EVERYTHING
from Ceramics
to Samovars
at the
RUSSIAN SHOP
278 HIGH HOLBORN WC1
(between Chancery Lane & Holborn Underground stations)
The official national showrooms of Russian products

Burlwood Caskets · Precision Watches
Fine Cameras · Palekh hand-painted Jewel and
Trinket boxes · Filigree Metal Work · Toys
Nested Dolls · Hand-painted Trays · Perfumes
Animated Animals · Dolls in National Costumes
Ceramics · Wood Carvings

EXPRESS DAIRY
LONDON'S PREMIER DAIRY SERVICE
Shops · Restaurants · Supermarkets
Throughout Greater London

Take it easy—take a TOBY
in the foyer bars
BREWED BY CHARINGTON

Stowells
WINE MERCHANTS
Suppliers of Fine Wines
to Patrons of
The Mermaid Theatre
and to all Wine Lovers
Bruton Street, Cheapside, SW3
FLAVENT 3210
Branches throughout London and the Home Counties

ICI
This - the symbol of
Imperial Chemical Industries Ltd.
- is known all over the world as evidence
that the news chemical and allied products
it represents are of first-class quality.
For you, too, it's a sign of top-quality
when you see it on products
you can buy in shops.

"Dulux" and "Dulux" paints
Kitchen and domestic ware made from "Alikathene"
"Stovax" fireplaces, stoves and inserts
Processing equipment in "Vynakt" and "Vynylit"
"Lighting" and "Nasty" dust removers
I.C.I. Garden Products—
pesticides, weedkillers, pesticides, etc.
Cloth and furnishing made of "Tedylene"
GIVE THE YOUNG MAN A CHANCE!

the City's only brewery supplies the City's only theatre

WHITBREAD beers
Whitbread Pale Ale Forest Brown
Final Selection Mackeson

TAPLOW'S Crown Vat
SCOTCH WHISKY

The Marriage Bureau
124 New Bond Street
London, W1
MAYFAIR 9634

HEATHER JENNER

W. C. YOUNGMAN LIMITED
Contractors' Plant—Materials Handling—Factory Equipment
LONDON and CRAWLEY

TAPLOW: A member of the CHAMBER OF COMMERCE of Compassion
WESTERHAM PRESS
for RUSSIAN
ТИПОГРАФИЯ
УЭСТЭРМСКАЯ
УЭСТЭРМСКАЯ
ТИПОГРАФИЯ
RUSSIAN for
WESTERHAM PRESS

The Mermaid Theatre
Puddle Dock
Blackfriars
London EC4
Box Office: CITY 7636
Restaurant: CITY 2835
General Office: Stage Door: CITY 0981
Founders and Artistic Directors: Bernard Miles
Josephine Wilson

Trusnees: Sir G. J. Callan Welch mr one mc
Major Richard Smith mc
Denys King-Patlow mr
Bernard Miles cxx

The Mermaid Theatre Trust
presents
THE BED BUG
by
Vladimir
Mayakovsky

English translation by
Dmitri Makaroff

Directed by Giles Fletcher
Settings designed by
David Myerson Jones
(by courtesy of the
Hornchurch Theatre Trust Ltd)
Costumes designed by
Jean Holcomb
Music composed by Leonard Salzedo
Choreography and movement by
Thane Bettasby
Sound arranged by Bill Hayes
Assistant Director: Josephine Wilson
This, the first professional production of "The Bed Bug" in this country,
opened at the Mermaid Theatre
on Wednesday 14 February 1962

The Mermaid Theatre Trust gratefully acknowledges
financial assistance from the Arts Council of Great Britain
the man and his play

Mayakovsky, a friend of Boris Pasternak, was hailed in the early '20s as the Poet Laureate of the newly-born Soviet regime. The Bed Bug was written while he was visiting Paris in the autumn of 1928, and was first produced in Moscow by Meyerhold in February 1929. Its merciless social satire aroused storms of criticism. A year after its production, in 1930, the author, then aged only 37, shot himself. In his last letter he wrote: 'Mama, sisters, and comrades, forgive me. This is not a means (I don't recommend it to others), but there is no other way left.'

