

THEATREMOBILE

TheatreMobile is the peripatetic professional theatre company attached to the Mid-Pennine Association for the Arts. The company consists of 8 actors, 4 technicians, a musician/composer, a designer, an administrative assistant and the Artistic Director. The theatre company is a self-contained unit carrying its own acting area, sound and lighting equipment. The equipment is transported in a 3 ton wagon and the personnel travel in a mini bus. We have office facilities in the MPAA premises in Burnley. At present we rehearse in a disused church where conditions are rather primitive. However, both the Church and the separate Sunday School building have been granted planning permission, following an application by TheatreMobile, for conversion into a permanent rehearsal base and community centre.



TheatreMobile was set up by the MPAA in 1970 because of the lack of professional theatre in the Mid-Pennine region and the company's brief is to stimulate an interest for theatre in an area which would otherwise be deprived of experiencing 'live' professional theatre. TheatreMobile's productions are toured to the districts which are members of the Mid-Pennine Association and performed in the facilities which exist there for public entertainment e.g. town halls, schools, civic centres. Occasionally short visits outside the area are arranged, usually as part of a festival.

TheatreMobile's work covers all age ranges from 5–105's. The company works with children as performers, not as a theatre-in-education group. The children's programmes are devised by the Artistic Director with the company and include a large amount of audience participation.

For older age ranges the company presents established plays of quality, both classic and modern texts. Also there are programmes compiled for specific occasions – for fairs, fetes, festivals, to take into pubs, old peoples homes, handicapped centres, etc. The programme from April, 1974 to April, 1975 includes performances of

Look Back in Anger by John Osborne

Stop the World—I Want to Get Off by Leslie

Bricusse and Anthony Newley

The Three Little Pigs based on the children's story

The Jam Butty Show a Lancashire Entertainment

When Fickle Fortune Smiled Renaissance poetry
and prose

The Life and Crimes of Al Capone musical by
Gerald Frow

Arms and the Man by Bernard Shaw

What You Will an original rock musical based on
Twelfth Night

Hedda Gabler by Hendrik Ibsen

Punch and Judy

In addition, Gloria Parkinson, Artistic Director of TheatreMobile, directed a film *Heaven Starts Here* Easter 1974, in which 100 local teenagers recorded their impression of life in the Mid-Pennine region. Other members of the company assisted on this production.

Obviously such a wide ranging programme makes heavy demands on the versatility of the company. Without a theatre building or accepted set decor the company exists on the talent of its members. Simply to be a good conventional actor is not enough, with the company he must develop all-round skills as an entertainer, play musical instruments, perform acrobatics, learn dance, mime, juggling, magic, etc.

TheatreMobile is one of several peripatetic companies operating in the areas of England where no other professional theatre activity is readily accessible. These companies are an important development in theatre in recent years and provide an exciting alternative to the more formal system of repertory theatres.



WHAT THE PAPERS SAY

"They are a fine team and their productions are always fun".

West Lancashire Evening Gazette

"The versatility of TheatreMobile never ceases to amaze me. The tense drama of 'Shadow of a Gunman' was followed by a superb performance of 'The Importance of Being Earnest' and this week they bounded into a vigorous production of the fast moving musical "Stop the World – I Want to Get Off".

Accrington Observer

"Creating a theatre atmosphere in a church may be second nature now to the TheatreMobile company, but nonetheless they should be congratulated for their ingenuity and improvisation".

Evening Star

The Importance of Being Earnest

"TheatreMobile's skill in production was a tribute to the eloquence of Mr. Wilde . . . an evening of sparkling acting and wit which passed all too quickly".

Accrington Observer

Clowns

"The performance itself is a colourful pageant of the history of clowning which has tremendous appeal to people of all ages. The presentation excelled with its constantly changing pace and held the rapt attention of the audience".

"The Three Little Pigs"

"The children loved every minute of it – 300 shining faces laughed and shouted and seemed to be as much part of the production as the actors were".

Cumberland News

The Jam Butty Show

"a good evenings pure entertainment"

Craven Herald

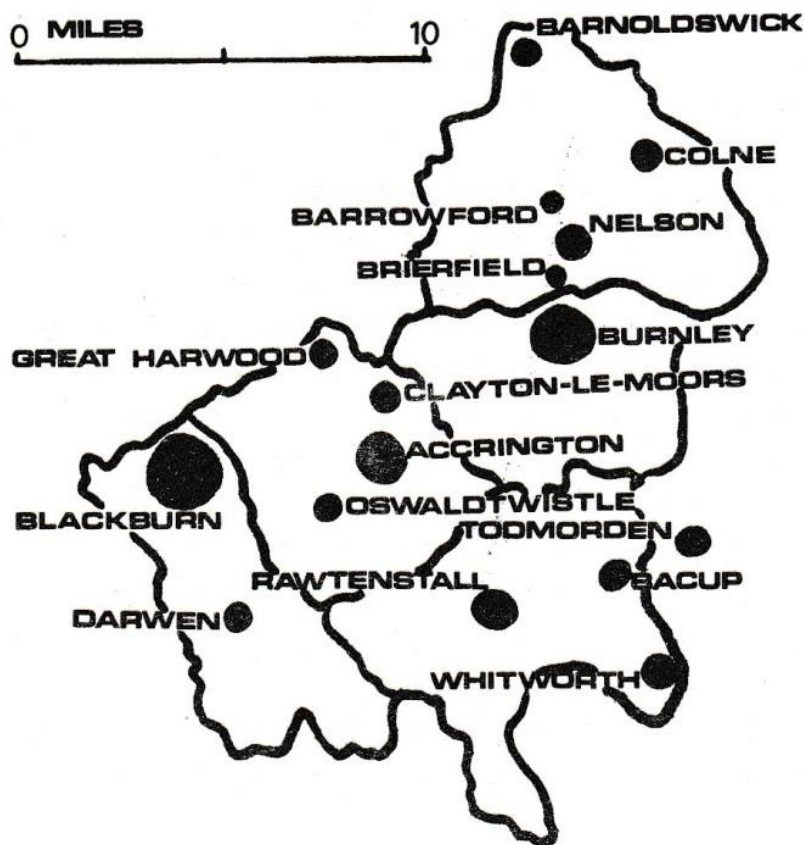
The Life and Crimes of Al Capone

"It has a bit of everything, music, drama, vaudeville, acrobatics, magic and even a hint of the Marx brothers at their zaniest".

Burnley Express

"incredible humour, lighting and movement"

Accrington Observer



Districts which contribute to the Mid-Pennine Association for the Arts – Towns in which TheatreMobile regularly performs.

All requests for further information about TheatreMobile and enquiries about availability of productions should be addressed to:

*Jane Pritchard,
TheatreMobile,
C/O Mid-Pennine Association for the Arts,
28 Back Saint James Street,
Burnley.
Telephone: Burnley 29513.*

Photographs of *The Life & Crimes of Al Capone*, members of the company on the road, and filming of *Heaven Starts Here* by Graham Veevers.