bad luck for happy landing

Theatre

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest Gielgud Theatre, W1 ***

Benedict Nightingale

ondary germs, missing several stroyed. performances on the Edin- The central point of Slater's the rainiest August Auld subtle.

lumbering critics?

escapes prison by getting himself committed to a state asylum, has strengthened since I saw it in Edinburgh.

burgh Fringe, putting up with performance is, I think, quite

Reekie has seen in years, then He underrates institutional

the fun-loving tearaway who Up there the Hollywood

bad boy was a bit too much the Holyrood nice guy. He still hasn't the anger and Jack Nicholson brought to the movie version of Ken Kesey's novel; but he's vital and charismatic enough AFTER losing one director to explain why his fellowand acquiring two others, get- patients follow him, and Big ting a dose of chickenpox, Nurse and her authoritarian playing host to loads of sec- ilk know he must be de-

breaking bones in his hand, power and can't see how slip- generation which put flowers and it remains very much of Owen O'Neill's edgy bisexual which their anxieties, guilts Christian Slater must have pery, devious and ruthless it in its decade. Yet Terry Johnson to Mackenzie Crook's stutter- and miseries will be scrupu-

had that Macbeth feeling. can become when challenged. against Vietnam, and Tamara Harvey's revival ing mother's boy, have their lously intensified. Was it wise to move on to a And somewhere here is the guru of R.D. Laing, who has the tension, humour and counterparts now. And when you see the steel city where he risked getting main point of Dale Wasser- thought that the sane might grip to persuade you that, no, And so, I fear, does Frances behind the seductiveness, the knocked down by big, red, lum- man's stage adaptation too. be mad, the mad sane and the it's not seriously dated. Per- Barber's Nurse Ratched. You ferocity disguised as femininibering buses — or, almost What is this battleship-grey world a fraud on the Native American suspect that this immaculate ty, you know you're watching worse, slaughtered by big, red, ward, with white figures issu- pressed? who has retreated into cata- gauleiter will scare and stun a terrific performance. Want ing orders from the sci-fi con- The original novel was Kes- tonic silence because of the you from the moment she to understand how the will Yes, of course he was right sole at its rear, but American ey's fictional account of the loss of his ancestral lands glides noiselessly into her tiny can combine with self-belief

to defy superstition, sickness society in microcosm? months he spent testing smacks of the period's manipu- powerhouse and, in the softest to enforce obedience? See Bar-

The lion, and fake

By Daiya Alberge Arts Correspondent

AN EPIC production of The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, which is being filmed in New Zealand with a British cast, has been forced to use fibreglass reindeer because of Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry regulations.

Animatronic reindeer had to be specially made after a ban was imposed on the producers importing the live variety from America for fear they might take with them the potentially deadly Q fever.

The animatronic animals, which are eerily realistic, have been created by Mark Rappaport and his Los Angelesbased Creature Effects team to pull the sleighs of the evil White Witch and Father Christmas, played respectively by Tilda Swinton and James Cosmo, the British actors.

Mr Rappaport, whose film credits include The Last Samurai, said that his creations, controlled by three puppeteers, could simulate breathing. They will also be able to stand still for hours to shoot scenes. He added that real reindeers would be "very stressed" alongside the live wolves that are also required.

Directed by Andrew Adamson, who made the Shrek films, the epic is the first of seven instalments of the Chronicles of Narnia by C. S. Lewis.





offer ends 4pm sunday

SMAIDS BEDROOMS

why choose Sharps?

around you

or shape

Every bedroom designed exclusively

Fully fitted floor to ceiling wardrobes

Free professional in-home design

Fully installed by Sharps fitters

Built to fit your bedroom - whatever size

Wide range of fitted and freestanding furniture

Britain's leading bedroom specialist

Forgotten tale that went like abomb

By Jack Malvern Arts Reporter

FIRSTNIGHT

Scottish Ballet in

CRITICS

good shape

lin **72**

THE SHARPEST

lappear every day

FORGOTTEN work by H.E. Bates, the author best known for The Darling Buds of May, is to be displayed for the first time after it was discovered at the National Archives.

The original typescript for The Flying Bomb, written under the pseudonym "Flying Officer X", shows the author's wordy writing style when he worked as a propagandist for the Air Ministry during the Second World War.

Flying Officer X became a household name for his pamphlets telling tales of derringdo both in the air over Europe and on the home front. One wartime collection of short stories, How Sleep the Brave, was later published under Bates's real name, but until then the stories' author was a mystery.

The manuscript, which will go on show at the National Archives as part of the Open House London weekend tomorrow and Sunday, records the landing of the first German Vl rocket in Bethnal Green, East London. "It dashed northward like a flaming meteor over the rich hayfields and ripening cherry orchards of Kent," he wrote.

"There was no illusion about the fact that this, at last, was the Hitler secret weapon, long-trumpeted and long-expected: the pilotless flying bomb, the thing, as a Cockney lady afterwards commented, that 'ain't quite human': the Wellsian dream of robot flying power come true."

The 90-page book, which also charts the first landing of the faster, deadlier V2 rocket, describes the VI as a despicable weapon that sounded like "the clattering harshness of a cheap and gigantic motor-bike".

"In appearance it had, from below, the deathly crudity of a black cross; angular, simple, narrow, entirely without aerial beauty."

John Wood, a curator at the

National Archives, said that the manuscript, marked "top secret", showed the flowery writing style for which Bates became renowned in The Darling Buds of May. "It is little known that he was Flying Officer X," he said. "It was after the war that he really became prominent. He wasn't a pilot but he pretended to be. Before the war he was a provincial

clerk and a journalist." Of all the propagandists at the Air Ministry, Flying Officer X was probably the most famous. His stirring pamphlets were distributed around the world, selling

more than two million copies. Bates was recruited to the Air Ministry by Lord Beaverbrook, the proprietor of the Daily Express, when the RAF decided to set up a public relations directorate. He became part of a team of journalists and lived with bomber crews, reporting their lives on the ground and in combat.

The manuscript, one of 8.5 million documents in the National Archives in Kew, will be exhibited alongside pictures showing the devastating effect of the German rocket attacks. Photographs of V2 rocket landing sites will be shown next to pictures of the sites as they are now. The information was kept secret at the time, when journalists were encouraged to report the explosions as ruptured gas pipes. The first V2s landed in September but were revealed to

the public only months later. The jets of flame that powered the rockets were thought by the public to be downed German planes. According to Bates: "[The rocket's flight] startled even the war-hardened citizens of the county [Kent] into leaping out of bed and watching its fiery passage

across the midsummer sky... "[It] caused a company of staid night-duty policemen at Croydon to stand and cheer like schoolboys under the mistaken impression that a German aircraft was on fire."

Ken Russell recovers after superbug attack

KEN RUSSELL, the film-maker who directed Women in Love, is recovering after becoming another celebrity victim of the superbug MRSA.

Russell, 77, was quarantined after doctors discovered the bacterium when he was treated in hospital for back pain. His wife said yesterday that she feared for his life as he slipped in and out of

took nine drugs for pain, including valium and morphine, said that he had been terrified. "The worst thing was that I didn't know what was wrong with me," he said.

Three years ago, Claire Rayner, a television agony aunt, contracted MRSA. Leslie Ash, the actress from Men Behaving Badly, caught MSSA, a similar virus, in consciousness. Russell, who April.