For many years the play was, like its hero, kept in cold storage and only recently has it been revived on the Moscow stage. It was given a production at the Playwrights' Theatre in Greenwich Village, New York, in March 1931, and its first production in this country was that by the London University Drama Society in 1959. The Mermaid production is the first professional one to be given in this country.

a memoir by Boris Pasternak

VLADIMIR MAYAKOVSKY

It was a hot day towards the end of May 1913. Pasternak was in a teahouse when Mayakovsky and two friends entered.

'I watched Mayakovsky uninterruptedly. I think it was the first time I had observed him from near.

'His 'c' for 'a', a piece of sheet-iron rocking his dic tion, was an actor's trait. His calculated harshness was easily interpretable as a distinguishing mark of other professions and conditions. He was not alone in his impressiveness. His friends sat beside him. Of them, one, like him, was playing the dandy, the other, like him, was an authentic poet. But all these similarities did not diminish Mayakovsky's exceptional quality but stressed it. As distinct from playing each game separately he played them all at once, in contempt of acting a part he played at life. The latter - without any thought one might have of his future end - one caught at a glance. And it was this which charmed one to him and terrified one.

'Although one can see at their full height anyone who is walking or standing up, the same circumstance in the appearance of Mayakovsky seemed miraculous, forcing everyone to turn in his direction.
HOLIDAYS IN THE SOVIET UNION

- May Day in Moscow
  3 days Leningrad, 4 days Moscow, 10-day cruise
  from £31.90

- Boat Tours
  15 days or more
  inclusion from £38.17.6

- Couch Tours
  To Moscow, 15 days
  £86.30

- Central Asia Tours
  18 days inclusive by air
  £308.15.0

- Trans-Caucasian Tour
  Caucasus – Black Sea – Crimea – Ukraine
  17 days by air and coach
  £183.15.0

- Russian Riviera
  Via Czechoslovakia – Ukraine – Hungary – Romania
  19 days inclusive
  £785.15.0

- Moscow November Celebrations Tour
  9 complete days in Moscow
  £28.00

- Individual bookings can also be arranged
  from £32.94 per day at Yalta and Sochi
  to individual travel de luxe at £150.10.6 per day

Send for our 1970 brochure which also includes tours to Poland, Czechoslovakia, Albania, German Democratic Republic, China, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Yugoslavia and coach tours of Western Europe.

PROGRESSIVE TOURS LTD
100 ROCHESTER ROW
LONDON SW1

TATS 2519-8

A man for whom truth held an almost animal attraction he surrounded himself with shallow dilettantes, men with fictitious reputations and false unwarrented pretensions. Or, what is more important; to the end he kept finding something in the veracity of a movement which he had himself abolished long ago and forever.

'He sat in a chair as on the middle of a rooster cycle, nest forward, cut and quickly swallowed his wine. Schmitz, played cards, turned his eyes all ways without turning his head, smiled particularly along the Kazemaky, listened hollowly in his nose like fragments of a liturgy particularly significant extracts from his own and other people's stuff, lowered, grave, rude and made public appearances, and in the depths behind all this, as behind the straightness of a sinister at full speed, there glimmered always his one day preceding all other days, when this amusing initial take-off was made, straightening his no boldly and independently....

'Usually his sympathies aroused perplexity. A poet with an exalitantly great self-knowledge, who had gone further than anyone else in stripping bare the lyrical element and in linking it to a great theme with a medieaval romance, until his poetry spoke with a voice which was almost that of sectarian identities, he was seduced on another more localised tradition with the same breath and strength.

'He saw at his feet a city which gradually rose towards him from the depths of "the Bronze Horseman", "Crimea and Punishment", "Petersburg", a city covered with a haze which with unnecessary prolixity was called the problem of the Russian intellectuals, but which was in reality nothing more than a city covered with the haze of eternal conjectures about the future, the precarious Russian city of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

'He embraced such views as those, and along with such immense contemplations he remained faithful, almost as though it were a duty, to the pygmy projects of his contemporaries, bestiy gathered together and always indecibly mediocre.
ALL THE EXOTIC SPLENDOUR AND MAGICAL MOOD OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS AWAITS YOU AFTER THE SHOW AT

**Omar Khayyam**

EUROPE'S ONLY PERSIAN RESTAURANT

Open until Midnight Monday to Saturday

The spirit is not young. To eat in blue and honeycomb amid the bibelots of Omar Khayyam—London's most alluring, alluring restaurant. Taste for yourself the definable delights of oyster Khorasan cuisine prepared for your sharing over open grilling sports. And, after you have dined, linger a while to sit Persian collations from hand-blown glass turn-of-century islands.

