

representative of many of the editors of other OISTT journals in that it is not his principal job. Indeed, Herr Grosser is technical director of the Munich Opera House, as well as the reigning president of OISTT itself, though I should point out that the headquarters of that organisation are in Prague.

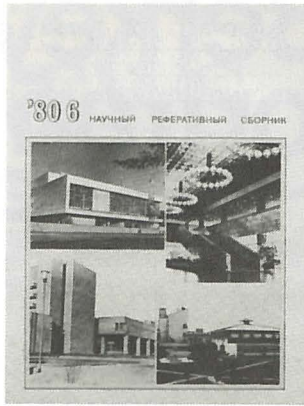
What do we find in BTR, aside from the fact that it is only printed in German? Not surprisingly there are detailed descriptions, plans and all the rest, of new theatres. There seems lately to have been a decline in the rate of new theatre building even in Germany so an exceptional multi-purpose hall will turn up or something rather special from outside, like our own National theatre. Productions of outstanding merit, or at any rate of special technical interest, will be featured. New technical equipment is reviewed or rather described. It would appear that commercial firms' own



specifications and descriptions are used or such articles are written by a believer. This is a problem not just for BTR: it is difficult to review a new spotlight, for example, without a real chance for a reviewer to make some proper comparative tests. The American IES has for well over twenty years a recommended practice for doing this and there is now an attempt to up-date the document and under the auspices of CIE (a lighting equivalent of OISTT but founded in 1929) committee TC 4.3 get it international recognition. A brave foray, especially as it has been so largely neglected in the States, the country of origin.

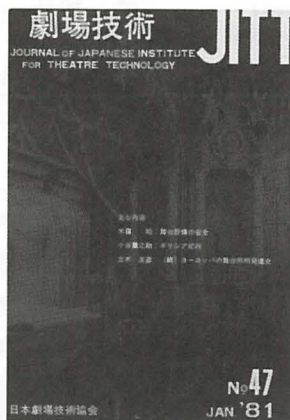
TC 4.3 formed a kind of epilogue to a series of international goings-on in London which included two days of *Showlight* in the new Barbican conference centre and the OISTT meeting this article is supposed to be about. Back to BTR, it does carry occasional articles on what may be described as the philosophy behind the various forms of theatre or presentation but in the main it is a journal of technology. For many years now there has been an excellent bibliography of books and the latest issues of all journals, occupying four or five back pages of each two-monthly issue.

The East German *Bauten der Kultur* is obviously more preoccupied with theatre architecture. When at last the refurbished Semper Dresden Oper is completed, this is where the architectural facilities will be well illustrated with the backstage elevators and all the rest taking second place. In BTR the



reverse would apply. Having once been described as 'Prodigieux animateur' as part of a tribute to my own work, in terms only publications in the French language can conjure up, I would like to have covered some more of the national journals but this would be out of proportion since there is a whole range of these printed in characters which do not provide me with the slightest clue as to what is going on. I happened to recognise that the Hungarian journal is issuing detail information sheets on each of its theatres as a pull-out supplement complete with scale plans. A model, if overwhelming, exercise for all of us.

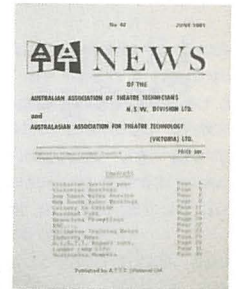
Nothing illustrates better the general atmosphere of amateur-professionalism within which most of the OISTT journals are put together. The cost of translation is



astronomical and in any case theatre technology uses a special language. Thus articles of mine which have appeared in BTR have been translated by Helmut Grosser himself and an excellent job he makes of it, according to my wife. But then as he puts it: he *knows* me! In the case of the couple which have appeared in the journal of the Japanese Institute of Theatre Technology, the translations were done by Sadahiko Tachiki the director of their National theatre. It is an established principle that members of OISTT can publish each other's articles without going through the rigmarole of obtaining permission and there is certainly little point in submitting proofs in most cases. All this can speed things somewhat. The Hungarians have a nice way of doing these reprints, whether full or summary, as they reproduce the particular journal's logo or

characteristic way of printing its name at the head of each. For example; 'Sightline' heads an article on 'A 19.sz.-i Színházak Megóvások Indítóokai' by a certain 'I. Mackintosh' in 'Színház-technikai Fórum' 1980 december'. The article had appeared in the ABTT's journal *Sightline* exactly one year earlier.

The OISTT meeting would have liked summaries of the articles in each issue of any country's journal to appear in two or three languages. This was always the practice with the old *Tab*s but then my wife could do the German and my secretary the



French, so there was little delay (and expense!) involved. I think the most we can hope to do at first is to ensure that short summaries in each journal's own language do appear, so at least the nature of articles not clear from any illustrations can be sampled at minimum translation effort and expense.

I am convinced that it is important to provide bound copies or decent binders. En passant, may I recommend the CUE ones. Exercise a little patience and you really do get a near-equivalent of a proper case-bound book. There are none of those messy wires of other systems. Of course a good



index is a sine qua non. After this brilliant display of linguistic virtuosity, I shall conclude by pointing out that whatever we write today, no matter how ephemeral, is the solid archive of tomorrow and if we stay around long enough we may be only too glad to consult it ourselves. How long is long? In the case of some technology ten years is a long time. It is a sobering thought that this trivial article improvised directly upon my typewriter – itself doomed before long to be replaced by a word processor – may have a greater power to survive than the latest and most expensive of stage lighting or sound or flying control systems.