

# FORUM THEATRE BILLINGHAM TEESSIDE

24th December, 1973 to 26th January, 1974

A Funny Thing  
Happened on  
The Way to  
the Forum



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Theatre Director and Licensee : LES JOBSON

Theatre Administrator : JEAN RANSOME

Theatre Telephone No. : Stockton-on-Tees 551381

Box Office : Stockton-on-Tees 552663

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**PHIL SILVERS**

*in*

## **A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum**

*A Musical Comedy based on the plays of Plautus*

*Book by BURT SHEVELOVE and LARRY GELBART*

*Music and Lyrics by STEPHEN SONDHEIM*

*with*

**JIMMY THOMPSON**

**JOAN TURNER**

**GORDON  
CLYDE**

**TREVOR JONES**

**ANTHONY  
MORTON**

**LESLEY DUFF**

**BILL KERR**

*and*

**FRED EMNEY**

**Directed by BURT SHEVELOVE**

**Designed by TERRY PARSONS**

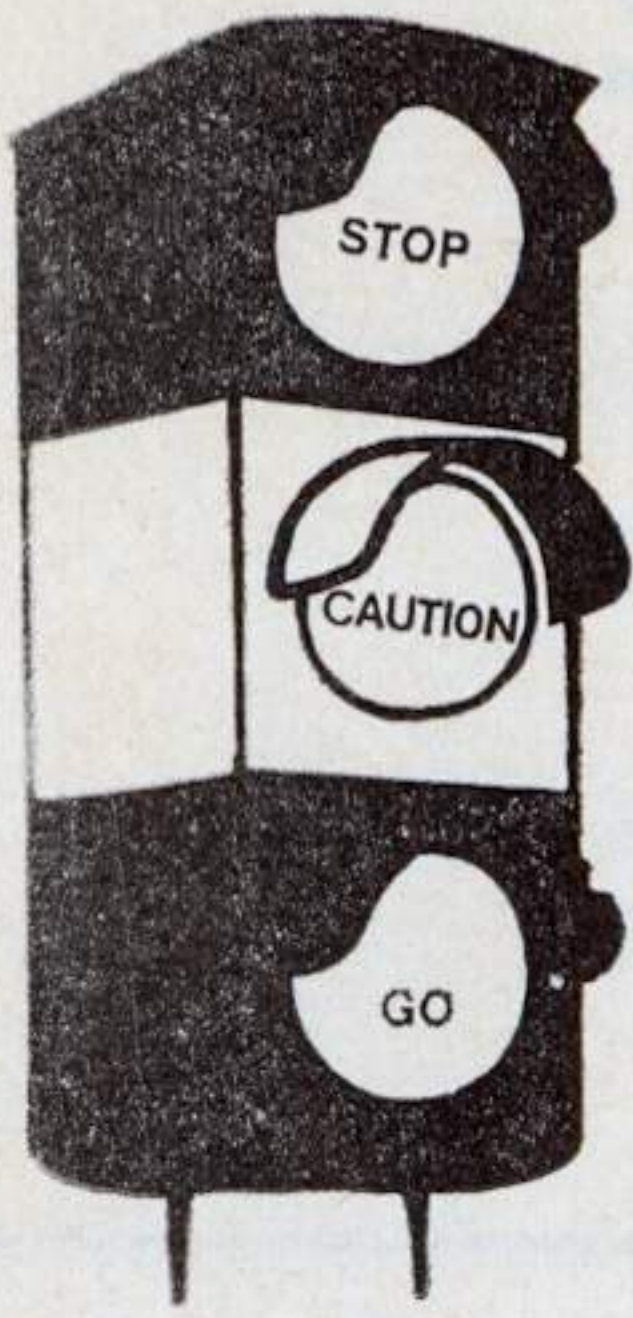
**Musical Director MICHAEL REED**

**Lighting Designer BARRY GRIFFITHS**

**Original Choreography by MARC BREAUX**

**This production first staged at the Forum Theatre, Billingham,  
on 24th December, 1973**





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# A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum

