



PSYCHIATRIST Dr Flache (Michael Bula) treats Missia (Rosemary Rambert) in *Une Folie*.

French comedy spins a stream of madcaps

WHAT do you get when you mix a psychiatrist, an engineer, a nurse, a tapestry-maker and a weird assortment of props?

Answer: Une Folie, the latest play to be performed by the Melbourne French Theatre in Carlton.

This farcical *comédie de boulevard* promises to keep audiences rolling in the aisles with its vaudevillean antics on the stage.

The play, written in 1951 by French playwright Sacha Guitry, centres on Jean-Louis, the engineer, and his wife Missia. Both are convinced the other is mad, and should consult Dr Flache, the psychiatrist.

According to Dr Flache, neither Jean-Louis nor Missia is mad, but he recommends they both take a lover to relieve the strain on their marriage.

What follows is a madcap series of goings-on, reminiscent of the 18th century's "comedies of manners".

Une Folie stars theatre manager and co-founder, Mr Michael Bula, and Brunswick actor and son of French language co-ordinator of radio station 3EA, Mr Gilbert Ducasse, as well as a number of other French and French-speaking actors.

"Although it is in French, anyone

can enjoy the play," Mr Bula said. "This is because the action lends itself very easily to visual representation."

For those who require it, a condensation of the plot, in English, is available. Many of the theatre's actors are university students, or just Francophiles with a love for the stage.

Mr Bula said the theatre was always looking for new actors, but they must be fairly proficient French speakers.

Anyone wishing to audition for future performances should contact Mr Bula on 347 8598.

Mr Bula said the theatre planned to send the production to New Caledonia later this year, under the sponsorship of the French Government.

There are also plans to perform two bilingual plays for the bicentenary, including Jean Giraudoux' *Supplement to the Voyage of Cook*.

Une Folie runs from September 2 to 5 at 7.30 pm, with matinees on Friday at 3 pm and on Saturday at 2.15 pm.

The venue is the Melbourne College of Advanced Education, 757 Swanston St, Carlton.

The cost is \$10 for adults and \$6 for full-time students, pensioners and unemployed. Bookings can be made on 560 0017 or 347 7505 (AH).