

# PEACE CHILD'S PROGRESS...

Vol. I, No. 1

November, 1983

"PEACE CHILD" is a musical fantasy about children who bring peace to the world. The Peace Child Foundation has been set up to play a part in making their dreams a reality. The Foundation has two immediate goals, first to legitimize peace education as a curriculum subject in schools; second, to find ways to give children an effective voice in the direction of world affairs. This newsletter will chart Peace Child's progress toward achieving those goals.

## D.C. Public Schools to launch "Peace Child" tour!

At last, through the generous cooperation of District of Columbia Public School system, a Peace Child Touring Company will be formed in the spring of 1984. DC School Superintendent, Floretta McKenzie, calling *PEACE CHILD* a "marvellous way of suggesting to students alternative ways of coping with the nuclear threat," has agreed to donate production and rehearsal space in return for a number of free performances for DC public school students.

### A Citywide celebration for Peace

Following these, the company will tour neighboring schools climaxing in a series of evening performances with a large chorus of children drawn from all sectors of the city. Like the Kennedy Center premiere, these will be spectacular events, but ticket prices will be low—starting at an affordable \$5.00!

### \$10,000 already raised

The Inglewood Foundation has generously offered the Peace Child Foundation a \$10,000 challenge grant to capitalise the touring company. The foundation doesn't see a penny of it until we raise the balance. We look to you, our supporters, to give whatever you can to put *PEACE CHILD* and its message on the road. Once in place, we believe that Peace Child, like 'Up with People,' will be touring for many years to come.



Hon. Hilda Mason

*PEACE CHILD*s tireless supporter on the DC City Council, Hilda Mason, commenting on the news of the DC launch, said: "We cannot shield our children from the threat of nuclear war: they are already deeply concerned. I cannot think of a better way to show them how our world can—and must—find peaceful solutions to its problems and conflicts than through the production of *PEACE CHILD*."

A recent survey highlighted differences in perceptions about nuclear war between Soviet children (who have curricula peace education) and US children (who don't).

		U.S.A.	U.S.S.R.
1. Would you die in a Nuclear war?	YES:	41%	80%
2. Will it happen?	YES:	38%	12%
	NO:	16%	54%
3. Can we prevent it?	YES:	65%	93%
	NO:	14%	3%
4. Does Civil Defense work?	NO:	35%	100%
	YES:	12%	—

## Snippets...

**"Peace Child" for Catholic Conference:** On 17th January 1984 at the Capital Hilton, "PEACE CHILD" will be performed for the Bishops and other diocesan staff concerned to find ways to implement the pastoral letter on war and peace issues.

**Short Hills, New Jersey:** possibly the first performance of "PEACE CHILD" outside the Washington area will be at the B'Nai Jeshurun synagogue in Short Hills. Glen Stein, Youth Director and Social Action consultant for the U.A.H.C. in New Jersey has booked the Peace Child Touring Company for three performances over the weekend 7th/8th April 1984.

**York, Pennsylvania:** Bill Schintz, a photographer in this pretty Pennsylvania town which was the first US capital, drew together 18 church and community leaders to invite the Peace Child Touring Company to join a large chorus of their children in performance at the beautifully refurbished Strand Theatre on April 13/14th.

**San Francisco:** Several people in the Bay Area working to mount a performance of "PEACE CHILD" to coincide with the Democratic Party Convention in July 1984.

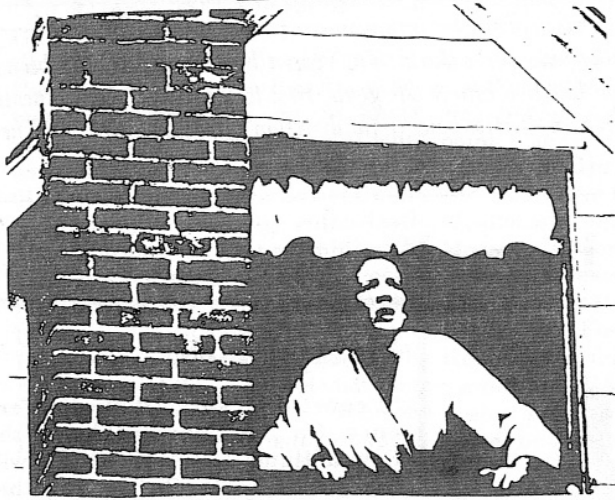
**Philadelphia:** A coalition of peace and environmental groups coming together for a peace week 15th-20th April. A series of "Peace Child" performances planned.

