

PLAYING AROUND

Playing Around explores the history of two local theatre companies, New Perspectives Theatre and Nottingham Playhouse Roundabout Theatre in Education Company. Both were founded in 1973 with a commitment to touring innovative and engaging theatre to new communities and audiences beyond conventional theatre spaces.

New Perspectives, originally called Key Perspectives, was founded by a group of five drama teachers/actors engaged in drama-in-education work. The company was based in Peterborough until, facing cuts in funding from Peterborough Council in the early 1980s, Perspectives were invited by the East Midlands Arts Association to become the region's resident touring theatre company, with Arts Association funding. They moved to Mansfield in 1982; now based in Nottingham, in the last four years New Perspectives' tours have reached more than 50,000 people in theatres and village halls nationwide and have twice transferred to New York.

From its opening in 1963, Nottingham Playhouse established a strong tradition of taking theatre into Nottingham and Nottinghamshire schools. In 1973 a pilot Theatre in Education project run by Sue Birtwistle proved so successful that Nottinghamshire Education Committee funded a permanent Theatre in Education company providing a year-round service to all Nottinghamshire maintained schools. Despite changes and challenges over its lifetime, in 2009-10 Roundabout delivered performances, workshops and other activities to nearly 12,000 participants



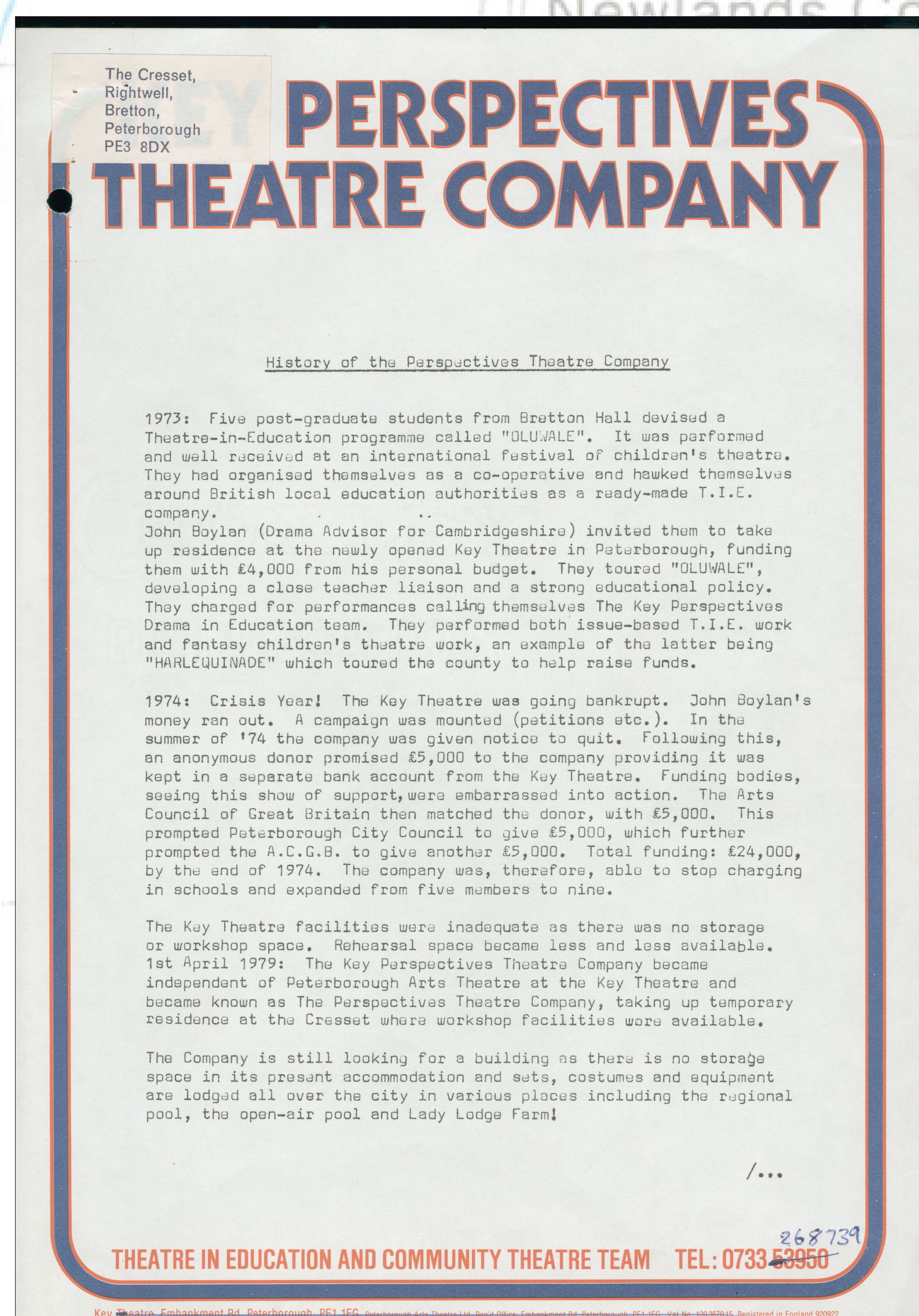
The founding members of Perspectives in the Evening Telegraph, 1973. NPT 2/1

