

NEW ZEALAND



HARBOUR CAPITAL
WELLINGTON, NZ

The Evening Post

Monday, March 12, 1990

50c incl GST

Festival of the Arts

Puppeteer creates 100 surprises from barest story line

By JENNIFER SHENNAN
Dance critic

Velo Theatre at the National Library Auditorium.

Charlot Lemoine is a French puppeteer specialising in miniature magic and fingertip fantasy. He is a postman with an uncontrollable curiosity in the contents of the parcels and postcards he delivers and invites us to peek inside with him.

We enter a charming world where the barest story line is an excuse for 100 animated surprises, in a journey overland which skirts round obstacles, and overseas survives hazards of the deep.

The inspired underwater scene was made from a blue plastic bag, a torch with an AA battery, a few fish from the bath toys and a doll whose legs were masking-taped into a tail.

It reminds us all that we can fold boats from silver paper and float them in a tub of orange skin, set a red jelly in a walnut and fix its paper sail to a toothpick.

Two chook feathers glued to

a plastic dinosaur from the Kor-nies packet make a pterodactyl and there are half a dozen ways for a puppet to defy gravity. A straw, a piece of string, a wire, a rubber band, a lifetime of patience, a fountain of ideas and a zany touch to one's sense of fun — that's all it takes.

Tania Castaing, animator, and Charlot Lemoine, performer, have an enchanting team act. The precision of fast and slow transformations in miniature is so faultless that it comes as a surprise when Lemoine, in taking his curtain-calls, knocks by mistake into the edge of his set and things come tumbling down.

We are reminded of how much can go wrong with any precision act, yet in the performance nothing did.

People who find four-leaf clovers, fix watches, play musical instruments, repair engines, make model aeroplanes, cultivate flower gardens, knit and sew, polish the silver, do calligraphy and cabinet-making, develop photographs, draw or paint, pot or sculpt, or hunt in rock pools will love this show.