

Paula premieres the tears of a Clowness

ACTRESS Paula Wilcox takes the plunge into previously uncharted waters at the Gate theatre in Notting Hill tonight when she performs her first one-woman show.

She stars in the British premiere of *The Clowness*, a play by Gerlind Reinshagen about a star who barricades herself in a bedsit to relive her past in a funny and heart-rending struggle for self-realisation.

Dora, as she is called, has spent a lifetime putting on an act, anxious to please and desperate to be loved, whether as actress, lover, mother or daughter.

"When I was first sent the script," says Paula, "I had to read it twice

by **ROBIN STRINGER**
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before I could assimilate it but then I knew I had to do it. It has humour and pathos and tells a story to which everyone will be able to relate."

The show, which runs for 75 minutes without an interval, is the latest test of Paula Wilcox's considerable reserves of skill and courage. These enabled her to join the National Youth Theatre at 17, turned her into a television star not long afterwards in *Man About The House* and made her a memorable Shirley Valentine on the West End stage.

Stringer Standard Clowness



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