

of materials and sources of interference are two such. The authors are masters of the useful one-liner, well-employed in dealing with microphone floor stands or carbon tetrachloride. Their recommendations concerning onstage equipment are simple and conclusive, and the three pages on magnetic tape recording are an amazingly concise guide to good practice, dealing with the big issues in the right order.

The last two chapters, *Organization and Planning* and *Installation, Operation and*

*Maintenance* are a wonderfully methodical statement of the case for method. It is notable that the administrative order advocated by the authors is directly related to the artistic order which is their, and our business; and characteristic that the very last pages are a series of step-by-step routine equipment checks which are models of clarity, the outcome of hours of work and worth in themselves the price, admittedly high, of the book.

I have documented my objections to the

equipment section of the book in some detail in order to make them clear. I should make it clear also that I attach no great importance to them when they are set beside the major, dateless, part of the book. They can, in any case, be met when the book is next republished in another twenty years' time. I envy very much those about to start their first reading of this radical, far-sighted, elementary, exciting and good-tempered guide to our work in theatres.

## 'Whither Student Drama?' and, of course, whether

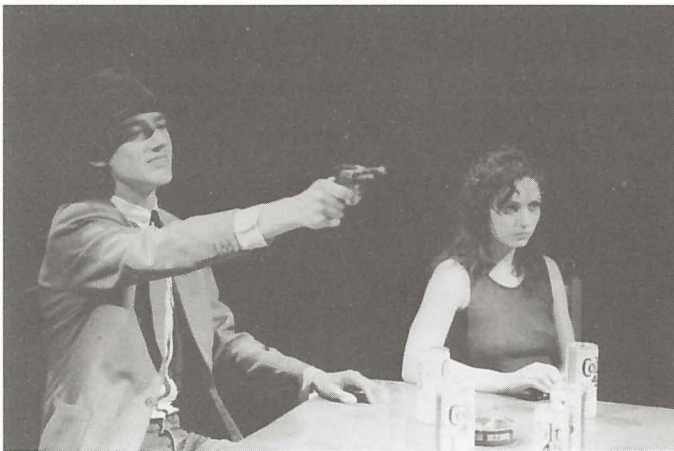
With 19 productions (it seemed like more) staged in a fortnight, a vast fluttering of fringe activities (including George Melly and the Abracadabra Fools Theatre Company which stopped the Tottenham Court Road traffic *twice*), the London Students Drama Festival was obviously a spiritual success and deserves to run and run. Despite the financial support it got from quite a few enlightened sponsors (us, for example) it probably won't turn out to have been yer actual box-office success, but that's show business. One reason for this says Eric Graham, who shared the concep-

tion and direction of the Festival with Graham Frost and Jane Gibbings (which should qualify them for some sort of post-graduate degree in its own right) must be that, with every night, most afternoons and some mornings being a *first* night, the paying public only found out what was worth going to when it had already closed and they couldn't; which doesn't seem too different, as it happens, from life in the grown-up theatre.

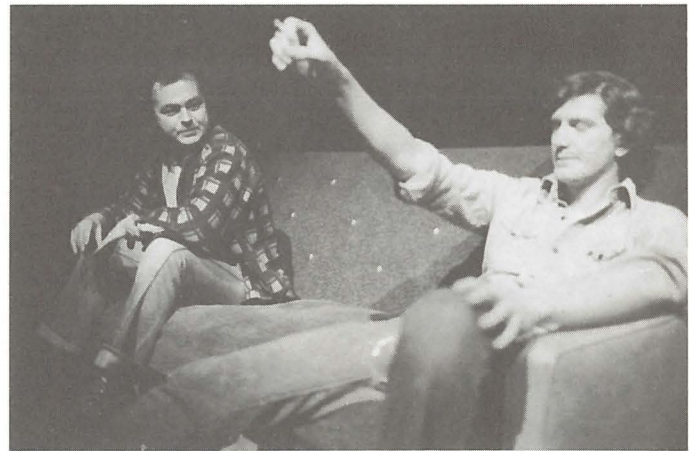
The seminarial side of things – sessions on directing, characterisation, movement, voice, technique, lighting (Nick Firth),

sound (John Leonard) etc. – seems, as is often the case, to have raised hopes and fantasies beyond the dreams of managements. It is heady stuff, after all, to have Charles Marowitz demand of you that you play Richard III *and* Hamlet *and* Romeo all in one speech, or that you adjust your emotions to the *Ring* speech from *Twelfth Night* while running on the spot.

But Eric Graham and his colleagues are nothing but pragmatic in their views on how those students who graduate into a theatrical world should be prepared to practise, insisting stoutly that there need be no



*On the Road*, Visions of Cody, adaptation of Jack Kerouac's novel. Brad Monj who won the CUE Lighting Award is far right.



*Circus of Circus*, Concorde and the Pope by Pierre Hollins.



*Stoned Tortoise*, Out of the Flying Pan, by David Campton.