

THEATRE ARCHIVE PROJECT

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Connie Williams – interview transcript

Interviewer: Eleanor Purkiss

15 December 2006

Theatre-goer. A Taste of Honey; censorship; Look Back in Anger; modern writing; musicals; regional theatre; Sheffield theatres, The Crucible, the Lyceum and the Playhouse; theatre design; theatre-going.

EP: OK, so you've been a theatregoer in Sheffield for quite a few years now; how would you say theatregoing has changed during this time?

CW: Well it's become more up-to-date, and more modern. I mean, there wasn't the musicals that we have now. In the days that I first went, in the late 1930s – Harry Hanson's Court Players - there were more plays than musicals then... and then there was the war years. After that in the forties... late forties that would be, I went to the Sheffield Playhouse for the Sheffield Repertory Company, they were really all plays. I enjoyed the drama very much, I do like that.

EP: Would you say the audiences have changed too; would you say in the 1950s there were more middle class people, or more of a variety?

CW: More middle class I think, yes, in those days.

EP: So these days probably people of all ages go more would you say; there is more of a variety of people?

CW: Yes, yes that's right, there are definitely...

EP: Which theatre would you say you've most enjoyed attending? Would you say maybe the old Sheffield Playhouse...

CW: [interrupting enthusiastically] Yes! The old Sheffield Playhouse definitely! Because - a regular - every fortnight there, you know. And there was always a lovely variety of plays. And a lot of the actors there - and actresses - have been on the television. Not recently, because they're getting older now, but a lot of them I recognise from those days... like, you know, Keith Barron and Ella Atkinson and Don Carson, I can remember a lot of them. And it's good to see them now, you know, it takes you back...

EP: Yeah, you can see how far they've come, yeah.

CW: Yes it takes me back to those days. I just loved going in those days, yes...

EP: Would you say there was a better atmosphere there than The Crucible maybe?

CW: Well I think so, I think so. Being a regular, you knew people who were there then very often.

EP: Yeah, exactly, so there was more of a community kind of feel I suppose.

CW: Yes it was, definitely.

EP: So would you say Sheffield was quite significant as a place of regional theatre?

CW: Well yes, yes I would. Yes I think so.

EP: What do you think of the stage at The Crucible? The main stage - the way that it's kind of... It's quite different really, isn't it, to...

CW: Well it is different from when we first went... at first I didn't take to it at all. I wanted the curtains, and the...

EP: Yeah, exactly, the traditional kind of...

CW: But I've adjusted to that now. But I much prefer the older... you know like the Lyceum, really.

EP: Which plays would you say you've especially enjoyed in all your time of theatre going?

CW: Oh, gosh! I don't really know. Drama, really, rather than... I don't know, I can't remember any special ones that I really... just so many of them, hundreds of them... When I was younger, I preferred the [?] I think, to musicals, but now I'm getting into, you know musicals more, like Phantom and all those... What's the other ones called, can't remember now...

EP: So how often did you go to the theatre? In the fifties did you go more often than you went now, would you say?

CW: Oh yes. We went every fortnight, because they did a different - they were rehearsing one, and doing another one... all the time in the old days. I don't think they could do it now, but of course they're more elaborate and take much more producing and everything, don't they, now.

EP: So did they have the same, kind of, actors and actresses in every play, every fortnight, so you got to know the...

CW: Yes, yes that's right. Mostly you knew them, there were some brought in, you know, special occasions, but you - we knew most of them.

EP: Have there been any plays that you've not liked so much, any plays you've not really enjoyed?

CW: Well I don't like... In *The Crucible*, one or two I didn't like - Tom Stoppard is not my favourite, and Joe Orton... Chekhov... I'm not really into those as much as some of the lighter drama ones.

EP: Did you watch Joe Orton's *Loot*, or not?

CW: No, I think I only went to... *The Egg* was it? Something... *An Egg*? Can't remember what it was called, but no, I didn't like that kind of humour.

EP: Would you say there have been quite a few contemporary, innovative plays put on in Sheffield? For example, maybe like *Waiting for Godot*, have you been to see...?

CW: Well yes, that's a while ago since that was on though...[inaudible] Yes, there have been quite a few... yes.

EP: How would you say audiences have reacted to these plays? Do you think that they like these kind of plays, or...?

CW: I don't think as much as the...

EP: As the traditional kind of ones?

CW: No, I don't think so, but that's my opinion, I mean, maybe somebody...

EP: So would you say that maybe audiences' taste in plays has changed? Would you say now there's more of a demand for contemporary plays than there... or...?

CW: I would think so, yes. Probably there are younger audiences anyway now... I don't know... what they're really like, particularly.

EP: In the 1950s would you say there was more of a demand for entertaining plays or educating kind of plays?

CW: Well in those days I think, educating really. It felt like that, anyway.

EP: Maybe after the war people wanted to be educated, more than just entertained?

CW: A little bit, yes. We felt we'd missed out on something.

EP: Would you say that television has had a negative influence on theatregoing?

CW: A bit, yes, I would think so. I see some things now that I have seen a long time ago, you know, in theatres. But I prefer the theatre atmosphere much, much more than the telly. You get the atmosphere, don't you!

