

CENTRE stage

HERSCH! HERSCH!
WHAT WOULD VANESSA SAY?



HOSSAN'S GOT A NEW GIRL!



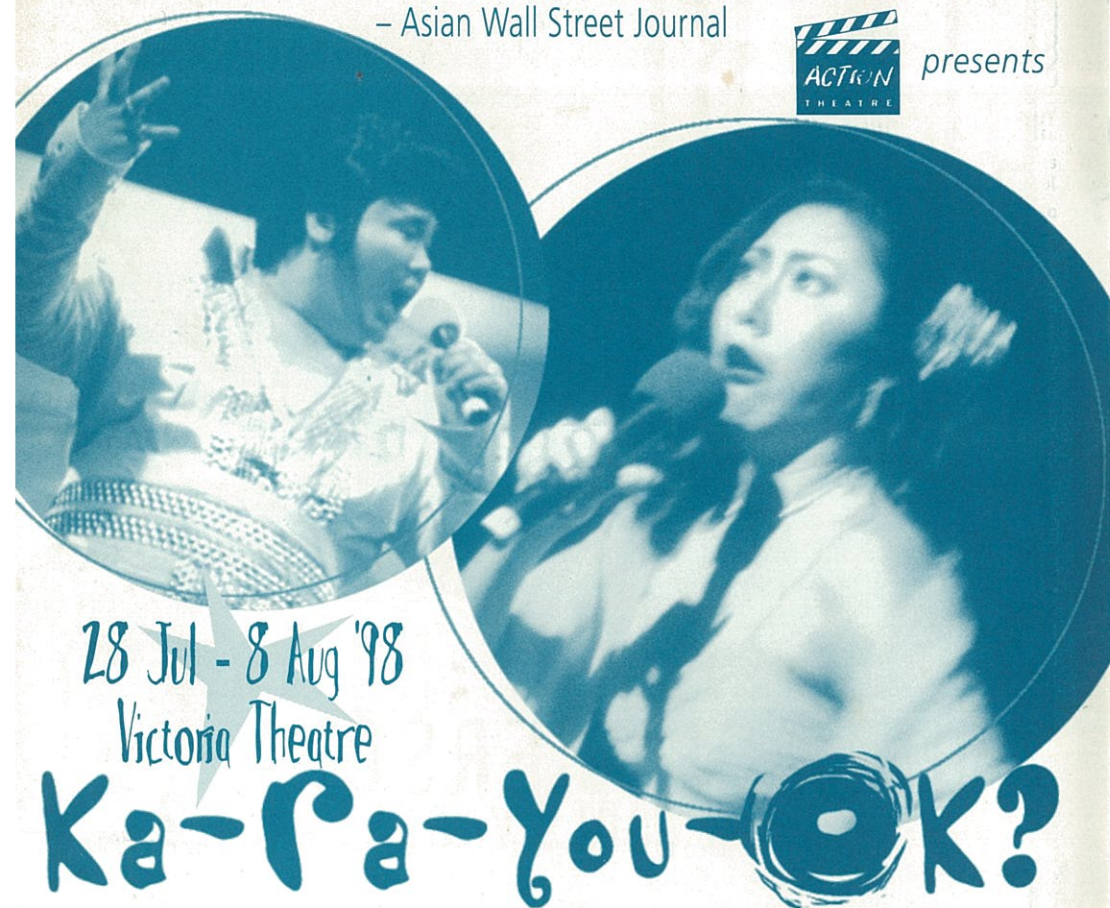
BIG GROUPS HAVE MORE FUN!

"A HYSTERICAL MUSICAL DRAMA!"

– Asian Wall Street Journal



presents



28 Jul - 8 Aug '98

Victoria Theatre

Ka-Ra-You-OK?

