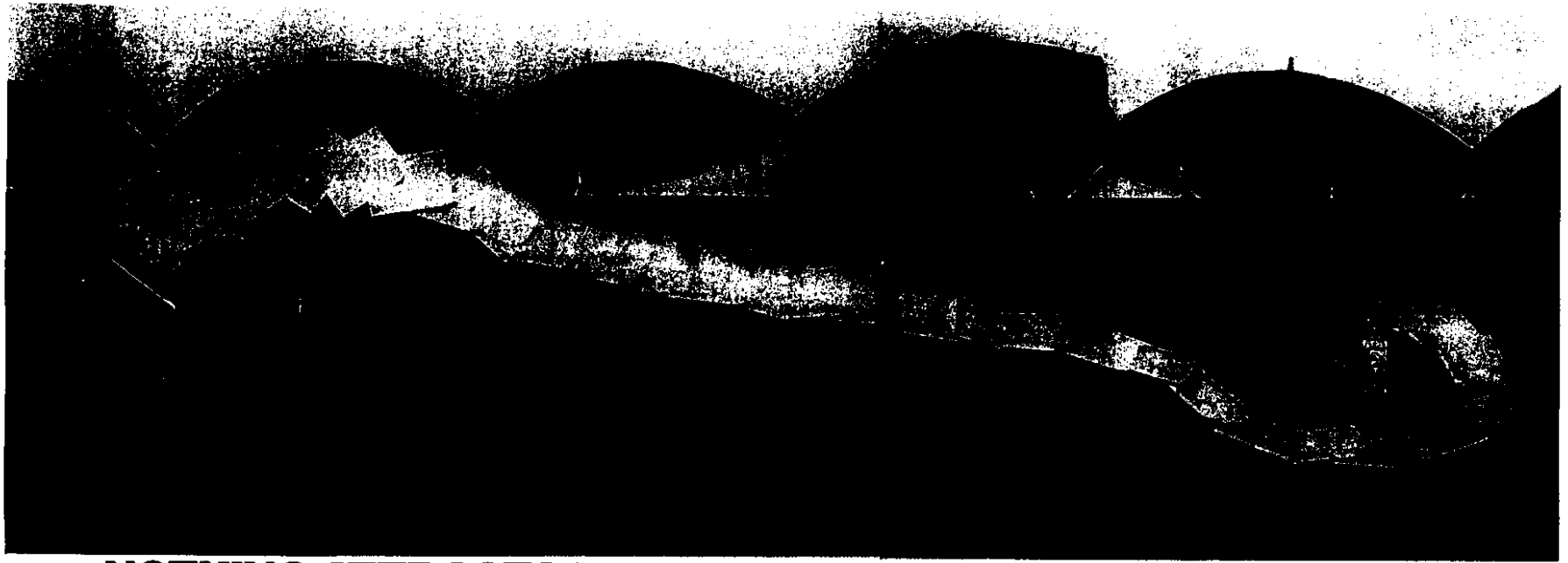

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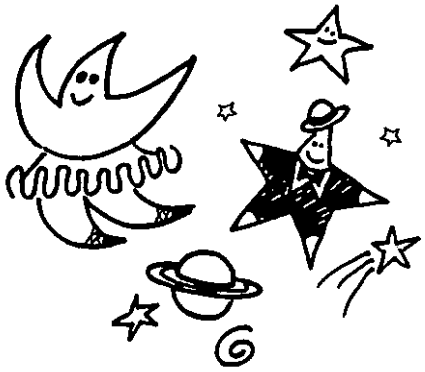
GUEST ESSAY



STAR **SEARCH**

How do we know when a star is born?

Stagebill *senior editor*
ROBERT SANDLA scans the skies

During early performances of Harold Rome's 1962 musical *I Can Get It for You Wholesale*, an unknown 19-year-old actress was tormented by the rustle of flipping program pages while she belted out her one solo number. Crestfallen, the newcomer fled to a wiser colleague for advice—why weren't people sitting still? Sweetie, came the apocryphal response, they're all looking to find out *who you are*. The answer audiences found was Barbra (could that strangely spelled first name be a typo?) Streisand.

What is it about a given performer that can galvanize an audience, make us twitch in our seats and compel us to squint in the dark to learn a stranger's name? The name, in fact, won't divulge much: it's just a handle. What we seek is confirmation that the young violinist who just broke our hearts by manipulating stretched catgut and scrolled wood, the new dancer who intimated immortality by jumping around in tutu and tulle, is that known quantity, a star. In the theater, the frisson of discovering star quality—that sheer daunting force of character—lures us into believing acts of the imagination; it blasts us out of somnolence with the force of a glacial wind. We need to know this perfect stranger; aesthetic voyeurs, we fall a little bit in love with a not-so-obscure object of desire.

Physical beauty won't explain it. A square jaw, cleavage you could toss a salad in, and great gams fascinate, but only for the first ten seconds (although they can be a stimulating ten seconds). Even in film (the art of shooting stars in close-up) there had better be something—like acting ability—or someone—like Gary Cooper—behind that fabulous face. Nor will technique suffice. A machine can pluck strings with greater precision than any human, but will lack soul, an ideal ever since musicians moved from medieval anonymity to the Romantic-era cult of the personality. The dancer who can spin like a vortex will evoke screams from the cognoscenti but will fail, eventually, to snuggle up to the heart of the public.

Star quality arises, in part, from the performer's compulsive revelation of the self before others, a sometimes physical but predominantly psychic strip-tease. Even low-key or enigmatic stars like the mysterious, basilisk-eyed Garbo crave attention. An ego the size of a Winnebago goes with the territory, along with its concomitant: the incessant ebb of what may be a low self-esteem.

And what works in one medium won't work in another. Fanny Brice on '50s swimming star Esther Williams: "Wet, she's a star. Dry, she ain't." ■

FLASH!

PHILHARMONIC FAREWELL

The New York Philharmonic honored Zubin Mehta with a farewell gala on May 28, when the Maestro led his final concert as Music Director, conducting a performance of Schoenberg's Gurrelieder.

All photographs by Mary Hilliard

Adieus: *(clockwise from top)* Mrs. James W. (Jean) Crystal, Chairman of the gala evening; "A Zubin Mehta Farewell"; Betty Allen, Executive/Artistic Director of The Harlem School of the Arts; Phyllis J. Mills, Board Vice Chairman, Mrs. Wade F.B. (Angela) Thompson; Zubin and Nancy Mehta are flanked by Philharmonic Chairman Stephen Stamas and his wife, Elaine; Mehta acknowledges the audience following the performance.

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Hall Listings: MOH: Metropolitan Opera House NYST: New York State Theater AFH: Avery Fisher Hall ATH: Alice Tully Hall VBT: Vivian Beaumont Theater MENT: Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater FP: Fountain Plaza PL: Plaza DP: Damrosch Park	**1** MOH 8:00 PM BOLSHOI OPERA Mlada	**2** MOH 8:00 PM BOLSHOI OPERA Mlada VBT 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare MENT 8:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN by Elaine May DP 7:00 PM WQXR CONCERT	**3** MOH 8:00 PM BOLSHOI OPERA Maid of Orleans VBT 2:00 & 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare MENT 2:00 & 8:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN by Elaine May FP 8:15 PM MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING
7 MENT 3:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN by Elaine May DP 7:30 PM GOLDMAN BAND PL 12:00 - 9:00 PM AMERICAN CRAFTS FESTIVAL	**8** MOH 7:30 PM ROYAL BALLET Swan Lake	**9** MOH 8:00 PM ROYAL BALLET Swan Lake NYST 8:00 PM (NYCO) A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC Paul Gemignani, conductor AFH 8:30 PM (MMF) MOZART FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA Gerard Schwarz, conductor VBT 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare MENT 8:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN by Elaine May DP 7:30 PM NATIONAL CHORALE	**10** MOH 8:00 PM ROYAL BALLET Mixed Bill AFH 8:00 PM (MMF) MOZART FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA Gerard Schwarz, conductor James Galway, flutist André Watts, pianist VBT 2:00 & 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare MENT 2:00 & 8:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN by Elaine May FP 8:15 PM MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING
14 NYST 2:00 PM (NYCO) TOSCA AFH 7:30 PM (MMF) HANDEL & HAYDN SOCIETY OF BOSTON Christopher Hogwood, director Robert Levin, fortepiano VBT 3:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare MENT 3:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN by Elaine May DP 7:30 PM GOLDMAN BAND	**15** MOH 8:00 PM ROYAL BALLET Swan Lake AFH 8:00 PM (MMF) CHAMBER MUSIC Isaac Stern, violinist Yefim Bronfman, pianist Robert Diaz, violist Jian Wang, cellist	**16** MOH 8:00 PM ROYAL BALLET Swan Lake AFH 8:00 PM (MMF) MOZART FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA Gerard Schwarz, conductor K. & M. Labeque, pianists Barry Tuckwell, hornist ATH EVE. SERIOUS FUN! JoHanna Went VBT 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION MENT 8:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN DP 7:30 PM NATIONAL CHORALE	**17** MOH 8:00 PM ROYAL BALLET Manon NYST 8:00 PM (NYCO) TURANDOT AFH 8:00 PM (MMF) MOZART FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA Gerard Schwarz, conductor ATH EVE. SERIOUS FUN! VBT 2:00 & 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION MENT 2:00 & 8:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN FP 8:15 PM MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING
21 NYST 2:00 PM (NYCO) LES PECHEURS DE PERLES Mark Gibson, conductor AFH EVE. (MMF) SPECIAL PROGRAM:MOZART & THE DANCE Lar Lubovitch Dance Company & Soloist New York VBT 3:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare MENT 3:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN by Elaine May DP 7:30 PM GOLDMAN BAND	**22** AFH EVE (MMF) To be announced	**23** NYST 8:00 PM (NYCO) TURANDOT Guido Ajmone-Marsan, conductor AFH 8:00 PM (MMF) MOZART FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA Armin Jordan, conductor ATH EVE. SERIOUS FUN VBT 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare MENT 8:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN by Elaine May DP 7:30 PM NATIONAL CHORALE	**24** NYST 8:00 PM (NYCO) TOSCA AFH 8:00 PM (MMF) MOZART FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA Armin Jordan, conductor ATH EVE. SERIOUS FUN! VBT 2:00 & 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare MENT 2:00 & 8:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN by Elaine May FP 8:15 PM MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING Duke's Men
28 NYST 2:00 PM (NYCO) A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC Paul Gemignani, conductor AFH 8:00 PM (MMF) THE MOZART EXPERIENCE Roger Norrington, director VBT 3:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare MENT 3:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN by Elaine May	**29** AFH 8:00 PM (MMF) CHAMBER MUSIC Kalichstein-Laredo- Robinson Trio	**30** AFH 8:00 PM (MMF) MOZART FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA Gerard Schwarz, conductor ATH EVE. SERIOUS FUN! Dance/Music/Film VBT 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare	**31** NYST 8:00 PM (NYCO) A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC Paul Gemignani, conductor AFH 8:00 PM (MMF) MOZART FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA Gerard Schwarz, conductor ATH EVE. SERIOUS FUN! Dance/Music/Film VBT 2:00 & 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY MATINEE	SATURDAY EVENING
4 VBT 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare MENT 8:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN by Elaine May FP 8:15 PM MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING Peter Duchin	**5** MOH 8:00 PM BOLSHOI OPERA Maid of Orleans VBT 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare MENT 8:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN by Elaine May FP 8:15 PM MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING Ed Polcer and the Condon Reunion Band	**6** MOH 1:00 PM BOLSHOI OPERA Maid of Orleans VBT 2:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare MENT 2:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN by Elaine May PL 12:00 PM AMERICAN CRAFTS FESTIVAL	**6** MOH 8:00 PM BOLSHOI OPERA Eugene Onegin VBT 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare MENT 8:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN by Elaine May FP 8:15 PM MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING Lionel Hampton
11 MOH 8:00 PM ROYAL BALLET Mixed Bill NYST 8:00 PM (NYCO) TOSCA AFH 8:00 PM (MMF) CHAMBER MUSIC Tokyo String Quartet James Galway, flutist ATH EVE. SERIOUS FUN! VBT 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION MENT 8:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN FP 8:15 PM MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING	**12** MOH 8:00 PM ROYAL BALLET Mixed Bill NYST 8:00 PM (NYCO) TURANDOT AFH 8:00 PM (MMF) MOZART FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA Gerard Schwarz, conductor Isaac Stern, violinist ATH EVE. SERIOUS FUN! VBT 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION MENT 8:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN FP 8:15 PM MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING	**13** MOH 2:00 PM ROYAL BALLET Swan Lake NYST 2:00 PM (NYCO) LES PECHEURS DE PERLES Mark Gibson, conductor VBT 2:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare MENT 2:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN by Elaine May	**13** MOH 8:00 PM ROYAL BALLET Swan Lake NYST 8:00 PM (NYCO) A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC AFH 8:00 PM (MMF) MOZART FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA Isaac Stern, violinist ATH EVE. SERIOUS FUN! VBT 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION MENT 8:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN FP 8:15 PM MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING
18 MOH 8:00 PM ROYAL BALLET Manon NYST 8:00 PM (NYCO) LES PECHEURS DE PERLES Mark Gibson, conductor AFH 8:00 PM (MMF) MOZART FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA Gerard Schwarz, conductor ATH EVE. SERIOUS FUN! VBT 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION MENT 8:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN FP 8:15 PM MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING	**19** MOH 8:00 PM ROYAL BALLET Manon NYST 8:00 PM (NYCO) A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC Paul Gemignani, conductor AFH 8:00 PM (MMF) MOZART FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA Gerard Schwarz, conductor ATH EVE. SERIOUS FUN! VBT 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION MENT 8:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN FP 8:15 PM MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING	**20** MOH 2:00 PM ROYAL BALLET Manon NYST 2:00 PM (NYCO) TURANDOT Guido Ajmone-Marsan, conductor VBT 2:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare MENT 2:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN by Elaine May	**20** MOH 8:00 PM ROYAL BALLET Manon NYST 8:00 PM (NYCO) TOSCA AFH EVE. (MMF) SPECIAL PROGRAM:MOZART & THE DANCE ATH EVE. SERIOUS FUN! Art Zoyd VBT 8:00 (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare FP 8:15 PM MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING
25 AFH 8:00 PM (MMF) MOZART FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA Armin Jordan, conductor ATH EVE. SERIOUS FUN! VBT 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare MENT 8:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN by Elaine May FP 8:15 PM MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING Bruce Daigrepont	**26** NYST 8:00 PM (NYCO) LES PECHEURS DE PERLES Mark Gibson, conductor AFH 8:00 PM (MMF) MOZART FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA Armin Jordan, conductor ATH EVE. SERIOUS FUN! VBT 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare MENT 8:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN by Elaine May FP 8:15 PM MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING The Jim Cullum Jazz Band	**27** NYST 2:00 PM (NYCO) TOSCA VBT 2:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION by John Guare MENT 2:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN by Elaine May	**27** NYST 8:00 PM (NYCO) LA TRAVIATA Guido Ajmone-Marsan, conductor AFH 8:00 PM (MMF) THE MOZART EXPERIENCE Roger Norrington, director ATH EVE. SERIOUS FUN! VBT 8:00 PM (LCT) SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION MENT 8:00 PM (LCT) MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN FP 8:15 PM MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING Frank Wess Orchestra

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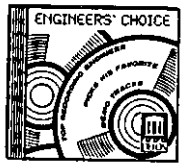

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• This year, London observes the Mozart (or Amade, as they call him) bicentenary and there are many special concert series in commemoration.

• Wigmore Hall, a cozy favorite venue, presents a mid-morning Sunday program at which coffee, tea, and sherry are served. Or consider venturing outside central London to lush Hampstead, where you'll find the city's answer to New York's Parks Concerts. The Kenwood Lake Concerts are held from May to August amid the greenery of Kenwood Lake, and play host to large resident and guest orchestras.

Additional tips on British concert-going:

• Probably the best source of information for musical and other cultural happenings is *Time Out* magazine, a weekly investment of (at last check) £1.20 ($2.40).

• British politeness prevails during the final encores and bows—rarely do people exit during them. Avoid a sore-thumb situation and take your cues from the people around you.

•Think about dining before the show. This is not a city of night owls, and a pre-concert meal would most likely be more accessible and enjoyable.

—Cathy Mahoney

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From January 1991 through August 1992, the eleven companies resident at Lincoln Center will pay tribute to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart by performing his complete works and presenting related ballets, films, exhibits, lectures, symposia and theater works.

The Mozart Bicentennial at Lincoln Center gratefully acknowledges the foundations, corporations, individuals and government agencies who have made this celebration possible.

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In addition, each of the eleven participating constituent organizations receives ongoing support from generous donors for the individual programs which comprise the Mozart Bicentennial at Lincoln Center.

QUIZ

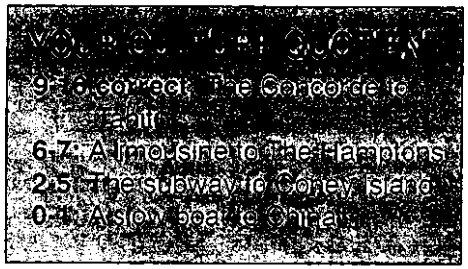
CULTURE CLUB

11. Bonus question: Who's the hoofer with the hoop?

1. *Ondine, The Dream,* and *Symphonic Variations* were choreographed by: a) Frederick Ashton b) Michel Fokine c) Leonid Massine d) George Balanchine

2. What is a *gran cassa*? a) a 17th-century Italian concert hall b) the large hole in the face of a guitar c) the final exam in an Italian conservatory d) a bass drum

3. Which ballet does not end in a wedding? a) *A Midsummer Night's Dream* b) *Les Sylphides* c) *Coppélia* d) *The Sleeping Beauty*



4. In what play does Ftatateeta skulk around? a) Larry Gelbart's *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* b) Shaw's *Caesar and Cleopatra* c) Shaw's *Androcles and the Lion* d) Stephen Schwartz' *Godspell*

5. Which choreographer consults the *I Ching* when putting a dance together? a) Lucinda Childs b) Merce Cunningham c) Karole Armitage d) Mark Morris

6. "O brave new world that has such people in't!" What Shakespearean heroine said this? a) Miranda in *The Tempest* b) Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* c) Kate in *The Taming of the Shrew* d) Cleopatra in *Antony and Cleopatra*

7. Carol Burnett's last Broadway appearance was in: a) *Once Upon a Mattress* b) *Hello, Dolly!* c) *Fade Out–Fade In* d) *Funny Girl*

8. Jerome Robbins choreographed *West Side Story.* Which budding choreographer played Baby John in the movie? a) Paul Taylor b) Bob Fosse c) Tommy Tune d) Eliot Feld

9. Who was Buoso Donati? a) an Italian Renaissance composer b) the creator of the role of Pollione in Bellini's *Norma* c) the corpse in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* d) the painter of Mozart's famous unfinished portrait

10. The 20-year-old Johann Sebastian Bach walked some 50 miles from Cöthen to Lübeck a) to apply for the post of court composer b) to hear the organist Dietrich Buxtehude c) to attend the premiere of his *St. Matthew Passion* d) to purchase a well-tempered clavier

ANSWERS: 1.a 2.d 3.b 4.b 5.b 6.a 7.c 8.d 9.c 10.b 11.Fred Astaire

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Serious Fun! Lincoln Center

Serious Fun!, presented by Lincoln Center in association with IPA and sponsored by Philip Morris Companies Inc., bolts through Alice Tully Hall July 11 through August 3. The fifth season of this avant-garde series may be the boldest and most innovative ever, as today's groundbreaking artists offer their latest work in music, dance, theater, video, and performance art.

Thursday, July 11-Saturday, July 13
The Mysteries and What's So Funny?
Written and staged by David Gordon
Music by Philip Glass
Visual Design by Red Grooms
(New York premiere*)

Tuesday, July 16
JoHanna Went and DANCENOISE
Double bill featuring performance artists from each coast
(East Coast premieres*)

Wednesday, July 17
Frank Olivier, Keith Terry, and Leonard Pitt
Three performers from the San Francisco Bay Area
(East Coast premiere*)

Thursday, July 18
Medea
Directed, choreographed, and performed by Ann Papoulis, with text by Heiner Muller
Original songs by John King, music by Cherubini, Laibach, and Yma Sumac
Sets by Cis Bierinickx

Friday, July 19
The New World—Plan B
The Blue Man Group and Harry Kipper

Saturday, July 20
Art Zoyd
French art-rock ensemble in their American debut
(American premiere*)

Tuesday, July 23
Rachel Rosenthal—*Pangean Dreams*
Her latest multi-media work
(East Coast premiere*)

Wednesday, July 24-Thursday, July 25
Reno
A new work by this New York performance artist
(World premiere*)

Friday, July 26-Saturday, July 27
Laurie Anderson

Tuesday, July 30-Wednesday, July 31
Dance
A multi-media collaboration with choreography by Lucinda Childs, music by Philip Glass, and film by Sol LeWitt
(Major American revival)

Friday, August 2-Saturday, August 3
Megadance
Charles Moulton, Ann Carlson, Doug Elkins, and Elizabeth Streb
(World premieres*)

* Indicates works specially commissioned for Serious Fun!—made possible in part by the New Works Fund established by the Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation.

Opening concert begins at 7:30 p.m.; all other programs begin at 8 p.m. Call CenterCharge, (212) 721-6500.

In addition to sponsorship from Philip Morris Companies, Inc., Serious Fun! receives deeply appreciated support from The Harkness Foundations for Dance, Sydney and Frances Lewis, The Greenwall Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, and New York State Council on the Arts.

Classical Jazz Lincoln Center

"The most important jazz program in America" (according to *The New York Times*) will bring the many voices of our country's original art form to Alice Tully Hall August 6-11. The celebrated Classical Jazz series is presented by Lincoln Center and sponsored by Cognac Hennessy. Trumpeter Wynton Marsalis, artistic advisor since Classical Jazz began five summers ago, will be performing in every concert, either headlining or as a member of the all-star Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra.

Tuesday, August 6
"At the Court of King Oliver"
Dr. Michael White, clarinet
Wynton Marsalis, trumpet and cornet
Marcus Roberts, piano
Nicholas Payton, trumpet
Freddie Lonzo, trombone
Don Vappie, banjo
Wycliff Gordon, trombone
Reginald Veal, bass
Herlin Riley, drums

Wednesday, August 7
"Two Divas of Jazz"—Abbey Lincoln and Shirley Horn
With Branford Marsalis, tenor saxophone
Wynton Marsalis, trumpet
Buck Hill, trumpet
Toots Thielemans, harmonica
Cedar Walton, piano
Billy Higgins, drums

Thursday, August 8
"Kansas City Swing and Shout"
The Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra—David Berger, conductor
Jay McShann, piano
Claude "Fiddler" Williams, violin
Charles McPherson, alto saxophone
Sir Roland Hanna, piano
Kenny Washington, drums
Jimmy Slyde, tap dancer

Friday, August 9
"Coltrane Serenade"
The Tommy Flanagan Trio
Joe Henderson, tenor and alto saxophone
Marcus Roberts, piano
McCoy Tyner, piano
Wynton Marsalis, trumpet
Todd Williams, tenor and soprano saxophone
Wes Anderson, alto saxophone
Charles McPherson, alto saxophone
Reginald Veal, bass
Roy Haynes, drums

Saturday, August 10-Sunday, August 11
"Portraits by Ellington"
The Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra—David Berger, conductor
Milt Grayson, vocals
Andy Stein, violin
"Wild" Bill Davis, organ
Steve Nelson, vibraphone
Chuck Connors, bass trombone
Bill Easley, clarinet

All concerts begin at 8 p.m. Call CenterCharge, (212) 721-6500.

In addition to sponsorship from Cognac Hennessy, Classical Jazz receives generous support from The Rockefeller Foundation, The Aaron Diamond Foundation, The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, William H. Kearns Foundation, Edward John Noble Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, and New York State Council on the Arts.

—Lisa Batchelder

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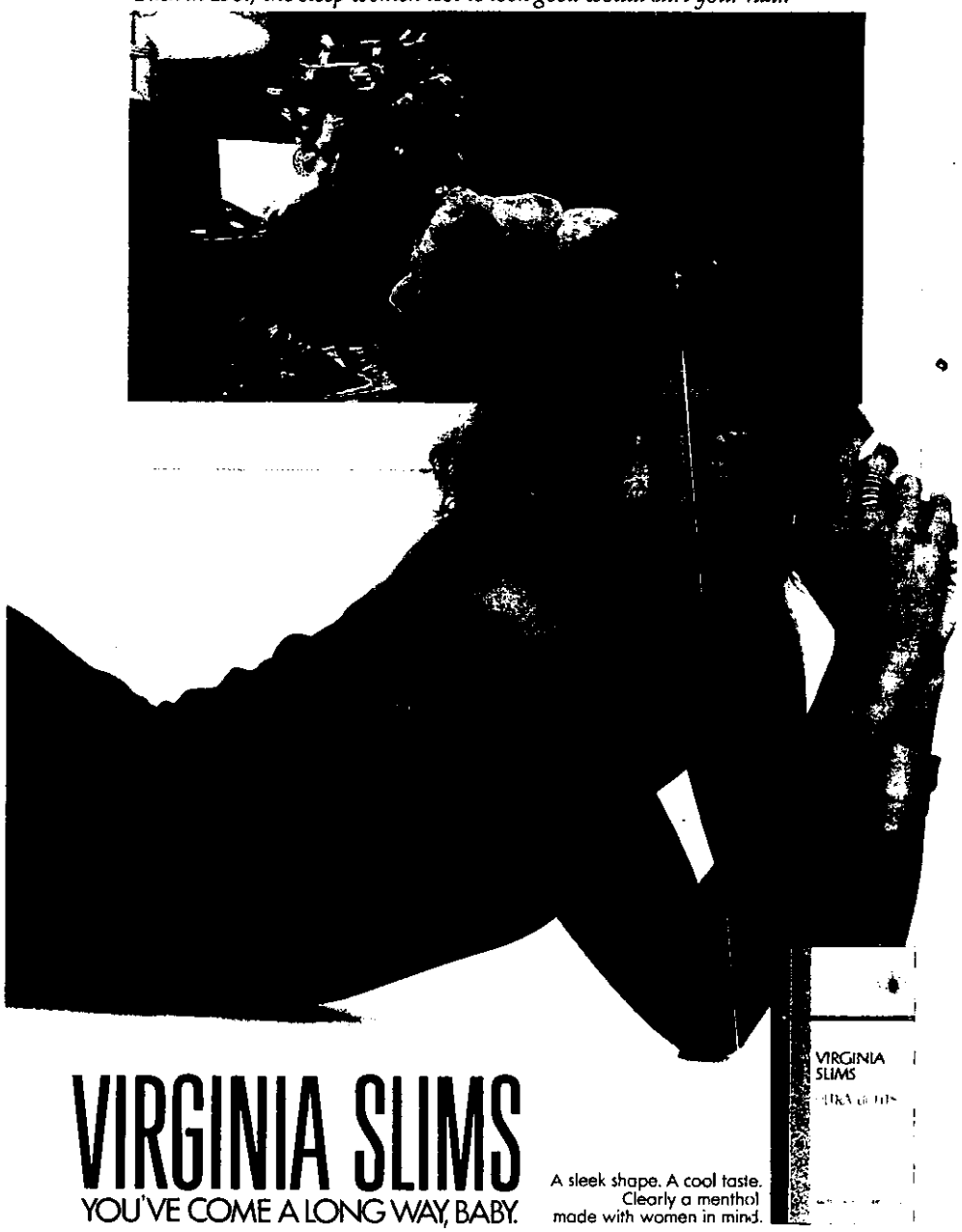

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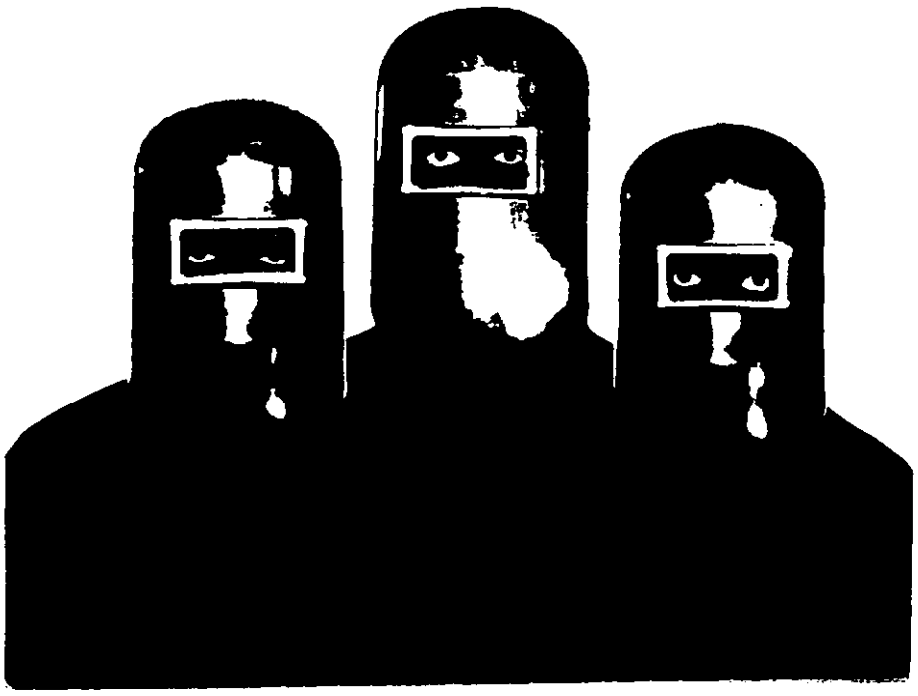

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Unterhaltung in Manhattan: Dem „alten Europa" oft voraus

„The Show must go on" (Die Show muss weitergehen) sang einst Queen-Sänger Freddie Mercury. Es gibt wohl keinen Stadtteil auf Erden, für den dieses Motto treffender erscheint als Manhattan. Allein das Unterhaltungsprogramm setzt Maßstäbe – weltweit. Wer dem „alten Europa" kulturell einige Monate voraus sein möchte, der sollte sich einmal entlang des Broadway umschauen.

Noch ein absoluter Insider-Tipp ist die innovative Multi-Media-Performance der „Blue Man Group", die ihr Publikum mit einer atemberaubenden Mischung aus Percussion, Rock, Comedy, Kunst und Philosophie konfrontieren. Ab Mai 2004 wird ein Ableger der Show im Berliner Musical-Theater am Potsdamer Platz zu sehen sein. Dann werden auch die deutschen Zuschauer erfahren, was die drei geheimnisvollen Männer mit den blauen Glatzen alles mit Klopapier und Abflussrohren anstellen können (im Internet www.bluemangroup.net). Besonders reizvoll für die zahlreichen Fans der Fernsehserie „Sex And The City" ist die gleichnamige, dreistündige Tour, die zu Original-Drehorten führt. Besucher erfahren hier, wo Carrie oder Samantha Schuhe und Liebesspielzeug kaufen. Die 33 Dollar für das Ticket lohnen sich allerdings eher für wirkliche Insider der Serie.

Sage und schreibe acht Stunden dauert eine NYC Showbiz Insider Tour. Allerdings genießen die Besucher hierbei das Privileg, ein Schauspielhaus wie das altehrwürdige „New Amsterdam Theater" durch den Hintereingang zu besuchen. Gute Seelen des Theaters erzählen Anekdoten über große Premieren, Hausgeister und das aktuelle Musical-Programm „Der König der Löwen". Anschließend stehen noch Visiten in der legendären Radio City Music Hall und in den NBC-Fernsehstudios auf dem Programm. Dort wird Europäern besonders deutlich, wie sehr das hiesige Fernsehprogramm durch US-Produktionen wie „Flipper", „Bezaubernde Jeannie" oder die „Bill-Cosby-Show" geprägt wurde.

Auch für Sportfans hat New York eine Menge zu bieten. Im „Big Apple" ist die erfolgreichste Baseball-Mannschaft der Welt zu Hause, der diesjährige Vizemeister „New York Yankees". Das Eishockey-Team der „Rangers" und die Basketballer der „Knicks" teilen sich den Madison Square Garden. Und das Football-Team der „Giants" empfängt seine Gegner jenseits des Hudson River in New Jersey. Obwohl Karten für die Spiele dieser Topteams nicht ganz billig sind, oft jenseits der 60 Dollar angesiedelt, sollte man unbedingt mal ein Heimspiel gesehen haben. Die obligatorische Nationalhymne und teils nationalistische Showelemente wie Kampfhubschrauber-Staffeln erinnern so gar nicht an deutsche Fußballstadien.

Ohne Fan-Schal und Schlachtruf wirken die Spiele in den USA oft wie ein Beiprogramm für Zuschauer, die mal eben nach der Arbeit im Stadion vorbeischauen. Als Gegenleistung für sein Geld erhält der Zuschauer/Kunde Entertainment in reinster Form. Doch im Hinblick auf gewachsene Fankultur sind es die Europäer, die den Amerikanern um einiges voraus sind.

HINTERGRUND

Die Blue Man Group tritt im Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette Street, auf. Die Sex And The City Tour (On Location Tours) startet viermal wöchentlich vor der Pulitzer Fontäne (58. Straße und 5th Avenue). Die NYC Showbiz Insider Tour startet täglich um 8.30 Uhr vor dem Gray Line Visitors Center, 777 8th Avenue. *majo*

Frankfurter
Neue Presse

HE, H
Erscheinung: täglich
04.11.03
Seite: KUS1

Platzierung

Thema Nr: 990.009
Meldung in Rubrik: Kultur und Service
Anstrich - No.: 24 37554 12

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in allen gekennzeichneten Ausgaben erschienen (Hauptausgabe in der ersten Zeile).		PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
✓	Frankfurter Neue Presse Stadt	60327 Frankfurt	* 45.718	* 48.823	* 54.562	1137
✓	Höchster Kreisblatt	65719 Hofheim	* 19.935	* 21.070	* 22.755	1534
✓	Nassaulsche Neue Presse	65549 Limburg	* 26.266	* 26.899	* 28.357	1670
✓	Taunus Zeitung	61348 Bad Homburg v.d.H	* 35.837	* 37.133	* 39.203	1267
4 Ausgaben mit der Meldung						
4 gelesene Ausgaben in der Gruppe			*** 193.410**	*** 203.819**	*** 222.195**	

So wie hier bei einer Aufführung in New York werden die Akteure der „Blue Man Group" demnächst auch in Deutschland ihre Rohr-Instrumente musikalisch bearbeiten. Die Produzenten des Spektakels sprechen von einer „neuen Kategorie" im Showbusiness. Foto: ap

Stumme Blaumänner blasen ins Rohr

Von Alexandra Rehn

Die amerikanische „Blue Man Group" bereitet für den 10. Mai im Berliner Theater am Potsdamer Platz die Europapremiere ihrer Show vor.

Was die „Blue Man Group" überhaupt ist, können noch nicht mal ihre kreativen Köpfe erklären. „Wir überlegen selbst noch, wie die Antwort auf diese Frage lautet", sagt Chris Wink, der das Projekt zusammen mit seinen Freunden Matt Goldman und Phil Stanton 1987 gegründet hat. Die Show, die in keine Kategorie so richtig passt, ist vom 10. Mai an erstmals außerhalb der USA zu sehen, und zwar im Berliner Theater am Potsdamer Platz.

Das Publikum kann sich gefasst machen auf ein audiovisuelles Spektakel – eine Mischung aus Musik, Comedy und Wissenschaft, wie der 42-jährige Goldman erklärt und ergänzend schwärmt: „eine Explosion von Farben und Klängen. Witzig, frech, originell und einfach unterhaltsam". Die Aufführung lasse sich weder als Theater noch als Musical oder Konzert klassifizieren und sei deshalb, ganz einfach, „vergleichbar mit nichts anderem im Showgeschäft". Die Preis-Jury des Drama Desk Awards in den USA musste sich, um der „Blue Man Group" eine Auszeichnung verleihen zu können, eine neue Kategorie ausdenken: „Unique Theatrical Production" (Einzigartige theatrale Produktion).

Einzigartig sind sie zweifellos. Auf der Bühne stehen drei blau geschminkte Männer, die, begleitet von sieben Musikern, das Publikum auf eine Reise in eine surreale Welt mit immer wieder neuen Überraschungen mitnehmen. Es seien „drei Entdecker, die uns durchs Leben führen", sagt Produzent Mnik Klokow, der die „Blue Man Group" nach Deutschland geholt hat. Sprache spielt dabei keine Rolle, die Akteure brauchen keine Worte, sie verständigen sich mit Mimik und Gestik. Es gibt also weder Dialoge noch eine Handlung, ähnlich wie im Slapstick, dafür aber Musik auf selbst entwickelten Percussion-Instrumenten: PVC-Röhren, die mit Schaumgummi-Paddeln und Stöcken geschlagen werden, oder das Drumbone, ein Rohr-in-Rohr-Instrument, dessen Tonhöhe sich durch Verlängern oder Verkürzen ändert, und mit dem ungewöhnliche Klänge zu erzeugen sind.

Ein „Blue Man" – von denen es in den insgesamt vier derzeit laufenden US-Shows in New York, Boston, Chicago und Las Vegas etwa 30 gibt – muss gleichzeitig Schlagzeuger, Schauspieler und Aktionskünstler sein. Entsprechend schwierig gestaltete sich das Casting für die Berliner Show. Insgesamt hatten sich mehr als 400 Darsteller aus ganz Europa beworben, aber nur eine Hand voll davon wurde tatsächlich ausgewählt.

Und warum ausgerechnet Berlin? Das sei in erster Linie eine emotionale Entscheidung gewesen, sagen die drei „Blue-Man"-Gründer, die einst als Straßenkünstler auftraten. „Wir wurden auch gebeten, nach London, Tokio oder Rio zu kommen, aber es war das deutsche Publikum in unseren Shows, das zu uns sagte: ‚Ihr müsst nach Deutschland kommen'", erzählt Goldman. Oft hätten die Leute sie gefragt, ob sie aus Deutschland kämen, sagt Stanton. „Ich weiß gar nicht, warum sie das dachten, aber es hat uns den Eindruck vermittelt, nach Deutschland kommen zu müssen." Abgesehen davon, dass das Theater am Potsdamer Platz sehr gut für ihre Show geeignet sei, gelte Berlin als der kulturelle Mittelpunkt in Europa. „Es ist eher so, dass Berlin die ‚Blue Man Group' angezogen hat, und nicht, dass ‚Blue Man' Berlin ausgewählt hat", sagt Goldman.

Einen bloßen Export der Show aus den USA nach Deutschland wird es nicht geben. Die blauen Männer haben sich von Berlin inspirieren lassen, wie sie selbst sagen, und dies wiederum werde die Produktion beeinflussen – insbesondere das Bühnenbild, das gemeinsam mit dem Designer Marc Brickman entwickelt wird, der bereits für die britische Rockgruppe „Pink Floyd" gearbeitet hat. „Wir haben ein spektakuläres Panorama geschaffen", glaubt Stanton. „Die Szene ist um das Brandenburger Tor angeordnet." Damit scheint eines sicher: Die Berliner Show wird so einzigartig wie die „Blue Man Group" selbst. Der Kartenvorverkauf hat begonnen. Doch wie lange die Show in Berlin laufen wird, weiß das Theater selber noch nicht. Ein Sprecher: „Das hängt davon ab, wie die Show ankommt." Nicht auszuschließen auch, dass sie bei Erfolg anschließend in eine andere deutsche Stadt weiterzieht.

Berliner Theater am Potsdamer Platz, Premiere 10. Mai, 20 Uhr, Karten-Hotline 01805-4444, Internet http://www.stageholding.de.

ACHTUNG

musicals

(5)

Thema Nr: **990.009**

Anstrich - No.: 12 31558

D-Überregional, H
Erscheinung: 6 x jährlich
01.10.2003
Nr. 103
Seite: 28

Platzierung

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
musicals	81669 München	k.A.	* 8.000	* 8.000	9873

6821319 990009

[redacted]

* Quelle: IVW
10049977

Spielpläne

LONDON

Telefon-Vorwahl 0044-...
www.officiallondontheatre.co.uk

Drury Lane
870 - 890 1109
Anything Goes
z.Z. Previews
Premiere: 07.10.

Phoenix
20 - 7369 1733
Blood Brothers

Apollo Victoria
20 - 7494 5386
Bombay Dreams

Adelphi
20 - 7344 0055
Chicago

Palladium
20 - 7344 4444
Chitty Chitty Bang Bang

Aldwych
870 - 400 0805
Fame

Cambridge
870 - 890 1102
Jerry Springer - The Opera
ab 14.10.

New London
20 - 7404 4079
Joseph...

Palace
20 - 7434 0909
Les Misérables

Lyceum
20 - 7344 4444
Lion King, The

Prince Edward
20 - 7447 5400
Mamma Mia!

Her Majesty's
20 - 7494 5400
Phantom Of The Opera, The

Strand
8870 - 060 2335
Rat Pack, The

Gielgud
870 - 890 1105
Tell Me On A Sunday

Shaftesbury
0870 - 906 3828
Thoroughly Modern Millie
Previews ab 11.10.
Premiere: 21.10.

Victoria Palace
0870 - 165 8787
Tonight's The Night
Previews ab 15.10.
Premiere: 06.11.

Dominion
20 - 7413 1185
We Will Rock You

▲ Karten in allen Preislagen
● Restkarten verfügbar
▼ fast ständig ausverkauft
✱ am Tag der Vorstellung oft Restkarten zu ermäßigten Preisen

NEW YORK

Telefon-Vorwahl 001-212-...
www.playbill.com

Ford Center
307-4100
42nd Street

Palace
307-4747
Aida

John Golden
239-6200
Avenue Q

Lunt-Fontanne
307-4747
Beauty And The Beast

Imperial
239-6200
Boy From Oz, The
z.Z. Previews
Premiere: 16.10.

Studio 54
239-6200
Cabaret
bis 02.11.

Ambassador
239-6200
Chicago

Minskoff
307-4100
Fiddler On The Roof
Previews ab 17.01.
Premiere: 12.02.

Sam S. Shubert
239-6200
Gypsy

Neil Simon
307-4100
Hairspray

New Amsterdam
307-4100
Lion King, The

Virginia
239-6200
Little Shop Of Horrors
z.Z. Previews
Premiere: 02.10.

Cadillac Winter Garden
239-6200
Mamma Mia!

Richard Rodgers
307-4100
Movin' Out

Broadhurst
239-6200
Never Gonna Dance
Previews ab 27.10.
Premiere: 04.12.

Eugene O'Neill
239-6200
Nine

Majestic
239-6200
Phantom Of The Opera, The

St. James
239-6200
Producers, The

Nederlander
307-4100
Rent

Plymouth
239-6200
Taboo
Previews ab 24.10.
Premiere: 13.11.

Marquis
307-4100
Thoroughly Modern Millie

Henry Miller's
239-6200
Urinetown

Gershwin
307-4100
Wicked
Previews ab 07.10.
Premiere: 30.10.

Al Hirschfeld
239-6200
Wonderful Town
Previews ab 05.11.
Premiere: 23.11.

LONG RUNS

BERLIN

Theater am Potsdamer Platz
(01805) 114 113
Cats
bis 30. Januar 2004

Blue Man Group
ab Mai 2004

Theater des Westens
(01805) 114 113
Les Misérables
Open End

Starlight Express Theater
(0180) 51 52 53 0
Starlight Express
Open End

Capitol Theater
(0211) 73 44 0
Miami Nights
bis Ende 2003

Capitol Theater / Club
Das Mädchen Rosemarie
ab 17. Januar 2004

Colosseum Theater
(01805) 114 113
Aida
ab 5. Oktober

Musical Theater Neuschwanstein
(01805) 300 200
Ludwig II
Open End

HAMBURG

Theater im Hafen
(01805) 114 113
Der König der Löwen
Open End

Operettenhaus
(01805) 113 113
Mamma Mia!
Open End

Neue Flora
(01805) 114 113
Titanic
bis 4. Oktober
Tanz der Vampire
ab 7. Dezember

Musical Dome
(0180) 51 52 53 0
Jekyll & Hyde
Open End

Nieuwe Luxor Theater
(0031-900) 300 5000
3 Musketiers
bis 4. Januar 2004

Fortis Circustheater
(0031-900) 300 5000
The Sound Of Music
bis 11. Januar 2004

Theater am Königssee
(01805) 72 59 72
Salzsaga
bis 26. Oktober

Apollo Theater
(01805) 114 113
42nd Street
ab 21. November

Palladium Theater
(01805) 114 113
Das Phantom der Oper
Open End

Beatrix Theater
(0031-900) 300 50 00
Mamma Mia!
Open End

Theater an der Wien
(0043-1) 58885
Elisabeth
bis 2. Mai 2004

Raimund Theater
(0043-1) 58885
Wake Up
bis 1. Januar 2004
Barbarella
ab 11. März 2004

City-Halle
(0041-52) 269 29 99
Space Dream
3. Oktober - 31. Dezember

PLZ 0

Eduard-von-Winterstein-Theater
(03733) 140 71 31
Anatovka
5./10./12./29. Oktober
9./15. November
11./25./28. Dezember
Faust - Die Rockoper
9./18. Oktober; 6./19. November

Städtische Theater
(0371) 696 96 96
Fame
5./24./31. Oktober
6./26. November; 1./18. Dezember
Comedian Harmonists
28. Oktober; 8./14. November
16. Dezember
Jesus Christ Superstar
22./27. Oktober; 1. November
16. Dezember
My Fair Lady
19./21. Oktober
12./18./28. November
14./15./27. Dezember
Dracula
28. November

Staatstheater
(0355) 782 41 70
My Fair Lady
5. Oktober
15./27./30. November
11./12./26./30./31. Dezember

Anhaltisches Theater
(0340) 251 13 33
Der Zauberer von Oz
3./4./25. Oktober
Les Misérables
17. Oktober; 15. November
28. Dezember
Life is Live
3./4. Oktober; 21./22. November

Staatsoperette
(0351) 207 99 29
The Beautiful Game
28./29. Oktober; 4./5. Dezember
My Fair Lady
2./3. Oktober; 13./14. November
26. Dezember
West Side Story
8./10. Oktober; 1./2. November
16./17. Dezember

Theater
(03731) 35 82 34
One Touch Of Venus
22. Oktober; 6./11./12. November
19. Dezember

Theater
(0365) 773 63 43
My Fair Lady
30. Oktober

Theater
(03581) 47 47 47
Wie werde ich reich und glücklich
8./15. November
5./14./28. Dezember

Opernhaus
(0345) 202 64 56
Du sollst nicht lieben
2./16./25. Oktober
Dr. Jekyll And Mr. Hyde
18./25.* Oktober
The Scarlet Pimpernel
30. Oktober
1./9./15./21./22. November
6./12. Dezember

Musikalische Komödie
(0341) 126 12 61
Ich, Mariene
14. Oktober; 2./25. November
26. Dezember
My Fair Lady
23. Oktober
Jesus Christ Superstar
5./8. November; 9./10. Dezember

* = Gastspiel-Termine in anderen Städten

West Side Story
13./14. November; 2./3. Dezember
Zauberer von Oss
29./30. November
5.-7./11.-13./18.-21. Dezember

Vogtland Theater
(03741) 28 13 48 47
Comedian Harmonists Historie
2. Oktober

Gerhart-Hauptmann-Theater
(03583) 77 05 44
Sonnenallee
24. Oktober; 30. November
31. Dezember
Rocky Horror Show
10. Oktober; 20. November
28. Dezember

Theater
(0375) 83 46 47
Sweeney Todd
3./9. Oktober; 2. November
Sonnenallee
4./12. Oktober

PLZ 1

Theater am Potsdamer Platz
(01805) 114 113
Cats
bis 30. Januar 2004

Theater des Westens
(030) 47 99 74 77
Les Misérables
Open End

Neuköllner Oper
(030) 68 89 07 77
Die Krötzkes sind drin
1./8.-11./14./17.-19./21./
23.-26./29. Oktober
Elternabend
21./25./27.-30. November
3./7./8./11.-14./18.-21./
26.-28. Dezember

Tribüne
(030) 341 26 00
Non(n)sens
11.-15./18.-22. November

Schiller Theater
(01805) 60 11 60
The Rat Pack
7.-26. Oktober

FriedrichstadtPalast
(030) 23 26 23 26
Revuepalast
Open End

Estrel Festival Center
(030) 68 31 68 31
Stars In Concert
Open End

Cups-Theater
(030) 39 74 77
Baden gehn
2.-5./15.-Oktober; 19.-22. November
19.-20. Dezember
Linie 1
7.-10. Oktober
11.-13./22./23. Dezember
Melodys Ring
28.-31. Oktober; 1.-3. Dezember

BAMAH Jüdisches Theater
(030) 251 10 96
Anatevka - Das kleine Musical
16.-19./23./25./26./30. Oktober

Kulturhaus Spandau
(030) 333 40 22
David
17./18. Oktober

Theater
(03381) 51 11 11
Das Leben ist ein Karusell
18./19. Oktober
30./31. Dezember

Kieler Forum
(0335) 401 01 20
Der kleine Horrorladen
28.* Oktober

Theater
(03834) 572 22 24
Vincent van Gogh
24. Oktober
Anatevka
14./15. Oktober
Sekretärinnen
29. Oktober

Landestheater
(03981) 20 64 00
Sugar
4. Oktober
22. November
4. Dezember
My Fair Lady
29. November
5./26. Dezember

Volkstheater
(0381) 381 47 00
Swinging St. Pauli
3./5. Oktober; 28. Dezember
My Fair Lady
6./11. Dezember

Uckermärckische Bühnen
(03332) 53 81 11
Swinging St. Pauli
26. Oktober; 6./8. November

Mecklenburgisches Staatstheater
(0385) 530 01 23
Cabaret
12./19. Oktober

Theater
(03831) 264 61 24
Anatevka
8./9. Oktober
Sekretärinnen
15. Oktober

PLZ 2

Theater der Freien Hansestadt
im Musicaltheater
(0421) 365 33 33
My Fair Lady
2./18./26./31. Oktober
8. November; 7./28./29. Dezember
Kiss Me, Kate
15./16./22. November
12./13./23./25./30./31. Dezember

Stadttheater
(0471) 490 01
Assassins
25./29. Oktober
7./14./25./27. November
Petticoat und Minirock
19. Oktober
21./27./30. Dezember

Schloss-Theater
(05141) 127 13
Anatevka
19./20.-23./25.-31. Dezember

Theater im Hafen
(01805) 114 113
Der König der Löwen
Open End

Operettenhaus
(01805) 114 113
Mamma Mia!
Open End

Neue Flora
(01805) 114 113
Titanic
bis 4. Oktober
Tanz der Vampire
ab 7. Dezember

Schmidts Tivoli
(040) 31 77 88 99
Heiße Ecke 24
14.-18./22.-25./28.-31. Oktober
1./18.-23./25.-30. November
2.-7./9.-14./16.-21./25.-28./31. Dezember

Neues Theater am Holstenwall
(040) 68 87 30 20
Only You Two
bis 31. Dezember

St. Pauli Theater
(040) 47 11 06 66
Auf der Reeperbahn...
17. Oktober - 18. November

Altonaer Theater
(040) 399 058 70
Sugar
ab 23. November

Delphi Show-Palast
(040) 431 86 00
Richy's Traum
bis 31. Mai 2004

Theater
(0431) 950 95
Die Comedian Harmonists
1./4./11./18./22./25./29. November

Bühnen der Hansestadt
(0451) 745 52
My Fair Lady
11./16./25./29. Oktober
2./9./13./28. November
7./13./27. Dezember
Der kleine Horrorladen
7./16. November; 6. Dezember

Theater
(04231) 421 00
Evita
8./12./23./26. Oktober
1./8. November; 6./25. Dezember

Landestheater
(0461) 233 68
My Fair Lady
20./25./28.*/31.* Dezember

Nordharzer Städtebundtheater
(03941) 69 65 65
Hair
13./22./27./31. Dezember
My Fair Lady
23. Oktober; 23. November
21. Dezember

Landesbühne
(0511) 28 28 28 28
Alexis Sorbas
11.*/13./15./17.*/18.*/19./22./25.* November
6.*/7.*/10.*/11.*/12./19. Dezember

Stadttheater
(05121) 331 64
Linie 1
23. Oktober
16./24. November
Jesus Christ Superstar
5./13./24. Oktober
1./4./27./28. November
15./17./28./30. Dezember

Theater im Centrum
(0561) 701 87 22
Boygroup
3./5./9./10./12. Oktober

Theater
(0391) 540 64 44
The Rocky Horror Show
16. Oktober

Landestheater
(06421) 256 08
Faust II
17./24./25. Oktober
8./9. November; 10. Dezember

PLZ 3

Städtische Bühnen
(0521) 51 54 54
And The World Goes Round
2./4./9./12./18./24./31. Oktober

Landestheater
(05231) 97 48 03
Victor/Victoria
11./13. Oktober
Piaf
2./24. Oktober
Hildegard Knef
5./25. Oktober
Die Fantasticks
1.-6.*/15. Oktober
Les Misérables
21.*/30. Oktober

Deutsches Theater
(0551) 49 69 11
Die Comedian Harmonists
29. November; 6./20. Dezember

PLZ 4

Starlight Express Theater
(0180) 51 52 53 0
Starlight Express
Open End

Westfälisches Landestheater
(02305) 97 80 20
Novecento
3.* November
Himmel auf Erden
22. November
3.*/10.* Dezember

Landestheater Burghofbühne
(02064) 4110 0
Cabaret
4./31.* Oktober

Städtische Bühnen
(0231) 502 72 22
Die Comedian Harmonists
10./15./25./26. Oktober
1./7./13./21./25. November
11./30. Dezember

Theater
(0203) 300 91 00
Mütter
13./14. November

Capitol Theater
(0211) 73 44 0
Miami Nights
bis Ende 2003

Colosseum Theater
(01805) 114 113
Aida
ab 5. Oktober

Weststadthalle
(0201) 887 20 48
Stars in Concert
Open End

Tor 2
(0201) 450 34 16
Swing Time!
18./24.-26./30./31. Oktober
1./2./6.-9./13.-16./
20.-23./27.-30. November
4.-7./11.-14./18.-21./
26.-28. Dezember

Musiktheater
(0209) 409 72 00
Anything Goes
2./6./8./14./15./19./21./22./
29./30. November
12./13./28./31. Dezember

Städtische Bühnen
(02161) 615 11 00
Anything Goes
12./17./18./23. Oktober
11./12./29. November
19./28./31. Dezember

Theater
(02166) 615 11 00
Anything Goes
10./12./17./18./23. Oktober

Städtische Bühnen
(0251) 41 46 71 00
Cabaret
3./4./7./12. Oktober
14./18./29. November
27./31. Dezember

Landestheater
(02131) 26 99 33
Snoopy!!!
12./13./15. Oktober
2./11. Dezember

TheatrO CentrO
(01805) 57 00 37
Vom Geist der Weihnacht
14. November - 30. Dezember

Städtische Bühnen
(0541) 323 33 14
West Side Story
5./17./19./21./26. Oktober
16./25. November; 25. Dezember

Theater in Cronenberg
(0202) 47 22 11
Life is Live
bis 29. Dezember

PLZ 5

Grenzlandtheater
(0241) 474 61 11
Das gibt's nur einmal
ab Mitte Dezember

Stadttheater
(0241) 478 42 44
Kiss Me, Kate
8. November

Kleines Theater
(0228) 36 28 39
Zarah
bis 9. Oktober

Oper
(0228) 77 80 08
Anatevka
2. November

Contra-Kreis-Theater
(0228) 63 65 17
What A Feeling!
2.-7./9.-14./16.-21./22./
25.-28./30./31. Dezember

Theater
(02331) 207-32 18
Kiss Me, Kate
8./22. November

Theater
(0261) 129 28 40
The Rocky Horror Show
24. Oktober; 2. November
6. Dezember
Sekretärinnen
5./8./14./16./19./23. Oktober
8./12./16./25./28. November
8./15. Dezember
Petticoat & Minirock
2./10./17. Oktober; 14. November
14./28. Dezember
Just Try
31. Oktober

Musical Dome
(0180) 51 52 53 0
Jekyll & Hyde
Open End

Gloria-Theater
(0221) 26 01
Success! Ein Päckchen nach Timbuktu
3./4. November
1./2./8./9. Dezember

Scala-Theater
(0221) 420 75 93
Ich mööch zo Foss noh Kölle gonn!
2. Oktober - 31. Dezember

Bühnen der Stadt Köln
(0221) 22 12 84 00
Blind Date
4./8./31. Oktober
13./30. November
16./29. Dezember

Theater
(0651) 718 18 18
Shockheaded Peter
6./13./17./30. Dezember

PLZ 6

Staatstheater
(06151) 29 38 38
The Rocky Horror Show
4./9./17./21./31. Oktober
6./14./20./28. November
5./13./31. Dezember
My Fair Lady
1. November

English Theatre
(069) 24 23 16 20
Jesus Christ Superstar
29. November - 7. Februar 2004

Alte Oper
(069) 13 40 400
West Side Story
17. Dezember - 4. Januar 2004

Culture Club
(06181) 520 520
Non(n)sense
1.-12.*/18. Oktober
8./9. Dezember
The Taffetas
17. Oktober; 14.*/21*. November
Musicalgala
18. Dezember

Städtische Bühne
(06221) 58 20 00
Die Comedian Harmonists
3./6. Oktober

Pfalztheater
(0631) 367 52 09
Nostradamus
18./26. Oktober
9./15. November

Nationaltheater
(0621) 168 01 50
Cabaret
7. November

Capitol
(0621) 336 73 33
Bal au Moulin Rouge
6./7./18.-22. November
3.-6./30. Dezember
Mannheimer Dschungelbuch
23. November
7./23./28. Dezember

Staatstheater
(0681) 322 04
Les Misérables
5./9./11./12./15./16./18./
19./23./24. Oktober
5./9./15./16./22./
23./29. November
14./21./26./27./31. Dezember

Staatstheater
(0611) 13 23 25
Fame
2./7./10./18./26. Oktober
3./6./12./21./28. November

PLZ 7

Theater
(07221) 93 27 00
Anatevka
11./12./24. Oktober
14./15. November
13./20. Dezember

Landesbühne
(0711) 35 12 30 44
Die Comedian Harmonists
15./17./21.*/24.* Oktober
2./7./8./16. November
20./21./25./30./31. Dezember

Städtische Bühnen
(0761) 348 74
My Fair Lady
6. Dezember

Theater
(07131) 56 30 01
Wo meine Sonne scheint
4./5./11./14./22./31. Oktober
Shockheaded Peter
18./19./25./26. Oktober

Sandkorntheater
(0721) 84 89 84
Sekretärinnen
5. Oktober
1./9. November
Mütter
14./15./21./22./29. November

Stadttheater
(07231) 39 24 40
Der kleine Horrorladen
24. Oktober
14. November
12. Dezember
Ein Käfig voller Narren
31. Dezember

Apollo Theater
(01805) 114 113
42nd Street
ab 21. November

Palladium Theater
(01805) 114 113
Das Phantom der Oper
Open End

Komödie im Marquardt
(0711) 227 70 22
Heesters
bis 9. November

Altes Schauspielhaus
(0711) 226 55 05
Cabaret
ab 4. Dezember

PLZ 8

AUGSBURG
Theater
(0821) 324 49 33
Kiss Me, Kate
8. November
Shockheaded Peter
14. Dezember

ECHTERFELDEN
Theater
(08721) 81 81
Kuss der Spinnenfrau
31. Dezember

FÜSSEN
Musical Theater Neuschwanstein
(01805) 300 200
Ludwig II.
Open End

MEMMINGEN
Landestheater
(08331) 94 59 16
Rattenfänger
26. November
12./14./16. Dezember
Lilith
31. Dezember

Deutsches Theater
(089) 55 23 44 44
The Rocky Horror Show
bis 12. Oktober
Hair
14. Oktober - 9. November
Palast Revue
11.-30. November

Staatstheater am Gärtnerplatz
(089) 21 85 19 60
Hello, Dolly!
18./19. Oktober
8./9. November

Staatstheater am Gärtnerplatz
im Prinzregententheater
Candide
12. November

Vollmarhaus Theater
(089) 26 01 80 10
Linie 1
ab 21. Oktober

Theater im ICM (Neue Messe)
(01805) 48 18 17
Vom Geist der Weihnacht
15. November 03 - 6. Januar 2004

SCHÖNAU
Theater am Königssee
(01805) 72 59 72
Salzsaga
bis 26. Oktober

PLZ 9

COBURG
Landestheater
(09561) 89 89 89
Sekretärinnen
26./28. Oktober
2./6./9./15./30. November
30. Dezember

EISENACH
Landestheater
(03691) 25 62 19
Mein Freund Bunbury
3. Oktober - 15. November
31. Dezember
My Fair Lady
4. Oktober
20. Dezember
Jesus Christ Superstar
11./12./16. Oktober
12./13./21. November
5./11. Dezember

FÜRTH
Comödie
(0911) 749340
Non(n)sense
1./12. Oktober

WÜRZBURG
Theater
(0931) 390 81 24
Piaf
3./4./7./9./15./22. Oktober

TOURNEE

Arena Theater & Festspiel GmbH
Xanten (02801) 7776
www.arena-theater.de
Anatevka
Joseph...