OMAR KHAYYAM 50 Cannon Street London EC4

ONLY 3 MINUTES FROM THE THEATRE

---

**the enigma of THE BED BUG**

by Dmitri Makaroff

Mayakovsky shares with all through the rehashed scene when *The Bed Bug* was being prepared for its first presentation at the Meyerhold Theatre, Moscow, in 1926, and yet the citizens of the brave New Socialist World created by him gap in hermit's arrangement at the sight of the human parasite pulling away at his cigarette.

Mayakovsky, probably the greatest Russian poet since Pushkin, wrote the most heart-wrenching love lyrics, but in his world of the future 'falling in love' is an ancient, forgotten disease, so remote as the Black Death.

Mayakovsky, posthumous of the newly-born Soviet State, shows us the communist society of tomorrow: an utterly sterilized, highly-organized Federation of the World, a bureaucracy of automatons to whom the human emotions and passions that throng in every fibre of human he ever worn are nothing but vague memories of a distant past.

Satire or self-criticism? Is this a genuine yearning for self-improvement, for a purifying fire to consume all the dross of the old life—or is it a prophetic warning? Is the poet laughing at himself as much as at the grotesque vulgarity of the Nepomen? Why are you laughing? You're laughing at yourselves? Gogol cries out to his audience in that other great Russian comedy of human life, *The Inspector General*.

There is no easy straightforward answer to the many riddles posed by this 'amazingly paradoxical' pantomime. It is the enigma of the poet himself, for no apparent reason committed suicide on the morning of 14th April 1936 with the strict injunction to his friends not to grieve about his death. "The drowned detective. It is the enigma of the Russian Revolution of the death-wish of the post-Revolutionary Russian intelligentsia, of Russia itself.

---

*the translator*

Dmitri Makaroff

Dmitri Makaroff, whose translation of *The Bed Bug* you are seeing this evening, is the 82-year-old son of White Russian refugees. He was brought up in Australia, and began his work in the theatre while at Sydney University, where he acted, among other parts, the name part in *Festener’s Hearim*. Since coming to England he has produced a number of plays in Russian for the Joint Services School, including Pushkin's *Boris Godunov*, *Twelfth Night*, *Othello* and *Hamlet* in Pastoral's translations, *Cousine Orphee*, *Aristophanes*’ *The Chases*, and Gogol’s *The Inspector General*. He directed the production of his own translation of *The Bed Bug* at London University in 1939, and translated Chekhov’s *Fathers* for the Royal Court Theatre.
Have **YOU** joined the Mermaid Association?

4,000 members receive regular advance information of all Mermaid activities, films, concerts and lectures as well as of stage productions.
Annual membership of the Mermaid Association costs only 7/6, the year running 1 November to 31 October.
If you have not already done so, why not join? Please use the form below to be handed in at the Foyer Bookstall or posted to The Secretary, The Mermaid Association, Mermaid Theatre, Puddle Dock, Blackfriars, London EC4

---

I wish to join the Mermaid Association.

Name (Mr, Mrs, Miss) ..................................................

Address ........................................................................

I enclose cheque/P.O./cash value 7/6 as my year's subscription to the Mermaid Association.

Date ...........................................................................

Membership No. (for office use only) ..............................
The Mermaid
Riverside Restaurant

The restaurant is open daily (except Sundays) from 12.00 noon to 2.30 pm for lunches; from 5.30 to 10 pm for theatre dinners; and from 10.30 to midnight for after-the-show suppers. It has a full table licence. Last orders taken at 11.30 pm. It is wise to book a table. You can do this at the Reservation Table in the foyer or by ringing CITy 2835. An all-in ticket priced at £1 guinea giving you a seat in the theatre PLUS a full three-course meal (including a glass of wine) is now on sale at the Box Office.
the cast

**scene 1** ‘slap, tickle and chuck’

Button seller **MICHAEL GOLDIE**
Doll seller **JOCELYNE PAGE**
Apple seller **COLIN ELLIS**
Lampshade seller **THANE BETTANY**
Balloon seller **TONY BECKLEY**
Bra seller **RONALD PEMBER**
Herring seller **DIANA CUMMING**
Glue seller **RICHARD BALE**
Perfume seller **SUSAN BRINLEY**
Book seller **PETER HONRI**
Scrofulovsky **JOSS ACKLAND**
Accordionoff **BERNARD MILES**
Rosalie **NITA PANNELL**
Zoe **HAZEL PENWARDEN**