\* \* \* \*

Would you like the Peace Child Touring Company to visit your community? All you need is: 1) A theatre; 2) A children's chorus; 3) A date; 4) A group of committed people prepared to get out and sell tickets. We are now planning dates May '84 thru September '85. Call Rosey Simonds on 202-628-6262.

# THE DAY AFTER

NOVEMBER 20, 1983, ON THE ABC TELEVISION NETWORK



Twenty years ago, Peter Watkins made a film called *The War Game* for the BBC in England about the nuclear holocaust. It was genuinely terrifying, and the BBC never showed it. Teachers did show it - it induced nightmares, weeping, vomiting in some children. By showing it, they effectively got peace education banned in Britain before it could get started.

On November 20th, ABC will show *The Day After* - a film on exactly the same subject. Several peace education groups have issued warnings telling children under twelve not to watch it because of possibly horrifying consequences. Naturally we in the Peace Child Foundation did not want children jumping out of windows or upsetting themselves over this film either: but if it was that upsetting, what was a major network doing putting it on public television? Why not put it in the cinemas? If it was really that bad, we felt we should take a stronger stand and ask that ABC not show it. Children always watch in spite, sometimes because of such advisories.

We set up two screenings for the youth directors of the Peace Child Foundation, Marco Clarke (13) and Bridget Condon (14). Both brought friends of their own age. Let us lay the ghost to rest: *The Day After* is a wonderful film - it isn't the least like *The War Game*. Where Watkins made *War Game* with brutal cold, documentary realism, Nicholas Meyer makes *Day After* with genuine warmth and human compassion. Marco said: "This film should win every Oscar, Emmy and Tony Award that is going. . ."

On the evidence of these children's reactions, (all of whom had been in, or seen the *Peace Child* show), it is clearly not a horrifying film. None of the children cried. They laughed at the jokes, asked questions, chatted. It is a film full of love - of people hugging, kissing, making love, getting married, having babies: the final image is of a man embracing the man whom he had just ordered off the barren hole which was his home. It is entirely life-affirmative. The children all liked it - "a happy ending, sort of. . ." "I couldn't have nightmares about this film because I loved it so much," said Brian (13).

The film is not nearly so gross or vulgar as I had led them to expect. Marco felt that it should have been more gross to really get its point across to adults. You hear flies, you see people putting rags to their noses, but there is no real visualisation of the awesome severity of the catastrophe - something the film-makers themselves admit at the end. Kids see far worse violence on other programs. None of the children had any worries about their younger brothers or sisters watching it. The worst it could do to them, Bridget felt, was to send them to sleep: "It does drag a bit after the bomb drops."

They felt it was a satisfyingly informative film. When a boy, bumping milk churns of water down into the basement before the blast, said: "I don't know why I am doing this," Marco commented "I don't think most children know anything about the nuclear threat. Parents and teachers don't tell them. I think adults should watch it with children so that they can answer questions about any bits of it that they don't understand." (Incidentally, the adults were pleased to be watching it with kids: their questions - their promise of life - made it more bearable for them.)

The conclusions were different and interesting: Marco and Brian both loved the film and felt that it would have real impact. Both deeply involved in the *Peace Child* scenario, Marco felt that it would create the conditions for him to get an interview with the President: "I'm serious - we really have to talk. Children want to live in this world, and we want our children to have the chance to live as well. Ronald Reagan and Yuri Andropov have got to sit down and see this film together, then children must ask them what they are going to do about it."

We came away talking about *Gandhi* - how this film would give inspiration to the great peace-makers, how it should bring horror to the war-mongers. We talked of Anwar Sadat - how great it would be if Reagan had the guts to make a similar visit to the Kremlin; we talked about how the strength of a nation isn't only measured in the number of its bombs, but in its economic strength, its ability to feed and clothe its people - "It's Love".

Bridget, equally involved, was less enthusiastic about the film. "It's not really addressing the right issue. We all know that nuclear war is horrible and that we would probably all die, but there are so many other things we should be talking about - things that we can do together with the Russians."

