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The Drama Review

Masks



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Southeast Asia, Korea, China,
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Noh Masks

AFRICA

Voltaic Masks
The Odo Festival

EUROPE

Western Europe
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Masks of Lipari



Tuxedomoon's Ghost Sonata, staged at Ancona by Winston Tong

and re-passing several times. Three motorcycles roar past, flying through the air off an inclined hill of dirt and continuing on their circuits. A battered racing car guns its engine and raises clouds of dust as it speeds by. In the center of the space, a series of long blue neon tubes stuck at angles into the ground flash on and off and then remain on.

Most of the images are violent, done to a soundtrack of extremely amplified music, primarily rock: one rock dancer attacks another and drags her body off, the white tents are disarranged and splashed with red, two men fight in the distance with fists and feet, half-naked figures throw dirt from the small hill at each other and into the air. After perhaps an hour, three figures with lights descend on long cables or ropes from the top of the cliff at the right. A rocket goes up; fireworks are set off on the ground. Two figures holding long knives—a man and a woman with ropes tied around their waists—dance to somewhat oriental music. The last figure to pass along the road is a man in an ape costume: in one hand he carries a machete and in the other a toy helicopter.

Tuxedomoon is a young, new-wave rock group from the United States that has performed primarily in Italy. Like many rock groups, their concerts have had a visual theatrical dimension; this year, in a presentation co-produced by the Polverigi festival and the city of Ancona, Tuxedomoon staged a single, unified theatre piece. Although it was supposedly Strindberg's *Ghost Sonata*, *Sonata di spettri* used no text, had no apparent narrative line, and eschewed almost all character continuity and interaction. Presented at

night on the large open-air stage in the park of the villa, *Ghost Sonata* combines heavily amplified music (four sets of large speakers surround the spectators), silent tableaux and film. Staged by Winston Tong (T81), who was responsible for the basic concept and the artistic direction, performers dressed entirely in white and wearing white wigs—the men in formal attire and the women in vaguely turn-of-the-century long dresses and large fanciful hats—move in slow motion, dance slowly, and form pictorial groupings. Shadow figures appear on a large central screen. Films by Bruce Geduldig are rear-projected onto the screen and onto a smaller screen hanging at the upper right. They show—in black and white—a graveyard, motionless views from old photographs, figures in evening dress, close-ups of made-up faces vignettied in darkness, at times brief abstract passages of white and black.

One of the performers (Geduldig) beams film from a projector carried on his shoulder: the image of a walking headless figure projected onto a sheet held by the two women is completed by the head of a man walking behind the sheet. Several times the figure passes, each time with a new hat. Faces are projected onto the mummy-wrapped heads of white-dressed performers, moving from one to another; the films on the other screens show blurred and doubled images of faces. In the tree-enclosed darkness, the amplified music is heavily atmospheric and moody. In three passages that could correspond to an overture and two entre-actes in the unbroken performance, a large string section of young and inexperienced players recruited in Ancona repeats, repeats and varies short staccato phrases. A synthesizer imitates wind, thunder and an organ. Amplified laughter becomes part of the continuous music. The piece ends with a long slow-motion picnic by the white-dressed figures.

Working with recorded music rather than with the Tuxedomoon musicians, Geduldig and Tong also presented a single short performance of a work-in-progress, *The Birth and*



Pictorial groupings in tree-enclosed darkness

PHOTO CREDIT: Roberto Nanni

FRIGIDAIRE ESTATE

BEKAA: IL MITRA NELLO STOMACO **MUSICA: I RESIDENTS** **TEATRO: LA GAIA SCIENZA**
FUMETTI: JORI, CARPINTERI, CORONA, SCOZZARI, MATTIOLI



