

Urdd Cwmni Theatr, Sherman Theatre

Youth display strong talent

By IFAN PAYNE

REVIEWS

CWMNI Theatr Cenedlaethol Urdd Gobaith Cymru has been touring Wales with *Dan y Wenallt*, and I saw the performance in the Sherman Theatre at the start of the tour.

This company comprises, almost entirely, older schoolchildren and the play with which this national youth organisation has been touring Wales is T James Jones's translation of Dylan Thomas's *Under Milk Wood*.

In a radio play a small cast can produce the many voices with relative ease but a more literal staging of the type produced here by Emyr Edwards requires a vast cast — in this case 28 young actors who, among them, portrayed more than 70 characters and produced some striking moments, like the rocking sea of human bodies and the ticking of human clocks.

The production suggested that the whole action of the play is a

dream by Captain Cat, who also represented the audience who were thus invited to view the play as a figment of their own imagination.

Within this framework there were many telling moments in the staging, such as the ringing of cash register "bells"; the use of scores of hats and caps to represent character changes and the relatively few, but well devised, lighting cues.

All in all, then, a successful evening for this young and amateur cast and crew and an important one for the number of young actors — Iestyn Llwyd and Amanda Rees, as well as the two narrators, Huw Llewellyn and Lynda Harding, prominent among them.

They displayed a basis of acting talent which promised that companies like Bara Caus, Brith Gof, Cwmi Cyfri Tri and S4C TV will be able to maintain their high standards for years to come.