Written by Ming Wong • Produced & Directed by Ekachai Uekrongtham • Music Director Ken Low

Starring Hossan Leong Deborah Png Benjamin Ng Sebastian Tan Wee Tze Lin
Philip Marcelo James Kenneth Koh Beatrice Chia • Introducing Denise Tan Jamie Yeo

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CENTRE stage

Volume 1 - Issue No. 2

EDITOR
Jennifer Yeo

DESIGNER
Chway Wai Leng

CENTRESTAGE is published in conjunction with every ACTION Theatre's production. We welcome suggestions and editorial contributions. For advertising enquiries, please contact Justin Tan (Tel 65 2278128, Fax 65 2278129 or E-mail : action@pacific.net.sg).



ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
Ekachai Uekrongtham

RESIDENT MUSIC DIRECTOR
Ken Low

ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
Pek Seok Lian

PRODUCTION CO-ORDINATOR
Felina Khong

ADMIN EXECUTIVE
Justin Tan

PUBLICIST
Elsa Lim

ACCOUNTANT
P. B. Low

ACTION Theatre
182 Cecil Street #04-04
Telok Ayer Performing Arts Centre
Singapore 069547
Tel 65-227 8128
Fax 65-227 8129
E-mail : action@pacific.net.sg

Website :
www.happening.com.sg/action
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cover : Rainer Hersch
this page (from top)
Rainer Hersch at Europa
Sailing Club



CLASSIC POSE CLASSICAL TWIST

IT was a warm and sunny Friday afternoon at the Europa Sailing Club. Down by the beach, a small crowd had gathered to watch a strange performance...

To the soaring sounds of Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor, a figure clad in a T-shirt and shorts proceeded to do a striptease, much to the amusement of his audience. Stripped down to only a white transparent singlet and underwear, he dashed into the sea...

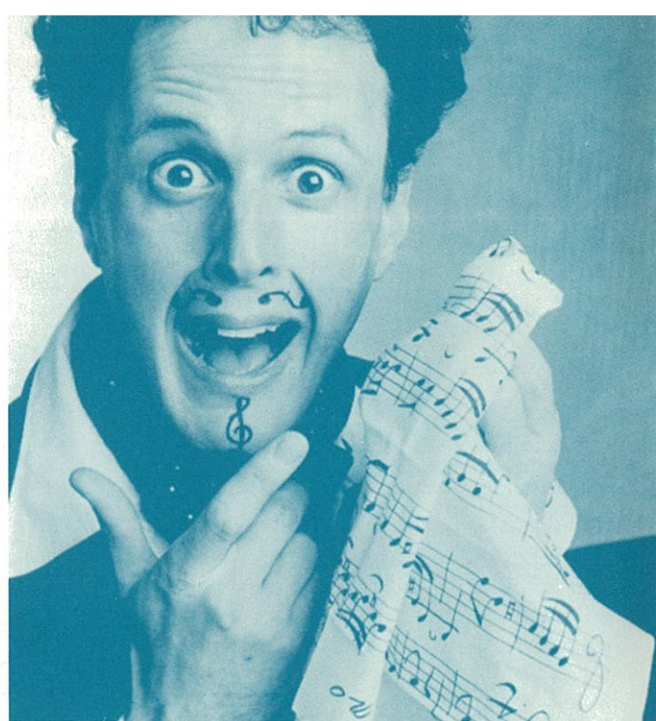
Playing his white "made-in-China Stradivarius" violin with a flourish, funnyman Rainer Hersch kept the onlookers in stitches, as he swayed his skinny hips left and right and pulled his face into a Vanessa-Mae-like pout. At one point he even asked the photographers, "Can you see my nipples?"

Why Vanessa-Mae? "We're both British, we both obviously love classical music. But I play a much better violin than she does, and of course I would like people to watch my show and think that I'm far sexier," says Rainer in mock seriousness as he dipped his violin into the water.

Rainer Hersch — sexy? You be the judge!

