

LIVING

A Breathtaking Performance with Spheres

by Fayza Haq

JEROME Thomas, a thirty-year old artistic juggler from France delighted his audience recently at the American International School at a unique and breathtaking solo performance "Extraballe" arranged by the Alliance Francaise de Dhaka. The audience ranged from toddlers to grandmothers, who lapped up the show.

Juggling, a skill in throwing and catching balls and knives is not modern. Juggling was practised by the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans and the evidence of this is found in sculptures, coins and ancient manuscripts. In an early manuscript a bear is shown standing on its hind legs and juggling with three knives. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the jugglers in Europe found a living in fairs, but it was not until the nineteenth century that the jugglers came into their own in the circus and the music halls.

Feats performed now are accomplished on horseback, on a perch or on high wire or on unicycle. TV has given impetus to juggling at a time when it looked as though it was on its way out.

Jerome, who began learning juggling at the age of fourteen, learnt from a small circus "Compagnie Foraine and Fratellini Circus". He saw a great deal on video and tried to understand and learn from that. His family was not happy altogether about his vocation but allowed it as there was no way of stopping him. Jerome says that the most important thing in juggling is concentration, spirit, humour and the love of juggling. "You have to like your audience too," he added.

Talking about the period when juggling was popular in Europe he said, "The Renaissance was a good period, and it was revived after the Second World War, and once again after '85. Today juggling is presented at the theatre. There are only seven shows in the world like mine which combines the theatre with juggling."

When asked how many hours he practised every day, Jerome replied, "Between the age of 18 and 23 I practised six hours a day, in which I combined classical dancing with classical juggling. After the age of 23 I began to explore the world of choreography, writing, acting and directing juggling in the theatre along with my normal practice. The rehearsals became differ-



Jerome Thomas performing on stage

ent. I had to organise the artistic presentation with light experts, musicians and actors. I also continued to give solo performances." He was invited to perform for President Frahois Mitterand and guests in '89.

Since his professional debut in '83 Jerome has been touring the world. He comments, "My life is always changing. The world is my home. I love travelling and have been to

Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Taiwan, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. I am scheduled to go to Canada, Central America (Mexico, Cuba etc.) and Spain. I love to study the cultural differences. I enjoy the chance to see other countries. I am impressed specially by Chinese jugglers, their concentration and meditation."

He added, "The communication between the audience and me must be complete. It is

such a good feeling to find rapport with the onlookers. Sometimes the people are even stunned by my act. I feel I had a good reaction in Dhaka. I have sixteen years of work behind me. I feel I can easily reach out to the people. I don't have to struggle any more but I want to be better and better."

Commenting on his performance Jerome said, "The manner in which I communicate is mingled with the language of poetry, while I try to reach out to their sensibility. I like to excite the imagination of the people and am happy to see that they are pleased to see the act where even a mad man is involved. The meaning of the show is to explore the world of the spheres. The sphere is a condition of life as all the planets are spheres. My work is cosmic. I want the spectators' imaginations to work. If the story is obvious it is boring. In my dance too I try to bring out the unconventional. Sometimes I want to entertain and make the audience laugh, while at times I wish to fascinate the people with my skill."

Jerome is not afraid or embarrassed about ever goofing. "Error is life: human beings work with errors. The trick is to hide the error. I am not a machine or a star. I am simply a human being," he remarks.

He teaches once a week every three months at Chalon sur Marne (France). "I love teaching. It helps me understand myself. I can have a comfortable life with my performances alone with the theatre, jazz and dance festivals. I am not exactly bowled over by institutions so I don't wish to open a school of my own. What I learnt was on a major part by myself. If and when I have a child I will not limit him to juggling. I will want him to try his hand at other skills and choose his own profession. I think it is a catastrophe when parents pressurise the child to have a particular career," he says.

Jerome is interested in philosophy, poetry, world religions, painting and dancing. He has mentors in the world of theatre and music and he learns from their work.

He works with his composer Laurence Olivier, who is inspired by typical Asiatic and repetitive sonorities. Olivier Manneveau, his light man and Georges Olivieri, his manager, are also in his team.

