

# TAKE THE

# FLOOR



BY  
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FAM-GRANT  
AND  
DJ  
GRANT

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The Market Theatre, Johannesburg, presents

# TAKE THE FLOOR

by Susan Pam-Grant and DJ Grant

Directed by Lara Foot Newton

**CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE**

Teacher	Mark Hoeben
Sophie	Gilda Blacher
Thomas	Basil Appollis
Rose	Molly Seftel
Ray	Joss Levine

Choreography	Mark Hoeben, Gerard Bester
Script Consultant	Lara Foot Newton
Teacher's stories written by	Mark Hoeben
Assistant Director	Gerard Bester
Set Design	Alex Desole
Original Lighting Design	Richard Barnes
Costume Design	Sue Steele
Sound Design	Dean Pitman
Original Music	Philip Miller

**ORIGINAL MUSIC PERFORMED BY**

Piano - **Philip Miller**; Double Bass - **Spiro Paxinos**; Violin - **Vigan Papaziar**

Company/Stage Manager:	Leigh Colombick
Apprentice Stage Manager:	Gretel G. Meyer

**FOR THE MARKET THEATRE**

Executive Director:	John Kani
Producer:	Michael Maxwell

There is no intermission.

*With special thanks to:*

**The Market Theatre Laboratory** - for the opportunity and support in developing this project.

**PCB Technologies' Computer Centre** - for enabling us to type and print the script.

Thanks also to: Barney Simon, Vanessa Cooke, Bruce Laing, Tale Motsepe, Siphon Mwale, Lilian Dube, Arthur Molepo, Phillipa de Villiers, Isabel Thompson, Paul Boule, Anton Burggraaf, Tim Grant, Cathy Gibbons, The Italian Department of the University of the Witwatersrand, Jennie Reznick and Lionel Newton.

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# *A Question Of Pride*



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## AUTHORS' NOTE

At a normal nineties party people jerked to the music distractedly - then a couple took the floor and DANCED! A gentle jive, then a boogie, then a waltz. We were impressed. "Wouldn't it be nice to dance like that?"

A couple of weeks later, in the dining car of the Trans Karoo from Cape Town, we toasted our new year resolution to learn to dance "in the old-fashioned way".

In order to learn the steps our fingers did the walking - we selected a dance club in Hillbrow and entered the world of Ballroom. At our first Friday night "Social", sitting out after the exertions of the "wheelbarrow race", we marvelled at this microcosm of life at large. Between sips of Lecol and a handful of peanuts, the seeds of the play were sown.

The "field-work" continued and, at the same time, after a proposal to the Market Theatre Laboratory and much discussion with an enthusiastic Mark Hoeben, Sue began a workshop at the Laboratory that included Molly Seftel, Lilian Dube, Arthur Molepo and, of course, Mark.

Then, excited at Lara coming in on the project and with the ideas beginning to gel, we worked furiously on a script before a second month of workshoppings began - this time including Basil and Joss as Lilian and Arthur became unavailable. Gerard, too, entered the scene and Philip was

already at work composing. With Lara contributing inspired thoughts, we hammered the script into shape and rehearsals commenced.

We would like to thank each and every one of this team for their generous input and their commitment to seeing *Take The Floor* ready to "tread the boards".

*Slow, slow, quick, quick, slow*  
- a delicate balance before two can Tango.

Sue and DJ

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

*Take The Floor* is an acceptance of the old and a celebration of the new. It enters the world of fantasy, candy-floss and clowns. It explores the painful nature of communication in a society wrought with insecurity.

Through dance the characters discover a vehicle which enables them to access emotion and so achieve a sense of liberation.

*Take The Floor* is a little love story in a very big world. It embraces romance in the same way that a child would hug a puppy.

But why? Why this play now?

*"There may be trouble ahead*

*"but while there's moonlight  
and music*

*and love and romance*

*"let's face the music and dance."*

A very big thank you to my assistant Gerard Bester.

Lara Foot Newton

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# PLAYWRIGHTS

## D J GRANT

Having heard the story of the development of *Take The Floor*, we asked DJ how a ceramic artist came to be involved in theatre...



"I was in Joburg in 1987, on my way to somewhere else (my only claim to fame at the time was having been a London bus driver) when I met Sue Pam in the doorway of a Rokeby Street vegetarian restaurant which changed my destination immediately. Thus followed involvement in the creation of *Curl Up and Dye*, *Another Kettle of Fish* and now *Take The Floor*. Otherwise, I am, as you say, a ceramic artist."