Customers **MICHAEL ALLABY, JEFFREY BIDDEAU, RUTH BURNS, ROGER JONES, CHRISTINA LEES, ANTHEA MORRIS, GAYNOR O WEN, EDWARD PHILLIPS, MARY QUEST, STEPHEN RICH, ANGELA SCOTT-PATRICK, JUNE THODY,RALPH TURNER**

Youth **TONY BECKLEY**
Cleaner **ROBIN CHAPMAN**
Young girl **CHARLOTTE SEL-WYN**
Inventor **COLIN ELLIS**
Specs youth **MICHAEL ALLABY**
Fitter **EDWARD PHILLIPS**
Scrofulovsky **JOSS ACKLAND**
Accordionoff **BERNARD MILES**
Zoe **HAZEL PENWARDEN**

Elizavira **SHEILA REID**
Scrofulovsky **JOSS ACKLAND**
Papa **JERRY VERNO**
Guest **THANE BETTANY**
Accordionoff **BERNARD MILES**
Rosalie **NITA PANNELL**
Pay clerk **RICHARD BALE**
Best man **PETER HONRI**
Best man **RONALD PEMBER**
Matron of honour **JOCELYNE PAGE**
Bridesmaid **DIANA CUMMING**
Bridesmaid **JUNE THODY**

Station officer **MICHAEL GOLDIE**
Firemen **TONY BECKLEY, ROBIN CHAPMAN, ROGER JONES, EDWARD PHILLIPS**

Old mechanic **COLIN ELLIS**
Young mechanic **MICHAEL GOLDIE**
Orator **PETER HONRI**
Reporters **MICHAEL ALLABY, TONY BECKLEY, SUSAN BRINLEY, RUTH BURNS, ROBIN CHAPMAN, EDWARD PHILLIPS, STEPHEN RICH, JUNE THODY, RALPH TURNER, BILL WIESENER**

**scene 2** ‘don’t wiggle your nether bosom!’

**scene 3** ‘trams from the registry office’

**scene 4** ‘with a fork in its head’

**scene 5** ‘a vodka-sucking suckling’
WHETHER IT'S RIP VAN WINKLE after forty years, or ourselves after a mere forty winks, to awake from sleep feeling frozen is to find the world a very unfriendly place. The remedy? Mr Therm's fully-automatic Gas Central Heating for effortless wraparound warmth in the home. With gas at special cheap rates, running costs are agreeably low. Details will be gladly given at any gas showroom.

North Thames Gas

THE CAST

scene 6 ‘the movements are normal. He’s scratching himself’

scene 7 ‘the hunting of the bed bug’

scene 8 ‘only don’t you breathe in my direction . . .’

scene 9 ‘an amazingly paradoxical parasite’

the band Carlo Marks and his Red Hot Four

MICKY BENSLEY Accordion PAUL RADCLOFFE Guitar TERENCE LEEHAN Trumpet GEORGE LEE Percussion

CHOICE WINES

from
the cellars of
NORTON & LANGRIDGE Ltd establ. 1837
2 Mitre Court
Cheapside EC2
Mon 29th

can be obtained in the
Riverside Restaurant

(From Peter Jackson's “London is Stranger than Fiction” published in The Times, New 1st February, 1905)
LONDON SHOWS
Original cast recordings on Decca

DO-RE-MI
@ SKL 4146 @ LK 4413

OLIVER!
@ SKL 4145 @ LK 4419

STOP THE WORLD
I WANT TO GET OFF
@ SKL 4147 @ LK 4418

ONE OVER THE EIGHT
@ SKL 4149 @ LK 4419

FING'S AIN'T WOT
THEY USED T'BE
@ SKL 4392 @ LK 4346

Stereo or Mono Records

Credits
Scenery: built in the Mermaid Workshop. Costumes by the Mermaid Wardrobe. Electrical equipment by Strand Electric and Engineering Co. Sound equipment by Decca Record Co and Stage Sound Ltd. Metal scenery, revolving stage and lifting gear by Lifet and Engineering Co Ltd. Wigs by Wigs Creation, Stockings by Keynes Bondor. Wardrobe Care by Lux, Rich dark Honeydew tobacco by Gallaher Ltd. Period cash register by National Cash Register Co Ltd. Cameras by Kodak Company. Hospital equipment by John Bell and Croyden. Boy's Oxygen outfit by British Oxygen Co. Lamps kindly given by Barker and Tythebridge Ltd. Brief cases kindly given by Remploy Ltd. Russian cigarettes kindly provided by J. Hamrick Ltd. We are grateful for the assistance of Guy's Hospital and St Bartholomew's Hospital. Wines kindly provided by Marshall Taplow Ltd.

