

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

Mummenschanz

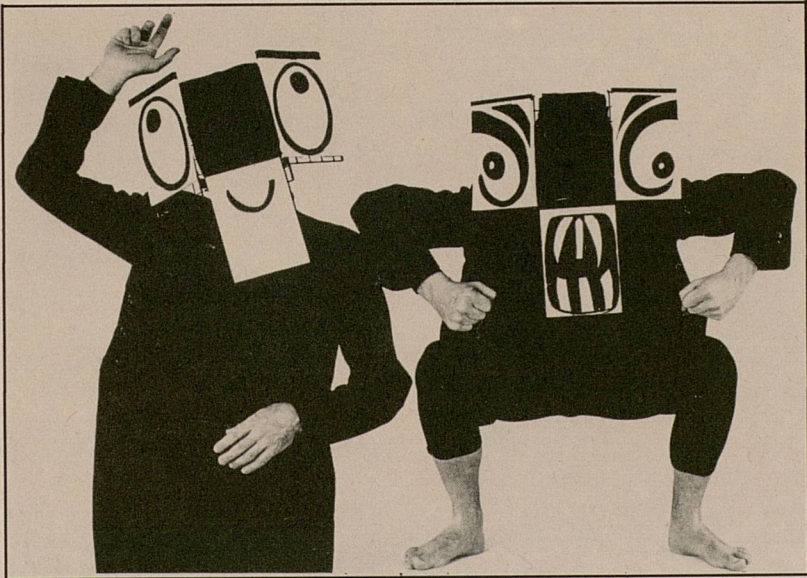
"Parade"

Created and interpreted by:
Floriana Frassetto
Bernie Schürch

in collaboration with
John Charles Murphy

in memory of
Andres Bossard (1944-1992)

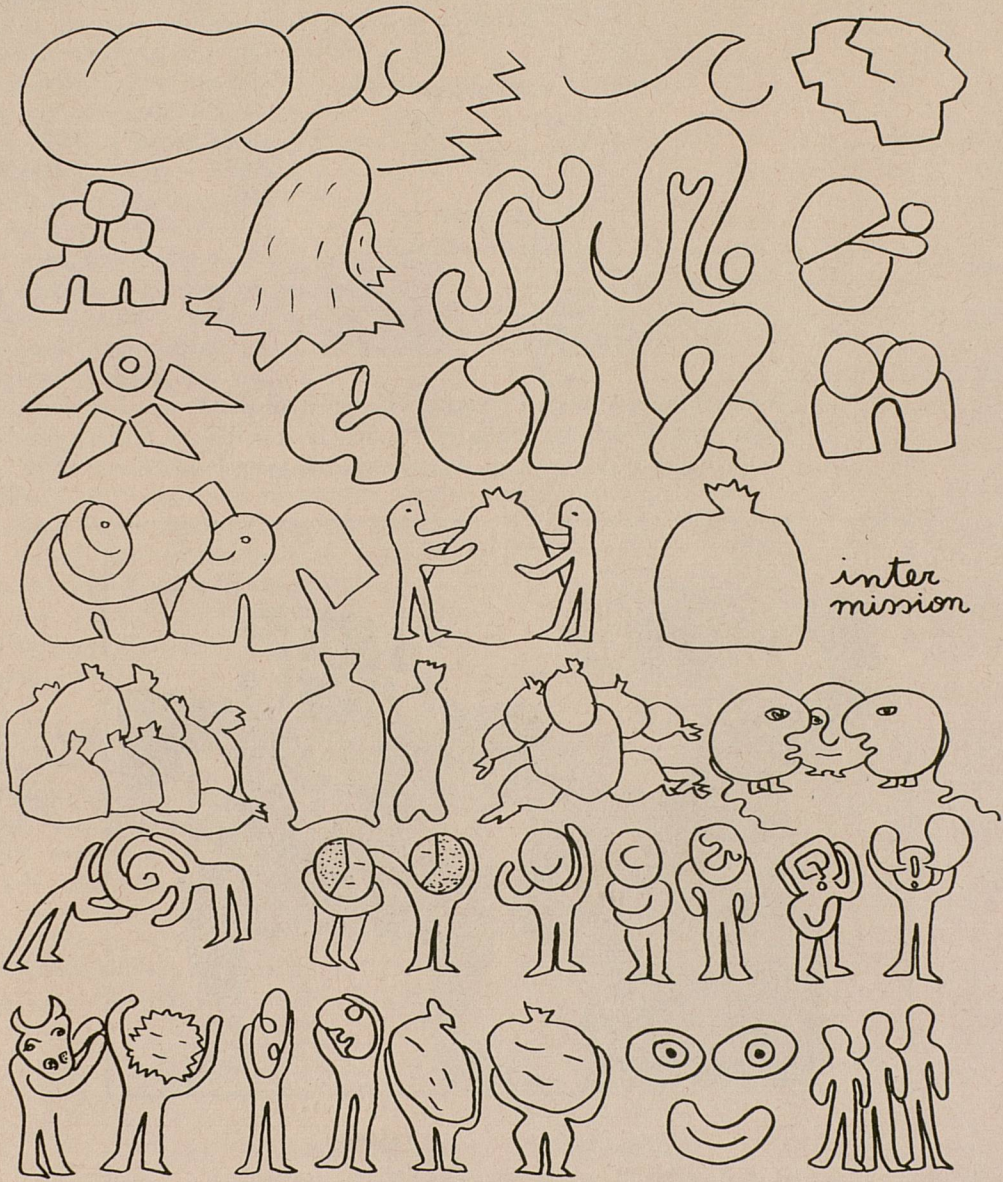
Wednesday Evening, February 17, 1993, at 8:00
Thursday Evening, February 18, 1993, at 7:00
Power Center, Ann Arbor, Michigan