## SUSAN PAM-GRANT

Susan graduated from the University of Cape Town Drama School in 1983. Her performances include *Skyf*, *Same Old Moon*, *Ladies/Dames*, *Thina Bantu*, *Kvetch*, *Mrs. Kaplan and the Witchdoctor*, *Curl Up and Dye*, *Another Kettle of Fish*, *Jack and the Beanstalk* and, for physical theatre, Marlene Blom's *Hedgehog in My Head* and Ellis Pearson's *Uurgh*.



Susan has written *Curl Up and Dye*, which she also directed for P.A.C.O.F.S., and *Another Kettle of Fish* and with Sheena Stannard she co-wrote *In Whorefish Bloomers*. *Curl Up and Dye* successfully ran throughout South Africa from June 1989 to November 1991, won several awards including best new South African play and toured to Germany, London and Edinburgh, where it won a Fringe First Award. *Curl Up and Dye* has recently been published in the collection *New South African Plays*. *Take The Floor* won the FNB Vita Award for Best New Comedy last year.



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## LARA FOOT NEWTON

(Director)

Lara completed her B.A. in Drama at the University of

Witwatersrand, where she directed *Die Grootvrek* for the 1989 Grahamstown Festival and Paul Slabolepszy's *Over The Hill*.

After graduation she directed 'N Skewe Sirkel for the A.T.K.V. Festival and Slabolepszy's *One For The High Jump*. Her first involvement with the Market Theatre was as Assistant Director to Barney Simon on *Starbrites*, in 1991. Later that year Lara co-wrote and directed *Flatspin!* for the Loft Theatre Company and went on to direct *Equus* and *Braait Laaities* for the Grahamstown Festival. Thereafter Lara was Assistant Director to Ellis Pearson for Theatre for Afrika's *Horn of Sorrow* and she accompanied the cast on the European tour.

In 1992 Lara co-wrote and directed *Rodney Gets His Gun*. Later that year she and Paul Slabolepszy formed FootPaul Productions, for which she directed *The Return Of Elvis Du Pisanie*. It was this production which won her the Fleur du Cap Young Directors' Award and the National IGI Vita Directors' Award. In 1993 Lara wrote and directed *The Big Bang* for N.A.P.A.C. and in 1993 she co-wrote and directed *Reggies' Roaring Roadshow* and *Times of*

*the Sign*. Lara has directed Athol Fugard's *Hello & Goodbye* at the Market Theatre. She recently directed and devised *Wombtide* at the Market Theatre.

## PHILIP MILLER

(Original  
Music)

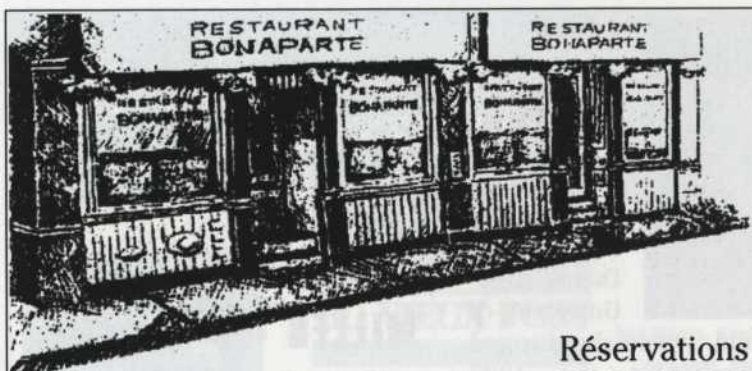


"Since my expulsion from school cadets for not knowing my right foot from my left", says Philip, "I always knew that a career in dance would not be an option. The closest I would ever get to a dance floor would be as the piano player."

Philip has written musical scores for a Channel Four Television documentary, *The History of Soweto*, for two animated films by William Kentridge and for the play *Lysistrata* by Wits Student Drama.

Philip graduated from U.C.T. Law school in 1986. He combines his passion for music and his legal training by working as the Legal Advisor for the Performing Arts Workers' Equity (P.A.W.E.).





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## MOLLY SEFTTEL

(Rose)

Did you ever think that you can be too old for acting? Well, Molly Seftel



admits: "I thought that I'd been put out to pasture, to sit lazing on my chaise-longue, nostalgically remembering my past when *tring, tring...* 'It's Sue Pam...' - and I'm offered a part in her play that no self-respecting old thespian could possibly refuse and so here I am on the stage AGAIN!"

"Plays I remember well - not in chronological order - are *Hello & Goodbye*, *The Lady's Not For Burning*, *The House of Bernardo Alba*, *King Leo*, *The Shrew*, *Macbeth*, *Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Mourning Became Electra*." She played a few witches in her time - *Dark of the Moon* ("twice!"), *Camelot* and *Macbeth* and as a result, says Molly, "I was once approached by a gentleman on a bus with a 'how much do you charge to haunt a house?'"