The arrangements for advertisements in this programme are made by Denys King-Farlow.

Programme editor: Gerald Frow
Production photographs by Morris Newcombe
First aid facilities in this theatre are provided by members of the British Red Cross Society and the St John Ambulance Brigade who give their services voluntarily.

Artistic Directors: Bernard Miles and Josephine Wilson
Manager and Production Manager: E.R. T. Card
Assistant Manager: Michael Anderson
Production Assistant: Antilla Lynex
Stage Director: Betty Crown
Stage Manager: Caroline Smith
Assistant Stage Manager: Cyno Owe, Stephen Rich and Ralph Turner
Chief Electrician: David Kaye
Stage Carpenter: Charles Tophet
Wardrobe Mistress: Joan Holcombe
Press/Publicity: Gerald Frow (City 6861)

The management reserves the right to refuse admission and to make any change in the cast necessitated by illness or other unavoidable causes.

Please No Smoking and No Photography in the Auditorium.

In accordance with the requirements of the Lord Chamberlain - 1. The public may leave at the end of the performance for all acts except and shall not leave at that time be open. 2. All dangerous, explosive and inflammable must be kept entirely from dress circle or any other observation. 3. Persons shall not in any circumstances be permitted to stand or sit in any of the passages intervening the seating, or to sit in any of the other passages. If standing is permitted by the manager the oldest and rear of the audience is shall be strictly limited to the number indicated by the signs exhibited in those positions.
When The Bed Bug was written in 1928, the Russians were just re-emerging from a nearly twenty-year period of the most intensive and almost continuous civil war in their history. They had seen their ill-equipped and badly-organized armies pushed back by the Germans in 1916. The country was left in the mire of war and was on the verge of disintegration.

They had seen their ill-equipped and badly-organized armies pushed back by the Germans in 1916. The country was left in the mire of war and was on the verge of disintegration. Their industries were leveled and their cities turned into ruins. They had seen their once mighty and powerful nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter poverty and despair. They had seen their once proud and mighty nation reduced to a state of utter pov
'girls of the future' leapt off the stage into the audience, showering us with copies of an official newspaper devoted to Mayakovsky and intended to show us that, in spite of everything, he had always been a believer in the glorious prospects of the Bolshevik state.

After thirty years the Bolshevik leaders felt strong enough and successful enough, it seems, to allow their people to see Mayakovsky's play once more, but they clearly do not feel that laughter should be left free to range without some attempt at guidance from above.

A VAST SHOUT FOR HUMANITY

The Bed Bug is often spoken of as a narrowly political play, a sort of anti-Soviet tract written by one of the greatest sons of the Revolution.

It is true the Co-Op horrors in Scene One proved smaller by a head than the private enterprise ones, and Scrofulovsky argues that the whole point of the Revolution was surely to get what the bourgeoisie had got. There are other cracks like 'Why did we kill His Imperial Majesty and send Mr. Karensky packing?' and 'It'll be the death of me, your damned Soviet Government'. But these are surely trivial points beside the vast shout for humanity which Mayakovsky raises in the second half of the play, 'at the top of his voice', when Scrofulovsky finds himself the only human being left in a world of aseptic, over-organized and dehydrated conformity, the only cigarette-smoking, beer-swilling, bug-ridden, bed-lover, yearning for 'beauteous repose in the spacious shelter of his riding breeches'. Surely that speaks for the whole of humanity?

I believe Mayakovsky saw the way humanity was heading and didn't care for it, and that the germ of this play were collected on his world travels, in Paris, Berlin, London and the U.S.A., just as much as at home.

B.M.
I NEVER SAY ‘NIET’

TO

MACKENZIE'S

Sherry

Try a glass
of Mackenzie's Sherry
In the bar – it will persuade
you to keep a bottle at home.