I agree with her. I also have doubts about the impact: last night's TV is conversation for a day and is then forgotten. Some perhaps will become involved in the peace movement - some may vote in a different way. But until there is a sustained commitment on behalf of all Americans to find ways of getting along with the Russians - an end to this pathological fear we have of them - there will be no change. *The Day After* doesn't begin to address this problem. The film covers only Lesson Three of the 10-Lesson *Peace Child Study Guide*! It's a pity it couldn't have got to some of the others. ■

David Woollcombe

# THE MINNESOTA PROJECT

**"I've laid my life on the line for this project . . ."**  
She didn't look that worried. It was two minutes to nine on a Wednesday morning and only four of the thirty chairs she had set out for a "Learn about *Peace Child*" Seminar were filled, but the Reverend Sally Hill was cheerful. Her confidence was justified: by 9:05 they were setting up extra chairs, and by 9:15 she was opening the meeting to over fifty church and community leaders!

They watched the video, sang "Mr President," read scenes from the show, discussed the lesson plans, and finished up buying out the entire Twin Cities stock of *Study Guides* - again! It's a pattern that has been repeated every time *Peace Child* has been introduced to this vibrant community in the heartland of America. The steering committee is now facing the arduous task of channelling this profusion of interest into concrete activity.

The Minnesota Peace Child Project was born when three individuals separately phoned the Peace Child Foundation office on the same day last April. We suggested that they get in touch with each other. They met for breakfast a few days later, and within a couple of hours, their separate interests - a peace festival with children, a peace education program for Minnesota schools, an opportunity for children to image a future peaceful world - had coalesced into a firm plan for the "Peace Child Festival," to be held in the fall of 1984.

The possibilities of the Festival are endless. There will be a mammoth production of "PEACE CHILD" with a chorus of over 1,000 children drawn from all across the state; there will be a Peace Village constructed on the State Capitol Mall in St. Paul - in the village will be International Folk Dancing, ethnic music, a food fair with dishes from all over the world, a Peace Post Office from which to send letters to world leaders asking for peace, teacher workshops to help teachers develop their own peace-teaching curricula; a media center where children may video-tape their feelings on "What Peace Means To Me" (an edited edition of which will be sent to other peace children around the world); art shows, film shows, a circus, peace puppets, meditation classes, environmental exercises . . . and one small idea which is growing to be, perhaps, the centre-piece of the Festival: the Children's Peace Assembly.

*Peace Child* is all about children talking on equal terms with presidents about world peace: the mix of innocence and experience is what allows peace to happen. The Minnesota Peace Child Project has determined to try this out for real, to invite prominent local, national, and international politicians and diplomats and let children discuss current issues with them. This approach could become an annual event with children from around the world coming together, not as national representatives, but as children of a global family, developing initiatives with their elders to construct a peaceful world.

# PEACE CHILD

Such ideas are the stuff of *Peace Child* dreams - and it isn't Sally Hill alone who has laid her life on the line to make these dreams a reality. The local steering committee of roughly forty people includes such powerful figures as Pat Elder, Educators for Social Responsibility (ESR) organiser for Minnesota, David O'Fallon, Director of the University of Minnesota Dept. of Continuing Education in the Arts, Paula de Cosse, author of the excellent, *Kids Whole Future Catalog*, and representatives from the YMCA, Clergy & Laity Concerned, Save the Children, Ground Zero, the Council of Churches, Communicators for Social Responsibility, and many others. The mayors of the Twin Cities have endorsed the project, and the assistant governor is helping them secure the State Mall for the Peace Village! The outreach has already gone beyond Minnesota into Wisconsin, Iowa, the Dakotas and Illinois.

Fund-raising has begun in earnest: several thousand dollars have already been raised but more is urgently needed. Please send your tax-deductible contribution to:

The Minnesota Peace Child Project,  
C/O the Office of Continuing Education in the Arts,  
320 Westbrook Hall, University of Minnesota,  
Minneapolis, MN 55455. Tel. (612) 373-4947

Offers of volunteer help and services in any area are also warmly welcomed.

