

Lowry at centre stage

By IFAN PAYNE

REVIEW

THE centre of attraction in Northern Ballet Theatre's performances currently being presented in Cardiff's newly renovated New Theatre is Gillian Lynne's *A Simple Man*.

This dance, originally conceived for television, is an evocation of the life and art of the painter L. S. Lowry, a man who apparently did not dare to eat a peach but who clearly heard the mermaids singing each to each.

In many ways *A Simple Man* is reminiscent of Ashton's equally picturesque

Nimrod, but without that latter's searing emotionality.

What *A Simple Man* does have is a brilliant series of stage pictures that are filled with distinctive and wonderfully portrayed characters.

Of its kind, this is a thoroughly engaging ballet — for Gillian Lynne has created an engrossing theatre work of kaleidoscopic virtuosity.

Though Jaques Tati should sue for plagiarism and Carl Davis's music always sounds like someone else and lacks an identifiable

personality of its own.

Of the two other works on the programme there were more painterly poses in *Memoire Imaginaire* which presented two imaginary incidents in

the life of the French Impressionist Berthe Morisot.

Finally, *Suite Italienne*, choreographed by Amedeo Amodio contained an uneasy mixture of styles