Ballett, Classic & Entertainment
Hannover (0511) 399 39 60
www.bce-gastspielbuero.de
The Rocky Horror Show
Footloose

BB-Promotion
Mannheim (0621) 10 79 20
www.bb-promotion.com
West Side Story

Gastspiel- und Konzertdirektion
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www.gastspiel-gerhartz.de
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Mamma - Come Together!

Wolfgang Bocksch Concerts
Mannheim (0621) 15 60 50
www.WBC-Musical.de
Grease
Hair

Konzertdirektion Landgraf
Titisee-Neustadt (07651) 207 51
www.Landgraf.de
Anatevka
High Society
Mahalia
Marlene
Irma La Douce
Buddy
Eine Weihnachtsgeschichte
King Of Jazz - Satchmo

Frank Serr Showservice
Rieschweiler (06336) 83 92 81
www.showservice-international.de
Godspell
Flower Power Musical Story

Star Music Entertainment
Steinfurt (02551) 83 39 52
www.star-music-entertainment.com
Musical Stars live

ÖSTERREICH

Theater 82er Haus
(0043-664) 243 64 65
Blutsbrüder
31. Oktober
7./9./14./16./22./23./28. November
Hits Of Hollywood
3. Oktober
Christmas Show
8./11.-14./18.-23. Dezember

Vereinigte Bühnen
(0043-316) 80 00 13 01
Sweeney Todd
15./20./22./26./30. November
3./5./13./18./20./27. Dezember

Stadttheater
(0043-463) 540 64
Fame
13./15./16./19./
22./23./28. November
5./28./31. Dezember

Landestheater
(0043-70) 761 14 00
Crazy For You
21./23./25./27./29./31. Oktober
4./5./17./23./27./28. November
2./5./10./13./19./20./
25./31. Dezember

Stadttheater
(0043-2742) 35 20 26
Kiss Me, Kate
2./11./17./31. Oktober
15./28. November
12. Dezember

Theater an der Wien
(0043-1) 58885
Elisabeth
bis 2. Mai 2004

Raimund Theater
(0043-1) 58885
Wake Up
bis 1. Januar 2004

AKZENT
(0043-1) 501 65 33 06
Lucky Stiff
2./5./7./9./10./15.-18. Oktober
Hair Reunion Concert
11. Oktober
Thomas Borchert
12./18./20./21. November

Metropol
(0043-1) 407 77 407
Sag beim Abschied...
1.-4./7.-11./14.-17./-
21.-26./28.-30. Oktober
4.-8. November

Volksoper
(0043-1) 513 15 13
Anatevka
7./10./17./19./23./27./29. Oktober
5./18./24./27. November
3./9. Dezember
La Cage aux Folles
20./26. Dezember

Kammeroper
(0043-1) 512 01 00 77
Company
11./13./16./18./20./
27./30./31. Dezember

SCHWEIZ

Musical Theater
(01805) 10 14 14
Jesus Christ Superstar
31. Oktober - 23. November
Fame
4. Dezember - 6. Januar 2004

Stadttheater
(0041-31) 329 51 51
Singin' In The Rain
23./28. Oktober
1./2./17. November

Festhalle / Musical-Halle 310
(0041-0900) 55 222 5
West Side Story
5.-14. Dezember

KKL / Luzerner Saal
(0041-41) 226 77 77
Der Drachenstein
12.-14./16.-19./21./
26.-28. Dezember

Theater
(0041-71) 242 06 06
Miss Saigon
11./18.Oktober
1./2./22. November
29./30. Dezember
My Fair Lady
20./27./31. Dezember
Shockheaded Peter
7.-9./12./14.-16./19./21.-23./
26./28.-30. November
3./10./12.-14./31. Dezember

OLMA Halle 1.1.
(0041-71) 246 41 41
Little Shop Of Horrors
7. November - 31. Januar 2004

City-Halle
(0041-52) 269 29 99
Space Dream
3. Oktober - 31. Dezember

BENELUX

Nieuwe Luxor Theater
(0031-900) 300 50 00
3 Musketiers
bis 4. Januar

Fortis Circustheater
(0031-900) 300 50 00
The Sound Of Music
bis 11. Januar 2004

Beatrix Theater
(0031-900) 300 50 00
Mamma Mia!
Open End

Infos über genaue Tourneedaten:

www.kbvv.be
Portret van een Verloren Lente

www.opusone.nl
Telkens weer het dorp
Buster & Benjamin
Tijl Uilenspiegel

www.alleenopdewereld.nl
Alleen Op De Wereld

www.vventertainment.nl
www.mojotheater.nl
Hamelen
Het Hemelbed

www.efteling.nl
Doornroosje

www.stairpro.com
Grease
West Side Story

www.erikbrey.com
Pluk van de Petteflet
Musical - de cursus

FRANKREICH

Palais des Congrès
(0033-1) 40 68 00 05
Les Demoiselles de Rochefort
bis 30. Dezember

Palais des Sports
(0033-825) 038 039
Autant en emporte le vent
bis 2. November

Théatre Mogador
(0033-892) 702 604
Elvis Story
5. November - 2. Januar 2004

Espace Tintin /
Hippodrome d'Auteuil
(0033-892) 705 105
Tintin et le temple du soleil
bis 19. Oktober

NORWEGEN

Det Norske Teatret
(0047) 22 47 38 00
Frendelaus
4./7./11./15./18./22./25./28. Okt.
1./11./14./18./21./25./29. November
2./5./9./13./16./20./30. Dezember

Eßlinger Zeitung

BW, H
Erscheinung: täglich
04.10.03

Platzierung

ema Nr: 990.009
dung in Rubrik: Medien und kritik
trich - No.: 9 3455A 5

untenstehende Meldung ist in allen gekennzeichneten sgaben erschienen (Hauptausgabe in der ersten Zeile).	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
Eßlinger Zeitung	73726 Esslingen	* 36.082	* 36.245	* 37.460	1332
Cannstatter Zeitung	70372 Stuttgart	* 9.188	* 9.325	* 9.734	1073
lusgabe mit der Meldung					
gelesene Ausgaben in der Gruppe		* 45.270	* 45.570	* 47.194	

TEST: Abseits des Mainstream kehren die Blaumänner zurück – „The Complex" der Blue Man Group

noiden sind derzeit wieder ver angesagt. Arnold enegger walzt als Mensch- e durch „Terminator 3" – eits der Leinwand auf einen leursposten in Kalifornien veil sorgen an der Ostküste ten ganz andere Humanoi- Aufsehen, wenn auch für et- ringeres: die **Blue Man** ein Performance-Projekt York, das nun mit „The x" sein zweites Album vor-

Debüt „Audio" noch rein ental, so haben sich die stets enden, blau eingefärbten diesmal prominente raft gesichert: Dave s intoniert beispielsweise ende „Sing Along", Tracy krönt die harten Gitarren- „Up to the Roof" mit hel- me. Die Ur-Blaumänner ldmann, Phil Stanton und ink sowie ihre Mitmusiker derweil das Instrumenta- s vom ordinären Bass und ug über Zither und Cemba- u exotischen Eigenbauten lum und Tuvulum reicht. iem Rüstzeug setzen die Eigenkompositionen und sehr eigenwillig um: Ihre les Jefferson-Airplane-Hits Rabbit" (gesungen von Es- perführt die düstere Quali- Originals ins dritte Jahrtau- nna Summers „I Feel Lo- gt auch bei der Blue Man und Gastsängerin Venus noch feucht-warm und g, erhält aber durch herz- chlagwerkeinsatz und wei- entlich Schub. Es ist wohl gerade diese Mischung aus aggressiven Tribal-Rhythmen, Industrial-Sounds und eingängigen Pop-Linien, die das Geheimnis dieser handgemachten Musik ausmachen. Klänge, bei denen man den Einfluss der musikalischen Ur-Humanoiden Kraftwerk aus Deutschland ebenso erkennen kann wie den Kontext US-amerikanischer Rockgeschichte. „The Complex" ist sicher weit kommerzieller ausgefallen, als der Vorgänger erwarten ließ, bewegt sich aber immer noch weit abseits des Mainstream. So beweist sich die Scheibe als vielschichtiges Stück Musik, in deren Details man sich verlieren, die man aber auch einfach nebenher hören kann. An das Gesamtkunstwerk Blue Man Group freilich kann und will die Konserve nicht heranreichen. Dieses lässt sich wohl nur live erleben, nach Angaben der Plattenfirma beispielsweise ab Mai 2004 in Berlin, wo eine feste Show der Gruppe zu sehen sein soll. Bis dahin werden die Humanoiden sicher auch hierzulande einem breiteren Publikum ein Begriff sein – vielleicht gerade mit Hilfe Schwarzeneggers: Der walzt nämlich in „Terminator 3" auch zur Musik der Blue Man Group über die Leinwand. „The Current", wie die Nummer heißt, kann man aber auch getrost ohne die „Steirische Eiche" genießen – Sänger Gavin Rossdale thematisiert den Kampf von Mensch und Maschine auch ohne visuelle Unterstützung kraftvoll und hörenswert. Michael Kallinger

Blue Man Group: The Complex. Vertrieb: Eastwest/Warner. Bestellnummer: 75678-3631-2

Humanoiden mit handgemachter Musik: The Blue Man Group — Foto: Anthony Bolante

[redacted]
* Quelle: IVW
684270

Deutsche Medienbeobachtungs Agentur GmbH
Gneisenaustraße 66, 10961 Berlin, Telefon (030) 20 39 87-0, Telefax (030) 20 39 87-77
eMail: sales@ausschnitt.de Internet: www.ausschnitt.de

AUSSCHNITT
MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

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Deutsche Welle (Germany)

Date of Publication: 10/07/2003

Account Number: 3755A [redacted]

Headline: **Broadway in the Bundesrepublik**

Source Web Page: http://www.dw-world.de/english/0,3367,1441_A_987056_1_A,00.html

The "Lion King" has been a smash hit in Hamburg since opening two years ago.

When people think of musicals, Germany isn't usually the first country to come to mind. People tend to focus on London's West End or New York's Broadway. But the past decade, Germans have been bit by the musical bug.

On Sunday, Elton John and Tim Rice's modern-day retelling of the classic opera "Aida," had its premiere at the Colosseum in Essen. The opening is part of a Ç68 million investment plan by the Netherlands-based Stage Holding, a company that operates musicals across Germany and plans to invest an additional Ç63 million through mid-1994.

The company, owned by charismatic Dutch businessman Joop van den Ende, holds international licensing agreements to lucrative Disney musicals as well as those of other major Broadway producers and is responsible for a string of the biggest productions opening in Germany this fall. Ende and a handful of other musical promotors want to transform Germany into a powerhouse on the international theater scene.

In addition to the musicals it has licensed, like "Aida," Stage Holding has also staged original musicals including the hit "Elisabeth," about the life of the Austria-Hungarian empress Elisabeth, whose fairy tale princess mythology was debunked by the recent discovery of her diaries, which outlined the severe depression that dogged her until her assassination. It may sound like a downer, but it was a massive hit with German audiences. Next spring, the company will mount "Changes," a musical chronicling Berlin after the fall of the Wall.

To kick off the fall season of musical premieres, DW-WORLD has rounded up a quick guide to the season's newest crowd pleasers as well as those that have been drawing audiences in Germany for longer. A note to visitors: most of the musicals are performed in German, but the tunes are familiar and will have anyone humming along.

Hamburg:

The northern port city of Hamburg is the indisputable capital of the German musical scene. "Mamma Mia," penned by ABBA's Benny Andersson and Bj÷rn Ulvaeus and set to the band's addictive music, plays at the city's Operettenhaus, located in the middle of the Reeperbahn, Hamburg's original den of sin.

Set directly on the Elbe River overlooking Hamburg's massive harbor, the Theater im Hafen is home to Disney's wildly successful "The Lion King," scored by Elton John and Tim Rice and staged and costumed by eccentric New York director Julie Taymor, whose almost folkloric staging of the coming of age story of a lion cub has won universal acclaim.

The Neue Flora Theater is home to the Tony Award-winning "Titanic: The Musical," an epic drama chronicling the doomed maiden voyage of the R.M.S. Titanic. In December, the musical will be replaced by "Dance of the Vampire," by Oscar-winning director Roman Polanksi. The show already enjoyed a successful three-year run in Stuttgart.

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Berlin:

The spectacular Theater des Westens, once West Berlin's most-glamorous theatrical address and now a crowning feather in the reunified city, is home to "Les Miserables," the crowd favorite that opened in Germany at the end of September. The Cameron Mackintosh musical is based on the Victor Hugo novel of the same title and follows the fugitive Jean Valjean on a lifelong mission to evade capture from the cruel Inspector Javert.

T.S. Elliot's "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats" leaps into life in Andrew Lloyd Weber's "Cats." The longest-running musical in history is playing at the Theater am Potsdamer Platz in the capital city's reconceived urban center, bringing feline intrigue to audiences six nights a week. But in early 2004, Staging Company plans to open up a show at the theater based on the Chicago-based "**Blue Man Group**" troupe of comedians.

Bochum:

For 15 years, the cast of Andrew Lloyd Weber's space age version of "The Little Engine that Could," "Starlight Express," have been strapping on their roller skates and pleasing audiences in a classic tale of David vs. Goliath. Young engine Rusty, built of outdated parts, must race against the macho Diesel Greaseball, in the world's first musical to take place entirely on roller skates.

Essen:

Disney's loose musical rendition of the classic opera "Aida," by Elton John and Tim Rice kicked off at Essen's historical landmark Colosseum the first weekend of October. The story sends a modern day couple visiting an Egyptian exhibition back to the times of the Nubian princess Aida. After her capture, the princess falls in love with the soldier Radames, but their relationship is fraught with peril.

Cologne:

"Jeckyll & Hyde," the musical staging of Robert Louis Stevenson's novella "The Strange Case of Dr. Jeckyll and Mr. Hyde," tells the story of Dr. Henry Jeckyll - a doctor and scientist who, grieving from his father's mental illness, seeks to isolate the good and evil in human beings. His failed experiment results in the creation of his alter ego: the evil Edward Hyde. The Frank Wildhorn musical became the toast of Broadway and was nominated for four Tony Awards. Today, crowds at Cologne's Musical Dome along the Rhine River fall for its spell.

Stuttgart:

A musical about a musical, the lead character of "42nd Street" is the young ingenue Peggy Sawyer, a small-town girl who sets off the New York for her big break. She gets it, literally, when the star of "Pretty Lady" breaks her ankle and the lead role is given to Sawyer. The show becomes a hit and Sawyer is catapulted to the ranks of the stars. The curtain will rise on "42nd Street" at Stuttgart's Apollo Theater on Nov. 21.

(c) 2003

WOCHEN SPIEGEL

Bayern, AH
Erscheinung: wöchentlich
08.10.2003

Seite: 9

Platzierung

Thema Nr: 782.006

Anstrich - No.: 2 37559

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
Wochenspiegel Coburg	98527 Suhl	k.A.	* 44.110	* 44.110	7147

30 Jahre Kaufhof Coburg – 30 Jahre Einkaufserlebnis

Coburg. 30 Jahre sind ins Land gezogen, seit sich am 1. November 1973 zum ersten Mal die Türen des Coburger Kaufhofs für die Kunden öffneten.

Die Vorgeschichte war wechselhaft genug. Die Gebäude der Coburger Hofbräu, des Coburger Tageblattes sowie das Passage-Kino mussten nach langwierigen Verhandlungen, die sich seit dem Sommer 1971 hinzogen, übernommen werden. Ursprünglich war der Standort des Warenhauses an anderer Stelle geplant. Dies konnte jedoch nicht realisiert werden, da einige Grundstückeigner nicht verkaufen wollten und die Stadtverwaltung Bedenken wegen des äußeren Erscheinungsbildes hegte.

In Rekordzeit von nur 12 Monaten wurde der Kaufhof Coburg als (damals) 74. Filiale der Kaufhof AG erstellt, ein nach modernsten Gesichtspunkten ausgestattetes Haus mit 5900 Quadratmetern Verkaufsfläche auf drei Geschossen, rund 300 Mitarbeitern und einer Angebotspalette von etwa 40000 Artikeln. Der Neubau kostete 16 Millionen Mark. Die Wasserversorgung erfolgte damals über das Regenrückhalte-Becken.

Die heutige Galeria Kaufhof Coburg hat sich gegenüber dem Vorgänger von damals gewaltig verändert. Getreu dem Motto „nur wer sich stets verändert, bleibt sich selber treu" hat die Coburger Filiale im Lauf der Jahre einen Wandel erfahren, der sie Zug um Zug den modernen Gegebenheiten angepasst hat. Hier einige Beispiele:

1974 wurden die Abteilungsbereiche Möbel und Gardinen, später Teppiche in andere Verkaufsetagen überführt, um die Sortimente der modernen Warengruppen erweitern zu können.

1981 Anbindung/Warenversorgung über die Kapfmühle Würzburg.

1982 Führung des Restaurants/Cafés als selbstständige Gesellschaft RESG, später „Diner".

1983 Einrichtung des Friseursalons „ESSANELLE".

1988 Umschichtung der absatzstarken Expedition und eines Lagers zum Schuhhaus.

1990 Führung des Reisebüros als selbständige Gesellschaft ITS.

1990 Übernahme von Tabakwaren/Zeitschriften durch einen Vertriebspartner.

1992 Einführung des „Warenwirtschaftssystems" (WWS) und Installation moderner elektronischer Kassen. Bildung „Großverbund Franken".

1994 Vermietung der Lebensmittelabteilung an die Firma Spar.

1998 Groß-Umbau der Filiale Coburg nach dem Galeria-Konzept. Neugestaltung aller Verkaufsabteilungen, Fußböden, Decken, Verlegung diverser Abteilungen, Flächenerweiterung unter Einbeziehung der Fläche des ehemaligen Diana-Restaurants auf 7.700 Quadratmetern Verkaufsfläche.

Integration der neu konzipierten Lebensmittelabteilung „Wochenend-City Food".

Einrichtung der Marktgastronomie „Fabiani".

2000 Sanierung/Neugestaltung der Kaufhof-Passade.

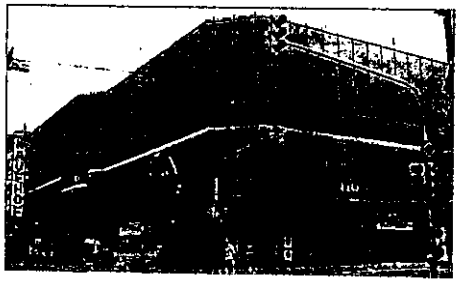
2003 Öffnung und optische Neuausrichtung der Lebensmittelabteilung mit neuem Partner für Backwaren, der Bäckerei Grosch/Weitramsdorf.

2003 Neueröffnung Alpin-Point in der Hindenburgstraße.

Im Lauf der Jahre ergab sich in den Verkaufsräumen eine Vielzahl von Umgestaltungen und Veränderungen. Deutlich wird dies durch die Einrichtung verschiedener Markenshops, u.a. Bianca, Gerry Weber/Gerry Weber Edition, Tailor, Street One, Bench, EDC, Mac H/Mac H Express, Mangoon, City Life, Vision, Anna Montana, Blend of America, Gin Tonic, Tom Tailor, Lerros, Casa Moda, Casablanca, S.Oliver, Pierre, WMN Leonardo, Villeroy & Boch, Picard, Alfoni.

Z. Z. sind in der Filiale Coburg 100 Mitarbeiter beschäftigt, davon 10 Auszubildende.

Noch heute sind im Haus sieben „Mitarbeiter der ersten Stunde" tätig und zwar Frau Wolters-Gründer, Herr Hofmann, Herr Mohr, Frau Mohr, Frau Stricker, Herr Schneider und Frau Wittner. Handel bedeutet Wandel – das ahnte Gebot aber bleibt das Bemühen um den Kunden, damit dieser aus Überzeugung sagen kann: „Galeria Kaufhof - ich freu mich drauf"



Wir feiern mit Ihnen vom 9. 10. - 18. 10. 2003

Donnerstag, 9.10.: Radio 1 Aktion „Thiff die Dreißig" live vor Ort

Freitag, 10.10.: Radio 1 „Thiff die Dreißig"

Zwischenschaltung 13 - 18 Uhr

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Weitere Informationen auf unserer Prospektständer - am Haupteingang Mohrenstraße. Großer Jubiläumsgewinnspiel mit attraktiven Preisen erwartet Sie.

6824990 782006

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* Quelle: IVW
10051575

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AUSSCHNITT MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

B.Z.

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich - No.: 13 3753A

Berlin, H
Erscheinung: täglich
22.10.2003
Seite: 16

Platzierung

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
B.Z.	10888 Berlin	* 220.739	* 224.285	* 278.925	1557

„Blue Man Group": die spektakulärste Show der USA kommt nach Berlin

Der Potsdamer Platz wird blau

Auf Stadtrundfahrt: Berlin inspirierte die Blue Man Group zu ihrer Show
Foto: Holzberg/Promo

Die blauen Männer trommeln auf selbstgebastelten großen Rohren
Foto: ddp

Die Show der Blue Men kennt keine Grenzen: Elemente

7268573 990009

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* Quelle: IVW
694111

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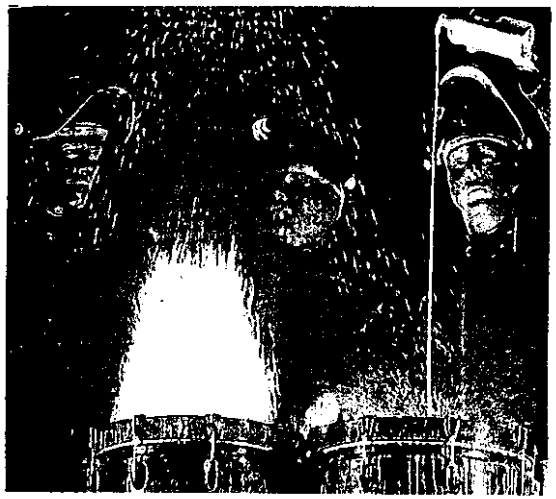
AUSSCHNITT MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

Kopfüber ins Publikum: Einer der drei Blaumänner springt von der Bühne. Ab Mai zu erleben im Theater am Potsdamer Platz. Die drei Performance-Künstler trommeln, werfen Farbe und machen Musik Foto: Eventpress Hermann



Die Show der Blue Men kennt keine Grenzen: Elemente wie Feuer und Farbe werden vermengt Foto: AP

Sie sind blau, kahlköpfig und machen die verrückteste Show Amerikas. New York, Boston, Chicago und Las Vegas liegen ihnen bereits zu Füßen, und ab Mai werden es die Berliner auch tun. Denn das Theater am Potsdamer Platz macht blau – mit der „Blue Man Group“:

Ihre Show sprengt alle Grenzen: Sie machen Comedy und Artistik, sie hauen auf die Pauke wie Stomp und werfen mit Farbe um sich. Auf Handlung und Wort wird verzichtet, stattdessen machen sie Musik mit fantastischen Instrumenten, die PVC, Tubulum und Drumbone heißen und aus riesigen Rohren bestehen, die jeden Klempner neidisch machen würden.

Erfunden haben diese Performance zwei Lebensmittelfabrikanten und ein Software-Entwickler, die gestern in Berlin ihre wilde Show präsentierten. Chris Wink, heute 42, und Phil Stanton, 43, sowie Matt Goldmann, 42, ein Schulfreund von Chris Wink, teilten sich in New York eine Wohnung und wussten nicht, was sie machen sollten. 1988 setzten sie sich Glatzkopfperücken auf, malten sich mit strahlend blauer Fettschminke an und veranstalteten eine „Bestattungsfeier für die 80er Jahre“. **Während sie das Bildnis eines Yuppies und eine Rambo-Puppe begruben, wurde die Blue Man Group geboren. Heute sind Mel Gibson und Robin Williams erklärte Fans der Blaumänner.** Allein in den USA gibt es vier Shows mit insgesamt 30 Blue Men, weltberühmt wurden sie durch die Werbung für Intel.

Blue-Man-Erfinder Chris Wink: „Für Berlin arbeiten wir an Szenen mit einer völlig neuen Technik, zu der uns eine Stadtrundfahrt inspirierte.“ In welchen Städten sie auftreten, das suchen sich die Blaumänner immer ganz genau aus. Matt Goldman: „Nach Berlin kommen wir, weil es irgendwie sexy, geheimnisvoll und mystisch ist. Es ist der Mittelpunkt der Kunst und Kultur in Europa.“ Recht hat er!

(Ab Mai, Mo 20 Uhr, Do + Fr 18/21Uhr, Sa 15/18/21 Uhr, So 18 Uhr, Tickets 49,90 + 59,90 €, ☎ 01805 44 44). *cnr/zö*

30 Jahre Kaufhof Coburg – 30 Jahre Einkaufserlebnis

Coburg. 30 Jahre sind ins Land gezogen, seit sich am 1. November 1973 zum ersten Mal die Türen des Coburger Kaufhofs für die Kunden öffneten.

Die Vorgeschichte war wechselhaft genug. Die Gebäude der Coburger Hofbräu, des Coburger Tageblattes sowie des Passage-Kinos konnten nach langwierigen Verhandlungen, die sich seit dem Sommer 1971 hinzogen, übernommen werden. Ursprünglich war der Standort des Warenhauses an anderer Stelle geplant. Dies konnte jedoch nicht realisiert werden, da einige Grundstückseigner nicht verkaufen wollten und die Stadtverwaltung Bedenken wegen des äußeren Erscheinungsbildes hegte.

In Rekordzeit von nur 12 Monaten wurde der Kaufhof Coburg als (damals) 74. Filiale der Kaufhof AG eröffnet, ein nach modernsten Gesichtspunkten ausgestattetes Haus mit 5500 Quadratmetern Verkaufsfläche auf drei Geschossen, rund 300 Mitarbeitern und einer Angebotspalette von etwa 80000 Artikeln. Der Neubau kostete 16 Millionen Mark. Die Warenversorgung erfolgte damals über das Regionallager Dietzenbach.

Die heutige Galeria Kaufhof Coburg hat sich gegenüber dem Warenhaus von damals gewaltig verändert. Getreu dem Motto „nur wer sich stets verändert, bleibt sich selber treu" hat die Coburger Filiale im Lauf der Jahre einen Wandel erfahren, der sie Zug um Zug den modernen Gegebenheiten angepasst hat. Hier einige Beispiele:

1976 wurden die Abteilungsbereiche Möbel und Gardinen, später Teppiche in andere Vertriebsformen überführt, um die Sortimente der anderen Warengruppen erweitern zu können.

1981 Anbindung/Warenversorgung über die Kopffiliale Würzburg.

1982 Führung des Restaurants/Cafés als selbständige Gesellschaft KGSG, später „Dinea".

1983 Einrichtung des Frisiersalons „ESSANELLE".

1986 Umschichtung der ehemaligen Expedition und eines Lagers zum Schuhbasar.

1990 Führung des Reisebüros als selbständige Gesellschaft ITS.

1990 Übernahme von Tabakwaren/Zeitschriften durch einen Vertriebspartner.

1992 Einführung des „Warenwirtschaftssystems" (WWS) und Installation moderner elektronischer Kassen, Bildung „Großverbund Franken".

1994 Vermietung der Lebensmittelabteilung an die Firma Spar.

1998 Groß-Umbau der Filiale Coburg nach dem Galeria-Konzept. Neugestaltung aller Verkaufsabteilungen, Fußböden, Decken, Verlagerung diverser Abteilungen, Flächenerweiterung unter Einbeziehung der Fläche des ehemaligen Dinea-Restaurants auf 7.700 Quadratmetern Verkaufsfläche

Integration der neu konzeptionierten Lebensmittelabteilung „Warehouse-City Food".

Einrichtung der Markenparfümerie „Fabiani".

2000 Sanierung/Neugestaltung der Kaufhof-Passade.

2003 Öffnung und optische Neuausrichtung der Lebensmittelabteilung mit neuem Partner für Backwaren, der Bäckerei Grosch/Weitramsdorf.

2003 Neueröffnung Alpler-Feinkost in der Hindenburgstraße.

Im Lauf der Jahre ergab sich in den Verkaufsräumen eine Vielzahl von Umgestaltungen und Veränderungen. Deutlich wird dies durch die Einrichtung verschiedener Markenshops, u.a. Bianca, Gerry Weber/Gerry Weber Edition, Taifun, Street One, Esprit, EDC, Miss H/Miss H Express, Mangoon, City Life, Visum, Anna Montana, Blend of America, Gin Tonic, Tom Tailor, Lerros, Casa Moda, Camplone, S.Oliver, Fissler, WMF, Leonardo, Villeroy & Boch, Picard, Adidas.

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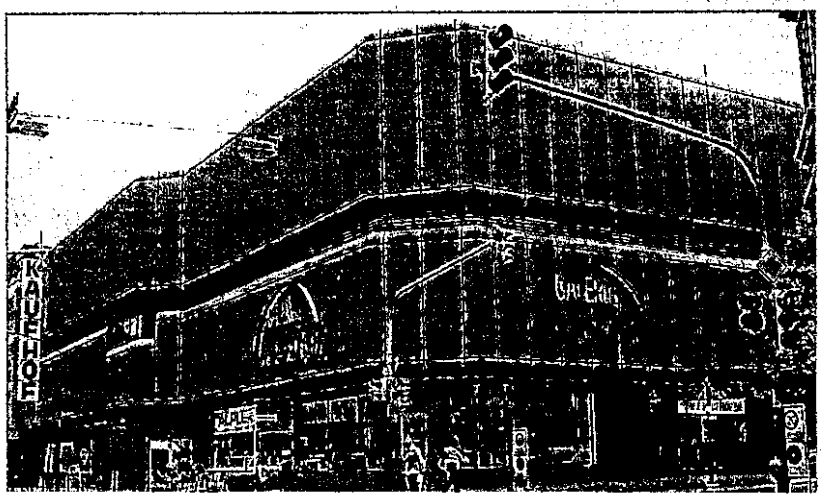

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Weitere Informationen auf unserer Programmtafel am Haupteingang Mohrenstraße.

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„Blue Man Group": die spektakulärste Show der USA kommt nach Berlin

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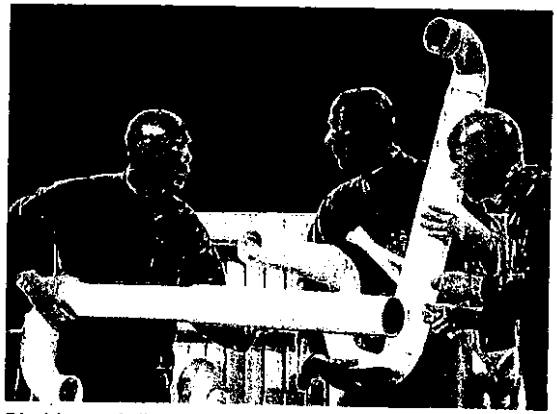
Auf Stadtrundfahrt: Berlin inspirierte die Blue Man Group zu ihrer Show
Foto: Holding/Promo



Die blauen Männer trommeln auf [illegible]

POTSDAMER
Neueste Nachrichten

Brandenburg, H
Erscheinung: täglich
22.10.2003

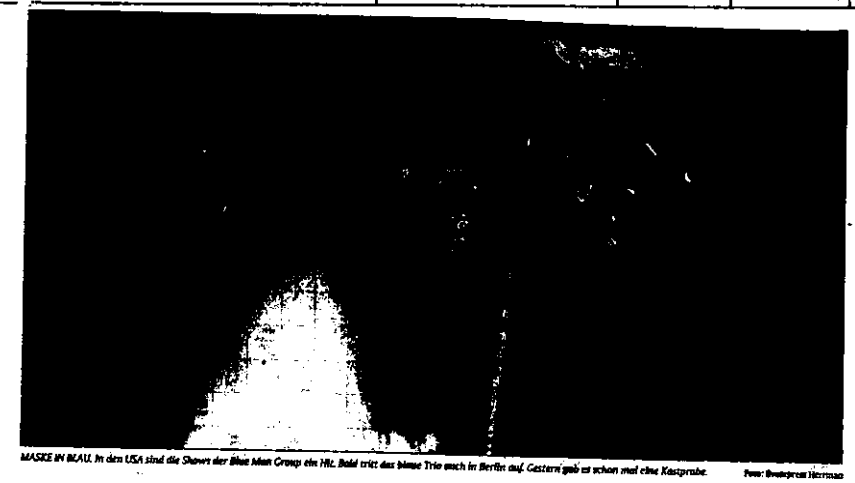
Platzierung

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich - No.: 19 3755A

Seite: 30

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
Potsdamer Neueste Nachrichten	14467 Potsdam	* 10.827	* 11.359	* 13.930	5005



MASKE IN BLAU. In den USA sind die Shows der Blue Man Group ein Hit. Bald tritt das blaue Trio auch in Berlin auf. Gestern gab es schon mal eine Kostprobe. Foto: Bruno Herrmann

Mach mal blau

Europapremiere am Potsdamer Platz: Die Blue Man Group aus den USA zeigte erstmals Ausschnitte aus der Show

Sie haben eine natürliche Gesichtsfarbe wie Fantomas und lachen so oft wie Buster Keaton: die Drei von der Blue Man Group. Mit ihrer Event-Show gastieren sie vom Mai 2004 an im Theater am Potsdamer Platz. Am gestrigen Dienstag standen die Blaumänner zum ersten Mal für einen Kurzauftritt auf der Bühne, um für die Nachfolgeproduktion von „Cats" zu werben. Denn die Lloyd-Webber-Miezen haben ausgeschnurrt und werden auf Tournee geschickt. Fast 30 Jahre nach der Premiere in Hamburg verlassen sie Deutschland.

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Das ist zwar eine Premiere in Europa, aber trotzdem auch ein Wagnis. 1800 Plätze im Theater am Potsdamer Platz gilt es zu füllen – 1200 sind es am bisher größten Blue-Man-Standort in Las Vegas. Zudem stoppen in Berlin regelmäßig Trommel-, Tanz- und Trickshows: Stomp, Gumboots, Tap Dogs, Lord of the Dance, Mayumana und nicht zuletzt das Spektakel De la Guarda, das im vorigen Jahr von der Stage Holding in die Stadt geholt worden war. „Aber wir sind anders", hielt Blue-Ur-Man Chris Wink am Rande der gestrigen Präsentation dagegen. Man sei moderner und beziehe aktuelle Strömungen aus der Kunst-, Kultur- und Globalisierung mit ein. Die Show der Blue Man Group wandelt sich stetig, so wie auch die Produktion an Berliner Verhältnisse angepasst worden sei. So taucht das Brandenburger Tor im Bühnenbild auf. Zudem wird auf deutsches Blau gesetzt (die Erfinder selbst stehen nur noch selten auf der Bühne): Aus 400 Bewerbern wurden fünf Akteure ausgewählt, die von zwei erfahrenen Amerikanern unterstützt werden – damit es bei den Blue Man keiner Blackout gibt.

BJÖRN SEELIG

Blue Man Group, ab Mai 2004 im Theater am Potsdamer Platz. Tickets zu Preisen von 49 und 59 Euro können von sofort an unter Telefon (01805) 4444 oder www.stageholding.de bestellt werden.

7269290 990009

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* Quelle: IVW
694544

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AUSSCHNITT
MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

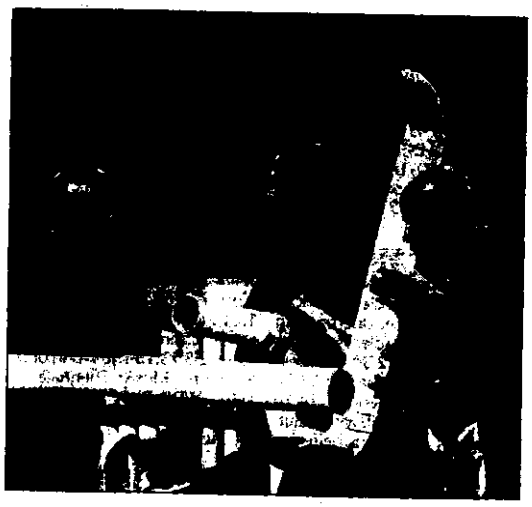
NEUE OZ OSNABRÜCKER ZEITUNG

NS, H
Erscheinung: täglich
22.10.03

Platzierung

Thema Nr: 990.009
Meldung in Rubrik: Feuilleton
Anstrich - No.: 13 31/55A 8

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in allen gekennzeichneten Ausgaben erschienen (Hauptausgabe in der ersten Zeile).		PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
✓	Neue Osnabrücker Zeitung	49074 Osnabrück	* 74.725	* 77.367	* 82.366	1522
✓	Bersenbrücker Kreisblatt	49610 Quakenbrück	* 14.676	* 14.933	* 15.644	1705
✓	Bramscher Nachrichten	49565 Bramsche	* 7.082	* 7.216	* 7.664	9433
✓	Ems-Zeitung	26871 Papenburg	* 17.876	* 18.264	* 19.108	1704
✓	Lingener Tagespost	49808 Lingen	* 22.714	* 23.237	* 24.098	1348
✓	Meller Kreisblatt	49324 Melle	* 9.905	* 10.127	* 10.616	1433
✓	Meppener Tagespost	49716 Meppen	* 21.715	* 22.170	* 23.033	1316
✓	Wittlager Kreisblatt	49074 Osnabrück	* 6.553	* 6.695	* 7.083	11015
8 Ausgaben mit der Meldung						
8 gelesene Ausgaben in der Gruppe			*** 302.432**	*** 309.367**	*** 326.498**	



Feuerwerk aus Farbe in Berlin

In den USA haben sie längst Millionen begeistert. Nun kommt die „Blue Man Group" auch nach Deutschland. In Berlin wird die Truppe ab 2004 im Theater am Potsdamer Platz ihre farbenreiche Multi-Media-Performance vorführen. Die „Blue Man" lösen in dem Theater das Musical „Cats" ab. Foto: AP

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* Quelle: IVW

696534

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AUSSCHNITT MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

Oranienburger
Generalanzeiger

BR, H
Erscheinung: täglich
22.10.03

Platzierung

Thema Nr: **990.009**

Meldung in Rubrik: Kultur

Anstrich - No.: 14 3155A 11

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in allen gekennzeichneten Ausgaben erschienen (Hauptausgabe in der ersten Zeile).		PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
✓	Oranienburger Generalanzeiger	16515 Oranienburg	* 15.887	* 17.431	* 18.547	5040
✓	Gransee-Zeitung	16775 Gransee	* 5.779	* 6.196	* 6.754	1775
✓	Ruppiner Anzeiger	16816 Neuruppin	* 7.439	* 8.767	* 9.378	1772
3 Ausgaben mit der Meldung						
3 gelesene Ausgaben in der Gruppe			*** 29.105**	*** 32.394**	*** 34.679**	

Blaue Männer im Epizentrum Europas

Die Blue Man Group kommt im Mai 2004 nach Berlin und löst das Musical „Cats" ab / Kartenverkauf hat bereits begonne

RLIN (dpa) • Sie sind blau. d sie sind zu dritt. Sie sind : Blue Man Group (BMG). e von den Amerikanern ut Goldmann, Phil Stanton d Chris Wink entwickelte ow um ein Trio von blaupfigen, schweigenden Mänr zählt zu den erfolgreichsı Unterhaltungsspektakeln den USA. 1987 als Performance auf den Straßen New rks gestartet, hat die BMG ch Big Apple und Chicago ch Las Vegas erobert.

Nun wagen sich die blauen inner nach Europa. Ab Mai)4 soll die Show die 1 800 itze des Theaters am Potsıer Platz in Berlin füllen. sei eine Show, die niemand schreiben könne, sagt ihr terfinder Chris Wink. In der t: Das BMG-Spektakel unscheidet sich grundlegend Trotzdem sind die Blue Men beides – hochemotional und irgendwie magisch zugleich. Dafür sorgt ein Mix aus Hightech und klassischen Slapstick-Elementen. Die mit ihren blau geschminkten Latexmasken an die Hauptfigur alter französischer „Fantomas"-Filme erinnernden Blue Men ziehen ihr Publikum durch ein farbenfrohes artistisches Spektakel von Hör- und Seheindrücken in ihren Bann. „Die Menschen stehen mit einem Fuß im Industriezeitalter und mit dem anderen in der digitalen Ära", sagt Matt Goldman. Die Show solle diesen Zustand widerspiegeln. Dabei bedienen sich die blauen Jungs der gleichen Methode wie schon Buster Keaton, Charlie Chaplin und Mr. Bean vor ihnen. Ihre Neugier entWeise die Absurditäten des modernen Lebens. Nur dass der stets als Trias auftretende „Stamm von drei Männern, die fast einer sind" (Wink) rüberkommt wie die Cyberpunkausgabe von Buster Keaton und Mr. Bean. Die von hämmernden Beats unterlegte Mischung aus archaischen Mustern und modernen technischen Elementen scheint in Deutschland besonders gut anzukommen. Jedenfalls legten die positiven Reaktionen deutscher Besucher der New Yorker Ausgabe der BMG eine spezielle Affinität zu den Figuren der Show nahe, sagt Goldman.

*

Karten gibt es ab 56,89 Euro in den Geschäftsstellen des Oranienburger Generalanzeigers, des Ruppiner Anzeigers und

[redacted]

* Quelle: IVW

696940

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AUSSCHNITT
MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

DER TAGESSPIEGEL

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich - No.: 10 37554

Berlin, S
Erscheinung: täglich
22.10.2003
Seite: 11

Platzierung

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
Der Tagesspiegel	10785 Berlin	* 139.704	* 147.463	* 179.031	1330

MASKE IN BLAU. In den USA sind die Show der Blue Man Group ein Hit. Bald tritt das blaue Trio auch in Berlin auf. Gestern gab es schon mal eine Kostprobe. ... Foto: Event

Mach mal blau

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Sie haben eine natürliche Gesichtsfarbe wie Fantomas und lachen sofort wie Buster Keaton: die Drei von der Blue Man Group. Mit ihrer Event-Show gastieren sie vom Mai 2004 an im Theater am Potsdamer Platz. Am gestrigen Dienstag standen die Blaumänner zum ersten Mal für einen Kurzauftritt auf der Bühne, um für die Nachfolgeproduktion von „Cats" zu werben. Denn die Lloyd-Webber-Miezen haben ausgeschnurrt und werden auf Tournee geschickt. Fast 30 Jahre nach der Premiere in Hamburg verlassen sie Deutschland.

Nur halb so alt ist die Blue Man Group: 1987 wurde sie von Matt Goldmann (42), Phil Stanton (43) und Chris Wink gegründet. Aus Happenings des Trios entwickelte sich rasch eine Show, die in den USA seit Mitte der 90er Jahre Aufsehen erregt. Und dabei gibt es nicht einmal eine durchgehende Handlung: Die Blauen lassen PVC-Röhren brummen, bewerfen sich mit Marshmallows oder bespritzen eine Leinwand mit Neon-Farbe, wobei ein kleines Kunstwerk entsteht. Alles wird untermalt von rhythmischer Musik, auch Trommeln gehört zum Handwerk der Blue Man Group. Und das verstehen sie offenbar so gut, dass nicht nur die Hollywoodgrößen Robin Williams und Mel Gibson zu ihren Fans zählen, sondern inzwischen auch zehntausende Amerikaner. Dieser Erfolg machte aus einem Drei-Mann-Betrieb innerhalb kurzer Zeit ein 500-Personen-Unternehmen mit 30 Blue Men, die in New York, Boston, Chicago, Las Vegas das Publikum zusammentrommeln – und nun auch in Berlin.

Das ist zwar eine Premiere in Europa, aber trotzdem auch ein Wagnis. 1800 Plätze im Theater am Potsdamer Platz gilt es zu füllen – 1200 sind es am bisher größten Blue-Man-Standort in Las Vegas. Zudem stoppen in Berlin regelmäßig Trommel-, Tanz- und Trickshows: Stomp, Gumboots, Tap Dogs, Lord of the Dance, Mayumana und nicht zuletzt das Spektakel De la Guarda, das im vorigen Jahr von der Stage Holding in die Stadt geholt worden war. „Aber wir sind anders", hielt Blue-Ur-Man Chris Wink am Rande der gestrigen Präsentation dagegen. Man sei moderner und beziehe aktuelle Strömungen aus der Kunst-, Kultur- und Clubszene mit ein. Die Show der Blue Man ... sich stetig, so wie auch die Prod... liner Verhältnisse angepasst ... taucht das Brandenburger Tor... bild auf. Zudem wird auf deut... setzt (die Erfinder selbst stehe... ten auf der Bühne): Aus 400 Be... den fünf Akteure ausgewählt ... erfahrenen Amerikanern und ... den – damit es bei den Blu... Blackout gibt. B...

Blue Man Group, ab Mai 2004 ... Potsdamer Platz, Tickets z... 49 und 59 Euro können von ... Telefon (01805) 4444 oder ... ding.de bestellt werden.

MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

Bild

Berlin, M
Erscheinung: täglich
22.10.2003

Platzierung

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich - No.: 11 3755A

Seite: 3

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
Bild Berlin-Brandenburg	10888 Berlin	* 139.035	* 139.702	* 171.471	2157

Blue Man Group. Vorverkauf für Show startet

Die neue Show am Potsdamer Platz – ab sofort können Sie Karten für die „Blue Man Group" (Start Mai 20049 kaufen). Sie kosten 49,90 bis 59,90 Euro, reservieren können Sie unter Telefon 01805/44 44.

In den USA läuft die avantgardistische Show seit mehr als zehn Jahren, inzwischen in vier Städten: Drei stumme Männer, blau bemalt, verblüffen die Zuschauer mit einem wilden Mix aus Kunst-Performance und Comedy. Berlin bekommt eine Kopie der Show, die in Las Vegas läuft – das ist die größte und aufwendigste Version.

Noch läuft für Deutschland aber das Casting. Mitbegründer Chris Wink (42): „Am Anfang waren wir noch zu dritt. Heute gibt es weltweit 30 Darsteller." Darunter ist auch eine Frau. Wer sich noch als „blauer Mann" bewerben will: Infos im Internet unter www.blueman.com

7268591 990009

[redacted]

* Quelle: IVW

694116

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AUSSCHNITT MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

Siegener Zeitung

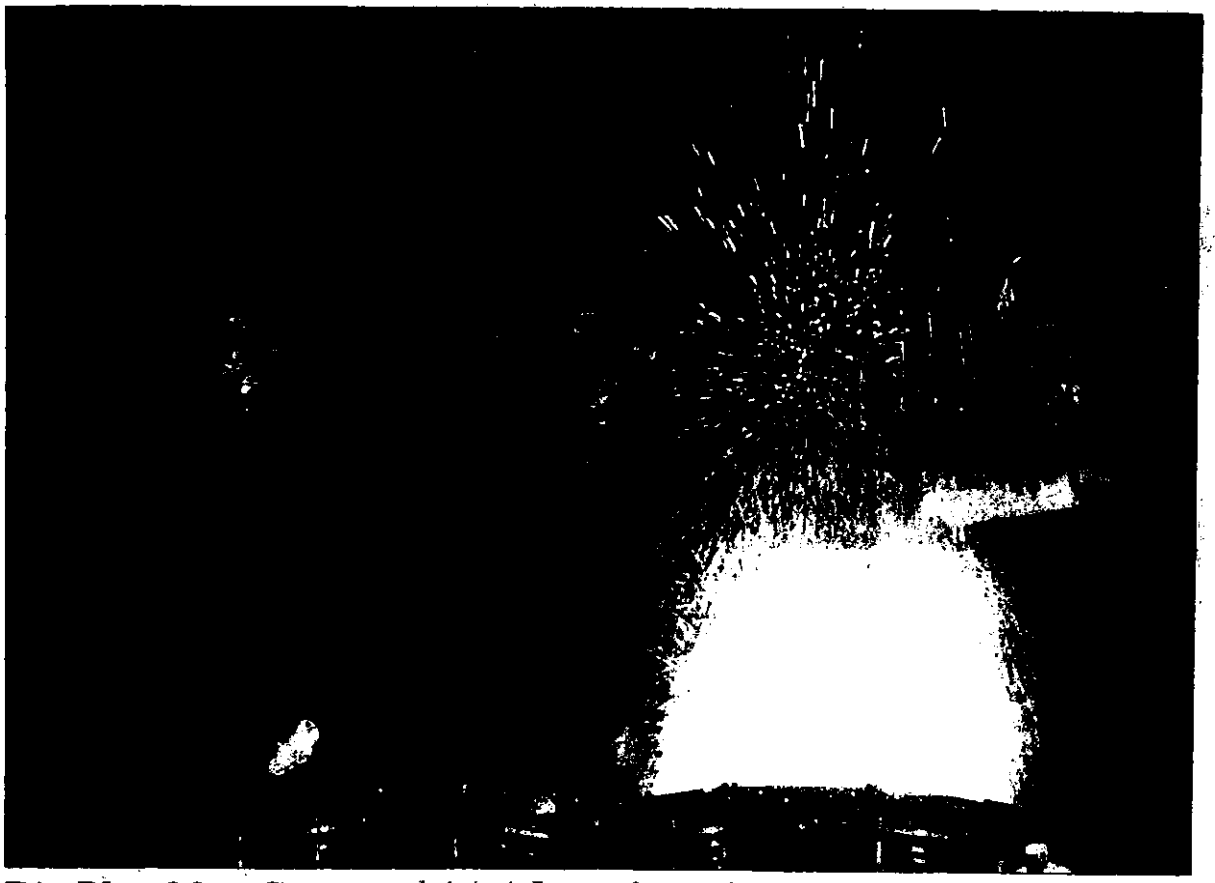
Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich - No.: 13 3755A

Nordrhein-Westfalen, H
Erscheinung: täglich
22.10.2003
Seite: 24

Platzierung

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
Siegener Zeitung	57072 Siegen	* 59.358	* 60.701	* 66.128	1132



Die Blue Man Group produzierte ein Feuerwerk aus Farbe im Theater am Potsdamer Platz in Berlin. Die vor 15 Jahren in den USA gegründete Truppe ist bekannt für ihre Multi-Media-Performances, bei denen drei kahlköpfige, blau gekleidete Personen auftreten und von einer Band begleitet werden. Hauptbestandteil der Show ist die unvergleichliche Musik mit selbstkreierten Instrumenten. Die Blue Man Group löst im kommenden Mai das Musical „Cats" ab und zeigte jetzt vorab schon einmal, worauf man gespannt sein darf.

[redacted]
1132022100304711

* Quelle: IVW
696643

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AUSSCHNITT MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

Neues Deutschland

Thema Nr: **990.009**

Anstrich - No.: 15 3755A

D-Überregional, H
Erscheinung: täglich
23.10.2003

Platzierung

Seite: 19

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
Neues Deutschland	10245 Berlin	* 53.303	* 54.020	* 61.285	5007

Blaue Männer

(ddp). Die Blue Man Group (BMG) wird ab Mai 2004 im Theater am Potsdamer Platz auftreten. Die von den Amerikanern Matt Goldmann, Phil Stanton und Chris Wink entwickelte Show um ein Trio von blauköpfigen, schweigenden Männern zählt zu den erfolgreichsten Unterhaltungsspektakeln in den USA.

1987 als Performance auf den Straßen New Yorks gestartet, hat die Blue Man Group es bis Las Vegas geschafft. Nun wagen sich die blauen Männer nach Europa. Es sei eine Show, die niemand beschreiben könne, sagt ihr Miterfinder Chris Wink. Die mit ihren blau geschminkten Latexmasken an französische »Fantomas«-Filme erinnernden Blue Men ziehen ihr Publikum durch ein farbenfrohes artistisches Spektakel von Hör- und Seheindrücken in ihren Bann.

»Die Menschen stehen mit einem Fuß im Industriezeitalter und mit dem anderen in der digitalen Ära«, sagt Matt Goldman. Die Show solle diesen Zustand widerspiegeln. Dabei bedienen sich die blauen Jungs der gleichen Methoden wie schon Buster Keaton, Charlie Chaplin und Mr. Bean. Sie entlarven Absurditäten des modernen Lebens.