There's an effortlessly positive, "can do" spirit alive in these Twin Cities: it makes you feel that peace is more likely to emerge from a place like this than from the large political centers. For example, it is said that the wife of a local police chief takes part in the Honeywell peace project, which is designed to make the workers at Honeywell realise that there are better ways of spending your life than making bombs. Every month, she turns up to demonstrate at the factory gates and every month, her husband is there to arrest her. They have, apparently, a wonderful marriage! ■

## Some 6th Grade ideas provoked by discussion of "Peace Child"

*"I was wondering if people really know what war is. It's not like kids—they just fight; we could have a nuclear war and kill off the whole world; it's not just a little fist fight."*

*"I'd like to have a world with peace because I could make friends with the Russian people and have even more friends than what I have now."*

*"Bombs can't tell anybody how they're feeling, they'll have to talk themselves, not war it."*

*"I hear some people say that it would take a miracle to put peace in the world, but it wouldn't. If the two presidents would talk together, it would work out all right."*

# The View From Europe

by Dominic Maffham



Dominic Maffham, Jessica Miller, and Bernard Benson at the door of a well-known British opponent of the US invasion of Grenada, Margaret Thatcher.

*Dominic Maffham, who played the boy in the London performance of "Peace Child", reports on last month's massive demonstrations organized by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND).*

It was a crisp, bright morning when I got off the train at Charing Cross Station with my girlfriend, Debbie. Already at 10:30 am there was a large crowd of young and old making their way to the three starting points for separate marches which would converge on Hyde Park. There, the demonstrators would listen to poets, singers, writers, and speakers of different backgrounds united by a common bond - the wish to see a peaceful society and a nuclear-free Britain.

The estimated 250,000 people assembling in London were not an isolated effort. In Bonn, West Germany, half a million people were assembling; in Holland, Belgium, Sweden and other West European countries people marched, stood, sat, chanted and listened, hoping that governments everywhere would take note and make a genuine effort to achieve nuclear arms elimination.

The march took us through the influential and conservative dominated areas of governmental London. As Debbie and I joined the masses, we both felt the warm atmosphere amongst the people. It was easy for me to approach total strangers and ask them about their motives for joining the march. Any cynicism I may have had about their answers was soon dispelled as I received heartfelt and honest answers from virtually everyone:

"I am genuinely terrified that I will never be able to grow up into this world and have the same chances as my parents did. I came here to make as much noise as possible, to get myself heard in Whitehall," said one 17-year old girl.

"Nuclear weapons are useless, bloody stupid. They spend our money to construct a machine that is suicidal to Britain."

"The Tories say that Cruise is a safeguard. They say that we are safe with an 'effective deterrent' - can't they see that it will just attract trouble?!"

"It's like a group of kids on a London street. One's got a knife and shows it off, -let's everyone know about it, even his sworn enemy. You can see the outcome, can't you? - he's the one who's vulnerable. Nuclear weapons are not a deterrent, they are the opposite - a blind provocation."

As the march progressed, we passed people in the streets who were probably expecting a rowdy mob of hooligans. I asked them why they were not participating and tried to put over my point of view. Other people also left the march to explain to bystanders. As the original "Peace Child", I was quite used to justifying myself to the press: but never have I been so rewarded as when a middle-aged couple, skeptical at first, took the trouble to listen to me and then joined us on the route to Hyde Park!

When we reached the park, we listened to a multitude of speakers, including Neil Kinnock, the new labour leader. He said:

"We are a movement for life! We are here to defend our way of life. We don't do it with Cruise missiles. . . . Britain is becoming nothing more than a platform which is the first line in another country's defence."

Mr. Kinnock also denounced the Trident submarine-launched missile system, urged Mrs. Thatcher to put Britain's Polaris missiles in the Geneva arms talks, and called on NATO to adopt a 'No first use' policy for nuclear weapons.

I can understand such political niceties now. I was only 13 when I was the "Peace Child" and less knowledgeable. I was frustrated, annoyed and bewildered by the sheer immensity of the problem. I knew that I could do something. It could be the missing piece of the jig-saw - it could be a solo effort like the "Peace Child's" invasion of the TV studio. Instead, I was able to take part in the fantastic, epic production of "Peace Child" at the Royal Albert Hall. The cast of dozens did it because they too were scared - scared of the consequences of a nuclear war that was - and still is - creeping nearer to fact every minute.