He appears regularly on television, not only in France but also in Japan, Germany, Italy and Denmark.

What an Engagement Entails

by Sylvia Saleem

SOMETIMES, when all is going well during an engagement, it seems to be going almost too well. The romantic aspect is emphasised at this time, as it should be, and thus can lead to the agonising doubt — is it real love or only infatuation? We know that we are in love, there is no doubting that. But what is the difference between being in love and being carried away, being infatuated?

There is a vital difference and it is important to recognise it.

It is possible to fall in love completely with somebody we do not really like and do not think well of. Indeed, sometimes such a person has a fatal spell over us, a fascination in spite of our better judgement. This can be just as difficult to understand as it is to resist.

It is also possible to begin by falling very much in love and then later get to like the person and feel affection and ordinary friendliness for him as well. But this does not necessarily follow, any more than we necessarily fall in love with everyone we have first learned to like. Sometimes we do, but not always.

Warnings against the perils of romantic love have this much sense in them, that it is sheer madness to marry on such a basis alone. But it is not romantic love alone that should be blamed when people make these tragic mistakes, because romantic love can give enrichment and delight and excitement to a truly loving relationship and can continue to exist throughout a lively and adventurous marriage.

It is the decision to marry on the basis of romantic love alone that is the folly.

A romantic attachment to someone is something which happens, not something we choose. Some personalities cost this magic spell over us just as some people have an unaccountable sexual attraction for us. This fact adds still more variety to loving and to engagement. Sometimes romantic love and sexual attraction are linked together and one sees in somebody a spellbinding combination of these two qualities. Together they may make up a powerful spell that may be nothing whatever to do with liking or affection.

Men and women often differ as much in this sphere as they can over coffee or tea for breakfast. It is easier for most men to feel excited sexually by an attractive woman without idealising her romantically at all. A woman will complain that

her lover is more excited by her body than by her personality.

With many women the reverse is true. They can come under some kind of romantic spell long before feeling any specific sexual attraction. And a man often finds it difficult to understand how a woman may be in love with him romantically without sex apparently coming into it at all.

Liking Him

These differences are sometimes slight, sometimes intense. The important question remains, do we like him

are content not to expect so much. If we like affectionately as well as being sexually attracted, then we can become adaptable in our giving and our receiving of love.

This brings us to the most important aspect of engagement — that we are learning how to share. Only true love can really share. Pure romantic idealising of somebody is as greedy, as self-centred, as pure sexual desire. Both can be liberated and enriched by being shared with someone we respect and like. This is a mature kind of loving which



Putting on the ring

as well as idealising him and finding him sexually exciting and attractive? This factor is vital in reaching the decision, first to get engaged and then to marry. What exactly does it mean, this very important "liking"?

When we are romantically in love with someone we have a dream or fantasy about him and we feel shocked or cheated when he does not come up to our expectations. We cannot adapt our feeling to the difference; it must be all or nothing. We cannot accept what he really is, and cannot like it.

Sexual attraction by itself is just as insistent; it is satisfied only when its demands are met. Romantic love alone is selfish love.

But when we feel affectionate love for someone we like, we can adapt ourselves to most of his needs and demands. We are not unduly shocked when he fails to come up to what we expected of him. We see other ways in which he does, or we

seriously considering marriage, cannot reasonably expect an outsider to make the decision for them and there is no psychological test or gypsy's crystal that can give them certainty of success or failure. How dull it would be if there were. Even if that were possible, would we believe it? Others can help us, but in the end we make our own decisions.

The Rough With the Smooth

Accepting the fact that marriage does not mean that life will be untroubled from then on is an adult approach to your new state. A little homespun wisdom may be found in the story of a custom that used to exist in Bavaria. One way of deciding the prospects of a young man and woman who wanted to marry was to get them to saw up logs with a double-handed saw. Anyone who has used one of these unwieldy things will know how each person has to adapt his strokes to the other's: the length of stroke, regularity, speed and pressure. If the couple got along smoothly and cut the log cleanly, the prospect for marriage was considered good; if they jabbed and jammed and argued and fussed they were counselled to think again.

