

Dramatic, wistful and funny

By IFAN PAYNE

IT IS a pretty chancy thing to be lucky enough to see a play as entertaining, yet as gently thought provoking, as *Victoria, A Most Unusual Woman* now at the Sherman Theatre.

Britain remains a basically sexist country, as a glance at the articles surrounding this one will probably indicate, but the publicity for *Victoria* is unfortunate since this play is not a mere feminist polemic nor a contemporary theatre in the raw.

Rather, writer George Pensotti has created an engrossing comedy about a person, who happens to be a woman, who is unusual only in wanting to be regarded as being that person rather than as being stereotyped by the male of the species.

Victoria's life unfolds in one continuous flashback as the three supporting actors slide in and out of a variety of roles; characters in the vividly displayed kaleidoscopic events from the memory of a dying woman.

There is no dialectic or propaganda here, only four very strong performances with the unhysterical, quiet strength of Alison Griffin notable in the title role, and David Dowse catching the eye as her second husband.