



It doesn't come much better . . .

THE LOSH AND HORROR SHOW by Gary Friedman Productions, presented in aid of charity by the Port Elizabeth branch of the Union of Jewish Women (Savoy Theatre):

MASTER puppeteer Gary Friedman's theatrically enchanting and visually adroit reading of the new South Africa is a fine example of the mysterious world behind the proscenium arch constantly springing surprises.

Who would have thought that painted, dressed-up strips of wood could, with a few deft movements and the addition of a voice, become people we know?

But this is what this superb team of entertainers



Three of the characters from the *The Losh and Horror Show* are Hymie and Hilda Rosen, and their maid, Dora.

achieves by creating a comically observed satirical reminder that 40 years of devotion by a domestic servant de-

serves a little more than three months double pay, the television set in her bedroom, and every-day crockery in the kitchen.

In a marvel of theatrical dexterity, and making rich use of strong and simple images, Friedman pressures us to look at ourselves with an unpatronising truthfulness that will jolt many a conscience.

Hidden by a curtain and wearing a harness supporting a detailed living room setting — and with puppets of his many characters hanging from a belt around his waist — Friedman yesterday worked tirelessly for 85 minutes in sweltering heat, manipulating his dolls and speaking their lines in a performance of gigantic pro-

Theatre review by TERRY HERBST

portions.

He looks at a Jewish family emigrating to Australia, and a Zulu family returning home after 20 years of exile in the United States, and asks: "Is there a land of milk and honey?"

Aided by music and song, this splendid entertainer uses a shrewd, mordant script to advantage in a bold, innovative display of theatrical inventiveness that demands to be enjoyed by the largest possible audience.

You will laugh uneasily at — and with — kugel de luxe Samantha; you will rejoice when Dora ("One of the family") Schwartz becomes a political force after decades of domestic work; and the irony of a black man with three university degrees not being able to find a job will not go by unnoticed.

A hearty round of applause for those who devised a compulsively watchable show — Friedman, Nyanga Tshabalala, Geoff Sifrin, Irene Stephanou, shadow puppeteer Indivar, and director Rosie Fiore — that leaves an ineradicable impression.

It doesn't come much better than this . . .