Can we face a knotty argument or dispute and find a way to saw through it?

Can we bring our two kinds of strength to bear on a difficulty or a difference and succeed because we can adapt ourselves to each other?

Can we modify our own cherished ways of doing things to suit each other and the job in hand?

If the answer to these questions is "On the whole, yes", then it is probable we shall find the zest to make a good marriage and raise a happy family. We will be able to saw through the knots and twists as well as the straight grain. And when the saw sometimes jams we may curse it but not put all the blame on the person at the other end.

Your engagement is a lovely time. If you are wise you will not spend the whole of it doing the nice and the easy things together. You will begin to face the difficulties, realistically and calmly.

If you still like and respect each other in difficult circumstances you can be sure your love is not made up only of romantic love or sexual attraction. Something much more vital unites you.

Lemon Mask :

A little raw egg white
Half a fresh lemon
Half a cup of oatmeal
Beat the egg white in a bowl till slightly frothy, squeeze in some lemon juice, then add the oatmeal. Mix all three together. Spread mixture over your face. Tuck an old towel into the collar of your housecoat — the mask is drippy but it dries fairly quickly. Avoid any

Make-it-Yourself Face Masks

facial expressions and speaking until it has dried. (It dries to a smooth, taut finish — you can really feel the tightening action of the egg white.) Rinse off with warm water and-

smooth on a light film of moisturizer afterwards. This mask is particularly good for greasy, open-pored and rather coarse complexions.

The Egg-and-Lemon Mask :

1 egg yolk
Juice of half a fresh lemon
Blend the egg yolk and lemon juice thoroughly in a basin. Smooth this thin paste over your face and throat and relax with your feet up for 15 to 20 minutes while it gradually thickens. It won't really dry. But after the prescribed time, rinse it off with warm water, pat skin dry and smooth on a moisturizer.

The Honey Mask :

2 tablespoons honey
Warm water
Have two small bowls handy, one for the honey and the other filled with water as hot as you can bear. Wrap hair in a towel to keep it off your face (which should be clean), and dip your fingers first into the warm water, then into the honey. Spread the honey over your face and throat with an upward movement, patting it in well. Avoid eye, nose and mouth areas. Leave on for five to 10 minutes, rinse off with lukewarm water and blot skin dry. Leaves a complexion soft and glowing.

Corn Mask :

1 fresh-picked young ear of corn
A clean cheesecloth bag
Husk the ear, removing all silk, and run a rough grater down the sides of the corn to cut into the kernels and to expose the rich, milky fluid. Gather the kernels in a cheesecloth bag and squeeze to remove the fluid. Add the

pulp as well — you only want to remove the corn hulls — and pat this pulp-and-fluid mixture on to your face and neck. Leave on for 15 to 20 minutes, until dry. Rinse off and follow with an application of moisturizer. The high protein and fat content in corn soothes dry tissue and provides the building material needed for a healthy skin. A feast for a starved complexion.

Cucumber-Milk Mask :

1 large cucumber
1 tablespoon powdered milk
A little egg white
Grate the cucumber coarsely and squeeze to remove the juice. Pour this into a small basin, add the powdered milk and a little egg white, and beat all together until blended. Apply over face and throat and leave for 15 minutes or until dry. Rinse off with cool water and moisturize your skin. The sulphur and silicon-rich cucumber juice combined with the calcium in powdered milk, and the tautening qualities of egg white, make this a very versatile mask for nourishing and toning the skin. If your complexion is inclined to be somewhere between normal and dry, leave out the egg white and apply only cucumber juice mixed with powdered milk; a wonderfully cooling face pack.

Fruit-and-Cream facial :

Half a small ripe papaya
Thick fresh cream
Mash the soft flesh of half a ripe papaya or any other similar fruit in a small bowl and add an equal quantity of thick, rich cream. Apply the mixture to the face and throat by patting it into the skin. Lie down for at least 30 minutes and rest while the fruit and cream nourishes and plumps out dried, dry skin. Rinse off and follow with a film of moisturizer.

