

Great sound of the 'South'

Rand Daily
Mail
Feb 13th
1970

By ADRIAN ENGLISH

FOLLOWING THE success of Springbok Stampede, a dozen or so members of the troupe broke away to form a new group, "Sound of the South." In a few short months, the group has conquered Rhodesia, Swaziland and Mozambique and now they are all set to wow Johannesburg.

This group of talented and dedicated young people, average age is 22, is bringing a new and vital concept into South African light music.

In Danie Gerber, they have one of the best composers in the country. His aim is to revolutionise Afrikaans music and lift it into world standards. Judging by the compositions I heard last night, he is going to do just that. At least 70 per cent of the material used in the two-hour show is written by the group. The rest is written by members of similar troupes in other countries.

The producer of the show, Gray Hofmeyr said: "The overseas material reflects our aims and ambitions, the training of young people for responsible positions in the future."

The music of "Sound of the South" is refreshingly original. Danie, and others, have not been afraid to experiment with tempo changes and chord progressions. They practice for 10 hours a day, six days a week,

and the result is a polished, proficient offering.

The man who plays "father" to "Sound of the South" is Nico Ferreira, a director of Springbok Stampede and the new troupe. It is on his farm at Witkoppen that the youngsters rehearse, eat and work out their stage technique.

Six glittering microphones, banked by amplifiers, guitars, drums, a piano and Danie's saxophone take up one end of a large barn. At the back is a complicated light unit, believed to be the only portable unit in the country, on which a dedicated team of young technicians make rapid adjustments.

The two soloists, 20-year-old Hamish Scott and 19-year-old Desiree Burton both have husky voices which blend together very well. When she is not singing, Desiree acts as choreographer to the group.

"Sound of the South" opens on Monday night at the Joubert Park Theatre, and the troupe hopes the show will run for two or three weeks.