## CAST

*in order of appearance :*

<b>Prologus</b>	<b>PHIL SILVERS</b>
<b>The Proteans</b>	<b>NEIL McLAUCHLAN</b> <b>PEPE BORZA</b> <b>MICHAEL SCOBLE</b>
<b>Senex, a citizen of Rome</b>	<b>BILL KERR</b>
<b>Domina, his wife</b>	<b>JOAN TURNER</b>
<b>Hero, his son</b>	<b>TREVOR JONES</b>
<b>Hysterium, slave to Senex and Domina</b>	<b>JIMMY THOMPSON</b>
<b>Lycus, a dealer in courtesans</b>	<b>ANTHONY MORTON</b>
<b>Pseudolus, slave to Hero</b>	<b>PHIL SILVERS</b>
<b>Tintinabula</b>	<b>AMANDA DAVENPORT</b>
<b>Panacea</b>	<b>PATRICIA PETERS</b>
<b>The Geminae</b>	<b>TESSA BILLYEALD</b> <b>CAROL HOFFMANN</b>
<b>Vibrata</b>	<b>SHIRLEY ALLAN</b>
<b>Gymnasia</b>	<b>RIKKI HOWARD</b>
<b>Philia</b>	<b>LESLEY DUFF</b>
<b>Erronius, a citizen of Rome</b>	<b>FRED EMNEY</b>
<b>Miles Gloriosus, a warrior</b>	<b>GORDON CLYDE</b>

Directed by **BURT SHEVELOVE**

Designed by **TERRY PARSONS**

Two hundred years before the Christian era, a day in Spring.  
The place is a street in Rome, in front of the houses of  
Erronius, Senex and Lycus.

*The action is continuous, with a single interval*



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## MUSICAL NUMBERS

### ACT ONE

<i>"Comedy Tonight"</i>	Pseudolus, The Proteans and the Company
<i>"Farewell"</i>	Domina
<i>"Love I Hear"</i>	Hero
<i>"Free"</i>	Pseudolus and Hero
<i>"The House of Marcus Lycus"</i>	Marcus Lycus
<i>"Lovely"</i>	Philia and Hero
<i>"Everybody ought to have a Maid"</i>	Senex, Pseudolus, Hysterium and Lycus
<i>"I'm Calm"</i>	Hysterium
<i>"Impossible"</i>	Senex and Hero
<i>"Bring Me My Bride"</i>	Miles Gloriosus
<i>"Finale"</i>	The Company

### ACT TWO

<i>"That Dirty Old Man"</i>	Domina
<i>"Echo Song"</i>	Hero and Philia
<i>Reprise : "Lovely"</i>	Pseudolus and Hysterium
<i>"Funeral Sequence"</i>	Miles, Pseudolus and Company
<i>"Finale"</i>	The Company

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### Credits

Wardrobe Care by Hoovermatic and Daz.

Lighters by Ronson.

Dyes by Dylon.

Shoes by Anello and Davide.

Wigs by Simon Wigs.

Understudy to Domina Joanne West.

The Producers wish to acknowledge with thanks the kind assistance given to this production by Patrick Spohn and Charnos Garments, Peterlee.

Scenery constructed and painted in the Forum Theatre Workshop.  
Costumes designed by Terry Parsons and made by Forum Theatre Wardrobe.



## PHIL SILVERS

. . . celebrated American actor and comedian, makes his stage debut in England starring in *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum*. Although this is his first stage appearance here he has visited this country on numerous occasions and he is probably the most noted Anglophile in the world.

Brooklyn born, he was the eighth and youngest child of Russian immigrant parents and at the tender age of ten he entered show business. His first professional engagement was as a singer and he quit public school to join the famed Gus Edward's Vaudeville Show. By thirteen he had established himself at New York's mecca of vaudeville, the Palace Theater.

After performing for five years in two-shows-a-day with the touring vaudeville team of Morris and Campbell he leapt into film comedies and starred in the Minsky Burlesque circuit. Following his first Broadway musical *Yokel Boy* — which gained him a host of fine notices, he began his film career proper making twenty three films, in only three years, for 20th Century-Fox and amongst the many pictures are *Hit Parade*, *You're In The Army Now*, *My Gal Sal* and *Footlight Serenade*.

During the war Phil Silvers, already an affirmed USO entertainer, played the European Theatre of Operations just as he played the Palace in the days of vaudeville. On one of these overseas engagements he appeared with Frank Sinatra, who was comparatively unknown at that time, and since then the two have become great friends.

