

go on to say that the two entrances on opposite sides of the ring immediately provide a decided axis. Reconciling a straight line stage to curved seating rows is thought by some to be difficult. Yet in Stratford, Ontario, to quote but one example, there is no problem.

These remarks are provoked by the notion of how far, in the face of the architectural concept, a client can possibly exercise any real influence over his building. If due to fashion the nearest an architect is prepared to concede to the circle is to lop off the corners of a square and make an octagon. Or if at another time, as with the BBC Television Centre, square studios have to be crammed into a circular format then all the consultancy and technical expertise in the world cannot satisfactorily solve the design of technical equipment to fit the left-over wedges.

It is part of Conrad Jameson's thesis that the users in the specific cases he instances—the students at Keele University—are liable to be completely misleading when market researched, even with the completed building standing there before or around them. If this is so then it would seem to be absolutely impossible to find out what they want when drawing up the brief.

With a theatre the question even arises who is the user? We know in these three theatres under examination who the client is, but who is the user? Is it the audience or is it the people putting on the show? Since the success of the enterprise will depend on both these users liking the building, it is a sad fact that their desires

may be diametrically opposed—that all too often the people putting on the show are only concerned with putting on the show.

The intriguing thing is the audience end but I know of little market research on what they like—inside the auditorium or outside it. For example, do they prefer continental seating in long rows or a number of intersecting gangways? In the front of house—to come back to the Keele case—do they want wide open spaces or small confined spaces? Should there be a few large bars or a lot of small ones? Are they happier in high rooms or low ones? Do they like to look out when in and do they mind being looked at when in—in other words, mind being made into an exhibition for the city in a crystal box, as is the case in some German theatres?

Is the theatre a meeting place or is it something you go to quite privately? Do you want your acquaintances to see who you are with? Do you want a bright light or cosy little puddles? What does concrete make you think of?

It is said the audience should be crowded together and aware of each other but who says so and on what is the opinion based? Are the massed bands of those spotlights as exciting a part of the theatre for them as for ourselves? How near to the actors do they like to be? Do they want to sit in the "side" seats which the thrust form so plentifully supplies? What really ranks as the best seat—but there we move out of speculation into certainty.