

S.F. MIME TROUPE



or 'Civil Rights in a Cracker Barrel'

WRITTEN BY SAUL LANDAU AND R. G. DAVIS
FROM ORIGINAL, TRADITIONAL AND IMPROVISED MATERIAL

DIRECTED BY R. G. DAVIS

PROGRAM NOTES

What is a Minstrel Show? Some of you over 40 may have seen one. Those under 40 are not supposed to know about them. It is an indigenous art form developed in 1830 and played coast to coast for 100 years. The Minstrel Show began with a black-faced performer, J. D. 'Daddy' Rice imitating a negro named Jim Crow. Rice did a Jim Crow Act, before the words 'Jim Crow' got turned around.

We have worked on this show, improvising, writing, and re-working the material for 9 months. We began with a desire to deal with racial issues in the theatre, but the plays we read and the material available did not talk about what we knew, and feared. The Minstrel form lends itself

to some of the subjects that confront us. It is an epic form, an open stage form where social subjects can be bounced around and not reduced to 'adjustment psychology.'

The U. S. melting pot often destroys the beautiful elements of an ethnic group — often its very life spirit. We bring back the stereotype Negro — the minstrel. There are bad things about this character, but don't deny him. Look, he is also beautiful — and funny.

We present our Minstrel Show, a Northern product, for those who live in the streets, by those who live in the streets. We know, we fear, and we rage on.

ON THE S.F. MIME TROUPE

~ We started the Troupe in 1959 doing what we now call classical Mime. For a definition, we could refer you to numerous books, which define Mime as "different from pantomime" or state that "Marcel Marceau does pantomime and Charlie Chaplin did Mime." But the real point of the San Francisco Mime Troupe is that it is a theatrical company performing ideas and images on a stage.

~ In 1959, we did mimes and original scenarios using one to five people. Robert Hudson, sculptor, did our first "Happening" or "Event" with us — we have done one each year since then.

~ We inaugurated the first outdoor Commedia Dell'Arte shows on the West Coast. In 1960 - 61 we went outdoors with a small stage and presented free commedia dell'arte (Italian popular and bawdy comedy) to the people in the parks. This summer will be our fifth presentation.

~ Upon opening our indoor theater in December of 1963, we presented *UBU ROI* (designed by William Wiley), and followed that pro-

duction with movies, original plays and "happenings."

~ We presented a complete movie series in 1964 under the direction of Saul Landau, screening such artists as Brakhage, Conner, and Jean Genet (*Un Chant D'Amour*).

~ This spring we opened with Breche's *Exception and the Rule* coupled with a talk on Vietnam by Robert Scheer.

~ We have tried to cut through the aristocratic and square notion of what theatre is by bringing movies into the work; also speakers who sometimes are far more dramatic than plays; and now a Minstrel Show that jumps Jim Crow to the civil rights movement. We have embarked upon a scheme of touring and renting, traveling from our home base in San Francisco. We will continue to risk amateur status, little theater titles and our own egos in order to keep the search open for better ways of making the theater, in content and in style, a living, radical force.

THE SAN FRANCISCO MIME TROUPE IS A NON-PROFIT CORPORATION.

924 Howard Street, San Francisco, California GARfield 1-1984

👉 NO CAMERAS IN THE THEATER 👈

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JIM CROW A GO-GO

KLINKER
R. G. DAVIS

HOKUS
Willie B. Hart, Jr.

BONES
CHUCK RICHARDSON

MINSTRELS
INTERLOCUTOR
JOHN ROBB

SNOWBALL
LOMUTO

GIMME
Jason Marc-Alexander
INKSPOT
PETER COHON

Musicians: Arthur Lutz - Bill Freese

Understudies: Joe Bella, Peter Cohon, Robert Hurwitt, Tom Luce

MINSTREL STAFF

Movie - Filmed and edited	Robert Nelson
Music:	Steve Reich
Costumes:	Herman George
Stage Manager:	Jim Haynie
Mask:	Francesca Greene
Costume Mistress:	Roberta Hamble
Assistant Director:	John Robb

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Arlene Sagan, Yuris Svendsen, Nina Landau, Bruce Bratton, Peter Arnott

MIME TROUPE STAFF

Technical Director	Jim Haynie
Secretary	Elizabeth Hancock
Legal Counsel	Marvin Stender
Photographer	Erik Weber
Bookkeeper	Sandra Archer

~ The Minstrel Show premiered on June 17th, 1965. ~

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