Jennifer Yeo

TRY HAVING A
CONVERSATION WITH
RAINER HERSCH AND
YOU'LL KNOW WHY
THEY CALL HIM "THE
WORLD'S FIRST CLASSICAL
HOOLIGAN"!



STRAIGHT FROM HERSCH'S MOUTH



Q : What contribution would you like to make to the world of classical music?

RH: **To have an interval drinks bar named after me.**

Q : What's your advice to classical music lovers coming to see your show?

RH: **Brace yourself. Don't try to talk to me afterwards.**

Q : And your advice to those who are clueless about classical music?

RH: **Bring someone who is really into classical music and tell them it is a lecture called "Masters of the 17th Century Fugue"**

Q : Complete this sentence - "If I was Elton John I would..."

RH: **...not enter a "whose got the fullest head of hair" competition.**

Q : What are the three most important things that one has to remember about appreciating classical music?

RH: **1) It is not big or clever to like classical music. 2) Classical music will not make you more attractive to members of the opposite sex. 3) If someone at a party offers you classical music, inform your host and phone the police immediately.**



RAINER HERSCH

Rainer Hersch is a stand-up comedian who works regularly on every major comedy stage in Britain and abroad including the Comedy Store in London and Caroline's in New York. He has appeared seven times at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, toured Canada four times, performed in comedy clubs all across Europe and the United States and appeared in TV shows from Germany to South Africa.

In performance, Rainer Hersch's innovative style crosses between straight stand-up and hilarious visual comedy as he dances and acts to backing tapes of TV themes and commercials. ["Most of

what Rainer Hersch does doesn't bear explaining. But it will make you laugh" Orlando Sentinel] This originality has put him in demand since his first stage performance in 1987 - both as a quality act and as an enormously effective compere, able to create a unique atmosphere for both audiences and the other performers to enjoy ["Rainer Hersch is possibly the best compere I have ever seen": TNT]. Whether he appears as an act or as a compere, Rainer's energy on stage is immediately passed on to his audience and the rapport he generates is boisterous and fun.

Rainer has toured a number of one-man shows: "The Massed Bands of the Grenadier Guards and RAF Fly-past + Support" (1994) ["clever jokes, visual comedy and biting parody" Saskatoon] and "Was God British?" (1995) ["An astonishing 60 minutes of stand-up comedy...so polished, he's scary" Winnipeg]. These played to packed houses all across North America - "Was God British" was broadcast across Canada by CBC.

In 1996 Rainer combined stand-up comedy with his private fanaticism for Classical Music to create "All Classical Music Explained" - a truly original approach to the difficult subjects of "how to play instruments without practising", "why is organ music so boring" and "what do conductors actually do". In a 55 date tour across three continents, All Classical Music Explained attracted rave reviews ["A stroke of comic genius" Victoria; "Not since Victor Borge has a musician-comic raised the roof with such continuous laughter" South Africa]. Following this success Rainer presented a full-length version in a series of performances at the Royal Festival Hall 3 and subsequently in Hong Kong and Singapore.

Rainer has just returned from a tour in New Zealand. Prior to that he was on a three month tour of the sequel to "All Classical Music Explained" - "The Masterclass" in South Africa and Canada including a three week run at the Assembly Rooms in Edinburgh. He is currently recording two radio series "All Classical Music Explained" and "Rainer Hersch's 20th Century" which will be broadcast the BBC in Autumn 1998. He will also be doing a quiz show "Its Not All Bach And Boticelli" for BBC 1 TV.

ALL CLASSICAL MUSIC EXPLAINED!

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ANNE MARIE KROICK

Produced by
EKACHAI UEKRONGTHAM

Production Manager
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HOSSAN'S FOUND A NEW GIRLFRIEND

NEWCOMER JAMIE YEO BEAT 50 OTHER HOPEFULS TO STAR OPPOSITE HOSSAN LEONG IN KA-RA-YOU-OK?

SINGAPORE BOY Hossan Leong has finally found the "girl of his dreams!" She is 21-year old Jamie Yeo, a recent Mass Comm grad, part-time model and budding actress.