His many successful starring performances include *High Button Shoes* on Broadway, the film *Top Banana*, *Do Re Mi* his third hit musical on Broadway, *Forty Pounds Of Trouble* with Tony Curtis, *It's A Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*, *Buona Sera*, *Mrs. Campbell* and *Follow That Camel* for the 'Carry On' team.

As Sgt. Bilko in the very successful TV series he stole the hearts of millions of people around the world in *The Phil Silvers Show*. In its premier year on TV, Phil Silvers became the first man ever to win three Emmy Awards in one season and in addition to these awards he boasts a highly coveted Donaldson Award for Theatre Excellence, an Antoinette Perry Award (Tony Award) and The Entertainer of the Year Award as well as many other outstanding achievements. But he is probably most proud of his second Tony Award for his exciting performance in *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum* which has won him wide acclaim.



## JIMMY THOMPSON

. . . star of many long running West End successes including *The Amorous Prawn*, in which he played opposite Evelyn Laye, and *The Rape Of The Belt* with John Clements and Kay Hammond, is well-known to TV viewers for his popular appearances on BBC TV with *Pinky And Perky*.

He was born in Halifax and intended to make his career in the family engineering business. However, Jimmy had other ideas and, after appearing with the Halifax Thespians, he joined the Arts Council's West Riding Theatre.

His first West End appearance was in *Oranges And Lemons* with Diana Churchill, Elizabeth Welch and Max Adrian. This was the start of a long run of revues and musicals, including *Penny Plain* with Joyce Grenfell, the original production of *The Boyfriend* and the title role in *The Quiz Kid*. In *For Amusement Only* his devastating impersonation of Liberace stopped the show — a success which he repeated on *Sunday Night At The London Palladium* and *Chelsea At Nine*. His comedy roles have ranged from *A Funny Thing . . .*, *One For The Pot*, *Charleys' Aunt* and *Monsieur Blaise*, which he also directed, to classics such as Wycherley's Restoration Comedy *The Gentleman Dancing Master* opposite Fay Compton and as the Dauphin in *St. Joan*, *Measure For Measure* with John Neville and Moliere's *That Scoundrel Scapin*. He also created the part of 'Pooh' in the West End production of *Winnie The Pooh*.

Recently he has appeared in *Maid Of The Mountains*, *Not Now Darling*, *A Man For All Seasons*, a tour of *Clandestine Marriage*, *A Close Shave*, *Me And My Girl*, *There's A Girl In My Soup*, *Tartuffe* and *The Englishman Amused*. He has also starred in many of the 'Carry On' films, with over 300 TV and radio appearances to his credit. His other films include *Raising The Wind*, *Doctor In Love*, *Band Of Thieves* and *Those Magnificent Men In Their Flying Machines*.



## FRED EMNEY

... veteran actor and comedian, enters his 59th year in show business as Erronius in this production of *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum*. His first professional appearance was in *Romance* as recently as 1915 at the Lyric. *The Best Of Luck* followed by a panto *Puss In New Boots*, both at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane led to his appearance with George Robey, the legendary comic, in *Zig Zag* at the London Hippodrome.

After six shows with Jack Buchanan he starred for five years at the Gaiety Theatre in London. Next came his self-penned *Big Boy* which was staged at the Saville Theatre and *Blue For A Boy* at Her Majesty's Theatre.

He has made many film, TV, radio and stage appearances over these years including the film *Brewster's Millions* and the stage comedy *When We Are Married* opposite Peggy Mount and Hugh Lloyd at the Strand Theatre.

His most recent film appearances include *The Magnificent Men In Their Flying Machines*, *Lock Up Your Daughters* and *The Italian Job* with Michael Caine. Amongst his most strenuous hobbies are smoking his Havana cigars and "women — the more, the merrier".

## JOAN TURNER

... rated as Britain's funniest comedienne, has appeared on stage for the past twenty years. Never able to take life too seriously she was often in trouble at school for mimicking her teachers and her intended ambition was to become a dancer but she made her professional debut at a well-known London Music Hall. This was followed by a touring revue *Hot From Hollywood*.