"How many opportunities are presented to us if we make our work in the spaces that people already inhabit?"

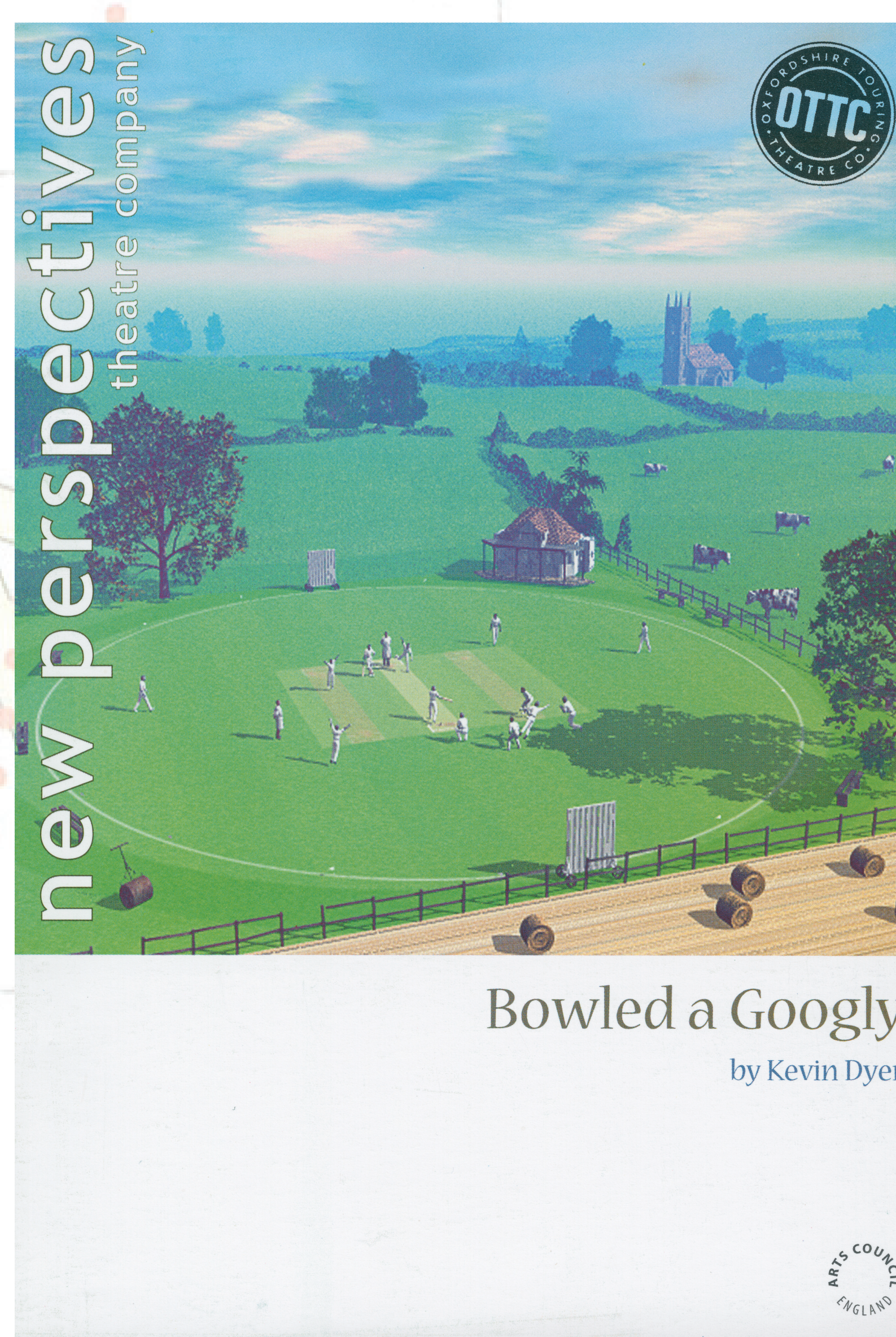
Gavin Stride, former Artistic Director, New Perspectives

as part of Nottingham Playhouse's Participation programme.