Es gibt schon Karten unter Telefon 10805 44 44, weitere Informationen im Internet unter www.bluemangroup.de

7271043 990009

[redacted]

* Quelle: IVW
695300

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AUSSCHNITT
MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

Thema Nr: **990.009**

Meldung in Rubrik: Kultur

Anstrich - No.: 8 3755A 5

SA, S
Erscheinung: täglich
23.10.03

Platzierung

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in allen gekennzeichneten Ausgaben erschienen (Hauptausgabe in der ersten Zeile).		PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
✓	Magdeburger Volksstimme Magdeburgische Zeitung	39104 Magdeburg	* 58.376	* 59.166	* 62.878	5018
	Burger Volksstimme Burger Rundschau	39288 Burg	* 11.924	* 12.068	* 12.611	2412
	Börde Volksstimme	39387 Oschersleben	* 15.813	* 15.941	* 16.510	1465
	Gardelegener Volksstimme	39638 Gardelegen	* 12.046	* 12.101	* 12.522	1643
	Genthiner Volksstimme	39307 Genthin	* 7.576	* 7.620	* 7.913	1336
	Halberstädter Volksstimme Halberstädter Tagblatt	38820 Halberstadt	* 17.834	* 17.907	* 18.616	2407
	Haldensleber Volksstimme	39340 Haldensleben	* 12.628	* 12.659	* 13.067	1452
	Harzer Volksstimme Brocken-Kurier Wernigerode	38855 Wernigerode	* 23.258	* 23.376	* 24.216	2411
	Osterburger Volksstimme	39606 Osterburg	* 11.410	* 11.438	* 11.934	1562
	Salzwedeler Volksstimme	29410 Salzwedel	* 8.710	* 8.816	* 9.257	1466
	Schönebecker Volksstimme Elbe-Saale-Rundblick	39218 Schönebeck	* 15.595	* 15.717	* 16.499	2410
	Staßfurter Volksstimme Salzland-Kurier	39418 Staßfurt	* 12.991	* 13.097	* 13.641	2408
	Stendaler Volksstimme Tangermünder Nachrichten	39576 Stendal	* 20.385	* 20.453	* 21.004	2409
	Wolmirstedter Volksstimme	39326 Wolmirstedt	* 8.712	* 8.765	* 9.124	1461
	Zerbster Volksstimme	39261 Zerbst	* 8.310	* 8.342	* 8.684	1520
1 Ausgabe mit der Meldung						
15 gelesene Ausgaben in der Gruppe			*** 245.571**	*** 247.469**	*** 258.476**	

Blaue Männer in Berlin

Die Blue Man Group aus den USA spielt bei einem Pressetermin auf der Bühne des Musical-Theaters am Potsdamer Platz in Berlin Szenen aus ihrer Show. 1987 als Performance auf den Straßen New Yorks gestartet, hat die Blue Man Group auch Chicago und Las Vegas erobert. Nun wagen sich die blauen Männer nach Europa. Die Produktion mit ihrer Mischung aus Musik, Pantomime und Komik wird ab dem Frühjahr 2004 in Berlin und damit erstmalig in Europa zu sehen sein. Foto: ddp

[redacted]

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AUSSCHNITT MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

Mindener Tageblatt

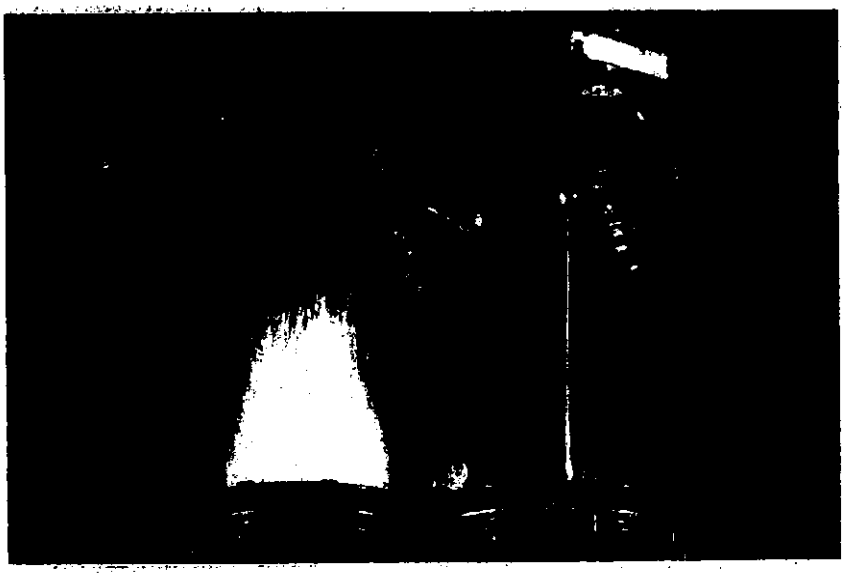
Nordrhein-Westfalen, H
Erscheinung: täglich
23.10.2003
Seite: 22

Platzierung

Thema Nr: **990.009**

Anstrich - No.: 7 3155A

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
Mindener Tageblatt	32423 Minden	* 36.912	* 37.809	* 40.441	1519



7286760 990009

Blaue Stunde mit der Blue Man Group an der Spree

Berlin (dpa). Eine Blaue Stunde am Potsdamer Platz: Die Blue Man Group spielt auf der Bühne des Musical-Theaters am Potsdamer Platz in Berlin Szenen aus ihrer Show. Die Produktion mit einer Mischung aus Musik, Pantomime und Komik wird ab dem Frühjahr 2004 in der Hauptstadt und damit erstmalig in Europa zu sehen sein. Foto: ddp

[redacted]
1519023100304711

* Quelle: IVW
697891

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AUSSCHNITT MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

HAMBURGER MORGENPOST

Hamburg, H
Erscheinung: täglich
23.10.2003

Platzierung

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich - No.: 18 3755A

Seite: 22

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.		PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
	Hamburger Morgenpost	22763 Hamburg	* 110.712	* 111.502	* 152.180	6077

KULTUR

foto: ddp

MOMENTAUFNAHME

WAS FÜR AUGE und für die Ohren bieten die drei der „Blue Man Group" in ihrer neuen Show. Ab dem Frühjahr 2004 ist ihre einzigartige Performance für ein Jahr auf der Bühne des Theaters am Potsdamer Platz in Berlin zu sehen.

7286540 990009

[redacted]
6077023100304711

* Quelle: IVW
695312

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AUSSCHNITT
MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

Recklinghäuser Zeitung

NW, H
Erscheinung: täglich
24.10.03

Platzierung

Thema Nr: 990.009
Meldung in Rubrik: Kultur
Anstrich - No.: 1 3755A 1

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in allen gekennzeichneten Ausgaben erschienen (Hauptausgabe in der ersten Zeile).		PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
✓	Recklinghäuser Zeitung	45772 Marl	* 68.788	* 71.614	* 76.387	1310
✓	BZ Buersche Zeitung	45894 Gelsenkirchen-Buer	* 8.801	* 9.394	* 10.869	1507
✓	Hertener Allgemeine	45699 Herten	* 9.795	* 10.270	* 11.022	5926
✓	Marler Zeitung	45772 Marl	* 16.098	* 16.612	* 17.608	1045
4 Ausgaben mit der Meldung						
4 gelesene Ausgaben in der Gruppe			* 77.589	* 81.008	* 87.256	

)as Spektakel der blauen Männ

ROPA-PREMIERE: Die Blue Man Group kommt / Mix aus Musik, Comedy, Pantomime, Wisse

s die Blue Man Group
können noch nicht
l ihre kreativen Köpfe
lären. Wir überlegen
st noch, wie die Ant-
rt auf diese Frage lau-
sagt Chris Wink, der
Projekt zusammen
seinen Freunden
tt Goldman und Phil
nton 1987 aus der
ife hob. Die Show, die
keine Schublade passt,
ab Mai erstmals au-
halb der USA zu se-
, und zwar im Berli-
Theater am Potsda-
r Platz.

VON ALEXANDRA REHN

Publikum erwartet ein au-
visuelles Spektakel – eine
schung aus Musik, Comedy
d Wissenschaft, wie der
jährige Goldman erklärt,
e Explosion von Farben
d Klängen, Witzig, frech,
ginell und einfach unter-
tsam. Es sei weder Theater
ch Musical noch Konzert,
gleichbar mit nichts ande-
n im Showgeschäft. Die Ju-
des Drama Desk Awards in
USA musste sich, um der
e Man Group einen Preis

zu verleihen, eine neue Kate-
gorie ausdenken: „Unique
Theatrical Production".
Einzigartig sind sie zweifel-
los. Auf der Bühne stehen drei
blau geschminkte Männer,
die begleitet von sieben Musi-
kern das Publikum auf eine
Reise in eine surreale Welt mit
immer wiederkehrenden Überra-
schungen mitnehmen. Es sei
ein Bild der Art, die uns
durchs Leben führen – sagt
Produzent Marc Klokow, der
die Blue Man Group nach
Deutschland holte. Sprache
spielt dabei keine Rolle, die
Akteure brauchen keine Wor-
te.

Keine Dialoge und auch keine Handlung

Es gibt also weder Dialoge
noch eine Handlung, dafür
aber mitreißende Musik, die
selbst entwickelten Percussi-
on-Instrumenten, PVC-Röh-
ren, die mit Schaumgummi-
Paddeln und Stöcken geschla-
gen werden. Etwa das so ge-
nannte Drumhone, ein Röhr-
in-Röhr-Instrument, dessen
Tonhöhe sich durch Verlän-
gern oder Verkürzen ändert.
Ein Blue Man, von denen es

Die Blue Man Group mit Szenen aus ihrer Show. Die Produktion mit ihrer aus Musik, Pantomime und Komik wird ab 2004 in Berlin zu sehen sein.

in den vier US-Shows in New York, Boston, Chicago und Las Vegas etwa 30 gibt – muss gleichzeitig Schlagzeuger, Schauspieler und Aktionskünstler sein. Entsprechend schwierig gestaltete sich das Casting für die Berliner Show. Insgesamt hatten sich mehr als 400 Darsteller aus ganz Europa beworben, nur eine Hand voll davon wurde ausgewählt.

Und warum ausgerechnet Berlin? Das sei in erster Linie eine emotionale Entscheidung gewesen, sagen die drei Blue Man-Gründer, die einst als Straßenkünstler auftraten. „Wir wurden auch gebeten, nach London, Tokio oder Rio

ren Shows, das zu uns sagte: 'Ihr müsst nach Deutschland kommen'", erzählt Goldman.

Oft hätten die Leute sie gefragt, ob sie aus Deutschland kämen, sagt Stanton. „Ich weiß gar nicht, warum sie das dachten, aber es hat uns den Eindruck vermittelt, nach Deutschland kommen zu müssen."

Die Akteure haben sich inspirieren lassen

Abgesehen davon, dass das Theater am Potsdamer Platz sehr gut für ihre Show geeignet sei, gelte Berlin als der kulturelle Mittelpunkt in Europa. „Es ist eher so, dass Berlin die

Berlin ausgew
Goldman.
Einen bloß
Show aus d
Deutschland w
ben. Die blau
ben sich von
ren lassen, wie
und dies wied
Produktion be
besondere da
das gemeinsa
signer Marc B
ckelt wird, der
Floyd gearbeit
ben ein spekta
ma geschaffe
ton. „Die Sze
Brandenburge
net." Damit s
cher: Die Berl

[redacted]

* Quelle: IVW

698258

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AUSSCHNITT
MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

DEWEZET

Thema Nr: 990.009
Meldung in Rubrik: Kultur
Anstrich - No.: 5 2
37558

NS, H
Erscheinung: täglich
24.10.03
Seite: 10
Platzierung

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in allen gekennzeichneten Ausgaben erschienen (Hauptausgabe in der ersten Zeile).		PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
✓	DEWEZET Deister-und Weserzeitung	31785 Hameln	* 27.478	* 28.254	* 29.524	1410
✓	Neue Deister-Zeitung	31832 Springe	* 6.800	* 7.028	* 7.432	1157
2 Ausgaben mit der Meldung						
2 gelesene Ausgaben in der Gruppe			* 65.483	* 68.733	* 72.625	

Überraschend: Spektakel blauer Männer

Europa-Premiere für den Mai geplant: Die „Blue Man Group" kommt nach Berlin

Von Alexandra Rehn

Berlin. Was die Blue Man Group ist, können noch nicht mal ihre kreativen Köpfe erklären. „Wir überlegen selbst noch, wie die Antwort auf diese Frage lautet", sagt Chris Wink, der das Projekt zusammen mit seinen Freunden Matt Goldman und Phil Stanton 1987 aus der Taufe hob. Die Show, die in keine Schublade passt, ist ab Mai erstmals außerhalb der USA zu sehen, und zwar im Berliner Theater am Potsdamer Platz.

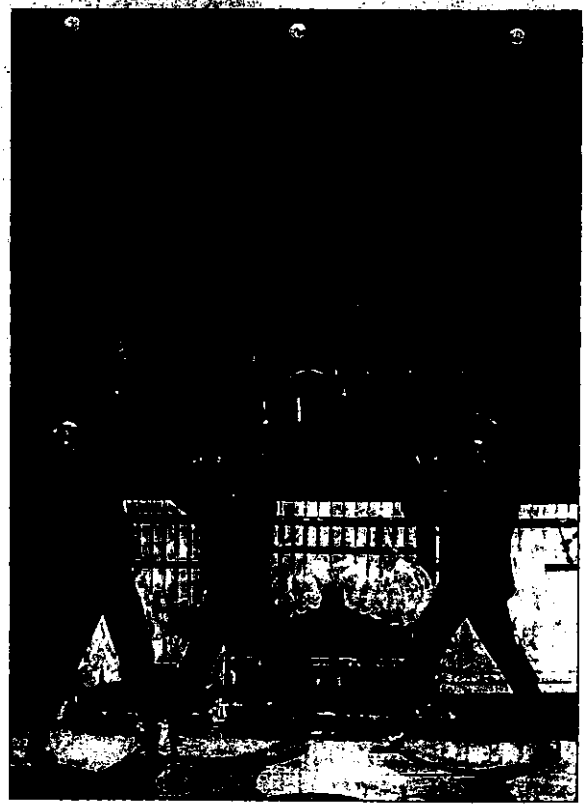
Das Publikum erwartet ein audiovisuelles Spektakel – eine Mischung aus Musik, Comedy und Wissenschaft, wie der 42-jährige Goldman erklärt, eine Explosion von Farben und Klängen. Witzig, frech, originell und einfach unterhaltsam. Es sei weder Theater noch Musical noch Konzert, vergleichbar mit nichts anderem im Showgeschäft. Die Jury des Drama Desk Awards in den USA musste sich, um der Blue Man Group einen Preis zu verleihen, eine neue Kategorie ausdenken: „Unique Theatrical Production".

Reise in eine surreale Welt

Einzigartig sind sie zweifellos. Auf der Bühne stehen drei blau geschminkte Männer, die, begleitet von sieben Musikern, das Publikum auf eine Reise in eine surreale Welt mit immer wieder neuen Überraschungen mitnehmen. Es seien „drei Entdecker, die uns durchs Leben führen", sagt Produzent Maik Klokow, der die Blue Man Group nach Deutschland holte. Sprache spielt dabei keine Rolle, die Akteure brauchen keine Worte.

Es gibt also weder Dialoge noch eine Handlung, dafür aber mitreißende Musik auf selbst entwickelten Percussion-Instrumenten: PVC-Röhren, die mit Schaumgummi-Paddeln und Stöcken geschlagen werden, etwa das so genannte Drumbone, ein Rohr-in-Rohr-Instrument, dessen Tonhöhe sich durch Verlängern oder Verkürzen ändert.

Ein Blue Man – von denen es in den vier US-Shows in New York, Boston, Chicago und Las Vegas etwa 30 gibt – muss Schlagzeuger, Schauspieler und Aktionskünstler sein. Entsprechend schwierig gestaltete sich das Casting für die Show. Insgesamt hatten sich mehr als 400 Darsteller aus ganz Europa beworben, nur eine Hand voll davon wurde ausgewählt.



Präsentierte sich in Berlin: Die „Blue Man Group". Foto: ddp

Emotionale Entscheidung

Und warum ausgerechnet Berlin? Das sei in erster Linie eine emotionale Entscheidung gewesen, sagen die drei Blue-Man-Gründer, die einst als Straßenkünstler auftraten. „Wir wurden auch gebeten, nach London, Tokio oder Rio zu kommen, aber es war das deutsche Publikum in unseren Shows, das zu uns sagte: 'Ihr müsst nach Deutschland kommen'", erzählt Goldman.

Oft hätten die Leute sie gefragt, ob sie aus Deutschland kämen, sagt Stanton. „Ich weiß gar nicht, warum sie das dachten, aber es hat uns den Eindruck vermittelt, nach Deutschland kommen zu müssen." Abgesehen davon, dass das Theater am Potsdamer Platz sehr gut für ihre Show geeignet sei, gelte Berlin als der kulturelle Mittelpunkt in Europa. „Es ist eher so, dass Berlin die Blue Man Group angezogen hat, und nicht, dass Blue Man Berlin ausgewählt hat", sagt Goldman.

Einen bloßen Export der Show aus den USA nach Deutschland wird es nicht geben. Die blauen Männer haben sich von Berlin inspirieren lassen, wie sie selbst sagen, und dies wiederum werde die Produktion beeinflussen.

* Quelle: IVW

[redacted]1410240100034711

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AUSSCHNITT
MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

fränkischer Tag

Thema Nr: 990.009
Meldung in Rubrik: Kultur
Anstrich - No.: 5 375574 4

BA, H
Erscheinung: täglich
24.10.03
Seite: W4
Platzierung

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in allen gekennzeichneten Ausgaben erschienen (Hauptausgabe in der ersten Zeile).		PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
✓	Fränkischer Tag	96050 Bamberg	* 41.399	* 41.669	* 43.939	1190
✓	Fränkischer Tag Forchheim	91301 Forchheim	* 12.108	* 12.179	* 12.832	1196
2 Ausgaben mit der Meldung						
2 gelesene Ausgaben in der Gruppe			* 73.679	* 74.192	* 78.867	

Das Blaue im Manne

Blue Man Group kommt nach Berlin

Was die Blue Man Group ist, können noch nicht mal ihre kreativen Köpfe erklären. „Wir überlegen selbst noch, wie die Antwort auf diese Frage lautet", sagt Chris Wink, der das Projekt zusammen mit seinen Freunden Matt Goldman und Phil Stanton 1987 aus der Taufe hob. Die Show, die in keine Schublade passt, ist ab Mai erstmals außerhalb der USA zu sehen, und zwar im Berliner Theater am Potsdamer Platz.

Das Publikum erwartet ein audiovisuelles Spektakel – eine Mischung aus Musik, Comedy und Wissenschaft, eine Explosion von Farben und Klängen. Witzig, frech, originell und einfach unterhaltsam. Es sei weder Theater noch Musical noch Konzert, vergleichbar mit nichts anderem im Showgeschäft, sagt Goldman. Die Jury des Drama Desk Awards in den USA musste sich, um der Blue Man Group einen Preis zu verleihen, eine neue Kategorie ausdenken: „Unique Theatrical Production".

Einzigartig sind sie zweifellos. Auf der Bühne stehen drei blau geschminkte Männer, die, begleitet von sieben Musikern, das Publikum auf eine Reise in eine surreale Welt mit immer wieder neuen Überraschungen mitnehmen. Es seien „drei Entdecker, die uns durchs Leben führen", sagt Produzent Maik Klokow, der die Blue Man Group nach Deutschland holte. Sprache spielt dabei keine Rolle, die Akteure brauchen keine Worte.

Es gibt weder Dialoge noch eine Handlung, dafür aber mitreißende Musik auf selbst entwickelten Percussion-Instrumenten: PVC-Röhren, die mit Schaumgummi-Paddeln und höhe sich durch Verlängern oder Verkürzen ändert.

Ein Blue Man – von denen es in den vier US-Shows in New York, Boston, Chicago und Las Vegas etwa 30 gibt – muss gleichzeitig Schlagzeuger, Schauspieler und Aktionskünstler sein. Entsprechend schwierig gestaltete sich das Casting für die Berliner Show. Insgesamt hatten sich mehr als 400 Darsteller aus ganz Europa beworben, nur eine Hand voll davon wurde ausgewählt.

Und warum ausgerechnet Berlin? Das sei in erster Linie eine emotionale Entscheidung gewesen, sagen die drei Blue-Man-Gründer, die einst als Straßenkünstler auftraten. „Wir wurden auch gebeten, nach London, Tokio oder Rio zu kommen, aber es war das deutsche Publikum in unseren Shows, das zu uns sagte: 'Ihr müsst nach Deutschland kommen'", erzählt Goldman. Oft hätten die Leute sie gefragt, ob sie aus Deutschland kämen, sagt Stanton. „Ich weiß gar nicht, warum sie das dachten, aber es hat uns den Eindruck vermittelt, nach Deutschland kommen zu müssen."

Einen bloßen Export der Show aus den USA nach Deutschland wird es nicht geben. Die blauen Männer haben sich von Berlin inspirieren lassen, wie sie selbst sagen, und dies wiederum werde die Produktion beeinflussen – insbesondere das Bühnenbild, das gemeinsam mit dem Designer Marc Brickman entwickelt wird, der bereits für Pink Floyd gearbeitet hat. „Wir haben ein spektakuläres Panorama geschaffen", verrät Stanton. „Die Szene ist um das Brandenburger Tor angeordnet."

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Gneisenaustraße 6

SSCHNITT
MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

fränkischer Tag

Thema Nr: **990.009**
Meldung in Rubrik: Kultur
Anstrich - No.: 5 37557 4

BA, H
Erscheinung: täglich
24.10.03
Seite: W4
Platzierung

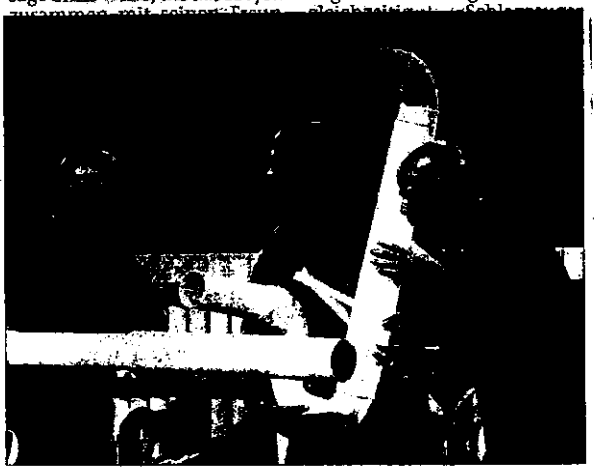
Die untenstehende Meldung ist in allen gekennzeichneten Ausgaben erschienen (Hauptausgabe in der ersten Zeile).		PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
✓	Fränkischer Tag	96050 Bamberg	* 41.399	* 41.669	* 43.939	1190
✓	Fränkischer Tag Forchheim	91301 Forchheim	* 12.108	* 12.179	* 12.832	1196
2 Ausgaben mit der Meldung						
2 gelesene Ausgaben in der Gruppe			*** 73.679**	*** 74.192**	*** 78.867**	

Das Blaue im Manne

Blue Man Group kommt nach Berlin

Was die Blue Man Group ist, können noch nicht mal ihre kreativen Köpfe erklären. „Wir überlegen selbst noch, wie die Antwort auf diese Frage lautet", sagt Chris Wink, der das Projekt zusammen mit seinem Freund [illegible] höhe sich durch Verlängern oder Verkürzen ändert.

Ein Blue Man – von denen es in den vier US-Shows in New York, Boston, Chicago und Las Vegas etwa 30 gibt – muss [illegible]



Mitglieder der „Blue Man Group" samt Rohrtrommeln auf der Bühne des Berliner Theaters am Potsdamer Platz. **Foto: AP**

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* Quelle: IVW
698973

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AUSSCHNITT
MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

Wilhelmshavener Zeitung

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich - No.: 4 375594

Niedersachsen, H
Erscheinung: täglich
24.10.2003
Seite: 11

Platzierung

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
Wilhelmshavener Zeitung Wilhelmshavener Presse	26382 Wilhelmshaven	* 25.732	* 26.221	* 28.645	1326

Die Blaumänner aus den USA kommen erstmals nach Deutschland

Sie passt in keine Schublade, die Show der „Blue Man Group" aus den USA: Ein „audiovisuelles Spektakel" aus Comedy, Wissenschaft, Pantomime und Pink Floyd nennt Matt Goldman die Darbietung seiner Gruppe. Erstmals ist die Show jetzt auch außerhalb der USA zu sehen: Im Mai 2004 feiert die „Blue Man Group" Premiere im Theater am Potsdamer Platz in Berlin. Die Show sei mit nichts anderem zu vergleichen, warb Goldman; die Jury der Drama Desk Awards musste für die Preisvergabe eigens eine neue Kategorie schaffen. BILD: AP

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* Quelle: IVW
698968

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AUSSCHNITT
MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

Norddeutsche
Neueste Nachrichten

Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, H
Erscheinung: täglich
24.10.2003

Platzierung

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich - No.: 8 3750A

Seite: 8

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
Norddeutsche Neueste Nachrichten Rostocker Anzeige	18057 Rostock	* 11.480	* 11.530	* 12.871	5014

Die Blue Man Group kommt nach Berlin

Berlin • Sie sind blau. Und sie sind zu dritt. Sie sind die Blue Man Group. Die von den Amerikanern Matt Goldmann, Phil Stanton und Chris Wink entwickelte Show um ein Trio von blaukopfigen, schweigenden Männern zählt zu den erfolgreichsten Unterhaltungsspektakeln in den USA. 1987 als Performance auf den Straßen New Yorks gestartet, hat die Blue Man Group auch Chicago und Las Vegas erobert. Nun wagen sich die blauen Männer nach Europa. Ab Mai 2004 soll die Show die 1800 Plätze des Theaters am Potsdamer Platz in Berlin füllen.
Es ist ein Mix aus Hightech und klassischen Slapstick-Elementen. Die mit ihren blauen Latexmasken an alte französische „Fantomas"-Filme erinnernden Blue Man ziehen ihr Publikum durch ein farbenfrohes artistisches Spektakel von Hör- und Seheindrücken in ihren Bann.

Ein Feuerwerk aus Farbe produzierte die „Blue Man Group" während einer Pressevorführung in Ber

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* Quelle: IVW

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AUSSCHNITT
MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

Delmenhorster Kreisblatt

Thema Nr: 990.009

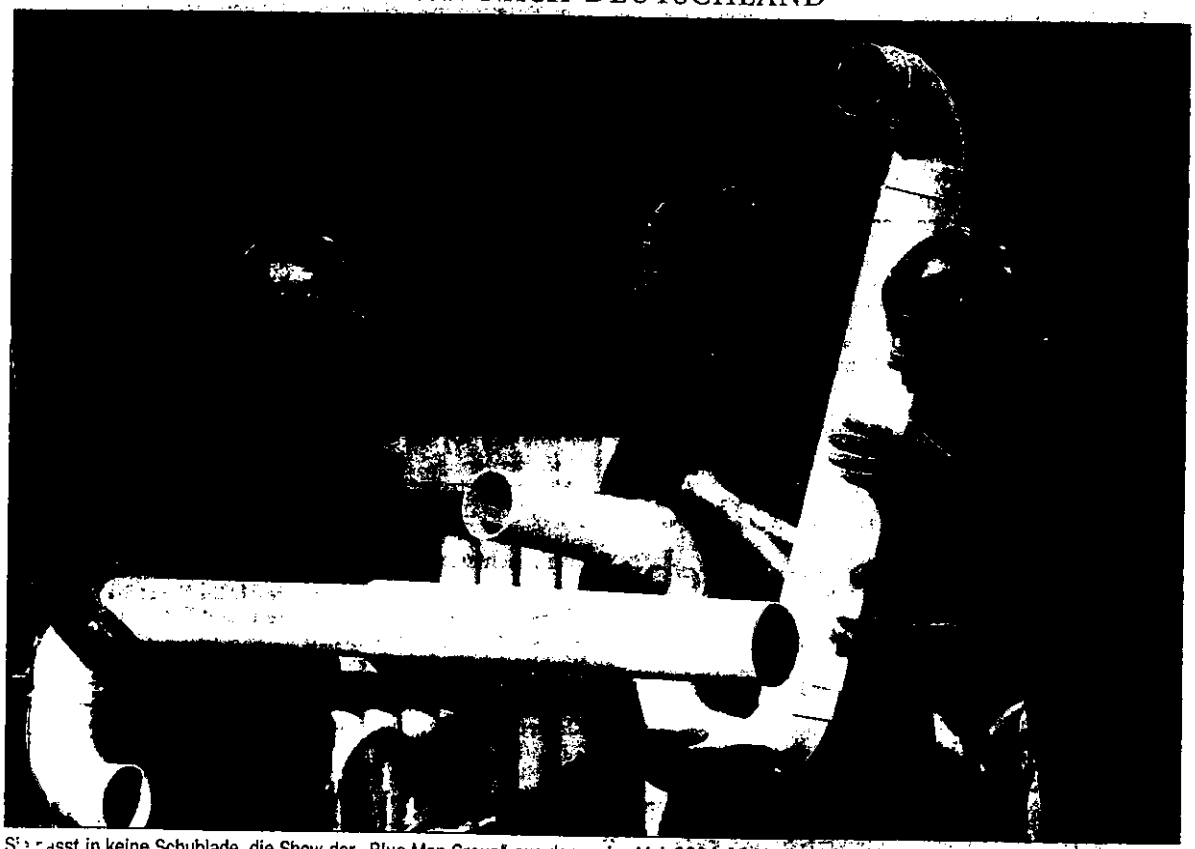
Anstrich - No.: 3

Niedersachsen, H
Erscheinung: täglich
24.10.2003
Seite: 6

Platzierung

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
Delmenhorster Kreisblatt	27749 Delmenhorst	* 21.139	* 21.254	* 22.617	1201

DIE BLAUMÄNNER KOMMEN NACH DEUTSCHLAND



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20102410200304711

* Quelle: IVW
699954

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AUSSCHNITT
MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

OSTSEE ZEITUNG

MV, H
Erscheinung: täglich
24.10.03
Seite: 23

Platzierung

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6

g ist in allen gekennzeichneten ptausgabe in der ersten Zeile).	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
cker Zeitung	18055 Rostock	* 46.735	* 47.664	* 49.928	2326
oberaner Zeitung	18209 Bad Doberan	* 11.217	* 11.535	* 12.231	6686
walder Zeitung	17489 Greifswald	* 18.684	* 18.961	* 20.199	2331
smühlener Zeitung	23936 Grevesmühlen	* 9.791	* 9.948	* 10.423	6685
ıener Zeitung	18507 Grimmen	* 6.539	* 6.684	* 6.991	6682
:-Damgartener Zeitung	18311 Ribnitz-Damgarten	* 14.812	* 14.983	* 15.875	6684
-Bergener Zeitung	18528 Bergen	* 17.510	* 17.706	* 18.939	2330
ınder Zeitung	18439 Stralsund	* 20.773	* 21.172	* 22.282	2327
m-Peene-Zeitung/ Wolgast	17438 Wolgast	* 12.554	* 12.714	* 13.686	6683
ırer Zeitung	23966 Wismar	* 19.899	* 20.188	* 21.245	2328
dung					
der Gruppe		* 177.735	* 181.046	* 191.316	

ın Group bietet explosives Spektakel

Awards in den USA musste sich, um der Blue Man Group einen Preis zu verleihen, eine neue Kategorie ausdenken: „Unique Theatrical Production".

Auf der Bühne stehen drei blau geschminkte Männer, die, begleitet von sieben Musikern, das Publikum auf eine Reise in eine surreale Welt mit immer neuen Überraschungen mitnehmen. „Drei Entdecker, die uns durchs Leben führen", sagt Produzent Maik Klokow, der die Blue Man Group nach Deutschland holte.

Die Akteure brauchen keine Worte, dafür gibt es mitreißende Musik auf selbst entwickelten Percussion-Instrumenten: etwa PVC-Röhren, die mit Schaumgummi-Paddeln und Stöcken geschlagen werden.

Außergewöhnliche Mischung aus Musik, Comedy und Wissenschaft mit der Blue Man Group. Foto: /

* Quelle: IVW
700840

Schweriner Volkszeitung

Thema Nr: 990.009
Meldung in Rubrik: PANORAMA
Anstrich - No.: 9 6
37558

MV, S
Erscheinung: täglich
24.10.03
Seite: 8
Platzierung

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in allen gekennzeichneten Ausgaben erschienen (Hauptausgabe in der ersten Zeile).		PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
✓	Schweriner Volkszeitung Mecklenburgische Zeitung	19061 Schwerin	* 31.745	* 31.919	* 33.797	5020
✓	Der Prignitzer Brandenburger Allgemeine	19348 Perleberg	* 14.027	* 14.061	* 14.840	2353
✓	Schweriner Volkszeitung Güstrower Anzeiger	18273 Güstrow	* 11.731	* 11.777	* 12.751	2350
✓	Schweriner Volkszeitung Hagenower Kreisblatt	19230 Hagenow	* 14.500	* 14.530	* 15.586	2351
✓	Schweriner Volkszeitung Ludwigsluster Tageblatt	19288 Ludwigslust	* 10.864	* 10.894	* 11.745	2352
✓	Schweriner Volkszeitung Parchimer Zeitung	19370 Parchim	* 7.400	* 7.418	* 8.037	5980
6 Ausgaben mit der Meldung						
6 gelesene Ausgaben in der Gruppe			*** 122.055**	*** 122.493**	*** 132.124**	

Die Blue Man Group kommt nach Berlin

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Ein Feuerwerk aus Farbe produzierte die „Blue Man Group" während einer Pressevorführung in Berlin.

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* Quelle: IVW

700814

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AUSSCHNITT
MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

Thema Nr: **990.009**

Meldung in Rubrik: Magazin

Anstrich - No.: 9 3755H 7

BA, H
Erscheinung: täglich
29.10.03
Seite: 20

Platzierung

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in allen gekennzeichneten Ausgaben erschienen (Hauptausgabe in der ersten Zeile).		PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
✓	Donaukurier	85051 Ingolstadt	* 35.618	* 36.318	* 37.804	1173
✓	Aichacher Zeitung	85051 Ingolstadt	* 9.075	* 9.610	* 10.068	5734
✓	Eichstätter Kurier	85072 Eichstaett	* 10.956	* 11.119	* 11.553	5986
✓	Pfaffenhofener Kurier	85276 Pfaffenhofen	* 15.212	* 15.445	* 15.997	5987
4 Ausgaben mit der Meldung						
4 gelesene Ausgaben in der Gruppe			*** 87.353**	*** 89.532**	*** 93.535**	

Die Blue Man Group kommt mit einer Mischung aus Musik, Pantomime und Komik ab Frühjahr 2004 nach Berlin und tritt damit erstmals in Europ

[redacted]

* Quelle: IVW

702027

BERLINER
WOCHENBLATT

B, AH
Erscheinung: wöchentlich
29.10.03
Seite: 3

Platzierung

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich - No.: 1 3255A 33

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in allen gekennzeichneten Ausgaben erschienen (Hauptausgabe in der ersten Zeile).	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
Berliner Woche Zeitung für Neukölln	12057 Berlin	k.A.	* 138.378	* 138.378	8010
Berliner Woche Zeitung für Friedrichshain	12057 Berlin	k.A.	* 57.425	* 57.425	8021
Berliner Woche Zeitung für Hellersdorf	12057 Berlin	k.A.	* 47.275	* 47.275	8022
Berliner Woche Zeitung für Hohenschönhausen	12057 Berlin	k.A.	* 47.700	* 47.700	8017
Berliner Woche Zeitung für Köpenick	12057 Berlin	k.A.	* 53.480	* 53.480	8025
Berliner Woche Zeitung für Lichtenberg	12057 Berlin	k.A.	* 78.000	* 78.000	8020
Berliner Woche Zeitung für Mitte	12057 Berlin	k.A.	* 38.050	* 38.050	8019
Berliner Woche Zeitung für Pankow	12057 Berlin	k.A.	* 56.225	* 56.225	8024
Berliner Woche Zeitung für Prenzlauer Berg	12057 Berlin	k.A.	* 75.875	* 75.875	8018
Berliner Woche Zeitung für Reinickendorf	12057 Berlin	k.A.	* 102.200	* 102.200	8014
Berliner Woche Zeitung für Treptow	12057 Berlin	k.A.	* 51.575	* 51.575	8023

Die Blue Man Group kommt

Neue Formen der Unterhaltung im Theater am Potsdamer Platz / Vorverkauf hat begonnen

Tiergarten. „Wir werden in Berlin einen Mix aus Klassikern und neuen Formen des Entertainments pflegen", sagte Maik Klokow, General Manager der Stage Holding Deutschland, gegenüber der Berliner Woche.

Die Show von Matt Goldman, Chris Wink und Phil Stanton. Foto: Wecker

Ab Mai wird Berlin im Theater am Potsdamer Platz eine solche neue Form der Unterhaltung erleben können. Zum ersten Mal in Europa wird die Blue Man Group auftreten. Was die Gruppe an Unterhaltung zelebriert, widersetzt sich jeder hergebrachten Beschreibung. Ihr ganzheitliches Theater findet nicht allein auf der Bühne statt. Die Künstler agieren mitten unter den Zuschauern, steigen über die Sitzlehnen und lassen sich die größten Verrücktheiten einfallen.

Wichtigster Bestandteil der Show ist die Musik, die auf neuartigen Instrumenten erzeugt wird. Da gibt es Schlaginstrumente aus PVC-Rohren, eine gebogene Posaune, das Drumbone, das von zwei Akteuren gezogen und von einem geschlagen wird. „Die Show besteht aus Musik, Comedy und Wissenschaft. Es ist ein Spektakel, es ist Technik, es ist eine tiefe körperliche Schönheit, mit Farbe, die aus unseren Trommelfällen läuft", versucht Matt Goldman die neue Kunst zu beschreiben.

Gemeinsam mit Phil Stanton und Chris Wink inszenierte er Happenings, woraus 1987 die erste Show der Blue Man Group entstand, die noch im gleichen Jahr den Tony Award erhielt. Seitdem wird die Show vor ausverkauften Häusern in Boston, Chicago und in Las Vegas gezeigt. Aus der einstigen Ich-AG ist inzwischen ein Erfolgsunternehmen mit über 30 Blue Men geworden. „Für uns Amerikaner ist Berlin der Mittelpunkt von Kultur und Kunst in Europa und somit der beste Spielort für unsere Show", sagt Matt Goldman. „Wir haben uns für die Europapremiere nicht Berlin ausgesucht, Berlin hat uns herübergezogen." Berlin wird keinen USA-Import zu sehen bekommen. Für die Tournee wurde ein neues Team gebildet, das eine völlig neue Show zeigt.

Karten gibt es ab 49,90 Euro ab sofort an allen bekannten Vorverkaufsstellen sowie im Internet unter der Adresse www.bluemangroup.de und unter ☎ 01805/44 44. FW

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AUSSCHNITT
MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

KULTUR PUR
BERLIN

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich - No.: 1

D-Überregional, H
Erscheinung: 2 x jährlich
01.09.2003
2003/2004
Seite: 3

Platzierung

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
Kultur Pur Berlin	10629 Berlin	* 29.000	* 35.000	* 40.000	6048

03/04

Herzlich Willkommen | Welcome

Willkommen zur zehnten Ausgabe von KULTURpur mit dem umfangreichen Überblick über die Spielzeit 2003/2004.

Nach einem wunderschönen Sommer liegt eine spannende Zeit mit einigen kulturellen Höhepunkten vor uns.
Denn trotz aller Diskussionen und negativer Presse um weitere Kürzungen der finanziellen Mittel lassen sich die Kulturschaffenden zum Glück nicht unterkriegen. Gemäß dem Motto „Jetzt erst recht!" wird, wenn auch mit Sand im Getriebe, weitergemacht: Mit dem Pei-Bau eröffnet ein weltweit hoch gelobter Museumsanbau. Das Mauermuseum Haus am Checkpoint Charlie blickt auf sein 40jähriges Bestehen zurück, ausgestattet mit Glückwünschen aus aller Welt. Die Sammlung Flick kommt nach Berlin, beobachtet von der internationalen Kunstszene. Les Miserable und die Blue Man Group bringen frischen Musical-Wind in Stadt. Und, nicht zu vergessen: Die großartige Ausstellung des Museums of Modern Art, New York, von Februar bis September 2004 mit den Hauptwerken des Museums. Dass diese Werke nach Berlin und in keine andere Stadt kommen, zeigt, welche Zugkraft sie nach wie vor als Kulturlandschaft hat. Lassen Sie sich davon auch wieder in der Saison 2003/ 2004 begeistern.

Welcome to the tenth issue of KULTURpur and our comprehensive overview of the 2003/04 season. After a beautiful summer, we are now looking forward to an exciting season replete with cultural highlights.

Despite the intense discussion and dire predictions about financial cuts in the cultural sphere, the arts continue to thrive. Under the motto „Now more than ever," cultural production continues apace, albeit with an occasional bump in the road. The Pei museum building, for example, has garnered high praise across the globe. The Berlin Wall museum at Checkpoint Charlie celebrates its fortieth birthday to the accompaniment of well wishes from across the world. Les Miserable and the Blue Man Group are bringing a fresh musical wind to the city. And, last but not least, the New York

Herzlich Willkommen ı Welcome

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Christian Kourik, Kulturpur

KULTUR PUR
BERLIN

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich - No.: 9

D-Überregional, H
Erscheinung: 2 x jährlich
01.09.2003
2003/2004
Seite: 107

Platzierung

3 755A

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
Kultur Pur Berlin	10629 Berlin	* 29.000	* 35.000	* 40.000	6048

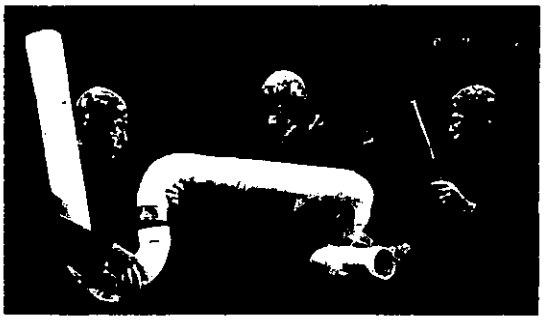
Berlin Musical Theater (Potsd. Platz)

Karten | admission: **01805-114 113**

Das Musical Theater gehört zu dem von den Architekten Renzo Piano Building Workshop, Paris und Chr. Kohlbecker, Gaggenau entworfenen Komplex des Daimler-Benz-Areals Potsdamer Platz, der am 2.Oktober 1998 eröffnet wurde. Es bietet ca. 1.800 Sitzplätze im klassischen Zwei-Rang-Theater, die Hauptbühne umfaßt eine Fläche von 350 Quadratmetern.
CATS spielt bis Januar 2004 en suite in Berlin, und wird nicht identisch mit der Hamburger oder Stuttgarter Aufführung sein. Vielmehr geht sie auf die Londoner Welturaufführung zurück und erfährt gleichzeitig zahlreiche Erneuerungen.

Ab Frühjahr 2004 ist erstmalig in Europa die Blue Man Group im Musical Theater zu erleben. Es gelten dann neue und günstigere Eintrittspreise.

The musical CATS is playing until January 2004 in Berlin. In a departure from the Hamburg and Stuttgart events, the en suite production both recalls the original London premiere and includes a variety of enhancements.
Beginning in spring 2004, the Blue Man Group will make its first European appearance at the Musical Theater. The new and more affordable ticket prices will be in effect for the event.



THEATER
THEATRE

Adresse|address

„BlueMan_Group" – Berlin Musical Theatre
Marlene-Dietrich-Platz/Potsdamer Platz
10785 (Tiergarten)

Kartenpreise für CATS | admission for CATS

di,do|tue, thur 20.00 Uhr
mi|wed 18.30 Uhr

PK 1	69,– €	PK 3	39,– €
PK 2	59,– €	PK 4	24,– €

fr|fri, sa|sat 20.00 Uhr und 15.00 Uhr

PK 1	81,– €	PK 3	54,– €
PK 2	72,– €	PK 4	39,– €

sa|sat 20.00 Uhr

PK 1	87,– €	PK 3	62,– €
PK 2	78,– €	PK 4	48,– €

so|sun 19.00 Uhr und 14.00 Uhr

PK 1	75,– €	PK 3	47,– €
PK 2	66,– €	PK 4	32,– €

Verkehrsanbindungen|Public Transportation:
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BUS 129, 148, 200, 248, 348

touristik aktuell

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich - No.: 42

D-Überregional, H
Erscheinung: wöchentlich
08.09.2003
Seite: 42

Platzierung

3755A

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
Touristik Aktuell	65239 Hochheim	22.499	30.809	30.860	2001

Wehe dem, der keins hat

Musicals haben sich zur tragenden Säule des Städtetourismus entwickelt

Frankfurt. Ein Patentrezept für erfolgreiches Städtemarketing lässt sich wohl kaum ausstellen. Schließlich hat jede Stadt ihre eigenen Spezialitäten, die es geschickt zu bewerben gilt. Eins aber zeichnet sich immer klarer ab: Musicals bringen Gäste. Mehr noch als Kultur und Shopping Malls beleben sie den Städtetourismus. Glücklich kann sich deshalb schätzen, wer eins oder gar mehrere hat. Wie Hamburg, das – dem König der Löwen und Mamma Mia sei Dank – im Ranking der beliebtesten Städtereiseziele bei den Kunden von Ameropa, Dertour, Neckermann Reisen und TUI derzeit ganz oben thront (siehe Seite 36).

Ganz anders stellt sich die Situation für München dar. Vor gar nicht langer Zeit noch unter den Top Five der Städte vertreten, ist die bayerische Landeshauptstadt in der Versenkung verschwunden. „Was München fehlt, ist ein Musical", diagnostiziert denn auch Jens Brösel, Bereichsleiter Städte und Events bei Dertour. An der Stage Holding, die seit der Pleite der Stella AG das deutsche Musicalgeschäft dominiert, soll es nicht hängen. „Wir sind durchaus am Standort München interessiert", sagt Torsten Seck, Sprecher der Stage Holding Deutschland. Ob sich die Münchener tatsächlich in den Reigen der Musicalmetropolen einreihen werden, bleibt abzuwarten. Bei den sechs neuen Stage-Shows ist die Stadt vorerst nicht dabei.

Doch nicht jedes Musical ist auch ein Garant für steigende Besucherzahlen. Um den Geschmack des Publikums zu treffen, sind Fingerspitzengefühl und ein Blick aufs Zeitgeschehen gefragt. Ansonsten ist Schiffbruch programmiert, wie im Fall Titanic. Seit Ende letzten Jahres sorgt das Musical in Hamburg für Untergangsstimmung, im Dezember muss es die Tanzfläche für die Vampire räumen. Das falsche Stück zur falschen Zeit, so könnte man meinen. „In schwierigen Zeiten steht den Leuten der Sinn eher nach Gute-Laune-Stücken", spekuliert Seck. Das würde auch erklären, warum Halli-Galli-Musicals wie Mamma Mia und der König der Löwen die Kassenfüller schlechthin sind. „Mamma Mia ist für den Rest des Jahres ausverkauft", berichtet Seck.

Die Tendenz zu Heiterkeit versprühenden Musicals bestätigen auch die Veranstalter. Mamma Mia und der Löwe seien die absoluten Renner, heißt es bei Ameropa, Dertour, Neckermann und TUI. Jekyll & Hyde dagegen lasse zu wünschen übrig. Das Musical über die Abgründe der menschlichen Seele feierte im März in Köln Premiere.

Ob dem Publikum auch künftig Frohsinniges besser schmecken wird als Düsteres, muss sich erst noch zeigen. Die neuen Inszenierungen der Stage Holding (siehe Kasten) stellen die ganze Palette menschlicher Gefühle zur Wahl. *Pilar Aschenbach*

Stage Holding: Shows und Musicals im Überblick

Cats: Berlin, Theater am Potsdamer Platz
Das Phantom der Oper: Stuttgart, Palladium Theater
König der Löwen: Hamburg, Theater am Hafen
Mamma Mia: Hamburg, Operettenhaus
Les Misérables: Berlin, Theater des Westens (ab 26. September)
Holiday on Ice: Diamond-Tour, deutschlandweit (2. Oktober bis März 2004)
Aida: Essen, Colosseum Theater (ab 5. Oktober)
42nd Street: Stuttgart, Apollo Theater (ab 21. November)
Tanz der Vampire: Hamburg, Theater Neue Flora (ab 7. Dezember)
Blue Man Group: Berlin, Theater am Potsdamer Platz (ab Mai 2004)

Der Broadway-Klassiker 42nd Street vertreibt die Vampire aus Stuttgart. Doch mit der Neuen Flora in Hamburg erhalten die Gruselgestalten eine neue Tanzfläche

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DIE WELT

Thema Nr: 990.009
Meldung in Rubrik: Feuilleton
Anstrich - No.: 110 25

BRD, M
Erscheinung: täglich
08.09.03

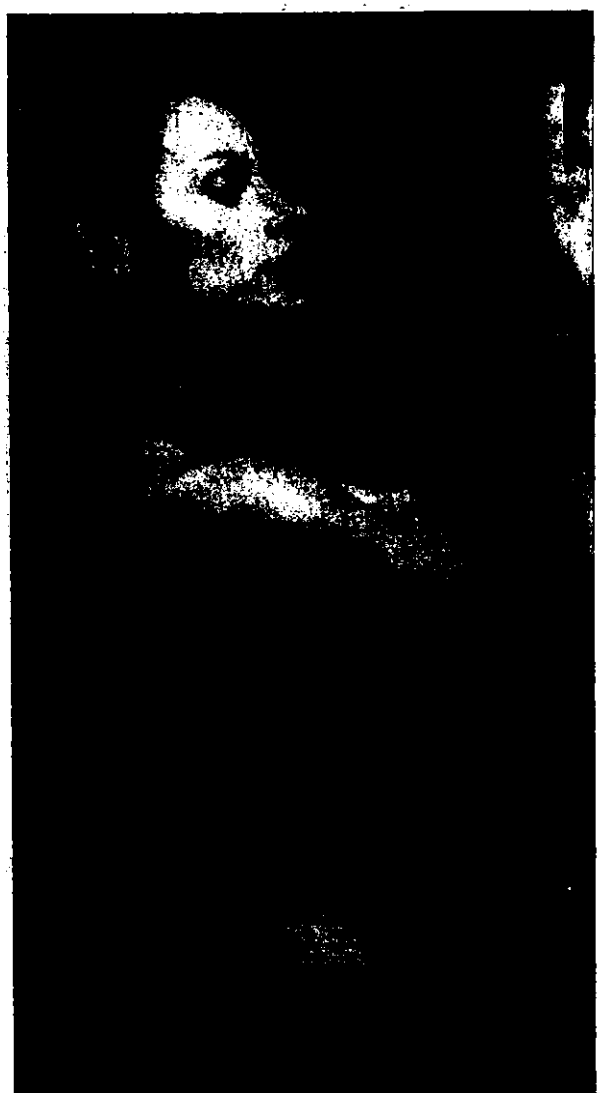
Platzierung

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in allen gekennzeichneten Ausgaben erschienen (Hauptausgabe in der ersten Zeile).		PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
	Die Welt überregional	20350 Hamburg	* 109.680	* 131.440	* 164.85	7778
	Die Welt Ausgabe Berlin	10888 Berlin	* 26.348	* 31.337	* 41.193	1026
✓	Die Welt Ausgabe Hamburg	20350 Hamburg	* 69.948	* 78.776	* 96.640	1231
	1 Ausgabe mit der Meldung					
	3 gelesene Ausgaben in der Gruppe		* 221.207	* 253.129	* 316.557	

Ein in ständig wechselnde Bilder übersetzter Puls

Schon mal im Dunkeln Basketball gespielt? Unter Wasser gerappt oder die Kolonne der Stadtreinigung mit singenden Mülleimern erschreckt? Probieren Sie das auch besser weiterhin nicht zu Haus, überlassen Sie's den hyperaktiven Mitgliedern von Mayumana. Dann können Sie sich nämlich formidabel in die Sitze des St. Pauli-Theaters zurücklehnen und acht jungen, außerordentlich schönen Menschen aus beinahe aller Welt zusehen, die sich den Wolf tanzen und trommeln. Wer sich bislang nicht vorstellen konnte, dass auf Blechdosen und Ölfässern, mit hübschen Quietscheentchen und gelenkigen Fingern wahre Orgien an Rhythmik zu entfachen sind, wird hier eines Besseren belehrt. Und weil den Fantasten die Musik allein den Aufwand nicht zu lohnen scheint, tanzen sie zu den selbst produzierten Takten und werden auch noch zu hinreißenden Komödianten. Da sitzt man dann im dunklen Raum und die Augen suchen all die Kleinigkeiten: hier eine Pirouette, dort ein Zeichen, vergeblich, die Ohren haben schließlich auch zu tun. Also Augen zu: Nun wissen wir nicht mehr, auf welchem Instrumentarium sich solche Töne herstellen lassen. Also die Augen wieder auf, herrje, die Szenerie gleicht gar nicht mehr der eben erst gesehenen. Einzig mit der furiosen Show der New Yorker Blue Men Group ist die Kunst von Mayumana vergleichbar. Nur weniger intellektuell, eher wie ein ständig wechselnder, in Bilder, Klänge, Tanzfiguren übersetzter Puls.

kru



Sie veranstalten auch auf Blechdosen und Ölfässern mit gelenkigen Fingern wah

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MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

KULTUR PUR
BERLIN

D-Überregional, H
Erscheinung: 2 x jährlich
01.09.2003
2003/2004
Seite: 10

Platzierung

Thema Nr: **990.009**

Anstrich - No.: 3

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
Kultur Pur Berlin	10629 Berlin	* 29.000	* 35.000	* 40.000	6048

6772757 990009

[redacted]

* Quelle: IVW
10046799

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AUSSCHNITT
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Nicht zu vergessen das Boulevard-Theater: Varietés wie der „Wintergarten" oder das „Chamäleon", sowie zahlreiche Kabaretts sorgen für gutes Entertainment. Das Motto des Berliner Varietés Wintergarten - "Dem Staunen gewidmet" - könnte auch für das Berliner Nachtleben gelten. Die Stadt entwickelt sich, auch Dank dieser dichten Ansammlung von Superlativen, zu einem der kulturellen Zentren Europas.

2003. Mit Sir Simon Rattle als Nachfolger von Claudio Abbado, Kent Nagano als Chefdirigent des Deutschen Symphonie Orchesters und - als Joungster - Andreas Homoki, der neue Intendant der Komischen Oper, vollzieht sich in der Berliner Hochkultur ein Generationenwechsel, der auch vor den Theatern der Stadt nicht halt macht: Ein junges Leitungsteam um die Choreographin Sasha Waltz und den Jungregisseur Thomas Ostermeier sorgt in der Schaubühne für gute Kritiken.

Es feiert auch die leichte Muse eine erfolgreiche Renaissance: Im Friedrichstadtpalast, Europas größtem Revuetheater, genießt man Tanz, Chanson und etwas nackte Haut. Mit dem Musical „Les Miserables" im Stella-Musical-Theater am Potsdamer Platz hat auch in Berlin ein erfolgreiches Ensuite-Musical Fuß gefasst.

Berlin hat eine großartige Kulturlandschaft, deren Umfang angesichts angespannter öffentlicher Haushalte häufig infrage gestellt wird. DIW-Untersuchungen belegen jedoch, dass die gewünschten Spareffekte weniger durch die Schließung von Theatern als vielmehr durch eigene Sparmaßnahmen vieler Theatern erreicht wurden. Die Kosten hängen ganz klar vor allem vom "Veranstaltungs-Output" und nicht von rechtlichen Organisationsformen oder der Trägerschaft ab. Das nur kurz an die Adresse unserer Senatoren, scheint es doch, sie wollten mit ihrem ewigen Nörgeln um die schlechten Finanzen vom eigentlichen Reichtum Berlins ablenken.

Reich ist Berlin zum Glück auch an privatem Engagement, wie dem der "Freunde der Nationalgalerie" - auf deren Initiative das MoMA Meisterwerke nach Berlin schickt - oder des Sammlers Flick oder der vielen ungenannten Kulturschaffenden der Stadt, die still und leise aus ihren Nischen agieren.

Berlin, cultural metropolis?

2003/2004. Berlin is one of the most exciting cities of Europe. The city's appeal derives in part from its central role in recent politics and history, including the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the reunification of Germany, the breakneck pace of reconstruction of entire city districts, the move of the federal government, and Berlin's revival as the nation's capital.

Berlin's charismatic cultural landscape and the city's large, diverse and enthusiastic audience have combined to lure many exhilarating exhibits and productions to the city this coming season, including the touring exhibit "MoMA in Berlin", and the "Berlin-Moscow/Moscow-Berlin" exhibit, the five-year layover by the Flick Collection, and such stage productions as Les Miserables and the Blue Man Group.
With three opera houses, more than 150 theaters and stages, over 170 museums and collections, 300 galleries, 130 movie theaters, over 250 public libraries as well as countless other attractions institutions, Berlin presides over an unparalleled number of cultural opportunities.