Several long runs in variety followed eventually making her TV debut. She stopped the show at London's Victoria Palace when she appeared with The Crazy Gang and since then she has appeared in the West End, The Royal Variety Show, a tour of South Africa and in cabaret in London and New York. She appears frequently on TV and radio and she is now in her sixth series. Joan Turner relaxes in her luxury house in Marble Arch and she attracts many of the liveliest people in show business with her quick wit and speedy humour. Her philosophy is simple. "Life is fun, even in these days", she says, and as long as she's around they'll be plenty of hilarity.



## BILL KERR

. . . came to this country from Australia where he starred as a child entertainer, billed as Wee Willie Kerr. On his arrival in England he went straight into various radio shows and soon became a very familiar voice.

His theatre career started here with *Pommie* and his subsequent stage work includes 'Sakini' in *The Teahouse Of The August Moon* on the national tour, *Damn Yankees* at the Coliseum, *Son Of Oblomov* at the Comedy Theatre and *The Bed Sitting Room* at the Mermaid Theatre. He also scored a great success as 'Bogart' in *Play It Again Sam* at the Globe Theatre, followed by a tour and a Christmas season in *Treasure Island* in which he played Ben Gunn to Sir Bernard Miles' 'Long John Silver'. Recently he appeared as 'Herr Winklekopf' in *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime* at the Sadler's Wells Theatre.

He has just returned from sunny Cyprus where he was shooting *Ghost In The Noonday Sun* with Spike Milligan and Peter Sellers. Prior to that he appeared in the Anthony Newley musical *The Good Old Bad Old Days* playing the role of 'Simon' which was presented at the Prince of Wales Theatre.

## GORDON CLYDE

. . . is an all-round entertainer who also writes comedy material and composes songs and is at present writing the book, lyrics and music for a full scale musical. Recently he has appeared in five musicals as the male singing lead. He played 'Baldessare' in the West End revival of *Maid Of The Mountains*, 'Robert Browning' in *Robert And Elizabeth*, 'The Red Shadow' in *The Desert Song*, 'Sky Masterson' in *Guys And Dolls* and 'Mr. Rochester' in a musical version of *Jane Eyre*.

His other West End credits include *Hello Dolly* as 'Cornelius Hackl' and *The Four Musketeers* as 'Portos' both at London's Theatre Royal, Drury Lane; *How To Succeed In Business Without Really Trying* as 'Bud Frump' and in the revue *The Lord Chamberlain Regrets*. In 1969 he starred in his own show entitled *Clyde-O-Scope* at the Mayfair Theatre, directed by Libby Morris.

He has made well over 2,000 radio broadcasts and appears frequently in cabaret. His many long running radio series include *The Ronnie Corbett Thing*, *Start The Week*, *The Lid's Off Libby* and *The Men From the Ministry*. He has also made many TV appearances on the *Morecambe And Wise* and *Dick Emery Shows* and recently he wrote and performed in *The Revenge Of Doctor Death* with Vincent Price.



## ANTHONY MORTON

. . . is Birmingham born and he won a scholarship to the Rose Bruford College of Speech and Dramatic Art. He has toured with the Rome Theatre Group in Italy and spent two years in rep in England. After extensive television work Michael Elliott invited him to join the last season at the Old Vic. His recent theatre appearances include 'Sheridan Whiteside' in *The Man Who Came To Dinner*, the name part as *Volpone* which opened the Forum Theatre, Billingham, and as 'Stephano' in the 'spectacular '69 Theatre production of *The Tempest*.

He can be seen in the current release of the Mick Jagger film *Performance* and is best known to many millions of TV viewers as 'Carlos' the Chef in the long running TV series *Crossroads* for ATV network.

## TREVOR JONES

. . . was born in Crewe and commenced his stage career at their Repertory Theatre with strangely enough the same role as he plays now in *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum*. He has just completed the leading role as 'Jesus' in the West End musical *Godspell* which he has played for thirteen months. Prior to that he played the lead in *The Dirtiest Show In Town* at the Duchess Theatre and his film credits include *Here We Go Round The Mulberry Bush* and *Alfred The Great* both directed by Clive Donner. On television he has appeared in *Z Cars*, *Manhunt* and many other plays and series. His burning ambitions are to become a dog-breeder and make a record.



