



Educationists IN ORBIT

By MANUEL AND
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A final pot-pourri

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Ever anxious for new travel experiences, we tried crossing the English Channel by Hovercraft. A flying saucer, it isn't! But it certainly presents a terrifying sight to the 250 passengers waiting for it at Calais. 40 metres long, 24 metres wide, this oval amphibian monster skims its way across the water to settle its great mass on the concrete apron with a sluggish hiss.

Before departure, the propellers force air under the machine. Trapped by great black rubber skirts, the cushion of air quickly lifts the 160 tonnes of machinery and men up and we move out over the crests of the waves, reaching Dover in 30 minutes — scarcely time to buy our supply of duty free liquor.

LONDON STAGE

Has any artist since Paganini ever so dwarfed

his contemporaries as Antonio? Now, to complement his own unsurpassable mastery of every type of Spanish dancing — exciting flamenco, regional dancing, classical ballet,

flamenco, regional dancing, classical ballet, exhilarating Zapateados — he brought to London his extraordinary company to whom he has passed on his dazzling techniques.

Inspired by his incomparable virtuosity, their exuberance, faultless teamwork, brilliantly costumed and superbly staged performances constituted an unforgettable experience. Why can't we see Antonio in Australia?

Would that Australians could see, also, opera as presented in London. Consecutively we saw *Der Rosenkavalier* at the

Coliseum and *Così fan tutte* at Covent Garden.

Could two works be more different? *Rosenkavalier*, "a comedy for music" by a famous poet and playwright, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, "with music by Richard Strauss", *Così fan tutte*, where Mozart's marvellously rich score makes one forget the thin, frivolous plot.

Yet both performances were alike in perfection of presentation. In opera (the plural of *opus*, a work) it is right to strive for the richest combination of

richest combination of visual and aural appeal. And, if the breath-taking entry of a dazzlingly costumed Rosenkavalier into an already rich court scene brought an involuntary gasp of delight, this magical moment took nothing from the glorious music which followed.

We warmly recommend Simon Gray's new witty and penetrating play *Otherwise Engaged*.

We see a successful publisher (superbly played by Alan Bates) whose London flat, and tranquility, are interrupted by a series of intruders — his schoolmaster brother; his friend, a drunken literary critic; an illiterate sociology student; a girl writer who, stripping, crudely attempts to seduce him; his unfaithful wife; and, an embittered old school-fellow.

With unfailingly serene courtesy he replies to their insolence, or sponging, or anguished pleas for help and understanding. But, in the midst of their crises, he remains "otherwise engaged", detached and indifferent.

Tate Games is an attempt by the famous Tate Gallery to interest people in its works of art. The method is based on participatory games. One entered the "playground"

by a pitch-dark entrance, and struggled through a labyrinth filled with suspended canvas strips, giant bottle-brushes and spilled paint.

To better comprehend the cubist paintings of Francis Bacon, spectators looked at themselves in ingeniously arranged series of mirrors, which broke their own faces up into unaccustomed, if recognisable, segments. One walked through a huge model of a Mondrian painting broken up into several parallel planes. Other games were designed to help one enjoy Jackson Pollock's *Yellow Islands* or Duchamp's *Large Glass*.

Unfortunately, invited as educationists to the opening, we could prophesy little success for this highly laudable experiment because of its present excessive sophistication, obscurity and difficulty.

DUTCH DELIGHTS

Freedom-loving spontaneously-welcoming Amsterdam is lovelier than

ever this year as she celebrates her 700th anniversary. She has never

niversary. She has never lost the great legacy of her Golden Age in the 17th century, the exquisite gabled palaces of the merchant princes, splendid tree-lined embankments and succession of gracefully-humped bridges, all mirrored in her canals.

But, this year, those gracious houses and the principal monuments are floodlit. Fresh flowers bloom in the streets.

Special exhibitions — devoted to Jewish philosopher, Spinoza, or the archaeological discoveries unearthed during the current construction of Amsterdam's underground railway — pay homage to the city's great past.

Carillon concerts and organ recitals are given almost daily in the churches. The fine Amsterdam Philharmonic has been giving concerts even on the streets and canals. And when music and art join hands!

Thus we heard a string quartet play in Haarlem's lovely Franz Hals Museum, while Franz Hals' masterpieces glowed richly in the flicker of the summer candles; and a series of Mozart recitals in the nobly-proportioned West Church, its walls lined with Rembrandt

lined with Rembrandt works.

