



Drama of dummies in store for passers-by



WILLIAM YEOMAN

The last time European street theatre company Royal de Luxe was in Perth it thrilled and outraged audiences with a giant fire-breathing sphinx, milk baths and full-frontal nudity in the large-scale spectacular *Le Peplum*.

Now it's filling Perth's shop windows with rebellious life-sized dummies in *Revolt of the Mannequins* — and there's a sniper on the loose.

"Actually, it's the opposite of what happens in a revolution," Royal de Luxe director Jean-Luc Courcoult said. "The sniper goes

out to kill the mannequins who don't want to revolt."

Revolt of the Mannequins is a comic strip played out in shop windows, with the scenes changing overnight in an unfolding drama. The mannequins are based on members of Royal de Luxe and all their imperfections.

"Mannequins are usually perfect," Courcoult said of his Perth International Arts Festival show, which ends on Sunday. "But here they are like normal people. That way, we can dream our own dreams. Advertising wants us to pay a lot of money to become someone else. But the hardest

thing is to become yourself."

Wherever it has been performed, *Revolt of the Mannequins* has created a sensation, with news of the show spreading across the host city by word of mouth and people discussing the latest developments in front of the windows.

"People don't always understand a story," Courcoult said. "But once they do, the imagination opens up."

As the sniper moves between windows, the mannequins are set to burst out of their retail prison — but just how that happens is up to the people of Perth to find out.



Spectacle of himself: *Revolt of the Mannequins* director Jean-Luc Courcoult hams it up in the shop window of Target in the Hay Street Mall.

Picture: Mogens Johansen