## LESLEY DUFF

. . . was born in Chelsea twenty one years ago. She became interested in the theatre having appeared at an early age in many amateur productions.

Her first professional appearance was in *Peter Pan* at the Scala Theatre. Lesley played the 'Mermaid' and understudied 'Wendy'. This was followed by a long tour of *Little Women* followed by a tour of *Murder At The Vicarage* and a spell in rep at Colwyn Bay.

She went to Malta where she appeared in Music Hall and on her return went into the film *Carry On Camping*. Then came the title role in *Sleeping Beauty* at the Derby Playhouse followed by her first West End appearance in *The Philanthropist* and a tour of England in the musical show *From The Twenties To The Seventies*. Recently she went on a world cruise playing the Juvenile leads in excerpts from many shows. Her hobbies are swimming and skating.

## BURT SHEVELOVE

. . . is the director and co-author of *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum*. He is a graduate of Brown and Yale Universities and succeeded as a Broadway director with his initial effort, the revue *Small Wonder*. He has directed *A Funny Thing . . . .* and *Hallelujah Baby!* on Broadway and recently reconstructed and directed *No, No, Nanette*. Off Broadway he adapted and directed William Gillette's *Too Much Johnson* and the West End production of *No, No, Nanette* which he also adapted. For the screen he co-authored and co-produced *The Wrong Box* and he has made a prolific contribution to television, producing and directing hundreds of shows winning many awards including an Emmy, a Sylvania Award and a Christopher Award. For his work in the theatre he has received four Tony nominations and won once.



## TERRY PARSONS

(*Designer*) . . . was born of a non-theatrical family in Cardiff, South Wales and his earliest ambition was to become a designer. He studied at the Central School of Theatre Design and won an Arts Council Award to the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, where he has designed over a hundred shows in the last four years.

*The King And I*, starring Sally Ann Howes and Peter Wyngarde at London's Adelphi Theatre, was his first West End musical but he has designed many shows for provincial theatres and tours including *West Side Story*, *The Pajama Game*, *The Boy Friend*, *Irma La Douce* and *Salad Days* — all of them directed by Roger Redfarn. His designs for *Bunny*, starring Eartha Kitt, were seen recently in the West End at the Criterion Theatre.

## LARRY GELBART

. . . co-author, won a Tony Award for writing, with Burt Shevelove, the book for *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum*. He also authored the Broadway musical *The Conquering Hero*. Beginning in radio he did scripts for *Duffy's Tavern* and shows for Joan Davis, Jack Paar and Bob Hope. In television, he received an Emmy and Sylvania Award for the Art Carney Specials and wrote for such other video productions as *The Sid Caesar Show*, *The Red Buttons Show* and *The Pat Boone Show*. His screenplays include *The Notorious Landlady* and *The Thrill Of It All*. In 1963, Mr. Gelbart moved to London, where his latest stageplay *Jump* was recently presented. He also produced *The Marty Feldman Comedy Machine* TV series.

## STEPHEN SONDHEIM

. . . has composed the music and lyrics for many successful Broadway shows. His hits include *West Side Story*, *Gypsy*, *Do I Hear A Waltz?*, *Anyone Can Whistle*, *Follies*, *Company*, and of course, *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum*. He also scripted the TV series *Topper* and wrote the incidental music for Broadway's *Girls Of Summer* and *Invitation To A March*. While a student at Williams College, Mr. Sondheim won the Hutchinson Prize for Musical Competition, and after graduation studied theory and composition with Milton Babbitt.

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**"A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum" is produced in association with Paul Elliott and Duncan C. Weldon for Triumph Theatre Productions who will tour the show after its run at Billingham.**



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Saturday 5th Jan.	10.30 a.m. & 7.15 p.m.	Dovecot Arts Centre, Stockton
Monday 7th Jan.	7.15 p.m.	Middlesbrough Town Hall Crypt
Tuesday 8th Jan.	7.15 p.m.	Middlesbrough Town Hall Crypt
Wednesday 9th Jan.	7.15 p.m.	Coatham Memorial Hall, Redcar
Thursday 10th Jan.	7.15 p.m.	Coatham Memorial Hall, Redcar
Friday 11th Jan.	7.15 p.m.	James Finegan Hall, Eston
Saturday 12th Jan.	3.00 p.m.	James Finegan Hall, Eston
Tuesday 15th Jan.	7.15 p.m.	Thornaby Pavilion
Wednesday 16th Jan.	7.15 p.m.	Thornaby Pavilion

**Booking** — Seats at all venues — 10p.

Tickets may be booked at the Forum Box Office, and, for the performances in Middlesbrough, Eston, Redcar and Thornaby only through the Arts and Recreation Department. Tickets will also be available at each venue immediately prior to the performance.

