



Set and costume designs for Bonne Bouche 1952. By kind permission of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.



were Diaghilev, Frank Lloyd Wright and are Franco Zeffirelli and Hal Prince. 'You have to keep your eyes on everything - in person,' he says. 'Too many disasters come about by just letting people get on with it.' Hence he much prefers working, say in the everything-under-one-roof conditions at Glynbourne to working in the 'we always have that done at Whitechapel' conditions of Covent Garden. He prefers, in fact, a civilised approach to production, and to his

part in it. 'I'm probably old-fashioned,' he says. 'It isn't generally recognised that the Victorian era went on well into the twenties, and, in my part of London (the splendid arrangements of squares, crescents, and gardens North of Holland Park Avenue) into the thirties. I think audiences are a bit old-fashioned, too. . .'. Well, maybe. But, meanwhile, the Littlehamptons, Maudie and Willie, who, in the name of egalitarianism, should have died off years ago, are

alive and well and sneering, and can be found every morning in your 'Daily Express'.

'That's really,' Osbert Lancaster says 'why I don't manage to get to the theatre as much as I once did. When I'm through with the Littlehamptons, I need a nourishing drink. And when I've had that I need a proper meal. And when I've had that . . . well, usually, the theatres are closed'.