

ACCA EXHIBITION POLICY

- Since December 1989 a new series of exhibitions have been installed at ACCA. These are part of the broader based program which is now in place. Central to the program is the focus on ideas which shape current art. Contemporary art has been and continues to be an art of ideas pushed beyond the established art systems. These ideas must be debated & continually talked about. ACCA provides a forum for this.

- **Role\Functions:**

ACCA's role is to meet the needs of artists as they require a space to experiment, to make site specific installations, to perform, to exhibit specific projects on current issues, to show films, to lecture, to hold forums, poetry readings, musical recitals and a number of other challenging activities relevant to the cultural life of the city.

- The function of the activities held at ACCA is to increase public awareness and understanding of contemporary art and related disciplines in the humanities and sciences. Contemporary art at ACCA is placed within the widest possible context in order to encourage public support for initiatives that will help shape this country's future cultural heritage.

- **Exhibitions:**

ACCA's commitment is to excellence and innovation through a range of new initiatives. Its primary objective is to mount exhibitions that bring audiences the very best current art. In accordance with ACCA's policy, when selecting artists to participate in these exhibitions, the aim is to take an open and pluralist approach so as to ensure that the widest possible range of practices and concerns is represented. The emphasis is on single artist exhibitions/installations as these best unfold the artist's work and offer new insights which are both provocative and educational.

- **Publications:**

A major publication in the form of a comprehensive illustrated anthology will be published every 18 months. This will include essays, interviews with artists, writers, theatre & film directors as well as prose and poetry relevant to The ACCA Anthology. It will be a book of about 250 pages and will be a record of 14 exhibitions and related educational activities held at ACCA from December 1989 to June 1991.

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Seven performers lost in the desert

DURING the past couple of years Peter King's Going Through Stages company has been quietly earning itself a reputation for boldness and innovation.

Some of that reputation has to do with the fact that the company is impatient with verbal theatre and is keen that movement and images, rather than words, should be the motivating factor for what happens onstage.

That being so, no one should be surprised to learn that while 'Lines in the Desert' has a script of sorts, the words (when you can hear them) are of little or no importance. The emphasis instead is heavily on movement.

The program calls it imagistic and poetic theatre travelling through the illusions of the desert. The characters could be travelling along the Birdsville Track ("one of the longest and loneliest streets in the world"). Alternatively, they might be in Egypt and the flat triangular hills in the distance could be the

THEATRE

Lines in the Desert, devised and directed by Peter King (Australian Centre of Contemporary Art, South Yarra, until 16 March).

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Pyramids. For King and company, it doesn't seem to matter.

What they are concerned with seems to be the experience of travelling in the desert, and the way that experience affects their being, their relationships, and their social behavior. It is essentially imagistic rather than representational theatre, performed by the seven-member troupe primarily through movement.

Barefooted, and in black or dark blue costumes strung about with masking tape, they grunt, grimace, writhe convulsively on the floor, make nonsense sounds, behave at times like zombies,

pummeling their canvas blankets or rolling them into a ball. There are puns on the word "burning" and "yearning" and to "going to blazes". There are references to pain, and the occasional cry of grief.

"Where are you in all of this?" one of the men asks (as well he might). "I'm in the middle of it," a woman replies. "But where is the middle point?" he persists. Where indeed?

The piece runs for 80 minutes and is performed with a great deal of vigor by the cast, who run, jump and stand still until the sweat pours off them. They seem to find the exercise exciting and important. I found it mundane and pretentious. The fact is that contemporary dance and performance-oriented companies have been doing this kind of thing for years, only with a more developed language of gesture and a more interesting use of space. 'Lines in the Desert' has a few moments of genuine originality. But the overall effect is patchy and, for me at least, disengaging.

WEATHER

Melbourne 0055 19800
Victoria 0055 15321



Bay/Coast 0055 15111
Interstate 0055 33221