William Walters, General Manager
Ian Jackson, Lighting Designer and Technical Director
Yvonne French, Technical Assistant and Stage Manager

All Mummenschanz acts, costumes, masks and props are registered and protected by the Société des auteurs et compositeurs dramatique (SACD), Paris.
Mummenschanz is represented by ICM Artists, New York.

PROGRAM



*inter
mission*

program subject to change

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Although the trio known as **Mummenschanz** presented its first program in 1972 as a fringe event at the Avignon Festival, their performances date back to 1969, when Bernie Schürch and Andres Bossard staged their first show together. Originally the two Swiss mimes combined spoken dialogue with mask sketches to create fantastic and humorous effects, but upon meeting Floriana Frassetto, another student of mime, and traveling to perform in Paris, they dropped all the spoken items to overcome the language barrier. From then on their programs relied solely upon mime and mask, and became appropriately named "Mummenschanz," meaning masquerade or mummery.

Since its initial engagements, the troupe has performed throughout the world – including South America, Japan, Israel and the former Soviet Union – and has regularly toured the United States, captivating audiences with its mixture of acting, mime, dance, puppetry and magic. In Europe, Mummenschanz has appeared at the Edinburgh and Spoleto Festivals as well as in London, Paris, Rome, Berlin, Vienna, Prague, Madrid, Copenhagen, Amsterdam and Brussels. In New York City, the trio performed for three years on Broadway at the Bijou Theatre.

After a period spent developing new material in Zurich, the original cast returned in 1984 with "The New Show" and began a second Broadway run in 1986. The years 1989 marked the 20th anniversary of Mummenschanz, and a special show, "encore," was created and began to tour the world.

For 1993, the original Mummenschanz trio planned a new production. After the premature death of Andres Bossard in 1992, the two remaining founders, collaborating with John Charles Murphy, Ian Jackson and Yvonne French, developed and staged Mummenschanz "Parade." This new show explores the cycle of life, death and resurrection, symbolized by the garbage bag and expressed through the images of recycling, terminal disposal and renewal. Throughout the program both familiar and

unknown characters appear, vanish and reappear transformed, with the combination of fantasy, mystery and humor that is unique to Mummenschanz.

