

currently investigated, but it is obviously quite different—less predictable perhaps—from that at his previous home in the Liverpool Everyman.

Clearly the hard benches do not matter (the shows are not over-long—an hour has not been unknown) and most of the audience seem prepared to wait in queues, with only a modicum of grumbling, for both coffee and toilets in the interval. What does matter to these people and therefore what the Young Vic believes it needs, is, say, continental food or the ability to stay late talking over coffee or a drink—perhaps too the freedom they have to turn the coffee bar into a local club. Acceptance of these values by such a management is essential. Just the sight of the juke box can make the kids faces soften and their eyes light up as suspicion slowly gives way to glee. The gaudy doorway, the tiny foyer (auditorium right, coffee left, toilets straight on)—are eye-catching and unassuming. The company is aware that it is an intruder in the Cut. It is thrust into that society, into a real street where people work and live, and is a trifle incongruous. Just as the actors “thrust” on the stage must be aware of the reactions that come back so the whole theatre is sensitized by the hostility and friendliness that come from its locale. Only in its price (40p a seat) is it making real concessions to that public though many of its items are blatant popular theatre—catching attention by any and every means, and steering away as much as possible from “the academic” on the one hand and from “plush and velvet” on the other.

I am not trying to imply that the Young Vic has universal appeal. One member of the audience in his twenties found it had its own pretensions:

“It has this smell that says, ‘You are here for the drama; you are devoted to the drama—so you sit on benches and have a funny-shaped coffee bar.’ Perhaps it’s something to do with its being a thrust stage.”

If that is how you feel about this sort of place then stay away. This theatre is not for you. The Young Vic speaks out against temples not as such but because they use up

on trimmings or irrelevancies the money that could have built three simpler, cheaper theatres in a vicinity, each with its individual appeal—each doing just one of the things that theatre does well.

Just what these things are may, they feel, emerge in the next twenty years. Since the days of Shakespeare theatre has been lost to the ordinary man and become a luxury commodity with seats at £2.50 a go. It is



*Wilson Bros. Butcher—business not as usual.*

now fighting to combat not the material but the sureness of touch in the other two communication media. Films have recently realised themselves as a director’s media. Television is the medium for current affairs, for quickly and widely disseminating information and reactions. Theatre can be seen as fulfilling to some extent the role of a magazine—one which provokes—which comments, at leisure and in depth, on what the “dailies” or “the tele” raised over the past weeks or years.

Dunlop tries to make his work energetic and wholehearted and his *Scapino* is a