



Stratford-upon-Avon: Model of 1972 arrangements showing auditorium with added balconies.

with it. And so it comes about that the third stage-lighting installation of the present theatre is being completed as I write.

The auditorium architecture now provides two lighting bridges (Nos. 1 and 2) in a new ceiling over the forestage. In the main ceiling there is a lighting bridge (No. 3) right across and a smaller one (No. 4) farther back which houses follow spots. There are now vertical side-lighting positions to correspond with the No. 1, 2 and 3 overhead bridges.

The installation requires 240 dimmers, and Strand Electric as Rank Strand, come for the third time with their latest in control. The theatre also has changed its name over the years, the *Memorial* having vanished in favour of *Royal*.

It is a feature of travel along a canal that one seldom has any doubt where one is going. The crossways and by-ways to get lost in are few indeed. It is quite otherwise with theatre design. The target of theatre design is audience involvement but what on earth does that mean? What will involve some will alienate others while a drop of deliberate alienation can sometimes produce even greater involvement. Then again the passage of time can make great changes in what is expected in our staging

of what, in the case of Shakespeare at any rate, are the same plays. We do not use less scenery than was the case with, for example Beerbohm Tree's productions at Her Majesty's; it is a different sort of scenery. Some would say we use more scenery. Certainly at Stratford before the war all scenery remained behind the proscenium and in consequence, however large, was small. Since 1951 the forestage and the proscenium itself have changed their scenic character for each season.

One might assume this was an attempt to bridge the gap between the enclosed stage and the audience, were it not for the fact that where "one room" theatres have been built, designed as really open stages from the first, scenery nevertheless proliferates—and of necessity it is large in scale.

In tracing the history of this particular theatre it is necessary to try to disentangle genuine attempts to overcome the defective actor/audience relationship of the 1932 building from those changes brought about by fashion and sheer love of change.

After all Peter Brook in the Stratford context writes* "About five years, we agree, is the most a particular staging can live."

*"The Empty Space". Peter Brook. MacGibbon & Kee, London. 1968.