Cookery

Baked Custard Pudding

4 or 5 eggs
flavouring to taste
2 pint milk
1 tablespoonful sugar
a pinch of salt
Beat the eggs sugar together, add the salt, and flavour with nutmeg, chopped lime-rind, or any flavouring which may be preferred. Heat the milk and pour it slowly on the egg mixture, stirring all the time. Pour into a buttered pie-dish and bake in a moderate oven for about 40 minutes or until the custard sets and becomes a light brown colour.

Baked Plum Pudding

1 lb flour
1/2 sugar
2 eggs
1 tablespoonful baking powder
3 oz suet
3 oz currants
2 oz raisins
2 oz sultanas
1 oz ginger preserve
1 oz candied peel
a grate of nutmeg
a pinch each of powdered cinnamon, cloves and cardamoms
a little milk
Prepare the fruit as directed in Recipe 600, and mix

them in a basin with the dry ingredients. Moisten with the eggs well beaten and add enough milk to make the pudding of the consistency of a very thick batter. Put into a well-greased baking tin and bake in a moderate oven from 1 to 1 1/2 hours. When ready, turn it out, cut into pieces, sprinkle with sugar and serve.

Baked Chocolate Pudding

2 tablespoonfuls cornflour
4 oz grated chocolate
3 tablespoonfuls sugar
1 pint milk
3 eggs
vanilla flavouring
Mix the cornflour to a smooth paste with a little of the milk. Put the remainder of the milk into a saucepan and bring to boiling point. Remove the saucepan from the fire and pour the mixed cornflour into it, stirring vigorously. Return the saucepan to the fire and let it boil for 5 minutes, stirring all the time. Then add the chocolate and sugar and stir until it is perfectly smooth. Let the mixture cool a little, then stir in the eggs well beaten and the flavouring. Pour into a greased pie-dish and bake in a moderate oven for about half an hour. Turn out and serve with Raspberry or Custard Sauce.

China and Earthenware

NOW that china and earthenware can be bought in such variety in good standard patterns at prices to suit all pockets, there is no excuse for chipped and ugly pieces on our tables. It is no longer considered important that everything should match in pattern, provided that the pieces are planned to go well together. For instance, you could have blue and white patterned plates and cups and saucers, with plain blue or white dishes, a black or deep blue salad bowl, and plain white soup dishes or fruit bowls.

Curiously enough, real bone china, though much thinner and more delicate looking, is far stronger than earthenware which is softer and more inclined to chip or break. But it is, of course, more expensive to buy initially. Hold a piece up to the light: if it is china, it will be faintly transparent. Make sure that the glaze is evenly applied and smooth.

What to Buy
When buying a dinner service, choose one with white or light-coloured centres to the plates and dishes — so much more pleasant when food is served on them. The plates and dishes should not be too heavy to handle easily when stacked. Sets of four are available from some manufacturers

and they take up less storage room for a young couple just starting in a new home. As a minimum you would need: meat plates, pudding plates, soup bowls or dishes (which could also be used for fruit), two covered dishes for vegetables, two oval meat-dishes. The vegetable dishes should have sensible handles that do not project too much and that will not easily get broken.

Examine the cups to be sure they are symmetrical and that really round, and that the handles are a comfortable size for the fingers. See that they are designed so that dirt won't collect between the handle and the cup and require a major operation to keep clean! Test teapots for an easy-to-hold, heat-proof handle, a well-designed spout not likely to drip, and a lid that will not fall out when pouring. Consider the handles of milk jugs.