For paper that needs an air of authority

SPIGERS’ PLUS FABRIC’ is a fine quality paper for business
stationery, with matching envelopes. Remarkably
inexpensive, it is distinguished by its excellence of colour,
good surface and opacity and the crispness of its ‘handle’.
Your printer will show you samples.

The tragedy of Meyerhold and the soviet twenties

by Dmitri Makaroff

The Bed Bug was specially written by
Mayakovsky for Meyerhold, a master-
piece from the pen of the heading ‘futurist’
poet for the heading ‘constructivist’ pro-
ducer of the day. It is perhaps hard for
us to imagine today that at that time
Moscow was something of a world centre
for all that was most avant-garde in the
arts.

The years preceding the Revolution had
been a period of feverish creativity in the
arts, a period which produced such names
as Daughters, Nijinsky, Strawinsky, Cha-
gall, Kandinsky, Chaliapin. It was this
period that saw the phenomenal rise of
the producer Vsevolod Meyerhold who
at the outbreak of the February Revolu-
tion was already well established as
‘Producer to His Imperial Majesty’ at the
Alexandra Theatre, St Petersburg.

The Revolution was immediately un-
leashed by such men as Mayakovsky and
Meyerhold as their own spiritual revolu-
tion; all through the years of civil war
and famine, through the NEP period they
produced their finest work. They evolved
new forms for the victorious proletariat,
worthy of the Dictatorship of the Pro-
letariat. Herein lies their tragedy. The
Dictatorship of the Proletariat could
make neither head nor tail of Construct-
ivism and Futurism; their aesthetic
ideals remained those of the pre-
Revolutionary bourgeois; frilly lamp-
shades, pretty chocolate box pictures.
Eventually these ‘ideals’ were formulated
at a Party doctrine, the doctrine of
Socialist Realism.

A series of ‘cultural’ purges followed,
which Mayakovsky by his timely exi
avoided, although The Bed Bug had
already been greeted by a hostile press.

Meyerhold did not fare so well. Accused
of ‘formalism’, his theatre was closed
down in 1938 and he himself, after
a violent attack made by him on Socialist
Realism in the Soviet Theatre, ‘disap-
peared’ to perish in exile.

the director

Glenn Fletcher is an Australian, and proud
of it. His grandfather was hung for sheep-
stealing and his great grandfather depor-
ted for poaching. Gliss says that's how
he came by his artistic genes. He was
educated at Amersham, Timoroo and
Adelaide, then privately at Oxford
where he narrowly missed getting a Degree. He
came down from Oxford in 1953 and
only just missed being given a big pro-
duction at the Old Vic. He then went to
Paris where he worked as focus puller
on three Jacques Tati films. Later, he
sailed to Holland and back in an open
boat, and then wrote his best seller Winds.

Iand Waves. Has been miner, fisher-
man, actor, boxer, journalist, painter,
bullfighter and deep-sea diver. Is married
to actress Joan Capelle and has three
children.

The Bed Bug is his first live production.
MERMAID DATES – FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday 25 February
11 April – 12 May
A concert by
LARRY ADLER
Pianoforte: Colin Kingsey

Programme includes
Earl, joy of men’s despairing (Boho); Dido’s Lament (Scott); Andante Cello Sonata (Rachmaninoff);
Concerto in F, 2nd Movement (Gershwin);
Carmen Fantasy (Bizet-Adler).

7 pm
Tickets: £2.50 £1.50 £1 £0.50 from Box Office.

The Death of Mayakovsky

Vladimir Mayakovsky shot himself at 10.15 am on the morning of 14 April 1930. Boris Pasternak has described what happened in the hours that followed.

"Between eleven and twelve the waves were still flowing in circles round the shot. The news made the telephones tremble, covered faces with pallor, and urged one towards the Lubyanskaya passage, across the courtyard into the house, where the side-door was already choked with people from the town and with the tenants of the house, who wept and pressed close to one another, hurled and splashed against the walls by the destructive force of the event ... In the hall and in the dingy-open men with and without hats were either sitting or standing. He was lying face down, in his own study. The door to the hall into Lidia’s room was open, and on the threshold, with his hand pressed against the lid, Aseev was crying. In the depths of the room by the window, his head sunk between his shoulders, Krasnov was shuffling with silent sobs ...

