

Sir John returns to the west end stage in the spring but we have lost that great actor, dramatist and director from the same golden age, **EMLYN WILLIAMS**. It is good to find the Theatre Museum marking his death with a showcase of memorabilia in the portrait gallery. Hopefully this is the start of their marking events by an appropriate mini-display. It would be particularly useful to have small retrospectives on the occasion of major revivals.

Sir John Gielgud is patron of the **LINBURY PRIZE FOR STAGE DESIGN** whose winners are on exhibition in the Irving Gallery until 31st January. The purpose of this new award, sponsored by the Sainsbury family's Linbury Trust, is to encourage young designers in a very positive way by using an open competition to select a small group for exhibition. To be thus selected is potentially an enormous career boost with the opportunity of having work seen under such auspicious circumstances by producing managements, directors and choreographers. And selection carries the added possibility of qualifying for a prize. The first prize of £10,000 and the two additional ones of £5,000 and £3,000 are quite chunky sums in relation to the fees normally available to a young designer.

The competition was open to those working in stage design including students, and artists working in the decorative, applied and fine arts. Those entering the competition were asked to produce preliminary drawings and plans of set and costume designs for drama (*Camino Real*, *The Seagull* or *The Tempest*), opera (*The Turn of the Screw* or *La Traviata*) or dance (*Daphnis & Chloe* or *A Midsummer Night's Dream*). The successful entrants were then commissioned to make models of their designs and given help with the costs.

The Keeper of the Theatre Museum (Alexander Schouvaloff) chaired a judging panel of Designers (Nicholas Georgiadas, Yolanda Sonnabend & Carl Toms) and Directors (Di Trevis and James Roose-Evans).

The prizes went to Patrick Connellan, Sarah Ashpole and Demetra Maraslis Hersey. The other winners on exhibition were Luca Antonucci, Hilary Baxter, Paul Bonomini, Damian Doran, Charles Edwards, Jacqueline Gunn, Jane Heather, Sonja Klaus, John Knowles, Charles Maude, Paul Minter, Ruari Murchison, David Neat, Andrew Papademitri, Nigel Prabhavalkar, Shaun Ray, Frank Rowland, Dee Sidwell, Maxim Stewart, Anthony Ward and Colin Whitley.

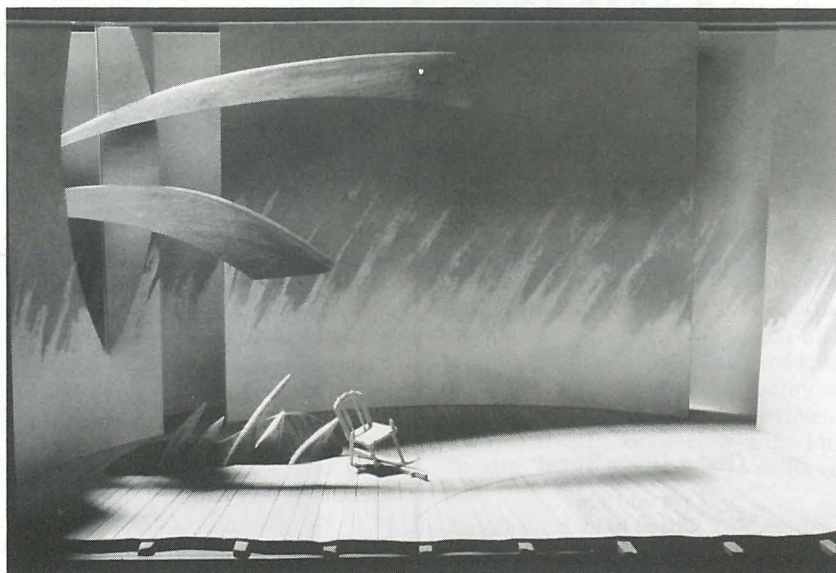
On the evidence of this exhibition, how fares the visual future for our theatre? Very healthy indeed, I'd say. I welcome the wide range of styles and the quality of imagination. I am relieved by the increasing use of paint. There is a flight from minimalism but the sets remain free from clutter. I note the growth of story boarding in exhibitions and



Anthony Ward's design for Camino Real — one of the 24 designs selected for the Linbury exhibition.



Dee Sidwell's design for The Tempest.



Another design for The Tempest by David Neat.