Molly has toured with the South African National Theatre and worked with Leon Gluckman, Leonard Schach, Taubie Kushlick, Leontine Sagan and last, but not least, Barney Simon... what more can we say? Molly says - "I'm now dusting off the cobwebs and learning to dance for Sue's *Take The Floor*. Awards? She's won "a few", she says coyly.

## MARK HOEBEN

(Teacher)

Mark only began lessons in Ballroom and Latin-American dancing in



1979, at the age of 19. He caught the competition bug and competed successfully until he stopped - his partner fell pregnant, three times (NOT by him!).

In 1989/90, while stranded in London, he landed a dance teacher's job and qualified as an Imperial Society Ballroom and Latin-American Teacher (Highly Commended). Mark even got to teach Rowan Atkinson (Mr. Bean) the waltz for his wedding and helped prepare Jane March for her dancing in the film *The Lover*.

Mark graduated from UCT, in 1980 with a B.Sc. and in 1985 with a Bilingual Drama Diploma, and he has worked extensively in Cape Town as an actor, director and teacher. Several memorable plays as a C.A.P.A.B. Drama Company member, include *Anatomie Titus: Fall of Rome*, the Dummy in *Ghetto* and Camille in *Hond Se Gedagte* (Fleur du Cap Best Supporting Actor nomination). Other C.A.P.A.B. performances include *Ubu Roi*, *Gulls*, *Peikniek By Dingaans*, *From My Point of View* and *Bergvliet Murder Mystery*. He freelanced *King Lear*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *Wuthering Heights*, *The Applegart* and *Hamlet*.

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Mark's physical theatre appearances include *People Say That Steven Weed...* and a one-person version of *The Hunting of The Snark*, both choreographed by Marlene Blom. Mark also wrote and performed *I Dance Alone*.

Mark has been seen most recently as the Soothsayer in Marthinus Basson's *Antony & Cleopatra* and as a theatre-sports player in Cape Town and Johannesburg.



## JOSS LEVINE

(Ray)

"When the Bee-Gee's and Saturday Night Fever took the world by storm",

says Joss "I quickly rushed off to a dance studio to learn the new disco steps - I wanted to dance. But after the assessment: Personality - 7; Rhythm - 1½; and Footwork - 2; I was left-footed and left it."

Joss studied at l'Ecole Jacques Le Coq, in Paris, and at Mountview Theatre School, in London. He has performed in *Somewhere on the Border* at the De Balie Theatre in Amsterdam, in *Kwamanzi* and in *Aggies Pitch* for N.A.P.A.C. and in *Romeo & Juliet* for P.A.C.T. In 1993, Joss co-wrote and performed *Joey Goes Superman*. Joss teaches mime at the Market Laboratory. His most recent performances include: *East and Womb Tide* at the Market Theatre. Joss also won a Regional Vita Award for his role in *Take The Floor*.

## BASIL APPOLLIS

(Thomas)

Between 1980 and 1983, Basil completed a Performers' Diploma in Speech and Drama at the University of Cape Town, working under Mavis Taylor and the late Robert Möhr. Basil is one of the founding members of the Alternative Theatre Company as well as the African Shakespeare Company formed in Cape Town. Productions include *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, *Romeo & Juliet* and the successful *Hello & Koebaai* with Sharleen Surtee-Richards.

In 1987, Basil won the British Council Scholarship to study directing with the British Theatre Association for six months. Production highlights were playing Richard Rive in *Buckingham Palace District 6 The Play*, playing Hairdresser in *District 6 The Musical* and Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with the Handspring Puppet Company. In all these productions Basil worked with the Baxter Theatre Company in Cape Town.

In Johannesburg, Basil played in Pieter Toerien's *Aint Misbehaving*, in *Julius Caesar* for the Civic Theatre and in the Market Theatre's own *Jack and the Beanstalk*.



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## GILDA BLACHER

(Sophie)

Gilda graduated from the Wits Drama School and spent two years travel-

ling overseas. Since her return she has worked for Pieter Toerien in productions such as *Lend Me a Tenor* and for P.A.C.T. in *Grease* and *Rodney Gets His Gun*. She also wrote and performed in three one-woman shows. Last year, she won two Vita Awards for her show *On The Couch* - Best Actress and Best New Script. She then co-wrote and performed in *Charlie and Suzz*. She also appeared in Paul Slabolepszy's play *Victoria Almost Falls*. Most recently, Gilda appeared in Steven Berkoff's *East* at the Market Theatre and *Two Weeks With The Queen* at the Alexander Theatre Johannesburg.