Choosing among the nearly 1,500 events each day can be a daunting task. Berlin's opera repertoire is the most extensive in the world, and the city's Museuminsel houses the world's largest assemblage of museums. Approximately sixteen million visitors tour the castles and gardens of Berlin and Brandenburg each year, while the new movie palaces at Potsdamer Platz have spurred an increase of the number of moviegoers to nearly sixteen million annually. Equally exciting are Berlin's boulevard theater, including variety theaters such as the Wintergarten and the Chamäleon as well as numerous outstanding cabarets. Indeed, the motto of Berlin's Wintergarten theater –"Dedicated to Amazement" – could equally be taken to describe Berlin's nightlife as a whole. With such an assemblage of superlatives, Berlin continues to grow and develop into one of the cultural epicenters of Europe.

Berlin is fortunate to be blessed also with a variety of private initiatives. Last but not least, the city of Berlin owes a great debt to the many tireless lovers of culture who quietly pursue their work from anonymous, quiet corners and cubbyholes of the reunified capital.

Bild

Thema Nr: **990.009**

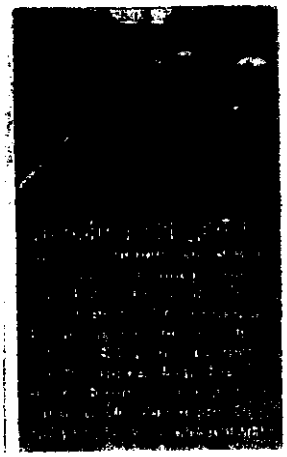
Berlin, M
Erscheinung: täglich
15.09.2003

Platzierung

Anstrich - No.: 4

Seite: 3

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
Bild Berlin-Brandenburg	10888 Berlin	139.035	139.702	171.471	2157



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* Quelle: IVW
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AUSSCHNITT
MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

TRAVEL talk

D-Überregional, H
Erscheinung: wöchentlich
15.09.2003
Nr. 38
Seite: 16

Platzierung

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich - No.: 6 3755A

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
Travel Talk	22041 Hamburg		36.130	36.292	7659

PRODUKTE

Von blauen Männern und leichten Mädchen

Neue Musicals sollen den Boom wiederbeleben

MUSICAL

Die Vampire tanzen künftig in Hamburg, die Katzen ziehen durch Europa, Männer in Blau beglücken Berlin, und die Scorpions lassen den „Wind of Change" noch einmal wehen – die Trends des Musical-Jahres 2003/04.

Neu in Deutschland: die Show der Blue Man Group (Foto oben) und das Musical „42nd Street".

Musical nicht nur für Kinder: „Der König der Löwen" ist seit fast Jahren im Hamburger Hafen erfolgreich.

Es kommt Bewegung in die Musical-Szene. Und das im wahrsten Sinne des Wortes: Die Zuschauer reisen nicht mehr zu den Shows, sondern die Shows kommen zu den Zuschauern. „Heutzutage muss man dem Kunden ständig etwas Neues bieten", sagt Michael Hildebrandt, Marketing-Direktor beim größten deutschen Musical-Veranstalter Stage Holding. Erfolgreiche Produktionen wie „Tanz der Vampire" wechseln in andere Städte, um die Laufzeit zu verlängern. So tanzen die Blutsauger demnächst in Hamburg statt in Stuttgart. „Les Misérables" ziehen von Bochum nach Berlin. Dafür wurde extra das Theater des Westens mit seinen 1600 Plätzen für rund zehn Millionen Euro in Schuss gebracht.

Seinen Dauerbrenner „Cats" schickt das Unternehmen auf eine zweijährige Europatournee. „Phantom der Oper" soll folgen. Als Vorbild dient die Eisrevue „Holiday on Ice".

Neue Produktionen locken Zuschauer

Die Produktionen sollen keine Billigkopien der Originale werden, versichert Hildebrandt. Top-Darsteller, aufwendige Choreografie und Kostüme sollen Standard sein. Darüber hinaus können sich die Zuschauer auf einige neue Musical-Produktionen in Deutschland freuen.

Die mit einem Tony Award und einem Grammy ausgezeichnete Produktion „Blue Man Group" gibt im Theater am Potsdamer Platz ihre Europa-Premiere im Mai nächsten Jahres. „Das Mädchen Rosemarie" können die Zuschauer in Düsseldorf ab Januar bewundern. Bereits diesen Herbst starten „Aida" in Essen und „42nd Street" in Stuttgart. Das Sahnehäubchen obendrauf soll in Berlin im kommenden Jahr die erste Eigenproduktion der Stage Holding

Lesen Sie weiter auf Seite 16 ▸

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TRAVEL talk

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich - No.: 6 3755?

D-Überregional, H
Erscheinung: wöchentlich
15.09.2003
Nr. 38
Seite: 16

Platzierung

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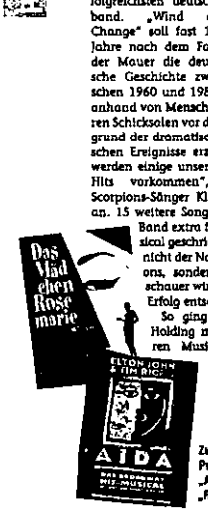
Hier geht's weiter von Seite 14 >>

werden: das zeitgenössische Musical „Wind of Change". Die Entwicklungskosten dafür belaufen sich laut Hildebrandt auf rund 15 Millionen Euro. Die Musik stammt von den Scorpions, der in Ehren ergrauten, erfolgreichsten deutschen Rockband. „Wind of Change" soll fast 15 Jahre nach dem Fall der Mauer die deutsche Geschichte zwischen 1960 und 1989 anhand von Menschen und deren Schicksalen vor dem Hintergrund der dramatischen politischen Ereignisse erzählen. „Es werden einige unserer größten Hits vorkommen", kündigt Scorpions-Sänger Klaus Meine an. 15 weitere Songs habe die Band extra für das Musical geschrieben. Doch nicht der Name Scorpions, sondern der Zuschauer wird über den Erfolg entscheiden.

So ging die Stage Holding mit der teuren Musical-Produktion „Tito nic" unerwartet unter (letzte Aufführung: 4. Oktober.) Hildebrandt: „Jedes Stück muss sich seine Anerkennung beim Publikum erarbeiten." Generell ist es seiner Meinung nach für das Musical in Deutschland wichtig, dass der Spielplan lebendig bliebe. Kürzere Spielzeiten und häufigere Wechsel der Produktionen sollen dem Zuschauer Abwechslung bieten. Dabei hat Hildebrandt auch neue Spielstätten im Visier. Momentan verhandelt die Stage Holding mit der Stadt München um die Radrennhalle auf dem Olympiagelände. Es ist nicht der erste Versuch, die bayerische Landeshauptstadt langfristig als Musicalstätte zu etablieren.

Neben neuen Spielorten möchte die Stage Holding auch ein jüngeres Publikum für sich gewinnen. So hat der Hamburger Veranstalter beispielsweise eine CD-ROM über das Musical „Der König der Löwen" als Unterrichtshilfe für deutsche Schulen entwickelt. Sie informiert laut Stage Holding über das Umfeld des Musicals, über Kultur, Familientradition und Wirtschaft in Afrika bis hin zur Musik. *tm*



Zwei neue Produktionen: „Aida" und „Rosemarie".

Musical-Splitter Musical-Splitter

Dertour schnürt Pakete
Dertour bietet erstmals Musical-Pakete zusammen mit den NH Hotels in allen deutschen Musical-Städten und in Wien an. Zwei Übernachtungen im Doppelzimmer mit Frühstück von Freitag bis Sonntag und Eintrittskarte der zweiten Kategorie mit Musical-Dinner kosten pro Person ab 152 Euro.

„Fame" mit Neckermann
Neu bei City & Events von Neckermann sind die Musicals „Beauty and the Beast" in New York (drei Nächte im DZ im Hotel Newton, Eintritt und Flug ab 684 Euro p. P.) sowie „Fame" (drei Nächte im DZ im Hotel Atlantic Paddington, Eintritt und Flug ab 271 Euro p. P.) und „Chicago" in London.

„Aida" besuchen:
Dertour, TUI, Neckermann und Ameropa bieten Pauschaltrips an.

Neuproduktionen
Rosemarie und Co

Das Mädchen Rosemarie
Club im Capitol-Theater Düsseldorf
Aufführungen: Mittwoch bis Sonntag jeweils 19.30 Uhr, Welturaufführung am 17. Januar 2004.
Produzent: Thomas Krauth und Andrea Friedrichs. Weitere Infos unter www.das-maedchen-rosemarie.de.

Saturday Night Fever
(Europa-Tournee) Start: 20. Juni 2004 im Circus Krone in München.
Aufführungen: (kompletter Tourneeverlauf steht noch nicht fest).
Weitere Infos unter www.saturdaynightfever.de.

Blue Man Group
Theater am Potsdamer Platz, Berlin
Aufführungen: Premiere: Mai 2004, Spielplan steht noch nicht fest.
Spielzeit: Die Spielzeit ist auf ein Jahr begrenzt. Produzent: Stage Holding.

Wind of Change
Aufführungen: Premiere: Anfang 2004, Spielplan steht noch nicht fest.
Spielzeit: Steht noch nicht fest.
Produzent: Stage Holding.

Scorpions als Musical-Produzenten: Rudolf Schenker (l.) und Klaus Meine (r.) mit Stage-Holding-Chef Maik Klokow.

TRAVELTALK-UMFRAGE

„Welche große deutsche Stadt könnte durch ein Musical für Besucher noch attraktiver werden?"

„München oder Dresden haben es nicht nötig, aber Frankfurt am Main führt im innerdeutschen Tourismus ein Schattendasein. Ein ‚König der Löwen', der für Frankfurt geplant war, hätte Wunder gewirkt, um das touristische Image zu stärken. Dieser Zug scheint erst mal abgefahren zu sein."
WALTER KROMBACH, AMEROPA-GESCHÄFTSFÜHRER

„Dresden und München sind attraktive Städte. In Dresden tut sich durch den Wiederaufbau der Frauenkirche eine Menge. München entwickelt sich touristisch leider nicht weiter. Ein Musical würde helfen. Auch die Stadt Bremen benötigt wieder eine gute Produktion. Das Musical-Theater dort wird leider nur für vorübergehende Theaterproduktionen genutzt. Der Tourismus hat damals von ‚Jekyll & Hyde' sehr profitiert."
ELIZABETH MOLDERS, NECKERMANN-PRODUKTMANAGERIN CITY & EVENTS

„Frankfurt und Hannover. Beide Städte könnten eine touristische Attraktion gebrauchen, die unter anderem das Wochenendgeschäft ankurbelt. Beides sind Business- und Messestädte, die am Wochenende im Vergleich zu anderen deutschen Städten nicht attraktiv genug sind."
LYDIA NICKEL, DERTOUR-PRODUKTMANAGERIN

(3)

TRAVEL talk

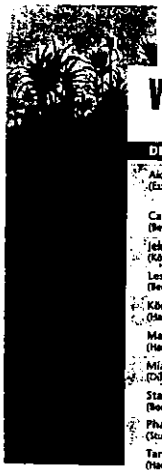
D-Überregional, H
Erscheinung: wöchentlich
15.09.2003
Nr. 38
Seite: 16

Platzierung

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich - No.: 6 3755A

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
Travel Talk	22041 Hamburg		36.130	36.292	7659



Stimmungsvolle Szene aus „Aida": Das von Elton John produzierte Musical startet im Oktober 2003 in Essen.

TravelTalk checkt die Kataloge

Welcher Veranstalter hat welche Musicals im Programm?

	Spielzeiten	Ameropa	Dertour	FTI	ITS	Neckermann	TUI
DEUTSCHLAND							
Aida (Essen, Colosseum Theater)	Dienstags bis sonntags bis Ende 2004, Premiere: 5. Oktober	●	●	–	–	●	●
Cats (Berlin, Theater am Potsdamer Platz)	Dienstags bis sonntags bis 31. Januar 2004	●	●	–	●	●	●
Jekyll & Hyde (Köln, Musical Dome)	Mittwochs bis sonntags, voraussichtlich bis Juni 2004	●	●	●	–	●	●
Les Misérables (Berlin, Theater des Westens)	Dienstags bis sonntags bis Ende 2004, Premiere: 26. September	–	●	–	–	●	●
König der Löwen (Hamburg, Theater im Hafen)	Dienstags bis sonntags bis Ende 2004	●	●	–	●	●	●
Mamma Mia (Hamburg, Operettenhaus)	Dienstags bis sonntags bis Ende 2004	●	●	–	●	●	●
Miami Nights (Düsseldorf, Capitol Theater)	Mittwochs bis sonntags bis 31. Dezember 2003	–	●	●	–	●	–
Starlight Express (Bochum, Starlight Express Theater)	Dienstags bis sonntags, vorerst kein Ende angekündigt	●	–	–	–	●	●
Phantom der Oper (Stuttgart, Palladium Theater)	Dienstags bis sonntags bis Ende 2004	●	●	–	–	●	●
Tanz der Vampire (Hamburg, Theater Neue Flora)	Spielplan steht noch nicht fest, bis Ende 2004, Premiere: 7. Dezember	●	●	–	–	●	●
Ludwig II (Füssen, Musicaltheater)	Dienstags bis sonntags bis mindestens April 2004	●	●	●	–	●	●
42nd Street (Stuttgart, Apollo Theater)	Dienstags bis sonntags, Spielzeit bis Ende 2004, Premiere: 21. November	●	●	–	–	●	●
ÖSTERREICH							
Wake-up (Wien, Raimund Theater)	Dienstags bis sonntags bis 1. Januar 2004	●	●	–	–	●	–
Elisabeth (Wien, Theater an der Wien)	Donnerstags bis dienstags bis Anfang 2004 Premiere: 1. Oktober	●	●	–	–	●	●
Barbarella (Wien, Raimund Theater)	Dienstags bis sonntags, März bis Ende 2004 Premiere: 11. März	●	–	–	–	●	●

Anmerkung der Redaktion:
ITS hat keinen eigenen Bücherdienstag. Deren Angebote beschränken sich auf den „Wochenschau & Sitzplatz" Katalog und deren Pauschalpakete.
Stand: September 2003

6737196 990009

musicals

D-Überregional , H
Erscheinung: 6 x jährlich
August-September 2003

Platzierung

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich-Nr: 17

Heft 102-Aug./Sept.

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
musicals	81669 München	k.A.	8.000	8.000	9873

THEATER		MUSICAL	PREMIERE	REGIE
Aachen	Stadttheater	**Kiss Me, Kate**	08.11.2003	Paul Esterhazy
Annaberg-Buchholz	Eduard-von-Winterstein-Theater	**Anatevka**	05.10.2003	Simone Zeisberg-Meiser
Augsburg	Theater	**Shockheaded Peter**	18.10.2003	Martina Veh
Augsburg	Theater	**Kiss Me, Kate**	08.11.2003	Ulrich Peters
Augsburg	Theater	**Annie Get Your Gun!**	26.06.2004	Reinhardt Friese
Baden-Baden	Theater	**Der kleine Horrorladen**	22.04.2004	N.N.
Baden (bei Wien)	Stadttheater	**Kiss Me, Kate**	28.02.2004	Alexandra Frankmann-Koepp
Bad Godesberg	Kleines Theater	**Zarah**	28.08.2003	Ernst Buder
Bamberg	E.T.A.-Hoffmann-Theater	**Buddy**	06.03.2004	Axel Stöcker
Berlin	BKA-Theater	**Surf Dance** (DE)	20.08.2003	Birgit Simmler
Berlin	FriedrichstadtPalast	**Revue Palast**	05.09.2003	Jürgen Nass
Berlin	Theater des Westens	**Les Misérables**	26.09.2003	James Powell
Berlin	Neuköllner Oper	**Elternabend** (Arbeitstitel / UA)	20.11.2003	Bernd Motti
Berlin	Theater am Potsdamer Platz	**Blue Man Group** (DE)	Mai 2004	N.N.
Bielefeld	Städtische Bühnen	**An The World Goes Round** (EE)	02.10.2003	Nico Rabenald
Bielefeld	Städtische Bühnen	**Starry Messenger** (UA)	28.02.2004	Nico Rabenald
Bonn	Oper der Bundesstadt	**Anatevka**	02.11.2003	Kirsten Harms
Bremen	Theater	**Kiss Me, Kate**	15.11.2003	Helmut Baumann
Bremerhaven	Stadttheater	**Assassins**	25.10.2003	Klaus Seiffert
Bruchsal	Badische Landesbühne	**Cabaret**	18.09.2003	Carsten Ramm
Bruchsal	Badische Landesbühne	**Für mich soll's rote Rosen regnen**	14.02.2004	Carsten Ramm
Castrop-Rauxel	Landestheater	**Himmel auf Erden**	22.11.2003	N.N.
Celle	Schloss-Theater	**Anatevka**	19.12.2003	Peter Ries
Chemnitz	Städtisches Theater	**My Fair Lady**	19.10.2003	Michael Heinicke
Chemnitz	Städtisches Theater	**Cabaret**	24.01.2004	Michael Heinicke
Coburg	Landestheater	**Männer**	17.01.2004	Dieter Gackstetter
Cottbus	Staatstheater	**Jesus Christ Superstar**	19.06.2004	Michael Apel
Darmstadt	Staatstheater / Kleines Haus	**The Rocky Horror Show**	20.09.2003	Michael Gruner
Darmstadt	Staatstheater / Großes Haus	**My Fair Lady**	01.11.2003	Helga Wolf
Darmstadt	Staatstheater / Kleines Haus	**Iron John** (UA)	05.06.2004	Kay Voges
Dessau	Anhaltisches Theater	**Der Zauberer von Oz**	03.10.2003	Ana Haffter
Dessau	Anhaltisches Theater	**Street Scene**	27.02.2004	Nicolas Muner
Detmold	Landestheater	**Die Fantasticks**	27.02.2004	Andreas Lachnit
Dinkelsbühl	Städtetheater	**Cyrano de Bergerac**	16.06.2004	Peter Cahn
Dortmund	Städtische Bühnen	**Die Comedian Harmonists**	28.09.2003	Dominik Wilgenbus
Dortmund	Städtische Bühnen	**West Side Story**	31.01.2004	Arthur Castro
Döbeln	Mittelsächsisches Theater	**Immer wieder sonntags**	17.01.2004	Matthias Stier
Dresden	Theater Junge Generation	**Der kleine Horrorladen**	26.09.2003	Volker Metzler
Dresden	Staatsoperette	**Can-Can**	30.01.2004	Werner Saladin
Düsseldorf	Capitol Theater / Club	**Das Mädchen Rosemarie** (UA)	Anfang 2004	Dirk Witthuhn
Eggenfelden	Theater	**Der Kuss der Spinnenfrau**	02.01.2004	Peter Nüesch

THEATER		MUSICAL	PREMIERE	REGIE
Eggenfelden	Theater	Anatevka	05.03.2004	Peter Nüesch
Eisenach	Thüringer Landestheater	Jesus Christ Superstar	11.10.2003	Manfred Straube
Erfurt	Theater	City Of Angels	20.12.2003	John Norris
Essen	Colosseum Theater	Aida	05.10.2003	Robert Falls
Esslingen	Württembergische Landesbühne	Comedian Harmonists	15.10.2003	Andreas Döring
Esslingen	Württembergische Landesbühne	Jesus Christ Superstar	03.12.2003	Peter Dolder
Frankfurt / Main	English Theatre	Jesus Christ Superstar	29.11.2003	Clive Paget
Frankfurt / Main	English Theatre	Kat And The Kings	14.05.2004	David Kramer
Freiberg	Mittelsächsisches Theater	Immer wieder sonntags	10.01.2004	Matthias Stier
Freiburg	Städtische Bühnen	My Fair Lady	06.12.2003	Roland Schwab
Gablitz	Theater 82er Haus	Blutsbrüder	Okt. 2003	Markus Richter
Gelsenkirchen	Musiktheater	Anything Goes	02.11.2003	Stefan Huber
Gelsenkirchen	Musiktheater	Nullvier (Arbeitstitel / UA)	09.05.2004	Matthias Davids
Gera	Theater	Jesus Christ Superstar	11.06.2004	N.N.
Görlitz	Theater	Wie werde ich reich und glücklich	08.11.2003	Jan-Richard Kehl
Göttingen	Junges Theater	Rio Reiser - Der Kampf ums Paradies	30.01.2004	Pit Holzwarth
Graz	Vereinigte Bühnen	Sweeney Todd	15.11.2003	Josef E. Köpplinger
Greifswald	Theater Vorpommern	Anatevka	14.10.2003	Hans Aschenbach
Hagen	Theater	The King And I	05.06.2004	Frank-Bernd Gottschalk
Halle	Opernhaus	Buddy	06.02.2004	Georg Mittendrein
Hamburg	Neue Flora	Tanz der Vampire	07.12.2003	Roman Polanski
Hamburg	Altonaer Theater	Sing! Sing! Sing! (UA)	02.08.2003	Mathias Christian Kosel
Hamburg	Schmidts TIVOLI	Heiße Ecke 24	16.09.2003	Corny Littmann
Hannover	Landesbühne	Alexis Sorbas	13.11.2003	Georg Mittendrein
Heidelberg	Rudolf-Wild-Halle Eppelheim	Der Glöckner von Notre Dame (UA)	15.08.2003	Joerg Mohr
Heilbronn	Theater	Wo meine Sonne scheint (UA)	28.09.2003	Frank Düwel
Heilbronn	Theater	Shockheaded Peter	18.10.2003	Andreas Natusius
Hildesheim	Stadttheater	Shockheaded Peter	20.12.2003	Ludmila Heilig
Hildesheim	Im theo	Babytalk	12.02.2004	N.N.
Hildesheim	Theater	Jesus Christ Superstar	03.09.2003	Gil Mehmert
Hof	Theater	Nostradamus	31.01.2004	Johannes Reidmeier
Ingolstadt	Stadttheater	My Fair Lady	13.12.2003	Dominik Wilgenbus
Innsbruck	Landestheater	Victor / Victoria	22.05.2004	Jochen Ulrich
Karlsruhe	Sandkorntheater	Mütter	14.11.2003	Fritzdieter Gerhards
Kassel	Staatstheater	West Side Story	31.01.2004	Wolfram Mehring
Kiel	Theater	Die Comedian Harmonists	01.11.2003	Daniel Karasek
Klagenfurt	Stadttheater	Fame	13.11.2003	Werner Sobotka
Koblenz	Theater der Stadt	Sekretärinnen	03.10.2003	Anthony Taylor
Köln	N.N.	Diestiny - Life is A Dance (UA)	14.02.2004	Elmar Ottenthal
Krefeld	Vereinigte Städtische Bühnen	Anything Goes	25.01.2004	Matthias Kniesbeck
Leipzig	Musikalische Komödie	The Rocky Horror Show	15.05.2004	Christian Hornef
Linz	Landestheater	Crazy For You	21.10.2003	Matthias Davids
Lübeck	Bühnen der Hansestadt	My Fair Lady	19.09.2003	Thomas Mittmann
Magdeburg	Theater	The Rocky Horror Show	13.09.2003	Craig Simmons
Mannheim	Capitol	Moulin Rouge	06.11.2003	Georg Veit
Mannheim	Nationaltheater	Cabaret	07.11.2003	N.N.
Marburg	Landestheater	Faust II. (UA)	17.10.2003	Manfred Gorr
Mönchengladbach	Vereinigte Städtische Bühnen	Anything Goes	10.10.2003	Matthias Kniesbeck
München	Komödie im Bayerischen Hof	I Have A Dream	02.06.2004	Helmuth Fuschl
München	Komödie im Bayerischen Hof	Sekretärinnen	21.07.2004	Manfred Langer
München	Deutsches Theater	Lola Montez	07.08.2003	N.N.
Münster	Städtische Bühnen	Cabaret	21.09.2003	Markus Kopf
Neuss	Landestheater	Snoopy!!!	19.09.2003	Barry L. Goldman
Neustrelitz	Landestheater	My Fair Lady	29.11.2003	N.N.
Neustrelitz	Landestheater	Sweeney Todd	27.03.2004	N.N.
Nordhausen	Bühnen der Stadt	My Fair Lady	23.01.2004	Clemens Bechtel
Osnabrück	Städtische Bühnen	West Side Story	20.09.2003	Holger Hauer
Paderborn	Westfälische Kammerspiele	Mütter	30.04.2004	Helga Wolf
Pforzheim	Stadttheater	Ein Käfig voller Narren	31.12.2003	Michael Blumenthal
Pforzheim	Stadttheater	Petticoat und Minirock	19.03.2004	N.N.

THEATER		MUSICAL	PREMIERE	REGIE
Pforzheim	Stadttheater	**Hair**	04.06.2004	N.N.
Plauen/Zwickau	Theater	**The Beautiful Game**	10.04.2004	N.N.
Regensburg	Städtische Bühnen	**Der Mann von La Mancha**	13.02.2004	Michael Blumenthal
Rostock	Sommertheater	**Heißer Sommer** (UA)	Juli 2004	N.N.
Rostock	Volkstheater	**My Fair Lady**	6.12.2003	Christian von Götz
Saarbrücken	Staatstheater	**Arena** (UA)	16.01.2004	Gerhard Weber
Schwedt	Uckermärkische Bühnen	**Swinging St. Pauli**	26.10.2003	Klaus Stephan
Senftenberg	Neue Bühne	**Die Drei von der Tankstelle**	28.11.2003	Christian Fries
Stuttgart	Komödie im Marquardt	**Heesters** (UA)	19.09.2003	Volkmar Kamm
Stuttgart	Apollo Theater	**42nd Street** (DSE)	21.11.2003	Eddy Habbema
Stuttgart	Altes Schauspielhaus	**Cabaret**	06.12.2003	Klaus Selffert
St. Gallen	Theater	**Shockheaded Peter**	19.09.2003	Anja Horst
St. Gallen	Theater	**My Fair Lady**	20.12.2003	Cusch Jung
St. Gallen	Theater	**Fame**	28.03.2004	Werner Sobotka
St. Gallen	OLMA Halle 1.1.	**Little Shop Of Horrors**	07.11.2003	Bruno Broder
St. Pölten	Stadttheater	**Kiss Me, Kate**	13.09.2003	Reinhard Hauser
Stralsund	Theater	**Anatevka**	08.10.2003	Hans Aschenbach
Steyr	Stadttheater	**Evita**	02.08.2003	Susanne Sommer
Steyr	Altes Theater	**Rocky Horror Show**	07.08.2003	Daniel Pascal
Trier	Theater	**Jesus Christ Superstar**	13.03.2004	Johannes Reitmeier
Uelzen	Theater an der Ilmenau	**Hundertwasser - Das Musical** (UA)	30.07.2004	N.N.
Wien	Metropol	**Sag beim Abschied...**	23.09.2003	Tamás Ferkay
Wien	Theater an der Wien	**Elisabeth**	01.10.2003	Harry Kupfer
Wien	Kammeroper	**Company** (ÖE)	11.12.2003	Ferdinando Chefalo
Wien	AKZENT	**Lucky Stiff**	02.10.2003	Thomas Peters
Wiesbaden	Staatstheater	**Fame**	27.09.2003	Iris Limbarth
Würzburg	Stadttheater	**Anatevka**	10.03.2004	Reinhold Röttger
Wuppertal	Theater in Cronenberg	**Hot Stuff**	30.04.2004	Ronald F. Stürzebecher

musicals

D-Überregional , H — Platzierung
Erscheinung: 6 x jährlich
August-September 2003
Heft 102-Aug./Sept.

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich-Nr: 12 375cA

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
musicals	81669 München	k.A.	8.000	8.000	9873

Blue Man Group

Wenn sich 'Cats' am 30. Januar 2004 von Berlin verabschiedet hat, wird die Produktion anschließend auf eine zweijährige Europa-Tournee gehen - erste Station soll in der Schweiz sein. Im Februar verwandelt sich das Musicaltheater am Potsdamer Platz dann wie in jedem Jahr in den Filmpalast der Berlinale, bevor im Mai 2004 die nächste Theater-Premiere stattfindet. Auf den Spielplan kommt kein Musical, sondern die Europa-Premiere der Percussion-Truppe 'Blue Man Group'. Die minimalistische Comedy-Show hat keine Handlung, sondern präsentiert drei Männer, die sich u.a. trommelnd gegenseitig mit Farbe bespritzen. In New York läuft die Performance schon über zwölf Jahre am Off-Broadway in einem 300-Plätze-Theater, in Boston und Chicago spielen Blue-Man-Group-Ableger in Theatern ähnlicher Größenordnung. Im Jahre 2000 wagte man sich erstmals in ein größeres Haus, als man in Las Vegas das feucht-farbige Vergnügen im Luxor-Hotel allabendlich zwei Mal vor jeweils 1.200 Zuschauern präsentierte. Die Produktion läuft in der Spielermetropole nach wie vor mit großem Erfolg, es dürfte also interessant sein zu beobachten, wie die Reaktionen des deutschen Publikums im 1.800-Plätze-Theater am Potsdamer Platz ausfallen werden.

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* Quelle: IVW

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Deutsche Medienbeobachtungs Agentur GmbH
Gneisenaustraße 66, 10961 Berlin, Telefon (030) 20 39 87-0, Telefax (030) 20 39 87-77
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AUSSCHNITT MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

musicals

D-Überregional , H
Erscheinung: 6 x jährlich
August-September 2003

Platzierung

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich-Nr: 8

Heft 102-Aug./Sept.

3½ SH

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LONDON

www.officialondontheatre.co.uk

Drury Lane
870 - 890 1109
Anything Goes
Previews ab 26.9.
Premiere: 07.10.

Phoenix ▲*
20 - 7369 1733
Blood Brothers

Apollo Victoria ▲
20 - 7494 5386
Bombay Dreams

Shaftesbury ▲*
870 - 906 3798
Calamity Jane
bis 20.09.

Adelphi ▲*
20 - 7344 0055
Chicago

Palladium ▲*
20 - 7344 4444
Chitty Chitty Bang Bang

Aldwych ▲*
870 - 400 0805
Fame

Victoria Palace ▲*
20 - 7834 1317
Grease
bis 06.09.

Open Air / Regent's Park ▲*
20 - 7486 2431
High Society
bis 13.09.

Cambridge ▼
870 - 890 1102
Jerry Springer - The Opera
ab 14.10.

New London ▲*
20 - 7404 4079
Joseph...

Palace ▲*
20 - 7434 0909
Les Misérables

Lyceum ▼
20 - 7344 4444
Lion King

Prince Edward ▼*
20 - 7447 5400
Mamma Mia!

Drury Lane ●*
20 - 7494 5000
My Fair Lady
bis 30.08.

Royal Festival Hall
20 - 7960 4242
On Your Toes
04.08.-06.09

Cambridge ▲*
20 - 7494 5080
Our House
bis 16.08.

Donmar Warehouse ▼
20 - 7369 1732
Pacific Overtures
bis 06.09.

Her Majesty's ▲*
20 - 7494 5400
Phantom Of The Opera, The

Strand ▲*
8870 - 060 2335
Rat Pack

Gielgud ▲*
870 - 890 1105
Tell Me On A Sunday

Shaftesbury
0870 - 906 3828
Thoroughly Modern Millie
Previews ab 11.10.
Premiere: 21.10.

Victoria Palace
0870 - 165 8787
Tonight's The Night
Previews ab 15.10.
Premiere: 06.11.

Dominion ●*
20 - 7413 1165
We Will Rock You

NEW YORK

www.playbill.com

Ford Center ▲*
307-4550
42nd Street

Palace ▲*
307-4747
Aida

John Golden ▲*
239-6200
Avenue Q

Lunt-Fontanne ▲*
307-4747
Beauty And The Beast

American Airlines ▲*
719-1300
Big River

Imperial
239-6200
Boy From Oz, The
Previews ab 16.09.
Premiere: 16.10.

Studio 54 ▲*
239-6200
Cabaret

Ambassador ▼*
239-6200
Chicago

Sam S. Shubert ▼*
239-6200
Gypsy

Neil Simon ▼
307-4100
Hairspray

New Amsterdam ▼
307-4100
Lion King, The

Virginia
239-6200
Little Shop Of Horrors
Previews ab 29.08.
Premiere: 02.10.

Cadillac Winter Garden ▼
239-6200
Mamma Mia!

Al Hirschfeld ▲*
239-6200
Man Of La Mancha
bis 31.08.

Richard Rodgers ▼*
307-4100
Movin' Out

Broadhurst
239-6200
Never Gonna Dance
Previews ab 27.10.
Premiere: 04.12.

Eugene O'Neill ▼
239-6200
Nine

Majestic ▲*
239-6200
Phantom Of The Opera, The

St. James ●
239-6200
Producers, The

Nederlander ▲*
307-4100
Rent

Plymouth
239-6200
Taboo
Previews ab 21.10.
Premiere: 13.11.

Marquis ▲*
382-0100
Thoroughly Modern Millie

Henry Miller's ●*
239-6200
Urinetown

Gershwin
307-4100
Wicked
Previews ab 07.10.
Premiere: 30.10.

▲ Karten in allen Preislagen
● Restkarten verfügbar
▼ fast ständig ausverkauft
* am Tag der Vorstellung
* Restkarten zu ermäßigten Preisen

Landestheater Burghofbühne
(02064) 4110 0
Cabaret
1./3.* August
18./21./30.* September
4./31.* Oktober

Städtische Bühnen
(0231) 502 72 22
Die Comedian Harmonists
28. September
10./15./25./28. Oktober

Capitol Theater
(00211) 73 44 0
Miami Nights
bis Ende 2003

Colosseum Theater
(01805) 114 113
Aida
ab 5. Oktober

Weststadthalle
(0201) 887 20 48
Stars in Concert
Open End

Theater
(02166) 615 11 00
Anything Goes
10. Oktober

Städtische Bühnen
(0251) 41 46 71 00
Jesus Christ Superstar
21./25./28. September
3./4./7./11./12. Oktober

Landestheater
(02131) 26 99 33
Snoopy!!!
19./20. September
12./13./15. Oktober

Schilda Halle
(0208) 86 00 72
Himmel oder Hölle
18.-21./24.-27. September

Städtische Bühnen
(0541) 323 33 14
West Side Story
20./26. September
5./17./19./21./26. Oktober

Freilichtspiele
(05482) 220
Joseph
3./9./10./17./21.-24./
28.-31. August

Theater in Cronenberg
(0202) 47 22 11
Life is Life
bis 30. Oktober

PLZ 5

Kleines Theater
(0228) 36 28 39
Zarah
26. August - 9. Oktober

Theater
(02331) 207 32 18
Kiss Me, Kate
14./24./27. September

Theater
(0261) 129 28 40
The Rocky Horror Show
24. September; 24. Oktober
Sekretärinnen
3./12./18./26. Oktober
Petticoat & Minirock
25. September
Just Try
31. Oktober

Musical Dome
(0180) 51 52 53 0
Jekyll & Hyde
Open End
Sommerpause: 4.-24. August
(0221) 57 79 0
The Rocky Horror Show
7.-24. August

PLZ 6

Staatstheater
(06151) 29 38 38
The Rocky Horror Show
20./26./28. September

Culture Club
(06181) 520 520
Non(n)sense
8.-10.* August
23.-28./30.* September
1.-5./7.-12./16. Oktober
The Taffetas
17. Oktober

Rudolf-Wild-Halle
(01805) 1705173
Der Glöckner von Notre Dame
15.-17./22.-24./29.-31. August
5.-7./12.-14. September

Pfalztheater
(06341) 52 09
Nostradamus
18./26. Oktober

Capitol
(0621) 10 10 11
Jesus Christ Superstar
3. August
Mannheimer Dschungelbuch
26. Oktober
Life is Like A Song
17. August

Staatstheater
(0681) 322 04
Les Misérables
7./13./14./17./21./26. September
5./9./11./12./15./16./18./
19./23./24. Oktober

Staatstheater
(0611) 13 23 25
Fame
27./30. September

PLZ 7

Theater
(07221) 93 27 00
Anatevka
31. August
12. September
11./12./24. Oktober

Landesbühne
(0711) 35 12 30 44
Die Comedian Harmonists
26.*/27.* September
15./17./21.*/24.* Oktober

Schlossfestspiele
(07243) 10 13 80
Ein Käfig voller Narren
5.-9./19.-21. August
Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari
1./2./12.-16./22.-24. August

Theater
(07131) 56 30 01
Wo meine Sonne scheint
28. September

Burgfestspiele
(07843) 91 23 45
Ein Käfig voller Narren
2.-6./8./10./13./14./17./20./
21./23. August

Volksschauspiele
(07222) 96 87 90
Jesus Christ Superstar
1.-3./8./9. August

Stadttheater
(07231) 39 24 40
Der kleine Horrorladen
24. Oktober

Freilichtspiele
(0791) 75 16 00
Der Zauberer von Oz
2./6./9./13./16. August

Apollo Theater
(01805) 114 113
Tanz der Vampire
bis 31. August

Palladium Theater
(01805) 114 113
Das Phantom der Oper
Open End

Komödie im Marquardt
(0711) 227 70 22
Heesters
ab 19. September

PLZ 8

Theater
(0821) 324 49 33
Shockheaded Peter
18. Oktober

Seebühne
(08051) 690 50
Thank You For The Music
1.-3. August
Elvis
9. August

Musical Theater Neuschwanstein
(01805) 30 02 00
Ludwig II.
Open End

Deutsches Theater
(089) 55 23 44 44
Lola Montez
5.-24. August
The Rocky Horror Show
ab 9. September
Hair
ab 7. Oktober

Staatstheater am Gärtnerplatz
(089) 21 85 19 60
Hello, Dolly!
19. September
18./19. Oktober

Volkmarhaus Theater
(089) 26 01 60 10
Linie 1
ab 21. Oktober

Prinzregententheater
(089) 54 81 81 81
Porgy And Bess
bis 17. August

Theater am Königssee
(01805) 72 59 72
Salzsaga
bis 26. Oktober

PLZ 9

COBURG
Landestheater
(09561) 927 42
Sekretärinnen
26./28. Oktober
Der kleine Horrorladen
18./19. Oktober

Landestheater
(03691) 25 62 19
Mein Freund Bunbury
19. September; 3. Oktober
My Fair Lady
30. August; 4. Oktober
Jesus Christ Superstar
11./12./16. Oktober

Comödie
(0911) 749340
Nonnsense
23.-30. September
1.-12. Oktober

Kubus im Goethepark
(03643) 240 00
Mephisto
1.-3./7.-10. August

TOURNEE

Arena Theater & Festspiel GmbH
Xanten (02801) 7776
www.arena-theater.de
She Loves You

Ballett, Classic & Entertainment
Hannover (0511) 399 39 60
www.bce-gastspielbuero.de
The Blues Brothers
The Rocky Horror Show
Footloose

Gastspiel- und Konzertdirektion
Gerhartz, Kiel (0431) 80 10 08
www.gastspiel-gerhartz.de
Musical Starlight
Mamma - Come Together!

Wolfgang Bocksch Concerts
Mannheim (0621) 15 80 50
www.WBC-Musical.de
Grease
Jesus Christ Superstar

Konzertdirektion Landgraf
Titisee-Neustadt (07651) 207 51
www.Landgraf.de
Anatevka
Sofies Welt

Frank Serr Showservice
Rieschweiler (06336) 83 92 81
www.showservice-international.de
Faust - Die Rockoper

ÖSTERREICH

AMSTETTEN
Musical Sommer/Eishalle
(0043-7472) 657 06
The Wild Party
1./2./7.-9./14.-16. August

Festspiele/Seebühne
(0043-5574) 40 76
West Side Story
1.-3./5.-19. August

Musicalfestival / Schloss Prugg
(0043-2162) 680 73 35
Anything Goes
7.-9./14.-16. August
Musical Gala
3./10./17. August

Musicalfestival / Stadttheater
(0043-2162) 680 73 35
Vom dicken Schwein, das dünn werden wollte
18./21.-24./27.-31. August

Wörthersee-Bühne
(0043-1) 96 09 64 05
Grease
bis 17. August

ORF - Theater
(0043-676) 515 18 00
Comedian Harmonists II
bis 30. August

LINZ
Landestheater
(0043-70) 761 14 00
Crazy For You
21./23./25./27./29./31. Oktober

ST. PÖLTEN
Stadttheater
(0043-2742) 35 20 26 19
Kiss Me, Kate
18./20./24./26. September
2./11./12./17./31. Oktober

Bühne im Hof
(0043-2742) 35 22 91
Julia & R.
23.-26. September
4. Oktober

Open Air Festival
(0043-2266) 676 89
Sag beim Abschied...
1./2./6.-9./13.-16. August

Musikfestival / Stadttheater
(0043-7252) 532 29
Evita
2./8./9./16./21.-24. August
Rocky Horror Show
7./10./14./15./17. August

Theater an der Wien
(0043-1) 58885
Elisabeth
ab 3. Oktober

Raimund Theater
(0043-1) 58885
Wake Up
ab 6. September

AKZENT
(0043-1) 501 65 33 06
Lucky Stiff
2./5./7.-10./15.-18. Oktober

Metropol
(0043-1) 407 77 407
Sag beim Abschied...
ab 23. September

Volksoper
(0043-1) 513 15 13
Anatevka
18./22./28. September
7./10./17./19./23./27./29. Oktober

SCHWEIZ

Theater
(0041-71) 242 06 06
Miss Saigon
9./12./27. September
Shockheaded Peter
19./23. September

Thuner Seespiele
(0041-848) 82 81 80
Evita
bis 30. August

City-Halle
(0041-52) 269 29 99
Space Dream
3. Oktober - 31. Dezember

BENELUX

ROTTERDAM
Nieuwe Luxor Theater
(0031-900) 300 50 00
3 Musketiers
bis 4. Januar

SCHEVENINGEN
Fortis Circustheater
(0031-900) 300 50 00
Aida
bis 3. August
The Sound Of Music
29. August - 11. Januar 2004

UTRECHT
Beatrix Theater
(0031-900) 300 50 00
Mamma Mia!
ab 28. September

TOURNEE
Infos über genaue Tourneedaten
www.musicals.nl
The Sound Of Music
bis 9. August

TSCHECH. REPUBLIK

Infos und genaue Spieldaten
www.goja.cz/lesmis
Les Misérables
www.draculamuzikal.cz
Dracula
www.kleopatra-muzikal.cz
Kleopatra
www.romeoajulie.cz
Romeo a Julie

FRANKREICH

Palais des Congrès
(0033-1) 40 68 00 05
Les Demoiselles de Rochefort
26. September - 30. Dezember

Palais des Sports
(0033-825) 038 039
Autant en emporte le vent
30. September - 2. November

Théâtre Mogador
(0033-892) 702 604
Elvis Story
5. November - 2. Januar 2004

Espace Tintin / Hippodrome d'Auteuil
(0033-892) 705 105
Tintin et le temple du soleil
19. September - 19. Oktober

Extra RB

D-Überregional , H **Platzierung**
Erscheinung: wöchentlich
26.08.2003

Nr. 2097

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich-Nr: 17 3/53A

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
RB Marketing the grey newsletter	81247 München	1.160	1.160	1.300	3022

669687799009

Stage Holding mit Messetheater auf RDA-Workshop

Premierenfieber herrscht bis Frühjahr 2004 bei Stage Holding; sie präsentiert in den Theatern und Arenen von Berlin, Essen, Stuttgart und Hamburg sechs neue Musicals und Shows. Der Erfolg LES MISERABLES wird am 26. 9. im renovierten Theater des Westens Premiere haben. Am 2. Oktober hat Holiday On Ice Weltpremiere der Diamond Tour in Hamburg; am 5. Oktober öffnet sich erstmalig der Vorhang für den Broadway-Hit AIDA im Colosseum in Essen. - *42ND STREET* wird ab 21. 11. das Publikum des Stuttgarter Apollo-Theaters verzaubern. Schaurig präsentiert sich ab 7. Dezember das Neue Flora in Hamburg, wo „Tanz der Vampire" zu sehen sein wird. Im Frühjahr 2004, direkt aus Las Vegas, kommt das Performance Theater BLUE MAN GROUP ins Theater am Potsdamer Platz.

[redacted] * Quelle: IVW

Bild

Berlin , M
Erscheinung: täglich
3.7.2003

Platzierung

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich-Nr: 10 3½ 5p

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
Bild Berlin-Brandenburg	10888 Berlin	140.903	141.834	172.596	2157
	Gesamtauflage der Gruppe:	3.976.023	3.985.503	4.715.967	2157

Cats geht und die blauen Männer kommen

Die Katzen haben ausgemaunzt! Im Januar 2004 schließt „Cats" am Potsdamer Platz. Dafür kommt ab Mai avantgardistisches Theater aus den USA! Die „Blue Man Group": Drei blaue Männer, grelle Lichteffekte, Comedy und dröhnende Musik (Rock/Drums).

„Die Show ist 1991 in New York gestartet, seitdem ein riesiger Erfolg", so Theater-Chef Jens Totschnig (39). „Jetzt läuft sie erstmals in Europa."

Die Version, die in Berlin gezeigt wird, ist die aufwändigste Variante. Sie läuft seit 2000 in Las Vegas. 13 Mal pro Woche, immer ausverkauft. Was ist zu sehen? Die stummen blauen Männer spielen mit dem Publikum. Werfen Farbe, Toilettenpapier, Marshmellows. Mal kindisch, mal rührend – nie langweilig. Das Stück hat den Theater-Oscar „Tony" erhalten, die erste CD „Audio" Gold.

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Neues Deutschland

D-Überregional , H
Erscheinung: täglich
3.7.2003

Platzierung

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich-Nr: 16

3155 A

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
Neues Deutschland	10245 Berlin	53.746	54.532	61.594	5007

Blue Man Group

(ddp). Die amerikanische Blue Man Group kommt mit ihrer Unterhaltungsshow nach Berlin. Der Musicalveranstalter Stage Holding holt die Künstler ans Theater am Potsdamer Platz, hieß es gestern. Die Europa-Premiere sei für Mai 2004 geplant. Die Spielzeit ist den Angaben zufolge auf ein Jahr begrenzt.

Die Blue Man Group biete Multi-Media-Performance. Der Zuschauer erlebe eine atemberaubende Verbindung aus Popmusik, Comedy-Elementen, Kunst und Wissenschaft. Alle verwendeten Musikinstrumente und Lichteffekte seien extra für die Show entwickelt worden.

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BERLINER KURIER

Berlin , H **Platzierung**
Erscheinung: täglich
7.7.2003

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich-Nr: 6

3755A

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
Berliner Kurier	10178 Berlin	139.561	140.614	186.661	5031

Blau glänzend wie in Lack getaucht - das ist die äußerst musikalische Blue Man Group. Foto: AP

lassen es krachen

Die Blauen Männer kommen! Das Licht zuckt in atemberaubenden Rhythmus, durch die Halle wabert der Sound selbst geschaffener Instrumente. Und dann sind sie da. Comedy, Slapstick wie von einem anderen Stern. Personen werden mal real, mal per Computer animiert einbezogen.

In den USA sind die Blauen Männer längst Kult, jetzt kommen sie nach Berlin, lösen die Katzen am Potsdamer Platz ab. „Cats" gehen ab kommenden Januar auf Europa-Tournee. Dann geben die Blau-Männer, die TV-Zuschauer bereits aus der Intel-Pentium-Werbung kennen, sich die Ehre.

Groß, schlank, blau glänzend - wie in Lack getaucht, ein wenig verrückt und äußerst musikalisch. So werden sie beschrieben. Eine völlig irre Multi-Media-Performance, ein völlig neues Produkt in Sachen Unterhaltung. Zuschauer sollen eine atemberaubende Verbindung aus Pop, Comedy, Kunst, Licht erleben.

Wer steckt hinter den Masken? Die drei Kumpels Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton und Chris Wink haben vor 15 Jahren als Straßenkünstler angefangen - und den Blue Man kreiert. „Wir hatten keine Ahnung, dass wir auf so viel Zuspruch stoßen." Inzwischen wurde aus der Blau-Männer-Gruppe ein unabhängiges Unternehmen mit mehreren hundert Mitarbeitern. Zur Zeit läuft eine Casting-Tour quer durch Europa, um die besten Blue Man zu finden. „Das müssen Menschen mit herausragenden Schlagzeugfähigkeiten, einem großen komödiantischen Talent und einer enormen physischen Fitness sein", sagt Chris Wink.

Die Stage Holding holt die Show nach Berlin. Geschäftsführer Maik Klokow: „Unglaublich viel Emotion, Innovation und Mut - selten hat mich eine Show so tief beeindruckt und bestens unterhalten." Er ist sicher, Berlin wird vor Wonne Kopf stehen.

Wenn erst „Terminator 3" über deutsche Kinoleinwände tobt, wird auch das hiesige Publikum die erste internationale Single der Blue Man Group hören: The Current ist unüberhörbarer Bestandteil des Films und wird von Gavon Rossdale (Bush) gesungen. Der Video-Clip ist dazu auf den Musiksendern MTV und VIVA zu sehen.

Casting Termine sind in Berlin am 5./6. August; Infos *www.stageholding.de*

TRAVEL talk

D-Überregional , H
Erscheinung: wöchentlich
07.07.2003

Platzierung

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich-Nr: 2 3755A

Nr. 28

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
Travel Talk	22041 Hamburg	k.A.	36.872	37.027	7659

NEWS

Mehr Geld bei Verspätung
Fluggäste erhalten schon ab 2004 mehr Geld, wenn sie ungewollt am Boden bleiben. Das EU-Parlament hat die Entschädigungen neu festgelegt: 250 Euro für Flüge bis 1500 Kilometer und zwei Stunden Wartezeit, 400 Euro bis 3500 Kilometer und drei Stunden und 600 Euro für Langstrecken und vier Stunden.

TUI ohne Alpitour?
Die TUI erwägt offenbar einen Rückzug aus Italien. Im Zuge des Sparkurses steht auch die Beteiligung am Veranstalter Alpitour auf dem Prüfstand. TUI ist seit zwei Jahren mit zehn Prozent an dem Unternehmen beteiligt.

Gexx nach Hannover
Billigflieger Germania Express (Gexx) zieht von Berlin nach Hannover, um. In der niedersächsischen Landeshauptstadt entstehen so 50 neue Arbeitsplätze.

Ameropa: mehr Bahn & Bett
Bahnveranstalter Ameropa verlängert sein Bahn-&-Bett-Angebot bis zum 31. August. Es umfasst Reisen in 26 Städte zu Preisen ab 74 Euro für Bahnanreise und eine Übernachtung.

Blue Man Group ersetzt „Cats"
Im Theater am Potsdamer Platz in Berlin halten im nächsten Frühjahr blaue Männer Einzug: Die Blue Man Group aus New York – bekannt aus der Intel-Werbung – gastiert mit ihrer aufregenden Show für ein Jahr. Das Erfolgsmusical „Cats" läuft am 30. Januar 2004 aus.

Blaue Männer aus New York

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Thema Nr: 990.009
Anstrich-Nr: 17

Die untenstehende Meldi
erschienen.

Potsdamer Neueste Nacl

Blaue Glatzen statt bunter Katzen

Der Unterhaltungs-Konzern Stage-Holding nimmt „Cats" 2004 vom Spielplan und streicht die Musicals am Potsdamer Platz. Stattdessen kommt die „Blue Man Group"

VON MATTHIAS OLOEW UND BJÖRN SEELING

Die Tage des Musicals im Theater am Potsdamer Platz sind gezählt. Denn nach „Cats" zeigt der Unterhaltungskonzern Stage Holding dort eine Show, in der weder gesungen noch gesprochen wird. Die Blue Man Group, so heißt der Titel der Produktion, ist eine Mischung aus Multimedia-Performance, Comedy, Pop-Musik und „Stomp"-artiger Trommelei. Markenzeichen der Truppe ist ihr blaues, lackglänzendes Outfit. In den USA sind die Blauen Kult, füllen Tag für Tag Theater in Las Vegas, Chicago oder New York. Hierzulande kennt man sie höchstens aus der Fernsehwerbung für Computerchips.

„Die Show ist eine Europapremiere", sagt Stage-Geschäftsführer Maik Klokow dem Tagesspiegel, auch weil Chris Wink, Mitbegründer der Blue-Man-Group dorthin wollte. „Er wollte unbedingt in Berlin auftreten." Für Klokow kam das wie gerufen – das Musical „Cats" ist dann anderthalb Jahre rund 500 Vorstellungen gelaufen, und ein so großes Haus wie das Theater am Potsdamer Platz braucht ein neues Zugpferd.

BLAUGEMACHT. Die „Blue Man Group" löst im kommenden Jahr „Cats" im Theater am Potsdamer Platz ab. Damit geht dort die Zeit des Musicals zu Ende. Fotos: AP / ddp

Im April 2004 soll die Blue Man Group in Berlin Premiere feiern. Etwa ein Jahr lang soll die Show laufen. In dem Haus wird auch die aufwändige Technik reaktiviert, die eigens für das Stück „Der Glöckner von Notre Dame" eingebaut worden war. Mit der Disney-Produktion wurde das Theater 1999 als Musicalbühne eröffnet.

Hinter den blauen Männern stehen drei Freunde, die vor 15 Jahren als Straßenkünstler angefangen haben. Inzwischen ist aus ihrer Drei-Mann-Truppe ein Unternehmen mit mehreren hundert Mitarbeitern geworden, das auch für den neuesten „Terminator"-Film gearbeitet hat: Die Blue Man Group steuerte einen Filmsong bei. Das Video dazu läuft derzeit auf MTV und Viva. Klokow erklärt: „Die Show wird eine Bereicherung für den Entertainment-Markt in Berlin, etwas Vergleichbares gibt es noch nicht."

Den Spielort Potsdamer Platz hat Klokow nach eigenen Angaben auch deshalb ausgesucht, weil „das futuristische Zentrum des neuen Berlins sehr gut zu der Show passt", die sich „sehr am Mainstream orientiert", also in seinen Augen kein Problem haben wird, das große Haus zu füllen.

Mit der Blue-Man-Group verbreitert die Stage-Holding ihr Angebot. „Unser Kerngeschäft bleibt das Musical", sagt Klokow, „aber wir werden uns in Zukunft breiter aufstellen." Neben Shows wie der Blue Man Group oder „De la Guarda", mit der die Stage-Holding im Frühjahr in Reinickendorf gastierte, kann sich Klokow auch den Einstieg seiner Firma in den Tourneetheater-Markt vorstellen. „Dafür fehlen uns derzeit aber noch die Partner."

Die Stage-Holding lässt derweil weiter am Theater des Westens werkeln. Im September soll dort das Musical „Les Miserables" Premiere feiern. Die Proben beginnen im August. Zurzeit wird das Traditionstheater an der Kantstraße für einen einstelligen Millionenbetrag umgebaut. Um das auch nach außen deutlich zu machen, wird das ganze Haus am kommenden Wochenende verhüllt, ähnlich wie seinerzeit das Brandenburger Tor. Die Hülle wird neben der Fassade des Hauses auch Szenen aus „Les Miserables" zeigen, dahinter wird die Fassade des Baus saniert.

Cats verabschiedet sich im Januar 2004 nach fast 20 Jahren aus Deutschland: Die berühmtesten Katzen der Welt werden auf Europa-Tournee geschickt. Das nächste Mal werden Grizabella, Munkustrap & Co. in der Schweiz miauen.

POTSDAMER Neueste Nachrichten

Brandenburg , H Platzierung
Erscheinung: täglich
15.7.2003

t	Auflage verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
27	11.188	13.875	5005

POTSDAMER Neueste Nachrichten
Brandenburg, H
Erscheinung: täglich
15.7.2003
Platzierung

Thema Nr: 990.009
Anstrich-Nr: 17

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
Potsdamer Neueste Nachrichten	14467 Potsdam	10.727	11.188	13.875	5005

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Blaue Glatzen statt bunter I

Der Unterhaltungs-Konzern Stage-Holding nimmt „Cats" 2004 vom Spielplan und streicht die Musicals am Potsc

VON MATTHIAS OLOEW UND BJÖRN SEELING

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BLAUGEMACHT. Die „Blue Man Group" löst im kommenden Jahr „Cats" im Theater am Potsdamer Platz ab. Damit geht dort die Zeit des Music

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Thema Nr: 990.009
Anschrift-Nr: 12

Die untenstehende Me
erschienen.
Der Tagesspiegel

Blaue Glatzen statt bunter Katzen

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Mit der Blue-Man-Group verbreitert die Stage-Holding ihr Angebot. „Unser Kerngeschäft bleibt das Musical", sagt Klokow, „aber wir werden uns in Zukunft breiter aufstellen." Neben Shows wie der Blue Man Group oder „De la Guarda", mit der die Stage-Holding im Frühjahr in Reinickendorf gastierte, kann sich Klokow auch den Einstieg seiner Firma in den Tourneetheater-Markt vorstellen. „Dafür fehlen uns derzeit aber noch die Partner."

