

Monday June 18

WESTERN MAIL — THE QUALITY VOICE OF WALES

Meltdown, Chapter Arts Theatre

Homegrown talents showcase

By IFAN PAYNE

REVIEW

IF all the musical events that you attend take place in The Hayes then you must get the impression that the only musicians worth hearing are in the main imported from outside and often from other countries.

If on the other hand you hear your music in Canton or in Senghenydd Road, or at St Donat's, you will know that this region is filled with highly skilled first-rate performers.

Nowhere was this fact made clearer than in Chapter's Meltdown Showcase.

Meltdown is the regular Sunday evening performance by local musicians in Chapter's bar but this Sunday the show moved upstairs to the theatre to display the broad range of local talent.

And talent there is in abundance.

The Song is the renamed Mally and Wiggy duo and pastoral new wave is as good a way as any to describe the style of its self-presented sequence of ballads.

What really catches the ear though is the beautifully vague guitar accompaniments. Here, as in the gently-rhythmic, lovely accompaniment to Marilyn, is playing of the highest order.

It was good also to hear Departure Lounge so soon again because it pro-

vides me with the opportunity to comment in particular on the striking song *Childhood Is Over*. This is a powerful mixture of simple playground melody, pounding rhythms and a threatening sense of adulthood.

This sense of threat — the post-punk aspect of Howard and Eberly's music — comes to the fore in several of their songs describing contemporary urban terror, *Sisters a dyke*, *Mamma's on speed* . . .

That sense of violence which lies beneath the surface of their songs is given best expression in *Thank you Mrs Thatcher*, which generated the most audience participation and which dealt with those Third World aspects of contemporary British life.

HUMOUR

The humour for the evening was provided by the wonderfully inept Balls Up, a juggling group from the aptly named No Fit State Circus.

Meltdown move outside for an extended session from 1pm to 5pm on Saturday, June 21, in Chapter's relandscaped front garden.

Don't miss it, unless you want to remain ignorant of the wealth of musical talent which does not have to be brought in from other regions at high cost.