

Stadtkurier
UNIDRAM Festival June, 2004
Potsdam, Germany

MACABRE, KITSCHY, MAGICAL

Australian puppet theatre enthralled/delighted (the audience)
by Ulrich Cruwell.

Thursday night. Every single seat is taken. The atmosphere is electrified. Today the Black Hole Theatre from Australia is showing their puppetry for the first time in Germany. The Unidram team keeps bringing in more seats. The venue is packed with people. The play with the title *CARAVAN...* and its description in the program booklet seems to have the effect of a magnet. It announces murder, homicide and of course sex.

PULP FICTION - these are the thrilling stories from dime novels that we read only secretly. The Australians use the conventional narrative structures of these magnificent stories and create with their stage design a timeless brutal story. It is set in the circus milieu. We remember diverse stories from the cinema. But here, thanks to the puppets, the brutal scenes get a cheerful translation.

To say, the audience only went there because of the sensational description of the contents is too simple and not fair. Jens-Uwe Spregel, one of the organisers of the festival, underlines that in the past, puppet theatre has always been a blockbuster/highlight. For that reason it got more and more important for the festival's program....

But not only the Potsdam audiences seem to love puppetry. The Australians have already played in Ireland, England and even Hong Kong. And now finally in Germany. *CARAVAN* was one of the highlights of this year's festival. Not only because it broke the "visitor" record: it was simply entertaining, but also macabre and sometimes kitschy; and sometimes again magical.