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Our cover picture shows the Fashion Fair at the Port de Versailles exhibition centre. If we cannot teach Paris anything very much about fashions in clothes we can still surprise them when it comes to putting the show on and lighting it. In this issue Richard Andrews describes working visits to Paris and Dusseldorf as well as a 20 week tour in Britain launching the new Vauxhalls.

CUE

Technical Theatre Review

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Quid pro quo

'Nice to see that Lord Goodman has weighed in as Chairman of the Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts, a body formed, presumably, to find out on behalf of commercial interests what is the quid for their quo, and, if not, why not? We hope they won't want to do for the theatre what Kerry Packer did for cricket, 'though, come to think of it, *some* theatres and quite a lot of 'leisure complexes' in civic centres do look as if they could do with a good dose of floodlighting. One thing AFBSOTA might question administrators about is under-utilisation of good selling-space. Apart from schools, it is hard to think of buildings less inhabited for most of the 24 hours than your average theatre. And it can't make sense, in commercial terms, to have all that square-footage of stage and back-stage and front-of-house, and all that excellent equipment, just standing there, if the only living things around most of the time are the caretaker and his cat and the lady in that depressing confessional labelled 'advance booking'.

The Business Sponsors etc. will think, surely, of conventions, seminars, shareholders' meetings and salesmen's symposia - too often still held in hotels where the 'full conference facilities' promised usually consist only of a set of spindly, gold-painted chairs kept in an annexe to the ballroom, and a Carousel is expected to manage a 70-foot throw under a ceiling 8 feet high.

But perhaps they will also suggest trade-fairs in foyers, music in the mezzanines, Bingo-mornings in the balconies, and on Sundays, revival meetings on the revolves.

It could be good business. It might be fun.

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