

# When anger becomes all the rage

IT IS almost exactly 55 years since *Look Back In Anger* exploded onto the stage of the Royal Court Theatre and changed the face of British theatre.

Gradually, the French widows and elegant middle classes were shouldered off stage by John Osborne and his sleazy set with an ironing board at centre stage and a



*Look Back In Anger*

working class anti hero.

Jimmy Porter is a home grown Hamlet, the product of a 'white tile' university, articulate and bitter.

The 'angry young man' had arrived.

At the Mill Theatre last Saturday the Creative Cow Company gave us their version of this groundbreaking play. It's not easy viewing. Jimmy Porter batters us into submission with self absorbed raging and verbal cruelty.

His command of language takes you by the scruff of the neck and makes you listen to his splenetic misogyny and unrighteous indignation.

Piers Wehrner gives a powerfully physical performance full of bitter polemic.

Alison, his wife, (Katherine Senior) may seem like a passive punch ball, but her passivity is in itself a weapon that exacerbates his rage.

'All I want', she sighs, 'is a little peace'. And when his ici-

cle sharp words are augmented by his unskilful trumpet playing, it was difficult not to feel the same way.

Jimmy's friend and lodger, Cliff (Jonathan Parrish) gives an admirably understated performance.

He's the no man's land in the battlefield of the Porters' marriage, a voice of sanity in the wilderness of rancour.

You come away bruised, battered and bewildered, but somehow stimulated and excited.

In the small confines of the Mill Theatre it was all so real that you felt like invading the acting area and confronting the nightmare that is Jimmy. Your ears are ringing, you feel drained, but you've certainly been involved and engaged.

It's on tour until the middle of June and your nearest venue would be at The Lighthouse Poole on June 16, 17 and 18.

Margaret Burgess