

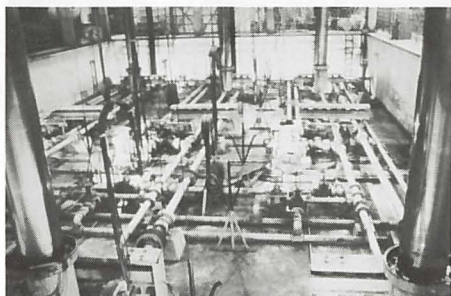
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The stage machinery of New York's Radio City Music Hall, as illustrated on our cover, was installed for the theatre's opening in 1932 and has been in continuous daily use ever since. The hydraulics continue to give trouble-free service and look set to feature in the theatre's productions for a long time to come.

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CUE

Technical Theatre Review

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May—June 1980

Wanted: More Fairy Godfathers

As the *Sunday Times'* John Peter has gloomily pointed out the total sum contributed by all of industry to the income of all our theatres in 1978-79 was barely £100,000. Or, put another way, the cost of making just one 30-second commercial and screening it, nationwide, just 5 times.

Meanwhile, as our *Autolycus* columns this month again seem to show, complete new theatrical enterprises are still being started up all over at prices for both the construction or conversion of the theatres themselves and for their equipment not much greater than this same £100,000, and the companies or sometimes just the few talented individuals who are nursing and coaxing these projects into existence are cheerfully soliciting funds. Despite, or possibly because of, the Arts Council's or a Local Authority's Seal of Approval on their fund-raising endeavours they seem to get more help locally from OAPs or Bring-and-buy-sales than they do from industry or commerce.

Is this because it is thought, within boards of directors, that an industrial company has no business to be in show business? Is it because of the company secretary's stock question: "what would the shareholders say?" To answer this, apart from 'professional' or vexatiously litigious shareholders, us widows and orphans would say what we would always say at company meetings we never knew were taking place anyway: "nothing".

In fact, we might be more enthusiastic about leaving our money in the keeping of a public company which showed at least some interest in the locality and the community in which it carried out its operations. 'Cultural sponsorship expenses', indeed, might show up as a more attractive item in its balance sheet than 'Unfunded obligations to overseas loan sharks' or whatever.

After all, did *anyone* except a politician ever hate a sponsor? Peeping slyly out from programmes, tucked away at the back of committees of management, humbly identifying himself on T-shirts or even, more boldly, on facades, fascias, and safety curtains, he seems rather a jolly fellow. Nicer, somehow, than Sir Subsidy Cut-Purse, puffing like an adder, and looking only for undertakings that will reflect his worthiness.

Give some money, we say to local business, to your friendly neighbourhood theatre. Get closer to what's happening there. Remember only that your patronage is not your passport to closer contact with naked showgirls in chains. Though, come to think of it, the customer might think it is.