



Young Vic Theatre. Lighting grid, access only from below by Tallescope. Thrust stage in low position.

Cutting your Shape to Suit your Show

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People in glass houses shouldn't throw stones and, as a corollary, those wishing to throw stones—or ideas—about should look for an appropriate place to do it. Such a place in Frank Dunlop's eyes was an "instant warehouse", constructed in the absence of the real thing, as a home for the experimental, the unpretentious and the entertaining to knock about in until something gelled.

There seem to be two kinds of theatre built today. The first is a building erected by a committee—often a civic authority—to embody the abstract ideals of a society. The argument runs something like this. We

believe in aesthetics; drama is an art form; therefore we will build a theatre. Now in an earlier century this would have been a cathedral—not because one was needed to worship God or to further religion but because it befitted a town to have such a thing. Both these "temples" pose two questions: what happens therein and who goes there to see it?

The other sort of theatre is the servant to a single driving spirit. It is now over twelve months since the Young Vic Theatre opened in the Cut with aims not altogether dissimilar from those of a highly religious Emma Cons in the Old Victoria