Die Stage-Holding lässt derweil weiter am Theater des Westens werkeln. Im September soll dort das Musical „Les Miserables" Premiere feiern. Die Proben beginnen im August. Zurzeit wird das Traditionstheater an der Kantstraße für einen einstelligen Millionenbetrag umgebaut. Um das auch nach außen deutlich zu machen, wird das ganze Haus am kommenden Wochenende verhüllt, ähnlich wie seinerzeit das Brandenburger Tor. Die Hülle wird neben der Fassade des Hauses auch Szenen aus „Les Miserables" zeigen, dahinter wird die Fassade des Baus saniert.

Cats verabschiedet sich im Januar 2004 nach fast 20 Jahren aus Deutschland: Die berühmtesten Katzen der Welt werden auf Europa-Tournee geschickt. Das nächste Mal werden Grizabella, Munkustrap & Co. in der Schweiz miauen.

DER TAGESSPIEGEL

Berlin , S
Erscheinung: täglich
15.7.2003

Platzierung

Auflage	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
ft	145.420	178.143	1330
132			

DER TAGESSPIEGEL

Berlin , S **Platzierung**
Erscheinung: täglich
15.7.2003

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich-Nr: 12

3755A

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
Der Tagesspiegel	10785 Berlin	139.332	145.420	178.143	1330

6949777990009

Blaue Glatzen statt bunter Kat

Der Unterhaltungs-Konzern Stage-Holding nimmt „Cats" 2004 vom Spielplan und streicht die Musicals am Potsdamer Pl

BLAUGEMACHT: Die „Blue Man Group" löst im kommenden Jahr „Cats" im Theater am Potsdamer Platz ab. Damit geht dort die Zeit des Musicals zu End

VON MATTHIAS OLOEW UND BJÖRN SEELING

Die Tage des Musicals im Theater am Potsdamer Platz sind gezählt. Denn nach „Cats" zeigt der Unterhaltungskonzern Stage Holding dort eine Show, in der weder gesungen noch gesprochen wird. Die Blue Man Group, so heißt der Titel der Produktion, ist eine Mischung aus Multimedia-Performance, Comedy, Pop-Musik und „Stomp"-artiger Trommelei. Markenzeichen der Truppe ist ihr blaues, lackglänzendes Outfit. In den USA sind die Blauen Kult, füllen Tag für Tag Theater in Las Vegas, Chicago oder New York. Hierzulande kennt man sie höchstens aus der Fernsehwerbung für Computerchips.

„Die Show ist eine Europapremiere", sagt Stage-Geschäftsführer Maik Klokow dem Tagesspiegel, auch weil Chris Wink, Mitbegründer der Blue-Man-Group dorthin wollte. „Er wollte unbedingt in Berlin auftreten." Für Klokow kam das wie gerufen – das Musical „Cats" ist dann anderthalb Jahre rund 500 Vorstellungen gelaufen, und ein so großes Haus wie das Theater am Potsdamer Platz braucht ein neues Zugpferd.

Im April 2004 soll die Blue Man Group in Berlin Premiere feiern. Etwa ein Jahr lang soll die Show laufen. In dem Haus wird auch die aufwändige Technik reaktiviert, die einst für das Stück „Der Glöckner von Notre Dame" eingebaut worden war. Mit der Disney-Produktion wurde das Theater 1999 als Musicalbühne eröffnet.

Hinter den blauen Männern stehen drei Freunde, die vor 15 Jahren als Straßenkünstler angefangen haben. Inzwischen ist aus ihrer Drei-Mann-Truppe ein Unternehmen mit mehreren hundert Mitarbeitern geworden, das auch für den neuesten „Terminator"-Film gearbeitet hat: Die Blue Man Group steuerte einen Filmsong bei. Das Video dazu läuft derzeit auf MTV und Viva. Klokow erklärt: „Die Show wird eine Bereicherung für den Entertainment-Markt in Berlin, etwas Vergleichbares gibt es noch nicht."

Den Spielort Potsdamer Platz hat Klokow nach eigenen Angaben auch deshalb ausgesucht, weil „das futuristische Zentrum des neuen Berlins sehr gut zu der Show passt". die sich also in s wird, da Mit d Stage-H schäft 1 „aber wi stellen."

BERLINER MORGENPOST

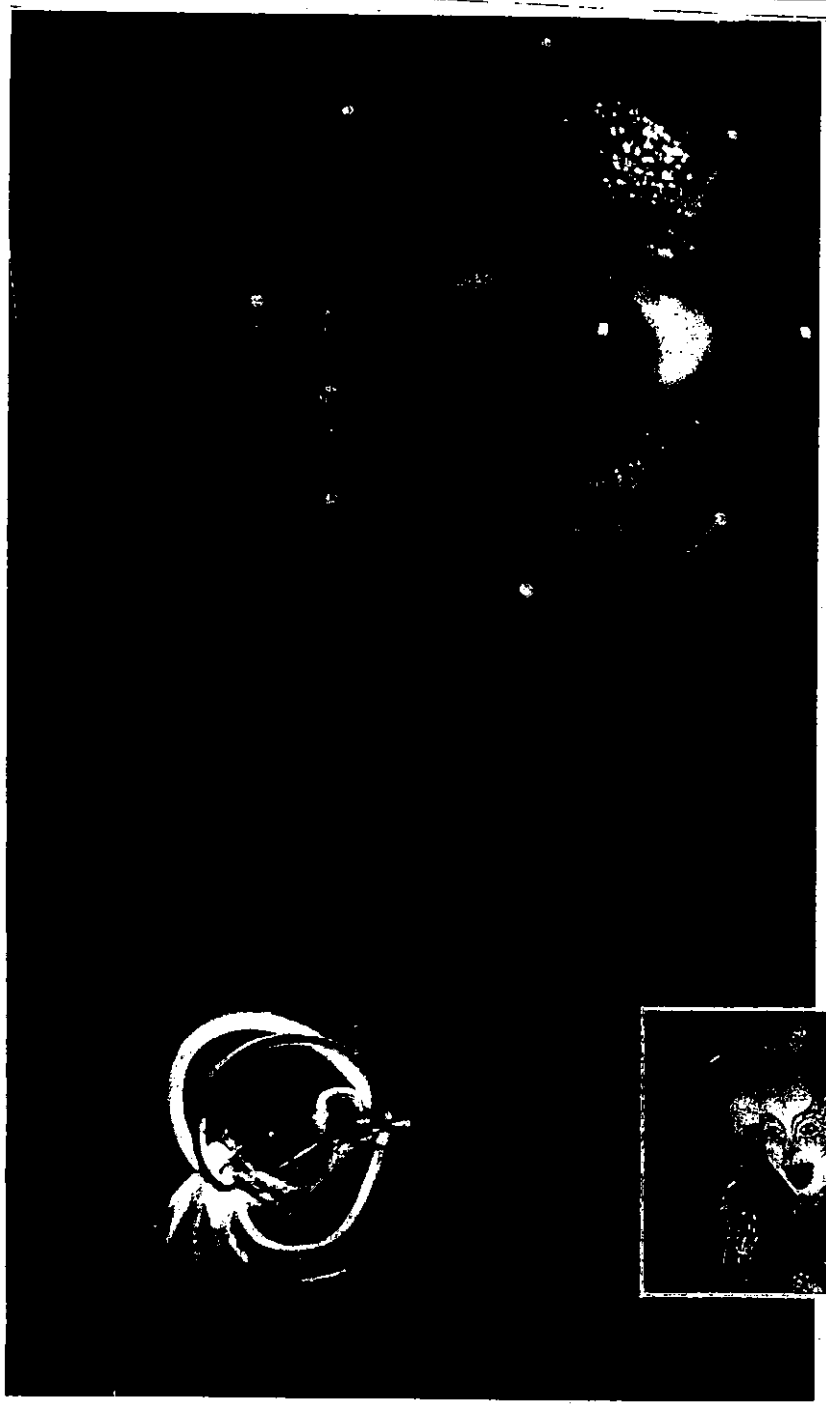
Berlin , S
Erscheinung: täglich
16.7.2003

Platzierung

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich-Nr: 22 3755A

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
Berliner Morgenpost	10888 Berlin	149.937	162.606	182.280	1234



Futuristische Multimedia-Show der Blue Man Group löst Cats ab

Die Katzen werden von den blauen Männern abgelöst. Nach anderthalb Jahren und 500 Vorstellungen verabschiedet sich das Musical „Cats" im Januar vom Potsdamer Platz. Im Mai hat dann das aufregende Spektakel der Blue Man Group in Berlin Premiere. Die beliebte Show ist zurzeit in Las Vegas, Chicago oder New York zu sehen. In den USA ist die Blue Man Group längst Kult. Jetzt verpflichtete das Theater am Potsdamer Platz den Renner aus Übersee.

Chris Wink, **Matt Goldman** und **Phil Stanton**, drei ehemalige Straßenkünstler, entwickelten die Multi-Media-Performance, eine Mischung aus Popmusik, Entertainment, Kunst, Wissenschaft und Comedy. „Selten hat mich eine Show so tief beeindruckt." **Maik Klokow**, Geschäftsführer der Stage Holding, freut sich, diese tolle Show nach Berlin zu bringen. „Dann ist der Potsdamer Platz um ein Ereignis reicher." Im Gegensatz zum Vorgänger Stella will die Stage Holding öfter mal etwas Neues auf die Bühne bringen.

Einen Vorgeschmack auf den Sound der drei blauen Männer gibt es bereits in Arnold Schwarzeneggers Film „Terminator 3". Die Single-Auskopplung von ihren Album „The Complex" soll im September auf den deutschen Markt kommen. Das Video dazu läuft bereits auf MTV und „Viva". *rit*

Die „Blue Man Group" verdrängt mit ihrer futuristischen Multimedia-Show das Musical „Cats". Europapremiere ist im Mai im Theater am Potsdamer Platz Fotos: Brian Jones(1), TM

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Hamburg , H
Erscheinung: täglich
16.7.2003

Platzierung

Thema Nr: 990.009
Anstrich-Nr: 8

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
Hamburger Morgenpost	22763 Hamburg	111.497	112.202	151.157	6077

TELEGRAMM

Die »Cats« verlassen Berlin

BERLIN Der Unterhaltungskonzern Stage-Holding nimmt nach einem Bericht des Berliner „Tagesspiegels" das Musical „Cats" Anfang 2004 vom Spielplan. Stattdessen soll die amerikanische „Blue Man Group", eine Multimedia-Performance-Gruppe, ab April 2004 auftreten.

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Berlin , M **Platzierung**
Erscheinung: täglich
16.7.2003

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich-Nr: 12 3755H

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
Bild Berlin-Brandenburg	10888 Berlin	140.903	141.834	172.596	2157
	Gesamtauflage der Gruppe:	3.976.023	3.985.503	4.715.967	2157

6956429990009

Casting für neue Show. Blaue Männer gesucht!

Es ist Berlins verrückteste Stellenanzeige: Sie müssen sich mit Glatze mögen, jeden Abend blau anmalen lassen – und Dinge mit dem Mund fangen können! Das Musical-Theater am Potsdamer Platz sucht Darsteller für die „Blue Man Group". Die Show aus den USA, die ab Mai läuft.

Am 5./6. August ist Casting in Berlin, parallel in sechs anderen Städten (Infos ☎ 040/31 18 61 16). Die Bewerber müssen 1,77 bis 1,90 Meter groß sein. Hervorragende Drummer und Schauspieler, dazu sehr sportlich.

„Die Rolle ist körperlich anstrengend", sagt Casting-Direktor Christoph Drewitz (24). „Schwere Instrumente, warme schwarze Anzüge, immer Farbe im Gesicht." Wer sich keine Glatze scheren lassen will, bekommt die Haare mit Latex überdeckt. Stimme? „Egal. Die blauen Männer sprechen nie." Gehalt? „Verhandlungssache."

Die Blue Man Group spielt seit 1991 in den USA, drehte Werbespots für Intel, schrieb Musik für „Terminator 3" (als Video auf MTV).

Die „Blue Man Group" ersetzt nächstes Jahr „Cats"

new business

D-Überregional , H Platzierung
Erscheinung: wöchentlich
21.07.2003
Nr. 30

Thema Nr: 990.009
Anstrich-Nr: 8

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
New Business	22359 Hamburg	1.476	1.750	1.854	3005

JUNG & HUNGRIG

Eine Übersicht über Nachwuchs-Agenturen

Beim Stöhnen auch der großen und etablierten Agenturen stellt sich die Frage, wie denn die Nachwuchswerber durchs Leben kommen. Von denen stellten wir im November 2002 im ‚new business Report' **Agenturmacher – jung & hungrig** einige hoffnungsvolle Agenturgründungen vor. Jetzt ist es an der Zeit, Rückschau zu halten. Die gute Nachricht: Bei keiner der vorgestellten 14 Agenturen ist das Licht ausgegangen. Im Schnitt wird der Umsatz zum Vorjahr (Vergleich Zeitraum 1. Halbjahr) in etwa gehalten, aber Ausreißer nach oben sind auch nicht zu beobachten. Das wiederum heißt, dass sich nur ganz langsam eine neue junge Basis bildet, die mal in die Lage kommen könnte, in die zweite Liga der klassischen Agenturen um Aimaq Rapp Stolle, Butter, Grabarz & Partner, Kolle Rebbe, Philipp und Keuntje sowie weigertpirouzwolf vorzustoßen.

Einer der Hoffnungsträger heißt **Saint Elmo's**. In München gegründet, fusioniert die Agentur mit Waitz Lohr van Horn in Berlin, wird vom Jahrbuch der Werbung (Econ Verlag) zur ‚Newcomer Agentur 2002' gekürt und gewinnt neue Kunden wie Antenne Bayern und den Möbelhändler KARE. Mit ihrer KARE-Kampagne, die die Werbung anderer Unternehmen verballhornt, bringt sich die Agentur ins Gespräch. Ebenfalls in München zuhause ist die Agentur Q. Trotz der Liquidierung ihres Kunden Versum, der 30 % des Umsatzes einbrachte, kann der Geschäftsumfang stabil gehalten werden. Das erreicht **Q** dank Neugeschäft vom Fremdsprachenspezialisten Pons, Kinderausstatter Schlichting, Advanced Medien und der Schuhhandelskette Bartu. Nach dem Motto 'Jetzt erst recht noch besser sein' hat Agenturgründer und Chefberater Philipp Kohlmey den CD Art Lars Oehlschlaeger von Aimaq Rapp Stolle geholt. CD Text ist unverändert Hans Neubert.

In Hamburg sorgt die vor zwei Jahren gegründete Agentur **Feuer auf St. Pauli** für frischen Wind. Die beiden geschäftsführenden Gesellschafter Roman Reimer (Beratung) und Kai Flemming (Kreation) gewinnen ganz frisch E.on Hanse, das aus Hein Gas und Schleswag fusionierte Versorgungsunternehmen. Zusammen mit den anderen Gewinnen bonprix, Brigitte young miss und einem Projekt der Deutschen Bahn wächst das Geschäft um 20 %, so dass jetzt drei neue Mitarbeiter eingestellt werden (16 insgesamt). König & Schroeder, ebenfalls in Hamburg, brach entzwei und es entstanden **König & Engländer** und **Straight Communications**. Bianca König führt das Musical-Werbegeschäft für die Stage Holding, das sie früher gemeinsam mit Jens Schroeder auf die Beine stellte, seit Anfang des Jahres mit dem aus England stammenden Partner James Charrington weiter. Nicht nur dass König & Engländer im angestammten Musik-Business stark ist (Betreuung neuer Musicals wie Aida in Essen oder Blue Man Group in Berlin), die Agentur gewinnt gegen Kolle Rebbe und Grabarz & Partner das Space Center Bremen als neuen Kunden und verdoppelt außerdem ihren Profit.

Die **holthausengroup**, Hamburg, lebt vor allem vom Schub ihrer Agentur für PR, ad publica. Hier wurden elf neue Leute eingestellt. Mit deren Hilfe bewältigt PR-Gf Torsten Panzer das Neugeschäft, das vor allem von Unilever (Knorr, Dextro Energy, Coral), Otto Reisen und Talkline kommt. Einen PR-Award gab's für die beste Publicity-Kampagne (Kunde: Ostseebäderverband Schleswig-Holstein). Einen Mitarbeiterzuwachs um sechs auf 22 und eine Umsatzsteigerung um 25 % meldet die Kölner Agentur **so**. Erzielt wurde das Wachstum vor allem mit dem Kunden Camel. Ausbauen konnte die Agentur ihr Angebot im Bereich Lifestyle- und Szene-Kommunikation durch Werbe- und PR-Arbeit z.B. für Philip Morris (Basic) und Cosmopolitan Cosmetics (bruno banani). **GBK Heye**, München, ging im Frühjahr 2001 als Ableger von Heye & Partner an den Start. In der Agentur ➤

Out
Thursday 1 May 2003
21

Monthly
page rate
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212 242 8100

Blue Man Group (BB106-4)

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Page 1 of 1

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

In this column, I have often pointed out the ways in which GLBT folk are disfavored in the world—the legal, social, and religious limitations placed on us for happening to have a particular sexual orientation.

This month, I'd like to dwell on an advantage, at least for gay men: We can wear makeup.

I know, I know. By saying this, I seem to lend support to a stereotype—that all gay men are effeminate. Aside from the fact that a few of us are (and good!), the real ignorance here is the notion that makeup is a female preserve and thus gay. I started thinking about this misperception after reading our cover story last month on Ewan McGregor, who confessed that he enjoys sporting eyeliner when he leaves the house.

But what about the nonperformer types? Well, there are still plenty of places in the world where face-painting for men, at least on ritualistic occasions denoting masculine prowess, is very much expected—a practice we find every time we turn on a football game and see fans slathered in Blue Man Group blue and whooping it up for the camera.

What about getting away with face-painting at school or the office? Well, that's where being gay is a blessing. If the world makes the ridiculous assumption that being a gay man is feminine or being a lesbian is masculine, we may as well capitalize on it if we choose. Why not dive into the Max Factor? And why don't lesbians don tailored men's clothing of the type chosen by *Out*'s fashion editor, Sam Spector, for the layout beginning on page 66, and fire dagger eyes at anyone who gets near them with a makeup brush?

Gay men have enjoyed such liberties of appearance for decades, at least in New York and San Francisco, and statistics now say that at least some straight guys are taking advantage too. They may prefer face creams to eyeliners, but believe me, the move from moisturizer to mascara is a mere step to the left at the cosmetics counter.

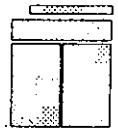
Still, most middle-class American straight guys are too insecure about gender roles to admit raiding their wives' or girlfriends' vanity cases. If they are tempted, they sometimes turn to us for help. (An upcoming reality show, *The Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, will be devoted to just this kind of advice.) Even so, it doesn't surprise me that none of the magazines that cater to straight men have devoted themselves to a makeover theme, as *Out* does this month. It would be too risky.

We held a makeover contest, asking readers to send us their "before"-type photos so we could find someone to mold and shape into a cover guy. Unlike a few women's magazines I know, we didn't cheat by using people from New York modeling agencies and pretending they were still living back in their hometowns. We wanted the real deal—and we got it: entries from throughout the world. We even received an entry from one of the gay clowns featured on page 21. The winner, Troy Inman, is from Georgia. He holds two master's degrees, and when he came to New York for a cover shoot, it was quickly apparent that this wasn't his first time at the urban rodeo.

Though Troy is the beneficiary of the best new grooming products as well as some wardrobe items, we don't present him wearing lipstick and rouge. But we could have, I suppose, and I wager that he'd still have gotten fan mail. One of the great things about being gay is that you don't have to be a Ewan McGregor or a masculine ritualist to make yourself up as outrageously as you damn please. You'll not only get away with it—you'll probably find someone who thinks you're beautiful.

BRENDAN LEMON EDITOR IN CHIEF

out.com For more of Lemon's columns, visit our Web site.



stereoplay

D-Überregional, H Platzierung
Erscheinung: monatlich
4/2002
April 2002

Thema Nr: 990.9

3755A

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
Stereoplay	70174 Stuttgart	50.255	52.533	78.329	1805

Die

weltexklusiv

KEF ist bei der Entwicklung des neuen Koaxial-Chassis ein Quantensprung gelungen

Diese Box hat ein Problem", spottete ein US-amerikanischer Händler auf der diesjährigen CES in Las Vegas: „Sie sieht aus wie eine B&W." Der Mann hat Recht. Dieses wunderschön nach hinten abgerundete Gehäuse, die feine Verarbeitung, diese elegante Mittelton-Gehäuse-Applikation auf dem Deckel mit dem Hochtöner on top – die KEF-Designer haben offensichtlich genau hingeschaut, wie das vergleichbare Erfolgsmodell der 5000-Euro-Klasse aussieht: Die Linienführung der 203 von KEF ähnelt der B&W 803 doch schon recht stark...

Ob sich das allerdings zu einem Problem für die hübsche Reference auswächst, bleibt abzuwarten. Denn: Gutes darf man ruhig kopieren. Und technisch ist die KEF sowieso ein eigenständiges Produkt. Dafür sorgt allein schon ihr Koaxial-Treiber, das bekannte, KEF-typische Uni-Q-Chassis.

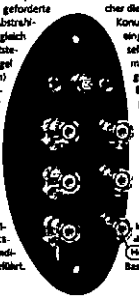
Schon seit Jahren teilen die Briten an dieser Kombination aus Tiefmittel- und Hochtöner (siehe Aufbau nächste Seite). Das Prinzip hat zwei dicke Pluspunkte. Erstens: Es ist die oft geforderte Punktschallquelle, deren Abstrahlverhalten zu allen Seiten gleich ist. Zweitens: Die Schall-Entstehungszentren (in der Regel sind das die Schwingspulen) von Hoch- und Tiefmitteltöner liegen exakt auf einer Ebene – die beste Gewähr dafür, dass die Schwingungen beider Treiber zeitgleich an unsere Ohren gelangen, das vielbeschworene „Timing" also perfekt ist.

Warum präferieren dann nicht alle Hersteller Koaxialsysteme? Nun, Nachteile gibt's leider ebenfalls zu Hauf. Für den Hochtöner wirkt der umgebende Konus wie ein Horn – das sich allerdings durch die Hubbewegungen ständig verändert und so die Hochtonsignale fies moduliert. Zudem ergibt sich durch Reflexionen am Hornmund stets eine unschöne Auslöschung, ein Einbruch im Frequenzgang, der, abhängig von der Größe der Kalotte, hier um 11000 Hertz liegt. Darum klangen die ersten Uni-Q-Modelle von KEF etwas nasal...

Doch mit der nun fünften Generation für die Reference-Linie ist den Entwicklern ein „Uni-Quantensprung" gelungen. Mit neuen Membranmaterialien (hochdämpfendes Polymer für den Konus, Titan für die Hochtonkalotte) schufen sie eine exzellente Basis. Aber auch konstruktiv bewegten sie einiges.

Als stark klangbeeinträchtigendes Moment machten die Briten Energie-Reflexionen der Mitteltonmembran-Einspannung aus, an der Sicke. Und zwar sind diese Reflexionen umso dauerhafter, je weicher diese Sicke ausgelegt ist. Der Konus des Uni-Q ist bockelhart eingespannt und bewegt sich selbst bei hohen Pegeln nur minimal. Auch dies ist eine gedankliche Anleihe bei B&W, die mit ihren honiggelben, sickenlosen Kevlar-Mitteltönern der Nautilus-Serie seit Jahren so verfahren.

Wenig Hub bedeutet wenig Tiefbass, der Uni-Q der Reference-Serie arbeitet deshalb erst ab



Das ist Referenz: Die Tri-Wiring-Anschlüsse sind mit CE-konformen, dennoch highendigen WBT-Buchsen ausgeführt.

In kritischen Räumen erlaubt die KEF 203 über verschiedene Hochpassfilter eine sinnvolle Bassanpassung.

* Quelle: IVW

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AUSSCHNITT MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

(3)

video

D-Überregional , H
Erscheinung: monatlich
Februar 2003

Platzierung

Nr. 2

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich-Nr: 33

3755A

5

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
Video	70174 Stuttgart	81.425	83.584	169.579	3505

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[redacted] * Quelle: IVW

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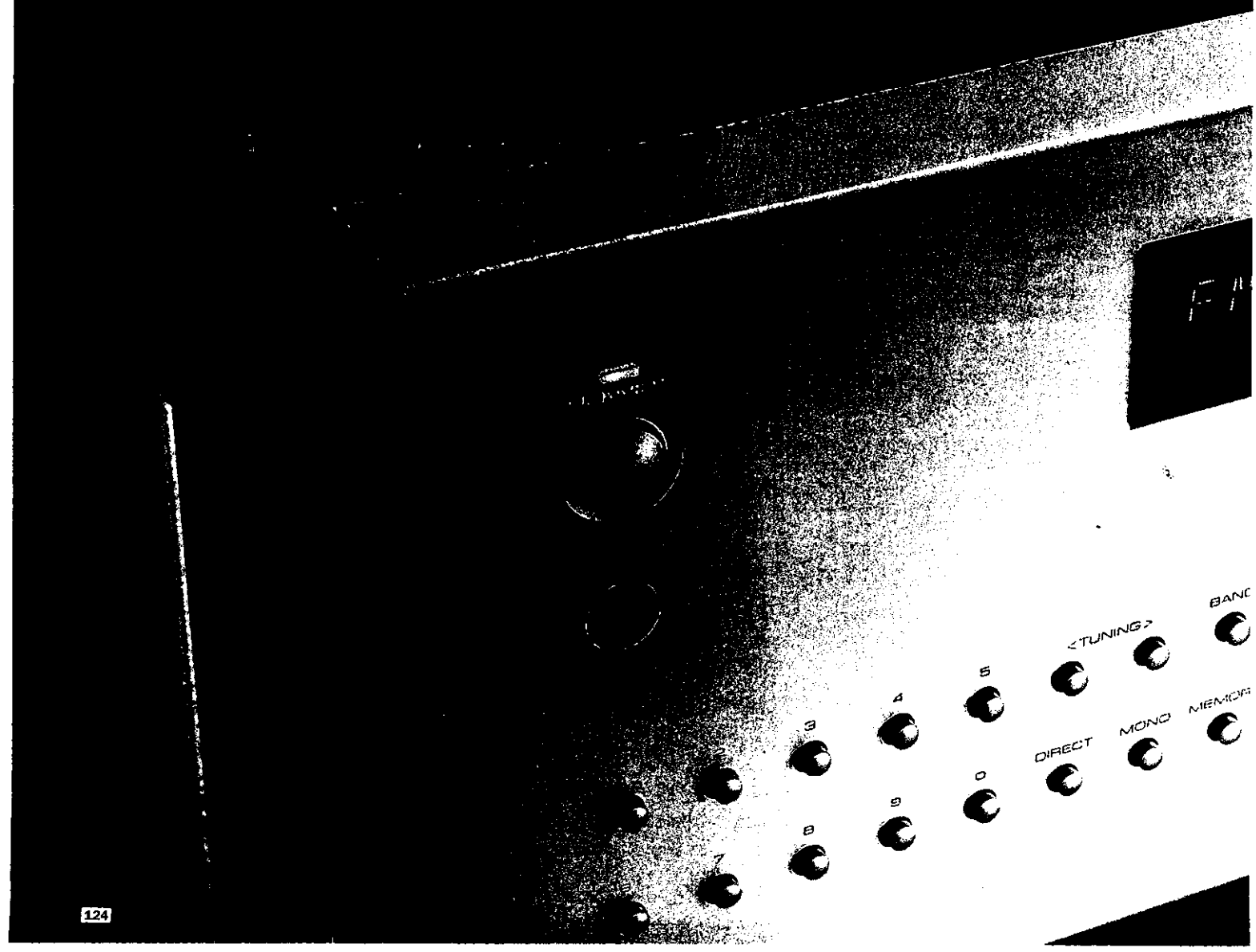
AUSSCHNITT
MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

ROTEL ROY

Der **Rotel RSX 1055** interpretiert das Thema Surround-Receiver auf ganz eigene Weise. Damit adelt er schnöden Mehrkanal-Sound zum wahrhaft lebendigen Raum-Klang.



AL
ROTEL
ROTEL
ROUND SOUND RECEIVER RSX-1055
dts
DOLBY DIGITAL EX PRO LOGIC II
RDS
HDCD
VOLUME
CD
TUNER
TAPE
VIDEO 1
VIDEO 2
2CH
DOLBY PL II GT
DTS NEO 6
DSP

Von Jürgen Schröder

Rotel gehört fraglos zu jenen Marken, die ein besonders hohes Maß an Identifikation mit ihrer Kundschaft genießen. Die Klientel des Herstellers legt zwar Wert auf feinste Technik zu nachvollziehbaren Preisen, weiß aber sehr wohl um die Wichtigkeit des audiophilen Feinschliffs. Das dazu nötige Herrschaftswissen -- und in der Folge einen exzellenten Ruf – hat sich die Firma in ihrer mehr als 30-jährigen Geschichte erworben.

Entwickelt in Japan, fein abgestimmt in England und gebaut in Taiwan, gelten Rotel-Komponenten, speziell die Verstärker, gar als Favoriten-Killer. Ihr technisches Konzept ist ebenso simpel wie einleuchtend: Stabile Stromversorgungen, einfacher und geradliniger Schaltungsaufbau mit kurzen, optimierten Signalwegen sowie ausgesuchte, besonders hochwertige Bauteile an klangentscheidenden Stellen.

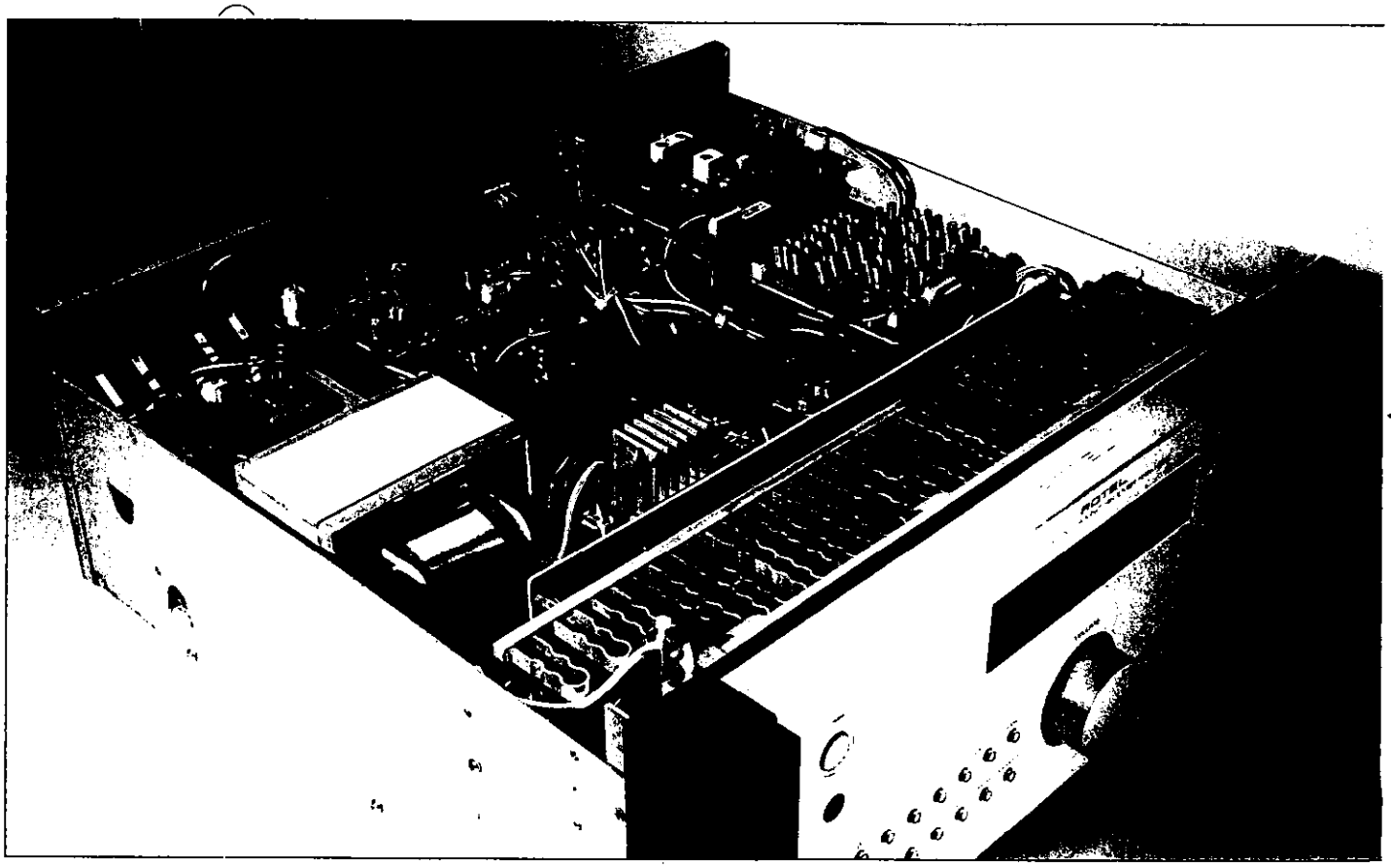
Spannend wird es, wenn ein Hersteller mit derartigen Präferenzen das Terrain der AV-Receiver betritt: Wegen ihres komplexen Signal-Managements können diese Geräte nicht auf einem einfachen, audiophilen Konzept basieren. Schließlich soll ein technisch anspruchsvoller Surround-Künstler alle gängigen Tonformate beherrschen – da müssen selbst die Puristen unter den Herstellern ihren noblen Komponenten schnöde Multifunktions-Decoder-Chips implantieren. Wie also schafft es Rotel, sich unter diesen Rahmenbedingungen gegen die Denons, Harman/Kardons, Kenwoods, Sonys und Yamahas dieser Welt zu profilieren?

Die Antwort soll der RSX 1055 geben. Mit 2000 Euro ist er zwar kein Sonderangebot, aber auch kein unerfüllbarer Traum. Das schnörkellose Design mit der massiven, eloxierten Alu-Frontplatte und den Metallgriffen strahlt Souveränität und Solidität aus.

Klar, dass der silberne Bolide bei den Tonformaten keine Abstriche macht: Sein Decoder verarbeitet 6.1-Signale für Dolby Digital EX, DTS-ES und ES-Discrete. Ebenfalls auf dem Spielplan stehen Dolby Pro Logic II und das DTS-Pendant Neo:6.

Fünf identische Endstufen sitzen im RSX 1055, weshalb echter 6.1-Betrieb mit zwei Surround-Back-Lautsprechern eine zusätzliche Stereo-Endstufe erfordert. Dabei kann sich die „Redirect"-Funktion als praxisgerechtes Feature erweisen: Sie dirigiert die Signale der integrierten Endstufen für linken und rechten Front-Lautsprecher zu den beiden Surround-Back-Strahlern – so darf eine leistungsstärkere, externe Stereo-Endstufe die Front-Lautsprecher befeuern, um beispielsweise besonders watthungrige Standboxen adäquat zu versorgen.

Dank des groß dimensionierten Kühlkörpers kann der Rotel auf einen störenden Lüfter verzichten.



Stabiles Gehäuse und 6.1-Betrieb – das offerieren freilich andere Hersteller auch. Zwingendere Argumente offenbaren sich jedoch nach einer eingehenden Prüfung. So attestiert das Messlabor dem RSX 1055 außergewöhnlich laststabile Endstufen. Sinkt etwa die Boxen-Impedanz frequenzabhängig von 6 auf 3 Ohm – was in der Praxis immer wieder vorkommt –, so stellt der RSX 1055 exakt die doppelte Leistung bereit und beweist damit die Standhaftigkeit seines Netzteils.

Die Rückseiten vieler AV-Receiver zieren Mehrkanal-Vorverstärker-Ausgänge, die eigentlich keine sind: Um eine elektrische Pufferstufe einzusparen, greifen sie das Signal über Spannungsteiler-Widerstände an den Endstufen ab. Nachteil dieser Spar-Lösung: Eine komplexe Verstärkerstufe mehr im Signalweg, die wertvolle Signal-Bandbreite und damit Klang-Transparenz kostet. Die Vorverstärker-Ausgänge des RSX 1055 dagegen tragen ihren Namen zu Recht – sauber gepuffert wie in einer richtigen Prozessor-Vorstufe koppeln sie die Decoder-Signale ohne Umweg aus.

Lernfähig: Die gelungene Fernbedienung übernimmt auch die Steuercodes von anderen Komponenten.

Ein Musterbeispiel für die Bauteile-Qualität sind die Siebkondensatoren (Elkos), die Betriebsspannungen im Netzteil brummfrei glätten. Rotel verwendet Typen mit perforierter Aluminiumfolie. Diese so genannte „Slit-Foil" reduziert Wirbelströme und sorgt damit für einen besonders niedrigen und frequenzunabhängigen Innenwiderstand – wichtig für gute Impulswiedergabe.

Weil zur Rotel-Philosophie auch eine unkomplizierte Bedienung gehört, lassen sich sämtliche Funktionen des RSX 1055 nicht nur per Fernbedienung, sondern auch an der Gehäuse-Front steuern. Dank des übersichtlichen, deutschsprachigen TV-Steuer-Menüs läuft das Setup wie am Schnürchen – nur die Verzögerungszeit-Einstellung für die Rear-Speaker ist mit 5-Millisekunden-Schritten arg grob. Etwas ungewöhnlich: Die Pro-Logic-II-Grundbetriebsarten „Emulation", „Movie" oder „Music" kann der Raumklang-Genießer nicht per Knopfdruck umschalten. Statt dessen muss er sie via Menü dem gerade aktiven Eingang zuordnen.

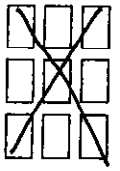
Solche Eigenwilligkeiten ließ der RSX 1055 im Hörtest schnell vergessen. Denn hier zeigte sich, dass der Rotel genau das beherrscht, was viele seiner Mitstreiter nicht können. Nämlich Töne erzeugen: Einige AV-Receiver klingen kräftig und voluminös, andere wiederum gestochen scharf und detailreich. Doch nur ganz wenigen gelingt die randscharfe und trotzdem gehaltvolle Ausbildung von Klängen und Lauten, beispielsweise dem Vokal „A". Sie schaffen zwar die Hülle drum herum, der eigentliche Ton jedoch kommt verkümmert-unterdrückt.

Der RSX 1055 dagegen ließ in „Movements In Still Life" von BT die Samples von Flipper-Automaten, Scratch-Einlagen und Rap-Fetzen wie materialisiert durch den Hörraum fliegen. Trotz dieses wilden Treibens war das Klangbild auf dem massiven Bass-Fundament bestens geerdet. Überhaupt spielte der Rotel wie ein Fels in der Brandung: Die ultratief gestimmten Pauken im 5.1-Spektakel „Synaesthetic" von Blue Man Group donnerten mit infernalischem Druck und provozierten sogar die basspotenten Rear-Speaker B & W Nautilus 803 zu beängstigenden Mem- ▸▸

DVD[illegible]
MARKT

D-Überregional , H
Erscheinung: monatlich
20.06.2003

Platzierung



Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich-Nr: 7 3755 A

Nr. 6

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
DVD music Markt	31319 Sehnde	k.A.	6.500	6.600	9479

6607146990009

[redacted]

* Quelle: IVW

10032619

HIGH RESOLUTION AUDIO

DVD-Audio und SACD: Ein History-Überblick - Teil 2

Neue Dinge haben es niemals leicht. Teil 2 eines Rückblicks mit Augenzwinkern - frei nach einem Bericht eines US-Branchenmagazins. Ende offen...

...Fortsetzung...

September 2000: Die Majorlabels plagen sich mit rechtlichen Fragen und Vergütungsproblemen bei DVD-A-Veröffentlichungen.

Oktober 2000: SACD ist seit einem Jahr verfügbar, rund 110 Stereo-Titel sind bisher veröffentlicht worden. Von DMP kommen die ersten vier Surround-SACDs. Philips kündigt den ersten Surround-Player an, der Preis soll bei 1.999 Dollar liegen. Sony wartet mit einem ersten SACD-DVD-Kombi-Player für 1.500 Dollar auf. Die IRMA erwartet für 2001 ein Produktionsvolumen von etwa 40 Millionen DVD-As.

November 2000: Warner bringt seine ersten sieben DVD-A-Titel auf den Markt, der Verkaufspreis liegt bei jeweils etwa 25 Dollar. Das Spektrum reicht von klassischer Musik bis hin zu einem Album der Stone Temple Pilots. Alle sieben DVDs bieten auch eine Dolby Digital-Version, die auf DVD-Video-Playern abspielbar ist. Warner erwägt, künftig monatlich DVD-As zu veröffentlichen. BMG kündigt an, erste DVD-A-Titel im ersten Quartal 2001 herauszubringen. EMI vermeldet, sich auf das Online-Geschäft und nicht auf DVD-A konzentrieren zu wollen. Universal ist immer noch mit dem Kopierschutz unzufrieden.

Januar 2001: Auf der CES kündigt Apex an, im Herbst einen Kombi-Player auf den Markt bringen zu wollen, der sowohl DVD-A und DVD-Video als auch SACD wiedergibt. Der Preis soll bei 299 Dollar liegen.

Februar 2001: Virgin veröffentlicht eine hybride DVD-A- und -Video-Version von „Audio" von der Blue Man Group sowie eine SACD-Version von Mike Oldfields „Tubular Bells".

Juni 2001: Sony berichtet, derzeit seien etwa 250 Stereo-SACD-Titel verfügbar und präsentiert den ersten Surround-Release, „Kind Of Blue" von Miles Davis. Warner, will sich auf Surround-Versionen von Alben von Fleetwod Mac, Van Morrison und Neil Young konzentrieren. Aktuell sind 29 verschiedene DVD-A-Titel erhältlich. „Die Herausforderung lautet zunächst, Surround Sound für die Leute erlebbar zu machen", sagen Experten.

September 2001: Noch immer hat Universal keinen DVD-A-Titel veröffentlicht. Das Unternehmen kündigt an, künftig das SACD-Format sowohl mit neuen als auch Katalog-Releases unterstützen zu wollen. Ein Firmensprecher: „Im SACD-Bereich wird sich wirklich etwas tun. Wir wollen kein zweites ‚Forever-on-hold-Scenario' wie bei der DVD-A."

Oktober 2001: EMI legt sich fest und verspricht, bis zum Jahresende eine ganze Reihe von Katalog-Titeln als DVD-A veröffentlichen zu wollen.

Juni 2002: Universal releast: Die ersten SACDs des Unternehmens sind in den USA veröffentlicht worden. Sony spricht mittlerweile von 650 weltweit erhältlichen Titeln. Crest National und Philips planen, die erste Produktionslinie für Hybrid-SACDs in den USA zu errichten - Jahreskapazität: drei Millionen Discs. Sonopress erhöht seine SACD-Kapazitäten auf 25.000 Discs täglich. Abkco kündigt 22 Stones-Alben als SACD-Re-Release an.

Juli 2002: Warner senkt in den USA den empfohlenen Verkaufspreis seiner DVD-A-Titel auf CD-Niveau.

August 2002: Marktforscher von Understanding & Solutions beziffern die weltweiten DVD-A- und SACD-Verkäufe für 2003 auf insgesamt fünf Millionen Einheiten. Die Zehn-Millionen-Grenze soll nach Ansicht der Analysten 2004 überschritten werden. Allerdings werden DVD-A- und SACD-Player zusammen 2003 nicht einmal in drei Prozent der US-Haushalte stehen.

September 2002: Die Zahlen steigen: Mittlerweile seien 750 SACD-Titel weltweit verfügbar, sagt Sony. Über 500 weitere würden noch im Herbst veröffentlicht. Das Warner-Label Rhino beeilt sich mit Ankündigungen zur DVD-A: Bis zum Jahresende will man 300 Titel verfügbar haben. Im September kommen die Rolling-Stones-SACDs in die Läden: Von außen ist es den Alben kaum anzusehen, dass sie einen zweiten Layer bieten. Berichten zufolge hatte man bei Abkco Angst, das Hybrid-Format könnte Käufer verschrecken.

Oktober 2002: Das DVD-Forum meldet 780 verschiedene DVD-A-Titel. Bis 2004, so prophezeit man, soll diese Zahl auf 5.700 verschiedene Titel gestiegen sein. Dann sollen DVD-A/Video-Kombi-Player 50 Prozent des Marktes ausmachen. In Deutschland wird die DVD-Audio Initiative e.V. zur Unterstützung des DVD-A-Marktes gegründet.

Dezember 2002: Das DVD-Forum berät über die Entwicklung einer CD-DVD-A-Hybrid-Disc - ähnlich der SACD.

März 2003: Nun doch: Universal kündigt für die USA die ersten 20 DVD-A-Veröffentlichungen an. Weltweite Releases sollen folgen. „Billboard" berichtet, noch in diesem Jahr solle die hybride DVD-Audio, die auch auf CD-Playern abspielbar sein soll, auf den Markt kommen.

Ende offen...

[redacted]

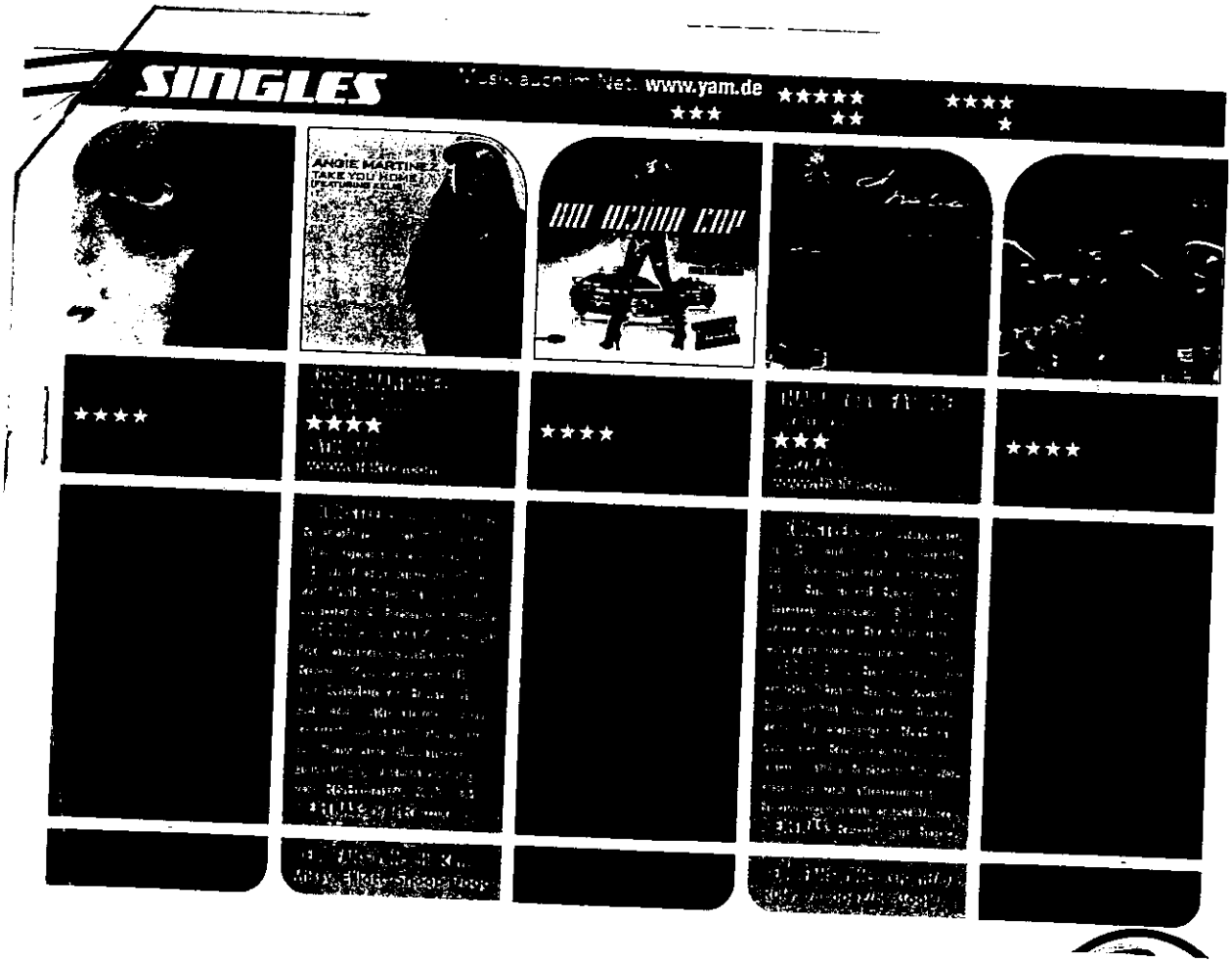
D-Überregional , H Platzierung
Erscheinung: wöchentlich
30.07.2003

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich-Nr: 12 31558

Nr. 32

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
Yam!	81541 München	328.091	330.568	555.919	7980



[redacted] * Quelle: IVW

10036593

Source: Jewish Chronicle
Date: Friday 22, August 2003
Page: 51

Circulation: ABC 41213 Weekly
BRAD info: page rate £4,330.00
scc rate £21.10
Phone:020 7415 1500

Keyword: Blue Man Group

Durrants

(BB106-4)

3755A

Blue Man blues

ROCK: 'The Complex' is all very clever but where's the emotion, asks a despairing **Don Carnell**

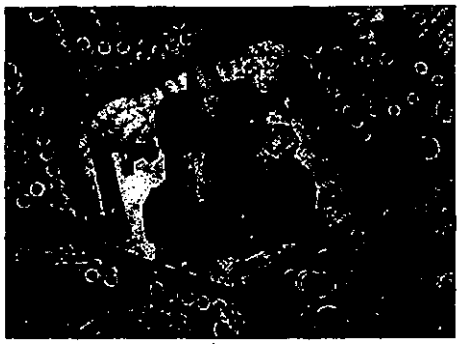
BLUE MAN GROUP
THE COMPLEX
LAVA ✡✡

Formed in 1987 by New Yorkers Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink, the Blue Man Group are the kind of art rockers who have multi-media happenings rather than gigs.

"The Complex" is their UK debut outing, and as well as the men in blue it features a cast of special guests including bona fide megastars like Dave Matthews and Mr Gwen Stefani himself, our very own Gavin Rossdale.

And, despite featuring an endearing version Grace Slick's 1960s druggie anthem "White Rabbit," it's Rossdale (née Rosenthal) who steals the honours with "The Current," a slow-burning slab of sci-fi lifted from the forthcoming Terminator movie "Rise Of The Machines." Quite suitable really, because it's machines rather than the human heart that drives "The Complex." Emotion is rarely present, and I guess the Blue Man Group would claim that's the point.

Despite Rossdale (and that white rabbit) it's one that passes me by completely.



Tube journey: the machine-like Blue Man Group

HANK WANGFORD & THE LOST COWBOYS
BEST FOOT FORWARD
EVANGELINE ✡✡✡

Country music purists look at Hank Wangford with the same sort of sneer that blues snobs do at the music of the (Thames) delta. It's their loss.

So what if Hank was born nearer to Tooting than Tennessee. His love of country music pours from this album like Jack Daniels from a broken barrel.

Driven along by the spiky driving guitar of Martin Belmont, Wangford and the other Lost Cowboys explore country's eternal struggle between sin, witness the cheating anthem "Forgetful Man," and loss, as on the Louvin Brothers arrangement of the weep-yourself-to-sleep slowie "Must You Throw Dirt In My Face?"

The fact that they do it all with a smile on their faces is merely an added bonus.

BLACK CAR
BLACK CAR
ALTERED STATES ✡✡✡

A band called Black Car suggests a bunch of goths screaming down Kraftwerk's "Autobahn." Good to report then that Dan Glendinning, the Black Car, er, driving force, is neither obsessed with death or the soulless sound of the future.

Instead, with its love of melody and the occasional genuine lyrical insight, this impressive debut conjures up the best of British pop and rock.

Typical of its virtues is the Coldplay-like, piano-led ballad "Come On Home" which is as plaintive a cry for a lost love as you'll ever come across.

Glendinning, ably supported by his brother Tom, hasn't broken any moulds here, nor stretched any templates, but somehow as the power chords that propel "100 per cent Proof" bounce around the room it hardly seems to matter.

Source: Oxford Times
Date: Friday 22, August 2003
Page: 6

Circulation: ABC 30583 Weekly
BRAD info: page rate £2,432.70
scc rate £7.70
Phone:018 65 425262

Keyword: Blue Man Group

Durrants

(BB106-4)

3755 A

Music on disc

Popular

By TIM METCALFE

Gillian Welch describes her latest album *Soul Journey* (Acony) as "sunny" — which is saying something for a singer/songwriter who has been branded as the 'Leonard Cohen of country'. Her intense, lyrical songs have attracted quite a following and this new album continues her travels through a land populated with restless wanderers, premonitions of death and — of course — trains and lost highways. There are no duets with her long time partner David Rawlings on this album, instead she has opted to use a band or sing solo. The reason is simple — Welch felt the songs, perhaps her most intimate to date, worked better with a band. And the result is a warm, engaging, album which transcends the country label Welch has been landed with.

From the sublime to the ridiculous — ***The Complex*** (Lava) from the Blue Man Group — a bunch of blokes who paint their shaved heads blue and play electronic dance music. They manage to wreck a couple of classic tunes much loved by different generations, *White Rabbit* and *I Feel Love*, and fill in the gaps with some pretty mediocre Euro-pap, which includes the theme from *Terminator 3*.

But if it's well crafted dance tunes you're after, check out ***Paul Hardcastle 1985-2003***. (Hardcastle Records). Hardcastle is the grandaddy of all dance music makers and this double CD set takes you on a trip through two decadess of his output. And yes, his classic track *19* is featured in three different versions.

Back in October Irish singer/songwriter Paul Brady got together with a bunch of singers and musicians for a journey through his songbook. The result was a TV programme and an album, imaginatively entitled *The Paul Brady Songbook* (Universal). The outcome is an interesting and entertaining collections of songs, all recorded on one day.

prisma
Wochenmagazin zur Zeitung

Nordrhein-Westfalen , H
Erscheinung: wöchentlich
26.08.2003

Nr. 35/30.08. - 05.09.03

Platzierung

Thema Nr: 990.009
Anstrich-Nr: 8

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
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② Für New York

Trance Groove: Meant To Be Like This, Schott
Songs zwischen Avantgarde, Jazz und Party. In New York sind Songs wie *Goldfinger* Hits.

③ Aus New York

Blue Man Group: The Complex, Eastwest

Die US-Superstars liefern mit *The Current* den Song zum „Terminator 3"-Kinofilm.

④ Hamburg rockt

Blumfeld: Jenseits von jedem, WEA
Das Hamburger Trio um Sänger Jochen Distelmeyer kombiniert wieder Rock mit anspruchsvollen Texten wie etwa bei *Wir sind frei*.

⑤ Kanada-Klassik

Holly Cole: Shade, Indigo
Die Sängerin aus Toronto interpretiert Klassiker, so etwa *Too Darn Hot* von Cole Porter.

[redacted] * C
[redacted] 10(

Gneisenaustraße 66, 10961 Berlin, Te
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670175899009

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D-Überregional , H
Erscheinung: wöchentlich
26.08.2003

Platzierung

Thema Nr: 990.009

Anstrich-Nr: 8 37558

Nr. 35/30.08. - 05.09.03

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
Prisma Wochenmagazin zur Zeitung	40549 Düsseldorf	k.A.	k.A.	2.805.991	3096

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Zoe: Zoeciety, Sony

Zoe stammt von den Vai in Liberia ab und mixt Reggae und Soul zu Songs wie *He Said* und *Precious*.

② Für New York

Trance Groove: Meant To Be Like This, Schott

Mit Songs zwischen Avantgarde, Jazz und Party (wie *Goldfinger*) setzt die Band in New York bereits mehr Platten ab als in Deutschland.

③ Aus New York

Blue Man Group: The Complex, Eastwest

Die US-Superstars liefern mit *The Current* den Titelsong zum „Terminator 3"-Kinofilm.

④ Hamburg rockt

Blumfeld: Jenseits von jedem, WEA

Das Hamburger Trio um Sänger Jochen Distelmeyer kombiniert wieder Rock mit anspruchsvollen Texten wie etwa bei *Wir sind frei*.

⑤ Kanada-Klassik

Holly Cole: Shade, Indigo

Die Kanadierin interpretiert Klassiker wie *Too Darn Hot* von Cole Porter.

