

CUE

Technical Theatre Review

11

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Cover picture is the almost completed Barbican Arts Centre viewed across the ornamental lake. It shows the lakeside terrace which is also the pedestrian access to the spacious foyers. The concert hall and the theatre share these foyers on two levels, the other being below ground for vehicle access. (Photo: Peter Bloomfield)

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Dedication

Some people never learn. And thank heaven for that.

In this issue we print, with a good deal of quiet satisfaction, a small tribute to Sam Wanamaker, and to the dream he has nursed and cherished of reconstituting the 'Globe' theatre on Bankside, where – if you except certain earlier affairs in cathedral closes – the whole business of show business really got started.

We hope to make this the first of a regular series of profiles on men or women of the theatre who, by persistent application to an idea, have put up the tents the great wandering tribe of writers, composers, actors, dancers, musicians, technicians (and managements) now more or less cheerfully and sometimes unthinkingly inhabit.

Names like those of Laurence Olivier, Peter Brook, Peter Hall, Bernard Miles, Ninette de Valois, Marie Rambert, Benjamin Britten, Robert Mayer come easily to mind – we've left out all titles lest they should be thought to be 'establishment' figures. But, also lining up, in less national terms, in more specialised categories and in more eccentric spheres of operation, is a host of patiently restless people who have worked the changes in our cultural life that represent some sort of progress, onwards and upwards with the arts.

From time to time, individual enterprise may, by a fluke, coincide with government policy, the interests of commerce, the taste of audiences or the attitude of public bodies of the rentier kind. But, more often, and especially in the infancy of ideas, the individual is left to go it alone. Coping with committees, supplicating for funds, arguing with accountancy and the natural defeatism of critics, importuning audiences agog with apathy, and never, never getting home for dinner on time. The private rewards are often small – one does not envisage Sam Wanamaker laughing all the way to the Bankside. His and their satisfaction must be that, without the innovators and the 'developers' (in the nicest sense) to show us the way, a great many of us – including, of course, the staff of CUE – wouldn't know where to go in the morning.

Let's run that one up the fly-tower and see who salutes . . .