



Bob Maza



basically black

The National Black Theatre has just completed the season of its first full production, "Basically Black", at Sydney's Nimrod Street Theatre.

"Basically Black" is a pointed, satirical revue whose fortunes have been (and will probably continue to be) closely associated with those of its patron, the National Black Theatre.

NBT has its origins in Melbourne, 1971, when the Council for the Arts made a grant to Jack Charles to produce Jim Crawford's play, "Rocket Range", with an all-black cast. When this project ran into problems Charles, Ollie Lewinsky and Dorothy Thompson approached Bob Maza, then working with the Victorian Advancement League, asking him to assist in producing a revue. Material for this project was contributed by Crawford, Frank Hardy, Kath Walker, Jack Huston, and Maza.

This version played at Melbourne, Monash and the Australian National Universities earlier this year. The original group then split-up and Bob Maza, who wanted to pursue the revue, obtained a Council for the Arts grant to produce it in Sydney, this time working with a different and distinctly national group of people. Thus

the formation of the National Black Theatre. Bob Maza is presently attached to Nimrod Street Theatre as a trainee director and acts as co-ordinator for all NBT activities.

NBT is in fact an umbrella organization for a set of individual art and theatre groups, comprising dance, writing and drama workshops, as well as several other schemes. It was featured on the ABC programme, "This Day Tonight", in July.

At about the same time as NBT was being formed in Sydney, Carol Johnson was organizing her dance classes. The dance group decided they wanted to work with the NBT and some of the girls became involved in drama as well. The dance group staged a public concert in September.

Also at this time certain advertising agencies began offering work to local blacks. This interest