

Panel 19

PUTTING ON A SHOW

Trainers and orcas develop close relationships. Good trainers use food as positive reinforcement. They learn to read the emotions of the orcas they work with. Tricks and routines develop slowly in stages with clear repeated gestures and whistles tuned to specific orcas. Training poles and balls on ropes are raised as the jumps become higher.

Sealand of the Pacific billed itself as the wettest show in the world. It delivered. Orcas appeared to select their spraying victims with glee. Children screamed. Adults ran. And water rained down around the small tank. But there was no mistaking the power and beauty of the captive orcas themselves.