Skin deep theatre

By KAREN MIDDLETON

GETTING splinters is an unpleasant but common experience. Everyone can remember digging at a finger with needles and safety pins and oozing blood, trying to get a wretched splinter out. Splinters rarely go unnoticed, and it was on this premise that a theatre group took up the name.

According to actor David Branson the Splinters theatre group, involving about 20 people from various arts backgrounds, is about finding "interesting, entertaining theatre which has something to say without being dogmatic, without taking away the honesty.

"We're off-shoots of performing groups, we get under the skin, and we're sharp," Branson said. "We take a direction which is not on the main."

Splinters is presenting a show — a "piece of performance art" — at the Northside Community Hall, Corroboree Park, Ainslie. *The Massive Love of Risk*, also known by two other names, is an almost-absurdist piece of theatre, resulting from a workshop of group members and presented with the assistance of a CYSS grant.

"It is a communication form and we are combining static visual imagery, dance, drama and music," Branson said.

The show was recently performed at the Mattara Festival in Newcastle, at the invitation of the festival organisers, and received a good response.

The Massive Love of Risk is not the first project for Splinters. Last year the group presented *This Fantastic Lake*, with the assistance of an International Youth Year youth-arts festival grant.

Branson said Splinters was applying for an Arts Council grant to assist with further productions so the group could "continue taking theatre to the community".

Beyond the current show, Splinters has no immediate plans as the members are all involved in other areas of the arts. However Branson mentioned a desire to go to Perth for the America's Cup, to perform some street theatre and entertain "all those people standing in queues".

Splinters presents *The Massive Love of Risk* at the Northside Community Hall today at 10am, and tomorrow, Friday, and Saturday at 8pm.