This exhibition has been curated by Dr Jo Robinson, Associate Professor in Drama and Performance, and Manuscripts and Special Collections at The University of Nottingham. We thank past and present staff of New Perspectives and Nottingham Playhouse for their invaluable support.



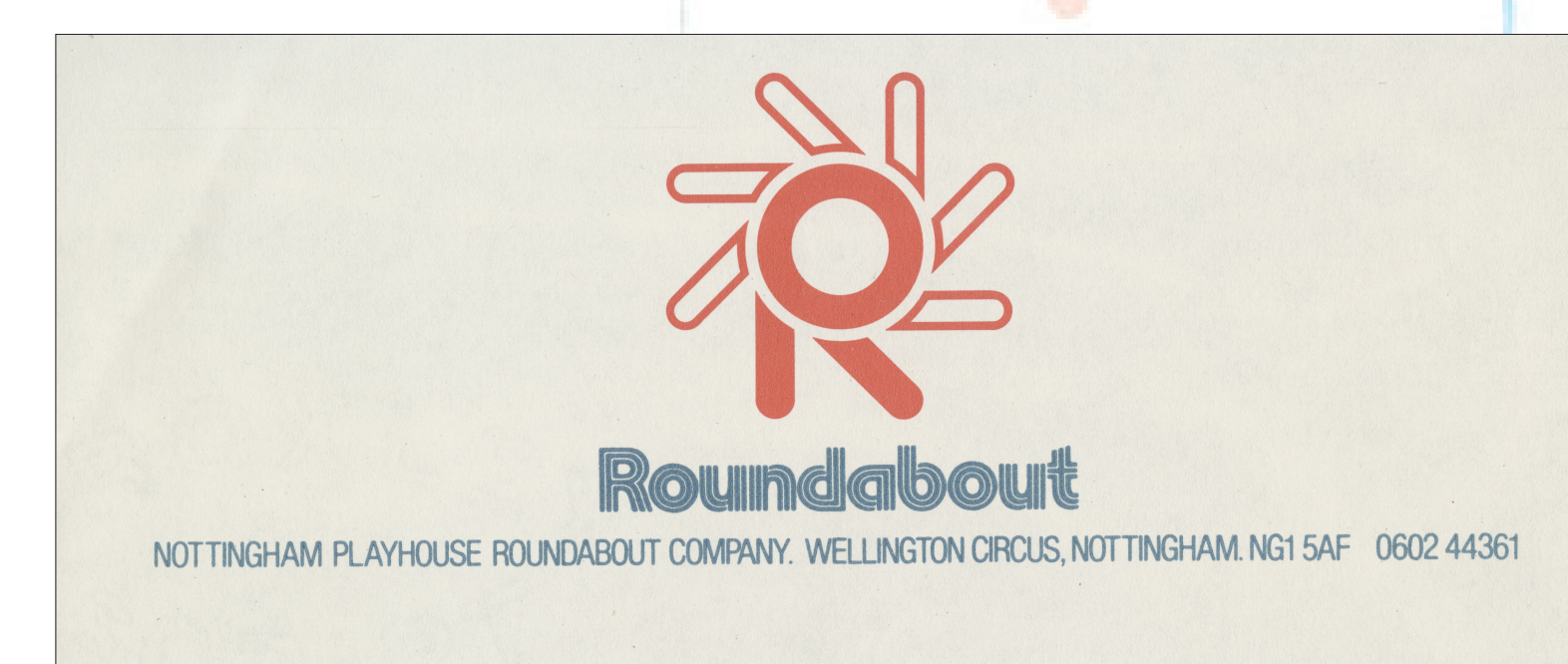
History of Perspectives Theatre Company, 1979. NPT 4/2/1



Poster for Bowled a Googly, 2003. NPT 2/103/7



A map taken from a report on the productions of New Perspectives for the year 1990/91, 1991. NPT 4/2/2



Top: an early logo for Roundabout, c.1970s. Bottom, the New Perspectives' logo



A flyer for the joint New Perspectives and Roundabout production, Walking the Tightrope, 2000. NPT 2/91/8



Taking theatre to communities across the East Midlands