Heft 31 – der Gewinner A. Müller, Bad Lauchstedt **Wer am weitesten kam** Cassandra Steen, Platz 59

stereoplay

D-Überregional, H
Erscheinung: monatlich
01.10.2003
Nr. 10
Seite: 150

Platzierung

Thema Nr: **990.009**

Anstrich - No.: 32

37558

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
Stereoplay	70174 Stuttgart	44.857	47.004	80.827	1805

Elektro-Pop & Rock

BLUE MAN GROUP

The Current Eastwest 7567-83631-2 (58:51; Enhanced-CD mit Multimedia-Content)

Aufgepasst, die Männer mit den selbstgebauten Klangsegeln und PVC-Röhren sind wieder da! Und die Blue Man Group wird bigger and bigger: Diesmal wurden gar Stars wie Gavin Rossdale (Bush) oder Dave Matthews für Vokalauftritte gewonnen. Zwar fesselt „The Current" etwas weniger als 2001 „Audio" (mancher Track, etwa das Donna-Summer-Cover „I Feel Love", geriet doch recht prollig), aber der Mix aus Rockgitarren, Percussion-Power und exotischen Sounds entwickelt noch immer mächtig Schub. *Chr. Hammer*

Musik: 7, Klang: 8, Repertoire: 7

6740328 990009

[redacted]

* Quelle: IVW
10044084

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AUSSCHNITT MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

DNA six

D-Überregional, H
Erscheinung: 10 x jährlich
01.10.2003
Nr. 10
Seite: 71

Platzierung

Thema Nr: **990.009**

Anstrich - No.: 5 3755A

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	Auflage verbreitet	Auflage gedruckt	No.
DNAsix	70327 Stuttgart	k.A.	k.A.	* 40.000	9361

BLUE MAN GROUP
The Complex
CD (WEA)

8888

Eigentlich eine phänomenale Scheibe, dieses zweite Output der Rhythmusschlümpfe. Man könnte ihnen ja die Dominanz ihres Images leicht zum Vorwurf machen, doch für ihr Debut vor zwei Jahren durften sie sich sogar Vergleiche mit Kraftwerk anhören. Für sich genommen sind die Songs, natürlich vor allem aufgrund ihrer Instrumentierung, die in ihrer rhythmischen Konsequenz an die großen Werke der Talking Heads, allen voran *Remain In Light* erinnert, ein großes Hörerlebnis. Aber wie schon so oft in ähnlichen Fällen leidet *The Complex* unter der Vielfalt seiner Gastsänger; als Album will sich einfach keine Kohärenz ergeben, denn zu verschiedenartig gehen die Vokalisten an die Lieder heran, Dave Matthews, Gavin Rossdale, Tracy Bonham, um nur die bekanntesten zu nennen – eine gewagte Kombination, aber letztendlich zu sehr Stückwerk, als dass die anvisierte Atmosphäre entstehen könnte. Und eigentlich ist es doch gerade das, was die Blaumänner suchen. Nächstes Mal bitte ein einzelner Sänger, und die Höchstwertung dürfte locker zu schaffen sein.

Sascha Seiler

6793163 990009

[redacted]
9361001100304711

* Quelle: IVW
10048884

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eMail: sales@ausschnitt.de Internet: www.ausschnitt.de

AUSSCHNITT MEDIENBEOBACHTUNG

Source: Billboard
Date: Saturday 18, October 2003
Page: 27

Circulation: 42000 Weekly
BRAD info: page rate £9,350.00
scc rate £0.00
Phone: 020 7323 6686

Keyword: Blue Man Group

Durrants

3755A

(BB106-4)

Beat Box™

By Michael Paoletta
mpaoletta@billboard.com

ALIAS LOVE: Yes, indeed, that was Blue Man Group's cover of Donna Summer's "I Feel Love" featured prominently in the season opener of ABC series "Alias." The timing could not be better: Remixes of the Blue Man Group/Lava track are being embraced by DJs and enthusiasts.

Source: Hi Fi News
Date: Monday 1, December 2003
Page: 79

Circulation: ABC 18207 Monthly
BRAD info: page rate £750.00
scc rate £15.00
Phone: 0208 447 0846

Keyword: Blue Man Group

Durrants

(BB106-4) 3755A

Rock

BLUE MAN GROUP

The Complex
Lava 7567 83631 2
58m 51s (£££)

Blue Man Group founders Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink have successfully transformed their avant-garde street busking act into a multi-million dollar business, via endless TV appearances, commercials, movie soundtrack contributions, and even a string of stage shows that run permanently in several American cities.

Amazingly, despite focusing so squarely on blatant self-marketing and mythologising, they also make fantastic music using bizarre instruments such as lengths of PVC pipe and an 'airpole', which emits whooshing noises, usually propelled by tribal drumming rhythms. For this album, they've moved away from their usual quirky instrumentals and are taking on the rock mainstream by incorporating vocals from the likes of Dave Matthews, Gavin Rossdale of Bush and Tracy Bonham.

The result is some wonderfully stimulating pop with a faintly Kraftwerkian overlay of humans being reduced to robots, and a sense of the whole thing somehow existing in a curiously impersonal future. The official line from the band is that this album is about the 'isolating effects of the modern urban landscape and the mind-numbing effects of information overload' but it's equally possible to listen to it just as great music, especially if you start with the quirky cover versions – Jefferson Airplane's 'White Rabbit' voiced by Esthero, and Donna Summer's disco classic 'I Feel Love' reinterpreted by Annette Strean of Venus Hum. *JB*

PERFORMANCES QUIRKY BUT QUALITY
RECORDINGS EXCELLENT

fliegen & sparen

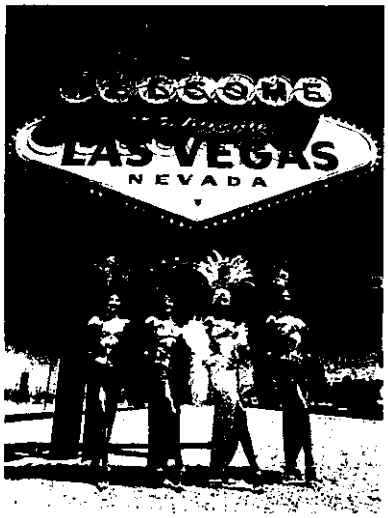
D-Überregional , H Platzierung
Erscheinung: 4 x jährlich
Februar-April 2003

Nr. 1

Thema Nr: 990.009
Anstrich-Nr: 22

Die untenstehende Meldung ist in folgender Ausgabe erschienen.	PLZ / Ort	Auflage verkauft	verbreitet	gedruckt	No.
Fliegen & Sparen	47179 Duisburg	23.401	23.401	51.160	6970

Tourtipp: Las Vegas



Der kleine **Las Vegas** Geizkragen

■Kostenlose Shows in und um Las Vegas und clevere Tipps, wie Sie Geld sparen können:

Es ist gar nicht so schwierig, Vergünstigungen oder gar kostenlose Eintrittskarten für Shows zu bekommen. Das funktioniert in aller Regel über Coupons. Die Betreiber der Casinos und Veranstalter der Shows sehen es nicht gerne, wenn die Theater bei der Vorstellung nur zur Hälfte besetzt sind. Auch für die Künstler ist es nicht gerade motivierend, vor halb leeren Sälen aufzutreten. So vergibt man kurzfristig an Besucher Coupons, bei denen man für eine Show ganz unterschiedliche Rabatte an der Kasse erhält, so etwa 30 US$ off, also 30% verbilligte Karten, oder Eintritt 2 pro Person kann das trotzdem ganz attraktiv sein. Die großen Produktionen wie Siegfried und Roy, „O" oder die Blue Man Group sind eigentlich immer ausverkauft, so dass man für alle Top-Produktionen in der Regel keine Vergünstigungen bekommen kann. Generell gilt auch: In der Hochsaison und an den Wochenenden werden wesentlich mehr Showtickets verkauft als an Wochentagen oder in der Nebensaison. Wenn man flexibel ist, kann man während der Woche schon mal ein Show-Schnäppchen machen.

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Gratis Spektakel: Piratenschlacht in der Buccaneer Bay vor dem Hotel Treasure Island

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Auch wenn Sie nicht viel Geld in das Glücksspiel investieren wollen, ein Slot Club lohnt sich immer. Manche Casinos bieten schon bei der Antragsstellung ein kleines Geschenk. Stecken Sie die Karte immer in den Automaten, wenn Sie spielen. Egal ob Sie gewinnen oder verlieren, Ihre Punktzahl steigt, je mehr Sie spielen. Vor der Abreise gehen Sie mit der Karte wieder zur Slot Club Rezeption und lassen sich überraschen, was das Casino für Sie bereit hält. Weitere Informationen zu den Slot Clubs finden Sie im gleichnamigen Kapitel.

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Gratis: sehenswerte Shows & Attraktionen

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Aber Vorsicht: Auf manchen Coupons steht noch ganz klein (Beispiel): One Drink Minimum 7 US$, man muss also pro Person mindestens einen Drink während der Veranstaltung für 7 US$ kaufen. Bei Showpreisen zwischen 20 US$ bis hin zu über 100 US$ pro Person kann das trotzdem ganz attraktiv sein. Die großen Produktionen wie Siegfried und Roy, „O" oder die Blue Man Group sind eigentlich immer ausverkauft, so dass man für alle Top-Produktionen in der Regel keine Vergünstigungen bekommen kann. Generell gilt auch: In der Hochsaison und an den Wochenenden werden wesentlich mehr Showtickets verkauft als an Wochentagen oder in der Nebensaison. Wenn man flexibel ist, kann man während der Woche schon mal ein Show-Schnäppchen machen.

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In einigen Casinos gibt es sogar die Möglichkeit, einmal kostenlos sein Glück an einem Automaten zu versuchen und dabei reales Geld oder kleine Preise zu gewinnen. Sie werden hierbei vor dem Casino angesprochen, z.B. im Tropicana, auch in der Downtown bieten einige Casinos diese kostenlose Promotion.

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Source: Group Travel Organiser
Date: Monday 1, September 2003
Page: 40

Circulation: ABC 10080 Monthly
BRAD info: page rate £1,240.00
scc rate £0.00
Phone: 020 7735 5058

Keyword: Blue Man Group

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Living it up in the USA

When it comes to the USA, sheer volume of choice of destinations, say the tour operators we asked, is the main problem for many group organisers. One of the 'hot' destinations for 2004 is *Atlantic City*, one of America's favourite playgrounds and is a two-hour drive from New York City. It is famous for its 24-hour casino-hotels, its world-class entertainment and diverse dining. Atlantic City's famous *Boardwalk* was the first in the world built in 1870, and is the lifeline of the city, where visitors can sunbathe, picnic and swim. The best known of Atlantic City's ocean piers, *Steel Pier*, opened on the Boardwalk in 1898 and is an amusement park with 25 different rides. There is also a great selection of themed hotels, including the *Showboat Casino Hotel* that has a riverboat-themed interior, while the extravagant *Trup Taj Mahal* boasts nine gigantic limestone elephants to greet its guests. It is easily recognised by the 70 bright minarets crowning the rooftops. Another popular attraction is the *Convention Hall*, which is the venue for the Miss America Pageant and was the largest auditorium in the world when it opened in 1929. The nearby *Atlantic City Historical Museum* and *Miller Art Center* both take a look at the city's colourful past and houses lots of Miss America memorabilia. There are several casinos within an easy walk from the marina, such as the art-deco themed *Trump Marina* that is very popular for UK groups in particular. Another local attraction is *Ripley's Believe it or Not*, a museum of oddities with exhibits based on Ripley's comic strips about natural curiosities and eerie coincidences.

More themed hotels and casinos can be found in *Las Vegas*, as well as permanent theatre shows, such as the world-class entertainers of Cirque du Soleil, Blue Man Group and Celine Dion. Most tours include a trip to *Fremont Street*, home of Vegas' oldest and best-known neon signs, as well as *The Strip*, where the majority of hotels are located in this prime downtown location. Other attractions can be found at the *Mirage*, for example, which is home to the impressive simulated volcano which erupts every 30 minutes, *Circus Circus* that has incredible circus acts, bungee rides at *Stratosphere*, a roller coaster ride at *Sahara Hotel*, and the *Imperial Palace Auto Museum*, which contains rare car models and cars once owned by the rich and famous.

New York's Times Square.

'The entertainment capital of the world' is full of magicians, singers, tribute bands, golf courses and shopping from designer boutiques to out-of-town factory outlets, with the world's best restaurants and 'things to see and do' 24 hours a day.

A city with enduring appeal for groups that is set to be popular next year is *New York City* that offers the uptown glitz of the *Upper West Side* to the downtown bohemian chic of the *West Village*, from Chinatown to Little Italy, and from Murray Hill to Midtown, where your group is presented with entirely different sights, sounds and smells in each neighbourhood. The capital is famous for its fabulous shopping, Times Square, the Empire State Building, Greenwich Village and the Statue of Liberty, coach tours. GTO

BLUE MAN GROUP

GQ

JANUARY 1993

Crushed by Nostalgia

Hindrance of things past: We've become a nation obsessed with the way we were, forever looking back for the future

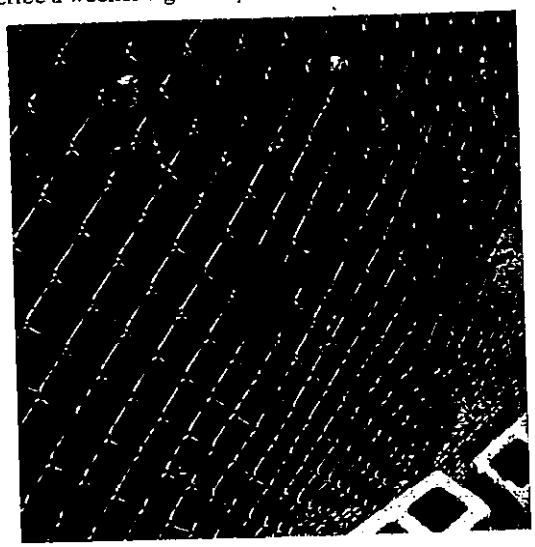
By David Kamp

.HINKER is sufficiently sentimental ...y's history to describe a weekend getaway to ..., Connecticut, as "a ...ke stepping back into ...1790" but takes the conceit no farther than that.

THE CLOYING NOSTALGIST smokes a corncob pipe and wears period dress even when not marching in an Independence Day parade.

THE CULTIVATED THINKER sits at the piano, draws upon his formative musical influences, incorporates his own ideas and creates music that is definitively his own.

THE CLOYING NOSTALGIST becomes obsessed with looking and sounding exactly like the Faces circa *A Nod Is as Good as a Wink . . . to a Blind Horse.*



The Blue Men dare to be nonderivative.

THE CULTIVATED THINKER mounts an independent candidacy in order to shake up an ideologically stagnant democracy and help the country move forward.

THE CLOYING NOSTALGIST mounts an independent candidacy to gratify his ego and promulgate a scary, antidemocratic vision of a nation run by an "electronic town hall."

Finally, one of the most important lessons to be ...m studying the past is that it was never as in... as we imagine it. The past often pr... ...e present—particularly with re... ...ner human-rights practices and its ... ...etween Cabinet members—and if there's a... ...ericans have repeatedly shown themselves to be go..., it's ferment. The trick is to persuade people not to be embarrassed to be forward-thinking. Nostalgia has seen better days. Let's hope we haven't. •

What's New

Is There Anything Out There That Isn't Nostalgic?

Not all Americans are consumed by a desire to re-create 1955 or 1963 or some other fondly remembered year in which the Dodgers won the Series. A vocal minority dares to be innovative, non-allusive and nonderivative. "Minority" is the operative word, since many of America's most promising new cultural and intellectual developments come from people whose voices have, until recently, been suppressed: African-Americans, women, gays, Asians, Hispanics. Below, a sampling of non-nostalgic America.

The anti–politics-as-usual movement. Ross Perot wasn't the answer, nor was Jerry Brown, but their low-tech campaigns signaled a heartening recognition by the American public that the current, two-party political system is in need of reform. Though some of the immediate solutions—"800" numbers, thirty-minute infomercials, calls for term limits—smack of gimmickry, they at least suggest that our representative democracy is still evolving.

Pioneer women. Females continue to be the most revolutionary social force in the country, as they have been for twenty years. Without older role models to guide them, women have confronted issues of the workplace, the dating game, the hearth and child-rearing.

Blue Man Group. Entertainment from the next millennium.

Food. Ten years ago, who would have known that we'd all be intimately familiar with balsamic vinegar, extra-virgin olive oil, polenta, tiramisu and salsify? With American farmers now cultivating exotic produce from Asia, Africa and South America, the country's gastronomic evolution continues at a furious pace.

Hip-hop. The genre is old news at this point, but it's the only genuinely new musical form to take hold in the past twenty years, and its influence on other media is burgeoning. Witness the emergence of *Vibe* magazine, the acting careers of Ice C... 'ce-T and the new film- and television-producing ... impresarios Russell Simmons, Rick Rubin and C... ...er.

The N... ...ball Association. Whereas Major League Baseball ... ...nog themselves over the passing of their respective ...ages, the NBA is in the midst of its golden age. Under Commissioner David Stern, the league has experienced quantum growth in popularity and revenues. Michael Jordan, arguably the most entertaining player ever, is in his prime.

Seattle. The record-company A&R men have since moved on, but seldom has one city been as influential in so many respects. Seattle has given us grunge rock, flannel-shirt chic and Starbucks coffee; was the first city to have a comprehensive recycling program; and, on the eve of the Pacific Century, is a model of American-Asian cooperation (exemplified by the city's International District and the new Japanese ownership of the Mariners baseball franchise).

Blue Man Group. Entertainment from the next millennium.

Astor Show Productions, Inc. 434 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10003 (212) 387–9415 Fax (212) 673–8424

THE BLUE MAN GROUP

"I think you have beautiful eyes," one woman says to Chris Wink after the 400+ performance of The Blue Man Group's off-off Broadway show *Tubes* at the Astor Theater in Manhattan. "That's the only thing you can really see," Wink replies. "No, I really mean it," she insists.

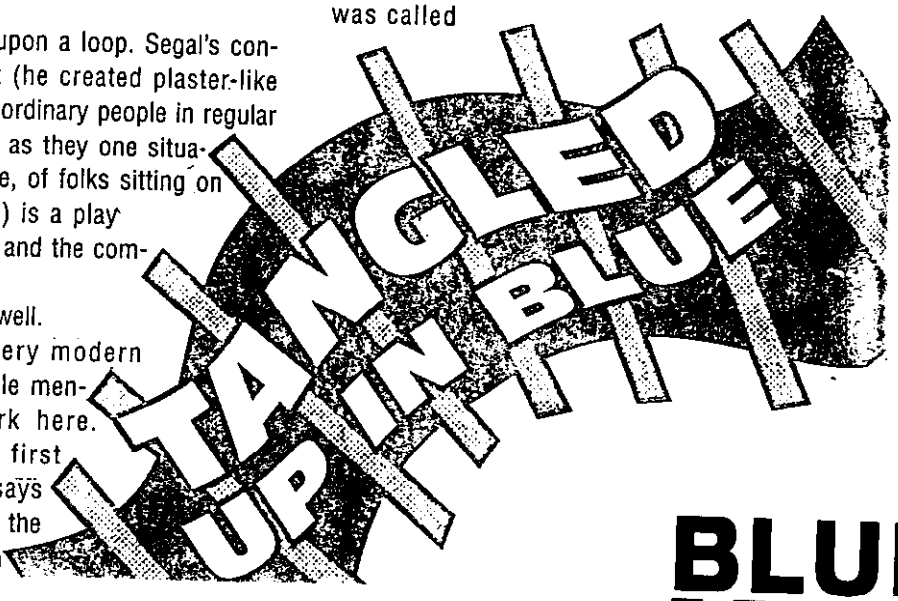
Wink just smiles, bemused because he's all in black, except for the glistening colbalt-blue coat of thick make-up which masks his face. The blue gunk is wet—all the better for him to leave blue kisses on programs or the willing cheek. More people pass by, most a bit exhausted by the one hour and 40 minutes of word plays, loud percussive beats, strange tricks of lighting, and effects that this three-man troupe has fashioned into an extended, staged happening.

In one of their key bits—a play on virtual reality/cyberspace—a female voice drones on in mock-serious tones about the advent of this new technology. She offers "the bitchin'-est visuals" and suggests it has opportunities to do things we can't do in real life. The Blue Men appear sitting on their podium lit from behind by the video screen which shows their supposed virtual reality. Garbed in gloves and goggles, they act out the cyberscenario with silly antics and broad gestures in space. The bit ends with the voice-over explaining that they can make new friends in cyberspace without ever leaving their homes—and the Blue Men are viewed on the video screen with their arms around several George Segal sculptures.

It's a loop upon a loop. Segal's conceptual work (he created plaster-like sculptures of ordinary people in regular settings such as they one situation used here, of folks sitting on park benches) is a play on art culture and the commodities that make it up as well.

There's a very modern garbage/recycle mentality at work here. "When we first started out," says Matt Goldman, the Blue Man with the real high tech experience (ex-computer designer), "we were driving down Sixth Avenue when Phil says, 'Pull the car over.' And he jumped out, pulls out a screwdriver, and dismantles this washing machine for the show. It's still in the show."

Phil Stanton brings some real constructive experience to the crew as well—he worked in a hardware store and handily applied his knowledge when it came to building up the early shows when they had absolutely no money (except maybe for a grand from the La Mama performance space). Before that they had done work at various underground performance centers, from P.S. 122 to the streets in front of various nightclubs, when the earliest version was called



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BLUE MAN GROUP

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BLUE MAN GROUP

"Club Nowhere." Says Stanton, "The motor from that old washing machine is great; it'll never go bad. Everything in the show is built from stuff not necessarily bought in hardware stores but on Canal Street, or found materials."

With plastic tubes hanging everywhere from ceiling to floor flowing from lobby to the full backdrop of the stage, their show is a paean to the plastic trash of the modern world, from spewing gobs of paint on canvases to parody modernist art to having an audience member participate in a number which involves eating fresh banana gunge. In creating all of these bits, they have become fantastical visionaries of future entertainment forms, a collusion of '60s to '80s artforms merged into some '90s third force. It's a remarkable display, given that when dissected, the Group's little set pieces don't really add up to much more than flip street theater. But as sutured together by the music, their Butoh-like performances and the audience's involvement it works as harbingers of a sort of new entertainment, rock 'n' roll performance theater

Wink is the troupe's most animated spokesman and the founder of this crew of post-30-year-olds. He's also the real rock band veteran and the most outspoken philosopher of gonzo culture. In fact, he's really passionate about the rock experience. "Our aesthetic isn't one of 'let's show people how fast we can do paradiddles,' but, 'let's create a tribal beat that the audience can feel.' So when Matt hits the huge drum it's very powerful...not more powerful—meaning twice as fast, but committing to the strong emotions the music expresses. That's what was great about what punk and new wave; it brought to rock back to an expressionist [like the '20s/'30s art movement in Europe] form rather than being a scientific or technologically-driven form. We'd like to think of this as a piece of theater that's been heavily influenced by the punk esthetic, with that populist ideal—the whole Lester Bangs garage aesthetic.

Michael Halsband

"We were in bands before, but the form of rock 'n' roll itself is limited. Go to CBGB's; be one of ten bands up there with the lights flashing. Now it seems performance art is rock of our time. Go on MTV, it's like a puppet show; you're just lip-syncing words. The live wild experience is like '60s, part of a socio-political event. In late '70s, rock was still, in a sense, associated with social movement of sorts; but then it became just another form. Performance art seemed in the place to accomplish what rock used to be able to accomplish."

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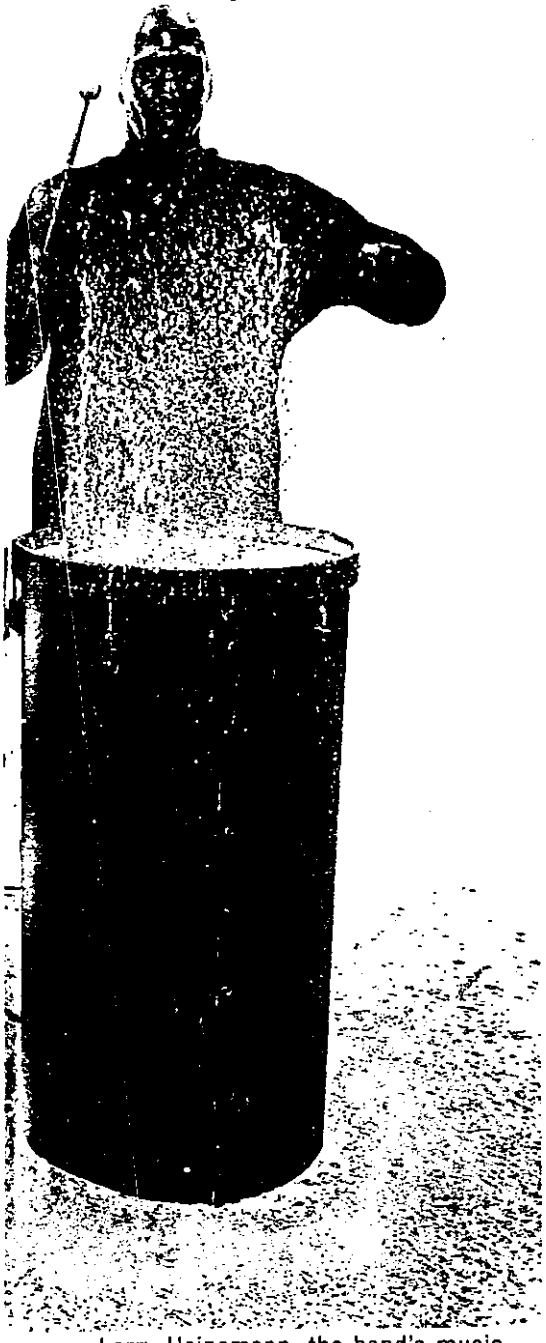


Larry Heinemann, the band's music director (also the bassist of Springhouse, which will have its second Caroline Records album out this Spring), jumps in. "The eras of rock 'n' roll that we were excited about were times when you'd buy a record and your mind would be completely blown, you'd really hear something you'd never heard before. I feel like now 99.9% of rock is revisionism; if you like something now it's because it reminds you of some other music that you really like. Nirvana's like that; so are a lot of bands coming out now."

Adds Chris, "We're fans. The stuff that's most interesting is the stuff that pushes things forward, and some of it can be revisionist if you're combining two forms that have never been combined before. It tells people—inspires them—not to listen to the voices that tell them to conform, or to do something that's happened before. I think there's an aspect to what we do where people get inspired to go out and do something new themselves."

With such spirited talk of the intersection between rock and performance, The Blue Man Group goes beyond talk; they're now in the studio cutting tracks for a soundtrack to what they do but they plan on it being much more than just that. This team, which includes the three Blue Men as percussionists on plastic and also Heinemann, bassist Tom Shad, and drummer Ian Pai, plans to record a cover version of Joni Mitchell's "Free Man In Paris" with guest vocalists.

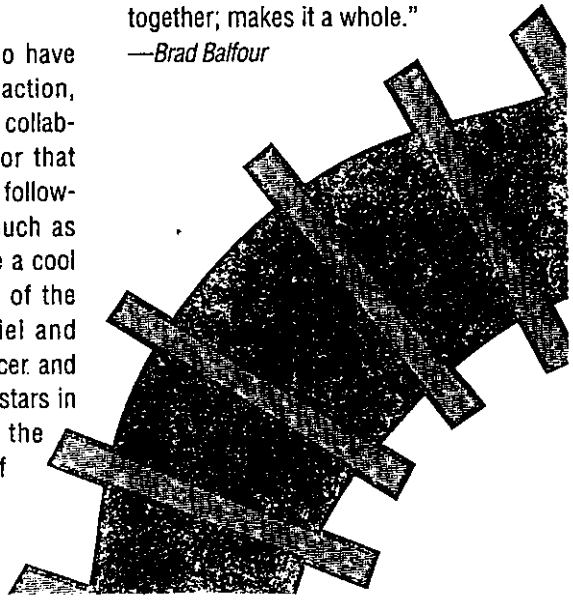
Given some of the people who have shown up to see the group in action, they have no lack of willing vocal collaborators—or instrumentalists, for that matter. They've garnered quite a following, with people dropping by such as David Lee Roth ("he seemed like a cool person to hang out with," one of the Men pipes up) to Peter Gabriel and Laurie Anderson. Broadway dancer and singer Gregory Hines (who now stars in *Jelly's Last Jam*) actually did the head in a huge throbbing mass of jello bit.

"David Byrne, Yoko Ono, painter Yves Klein's widow, painter Robert Rauschenberg, Penn & Teller, Francis Ford Coppola, Danny Devito, Meryl Streep, Matthew Modine, Bruce and Demi, Jeff Goldblum, Ellen Barkin..." shouts out each of the Blue Man as the list some of the appreciators of this crew. "They've all been there," says Goldman. "It's a bit of a mindfuck entertaining people in the audience who have entertained you. A real reversal...it's different than meeting them, you're actually entertaining them, and they're sitting there watching you..."

One of the weirdest moments for these three was the time The KLF, particularly chief conceptualist Bill Drummond, came to the show. "Apparently his manager hadn't told him we use his music at the end," says Wink. "He was just told to go to the show. Instead of being pissed off, he called the other guy in KLF and had him fly to New York the next day to see us."

Adds Wink, "People have compared us to Gwar. I think they're okay, but what they do is only a part of what we're about. We explore the spiritual side of rock. And it's the music that ties things together; makes it a whole."

—Brad Balfour



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Spring/Summer 1993

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BLUE MAN GROUP

the other hand, there are instances of purely visceral entertainment: Food flies about the stage and works of art are created by spitting mouthfuls of chewed-up marshmallows or paint pellets onto canvas.

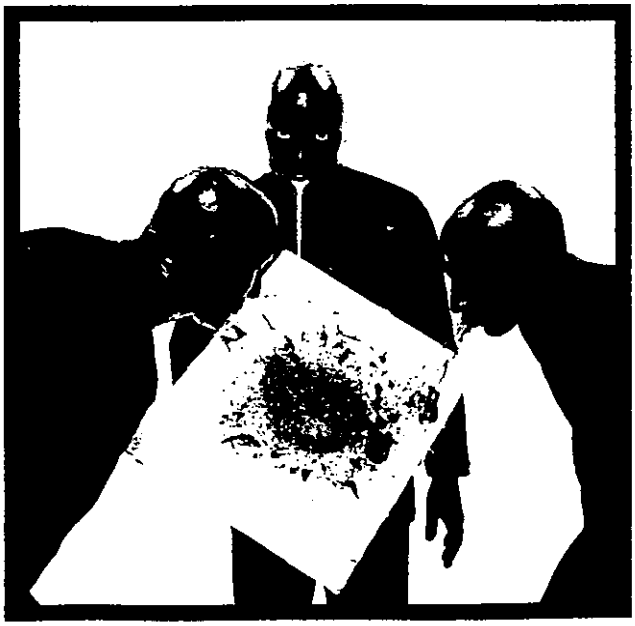
That such tricks have made Blue Man so popular is a bit ironic, since the group, like many avant garde endeavours, grew out of its members' frustration with the mainstream, and was, in fact, a response to the cultural vacuousness of New York in the go-go decade. As Wink puts it, "In the '80's, things that were once vibrant had become institutions." But being popular doesn't bother Blue Man a bit. And while they have become a must-see hit in New York, the show, driven by audience enthusiasm and the earnestness of its performers, is unlikely to become rote or predictable.

The three began their collaboration by experimenting with blue paint in Wink's and Goldman's shared apartment, in "a desperate desire to be involved in something fun and interesting," Wink says. They soon took their painted selves outdoors, riding the subways, interacting with strangers, even setting up "Club Nowhere" near the queue for the popular, bouncer-shielded Manhattan nightclub Copacabana, inviting guests to pass beyond the Blue Man's own velvet cord to dance without music on the sidewalk. In those days, Blue Man talked, and conversations inspired him. "There were no barriers," cultural or otherwise, Wink recalls. "People really opened up to us." Returning to the indoors, they performed in bars, at parties and eventually at Performance Space (PS) 122 and La Mama, two New York venues for the new and offbeat. The next big step was the Serious Fun Festival at Lincoln Center, which in the past has showcased such performance artists as Laurie Anderson, Eric Bogosian and Spalding Gray. The regular gig began in 1991 at the Astor Place Theatre, just across from the Joseph Papp Public Theatre downtown on Lafayette Street. And as manic as the act is, it is something of a rest for the group. Not only do they not have to transport their thousands of yards of tubing and the show's complicated mechanical apparatus from place to place, they now merit a staff to help with the enormous task of setting and cleaning up.

Martha Thomas is the editor of Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts Magazine.

The act has been refined a bit, cleaned up, if you will, though it's still pretty messy. But it's not so much about goo and splatter as it is about other forms of chaos in our lives.

The act has been refined a bit, cleaned up, if you will, though it's still pretty messy. But it's *continued on page 68*



Continued from page 49

not so much about goo and splatter as it is about other forms of chaos in our lives. The choices we are forced to make in editing the overwhelming information bombarding us daily, for example, are illustrated by frantically flipping posters. Read only one poster in a set of three, we are instructed; remain loyal to that poster and do not read the others. Our fear of making the wrong choice is confirmed when the poster we read says, "Once again you have chosen the wrong poster to read. While the people next to you read useful information, you are stuck with the equivalent of junk mail, as usual." Others around you may be reading either a similar message or such provocative information as, "A weekday edition of *The New York Times* contains more information than the average person was likely to come across in a lifetime in 17th-century England."

Other experiences particular to the modern age also have come into play. Early on, the group tried to give its audiences the eerie feeling of being the victim of "niche marketing" by asking members to identify themselves as a certain type based on a "value and lifestyle" chart. Each "type" got its own tailored headset for the skit, and, says Goldman, "the performance you got was determined by the tape you got."

The challenge proved greater than the resources at hand, and the niche marketing skit was eliminated, mainly due to the expense of cassette players and the near impossibility of having the right number of each tape.

Still, ludicrous propositions do not easily daunt the group. How to make cream (in this case, actually squashed bananas) ooze from your chest? Try yards of tubing and foot pedals concealed beneath a table. How to change the consistency of marshmallows, so when tossed onto a surface (in this case, one actor's face), they fuse into a glob rather than bouncing away? Try making the "marshmallows" out of meticulously molded and chilled cream cheese. A swirling vortex of water that opens and closes the show may hold our attention for only a moment, but it resulted from hours of mathematical calculations and experiments with recycled washing machine motors.

Phil Stanton is the tinkerer of the group, and he at times aggravates his partners by surreptitiously fiddling with a calculator while Wink and Goldman are trying to resolve more important issues. Stanton will walk into a hardware or industrial supply store and identify just the right pump, motor, glue or tubing to solve a problem. The son of a Pentecostal minister, he grew up in Georgia and came to New York to be an actor. Wink and Goldman, both New York natives, were high school friends. Before forming Blue Man Group, Goldman was a computer software producer, and Wink and Stanton worked for a caterer, who, incidentally, contributes to his former employees' success by preparing the 60-pound jello mold required each night.

Even as one Blue Man, the three show subtle distinctions on stage that reflect their offstage selves. Goldman is a bit of a troublemaker while Stanton, tall and austere, keeps the peace. Wink, who offstage loves to question, to reason, to talk, is the curious one, the onstage explorer.

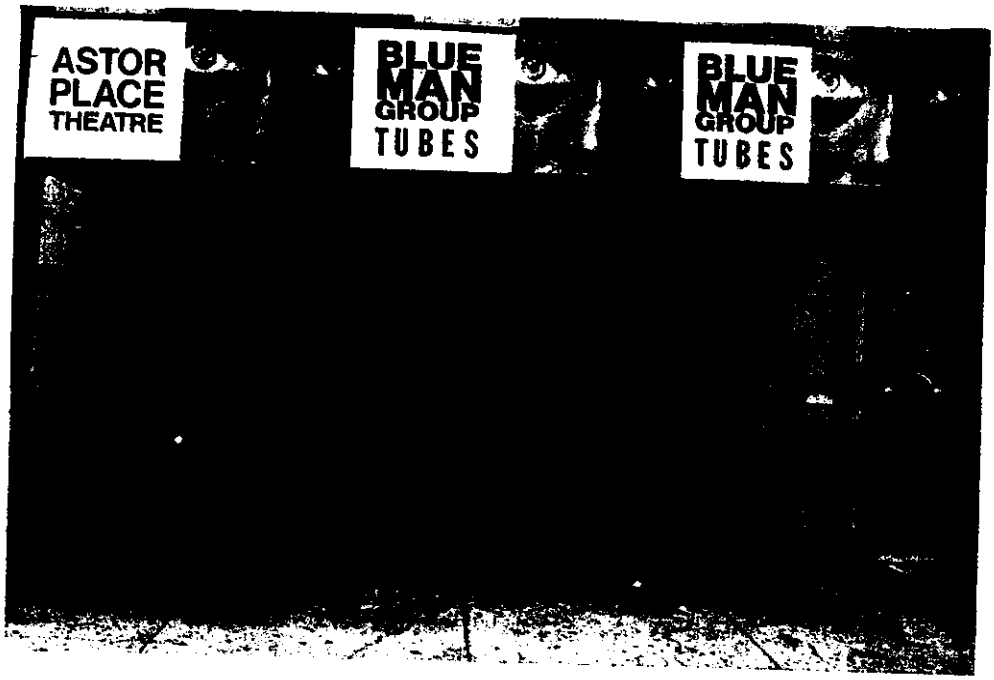
Combined, Blue Man is inquisitive and naive, not unlike Spielberg's Extra-Terrestrial, another cultural icon that seemed to charm us in spite of our cynical resistance to its mawkish manipulation. Blue Man succeeds because he is naive. He approaches each of his encounters with a freshness that he invites us to share. And he redefines the familiar, or at least casts it in newer, more honest light. Cap'n Crunch cereal, for example, "is a product that has never been promoted for its nutrition or taste," Goldman points out. Its identity and cache rest entirely in its ability to stay crunchy even after drenched with milk. Blue Man thus recreates Cap'n Crunch as a percussion instrument, in a skit that involves chewing like crazy, morsels spewing across the stage, to a raucous series of beating sounds. "It's a better drum than it is food," says Wink. And even if you aren't inclined to analyze the iconography of Saturday morning television commercials, watching these guys chomp on Cap'n Crunch is a lot of fun. You may just want to join them.

BLUE MAN GROUP

American

Holiday & Life

Fall 1993



Experimental theaters offer an alternative to Broadway. Among the most celebrated and most avant-garde off-Broadway productions is *Blue Man Group: Tubes* at the Astor Place Theater.

Astor Show Productions, Inc. 434 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10003 (212) 387–9415 Fax (212) 673–8424

The New York Times
Arts & Leisure
Sunday, December 5, 1993

How Much Cap'n Crunch Can One Man Eat?

Blue Man Group took on the art world in late 1991 when the three satirists opened in "Tubes," at the Astor Place Theater. In their post-modern romp, Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink, who paint themselves blue, consume or demolish a variety of props. Here are the two-year totals.

1,152 boxes of Cap'n Crunch

841 "bald" caps worn under the blue greasepaint

9,600 cakes of greasepaint (Yves Klein blue, to be exact)

49,920 pounds of bananas

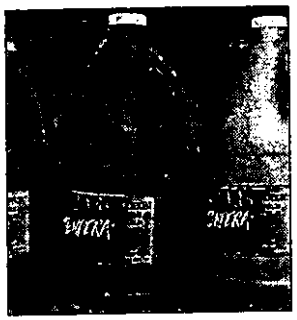
Photographs by Sara Krulwich/The New York Times

28,288 rolls of recycled paper towels

3,072 pounds of cream cheese (for fake marshmallows)

2,304 cans of shaving cream

384 pairs of surgical gloves (painted blue on the outside)



288 gallons of paint (red, yellow, blue, pink and orange)

And **65,920** pounds of Jell-O, **48,384** Twinkies Lights, **1,680** ponchos (for audience members seated near the stage), **1,152** bags of real marshmallows, **600** drumsticks, **528** drumheads, **384** pairs of flip-flops, **288** rolls of string, **192** loaves of Wonder Bread, **144** stereo headphones (worn under the performers' caps so they can hear the band), **48** gallons of makeup that glows in the dark

BLUE MAN GROUP

The Nation

January 20, 1992

THEATER.

THOMAS M. DISCH

Blue Man Group: Tubes

Right across the street from the Shakespeare Festival, at the Astor Place Theatre, the first genuine hit of the new theater season has opened, the Blue Man Group's *Tubes*. The Blue Man Group consists of three performers—Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink—who have concocted a blend of music, performance art, comedy and carnival sideshow that is Post Everything and a great deal of innocent but knowledgeable fun. With their heads sheathed in cobalt blue plastic and faces painted to match, and wearing bulky work-clothes-like costumes capable of extruding goop and spewing juices, the three observe a dancer's vow of silence while they perform various stunts that combine child's play, painting, drumming, art criticism and animal tricks. Imagine Jackson Pollock partially metamorphosed into three circus seals splashing about in pools of paint to the accompaniment of one of Robert Bly's new tribal percussion groups. What makes the art click is the performance style of the Blue Men, who pursue each of their peculiar activities with the same earnest, slightly anxious, terrierlike demeanor. Like all great clowns, they never seem to intend to be funny. Before seeing them I'd read accounts of many of their acts, but these descriptions did little to convey the effect the Blue Man Group has on its audiences, which is one of high glee and childish delight. All but the terminally high-minded should try to get to it.

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JANUARY 20, 1992

TIME

BLUE MAN GROUP

Breaking the Jell-O Mold

Blue Man Group is, yes, a group of men who are really blue, and their bizarre "art playground" is a sensation

By RICHARD ZOGLIN

The three bullet-headed, blue-colored actors move about the stage in eerie, wordless unison. They bang away at kettledrums while squeezing tubes of paint onto the drumheads, creating volcanic eruptions of color. They stuff handfuls of Cap'n Crunch cereal into their mouths, then join in a symphony of amplified chomping. They entice an audience member onstage for a banquet of Twinkies; suddenly cream filling spurts out of their chests. By the end of the evening, with strobe lights flashing and electronic music pulsing, the audience is engulfed by a tidal wave of crepe paper streaming from the balcony.

Don't try to understand it. Nothing Blue Man Group does makes much conventional sense. The troupe's 80-minute theater piece, called *Tubes,* is a potpourri of physical stunts, visual gags, art commentary, audience participation and all-out sensory assault. In the '60s it might have been called a happening; today the preferred term is performance art. Whatever, it is the most talked-about off-Broadway show of the season—and the most bracingly original.

Explaining Blue Man Group is no easy task. Take the Blue Men themselves. They are expressionless and robotic, yet oddly childlike and endlessly creative: a tripartite Buster Keaton, dropped in from Saturn. Some of the bits are overtly satirical (a dead fish on a canvas is the subject for a high-toned art critique, which scrolls by on an electronic message board). Others are raucously playful. One of the Blues tosses what appears to be marshmallows across the stage to a comrade, who catches them with his mouth and stuffs them inside like a huge wad of bubble gum. An audience member is hauled up onstage, dressed in a white jumpsuit and helmet, and taken backstage, where a video camera shows him getting suspended by his feet, splashed with blue paint and bounced against a canvas. He reappears onstage with his head encased in a mold of orange Jell-O. (It's a bit of Blue Man trickery: the fellow manhandled backstage is actually a pretaped double. The Jell-O, however, is real.)

"We are trying to create an art playground," says Chris Wink, one of the three 30-year-old New Yorkers who formed Blue Man Group in 1988. Their backgrounds are as unexpected as the show. Wink, who used to write synopses of articles for a Japanese magazine, dubs himself a "disillusioned futurist." Phil Stanton was a drummer and an aspiring actor who met Wink when they worked together for a catering company. Matt Goldman, a high school friend of Wink's, got an M.B.A. and worked as a computer-software producer before joining the group.

They began doing their Blue Man act on the sidewalks of New York City, once setting up shop opposite the Copacabana nightclub and enticing the overflow crowd to their own alternative "Club Nowhere." Later they moved indoors to various performance spaces in Manhattan. They created *Tubes* (named for the industrial tubing that snakes along the theater walls, hangs from the ceiling and laps up onstage) in early 1991 for the La MaMa experimental theater, then restaged it at the Astor Place Theater in November.

The group is getting offers to take its blue humor overseas (since most of it is wordless, the language barrier is minimal). For the time being, though, they have settled in for what is shaping up as an extended run. "Up until now, we were always building the props and wrapping the wires right up to the last minute," says Wink. "This is the first time we've had a chance to work on our craft."

It is still a labor-intensive show. The three arrive at the theater at noon to help prepare the props for the evening show. A fresh Jell-O mold is delivered every day, and 1,500 feet of recycled crepe paper are wound onto rollers for each performance. The blue makeup takes nearly two hours to apply; the actors do it themselves. Once the show is over they hang around for another couple of hours, helping clean up the nightly mess.

The group members wax philosophical about their chosen color ("Blue has an emotional complexity: a severe quality, but also a softness") their alienation from the '80s ("We felt like outsiders, but we were steeped in the culture") and their desire to "blesh" with the audience (the word, a combination of *blend* and *mesh*, comes from Theodore Sturgeon's sci-fi novel *More Than Human*). But their show is refreshingly free of intellectual cant and artistic pretension. One can hunt for precursors—the populist subversiveness of Penn and Teller; the visual inventiveness of Squat Theater—but the troupe seems to have sprung, well, out of the blue. "This is a celebration of the act of creation," says Wink. For the audience, it's just a celebration.

MARTHA SWOPE

FRANK MICELOTTA FOR TIME

Tubes and Twinkies: Stanton, Wink and Goldman, in natural color and after the two-hour makeup job that has turned them into off-Broadway stars

BLUE MAN GROUP

Esquire

FEBRUARY 1992 · VOLUME 117 · NO. 2

212) 673-8424

Astor Show Productions, Inc. 434 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10003

MAN AT HIS BEST

LOOKS

City Slickers

THESE BLUE MEN are Blue Man, the New York performance group that specializes in making mincemeat out of high art and vice versa. Blue Man's latest show, *Tubes*, at the Astor Place Theater indefinitely, twists pop-culture imagery to its own designs, whether that means deconstructing fish, spitting paint onto canvases, or rhythmically munching Cap'n Crunch. The slickers they're wearing come from the Reliable Outerwear Company, a fledgling outfit whose primary directive is to deliver hip, coated-cotton long coats and rain slickers for under $125. Retailers snatched up the collection immediately, so it's available now at shops around the country. With all the splattering Blue Man does, those slickers are a good idea for potential audience members, too. Remember, firemen and fishermen have been splattering themselves in them for years. And when you think about it, in the truest postmodern spirit, Reliable actually one-upped Blue Man. It deconstructed the traditional rain slicker by changing nothing at all. *tt*

POST-MOD SQUAD: *Blue Man—left, Phil Stanton, Chris Wink, Matt Goldman—cooks up a mess of postmodern blues.*

RAUL VEGA

BLUE MAN GROUP

VARIETY

JANUARY 6, 1992

REVIEWS

OFF BROADWAY

TUBES

NEW YORK A. Mark Dunn and Makoto Deguchi presentation of a performance piece created and written by Blue Man Group (Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton, Chris Wink). Directed by Marlene Swartz. Artistic coordinator, Caryl Glaab; set, Kevin Joseph Roach; lighting, Brian Aldous; costumes, Lydia Tanji/Patricia Murphy; sound, Raymond Schilke; computer graphics, Kurisu-Chan; associate lighting designer, Stan Pressner; associate producers, Akie Kimura & Broadway Line Co.; assistant producer, John Rizzo; general manager, Maria Di Dia; press, David Rothenberg Assoc. Originally presented at La MaMa E.T.C. Opened Nov. 17, 1991, at the Astor Place Theater. $37.50 top.

With: Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton, Chris Wink, Brian Dewan, Larry Heinemann, Ian Pai.

Add "Tubes" to the growing throng of Off Broadway entertainments that refer back to pep rallies, sock hops, spin-art, happenings and other pop communal rites to draw audiences into the action. The lucrative list already includes "Tony 'n Tina's Wedding," "Song of Singapore" "Pageant," "The Real Live Brady Bunch" and "Return to the Forbidden Planet."

"Tubes," the very-high-decibel creation of a performance trio called Blue Man Group, is the hippest of the bunch. But there are no retro conga lines here, no covers of "Monster Mash." Blue Man Group is a serious performance ensemble with a post-"Bonfire of the Vanities" sensibility, wrapping its anti-excess message in a sometimes charming, frequently assaultive barrage of sounds and images.

The sole number from the past — performed as a sing-along, of course — is the Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit," underlining the show's through-the-looking-glass world view. With its black light skits, toilet paper blizzard, handy cam, throbbing music and no spoken words, "Tubes" is "Mummenschanz" on acid.

Blue Man Group is three men (Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink) painted to look like blue light bulbs with eyes, and garbed in dark olive drab. Their environment, evident the minute one enters the Astor Place Theater's lobby, is a spaghetti jungle of tubes (a mesmerizing and provocative accomplishment of the design team). There are tubes everywhere, many emitting strange, barely perceivable messages. On the stage, an LED-zipper sign instructs the audience in various group activities. An exceptional onstage band heats up the action with music that has a fierce aboriginal edge.

Over the course of the evening, Goldman, Stanton and Wink create artwork with tubes that spit out paint from their chests, share Twinkie Lites with an audience member, beat several drums furiously and spew. A lot of spewing goes on in "Tubes," sometimes reflecting the gastric consequences of over-consumption, sometimes just for the hell of it, as in the toilet paper orgy in the big finale.

Director Marlene Swartz — a master with contemporary works whose underlying theme is paranoia in a secretive, threatening world — has made "Tubes" an accessible and enjoyable event, if a little bit like an artifact before its time. But she hasn't excised the redundancies that make the show, even at 90 intermissionless minutes, seem padded. That was no affront to the audience, which roared its approval at every opportunity over the ever-swelling din.

— *Jeremy Gerard*

BLUE MAN GROUP

TV GUIDE

Wednesday 8:05PM 9PM January 15, 1992

(13) EDGE (CC)—Magazine; 60 min.
93844
This month's edition, host Robert Krulwich says, "looks at the issue of identity in America. It's added to. It's covered up. It's definitely confused." Scheduled segments include off-Broadway's Blue Man Group; the phenomenon of the sports highlight; political ads in the 1992 campaign; controversy over Forrest Carter's book "The Education of Little Tree."

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BLUE MAN GROUP

DAILY NEWS

Monday, February 24, 1992 DAILY NEWS

PEOPLE PAGE

Photographed by RICHARD CORKERY DAILY NEWS

LOOK WHO JUST 'BLUE' THEIR COVER!

Their show, "Tubes" is a main squeeze among the city's theatergoers these days, but who are they? Blue Man Group, and they've leaped onto the world stage since opening Off-Broadway at the Astor Place Theatre. Seen unpainted in public for the first time, "Blue" loons (from left) **Phil Stanton, Chris Wink** and **Matt Goldman** say they see themselves as a single identity with three bodies. They cover their heads in cobalt blue paint for their show, and splash spray, squirt and splatter around for more than an hour. "The offers are coming in from all over the globe," says co-producer **David Rothenberg.** Says **Chris** "We like to think of the show as raising questions, and maybe even confounding and confusing people." They invite theatergoers onstage–most recently **Gregory Hines**–to participate in their antics, which include food shooting out of their jackets and catching balls of paint in their mouths that they spit out as art. Gee, what do you wear to this show?

Michael McGovern

BLUE MAN GROUP

AFTER HOURS

MEN OF TEAL

Now that performance art is more than 30 years old, we've reached a point where we're able to distinguish—with an expertise we've yet to develop for street mimes—between good and unfortunate acts. Of the latter, we've witnessed NEA grant recipient Karen Finley smear yams on her naked body, ex–porn queen Annie Sprinkle offer peeks at her cervix and an androgynous clubgoer quaff urine on stage.

However, *Tubes*, a show in New York performed by the Obie Award–winning Blue Man Group, transcends all the downtown *dreck*. Each man in the trio is garbed in a blue latex body suit equipped with tubes that spew multicolored paint at his buddies, the spectators and an occasional canvas. The presentation we attended integrated music, lighting and a variety of stunts to rousing effect. Somehow, this event was productive in a way we can't explain. Is it a show for your mom? No. Your brother-in-law the accountant? Definitely.

•

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BLUE MAN GROUP

New York Newsday

NEW YORK NEWSDAY, THURSDAY, MAY 28 1992

PART II NY

BROADWAY JOE

Mixed Bill

When Jay Leno calls, even mysterious, silent blue men answer. The Blue Man Group will use its day off from "Tubes" at the Astor Place Theater to appear on "The Tonight Show" Monday. That means flying out to L.A. Monday morning, getting six minutes of national exposure that night and returning in time for Tuesday's show. They'll have red eyes to go with the blue makeup .

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TURN T

You ain't seen blue till y

offbeat off Broadway ■ by Kim

▲ "We thought up this bald blue guy," s
Wink (right, with Stanton and Goldman
"We didn't know where he'd take us."

108 6/8/92 PEOPLE

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isn't to s
poet-type g
Wink, "and a
thought the sho
'rigorous.' "
That's precisely
didn't have in mind.
mance, which has been
fun-loving types since it o
November, is dedicated to th
that "our brains help us only so
You have to have your heart, you
know?" says Wink. To that end *Tube*
offers haunting music, audience parti-
cipation—the chance to have your
head encased in Jell-O, for one—and
plenty of mess. (Viewers in the first few
rows are given plastic sheets.) By the
time the show's silent, expressionless
rs reach their exuberant finale, au-
ces are cheering.
ombine[s] the malicious vaude-
humor of Penn and Teller with
nctiousness of . . . *Animal*
lared Frank Rich of *The*
es. "An opportunity

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ton: "We
ner and see
prising." No
they'd planned,
trio would barhop
the blasé denizens
life barely blinked. B
sponded enthusiastical
play with ooze ourselves,
Wink, "but we thought the
would. We pictured him havin
born off a painting, being this m
gooey thing."
Gradually Blue Man increased h
repertoire, each piece growing from
his creators' musings: about ritual, the

PLE 109

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, New York, NY 10003 (212) 387–9415 Fax (212) 673–8424

BLUE MAN GROUP

BusinessWeek

JULY 20, 1992

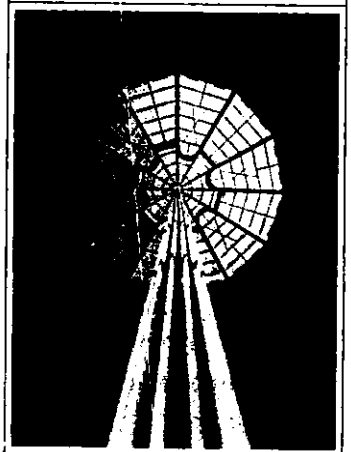
Personal Business

Travel

A FEW TASTY BITES OF THE BIG APPLE

In mid-July, the Democratic convention will add 40,000 visitors to Manhattan's crowds. So even people who can pay any price to get into The Four Seasons or *Guys and Dolls* may find themselves out of luck. But don't fret if the best-known attractions are thronged. Here's an insider's guide to alternatives:

DINING Without advance notice of a week or more, forget



NEWLY EXPANDED: THE GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM

OFF-BROADWAY HIT: BLUE MAN GROUP'S ART AMUSES AUDIENCES OF ALL AGES WITHOUT A WORD BEING UTTERED

For Italian cuisine at moderate prices, a bright chef who was formerly with Spago serves up California-style fare at **Dolce** (60 E. 49th, 692-9292). At **Trattoria dell'Arte** (900 7th Ave., 245-9800), the big anatomical artworks are amusing, the antipasto is bountiful.

If you favor Chinese, **Flower Drum** (856 2nd Ave., 697-4280) near the U. N. is less busy at dinner than at lunchtime. And in Chinatown's new Hotel Maria, **Pacifica** specializes in seafood, Hong Kong-style (138 Lafayette St., 941-4168). There's exotic luxury, too, at a much-praised new arrival, **Jewel of India** (15 W. 44th St., 869-5544).

Near Lincoln Center, **Cafe Luxembourg** (200 W. 70th, 873-7411) has lively crowds and brasserie-type cuisine. Fresh seafood and oceanside decor made **Fishin Eddie** (73 W. 71st, 874-3474) an instant success when it opened last fall. This summer's lures for the young and trendy are downtown: **Boom**, **Félix**, and **Metro CC**.

SHOWS If the SRO sign is up at *Crazy for You* and *Miss Saigon*, head Off-Broadway to ***Ruthless*** (254-5076, $37.50), a very funny musical that blends *Gypsy* with *The Bad Seed*. ***Blue Man Group*** (254-4370, $35) is Off-Broadway's highly offbeat trio in blueface. They mix slapstick with sophisticated pokes at avant-garde art and music to make audiences of all ages laugh.

CAMCORDER CITY: ELECTRONICS BUFFS MOB 47TH STREET PHOTO

THE Tonight SHOW WITH JAY LENO

September 22, 1992

Mr. Phil Stanton
Mr. Matt Goldman
Mr. Chris Wink
BLUE MAN GROUP
c/o Mr. Frier McAllister
Maria Productions
165 West 46th Street
Suite 1104
New York, NY 10036

Dear Phil, Matt & Chris:

Thank you for being on our show last night.

We enjoyed having you all back and look forward to seeing you again on New Year's Eve.