ALIEV

Il Califfo del Cremlino

IN ESCLUSIVA MONDIALE LA SCALATA DI UN MUSULMANO AL VERTICE DEL POTERE SOVIETICO

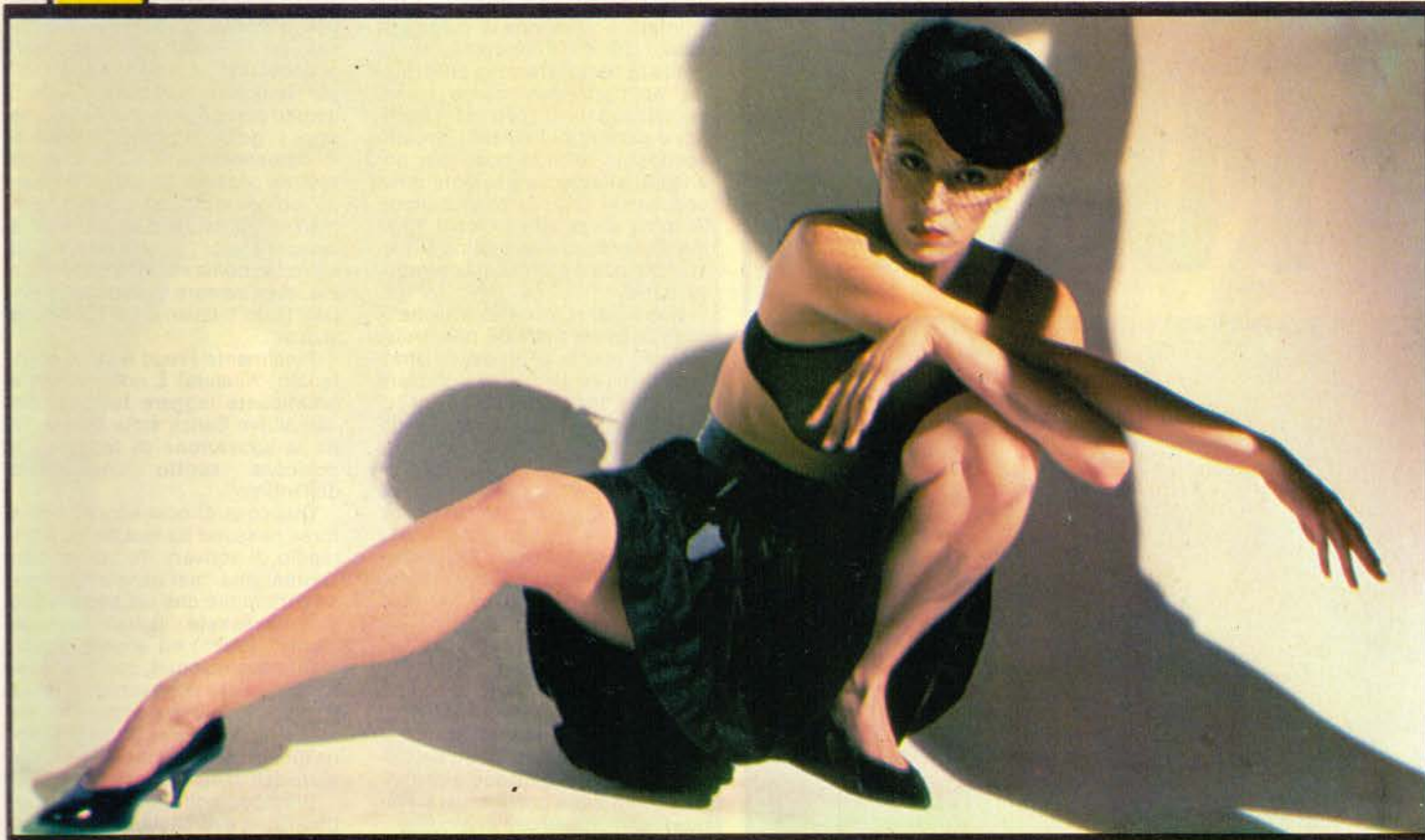


foto Roberto Nanni

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