"My throat was constricted, I decided to enter his room once more and weep my fill.

"He lay on his side, his face turned towards the wall, sombre, still, a sheet covering him to his chin, his mouth half open as in sleep. Turning proudly away from us all, even when he was lying down, even in his sleep, beating away from us in a stubborn posture to reach something. His face recalled the time, when he had spoken of himself as 'beautiful in his twenty-two years,' for death had realised a mask which rarely falls into its clothes.

Suddenly there was a movement in the hall. Alone, apart from her mother and sister, who were already giving way to their grief insensibly in the crowd, the younger sister of the dead man entered the hall. She entered possessively and briefly. Her voice floated into the room before her. Mounting the stairs alone she was speaking to someone in a loud voice, addressing her brother openly. Then she herself came into view, and walking through the crowd as through a rubbish pit, she reached her brother’s door, threw up her hands and stood still.

"Vолодя!" she screamed in a voice which echoed through the whole house. A second followed by: ‘He says nothing! He doesn’t answer. Vолодя, Vолодя! How terrible!’

"She was fainting. They caught her up and quickly began to restore her to consciousness. She had hardly come to herself, when she moved greedily towards the body and sitting down at his feet, precipitately resumed their unembarrassed dialogue. At last, as I had long desired, I burst into tears.

Take home

“Contemporary Wear by SUEDERFRAU

Choose from the largest collection of "Suederfrau", Leather and Suede Wears in London - the prices are the lowest possible for top quality garments - example ladies’ jackets from £10. Each garment is hand cut from English skins and beautifully finished in Suederfrau’s own factory.

Catalogue of over 30 styles on request

Suederfrau
51 BEAUCHAMP PLACE SW1
(01) 4653 - Late Night Thursday
Other shops at Birmingham, Edinburgh and Bradford.

LÖWENBRÄU MÜNCHEN
THE BEST BEER IN THE WORLD

Available in the Restaurant and Bars of this Theatre

Sole U.K. Agents
J. C. McAULIFFE LTD
30 Coptic Street
London WCI
Tel. Museum 0691

INTRODUCTIONS

Full details in confidence from

PHYLLIS M. BAMATTRE
12-14 Denman Street
Piccadilly Circus W1
GRAND 5905 or 4092

Latest U.S. grow action line (in" speed force") in raced envelope.
Every dramatic critic sometimes feels that he is the only person in the theatre who understands what the play is about, and stares around him in amazement at the delirious incomprehension of all those laughing so heartily at a particularly tragic commentary on the human predicament, or sitting glum before a riot of wit. To few of us, however, is given the experience of such a feeling of lonely understanding coupled with the realization that it is objectively true.

This happened to me in 1960, when I saw Mayakovsky's The Bed Bug at the Satire Theatre in Moscow. This masterpiece is perhaps the bitterest comment ever made on Soviet society from inside; its contrast of the human, individual personality of Scrofulous with the mass society in which he wakes after his long sleep is driven home with all the resources of an outraged genius contemplating the betrayal of everything he had longed and worked for.

And there it was, thirty years later, as savage a satire on the dictatorship of the proletariat as it had ever been. But something, meanwhile, had gone wrong with the audience. The Bed Bug is shown, by the Soviet scientists, film of Soviet man and woman at work, at play and on parade — in awful, regimented, thousand-strong unison; he is appalled by what he is seeing; he breaks loose and dashes into the audience appealing for us to come into the cage with him. And everybody laughed. But I had spoken to the director of the play that very morning, and I knew what they thought they were laughing at — 'We satirize', he said, 'what we call the birthmarks of capitalism. Even when the Bed Bug has been shown how society ought to be, he still wants the old system. So he must be educated!'

With such a symbolic inversion had Soviet society corrupted the witness for which Mayakovsky had blown his brains out. And that is how I came to be the only person in the place who knew what the play was about. It was not until a week later that I began to reflect that Soviet theatre-directors might not care to tell strangers what is in their minds, and that Soviet audiences might not be quite so gullible as in Soviet theory. Perhaps Mayakovsky's message, that the individual counts more than the mass, had not been quite obscured. Perhaps I had not been alone in the Satire Theatre after all.

For all our sakes, I hope so.
TOBACCO AT ITS BEST

Designed and printed by the Westerham Press Limited