

Raspberries & Peaches

Why do we seem to find it so difficult to persuade people to experience the arts? Could it be that we are not talking to people in the right way? Almost all audience members need straightforward answers to three straightforward questions: What is it about? What is it like? How am I going to feel when I experience it? In a bid to get us all communicating appropriately, JAM brings you a range of peaches to aim for and raspberries to avoid.

A Big Raspberry to...

■ **The dance festival** that consistently writes copy that goes straight over most people's heads – including those who *like* contemporary dance: *His performances explore movement inspired by how the body is regarded as both form and content in a live performance. [This] is a solo work which searches for the space where the perception of oneself as object collides with the wish to retain control. What?!?*

■ **Marketers are usually on a mission to explain.** It is extraordinary, though, how often our beautifully crafted peaches turn to raspberries the moment we ask the artist to pick up a pen. Here's some well-intentioned copy from a Scottish gallery: *How often have you looked at abstract art and wondered what it meant, or what was going*

through the artist's mind? In this exhibition, [the artist] provides an explanation for every painting so that you can find out what lies behind his abstract patterns and colours.

'I use colour to create meaning and interplay with my perceptions of reality and life with all its complexities.'

■ **This contemporary music group** made a tantalising promise in their direct mail letter: *They hope that through their performances listeners will discover that there can be more to contemporary music than a paralysed posterior, a glum-faced composer, and frequently un-listenable music.*

One wonders, then, whether they thought they were helping the inexperienced listener when they chose this excerpt from Hofstadter's *Gödel, Escher, Bach: an Eternal Golden Braid* as the only

explanatory copy in their programme: *The pearl is prized for its luster and simplicity; the oyster is a complex living beast whose innards give rise to this mysteriously simple gem. Gödel's Theorem appears as Proposition VI in his 1931 paper On Formally Undecidable Propositions in Principia Mathematica and Related Systems I. It states: 'To every w-consistent recursive class k of formulae there correspond recursive class-signs r, such that neither v Gen nor Neg (v Gen r) belongs to Flg (k) (where v is the free variable of r).'*

Actually it was in German, and perhaps you feel that it might as well be in German anyway. So here is a paraphrase in more normal English: *'All consistent axiomatic formulations of number theory include undecidable propositions This is the pearl.'* ■

Peaches and Cream...

■ **Have you seen the Tron's newsletter format brochure?** In four A3 pages, it's got Sunday supplement style pictures and profiles of audience members and a delicious sounding recipe from the chef at their restaurant alongside a series of energetic and informative articles by directors and writers.

■ **A huge, juicy peach** too to The Tower Arts Centre in Winchester for the best ever prelude to a brochure redesign. If only I had the courage to write copy like this:

This is a message from control ... This will be the last brochure in the present format. Why? A number of reasons; principally because it's become expensive to print and post – and we think we can do it better. It's also been hanging out with the wrong crowd, not handing its homework in on time and generally demonstrating a very poor attitude, an attitude which does not bode well for

any future career path it may choose to take. But it's mainly a money and an upgrade type of thang. We can't really reveal too much at the moment (Now there's a surprise – Ed), but fear not, it will still contain a great programme of events in a regionally significant venue, a venue that reaches the parts for many of the people who perform here other venues simply don't reach. 'It's always hot at The Tower' quoth Mr Eric Bibb and Paul Jones said something really complimentary on Radio 2 last year, which the two people we know who heard it can't remember.

Anyroad, keep turning up, tuning in, and not dropping out, and watch out for that new brochure, but remember, just 'cos we've got a new frock on doesn't mean it's not the same old loveable, cuddly hairy knees underneath (what on earth does that mean!? - Ed) Have a great Summer, don't forget The Big Freeby Water Thingy in Abbey Gardens at the fag-end of July. I see you there, muchachos! Ciao, for now, frauhaul!

(What happened to 'It's a great line-up this season, we've got performers from Zimbabwe, Australia, Ireland, the USA and Alexei Sayle and all that proper Introductory stuff? My office. Now. – Ed)

Perfect for their target market. It sounds a great place to hang out – and they've got a fabulous contemporary visual and performing arts programme too. ■



Make jam for the AMA

Send your peaches and raspberries to the AMA by e-mailing info@a-m-a.co.uk