I know that now, and in the future, all those lucky enough to take part in or watch *Peace Child* will be doing so because they are caring about our destiny. In my time as the boy, I worked with the team. We shouted, sang, laughed and cried in a celebration for peace; we joined together and tried to persuade as many people as possible that any nuclear arms maintenance is just the preparation for a colossal destruction of what is really a world that can offer so much. Indeed, look at how much more it could offer if the nuclear terror were taken away and the billion of dollars held in reserve were invested in constructive, not destructive, projects.

All of this is now becoming clearer to me, especially as I have just witnessed the arrival of a new baby sister. She must not have the same worries as us. She must not have the constant threat of war and violence.

That can only happen if we stick together and shout, shout, shout on that stage - or on those streets, whether it be in London, New York, Washington or anywhere. This is a chance to be heard which you must not let go. ■

*"Learning to live together on this ever-shrinking planet is made real—even fun!—through "Peace Child." It worked the Riverside Church: it will work in your school, community, church or synagogue. DO IT!!!"*

Cora Weiss, Co-Director R.C.D.P.

# What People Are Saying about "PEACE CHILD"...



Susannah York

"You can't be part of "Peace Child" without being made happy, without being made hopeful. . . . "Peace Child" engenders joy, it engenders generosity of spirit—it engenders above all the will to do something more positive for the cause of peace and love."

Susannah York

"In audiences across the country, I find young people fearful about nuclear war—feeling hopeless. this is no way to raise the next generation. "Peace Child" creates a vision of how they can make a better world. The production and the Study Guide are excellent tools to give children hope and to excite them about the idea that they can do something to bridge the gulf of hate and fear which puts us on a collision course with the Soviet Union."

Gene La Rocque  
Rear Admiral, USN (retd.)

"In a sensitive manner, "Peace Child" addresses directly the fears and anxieties present in youngsters who have never lived without the threat of nuclear warfare. Appealing to the best in people, it challenges the young who will produce the play, and the adults who will come to view it."

Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, C.S.C.

## Bridge-building . . .

"It is increasingly clear that we must fundamentally rethink the challenge of building bridges between the Western democracies and the Soviet Union—the beautiful music and children of "Peace Child" give new hope that we can someday find those bridges of human understanding without which all music and all children will be lost forever."

Roger Molander  
Director, Roosevelt Center

"Peace Child" may seem a fantasy, but the day that the super-powers choose to replace long distance rhetoric and threats by a more constructive and personal bridge building process, the fantasy that is "Peace Child" could become an achievable reality."

Brigadier Michael Harbottle

"The fundamental values and goals of "Peace Child" represent a positive approach to improving US-Soviet relations. This kind of work can help bridge the dangerous gap that currently exists between our two countries."

Rep. Morris K. Udall, U.S. Congress

## Send Us Your Thoughts For The Next Issue—MAY 1984!

Give us a call! (202-628-6262). There is always someone on the end of the phone ready to help you solve production or teaching problems. New ideas and materials are in preparation to help you: in the spring, we are producing studio-recorded backing tracks of the music so that anyone with a cassette-player can do the show; we are also preparing a new video showing classroom use of the Peace Child Study Guide; and alongside the Peace Child Players performances, there will be teacher workshops, helping teachers develop their own methods for teaching peace.

BUT—it has to begin with your commitment to Peace Education. We share the confidence of those above who feel that "Peace Child" can become a cultural bridge between us and the Soviets: children, music, drama can reach to the hearts of people whose minds are closed to the rhetoric of politicians and diplomats. In years to come, when "Peace Child's Progress" is a 40-page magazine networking peace children around the globe—Japan, Africa, Australia, the Soviet Union, Europe—your thoughts, *Children's* thoughts about peace and how to achieve it, will remain at its heart. *Start now!*—write to us, send us your students thoughts and essays.

