

Regional Theatre

Worthing theatre in need of cash

WORTHING CONNAUGHT Theatre has introduced economic strictures in an effort to stabilise its finances.

The theatre's general manager, Makki Marseilles, told a recent press conference that the first major cut-back in the Connaught's plans was the cancellation of "The Merchant of Venice," a further threat being posed in the shape of a possible abandonment of its popular Theatre in Education tour.

"Although the 12 per cent increase

in grant from the Arts Council and the £11,000 grant from the local authority has been approved it does not match the level of grant anticipated," said Makki Marseilles. "The theatre either needs a special grant or an industrial sponsor to be able to mount Shakespeare."

The overall scene was not one of unrelieved gloom, however, and the Children's Theatre and the Sunday lunch-time jazz sessions were proving to be a great success.

Marseilles reminded reporters that commercial enterprises had shown "unwavering confidence" in the work of the Worthing Connaught and explained that in 1980 the theatre would stage a new musical, "Schweik," starring Don Estelle, which was scheduled for the West End.

Another commercially-sponsored production was "Chekhov in Love" and this, too, was destined for the West End and Broadway.

"What we must do is to impress on the grant-aiding bodies the need for a larger subsidy towards the kind of work we do," said Marseilles, "and, secondly, to continue pressure with the rest of our programme in order to attract larger audiences to the Connaught."

Perspectives on tour



WORTHING ACTOR, musician and screenwriter RAYMOND THOMPSON has added another string to his bow, that of novelist, the book, written in collaboration with Treve Daly, being "The Number To Call Is . . .", which is based on his American TV play based on the take-over of a television station by middle-class revolutionaries. He returned to this country in 1976 after 12 years in Canada, where he appeared with the Second City Theatre Company and the Muskoka Summer Theatre and is now anxious to return to acting following his writing successes.

PERSPECTIVES Theatre Company, based at the Cresset, Peterborough, is currently touring the city's schools with two new programmes. One, "Spaces", is based around the ideas of Dr Edward de Bono and is designed to encourage children to think creatively and inventively. The other, for juniors, is "Nice Enough to Eat" and is concerned with the problem of food supply.

From July 2 to 13, Perspectives will be touring a show specially devised for severely mentally handicapped children.



Wesker premiere

playing at the new Wireworks Theatre, next to the Festival Fringe box office — one of the best sites in the city.

Their programme will also include three British premieres — two of plays by American comedian Woody Allen, and one by Czech dissident Pavel Kohout. The Allen double bill is "God" and "Death", and the Czech play is "Poor Murderer", which has been seen in Europe and America, but not this country. In addition, Revunions will be presenting their annual revue, "Live Wire", produced by Nick Chilvers and Timothy Turnbull, who will also be giving their own show as Company Two.

ARNOLD WESKER'S controversial play "The Journalists" is to be given its first major British production at the Edinburgh Festival this year by Bristol Revunions, the revue company from Bristol University.

"The Journalists" was written after Wesker worked at *The Sunday Times* in 1971 to observe the newspaper industry at first hand. The option on the play was given to the RSC but it was never performed and Wesker is now involved in legal action against the company.

Since then it has had only one amateur performance at Coventry, leaving Bristol Revunions to give it a first national showing in the spotlight of the Edinburgh Festival. Revunions director Chris Date said: "This highly ambitious project should prove one of the main events of this year's Festival."

Because the play requires a cast of 33, Revunions are hoping to attract a wider range of players than usual for their visit to Edinburgh. They will be

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THE ARTS Theatre at Cambridge has received another financial boost. It has been granted £12,750 by the Eastern Arts Association.

The theatre, which lost £70,000 last year, was recently given a grant of £10,000 by the city council to help it over its cash crisis.

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