Floriana Frassetto studied basic acting techniques in Rome from 1967 to 1969, at the Theater Academy with Alessandro Fersen and through intensive study of body movements (mime, acrobatics, and dance) at the Teatro Studio of Roy Bosier. During the next two years, she worked with various mime shows on tour throughout Europe and joined Andres Bossard and Bernie Schürch, with whom she founded Mummenschanz in 1972. She has been creating and performing the Mummenschanz repertory ever since. Her most notable individual accomplishments in addition to Mummenschanz include her costume design and choreography for a production of *Faust* in the Greek amphitheater of Taormina, Sicily, and her collaboration in the musical *Body and Soul* produced by Andre Heller.

Bernie Schürch interrupted his studies at The Acting School of Berne, took leave of a local mime company and went to Paris to study at Jacques Lecoq's School of Theatre and Movement from 1967 to 1969. There he met Andres Bossard and spent the following two years researching and developing a fundamentally new form of visual expression. After many work-in-progress productions and occasional touring engagements in Europe, he founded Mummenschanz with Andres Bossard and Floriana Frassetto in 1972. He has created and performed with Mummenschanz on worldwide tours, including two long runs on Broadway from 1977-80 at the Bijou Theatre and in 1986 at the Helen Hayes Theatre. In 1988 he collaborated on an adaptation of a Mummenschanz act for the Swiss National Circus.

John Charles Murphy holds a B.A. in Speech and English from Creighton University and an M.A. in Theatre and Dance from the University of Colorado. Between 1974 and 1976 he acted in children's plays

and street theater productions. From 1976-78 he attended Jacques Lecoq's School of Theatre and Movement and the mime school of Etienne Decroux in Paris. In 1979 he acted in several off-off-Broadway shows until he joined the Mummenschanz company touring worldwide from 1980 to 1982. Since 1983 he has been living in Italy teaching theater techniques, performing and directing in cities throughout Europe. In 1992 he joined Floriana Frassetto and Bernie Schürch to collaborate in the production of Mummenschanz "Parade."

Andres Bossard started to perform in a children's theater at the age of 10. Between 1956 and 1966, he first founded a local youth cabaret group, for which he served as writer, director and actor. Later, he took an active part in the production of German and Austrian cabarets. From 1967 to 1969 he was a student at Jacques Lecoq's School of Theatre and Movement, where he met Bernie Schürch, creating and performing the Mummenschanz repertory until 1991. In more recent years, he staged a movement chorus for a baroque opera in Germany. Mr. Bossard passed away last year.

William Walters spent the last twenty-six years traveling around the world as the Stage, Production, and Company Manager for Peter Schickele's P.D.Q. Bach. After the retirement of the erstwhile Professor Schickele, he took a job as the Production Manager of The Acting Company (founded in 1972 by John Houseman and Margot Harley). He is now an advisor to both The Acting Company and Peter Schickele.

Mr. Walters has written plays, stage managed, acted, directed, designed and built scenery, and collected unemployment insurance. He has worked for NBC, the Juilliard Dance Ensemble, the New York Shakespeare Festival, the Playhouse of the Ridiculous and several summer stock outfits. This is his first season with Mummenschanz.

Ian Jackson began his theatrical career in 1984 as a deputy chief electrician at the Bournemouth International Center and the Pavilion Theatre in Bournemouth, where he worked until 1987. The next year he moved to London. After taking an H.N.D. in Lighting Design, he soon received engagements in the West End, designing for various theaters and opera houses. At the same time, he was commissioned as a freelance technical manager to the Hill Street Theatre at the Edinburgh Festival and for television productions for the BBC and others.

Yvonne French moved from her hometown of Cleveland, England, to London in 1987. There she studied theater design, specializing in the design and construction of theater costumes and stage properties. Since 1990 she has been working as a freelance prop and costume maker in several film, theater, and opera productions, developing her own technique for sculpting various kinds of plastics and synthetic foams used in the construction of masks and armor. Before joining Mummenschanz, she worked at the Royal Opera House in London.

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