Jerusalem saluted this 700th anniversary by sending a superb exhibition of photographs of the many-faceted life of the "City of Gold". Some glowed with the richness of oil paintings; others showed fascinating, historical incidents such as a Golda Meyerson (Meir) among an American delegation of Jewish workers visiting Palestine in 1937; or the ecstatic joy of Chassidic Jews on their way to the Western Wall.

We believe Australia could, and should, arrange to borrow this exhibition.

In ample time for the 700th anniversary, there was finished the Vincent van Gogh National Museum. This presents the world's most complete collection of the artists' paintings, drawings and letters. The "showcase" is almost as arresting as its contents. For example, the works exhibited, thanks to the genius of the architects, can be enjoyed to their finest advantage in the daylight which bathes them.

DELIGHTFUL DUCHY

Why does the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, with 300,000 people living in 1000 sq. miles, play so

With 500,000 people living in 1000 sq. miles, play so important a role in the Europe of today? Its geographical position, its great iron and steel industry and its eighty-eight (yes, 88) great international banks help explain this. The Savings Bank head office is often mistaken for a gigantic fortified castle.

Linguistically, Luxembourg is an unbelievable hybrid. Till they begin school, the children speak only Luxembourgish, a virtually unwritten cousin of the Germanic languages.

In their first three years of primary school all education is carried on in German, which continues as vehicle for certain subjects, for example, history and mathematics. But, after those first years, all other primary and secondary school instruction is carried on in French.

The language of official business is French, except for the police, so that in law courts, the accused will frequently speak Luxembourgish, the police give evidence in German, while lawyers and judges will use French.

At the crowded shule service we attended on

service we attended on Rosh Hashanah eve, the rabbi lectured in French; to the scantier attendance, next morning, in German.

Little had we expected, on entering Luxembourg, to both be making public appearances there. Yet, indeed, this is what happened! The Union of Jewish Women invited me, (S.) as President of NCJW of Australia, which in April, hosted International Council of Jewish Women's Convention in Melbourne, to address them on the Australian and International bodies' activities.

This meeting led to a veritable snowball of heart-warming invitations for us, antipodean strangers, including one from Dr. Ruth Farkas, one of the most remarkable women we have met. For a woman to be appointed American Ambassador to Luxembourg, representing one of the world's super-powers, is already an outstanding achievement. But, when she is also a Jewess . . . !

Luxembourg's geographical position makes it a favourite centre for international congresses. I, (M), felt privileged to be invited to lecture at the great week-long Biennial of the French Language, which brought together, from all French-

together, from all French-speaking countries, Ambassadors, Cabinet ministers and leading jurists, professors and linguists.

The international flavour was brought out on the first day, when I shared the platform with President Senghor of Senegal and Maurice Schumann, France's Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Pompidou administration.

BAY OF ANGELS

After nine months of high-pressure work (and play) abroad, what better place to holiday, at last, than Nice, on its well-named Bay of Angels? Nice, where, in autumn, we are swimming in that ever-blue Mediterranean; Nice, where the local bus, for a few francs, takes you to Monte Carlo, or Cannes or even to St. Tropez, along an incomparable series of picturesque bays; Nice, where you eat better and

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cheaper than anywhere in France.

No wonder they call the Riviera the "Earthly Paradise" and Nice its Capital.

But, in addition, Nice offers two unrivalled delights for art lovers. Firstly, at nearby St. Paul de Vence, the Maeght Foundation presents 20th century paintings, sculptures, drawings, tapestries in a unique setting. The complex which houses the galleries is itself a work of art, designed by a famous architect.

The gardens, labyrinth

and surrounding walls are gaily enlivened with sculptures by Barbara Hepworth, Calder and Badkine, mosaics by Chagall, giant ceramics by Miro, stained glass windows by Braque, a delightful courtyard peopled by Giacometti bronzes.

Even more interesting to Jewish readers is the magnificent "Marc Chagall Biblical Message", the only museum the French Government has ever constructed as a monument to a single artist, having bestowed all other possible honours upon this greatest living

upon this greatest living Jewish painter. Set in a lovely olive grove, perched high overlooking Nice, it is designed to create an atmosphere of worship.

Chagall, himself, has donated 35 of his finest biblical paintings, including one room devoted to his *Song of Songs*, and the huge, superb, unforgettable *Giving of the Law*, *Scarifice of Isaac* and *Abraham and Three Angels*.

Around these permanent masterpieces are presented concerts, lectures, films and paintings by other great artists, but always with the single central theme — "the message of the Bible".

What bliss for us to have found there, also, a splendid exhibition of 130 works by Rembrandt on biblical subjects, gathered from far and near! We wandered in rapt delight from room to room listening to this dialogue on the same theme across the centuries, between Holland's 17th century genius and the great French Jew of today.