Jamie will appear as Hossan's love interest in ACTION Theatre's new production of its musical drama Ka-Ra-you-OK? at the Victoria Theatre this July. She will play Lorraine, a student-songwriter who falls for a troubled teenager Elvis, played by Hossan.

The part of Lorraine has been specially retailored for the 1998 production of Ka-Ra-you-OK? The "new" Lorraine is now a budding young songwriter who believes in expressing herself through her own music and NOT karaoke songs. In the show, she will sing the acoustic version of

Ready for a new romance: "I can't wait to see how we'll work out as a couple. I'm such a nerd and she's such a glamour girl!"



New learning curve: "I'll learn a lot from Hossan. He's got so much talent and experience. And he's down-to-earth and doesn't have the airs of a star!"

"Escape", penned by Ken Low, composer of Corporate Animals and Chang & Eng -The Musical. The song will soon be released on a CD single.

JAMIE won the role over more than 50 young hopefuls who answered ACTION Theatre's audition call for Hossan's girlfriend. The audition process was challenging: would-be Lorraines were required to sing, play the guitar if possible, and enact two intimate scenes in the play with Hossan's Elvis.

According to Ekachai Uekrongtham, director and producer of Ka-Ra-you-OK?, Jamie was a last-minute audition candidate and the last to be auditioned. "We wanted to find a fresh face for the role of Lorraine. Although we were very impressed with the quality of all the young talents who auditioned, Jamie stood out with her natural and almost instinctive understanding of Lorraine's character after just one reading with Hossan. I'm sure she'll be able to bring a refreshing dimension to the role."

A NEW FACE TO WATCH ON GROWING UP

In addition to the role of Lorraine in Ka-Ra-you-OK?, Jamie has recently clinched the coveted role of the teenage "Tammy" in the new season of TCS hit show Growing Up. Filming will soon begin for the new season of the series. Trained in piano up to Grade 6, Jamie has also performed as lead vocal on "Provocative", a dance track on the album "Equatorial" produced by Club E's Leonard Tan.

Unlike the character she'll play in Ka-Ra-you-OK?, Jamie enjoys karaoke in real life and occasionally has karaoke sessions at the Jurong Country Club with her family.

WHAT'S NEW IN



A brand new production of Ka-Ra-you-OK? will come alive at the Victoria Theatre from 28 July to 8 August 1998. The mysterious "Electric Geish" will once again take us on a roller coaster of laughs, heartwarming moments and great music. Hossan Leong, Deborah Png (Gigi/"Teresa Teng"), Benjamin Ng (Boh Gey), Sebastian Tan (Eddie/"Diana"), Wee Tze Lin (Charlie/"Elvis"), Philip Marcelo (Sam/"Tom Jones") and James Kenneth Koh (the "karaoke virgin") will return to reprise the roles they created back in 1996.

Joining them are some hot new talents such as Beatrice Chia (soon to be seen as Paul's new love interest in Under One Roof), Denise Tan (who blew everyone away with her rendition of "Crazy" at the audition!) and Jamie Yeo. Also watch out for the first public appearance of EchoBoys, Singapore's very own boyband in this 1998 production!



Watch out for Beatrice and her whip in the new production!

