

## Marg and the Beast

Comedians Margaret Dobson and Shirley Billings are back.

Those who saw last year's show *Cooking with Mary* know that a performance by these two women is not to be missed. *Mary and the Beast* was a satire of TV cooking shows and this year they turn their raw, manic energy on the beauty industry and beauty products.

*Mary and the Beast* has obvious parallels with the classic fairytale *Beauty and the Beast*, complete with the ugly sisters and a wild unseen beast. The message of the fairytale is that Beauty tamed the savage Beast. This is reassessed in the show, where the implication is that the pursuit of beauty is the beast.

Marg and Shirl are two crazy beauticians who take us to a beauty products home sales party, where adults play silly games and are pressured to buy very expensive beauty products. The audience too plays silly games as we all tried to pass lemons to each other with our chins. As in their previous show, *Mary and the Beast* depends on a willing audience participant. The unlucky chosen one is lead to the stage for a facial for

cucumber, oats, elderberry and some left over coriander and yoghurt from last night's curry. The public embarrassment of this member of the audience is somewhat quelled by a liberal number of strawberry daquaris, fresh from the beauty blender of Shirl herself.

Marg and Shirl are beauticians of the '90s. Their facial ingredients are all natural and they dispose of their left-over cottonwool facewipes "thoughtfully". I still have a battered copy of the 1973 hippy girl's guide "How to Feed your Face", and was therefore receptive to the idea of cucumber eye packs, oatmeal face packs and apple cider vinegar skin toner.

Our two beauticians seem to fly across the stage as they give facials, wrestle with the beast and sing and dance, all at an unbelievably frenetic pace.

Margaret Dobson says the message of the show is that "you can be rich and beautiful: you'll be rich if you don't buy the cosmetics and use the oatmeal from the fridge and then you'll also be beautiful from the inside."

Don't miss Marg and the Beast. I am told these girls can do a facial anytime, anywhere.