

Evening of dance at Sherman

Testimony to dancers' commitment

By IFAN PAYNE

REVIEWS

OSTENSIBLY the evening of dance presented by Diversions at the Sherman Theatre on Saturday evening was an opportunity to appreciate the skills of the students of their two-week summer school.

The evening also featured a collaboration between Diversions and the even younger students of Rubicon's summer vacation course for 12 to 14-year-olds.

In both cases the resulting delightful performances were testimony to the range of talents and commitment of these embryonic and pubescent dancers.

But even more, the evening was a triumph for the skills of the professional members of Diversions who provided inspired and appropriate choreographies for all of the dancers whatever their ability.

In an art form that can often take itself too seriously, the whimsical inventiveness — indeed, balletic wit — which is so distinctive an aspect of the work of Diversions, is an expression of these dancers' sheer delight in the joy of movement and

therefore, through their art, of life.

The company also has an ear for a consistently stimulating selection of music.

All of this was most movingly communicated during the final *Journey*, the only dance performed by the professional dancers themselves.

Ravishingly choreographed by Ann Sholem, who's *Lava Landscapes* contained some equally stunning images.

The movements of *Journey* are poignantly grateful and heartbreakingly beautiful for the aura of serenity which suffuses this subtle set of variations on stylised, distilled, orientalist questing.

For those who appreciate theatrical, as well as the dance arts, the name Diversions is by now a guarantee of artistic quality and it is a pleasure to know that at a time when some artistic endeavours receive millions of pounds in subsidies and cry poverty, this company which operates on a virtual shoestring is so bountiful, in artistic terms, in enriching the lives of so many young people.