Best wishes,

Jay Leno

NBC • 3000 West Alameda Avenue • Burbank, CA 91523 • (818) 840-2222

BLUE MAN GROUP

DAILY NEWS

PEOPLE PAGE

Tuesday, November 17, 1992

BLUE MAN GROUP, THE OFF-Broadway blockbuster show, celebrated its first anniversary with **Brian De Palma, Melanie Hutsell** and other guests at a party in a no-name bar in the meat district on W. 14th St. It was eerily lit by "black light," which made all look ill. Blue Man has $250,000 in advance bookings.

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THE VILLAGE VOICE

January 15, 1991 • Vol.XXXVI No.3 • The Weekly Newspaper of New York • $1.00

JULIET LOFARO

Blue Man Group: art about making art about art

Pissing on Propriety

BLUE MAN GROUP

By Alisa Solomon

Tubes
Blue Man Group
La Mama
74A East 4th Street
475-7710

In the most staid portion of the Blue Man Group's rich and raucous new show, *Tubes*, a serene female voice explains the uses of fractile geometry: Equations fed into a computer produce swirling images that can help solve mysteries of the universe. Never mind that the voice is discussing an arcane area of theoretical mathematics as she pontificates about order and chaos, pattern and randomness, repetition and diversity. She sounds like a tour guide at the Museum of Modern Art. She could even be talking about the Blue Man Group.

Artsy self-referentiality? With a vengeance. As the slide-accompanied lecture continues, the Blue Man Group—three men with electric-blue bathing-cap-bald humanoid heads—paint the surface on which the computer-generated paisleys are projected. At first, their slashes of paint chase the curling images across the canvas. But soon the lines and shapes left by their frantic brushstrokes are lost in a whitewash. The canvas has become a screen, an artless blank without those projected fractiles.

The Blue Man Group's art about making art about art has as many twists as the heating duct tubes that twirl in a bouncing tangle from the ceiling of the La Mama Club. Whether banging xylophonically on a radiatorlike mass of plastic plumbing pipes, amplifying their chomps and crunches of breakfast cereal into a rhythmic fugue, or swaying beatifically as sprinklers attached to their chests emit spinning sprays of primary colors, the Blue Man Group revels in the clash when low art meets high tech—and vice versa.

At the same time, the Group (Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton, Chris Wink) brings a giddy, gooey mischief to their theme. The bad-boy counterpart to the V-Girls, they dis the discourse, and piss on the proper—almost literally. Before the show, spectators in the front rows are covered in plastic, protection against the strange substances that ooze, glop, and drip from the Blue Man Group. After the men dine on Twinkies, a viscous yellow pudding spurts from orifices in their shirts; one spits a mouthful of marshmallows onto a pedestal—and immediately affixes a $4000 price tag to the creation.

Tubes can make fun of the idea of art as childish mud pie making one moment, and offer a sophisticated—and hilarious—parody of Jenny Holzer, deconstruction, and Pop Art the next. And yet at any given instant, there's more than merry prankstering in the Blue Man's world.

In one astonishing segment, Goldman, Stanton, and Wink perform a muscular drum trio, each beating furiously against a surface filled with paint. As their sticks strike the drumheads, fountains of color leap and dance to the crescendoing rhythms. Splashes of blue, red, and yellow burst into space like fireworks. In this sequence, like so many in *Tubes*, art is silly, simple, basic.

And also beautiful. ■

Astor Show Productions, Inc. 434 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10003 (212) 387-9415 Fax (212) 673-8424

The New York Times

Copyright © 1991 The New York Times NEW YORK, FRIDAY, JANUARY 25, 1991 60 cents beyond 70 miles from New York

Jonathan Slaff/La Mama

Phil Stanton, left, Chris Wink and Matt Goldman, of Blue Man Group, performing in "Tubes," at La Mama.

Pop/Jazz

3 Clowns With a Message On Ritual, Art and Comedy

By STEPHEN HOLDEN

One of the most joyous moments in "Tubes," the delightfully circusy performance piece at La Mama, comes when its three creators, known as the Blue Man Group, enact a percussion-and-paint ritual that tickles one's primal fantasies of making noise and splatter.

Standing side by side in front of snatching kettledrums, the trio of unsmiling clowns, their faces and necks painted blue, begin tapping out a martial drum roll while pouring red, yellow and blue paint onto their instruments. Drumming, they kick up multicolored fountains of spray that rhythmically rise and fall. Plunging canvases into the gaudy spindrift, they then create instant "action" paintings.

"Tubes" is one of messiest performance pieces ever staged in a New York City theater, and also one of the most delightful, recalling the euphoric high jinks of Penn and Teller and the Kipper Kids, with percussion added. Before the performance, those in the front rows are handed sheets of plastic wrap to protect them from gooey substances that will be squirted from nozzles attached to the trio's Tin Man-style armor. Later, a volunteer is taken backstage, and a video screen shows him being swabbed with black paint, suspended upside down on a rope and swung gently against a canvas.

"Tubes" takes its title from the show's environment of hollow rubber tubes draped all around the theater with their ends dangling within reach of the audience. Those who put their ears to the tubes will hear all sorts of weird squawks and jabber. The show culminates with a disco bacchanalia in which the tubes begin to gyrate as a strobe light flashes, and the performers wade into the audience and dance on the tables while the theater fills with white streamers.

Breaking Down a Wall

The deliriously antic blend of music, painting and clowning has its semi-serious side. In an amusing spoof of art criticism, the three performers, who never speak, pose as a panel of experts sharing their thoughts about a stuffed fish held in front of a canvas. Those thoughts, alternately pretentious and irreverently funny, are paraded in red dotted letters across electric signs attached to their heads.

The Blue Man Group was formed three years ago by Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink, three caterers for Glorious Foods in Manhattan. Mr. Goldman had a background in computers. Mr. Stanton had studied acting and liked to build things. And Mr. Wink, a student of African and Latin drumming, had played with several post-punk rock bands.

"When we first got together, we didn't know what we wanted to do except find a style that had passion and that would break down the wall between performer and audience," Mr. Wink said the other day. "Gradually, we developed this character named Blueman, whom we think of as a single entity, but in three parts. Though he's extremely human, he also has strict limitations. He can't speak or move his arms, but he's got a passionate interest in color."

The group's first public performance, "Funeral for the 80's," was a happening staged two years before the decade actually ended, in Central Park opposite the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where they paraded with a coffin. Several months later, they performed "Club Nowhere" on the sidewalk opposite the Copacabana on East 60th Street. With a velveteen rope supplied by Glorious Foods as their only prop, they set up a club on the street and offered free memberships to the people waiting in line at the Copa. People liked the idea and began dancing on the sidewalk, even though there was no music. The group went on to perform in downtown clubs like King Tut's Wah Wah Hut and Dixon Place and at spaces like the Performing Garage and Performance Space 122.

A New Vaudeville

The range of skills the trio has developed is quite remarkable. All three members are accomplished percussionists who are augmented in "Tubes" by two drummers, Larry Heinemann and Ian Pai. They also play semi-improvised pieces in African-Latin style on their own homemade wooden, vibraphonelike instruments. One of their funniest skits involves tossing and catching objects in their mouths. They also constructed the rotating tubes from tubing donated by Materials for the Arts and motors they found in junkyards.

A particular inspiration has been the work of the popular New Vaudeville magicians Penn and Teller.

"I love the way they turn themselves in as they go," Mr. Wink said. "They'll do a trick and show you what they did, so that the piece is not about pretending to have supernatural powers, but about the sociological phenomenon of huckstering."

Rock as Tribal Ritual

A similar feeling of collaborating with the audience, rather than showing off for it, goes to the core of the Blue Man Group's vision and links it with what Mr. Wink described as "rock-and-roll utopianism."

"At certain moments in its history, rock-and-roll has become a tribal thing," Mr. Wink explained. "A lot of the impetus for Blueman came out of our dissatisfaction with being audience members at rock shows where we felt we were being kept at a distance, when punk and new-wave rock were supposed to give people the freedom to reinvent themselves. We're not geniuses, but we wanted to create something that we did feel was happening, something that had a little passion. One of the first things we discussed when we sat down together was how to form a new tribe."

La Mama is at 74A East Fourth Street, Manhattan. Performances this weekend are tonight and tomorrow at 10, and tickets are $12. The engagement has just been extended through Feb. 9. Shows will be Thursdays through Saturdays at 8 P.M. Reservations: (212) 475-7710.

BLUE MAN GROUP

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AMERICAN WAY MAGAZINE
MARCH 15, 1991

BLUE-MAN FANDOM

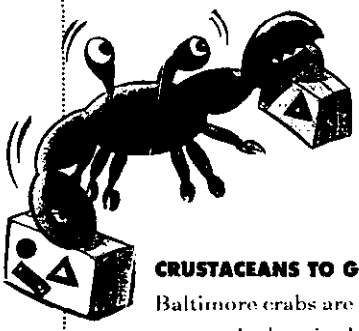
Miles of vinyl tubes creep through Manhattan's darkened Astor Place Theater and choke the stage. People in the first few rows put on clear-plastic baggies, and the show begins. Three men, bald as billiard balls and painted a beautiful cobalt blue, announce their arrival by banging on large drums. After a few bars, they pour paint on each drum to create brilliant, colorful eruptions (it's like a Helen Frankenthaler inspired by being thrown into a volcano). Later, an audience member is hauled backstage in a helmet and jumpsuit. On video, the rest of us watch as he is smeared in blue paint, strung upside down, and flung against a canvas. Soon he emerges unscathed, center stage, from a mammoth mold of orange Jell-O.

This is not a particularly sophomoric episode of *Late Night with David Letterman*. It's *Tubes*, the offbeat, off-Broadway show starring the silent, robotlike trio Blue Man Group. And it's New York's hot ticket of the moment. Since the show opened in November, critics have gone gaga over Blue Man Group's hilarious satire on the contemporary art world. A fish hanging on a canvas becomes the subject of purposefully silly, high-toned criticism flashed across electronic screens — Jenny Holzer-style. One Blue Man catches what appear to be gum balls in his mouth, chews them up, then sprays gunk on a blank canvas. First blue, then yellow, then red. *Voilà!* Instant art — and not half bad.

Time magazine called the show "bracingly original." *The New York Times* said it "reduces the late-twentieth century to a postmodern romp in a lunatic nursery school." But no amount of criticism can describe the queer fun of watching three men in their thirties (two used to be caterers, the other a computer-software producer) make a great big mess. Fans range from Joan Rivers to John Kennedy Jr. to Mikhail Baryshnikov.

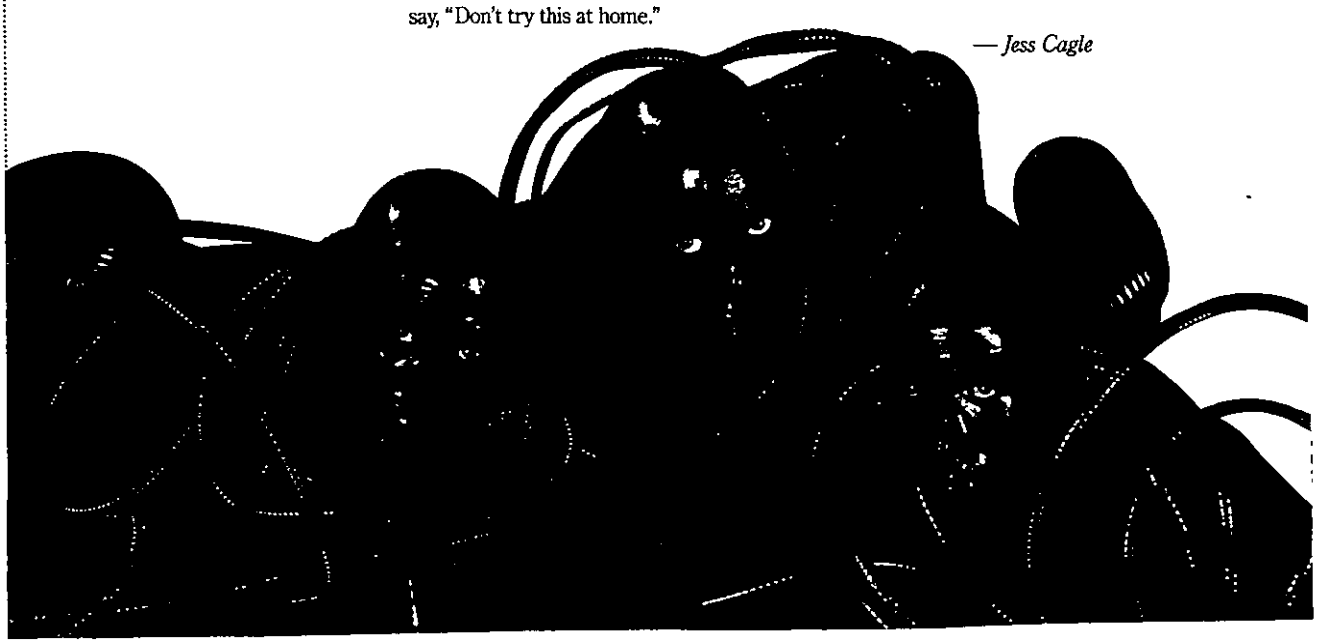
Blue Man Group first grabbed New York's attention working on the street, setting up velvet ropes across from the ultra-hip Copacabana, and silently beckoning those waiting in line to come to Club NoNowhere and dance to no music. Now, in their off-Broadway venue, patrons pay from $22.50 to $30 for the privilege of seeing Blue Man spew sixty pounds of bananas from tubes on their chests and hurl a massive lump of Jell-O from the stage. Finally, the wide-eyed, grinning audience is blissfully buried in a blizzard of white crepe paper. Kids love it, but beware: Not once does Blue Man say, "Don't try this at home."

— Jess Cagle



LINDA BLECK

CRUSTACEANS TO GO. Baltimore crabs are among the best in the world. Faidley's Seafood and Raw Bar **(410-727-4898)** and Ocean Pride Seafood **(410-321-7744)** will send them anywhere in the continental United States.



© MARTHA SWOPE

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BLUE MAN GROUP

VANITY FAIR

April 1991

fanfair

Turning Blue

Canvassing opinion: Blue Man mouths off during a performance.

MICHAEL HALSBAND

Their performance is enough to make a self-serious art critic turn blue in the face: one minute they're pounding kettledrums full of splashing Day-Glo paint, the next they're munching Cap'n Crunch in amplified rhythm. It's a psychedelic symphony of sound, vision, and food conducted by three cobalt-colored androids.

Since the Blue Man Group first splattered onto New York's art world three years ago, members Chris Wink, Phil Stanton, and Matt Goldman have joyously trod the thin blue line between art and parody. And with such high jinks as catching paint balls in their mouths and spewing them onto a canvas, they've rapidly become the darlings of the scene's glitterati. Among the Blue boys' fans: David Byrne, Laurie Anderson, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Ed Harris, John Kennedy Jr., and Joan Rivers. This fall at the Astor Place Theater the group launches a run of *Tubes*, the highly acclaimed show that nabbed it an Obie Award last winter. Not bad for a couple of frustrated artists-cum-caterers and an ex–computer-software specialist.

—GINI SIKES

BLUE MAN GROUP

THE NEW YORK TIMES, TUESDAY, JUNE 4, 1991

In July, Fun at Lincoln Center Is Serious

By STEPHEN HOLDEN

Serious Fun, Lincoln Center's midsummer series of performance art and nontraditional dance events, is about to celebrate an anniversary. When the three-week avant-garde festival begins at Alice Tully Hall on July 11, it will be starting its fifth season.

Opening this year's series is "The Mysteries and What's So Funny," an evening-length dance-theater work by David Gordon that features 13 actors, a solo piano score by Philip Glass and sets by Red Grooms. "Mysteries," which Serious Fun co-commissioned with the Spoleto Festival U.S.A., had its world premiere last week in Charleston, S.C, and its three New York performances will take place July 11 to 13.

Also scheduled to appear this season are the performance artist Laurie Anderson and the dancer and choreographer Lucinda Childs. Ms. Anderson's new show, "More From the Beyond," will be all talk and no music and will have performances on July 26 and 27. On July 30 and 31, Ms. Childs will perform a revival of her work "Dance" (music by Mr. Glass, sets by Sol LeWitt), which had its 1979 premiere at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

The series' 19 performances this season will include 7 world premieres, 7 New York premieres and 6 original commissions.

Budget Has Tripled

Since Serious Fun was inaugurated in 1987 as an experiment in attracting downtown avant-garde audiences to the city's uptown cultural headquarters, it has grown steadily in size. The budget for the series, which is coproduced by Lincoln Center with International Production Associates, a company that manages and books experimental performers, has nearly tripled, to over $900,000 from $330,000. This season the series has a new corporate sponsor, Philip Morris.

"We made a commitment to cultural expansion five years ago with Serious Fun and with Classical Jazz," Lincoln Center's president, Nathan Leventhal, said last week. "And each year has seen that commitment intensify."

Jedediah Wheeler, who runs International Production Associates, described the spirit of this year's festival as one of "creative mayhem." "A lot of the work is driven by chaos," he said. Mr. Wheeler cited the clown trio Blue Man Group, Harry Kipper, the comedienne Reno and the duo Dancenoise as examples. The Blue Man Group will present an enlarged version of "Tubes," a performance piece that uses motors, pumps, drums and paint, on July 19. Reno, who appeared recently in the Public Theater production of Tony Kushner's drama "A Bright Room Called Day," will perform an original evening-length piece.

Here is a complete list of Serious Fun events:

July 13 to 16: "The Mysteries and What's So Funny."
July 16: JoHanna Went, a West Coast performance group, presents the New York premiere of "B-4 Sin." On the same program, Dancenoise (Anne Iobst and Lucy Sexton) gives the world premiere of "It's a Girl."
July 17: Frank Olivier, Keith Terry and Leonard Pitt, three performance artists from the San Francisco area, perform works new to New York.
July 18: The dance and theater artist Ann Papoulis performs her 75-minute work "Medea," with the performance collective Watchface opening the program.
July 19: The Blue Man Group and Harry Kipper.
July 20: Art Zoyd, a French art-rock ensemble, makes its American debut.
July 23: Rachel Rosenthal, a Los Angeles performance artist, gives the New York premiere of her multimedia work "Pangaean Dreams."
July 24 and 25: Reno.
July 26 and 27: Laurie Anderson.
July 30 and 31: Lucinda Childs.
Aug. 2 and 3: The annual finale, "Megadance," presents the world premieres of four specially commissioned works by Ann Carlson, Doug Elkins, Charles Moulton and Elizabeth Streb.

Your Money: Saturday, in Business Day

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BLUE MAN GROUP

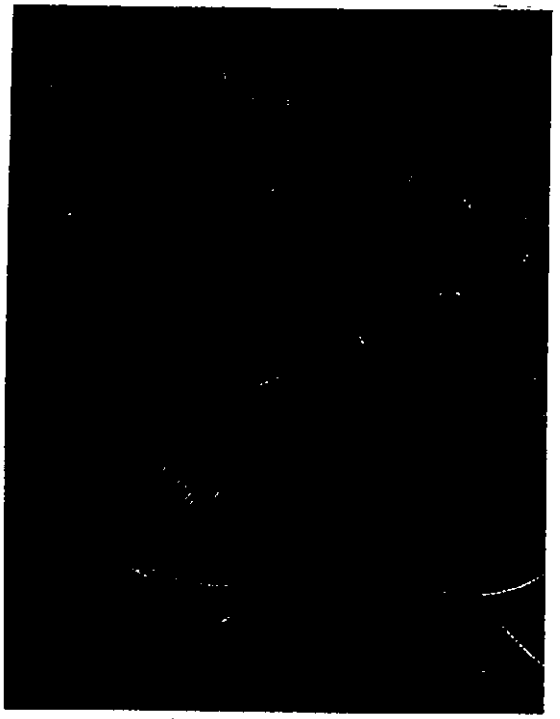
NEW YORK MAGAZINE

November 1991

Tubes is merry performance art. . ."

Theater/John Simon

THE GRAY AND THE BLUE



BLUE MEN: *Making an enjoyable mess out of* Tubes.

Blue Man Group COMPRISES THREE MAD-caps who, though mad, wear no caps—not even hair on their shaven heads, which they paint blue. Not robin's-egg blue, as might befit these glabrous ovoid craniums, because the trio doesn't want to represent a specific group, not even robins. Cobalt blue, then, making Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton, and Chris Wink look like men from Mars, except that Mars is the red planet.

What do they do? Easier to tell you what they don't. They don't do a play. They don't talk, save sometimes through running electronic displays or stacks of schizophrenia-inducing posters. They don't do magic tricks. And they don't make sense, only a very special kind of nonsense. It would make sense to a clever child, to Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear, to Yves Klein, *le monochrome,* who painted solid-blue canvases. But not to Gainsborough, *The Blue Boy* notwithstanding, because he painted neatly. When Blue Man Group paints with its mouths (spitting colored food onto a canvas), with other people's bodies (painted blue and rolled onto a canvas), with spouts in their jackets gushing blue, red, and yellow, it paints sloppily. That is what makes its frenetic action painting look like modern art. It may even *be* modern art; it is certainly the merriest performance art I know of.

BMG likes paints and food best, because with them you can make the most massive messes. But it can wreak sloppy havoc with less conducive materials: computers, camcorders, drums, strobe lights, and endless rolls of paper in which it wraps the audience. (Eat your heart out, Christo, though you could never make as big a mess of it as the blue men make of three boxes of Cap'n Crunch, and an audiovisual mess at that.) BMG also makes music on weird organs made from plastic plumbing tubes (hence the show is called *Tubes*), tubes that take on a riot of colors until they look like a designer bowel organ, perhaps a Versacephone. There is also backup music from another trio who (we see them dimly in blue light) may be men with blue guitars. Wallace Stevens would have liked them. *I* did. ■

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BLUE MAN GROUP

THE NEW YORKER NOVEMBER 25, 1991

THE THEATRE

NOT long ago, readers of this magazine were told, in some detail, about La Fura dels Baus, a Spanish theatre group whose performers were so high-spirited that audience members were warned to "wear old clothes" to see them. Although similar advice would be useful for those planning to take in Blue Man Group—who are at the Astor Place Theatre reprising "Tubes," a piece that they did earlier this year at La Mama—it must be noted that the Astor Place management at least provides plastic sheets for spectators sitting up front. They'll need them, for here are just a few of the goodies that Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton, and Chris Wink, the blue-painted men who make up the ensemble, utilize in the course of the seventy-minute performance: Twinkies, Cap'n Crunch cereal, gumballs, marshmallows, and Jell-O. Once ingested, this food has a way of bubbling up through orifices both biological and mechanical. All three guys, in fact, are champion hurlers—and we're not talking baseball. While such antics may sound juvenile, Blue Man Group's concerns turn out to be more or less grownup. With the assistance of a wide-palette technological paintbox, in addition to electronic message boards, live video, and, naturally, all manner of tubing, they broach such tough subjects as deconstruction, kitsch, information overload, and overpopulation.

The group makes its points with more or less expressionless faces and without speaking, but lack of speech and affect doesn't mean lack of sound and feeling. B. M. G.'s audio blips—the most sophisticated this side of Otts Munderloh—rely heavily on percussion, as performed both by the actors and by a trio of backup musicians. In the most spectactular rhythmic display, the blue men bang tribally on slickened oil drums, causing pyrotechnical sprays, one primary color per performer. At times, the actors are separated by emotional hues, too. But make no mistake: the three are not distinct or original comic types, even if they are very funny and worth seeing. They're more like leftovers: visually, from "THX 1138" or George Segal's workshop; spiritually, by way of Bruegel. Eat first.

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24			

Blue Man Group in "Tubes"

THE NEW YORKER

JUNE 22, 1992

TUBES—A performance work by Blue Man Group about art and other matters. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370.)

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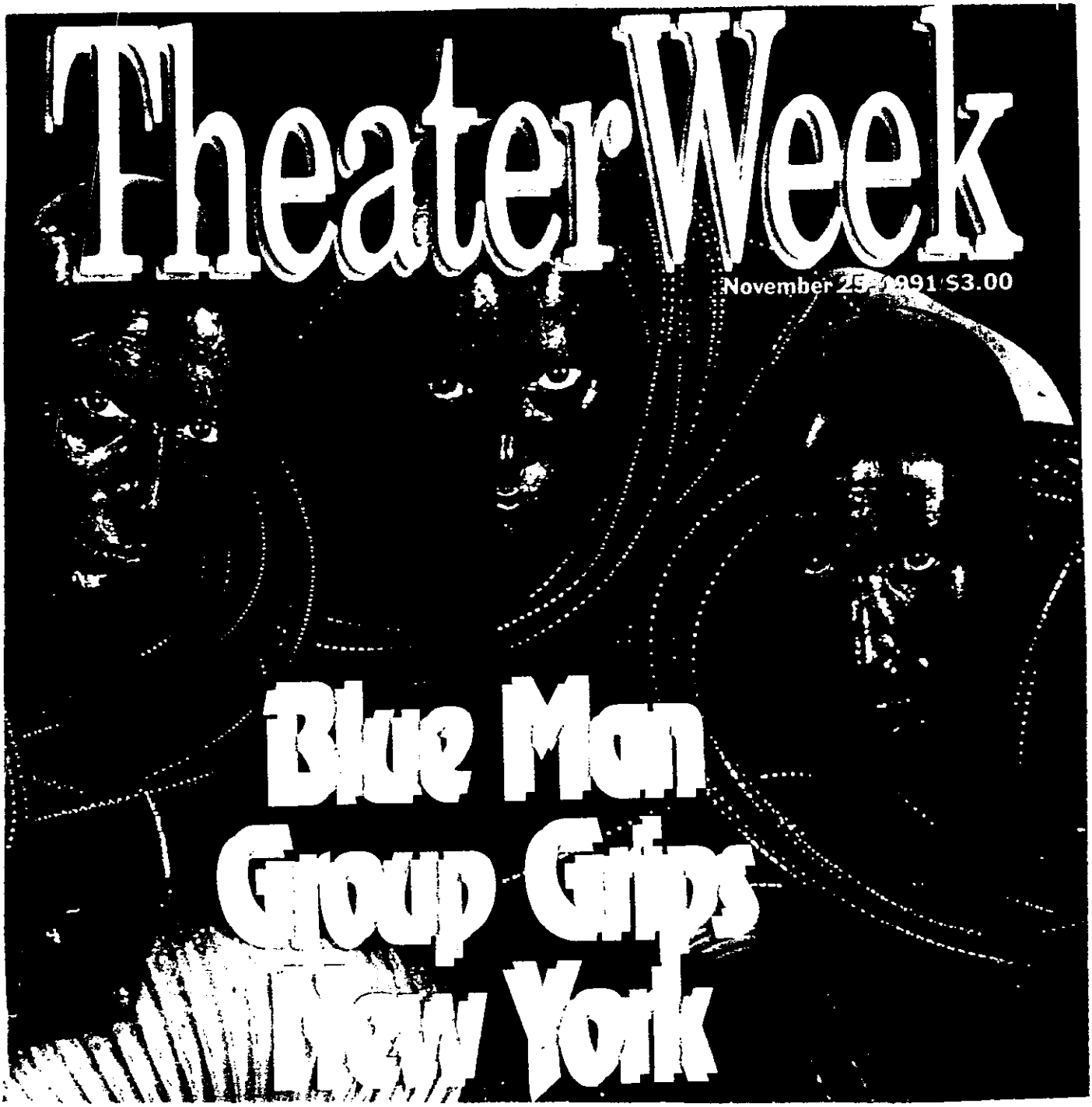
BLUE MAN GROUP



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BLUE MAN GROUP

NEW YORK MAGAZINE

DECEMBER 9, 1991

HOT LINE

THE TOPS IN TOWN THIS WEEK

THEATER

Blue Man Group: This performance-art troupe, writes John Simon, "comprises three madcaps who, though mad, wear no caps—not even hair on their shaven heads, which they paint blue. What do they do? Easier to tell you what they don't. . . ." At the Astor Place Theatre.

Martha Swope

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BLUE MAN GROUP

FRANK RICH, WQXR DECEMBER 13TH 1991

However you choose to categorize ''Tubes'' - the show by three men who call themselves Blue Man Group - it is still a fun 80 minutes of entertainment. THe author-performers - Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink - are masked in blue paint and perform a series of stunts that combine the malicious vaudevillian humor of Penn & Teller with the rambunctiousness of the fraternity boys in ''National Lampoon's Animal House.'' They make all kinds of messes with such materials as thick, runny paint, Twinkies, Jell-O, marshmallows and, best of all, roll upon roll of toilet paper. But they never speak, except in the form of electronically relayed captions.

You don't want to make too much of the content of ''Tubes'' - a title which also describes the decor the show bestows upon the Astor Place THeater - but it is clearly at times a response to the go-go art-world of the 1980's, a satirical comment on the crazed art market of that decade and the posing artists and critics who fueled it. In truth, that line of comic attack is already dated in the austere 1990's, but Blue Man Group is so light in its touch, so unpretentious, that you laugh at the jokes anyway. Even funnier are the swipes at technology, some of which recall Jacques Tati's war against the future in the classic French film comedy ''Mon Oncle.''

In terms of craft, ''Tubes'' is an extremely well-choreographed and executed mixed media affair that involves a witty use of live video as well as live music, with a heavy emphasis on percussion. The evening, played without an intermission, is exactly as long - or as short - as it should be. Blue Man Group is sure to delight the young - not the very young, who might be frightened, but certainly any child remotely within hailing distance of adolescence. For the rest of us, ''Tubes'' is an invitation to lose our minds in an entertainment that some may label theater or, GOd forbid, performance art, but that is really, most of all, an opportunity to regress in some place other than the privacy of our own homes.

THis is Frank Rich of The New York TImes.

(END)

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BLUE MAN GROUP

NEW YORK POST

NEW YORK POST **ADVICE** THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1991

Do you agree?

TODAY Dear Abby hears from a reader concerned about disposal of used condoms. The Post asked: Should manufacturers be required to package, along with condoms, means for their disposal?

— ANITA SUMMER

BLUE MAN GROUP

Now starring in "Tubes" at the Astor Place Theater:

"Blue Man thinks there are enough disposables on the planet as it is. These things should be filled with the most exotic colors imaginable and splashed against canvasses or blank walls; dropped from high places onto empty streets to brighten them up; blown up to make interesting shapes. Bigger ones could be filled with helium and used in the Thanksgiving Day Parade."

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BLUE MAN GROUP

NEW YORK STAGE

DECEMBER 29, 1991 — Sunday Star-Ledger

'Ten Best' list for '91 contains meager half-dozen titles

By William A. Raidy

• "Tubes": A trio of inspired performance artists known as Blue Man Group has come up with the craziest and funniest show of the year, cleverly parodying some of the pretensions of the contemporary art scene and the people who make a living "explaining" it.

Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink are the Blue Man Group, who use everything from breakfast cereal to gumballs, a gooey marshmallow-like substance, electronic signboards, body painting (shades of Yves Klein), and a huge mound of quivering orange Jell-O to get their hilarious message across. The Astor Place Theatre is alive with scores of gray plastic tubes falling from everywhere. If you listen to the open end of one, a voice speaks to you.

A dozen years ago, "Evita," "Talley's Folly," Harold Pinter's "Betrayal," "Sweeney Todd" and Bernard Pomerance's "The Elephant Man" were among New York's outstanding "best plays."

The saying on the Main Stem goes that next season will be the best season. It's my New Year's wish!

blue man

№1

№2

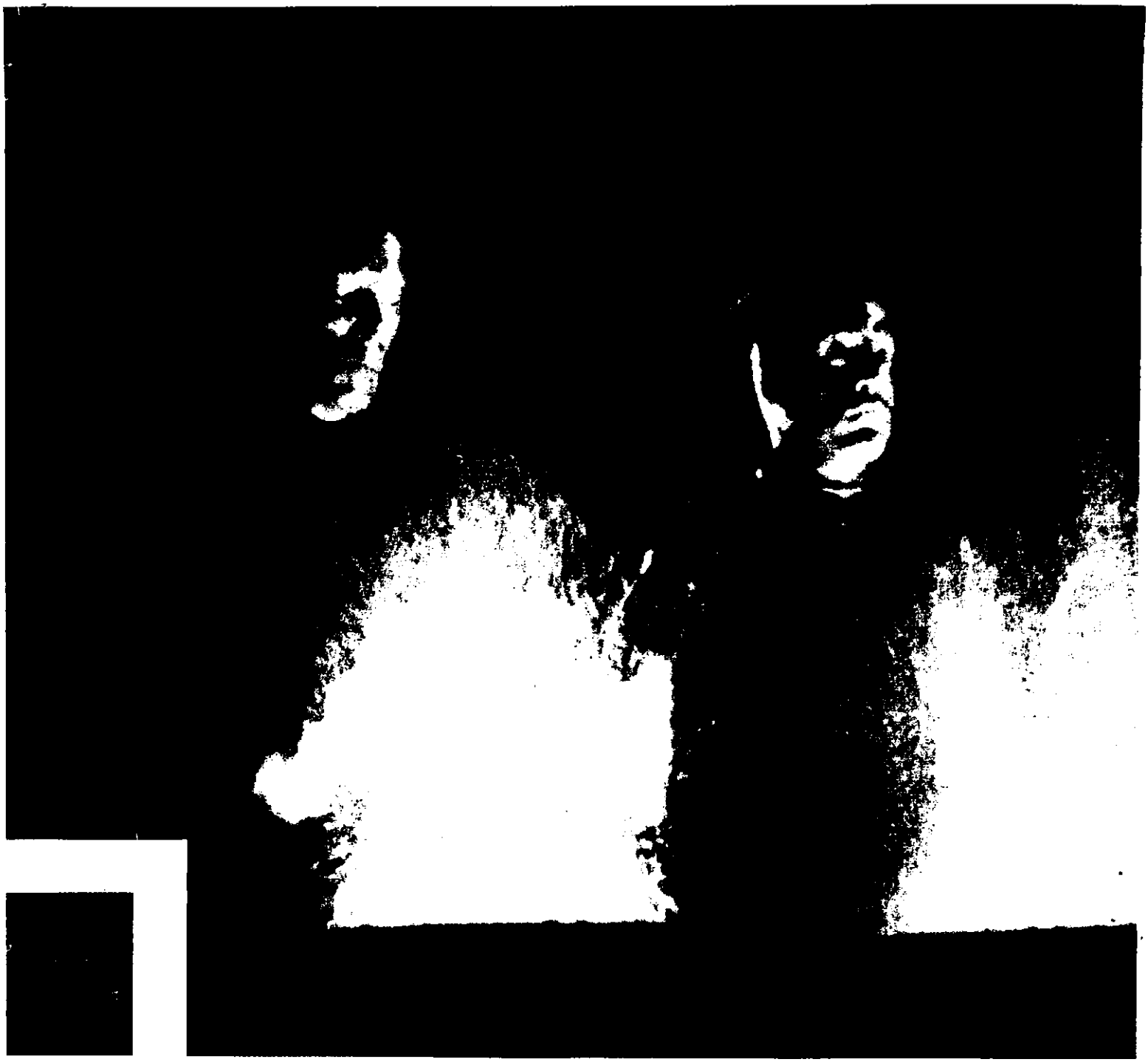
d feldman

group

синие из «клуба никуда»

№3

вика виноградова



Сначала электронная строка просит вас зарыть во все горло. Затем вам раздают ленточки туалетной бумаги: если вы обвязались ленточкой, значит, согласились принять участие в шоу. Барабанная дробь разрывает темноту. Трое с синими лицами пристально разглядывают зрительный зал. Один на секунду замирает, выплескивает на барабаны краску, и все трое еще яростнее отдаются ритму. Из-под палочек взмывают цветные звуки.

Blue Man Group существуют уже семь лет. Билеты на каждое шоу в Astor Place Theatre в Нью-Йорке распроданы за неделю вперед. Феерию звуков, красок, видео, пантомимы и причудливых перформансов трудно назвать театром. Скорее это магическое действие. По окончании представления понимаешь, что получил эмоциональный оргазм.

Барабанная дробь затихает, и из темноты выступают три силуэта. Медленно достают пакеты с небольшими шариками. Синий человек №1 ловит ртом цветной комок... Затем берет в руки чистый холст, разворачивает его и... выплевывает пожеванную массу. На холсте расцветает абстрактная картина. Синий человек №2 пытается повторить опыт своего друга. В рот ему летит комок белой массы. Как следует его разжевав, он выплевывает свою краску, но вместо картины получается жиденький нарост, похожий на кусок жеваной жвачки. Наш герой явно расстроен. Синий человек №1 выплевывает вторую картину. Синий человек №2 открывает рот и ловит один, два, три, пять, десять шаров. Двадцать, двадцать пять... Кажется, что он сейчас лопнет. Тридцать, тридцать пять... Публика в экстазе. Наконец, вращая обезумевшими глазами, он выдавливает из себя всю эту массу, и получается... скульптура. Белый фаллос гордо

фото blanche mackay

Club Nowhere. Абсурдные шоу синих парней вскоре вышли из-под контроля и заставили заговорить о новом культовом явлении большого Яблока. По словам их музыкального продюсера Хайна Ильи (Jan Pai), компания оказалась at the right place at the right time. Вскоре группу заметило всемогущее MTV, последовали выступления на престижных площадках, аудитория расширилась с 200 до 15 000 человек.

На плечах синих — полузвуковому электронному табло. Оно отражает их мысли о выставленной здесь же картине — засохшей живой рыбе на белом полотне. Один сравнивает ее с искусством дадаистов, второму кажется, что так выглядят его невоплотившиеся эмоции, а у третьего просто высвечивается текст "радостно водить машину" — почему-то на немецком языке.

Инструменты и интерьер синие создавали сами — от пластиковых труб до специальных барабанов. Помещение для работы — бывшая конюшня. Обшарпанные стены и бесчисленные трубы на потолке натолкнули на идею продолжить эту бесчинственность: теперь трубами оплетено все пространство. В разгар шоу они отрываются от стен и начинают плавно раскачиваться над головами зрителей. Сверхзадача синих — создать салон, где "двух битников соединился бы со студией Энди Уорхола". Синий цвет, согласно Стантону, — символ одновременно агрессивного и всеобъемлющего. То, что расположено "выше секса, религий и рас". На первые их шоу приходили только посвященные, неформальные тусовщики из East Village и студенты из близлежащего New York University. Сегодня Blue Man дают представления и в других городах — в Чикаго и Бостоне. Билеты (39 и 49 долларов) продаются как часть туристических: авангардное шоу превратилось в туристическую достопримечательность.

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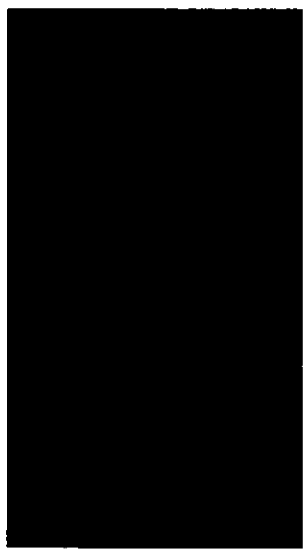
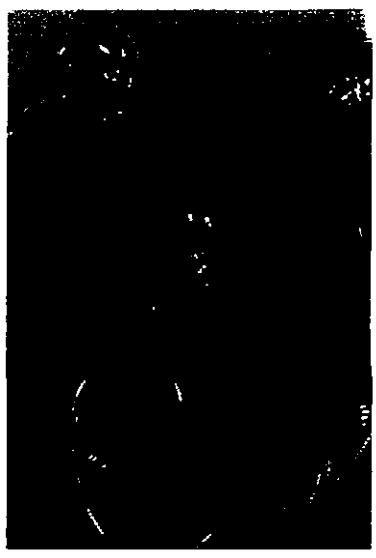
возвышается на пьедестале, но через мин неожиданно оседает. Зрители задыхаются от смеха. После шоу они смогут приобрести эти произведения искусства.

Семь лет назад трое молодых людей — Крис Винк (Chris Wink), Фил Стантон (Phil Stanton) и Мэтт Голдман (Matt Goldman) решили, что Америка разжирела, оголодала и живет ужасно скучно. В Центральном парке Нью-Йорка они устроили восьмидесятым пышные похороны. По вечерам они красили лица в синий цвет, натягивали бархатный канат у железной закрытой двери на West 33-й улице и вставали на ее страже — на страже двери, которая не вела никуда. Так возник "Клуб Никуда" (Club Nowhere).

Очередь в расположенный напротив латиноамериканский клуб Сарасавана потихоньку переместилась к





BLUE MAN GROUP

Трое синих появляются из темноты с огромной пластиковой трубой, похожей на гусеницу. Неподвижно и молча устрев взгляд в зал, неожиданно разрывают напряженную тиши "трубной" дробью. Синий №2 отходит на шаг в сторону есте с частью трубы. Звук становится на октаву ниже. №2 вращается в исходную позицию. Дробь не прекращается. С ерки подключаются музыканты, в аквариумах, стоящих по ям сцены, куролесит вода, звук нарастает и ускоряется... чется выскочить из кресла и прыгать.

Один из авторов барабанных увертюр — Айан Пэй. Маленький еец не только создал музыкальный и энергетический фон шоу, и написал громадные абстрактные полотна, встречающие зрителей в фойе. Когда он исполняет свою музыку, понимаешь, что он сто переносит свои сложные чувства с холста на барабаны.

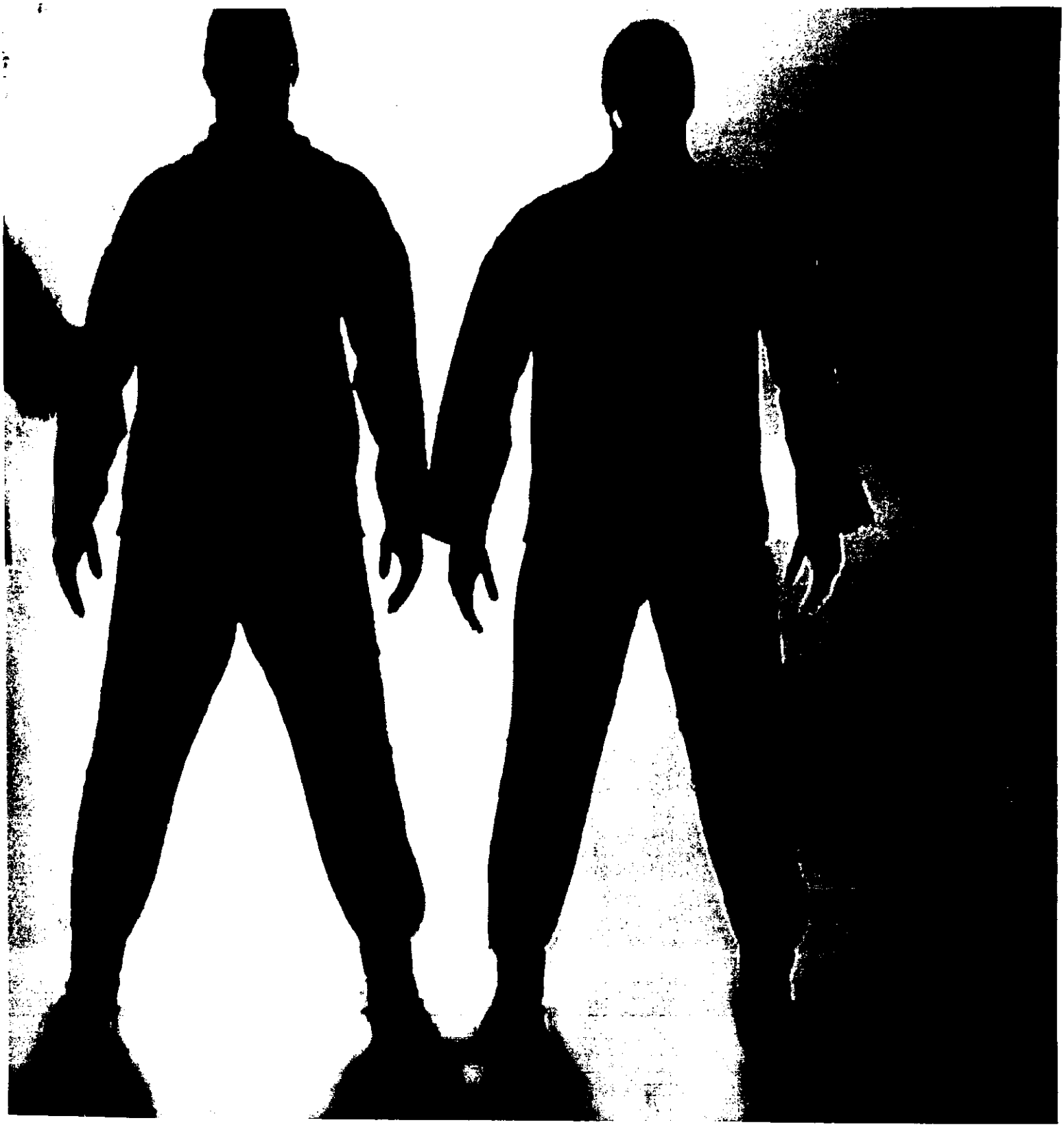
На несколько секунд все погружается в темноту. Когда зажится свет, синие идут в зал: по креслам, через головы зрителей, наступая на плечи и пачкая изредка попадающиеся лысины синей краской. Они что-то ищут. Точнее, выбирают жертву. Останавливаются у моего кресла. Синий №1 расплывается в нежной улыбке, советуется взглядом с двумя другими и приглашает меня с собой. "Влипла", — думаю я.

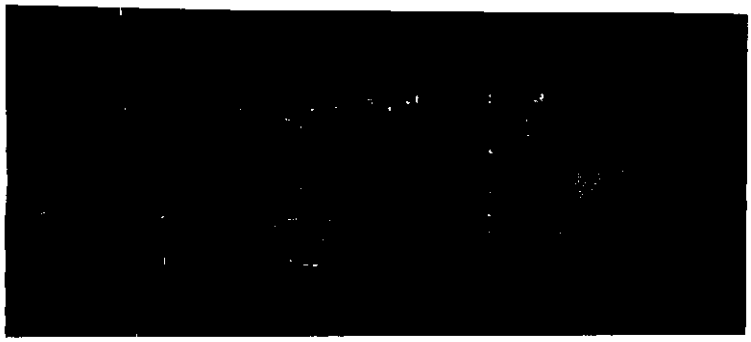
На сцене нас приветствует видеокамера. Синие молча облачают от меня в подобие водолазного костюма с отверстием на груди, усаживают за стол рядом с собой и вновь замирают. Мы неподвижно смотрим в зал. Синий №1 достает противный американский кекс в пластиковой упаковке и протягивает мне. Повторяет остальных. Начинает разворачивать свой кекс и... не может. Протягивает его мне: помоги. Потом мы медленно кормим друг друга кексами. Абсурдность происходящего оказывает на публику магическое впечатление: она подвывает. Вдруг одного из синих неожиданно рвет. Желтая склизкая масса заливает тарелки. Синие стремительно ее поедают и предлагают попробовать мне. Я, сморщившись и закрыв глаза от ужаса, соглашаюсь. Неожиданно приятный вкус банана. Из отверстия в моем водолазном костюме вдруг начинает хлестать та же желтая масса, обдавая с ног до головы зрителей из первых рядов, которых заранее снабдили полиэтиленовыми накидками. На прощание синие дарят мне полароидную карточку с моим искаженным лицом в момент поглощения загадочной массы.

Следующую жертву — скромного японца — в отличие от меня сразу уводят за сцену. На экране мы видим, что происходит за кулисами: его облачают в белый костюм, подвешивают вверх ногами и быстро-быстро красят в синий цвет. Затем, раскачав тело, "рисуют" отпечатками спины, задницы, ног синюю картину. Через некоторое время на сцену выезжает телега с огромным куском желе. Розовая масса колышется в свете прожекторов, пока оттуда не возникает голова смущенного, довольного японца.

Кроме того, вам предложат экскурс во фрактальную геометрию, чтение нескольких текстов одновременно, цифровой раскатель для котов и прочие штучки, которые описать уж совсем невозможно. Вновь нарастает музыка. Вибрируют флуоресцентные огни. Лавина туалетной бумаги обрушивается в зал в районе задних рядов и несется к сцене. Бесконечные рулоны бумаги перекатываются через головы зрителей. Стюарт Эвен (Stuart Ewen), декан факультета коммуникаций Hunter College, прокомментировал эмоциональное впечатление от Синих Людей так: «Довольно редко бывает, что приходишь в цирк, а уходишь наэлектризованный идеями»... ■

фото john mattera

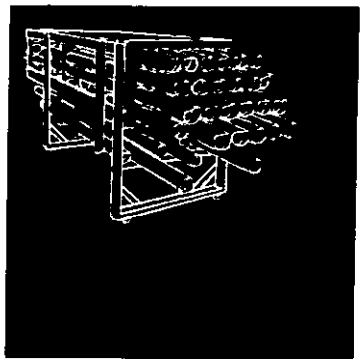


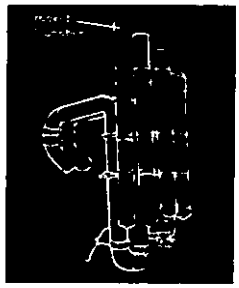


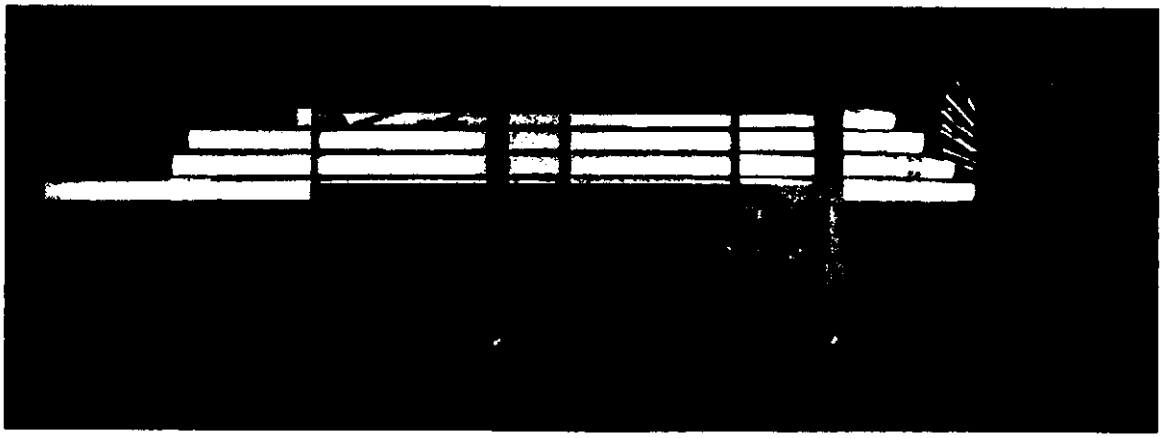
3 Männer:

Blau

Das Wort vom Pentium-Pop macht die Runde. Ihr gemeinsamer Auftritt mit Moby bei der Grammyverleihung dieses Jahres war der einzige Höhepunkt eines von Jahr zu Jahr vorhersehbarer werdenden Jahrmarktes der amerikanischen Eitelkeiten. Ihr »Instrumentarium« ist ein einziger Anschlag auf den High-Tech-Glauben und sie sind sicherlich das Beste, was der Rockmusik seit Frank Zappa und den Marx Brothers widerfahren konnte. Oder ist es etwa doch nur die blanke Anarchie, die sich hier Bahn bricht? Es ist alles und nichts, es ist die Blue Man Group!





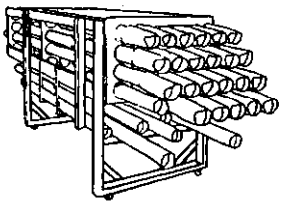


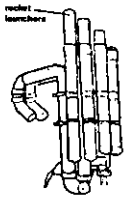
■ Aktuelle CD:
■ Blue Man Group: *Audio* (Virgin)

ck

Thorsten Bednarz. Das Spektakel begann vor nahezu zehn Jahren, als Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton und Chris Wink die Blue Man Goup »erfanden«. Bis heute ist daraus ein ansehnliches Unternehmen geworden. Allein fünfzig bis sechzig Blue Man gibt es, die in den Shows in New York, Las Vegas, Boston und Chicago regelmäßig auftreten. Dazu kommen noch Bühnenhelfer, Musiker, Techniker und natürlich die »Verwaltung« – alles in allem sind es an die 400 Leute, die unter dem Namen der Blue Man Group arbeiten.

Die Show selbst ist ein wildes Happening, eine kollektive Ekstase die in vielen Momenten an die besten und wildesten Zeiten der Rocky Horror Picture Show erinnert, so stark wird man als Besucher einbezogen – und nicht nur, wenn man selbst auf die Bühne geholt werden sollte. Schon





zu Anfang des (New Yorker) Programms übt sich das Publikum im Skandieren des Textes von *Happy Birthday*, wobei man von Seiten der Künstler darauf besteht, nicht zu singen. Das will man doch keinem zumuten! Auch werden die ersten sechs oder sieben Reihen im Publikum mit langen Plastikregenmänteln ausgestattet, die die Zuschauer vor herumspritzender Farbe und noch anderen viel unangenehmeren Dingen schützen sollen. Immerhin wird nicht nur der aktuelle Kunstmarkt und seine Auswüchse seit den 50er Jahren liebevoll auf die Schippe genommen (oder auch konsequent weitergeführt), sondern man schrammt von Zeit zu Zeit auch gern über die Grenze zum schlechten Geschmack. Wollte man es in Worte fassen, so ist es wohl eine futuristische Form von Slapstick, wie sie einst Buster Keaton und Charlie Chaplin betrieben, gleichzeitig aber auch die hohe Kunst von Fritz Langs *Metropolis*, gepaart mit der Aktionskunst von Yves Klein. Expressionismus in Zeiten des Entertainments, Bauhaus meets Kraftwerk. Es ist ein Konzept, das für alle Kunstformen offen ist.

»Wir lieben es, wenn die Leute sich fragen, woher die einzelnen Dinge kommen, die auf der Bühne passieren, die so futuristisch wirken und doch irgendwie an den Übergang vom 19. zum 20. Jahrhundert erinnern«, erklärt Matt Goldmann. »Die Künste reagierten damals auf die große Energie, die durch die industrielle Revolution freigesetzt wurde. Optimismus begegnete großen Ängsten. Auch unsere Instrumente klingen oftmals wie modernste Sequenzer und bestehen doch nur aus industriell gefertigten Abflussrohren. Das gilt irgendwie für die ganze Kultur von heute: Es gibt einige wenige wirklich revolutionäre Bewegungen in der Kunst, aber ansonsten hängen wir noch immer an den althergebrachten Formen und Ausdrucksweisen.« Und natürlich könnte man noch viel weiter zurückgehen in der Musikgeschichte, wenn man betrachtet, wie hohle Bambusröhren seit Jahrhunderten als Instrumente genutzt werden. Und auch das Internet ist gar keine so neue Erfindung, lernt man aus der Show der Blue Man. Schließlich gibt es schon seit Jahrhunderten das Netz der Kanalisation. Und hier sowohl als auch im Internet gilt: gibt es einen Knoten und die eingegebenen Informationen stauen sich, sitzt man bald ganz schön in der Patsche bzw. im Schlamm.

»Wenn man es richtig betrachtet«, so Phil Stanton, »... ist in unserer Musik außer der elektrischen Verstärkung vielleicht kaum etwas, was man nicht auch vor 10.000 Jahren hätte spielen können und was noch heute die gleichen emotionalen und vielleicht auch chemischen Reaktionen in deinem Körper hervorruft. Das ist der ›tribal aspect‹. ... Wir sind aber keine Weltmusiker, ebenso wie wir keine Avantgardisten oder Innovatoren sind«, ergänzt Matt Goldmann. »Wir wollen keine neue Musik erfinden. Wir nehmen unsere futuristischen Instrumente, die doch eigentlich sehr alt sind, und schreiben damit ganz normale Popsongs der heutigen westlichen Kultur.«

Und doch empfiehlt Phil Stanton, das nun auch in Deutschland erschienene Album eher laut zu hören, denn die Musik ist doch eher treibend und mitreißend angelegt, obwohl man sie vielleicht auch im Hintergrund laufen lassen könnte. Das gilt vor allen Dingen für die DVD, die in Dolby Surround abgemischt ist. Hier kann man eintauchen, sich treiben lassen, entspannen – aber sich auch anregen lassen, stimulieren lassen, um selbst auf die Suche nach neuen Klängen und Rhythmen zu gehen.

