

Mime Troop in Detroit For Minstrel Show

Fifth Estate Collective

1966

The San Francisco Mime Troupe, fresh from a successful ten months run in Northern California, and as a part of their nationwide tour, will bring its current production, "A MINSTREL SHOW/OR: 'CIVIL RIGHTS IN A CRACKER BARREL' " to the Detroit Institute of Arts, Oct. 7, under the sponsorship of the American Civil Liberties Union. See ad for details and ticket information.

The co-authors, Saul Landau and Troupe director R.G. Davis, have adapted the indigenous American art form of the minstrel show as a weapon of brash caustic satire aimed at all phases of the Civil Rights movement and dishonesty and pretense on both sides of the color line.

The show has an interracial cast of six minstrels in sky — blue satin tails; a paternal interlocutor in a tuxedo and two old-timey banjo players. Beginning gaily enough with song and dance numbers, broad jokes and Stephen Foster burlesques, the show shifts into a tight, structured frieze of incidents which mercilessly examine Uncle Tom, the middle — class negro, the white liberals and hippies, Martin Luther King Jr., the Watts riots, the Black Muslims and the relationships of these things and people to each other.

The Minstrel Show is meant to be shocking and disturbing, and has shocked many, including the officials of St. Martins' College in Olympia, Washington, who stopped a performance there midway because of "embarrassment" and because it brought certain investigations of sex "a little too close to home."

R.G. Davis, director and co-author (who, incidentally plays one of the minstrels for the show) says, "Everybody will be bothered by it, like we're bothered by it."



Fifth Estate Collective
Mime Troop in Detroit For Minstrel Show
1966

<https://www.fifthestate.org/archive/15-october-1-15-1966/mime-troop-in-detroit-for-minstrel-show>
Fifth Estate #15, October 1-15, 1966

fifthestate.anarchistlibraries.net