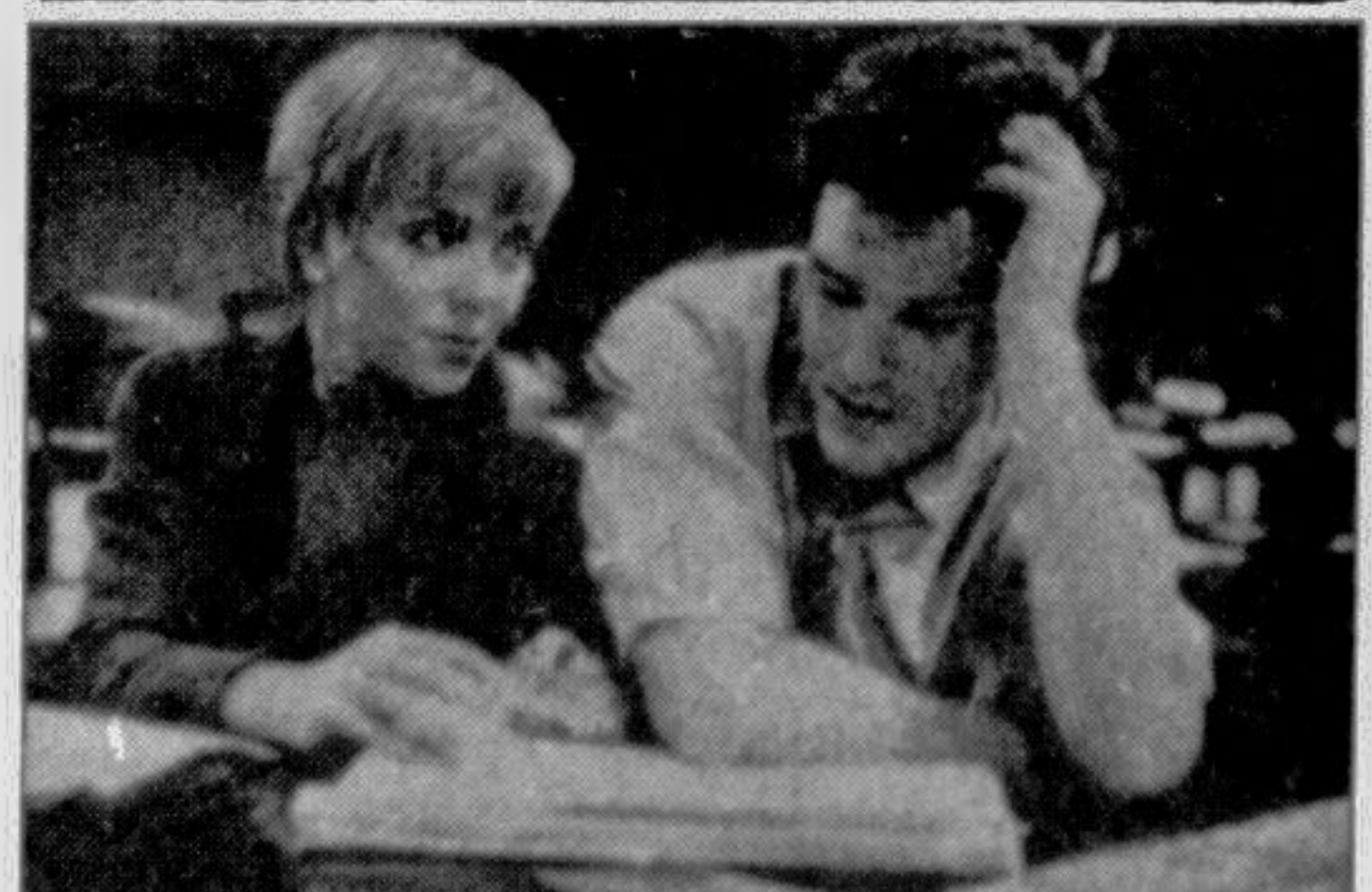
For a tea-set, you need teacups and saucers, small plates (or cheese plates), two cake plates, a cream or milk jug, sugar basin, slop basin, and teapot. For a breakfast set have larger cups (which can also be used for elevenens and evening cocoa) to match the dinner service, or in plain white or a colour to tone with the pattern on the plates, egg-cups, and a larger milk-jug, pudding plates and an oval dish for serving. S.T.



A scene from a fashion show — Star photo



Pierce Bronson & Deborah Ruffin on "Star Plus"



Trevyn Mc Dowell & Douglas Hodge on "Star Plus"