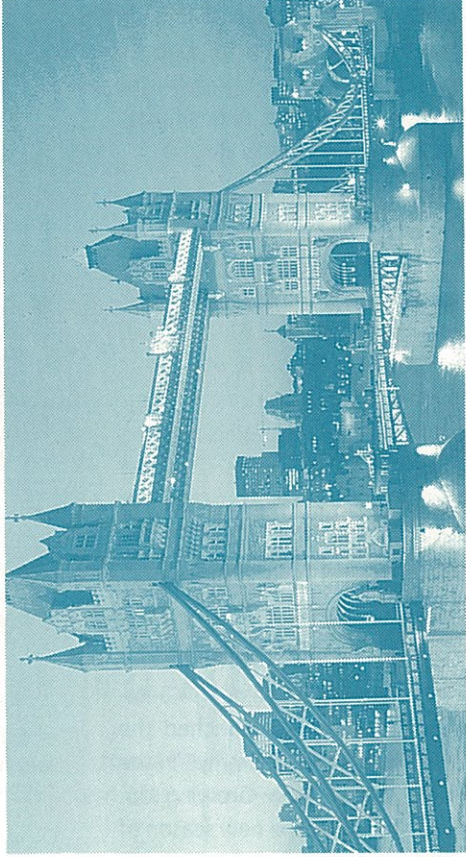


Be the first to see Singapore's very own boyband on stage

Other new features you can look forward to include a sparkling new set, new video sequences, more original songs by Ken Low (Corporate Animals, Chang & Eng), more twists in the plot, new characters plus some very exciting "retailored" ones!

Tickets are now on sale at all TicketCharge outlets. Great group booking privileges are also available. See last page for more details or call TicketCharge at 296-2929.

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42 WATERLOO STREET is a pre-war bungalow which National Arts Council and ACTION Theatre are currently restoring into a home of intimate performance spaces. Restoration has already begun since November 1997. Basic construction is targetted for completion by the end of 1998. The official launch for 42 Waterloo Street is scheduled to take place in June at the 1999 Festival of Arts.

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BIG GROUPS HAVE MORE FUN!

A NIGHT OUT Night out at the theatre always promises a unique experience. And if it's as hilarious as Ka-Ra-you-OK?, going in a big group can easily double the fun!

Ka-Ra-you-OK? group bookers (20 tickets or more) will enjoy attractive discounts of up to 20%, free souvenir programmes plus an opportunity to meet and have their photos taken with the cast. Pre-show dinner featuring the scrumptious "Ka-Ra-you-OK?" chicken and Japanese green tea ice cream can also be arranged at the theatre. Early group bookers will also be invited to an exclusive whisky tasting workshop.

GREAT TIME WITH GOOD FRIENDS

Having a special night out at the theatre in big groups has long been a tradition in the major theatre capitals of the world and it's now catching on in Singapore. Mrs Fiona Chan, who runs her own business, is one of ACTION Theatre's regular group bookers. Says Mrs Chan who saw Ka-Ra-you-OK? back in 1996, "I'll be watching the show again with my regular "kakis" because we had such a good time laughing in a big group the last time. After the show, we will go for supper, talk about it and laugh all over again!"

Ms Caroline Wee, a nurse, has organised a group of 30 friends and colleagues to watch Ka-Ra-you-OK? Says Ms Wee, "After a long and stressful day at work, a night out at a show like Ka-Ra-you-OK? is really fun and relaxing. This is a show I know my friends will enjoy - even those who don't usually go to the theatre!"

THERE'S MORE TO LIFE THAN STUDYING

Teacher Mrs Caryn Leong, will be accompanying nearly 200 Ping Yi Secondary School students to an afternoon matinee performance of Ka-Ra-you-OK? Says Mrs Leong, "We always organise theatre group outings for our students to expose them to the arts and give them a more balanced education. There's more to life than studying! This is a show that will go down well with our students - that's why we decided to book early, before all the best seats are taken!"

REFRESHING CHOICE FOR A CORPORATE NIGHT

More and more Singapore companies are also beginning to discover the unique appeal of a corporate night at a theatrical event. Says Ms Cecilia Pang, Public Relations/ Communications Manager of Hewlett-Packard, a longtime supporter of the local arts, "An evening at the theatre offers us a refreshing way to say "thank you" to our important clients. It also gives us an opportunity to support our own homegrown talents at the same time."

For more details on group bookings for Ka-Ra-you-OK?, call TicketCharge 296-2929 or Fiona Choong of ACTION Theatre Tel 227-8128.



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