

## Taylor proves his worth

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JEREMY TAYLOR in Cabaret, presented by Cabab, The Barn:

ONE wonders why this outstanding Brit-South African entertainer does not call his latest show *Jeremy Taylor in Broederstroom*. For Broederstroom read Groot Marico and you have the theme: The rural Afrikaner living out the tussle between man and Africa in several of its fascinating aspects — as told by a master raconteur and consummate actor.

After the first two numbers had passed without applause I must admit I had misgivings. Was not this a taking over of the Groot Marico genre of Herman Charles Bosman and not doing it better or differently enough to stop its being

old hat?

The subject matter here was first the drought, when the preoccupation of the farming community was with its lifeline, the irrigation channel and the defence of it against the temptation between neighbours to steal water.

Then followed, with a modern touch, a comparison between the methods of the Broederstroom police station and those of the crime fighters of Hill Street Blues on television.

No 3 was more modern still, introducing current marital morals, as they concern a rectangle composed of a French filmmaker, making a film at Matjiesfontein with Daisy de Lange, Koos and his wife Cora. Universal material,

like the haves versus the havenots, politics and guilty pretences, broadens the interest.

The show really came alive when Jeremy portrayed the "science" of making wine in the Transvaal against the ideas of the Cape, hidebound by tradition. It turned out to be an excellent and amusing acting performance. It also presented an entertaining, and absorbing dramatisation into comedy of some lesser-known aspects of turning grapes into good or bad wine.

This fine artist, evidently matures like wine. It is somehow particularly admirable that he has grown more and more objectively South African with the passing years. As Herman

Charles Bosman did, Jeremy Taylor looks at his surroundings without prejudice. He has succinctly captured the essence of life and the subtleties of human behaviour. In this show he projects them best, as cabaret literature, in the classic saga of the borehole and the water diviners. Hannes Steenkamp and old Solomon.

Equally satisfying is his version of the popular character, the operator at the telephone exchange in Broederstroom (near the Hartebeespoort Dam). There is high comedy and laid-back humour in her authority over the world's telephone links. It makes a touching extension of *Nommer asseblief*.

— R R W NIXON