## GRETEL G. MEYER

(Apprentice  
Stage  
Manager)

*Take The Floor*  
marks Gretel's



return to Centaur for a second season as Apprentice Stage Manager. Previous Centaur credits include *The Substance of Fire*, *Tall Tales of a Generation*, *Someday*, and *Blokes II*. Gretel studied theatre at Bishop's University, where she also worked as a Technical Apprentice at Centennial Theatre. This past summer, she spent her second season at The Piggery Theatre in North Hatley as Props Builder for *Not Now Darling*, *Marry Me a Little*, and *The Wild Guys*.



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## THE MARKET THEATRE COMPANY

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In 1975, the Company won the tender to convert the 1913 Indian Fruit Market into an arts complex. They promised the people of Johannesburg a centre, as vital and challenging as the market which it replaced.

The Market Theatre Company has been reborn as a non-profit concern, still promising a commitment to our community in a time in need of healing, understanding, sharing and reconciliation. It is primarily dedicated to the development of indigenous work that reflects our aspirations and our lives.

MANAGER OF THE COMPANY:

Michael Maxwell

ADMIN. MANAGER:

Regina Sebright

ASSISTANT TO ADMIN. MANAGER:

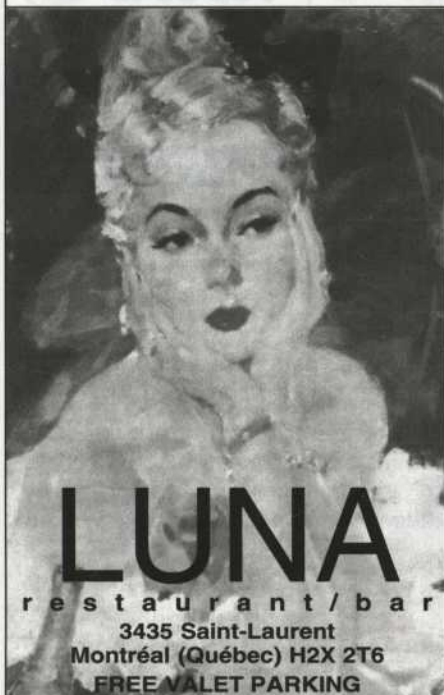
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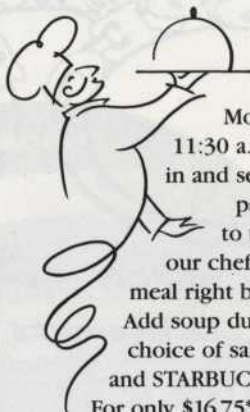
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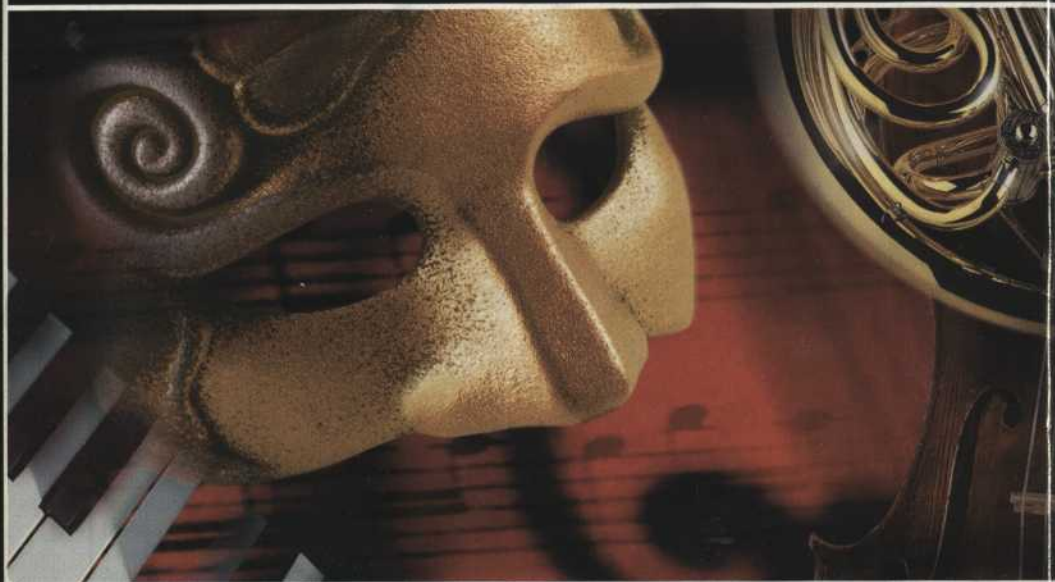
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