

# Faruk's lines make the floorboards creak

FARUK Hoosain is not your average playwright — there is no flamboyance, no chain smoking of strong continental cigarettes and certainly no eagerness to talk about himself and his work.

He just sets about quietly doing what a playwright should do — write plays. His latest, *A Question of Time*, is his second major play that opens at the Communikon Theatre on March 1.

Being a teacher by profession, he has an obvious affinity with youth and it was young people that set him firmly on his playwriting career. Last year, to channel some of the enthusiasm and interest of some of his pupils who had been suspended from school he wrote and directed *Wilson's Bug*, a satirical look at labour relations at a sweet factory.

The play proved highly successful and was extended by popular demand.

"*Wilson's Bug* was quite an experience," says Faruk. "It taught me many things. First, that people don't like to be bludgeoned on their heads about their situation. In the play I got the feel of the lines that make the floorboards creak — with identification.

"I am grateful I was able to work with Ketan Lakhani, creative director of Communikon who was always on hand to encourage and assist.

"I am personally terrified of destructive criticism but Ketan was able to show me that all criticism need not be destructive. It was his encouragement that

led to my spending my holiday working on the present script."

The script is *A Question of Time*, set in the playwright's home town of Cape Town. It tells of the problems in a family torn by racial classification and re-classification. Many and varied characters of our society affect and influence the lives of the family. It looks at loneliness, rejection, ageing, ambition and the ruthlessness of the law.

The play is being presented by Dare — an independent, non-racial, non-subsidised group of theatre people. Set up by Hoosain as a laboratory for his work, the group aims to

develop means of working in the theatre to extend the individual into the free interaction of intellect and fantasy.

"We are trying to shed some of the unnecessary mystique of the theatre.

"I think theatre has a vital role in our society that has yet to be fully realised."

Dare stands for Drama Against Repressive Establishments.

This sums up Hoosain the man and playwright — his theatre is not negative for the sake of being "anti" anything but seeks to look at the weaknesses in a society of people that must have some good and expose it critically.

