

Archaos
DURRANT'S TEL: 071-588-3671
 103 WHITECROSS STREET, LONDON EC1Y 8QT

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*Kay Smith reports on
 the timely reopening
 of an innovative
 Edinburgh theatre venue*

Fired up, ready to go

A FIRE-EATER and trick cyclists from the Archaos circus yesterday reopened Edinburgh's Theatre Workshop in suitably flamboyant style. After nearly £¼ million worth of conversion work, the workshop can now offer a greater amount of activity to a broader range of groups, director Adrian Harris told guests at the reopening.

All areas in the Workshop have been converted to provide easy access to people with disabilities. "For the first time we can invite groups from adult training centres and special schools into the building without people in wheelchairs having to suffer the indignity of being bumped up and down stairs or being brought in through the side entrance," explained Harris.

The conversion includes a studio theatre with a raised platform stage and seating capacity for around 60 people. The additional space — suitable for one- and two-person performances — enabled the Workshop to double the size of its Festival programme for this year. Informal performances and cabaret can now be held.

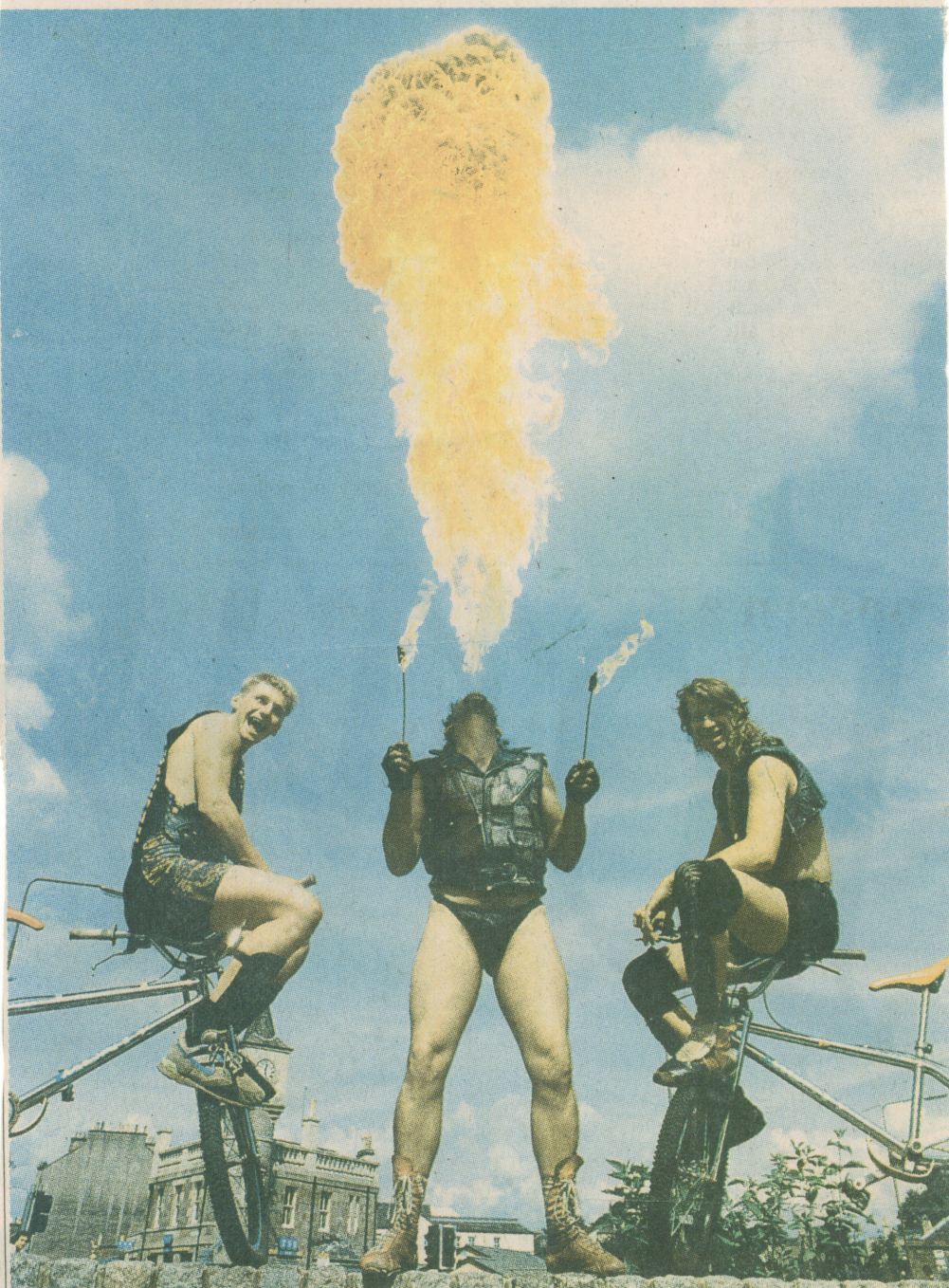
Throughout the rest of the year, Harris promises activities ranging from drama workshops for the under-fives to tea dances for older people. "I see the building not only as a resource for the community of Stockbridge (where Theatre Workshop is based) but for numerous groups throughout the region," he added.

The bulk of the funding for the renovation came from Edinburgh District Council, the Scottish Education Department, the Scottish Arts Council and Lothian and Edinburgh Enterprise Limited (LEEL). The Carnegie UK Trust also gave a maximum £25,000 grant through its ADAPT Fund.

Should more funds become available and pending current negotiations with Scotmid, who own the adjacent premises, further expansion of Theatre Workshop may go ahead.

Home News

IAN RUTHERFORD



Going for the burn: members of the avante-garde circus group, Archaos, yesterday re-opened the newly-renovated Edinburgh Theatre Workshop in Hamilton Place. Fired up, Page 13