After these advertised public performances, the production will be available throughout the Spring Term for schools.

### Future Plans

## SWEETIE PIE

For 6th Forms and College Students available from 28th January "Sweetie Pie" is a play about the role of women in our society. It pleads the case for women's liberation, not of the flag-waving, bra-burning variety, but the case of the ordinary housewife who wants more out of life than housework and child-bearing can offer. "Sweetie Pie" is the story of one average woman and her struggle to exist as an individual in her own right in a male-orientated society.

Although originally written with a 6th form and student audience in mind, we would very much like to hear from any women's organisations who would like a performance.

## MAN AND THE EARTH

A two-part programme for the 9-12 age group about man's relationship to his environment. The first part is about the destruction by the invading white man of the Red Indian culture in North America. The second part concentrates on a local subject, the destruction by pollution of the community in Haverton Hill.

Part One available from February 25th. Part Two available from March 11th.

Continued on Page 21



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### **Production Staff :**

Production Manager	MICHAEL BURCHILL
Company Stage Manager	KEVIN RICKETTS
Resident Stage Manager	BRIAN HARRIS
Deputy Stage Manager	PETER DINEEN
Assistant Stage Manager	MANDY JONES
Dance Supervisor	STELLA CLAIRE
Wardrobe Supervisor	MICHAEL JESSOP
Personal Assistant to Mr. Silvers	ALASTAIR COURTENAY
Stage Dayman	NEVILLE FENWICK
Chief Electrician	ALAN SEADON
Electricians	DAVE ASHTON ROBIN JOHNSON
Head Carpenter	LES ROBINSON
Carpenters	PAUL EASON RICHARD RAWLINGS
Apprentice Carpenter	LESLIE DONALDSON
Scenic Artists	LIZ REED JOSEPHINE HENDON
Scenic Artist Assistant	IAN NAISBETT
Prop Supervisor	SUE RUMBALL
Prop Assistant	ANN PUGH
Wardrobe Assistants	EILEEN SOUTHALL LUCILLE COLLIER ALISON THOMAS TISH KOPPEL

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**The Management reserves the right to refuse admission to the theatre and to change, vary or omit, without previous notice any item of the programme.**

**Coffee is available during the interval in the restaurant area.**

**Drinks for the interval may be ordered before the show commences.**

**For quick and convenient exit after the performance theatre patrons are advised to leave by the emergency exits.**



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Continued from Page 17

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A weekly session with puppets and masks for children of primary school age ;

Two weekly sessions for 13-18, leading, we hope to a major production at Easter.

Any young people interested in coming and having fun at these sessions should either write to the Organiser — Tom Spencer — at the Forum, or watch out for posters in schools and the Forum.

Members of the company are also available to take occasional sessions in schools and youth clubs.

## About the Company . . . . .

The company was formed earlier this year to bring theatre to, and to make theatre with young people of all ages. We perform in schools, youth clubs, community centres, the Forum Theatre and in the open air.

If any one would like further information about the company and its activities, please contact the Organiser — Tom Spencer, phone Stockton 562236.

The company is : Elliott Day (Stage Manager), Roz Ebbetts (Actress), Caroline Harrington (Actress), Peter McGowan (Actor), Paul Miller (Designer), Nick Sales (Actor/Director), Peter Small (Actor), Tom Spencer (Organiser), Huw Tyler (Actor).

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If you are interested in the Theatre's  
future programmes please hand in your  
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**Party Bookings**

Price reductions of 5p off per seat for  
parties of twenty or more are allowed  
for most shows.

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Photographs of the Forum are available, price 3p. Please ask attendants  
for further information.

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The Forum Theatre, Billingham, gratefully acknowledges financial support  
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