## DO IT TODAY!!

### Order Form for

### Peace Child Materials

Please send me the following:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Peace Child Schools Package @ \$50.00  
(Includes the Peace Child Study Guide, script, musical score, "The Peace Book" by Bernard Benson, sound cassette, and video cassette.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Peace Child Study Guide, script & score @ \$12.50 (10 or more copies @ \$10.00 each)
- \_\_\_\_\_ "The Peace Book" by Bernard Benson @ \$10.00 (10 or more copies @ \$8.50 each)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Total Amount Enclosed

All prices include postage and handling. Allow 30 days for delivery. Checks must accompany this order form. Make checks payable to The Peace Child Foundation and send to PO Box 33168, Washington DC 20033.

CLIP THE COUPON AND SEND TO: The Peace Child Foundation, Box 33168, Washington, DC 20033.

# "PEACE CHILD" for the Soviet Union...?

In a series of conversations with Galina Kolosova of the International Children's Theatre Center in Moscow, Cynthia Lazaroff of the San Francisco based US-Soviet Student Exchange program, laid the foundation of what could become the first performance of "PEACE CHILD" in the Soviet Union.

Galina was extremely enthusiastic about the idea but after examining the text, she felt that some parts would have to be changed. She was particularly unhappy about presenting presidents Reagan and Andropov on stage. She felt that the children should visit some more "anonymous" figures, "someone from the State Department perhaps."

Our initial response to this was, "Oh!—how do you sing 'Mr. President!' to a character who isn't the president?" But the show is infinitely flexible, and a more realistic scenario might well emerge from a discussion of this very point. The Great thing is that Galina was prepared to start the conversation; she was eager to have author David Woolcombe and Cynthia Lazaroff in Moscow to work with their children and their teachers. She was also keen to accept the invitation from the Minnesota Peace Child Festival to bring a Soviet troupe of children to perform their version of "PEACE CHILD." The Minnesota invitation has since been endorsed by the mayors of the Twin Cities.

Cynthia warned: "Do not raise your hopes too high yet. We cannot know what the Soviet response to the deployment of missiles in Europe will be but it may include cancellation of all such promising initiatives as these." But David Woolcombe, President of PCF (USA) commented: "I am delighted by this news. We challenged the Soviets to re-write the play and they appear willing to take up that challenge. What's more, they appear to want to bring it here: we have always dreamed of Soviet and American children singing the songs of "PEACE CHILD" together and it looks as though the Soviets want to make that dream a reality."

## Join Us . . .

More than 10,000 people have been a part of "PEACE CHILD," either as audience, performers, or creative volunteers. We owe you all a huge "THANK YOU"!! - your time, your skill, your effort and your money have brought the project to the point where it is poised to become a crucial new force in the movement to create a peaceful world.

The opportunities now before us stagger the imagination! Soviet and American children performing *Peace Child* together in the heartland of America! A national tour which brings our message of peace through school systems to thousands of children across the country and around the world. A hit record of the songs; a TV documentary about Peace Child education in the classroom; media coverage in every city that we visit. And perhaps most importantly, a children's assembly where peace

children develop initiatives with distinguished politicians and diplomats to secure world peace in their lifetimes. . . .

All this is, of course, utterly dependent upon your continued support. We are therefore creating a network of members of the peace Child Foundation. Membership privileges include 2-for-1 ticket prices on all *Peace Child* performances (except Galas) and free copies of this quarterly newsletter which will let you follow *Peace Child's* progress across America and around the world.

Be a Peace Child - create a trust membership for your child or grandchild, become a sustaining member. Invest a little of your present in the future of the children of the world, children who want peace, who "want to live!" Your contribution cannot guarantee it, but it will ensure that many thousands of children are given a powerful vision of the potential of a peaceful world and how, with love, it can be achieved. ■

### Peace Child's Progress . . .

Box 33168, Washington DC 20033.  
(202) 628-6262

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address Correction Requested

☐ **YES - I would like to be a Peace Child! I am under 15 and I enclose my first annual membership dues of \$5.00.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **YES - I would like to be a sustaining member! I am over 15 but support the Peace Child's progress with my annual subscription of \$10.00.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **YES - I would like to take out membership in trust for my child/grandchild/nephew/niece/friend. I enclose \$10.00.**

Name & address  
of Child Trustee: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **I would also like to support the work of the Peace Child Foundation. I enclose a tax deductible contribution: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (As a \$100+ donor, I do/do wish my name to be included in the list of sponsors of this year's "PEACE CHILD" performances).**