»Das Komplizierte ist doch, dass man sich sofort gewissen Zwängen und musikalischen Strukturen unterwirft, sowie man ein herkömmliches Instrument in die Hand nimmt, sei es nun eine Rockgitarre oder ein Cello«, erklärt Matt Goldmann. »Wir können viel freier mit unserer Musik umgehen, obwohl gewisse Songstrukturen auch in unseren Stücken vorhanden sind. Aber es gibt gewisse Stereotype, wie Gitarren eingesetzt werden, wie Orgeln oder welche Instrumente auch immer. Wir aber haben neue Instrumente, die wir ständig neu definieren können.« Und nicht nur das. Viele der Instrumente werden so gestimmt, dass sie letztendlich nur in einem einzigen Song zum Einsatz kommen. Wollte man das komplette Bühnenprogramm mit der Musik bestücken, die auch auf der CD zu hören ist, wäre die Bühne voller Instrumente und man hätte wohl keinen Raum zum Spielen mehr. Denn noch immer ist die Blue Man Group eher ein audiovisuelles Ereignis und kein rein akustisches. »Wir haben schon früher versucht, einige Songs aus der Show aufzunehmen. Aber es funktionierte nicht«, erzählt Phil Stanton. »Es klang nicht. Wir mussten erst unsere ganze Musik überdenken, mussten sie auf eigene Füße stellen – ohne den visuellen Aspekt der Show. Wir haben selbst drei Jahre lang jeden Abend auf der Bühne gestanden und gespielt und haben dabei auch unsere Musik verändert. Die Show lebte, entwickelte sich ständig. Aber etwas digital zu editieren und auf eine CD zu brennen, die sich dann nicht mehr entwickeln lässt, das war etwas ganz Neues für uns. Es war eine große Herausforderung, sich jetzt auch dieses Mediums bedienen zu wollen.«

Eine Herausforderung, der sich die Blue Man auch durch den Aufbau eines eigenen Studios stellten, in dem die teilweise riesigen Instrumente gebaut, ausprobiert und wieder verworfen oder schließlich doch aufgenommen werden. Die eher kleinen Konstruktionen, wie wir sie aus dem neuesten Werbespot für einen Computerchip kennen, sind inzwischen in der Unterzahl. Interessant ist aber auch, dass bestimmte Songs der CD niemals in der Show zu hören sein werden, weil sie einen viel zu großen Spannungsbogen haben. Die Aktion auf der Bühne entwickelt sich rasant und lässt keine Ruhepunkte zu. Diese setzen die Blue Man auf ihrer CD.

Als die Rede auf die karikierenden Momente des Stadionrockrummels kommt, erklärt Matt Goldmann eher zufällig den wesentlichen Unterschied zwischen der Live-Show und der CD. »Wir selbst nehmen uns nicht ernst. Nur unsere Musik nehmen wir ernst. Aber auf der CD können wir nicht die Witze machen wie auf der Bühne und dann musst du mehr an die Gefühte appellieren. Die Blue Man im Theater sind das eine. Wenn wir jedoch als Musiker auf Tour gehen würden, dann hieße das schon, gewisse Aspekte einer Rockshow zu beachten – selbst wenn man sie nur als Karikatur beachtet.«

Doch Musik ist ja nicht das Zentrum. »Das Beste ist, wenn die Leute in die Show kommen und nicht wissen, was sie erwartet. Wenn sie zu vorbereitet sind, dann ist das Spontane, der Zufall, der uns weiter treibt, schon verloren.« Und in vielen Belangen ist der Zufall eine wirklich treibende Kraft der Blue Man Group. Ein bewusst kalkulierter oder doch wenigstens gewollter Aspekt, wie sich im Laufe des Gesprächs herausstellt, als die Rede auf die (blauen) Körperbilder von Yves Klein kommt und wie sich die Blue Man auch dem experimentellen Ansatz z.B. in der Malerei der fünfziger und sechziger Jahre stellen. Doch zu viel Ernst sollte dabei auch nicht im Raum stehen, betonen Matt Goldmann und Phil Stanton immer wieder. »Wenn du Leute zum Lachen bringen kannst, ist es einfach, völlig unambitioniert zu sein. Du wirst immer auch so einige Lacher ernten. Aber wenn du es schaffst, darüber hinauszugehen, bestimmte Probleme auf einem vielleicht auch unbewussten Niveau anzusprechen, dann hast du sehr viel erreicht. Charlie Chaplin hat das in Modern Times oder seinem großen Diktator wunderbar gemacht. Wir wären froh, wenn wir dem wenigstens ein wenig folgen könnten.«

FORTSETZUNG VON SEITE 57. BABEL.

»Der Unterschied besteht darin, dass im englischen Jazz keinerlei Geld involviert ist. Es gibt so gut wie keine öffentlichen Mittel, um die Szene zu unterstützen. Die BBC tut einiges, aber die Regierung hat für diese Szene genau eine Million Pfund im Jahr übrig. Das ist, auf die Masse verteilt, gar nichts. Für Babel habe ich im Lauf der ganzen Jahre gerade einmal 5.000 Pfund bekommen. Hin und wieder kriegt ein Musiker für eine Platte ein Stipendium, aber das ist die Ausnahme. Insofern ist die Solidarität unter den Musikern unheimlich wichtig. Sie sind darauf angewiesen, sich auf die eigene Szene zu konzentrieren, um kollektiv zu überleben. Von den Labels war bis vor kurzem nicht viel zu erwarten. Sowie eins gegründet wurde, verschwand es auch schon wieder. Deshalb sind auch viele historisch wichtige Platten nicht mehr erhältlich. Ich bin gerade dabei, über den Katalog der Loose Tubes zu verhandeln. Kein einziges Album dieser wichtigen Band ist derzeit erhältlich. In den Siebzigern nahmen Musiker wie John Surman und Keith Tippett noch Platten für Major Labels auf. Das war großartig, denn es brachte den Musikern viel Support und auch eine starke Connection mit der Pop-Szene ein. Auf der anderen Seite gab es den Free-Bereich, Derek Bailey, der mit Incus vieles in Bewegung setzte. Aber er konzentrierte sich mehr auf die europäische Szene. In den Achtzigern und Neunzigern entstanden eine Menge Labels, die der britischen Szene eine gewisse Aufmerksamkeit zuteil werden ließen, aber die hatten eben alle keine lange Lebenszeit oder konzentrierten sich irgendwann auf andere Dinge. Inzwischen haben wir eine total veränderte Labellandschaft. Wir helfen einander, was viel einfacher für Vertriebe, Marketing- und Booking-Agenturen ist. In Deutschland haben wir zum Beispiel unseren gemeinsamen Repräsentanten Ulli Rattay, der den Überblick über die gesamte britische Szene und Kontakt zu einer ganzen Reihe von Labels hat. Wenn irgendjemand eine Frage zum Thema Jazz in Großbritannien hat, braucht er nur Ulli anzurufen.«

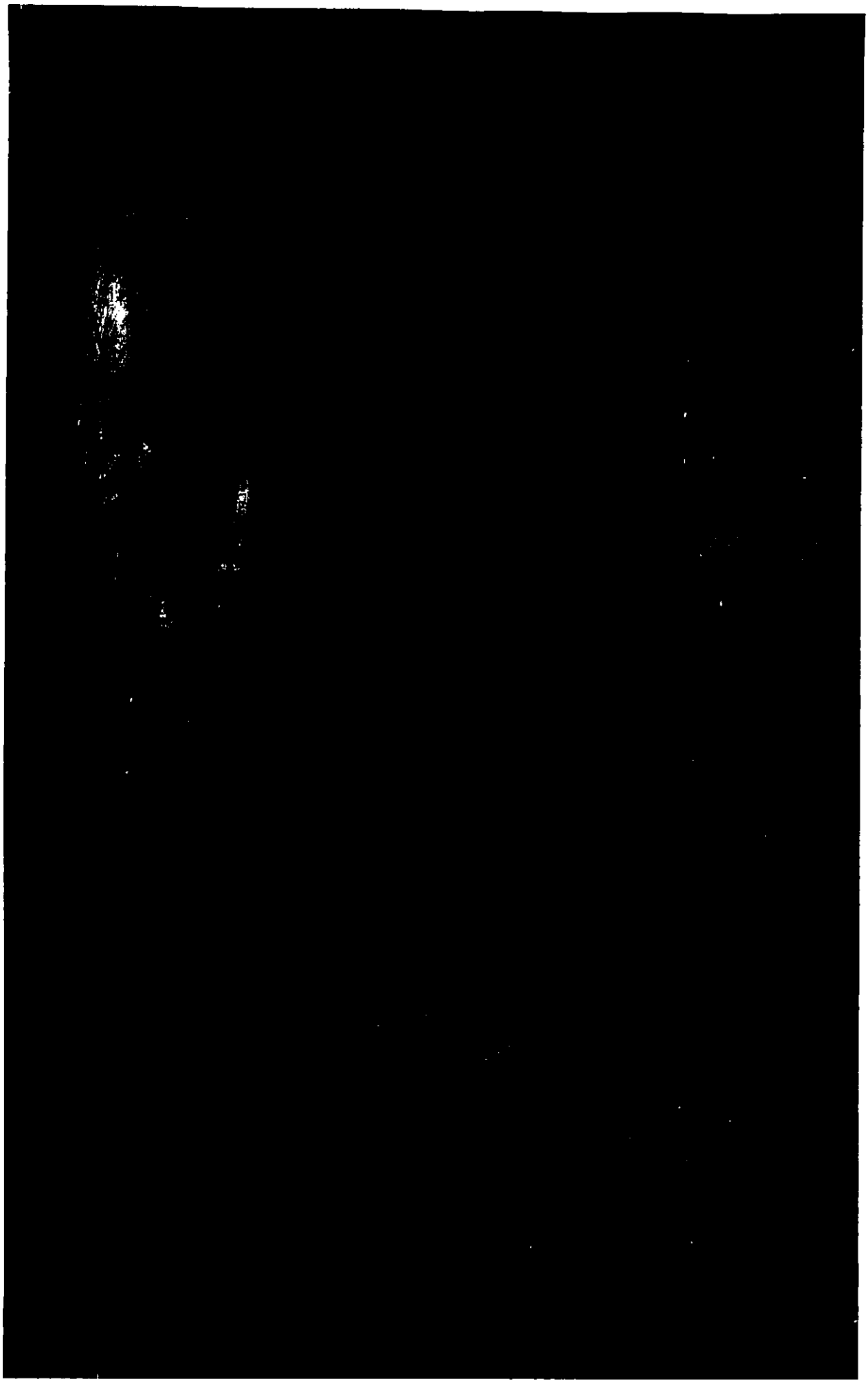
Da drängt sich geradezu die Frage nach der britischen Jazz-Identität auf. Es ist nicht schwer, britische Produkte mit dem Ohr von anderen zu unterscheiden, aber was sie letztlich anders macht, ist kaum in Worte zu fassen. Ist es eine besondere Positionierung zwischen Tradition und Avantgarde? Ist es ein spezieller Umgang mit dem Humor im Geiste Monty Pythons? Unterscheiden sich die Briten von den Amerikanern und Festlandeuropäern durch ihr unberechenbares Wechselspiel zwischen philosophischer Intensität und tänzerischer Leichtigkeit? »Es gab schon einmal eine solche britische Jazz-Identität, die auf die Loose Tubes zurückging. Die Band selbst hatte zwar gar keinen Schimmer, wie einflussreich sie war, aber nachdem sie aufgelöst war, wurde deutlich, in wie vielen Zusammenhängen ihre Musiker auftauchten. Irgendwann ging diese Identität verloren. Kaum jemand außerhalb Großbritanniens verfolgt noch, was der einzelne Musiker heute tut. Django Bates hat seit drei oder vier Jahren keine Platte mehr rausgebracht. Und er war eine der zentralen Persönlichkeiten jener Szene, die in den Achtzigern groß war. Steve Argüelles hatte den Status des internationalen Botschafters der britischen Szene, denn er lebte in Paris und arbeitete mit vielen europäischen Musiker, was für die britische Szene eher ungewöhnlich ist. Es gibt definitiv eine britische Jazz-Identität, aber sie ist nicht leicht festzumachen. Es ist ein in sich geschlossenes Netzwerk, an dem viele Komponenten teilhaben. Humor ist ein wichtiger Aspekt der Kommunikation innerhalb dieses Netzwerkes. Es gibt einen Eklektizismus der Einflüsse, an dem jeder Musiker leicht mit neuen Ideen partizipieren kann. Nichts wird bewusst in eine bestimmte Richtung getrimmt. In Deutschland hört man sofort, wenn eine Band gewollt südamerikanische Pfade beschreitet. In England kommt es auf wesentlich natürlicherem Weg zu irgendwelchen Kombinationen. All die Südamerikaner und Südafrikaner leben einfach unter uns und arbeiten mit all den anderen Musikern, so dass es ein Leichtes ist, diese Ästhetik zu absorbieren.«

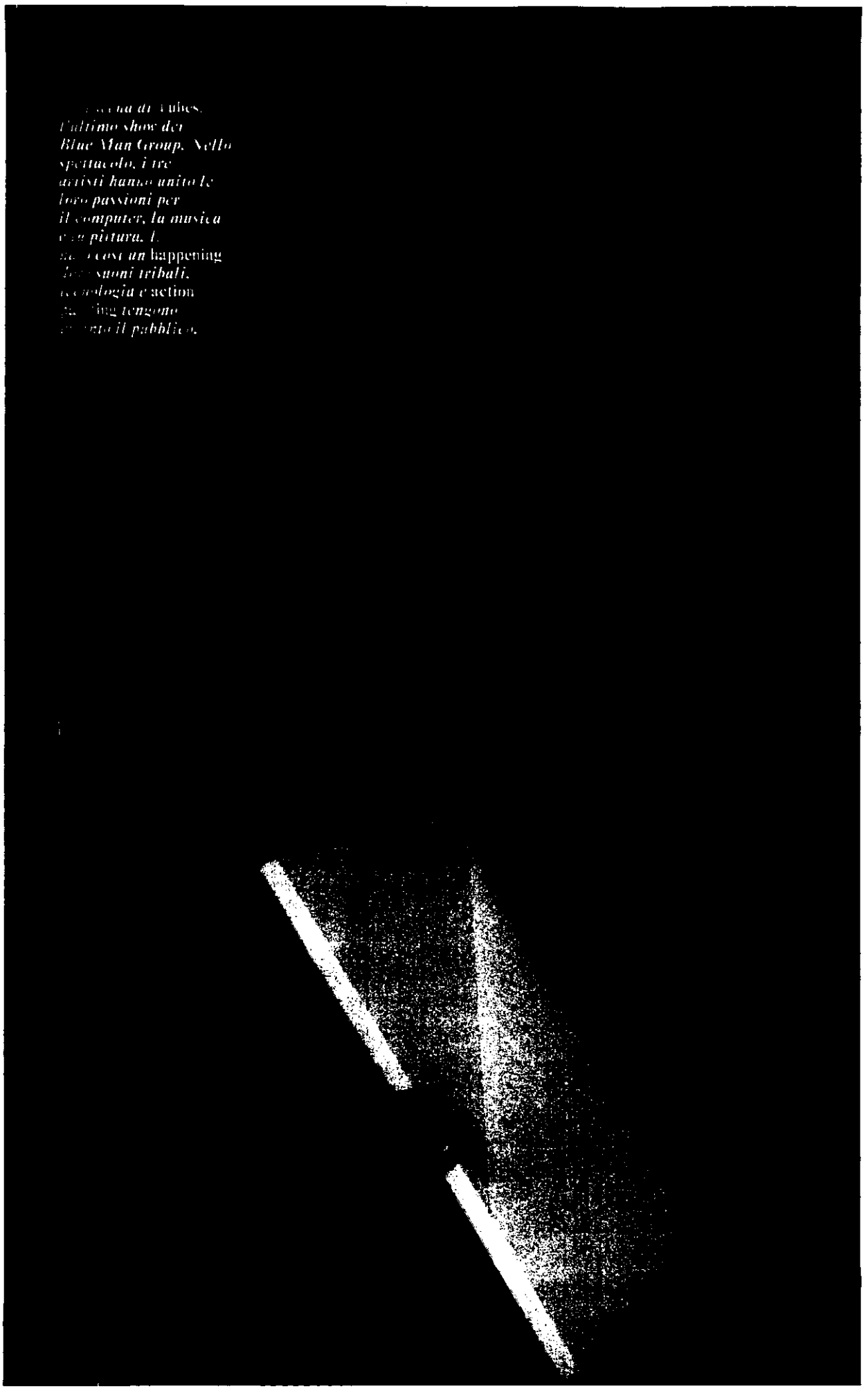
Vielleicht hat es ja wirklich etwas mit der Insellage zu tun, dass England eine Jazz-Sprache entwickelt hat, von der wir in Deutschland nur träumen können. Eine Situation, die existenziellen Druck auslöst, aber einen spielerischen Umgang mit dem Gut Musik provoziert. »Musiker in Großbritannien«, so Weindling, »müssen sehr flexibel sein, um zu überleben. In New York ansässige Jazzmusiker haben immerhin die Möglichkeit, sich ein Konzept auszudenken und nach Europa zu gehen, um es dort aufzuführen. Für britische Musiker gibt es diese Möglichkeit kaum. Unabhängig von der Musik ist ein amerikanischer Reisepass auf dem europäischen Jazzpflaster von ungeahntem Vorteil. Die britischen Musiker können noch so experimentell sein, sie sind darauf angewiesen, in Werbespots und Pop-Sessions mitzuspielen. All das hat wiederum ein Feedback auf die Musik selbst. Huw Warren ist gerade dabei, ein Album mit der Musik von John Dowland, Hermeto Pascoal und Charlie Parker aufzunehmen. Er fragt, wo ist der Unterschied, all diese Musik hat Groove.«

Weindlings Arbeit hat sich gelohnt. Seine Künstler gehören zum festen Bestandteil des rustikal ehrwürdigen Londoner Jazzclubs Vortex, der bis vor wenigen Wochen von der Schließung bzw. dem Umzug in ein wesentlich weniger vorteilhaftes Ambiente bedroht war, aber nicht zuletzt durch Weindlings unermüdliches Insistieren in gewohnter Weise fortbesteht. National wie international hat sich die Wahrnehmung von Babel extrem verändert, auch wenn britische Jazz-Musiker immer noch kaum auf deutschen Bühnen zu erleben sind. Weindling steckt voller Ideen und ist weiterhin beständig auf der Suche nach jungen Künstlern, die das Vokabular erweitern helfen.

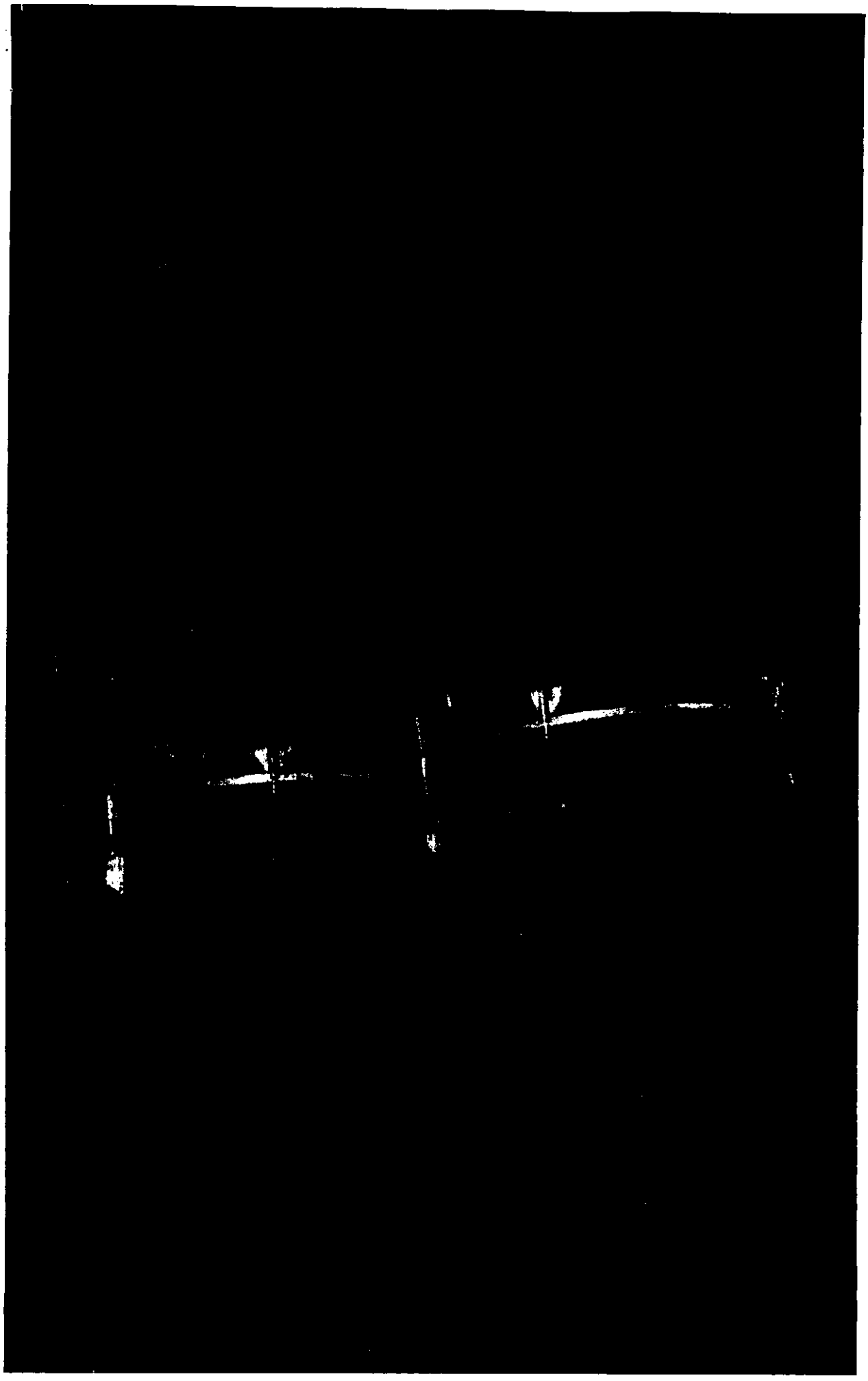
MARZIANI

A NEW YORK





[illegible] di Tubes. L'ultimo show dei Blue Man Group. Nello spettacolo, i tre artisti hanno unito le loro passioni per il computer, la musica e la pittura. E [illegible] così un happening *[illegible] suoni tribali, [illegible]ologia e* action *[illegible]ing tengono [illegible] il pubblico.*



campo divulgativo e sugli aspetti diciamo così fisiologici, ovvero quelli intermedi tra un pur legittimo ruolo degli addetti ai lavori (che scrivono sostanzialmente per altri addetti ai lavori) e lo «sbatti il mostro in prima pagina» dei cronisti spettacolaristi - anch'essi altrettanto legittimi, si intende - che piombano sulle patologie per produrre più allarmi che spiegazioni, più processi che informazione, più chiasso che partecipazione. (Ed è su questo aspetto del problema che «Media Save Art», da cui appunto il nome, ha fatto compiere passi avanti, ponendo un problema di portata internazionale e di non impossibile sviluppo).

Terza risposta: la qualità promozionale (ambiente, confort, orari, assetto informativo, disponibilità di materiali tanto «facili» quanto rigorosi) dei luoghi museali e degli spazi scientifici, che diversamente gestiti consentirebbero un rapporto con il sistema scolastico - e generale con il cittadino - [illegible] altra portata pedagogica rispetto al vagabondare di turisti e di scolaresche abbandonati spesso [illegible] di una moderna [illegible].

[illegible]stituzioni (cultura e [illegible] media e imprese [illegible] grazie alle sponsorizzazioni hanno un ruolo anche informativo sulla salvaguardia e che, a fronte di una maggiore domanda, potrebbero veder sviluppato un business importante) stanno sul banco degli imputati.

Qualcuno tuttavia dirà che, a guardar bene, l'opinione pubblica italiana, quando riceve giuste informazioni, partecipa agli eventi della tutela dell'arte e della cultura con entusiasmo. Ad accompagnare la statua di Marco Aurelio restaurata in Campidoglio c'erano, ai lati della strada, i romani che applaudivano come al tempo del passaggio del vero Marco Aurelio nei Fori. A salutare il restauro dei Bronzi di Riace - tra visitatori e telespettatori - tutta l'Italia ha fatto cornice. A preoccuparsi per le sorti dell'*Ultima Cena* leonardesca a Milano non sono solo gli specialisti ma tutti i milanesi che hanno a cuore i loro simboli. Tutto vero. Ma, all'italiana, tutto ciò convive con le irrisolte questioni già accennate. E convive in particolare con un cattivo tradizionale rapporto degli italiani con ciò che è «pubblico» (Stato, suolo, siti, funzionari, eccetera). Storia, forse, di reciproche non del tutto superate diffidenze. Che travalicano fino all'eccesso di chi non ha ritegno a spegnere la sigaretta per terra, magari anche su un tappeto o una moquette, appena ci si accorge che si tratta di un luogo pubblico.

Resta comunque una considerazione di sintesi da fare su un paese - il nostro - troppo ricco di natura, troppo ricco di cultura. Dicono gli psicologi che le «mancanze» aguzzano i desideri, che le «sottrazioni» inducono all'apprezzamento. Siamo davvero capaci di dare scontata l'imperturbabile, infinita disponibilità di paesaggi e affreschi, cornici montane e cornici museali, flora e statue, tramonti e mosaici, boschi e palazzi, da non avvertire neppure il dolore per una scomparsa, per una lesione, per una trascuratezza, per un vandalismo?

Inguaribile difetto, questo, degli italiani che, soprattutto, non amano le sofferenze, non le vogliono avere per vere. Così rischiando di farsi tirare le orecchie dagli stranieri. Loro saranno anche invidiosi, qualche volta maliziosi nella critica. Ma, diciamocelo sottovoce, sull'argomento capita pure che ci azzecchino. Insomma, italiani, poeti, navigatori, eroi. Sì, ma, come dicono a Napoli, anche un poco scostumati.

Stefano Rolando

Lunghe code per accedere a mostre e musei: è un ulteriore aspetto della eccessiva improvvisazione italiana rispetto alle esigenze del pubblico. All'estero, per esempio, il visitatore di una rassegna artistica è obbligato a prenotare il biglietto e l'orario, per evitare snervanti attese all'esterno e affollamenti all'interno.

BLUE MAN GROUP

DETAILS

NOVEMBER 1988, VOLUME VII, NO. 6

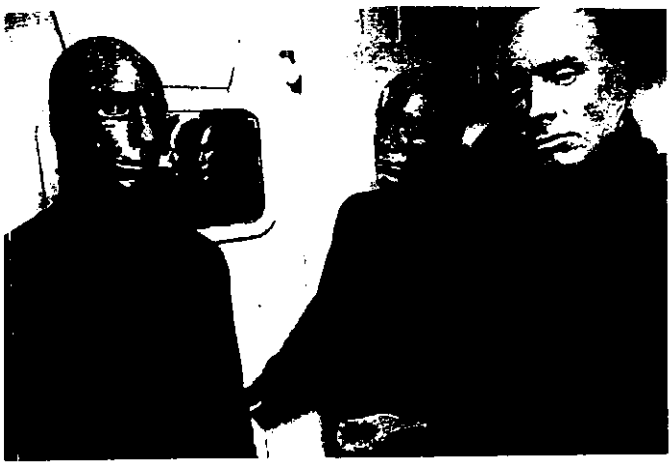
Mitchell Baum

The second Copacabana Thursday night was an overcrowded mob scene. But across the street on the sidewalk, the Blue Man group of performance artists set up an exclusive little nowhere club, Cross The Line, complete with rope and door policy. Since it had no dancefloor, no deejay and no bar, guests drifted out almost immediately and returned to the throng outside the Copa. But it served as an amusing divertissement

Astor Show Productions, Inc. 434 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10003 (212) 387-9415 Fax (212) 673-8424

DETAILS

NOVEMBER 1989



Blue Man go to work

EVEN WHITE MEN GET THE BLUES

JOHN WASSER

PHOTOGRAPHED BY KATHY SHORR

BLUE MAN GROUP

Last year, Blue Man staged a mock funeral in Central Park, burying the yuppie, eulogizing new music and cremating post-modernism. If artists are the antennae of social consciousness, these inventive twentysomething guys (Chris Wink, Matt Goldman and Phil Stanton) could be *the* Nineties' performance art troupe.

At appearances they sport identical blue heads and hands and opaque clothing, silently creating unique and indelible images. Blue paint magically oozes from their bodies, exploding into childlike expressions of color. An extended "poster moment" displays human physiology's inadequacies in dealing with the newfangled Information Age. Pieces from an enormous Jell-O mold (courtesy of Glorious Food's Jean-Claude Nédélec) fly through the air, showering the unsuspecting audience. The tribal experience has returned in full force.

"Blue Man evolved from a desire to clean the slate," says Wink, the group's energetic and unofficial leader. "We wanted to begin again." At first, he and high school friend Goldman held "idea forums" in their sprawling Upper West Side apartment. Friends, including kindred spirit Phil Stanton, dropped by on these Sunday afternoons to informal y discuss psychological bonding and share their individual philosophies. Gradually the idea of forming a performance art troupe began, emerged and took hold.

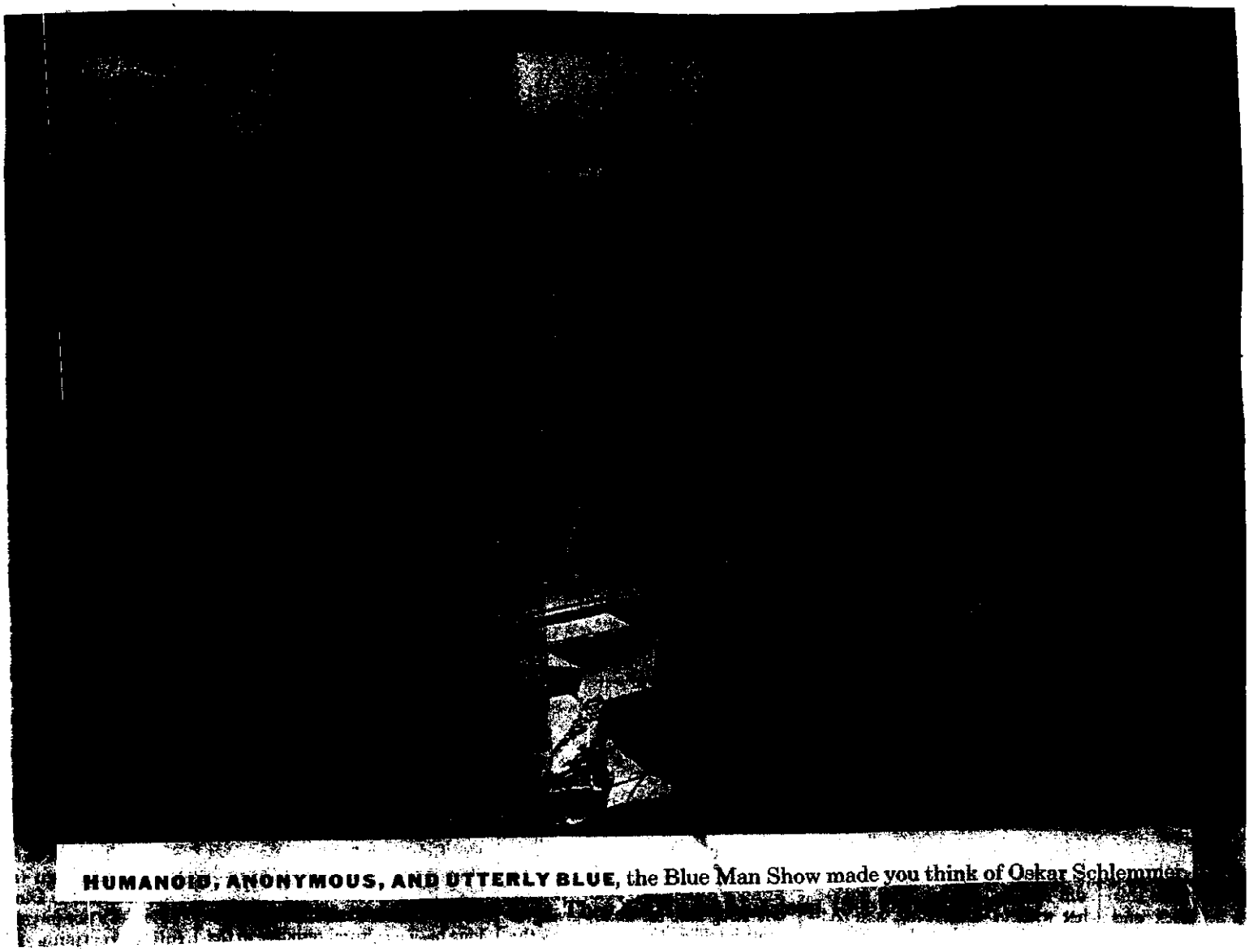
Following the Central Park funeral, Blue Man organized a makeshift club, complete with velvet stanchions and a liberal door policy. Crowds waiting to enter Susanne Bartsch's Copa party drifted across the street. "I think some people were having more fun with us," says Goldman.

The group proceeded downtown, performing to packed houses at PS 122, Dixon Place, Gusto House, King Tut's Wah Wah Hut, Cucaracha Theatre and The New Museum of Contemporary Art. Their adroit mixture of exuberance, alienation, strangeness and familiarity has struck a collective nerve. "Blue Man is more than just a group," expounds Wink. "It's a philosophy, a creative, rather than consumptive, lifestyle. It's easy for people to relate."

Expect to see Blue Man around this winter (they'll be appearing at Franklin Furnace on January 19th and 20th). Wear your ponchos if you sit in the first few rows.

the village VOICE

MAY



HUMANOID, ANONYMOUS, AND UTTERLY BLUE, the Blue Man Show made you think of Oskar Schlemmer

NEW YORK

$1.95 • S

NEW YORK MAGAZINE

NEW YORK/SEPTEMBER 25, 1989

Tangled up in Blue

THEY'RE BALD, THEY'RE blue, and they're mute. But without a word, the Blue Man group has audiences laughing.

Philip Stanton, Chris Wink, and Matt Goldman put their art where their mouths are. In one bit, a Blue Man tosses balloon balls full of paint while the other two field them in their teeth, turn to a blank canvas, and spew. Voilà! Instant abstract art. Starting September 22, Blue Man challenges conventions for three nights at Performance Space 122 (150 First Avenue).

Blue Man's men: Stanton, Wink, Goldman.

Blue Man grew out of the frustration its members felt about the music and art scenes. Though by day Stanton and Wink worked as caterers (where they picked up the balloon-catching trick, practicing with goat cheese), by night Stanton, 29, studied acting, and Wink, 28, was a drummer. Goldman, a 28-year-old computer-software specialist, wanted to do something creative for fun. "In the past, there were movements in which anyone could find a creative outlet," Wink says. "The sixties had the hippies, the seventies punk and New Wave. The eighties only had yuppies. Nothing was happening."

Their solution was to create an artistic Everyman who could express himself unself-consciously. One of their first efforts was a mock funeral procession for the eighties in Central Park. Now the one-year-old group makes "art" with music, beating rhythmically on huge vats of Day-Glo pink, yellow, and orange paint to create a hallucinogenic waterfall. When their messy song is through, they hold up the drop cloth they've laid across the floor and slap on a price tag.

Despite the sight gags, Blue Man's lofty intention is to explore the impersonality of mass culture and, in their requisite food bit, conspicuous consumption and waste. "As much as we're poking fun at the art world, we're also celebrating the joy of creation—like kids with a new platter of finger paints," Wink says. "You can think, Look how bogus it is to make art, or you can think, Anyone can create. And it's pretty colorful."

GINI SIKES

DOWNTOWN

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ART BEAT

SINCE 1976, WHEN HE WAS 60, THE REV. HOWARD FINSTER HAS created more than 11,700 "sermons in paint" on everything from pine boards to beds. "Sinners are my favorite people," he says from his home in Summerville, Georgia. "I work night and day to save them. I tell you, my art is my church, and I've been commissioned by God to paint life." Finster's first New York retrospective is at the PaineWebber Art Gallery, 1285 Sixth Avenue, through January 5, 1990. ALEX PRUD'HOMME

SOUNDS

THE SWEETEST TABOU

THE GIANT JULY-AFTERNOON crowd at the Central Park Bandshell was standing, clapping, and chanting just minutes after Tabou Combo hit the stage, and three people in the back were dancing and singing along as if they were groupies. "No," one man said. "We first heard them ten minutes ago."

In clubs like Brooklyn's Le Manoir, where they play most Sunday nights, and Manhattan's Sounds of Brazil, where they play this Friday, the Caribbean superstars draw an interracial audience—and they keep everybody moving.

Tabou Combo's Haitian nine.

They're sensitive, though, about being seen as a "party hearty" band that doesn't address Haiti's political and economic problems. "We *do* have messages about inequality and poverty, but they are very subtle," says Yves Joseph, the group's main songwriter and background vocalist. "You don't want to make people think of tragedies."

Formed in 1968, when drummer Herman Nau and the three other original members were teenagers in an affluent section of Port-au-Prince, the band made Brooklyn its base after it performed there in 1970. Today, nine band members are Haitian and three—the horn players—are American. They've made 21 self-produced albums, and one of their songs will appear on a new compilation from A&M Records.

Tabou Combo's music, while based on the traditional Caribbean *compas*—a blend of native and French-colonial music popularized by big bands in the forties—has incorporated a multinational array of musical currents over the years, from the funk of Earth, Wind and Fire to the rhythms of the "world beat" movement.

It was a band from another island, however, that sparked Tabou Combo to begin its revitalization of the *compas*. "It was the Beatles revolution that put it all together," says Joseph. JOHN DEGEN PENER

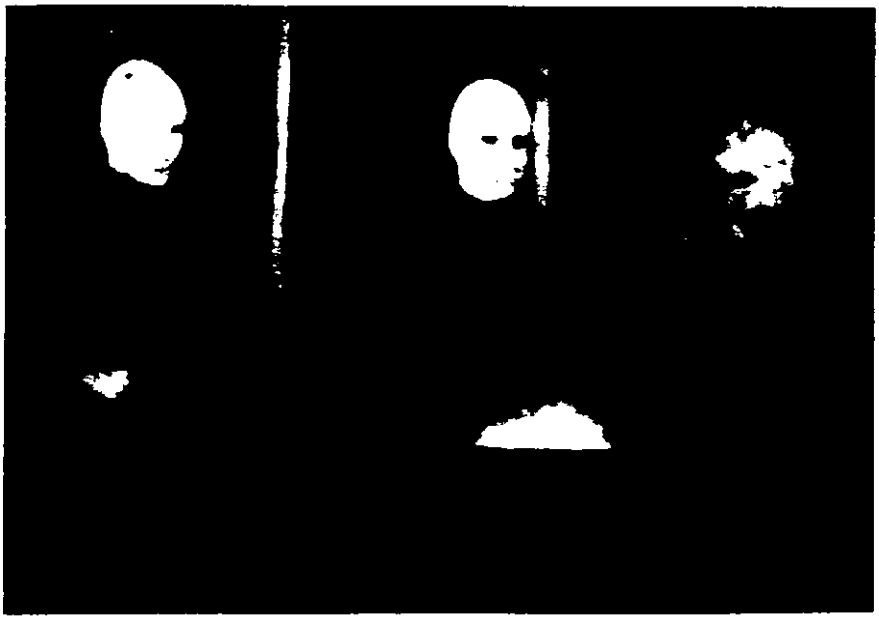
Photographs: top, Andy Freeberg; center, Chris Carroll; bottom, Jayme Schlepp.

BOMB
artists · writers · actors · directors
SUMMER 1990

Blue Man Group

Technology versus humanism: Three figures painted blue, bald-headed, with no ears, systematically square off against a parade of familiar household products. Then begins the chaos with Cap'n Crunch cereal, Jell-O, a talking kid's toy, fluorescent toothpaste, amplified instruments, a film of fractal projections, day-glo paint, and a cascade of 100,000 ball bearings rolling across the floor at Franklin Furnace.

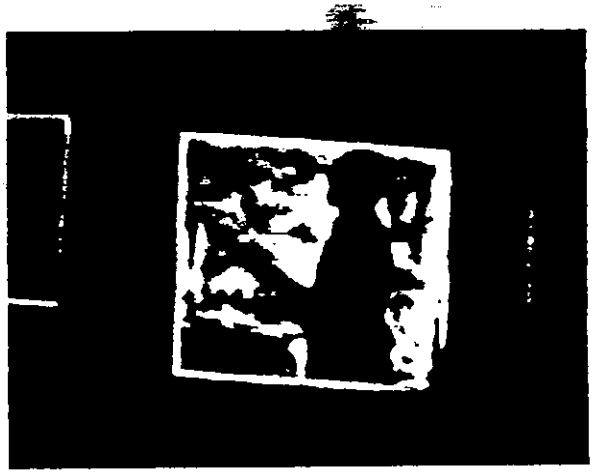
I invited Chris Wink, Phil Stanton and Matt Goldman to discuss their work. Unlike their eerie synchronous behavior on stage, Chris arrived first, followed by Phil and Matt minutes later. Over a table soon-to-be-littered with spent juice boxes and Oreo carcasses, Blue Man Group described their vision. At the interview's conclusion, the table top resembled the stage after one of their performances.

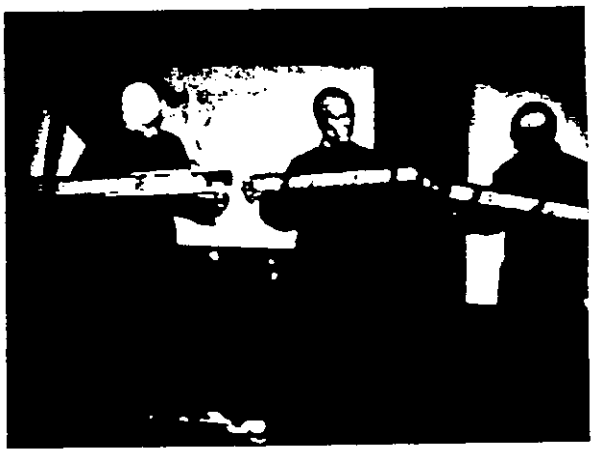


Blue Man Group: We act as a single unit so our part should read, B.M.G., Blue Man Group.
Stanley Moss: You'd like the responses to be collective?
BMG: Absolutely.
BMG: We'd like to have our names in the thing, but...
SM: The most obvious aspect of your work is the continuing collision with technology.
BMG: We combine the seemingly different ends of the spectrum: chaos and order, technology and art. And hope this intersection is communicated. When we got together in this little tribe, tucked away in this little cubicle somewhere, sheltered from the bombardment of progress, which we were monitoring, we saw our ourselves as huddling in from the storm—the storm of progress, the storm of technology—and the questions were: Where should human beings fit in? What is this thing that no matter what, is human and how do we protect that? We were drawn from different professions. A lot of people have been involved and come and gone to other things, but they were drawn by this feeling: What is going to happen? That's where we get into the electronic tribes. How do we keep the childlike, the innocent, the passionate, the dangerous?
SM: Everything you use in performance—Jell-O, Cap'n Crunch, fluorescent toothpaste, primitive drums, amplified sound—is a series of collisions with a techno-object. The entertainment precludes the intellect during the performance, but later, the intellect puts it all together. I realized that there was a much deeper message than the vicarious participation. I assume that it always is a scripted work?
BMG: There's a repertoire of pieces, and they fit together, and new pieces are being written. But no show's ever been the same. This tends to drive the strict theater people crazy. They say, "Well, I liked it, but I need a beginning, middle and end. I want that Aristotelian..."
SM: Is there a beginning, middle and end to your performance?
BMG: There's an emotional narrative.
SM: You do have a narrative within each bit.
BMG: The narrative is left partly to the person to ponder and put together in the days that follow. The experience itself goes bit to bit. What we hope for is that within the bit there's a discovery, a beginning, middle and end in the sense that we come to something, we discover it, something twists at the end—in that sense we're very classical. But we're not telling a literal language story.
SM: What governs the arrangement of bits then, if anything? I mean, is it truly random? You methodically destroy the set. You get messier and messier. I wanted you to play even more with those forbidden

Artist and corporate graphic specialist, Stanley Moss also designs BOMB magazine.

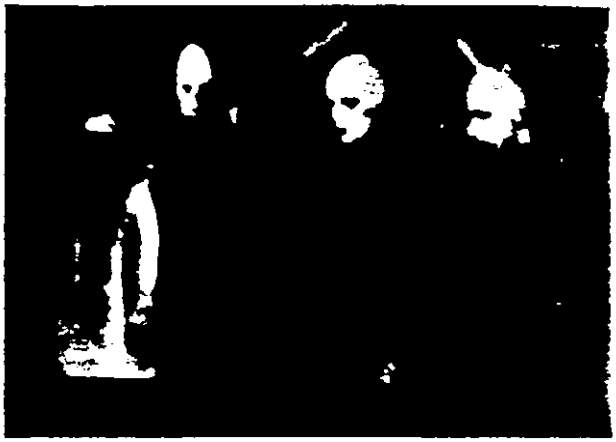
substances, get dirtier and get your hands all gooey. And there is more flagrant destruction as you go on. You get to greater chaos, breaking synthetic things back down to their elemental components.
BMG: We start slowly trying to pare the brain down to the cortex, to the brain stem, right? The stage gets transformed from a pristine stage to one that has either art or waste, depending upon where the stuff landed. There is a certain mythical characteristic to Blue Man. When Blue Man shows up in the landscape that's on that stage—traditionally, our landscape, industrial landscape, information landscape that we are a part of, that we see—it's very unfamiliar to Blue Man. Blue Man's very timid. He will be confused.
BMG: Right.
BMG: There are just as many contradictions within Blue Man as there are in the show. He's very wise and innocent.
BMG: There's a danger underneath, there's a sweet...
SM: Does each of you play a separate aspect of character? You're breaking down what we—each of us walks around with three or four people inside of us.
BMG: It is an ideal...
SM: It's funny, because there are three definite people.
And they cooperate.
BMG: Well, it's a single organism with three parts that seemingly are similar and yet very distinct. Even in its diminished state.
BMG: And that's very important. The reporters of our culture always want our names. They want to separate us. There are isolating and insulating forces. One of them is the star system. Another one is having your VCR at home. Anyway, they want to get you separated and figured out. It's an act of defiance, wearing all the same blue clothes and being on the stage as one person. It's passive-aggression.
SM: I'm not supposed to be able to identify the character in performance with a person from my own world. That demystifies, demythologizes the guys who are sitting across from me. The three guys on the stage then become...
BMG: One.
BMG: Everyman. It's not like we become clones. There's nothing robotic or clonelike about it. It's individuality existing within comedy.
SM: That scene where Blue Man stands and listens to the rock 'n' roll song. "She loves me..." And everybody shakes their head, "Yes." "She loves me not," everyone shakes their head, "No." It lent a human dimension to the characters, a gesture which demonstrated emotional response. Characters seemingly inhuman, returning to humanistic behavior.
BMG: That's a genre, a device—the fish out of water. That's something a lot of films do, take someone out of their world. Aliens or mermaids can see through fresh eyes—innocent eyes—it's framing things. You can look at the mundane because we're blue, and we're bald, and we're all sitting together. And our motions are diminished.
BMG: Blue Man doesn't see things the way most people do, Blue Man doesn't come to a box of Cap'n Crunch and see food.
SM: What does Blue Man see in a Cap'n Crunch box?
BMG: Maybe it's what Blue Man doesn't see.
BMG: He sees something that says it has a loud crunch. It's marketed for its crunch, not its food value. Blue Man tries it out as a musical instrument.
BMG: Right. It's Blue Man's symphonic exercise.
BMG: Blue Man finds the essence of the crunch.
BMG: By *hyper*consuming it, he transforms it...
BMG: Right. You can stuff it in your mouth until you can't get any more in and then the crunch is happening and it becomes a percussive crunch.
SM: How do you do that? Amplify your jaws...
BMG: We're mouth-synching; we're mouth-synching to a tape.
BMG: That's a good little area to take on, consumption, you know? Just by hyperconsuming, it becomes funny. We either diminish or exaggerate at different times. Like the dance part is very diminished.
SM: The dance part?
BMG: When we're doing she loves me, she loves me not.
BMG: We call that a dance.
SM: This brings to mind the fact that your pieces are meant to be performed in front of an audience. The work could not translate well to video, only because the personal stake, which I had as an audience member, would be greatly diluted...
BMG: No. Not until they get a tube that's more interactive.
SM: Like a holodeck. The moment in the show where Blue Man surrounds what appears to be a cylinder of Jell-O and we, the audience, can look through that cylinder and see a human face. Then you cooperatively dismantle the Jell-O. And we hear a monologue. Now, what was that?
BMG: That was a show-specific piece in monologue time.
BMG: You heard a character called Adolph Beck reciting what was called, "Bonehead Puma of Ennui." It's about not succumbing to the puma. And he looks like he's gonna go with it, but he's drawn to the bonehead, to the buffalo of his zeal.
BMG: The puma of indifference.
BMG: And Jell-O is a techno-item.
BMG: Jell-O and gel toothpaste and different foams. We have a piece where





For Left, Fluorescent painting with the primal drum. Top, Fluorescent painting by projectile. Center, Plato's cave? Silhouette of primal drummer. Bottom, Wearing digital signage.

Blue Man tries it out as a musical instrument. It's Blue Man's symphonic exercise. Blue Man finds the essence of the crunch.



huge ice buckets are filled with paint. And we drum and the paint flies up, these huge quantities...

BMG: We love all these different materials as rheologists. We're interested in rheology, the study of matter, form and flow...

BMG: ... flow and deformation of matter.

BMG: That point where it's about to go out of control is very intriguing to us. What kind of ritual of exuberance can we create? I'm thinking specifically of the drum painting. The joy of this color explosion. That's a very pure and simple childlike creative urge.

SM: Why is the responsive drumming funny? One character goes, Boom boom, another one goes, Boom boom, the third one goes, Boom BOOM. And everybody laughs.

BMG: That goes back to the idiosyncracies of the characters. It has to do with timing.

BMG: He goes, Crunch crunch crunch crunch, crunch crunch crunch crunch, crunch crunch crunch crunch, CRUNCH, CRUNCH, CRUNCH!

BMG: These guys are going on and on, and I'm waiting, and then Boom!

SM: You always play the loud part?

BMG: I'm always the loud part.

BMG: He's always the quarter notes. I'm the eighth notes, and Chris is the sixteenth.

BMG: People can relate to it, because it's comic. They see how it gets pretty tricky. And then there's the person who surrenders...

BMG: We practice for hours.

SM: Do things ever happen that you don't expect?

BMG: We know they will, because we're always right on that edge, so necessarily we go over it.

BMG: The set's booby-trapped. Sure. There's a snap, and someone's up in the tree, hanging upside-down like in "Gilligan's Island."

BMG: We set up this landscape to play in and then we go play in it. We can't predict how it's going to come out.

BMG: Like the marbles. We had 6,300 marbles, but the most we ever rehearsed with was a couple hundred.

BMG: The biggest problem I have is that I'm not supposed to break character. It really bugs me, because I'm watching this stuff for the first time myself and I would love to just sit there. We built a slowness into the characters so that we can take it in.

BMG: We have other shows where props swing out into the audience—paper comes rolling out—you're a part of that waste, we're there playing and you're there playing with us.

BMG: Consumption always has waste as a by-product. When we go to a catered event, these people are on, there's a beautiful setting. And we do our eating piece to "Bolero"—with candelabras and everything—and then color oozes out our sides and all hell busts loose.

SM: You have a tableau or a menu of technological expressions that you can draw from to express your emotional observations.

BMG: It's as if we get this feeling, and we call up a switchboard operator and say, "Here's the feeling, now connect, get me there somehow with these wires. Get me a patch."

BMG: In the group, that organismic quality exists both on and offstage.

SM: I can see that. That you sit clustered together the way you are sitting across from me now. You have a bonding experience that gave birth to the creative work you've produced. Tell me about the talking toy.

BMG: Oh, oh.

BMG: Kiddie City. It's incredible. It's a computer—that is a true collision of technology. A little robotic figure with a jaw that moves.

BMG: And his arms move.

BMG: Absolutely grotesque.

BMG: And it's also a game show host.

SM: Blue Man pushes the buttons, but then refuses to play the game according to its verbal instructions.

BMG: It drives you crazy. It dictates the pace of the circus.

SM: And then the toy has the last word. He says, "If you don't want to play, fuck you."

BMG: Right.

SM: Does he really say that, or did you create that?

BMG: No, we reprogrammed it.

BMG: I'm a master programmer.

SM: It's the hand of God.

BMG: But that's why it's so accessible to everybody. It's on the gut. Boy, you see this thing, you want to take a hammer and smash it. Instead, we smashed it in a slightly different way, by having it blow its cork.

BMG: There's Surrealism in the Blue Man—Salvador Dali said his role was that of a thaumaturge, a worker of wonder, a maker of magic. It's not that we're magicians, but there's that effect of magic.

SM: The magician's always working in an illusion, and what you see is not really what's there, it's what you *believe* you want to see.

BMG: We do the same thing, only backwards. We try to distract you from your distraction so that you see the reality (*laughs*). It's like sidewards magic.

BMG: The fact of the matter is, if we are distracting you from consciously confronting a social issue at the moment of performance, and then you later go back and reconnect, that's all about society and progress and civilization and culture and industrialization. Blue Man is an analogy for the emerging global experience as opposed to the local one.

BMG: We're on a rocket ship learning curve.

SM: Blue Man as space traveler...

BMG: ... flying around the universe...

BMG: ... dropping in.

BMG: Simply reacting...

BMG: ... to what's there.

BMG: And the problem is, the problem is making sense.

STANLEY MOSS

Above, Left, Liberating the head of Adolph Beck from the jello. Right, Mixing fluorescent paint into swirling liquid.
All stills by Mark Lost from his video of their performance at Franklin Furnace, January 1988.

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On Newsstands WEDNESDAYS

Vol. XLIX No. 41
Wednesday, October 10, 1990

NEW YORK $1.25
OUTSIDE NYC $1.50

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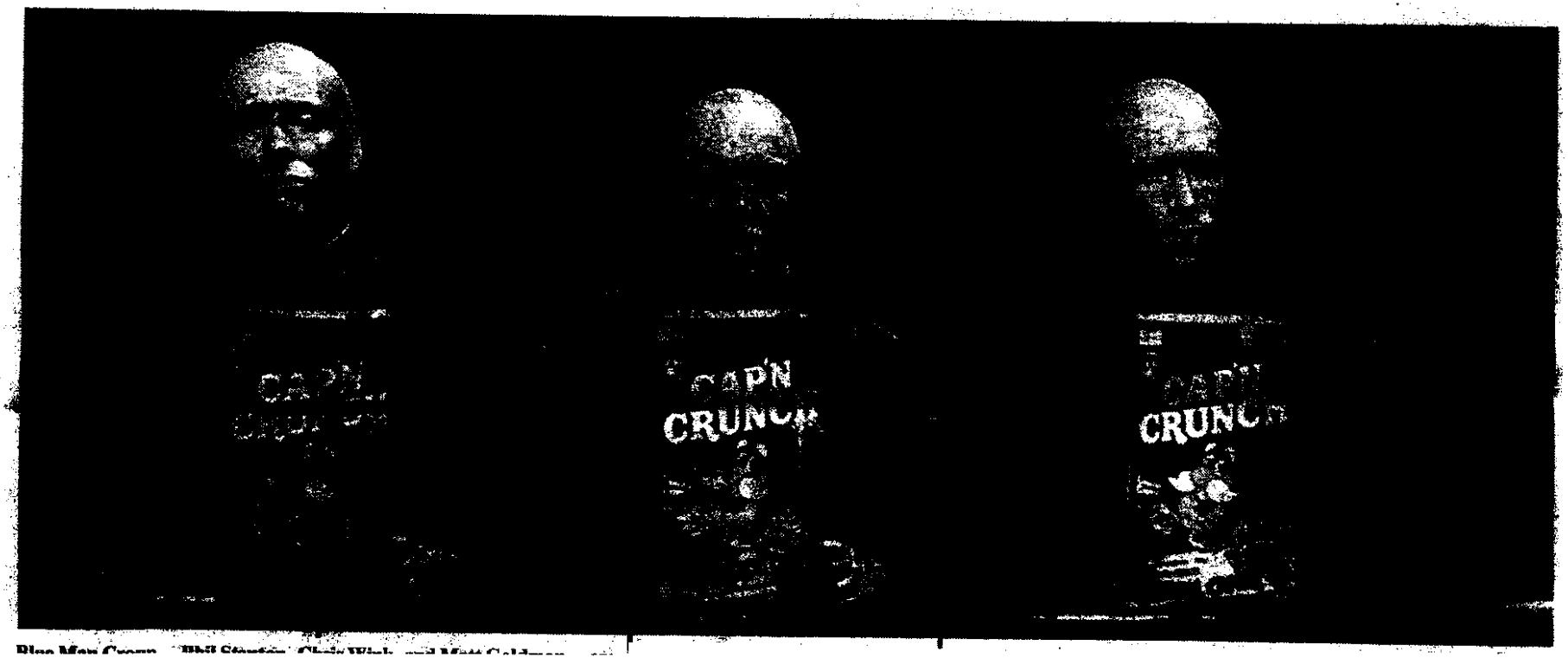

Blue Man Group, Phil Stanton, Chris Wink, and Matt Goldman