

Metro North East
5 June 2002

THEATRE REVIEW

Frank

★★★★☆

This self-styled 'odyssey for the true and the brave' is essentially performance art where you actually become the play, with some interesting preconditions; such as, you aren't allowed to come with a friend – or, if you do, you have to set off at different times.

This journey is what you make of it. If the thought of striking up conversations with a friendly, but mysterious bunch of 'actors' brings you out in a cold sweat, then you may simply trot through the labyrinth of rooms, notice the pretty things and make your own journey back down to earth.

I am honour-bound not to reveal too much about it all, for fear of giving the experience away but, after an initial 'what am I doing here?' moment, things got better and better. Described by director Richard Gregory as an 'exploration of honesty', the impression I was left with was of a party which I gradually became more immersed in.

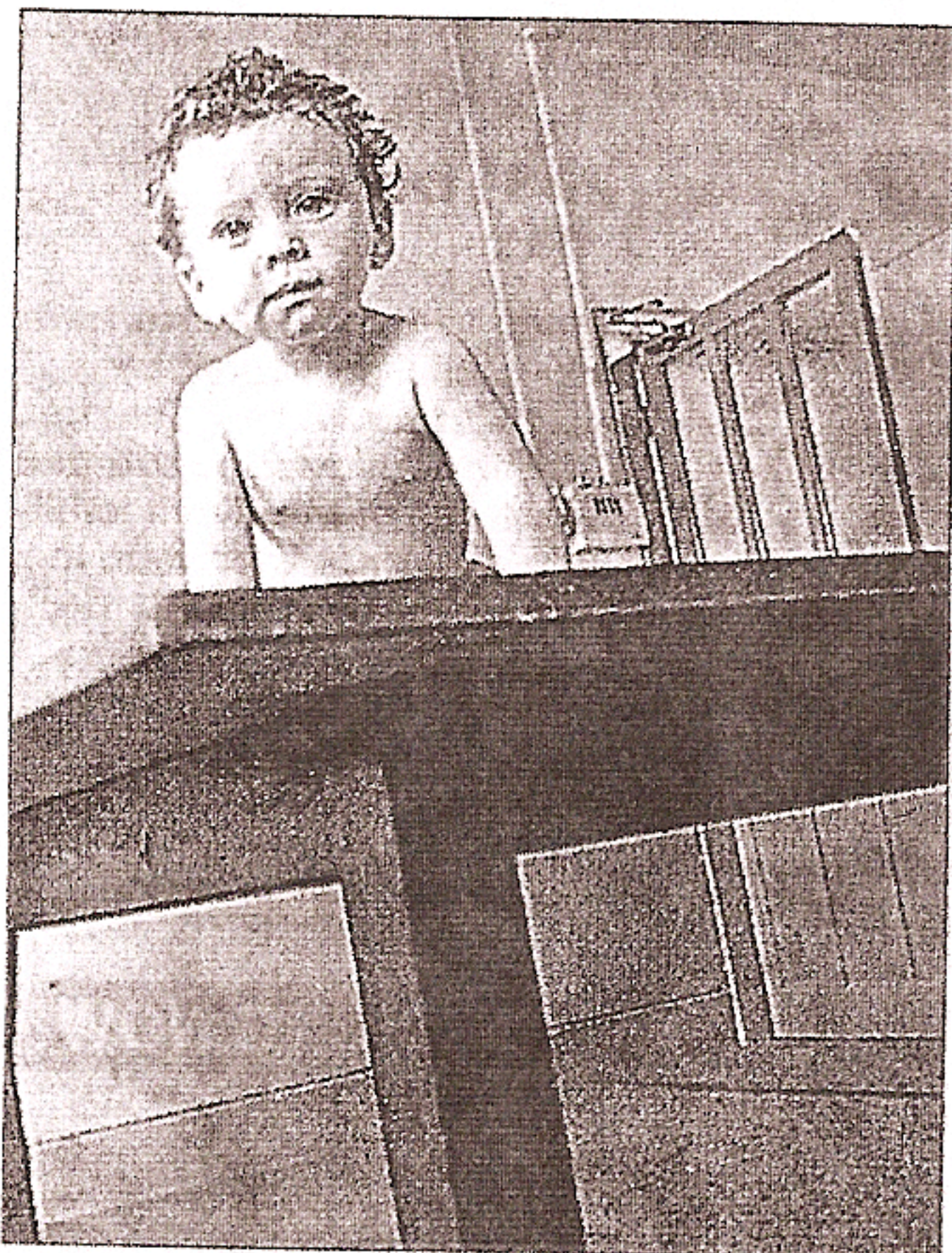
At first, I did what I was told and desperately tried to find some profound answers. Then I regressed to kiddie-style make and do activities (arranging pots in sequences for example). After becoming a tad bored, I began feeling more at home (in spite of a stranger already sleeping in the bed and soot everywhere) and, by the time I left, I had been fed, watered and had indulged in a spot of kitchen cosiness and armchair politics.

Frank looks and feels fab. While this project is more live art than proper performance, it is a bold, brave trip to a land where you can still get thrilled in the theatre.

Elizabeth Scott

Until Sat, Newcastle Playhouse, Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne, 6pm onwards, journey times by arrangement, £3 to £8.

Tel: 0191 230 5151. Metro: Haymarket



Interactive experience: Frank is a theatrical journey that is exactly what you make it