EP: Yeah, exactly, with the actual people there, yeah. On the course that I'm doing we have been studying a range of plays from the post-war kind of period; on that list, have you seen any of those plays in particular? Like, have you got any opinions or experiences of them maybe?

CW: Separate Tables yes that was – I quite liked that. Don't know The Lesson. Waiting for Godot, yes that was OK, but not as entertaining sort of, not like... a bit deeper somehow. Look Back in Anger and The Entertainer, yes quite liked those. No I can't remember this... Good Woman of Setzuan was it? Something like that? I don't know whether I did see that or not, I'm not sure, and Mother Courage I didn't see. Taste of Honey, yes that was quite entertaining... I'm not keen on The Caretaker, I didn't see Roots, Wesker, or that one, Joe Orton... I didn't see that one, didn't know that one either – Saved, is it Saved? I didn't see that one.

EP: Because at the time Osborne's Look Back in Anger, it was quite, you know, controversial really, wasn't it?

CW: At that time it really was yes, but I don't know... it had a lot of meaning to it... I mean you could understand it... quite good really. I don't know that it was to everybody's taste, but it was OK.

EP: How about A Taste of Honey; how did people take that that you knew, because that again dealt with...

CW: Well, that was a similar sort of vein wasn't it?

EP: It dealt with quite a few controversial issues, yeah.

CW: Yeah a little bit yes, a bit controversial.

EP: Would you say plays now; they're a lot more... now that the censor hasn't got so much of an input as to what gets put on in theatre, have you noticed the difference since he's lost his...

CW: Yes. I don't like a lot of them now, especially the language. I cannot cope with it, I don't think it's necessary really, but that is the language of the people now, the young people, I feel. And they just use it as if it's, you know, normal language. They don't think anything of it. But I don't think it's in good taste at all in the theatre, to be honest. But at my age obviously I wouldn't, really.

EP: So do you still think the Lord Chamberlain should have a certain amount of power over what gets put on?

CW: Well I do think so, yes. And especially on television too, because younger children watch that. I think it's dreadful a lot of the language that is allowed. In the books I read now; it's in all of them. It isn't necessary to emphasise a fact at all.

EP: So what would you say women's roles were like in plays in the 1950s? Have you noticed that maybe the roles of women in plays have become more prominent, or that they have better roles now, or...?

CW: I think they have better roles now really. Yes they were a bit... I don't know, they didn't have the emphasis and the power that they have, in those days... they took a smaller part.

EP: Yeah, men took the dominant parts, yeah.

CW: That's right.

EP: Are there any other plays in particular that you would like to talk about?

CW: Well not really plays, it's been musicals recently, you know, rather than...

EP: Which musicals have you been to see recently?

CW: Oh, Phantom I've seen a few times. I just love the music of Phantom. And Aspects of Love, I saw that in London, I quite liked that. The story of that I quite liked. Les Miserables, I've seen that a few times, yes, I like the music in that. I like the Andrew Lloyd Webber ones really. I didn't like Cats; saw that in London. And I haven't seen Whistle Down the Wind or The Woman in White - Ricky Collins. I read the book, and I did want to see the production, but I haven't been to London since it's been on so I haven't seen that, but I didn't see how they could make really a musical of that, having read the book somehow. But I don't think it was on for very long was it... or is it still on? No I think they brought it off... anyway I haven't seen it. But having read the book I thought, 'Well I would like to see what they made of it' sort of thing, you know?

EP: When would you say was your favourite decade of theatre, would you say maybe the fifties, or the sixties... would you say that was quite a dominant...

CW: Sixties I think, when I was still going to the Playhouse every fortnight to see the plays there. I did really enjoy those. I then had a long gap before I sort of started going again... bringing up the family and...

EP: Would you say that it was obvious that the theatre was going through quite a prominent time at that time? Could you tell that... with all the different new plays being brought out... like the Absurdist plays, and maybe Look Back in Anger...

CW: Yes, it was going through a transition period sort of thing at that time I think. Yes.

EP: Was it quite a talking point? Would you say quite a few people went to the theatre at that time?

CW: Yes, I think so. We talked about it quite a lot - the progress that it was making and the plays they were putting on, you know. They were quite controversial some of them, and some quite simple ones, yes. It was more entertainment, we really enjoyed it you know, looked forward to going out really, because we didn't get a lot of other interests in those days, not so much.

EP: So the theatre was much more of a centre at that time?

CW: Well yes, yes it was really. We made an effort to go there really.

EP: So, you saw the Harry Hanson Court Players in the 1930s, was that?

CW: Yes. I can't remember much about those really. The singing... I loved to go and be [?] And they had them at the Lyceum and The Crucible, I really enjoyed listening... well I mean singing them as well. I really enjoyed them.

EP: So you've been to see quite a few of the really defining plays in the last few years; Separate Tables, A Taste of Honey... They're really kind of...

CW: Long time ago since I saw some of these, yes it was.

EP: Were they all at the Sheffield Playhouse at that time?

CW: They were, yes. I've only been to plays in Sheffield really. When I've been to Manchester and London they've been a musical, that's all.

EP: Have you seen any of the plays you've seen more than once or not really?

CW: Phantom and Les Miserables a few times.

EP: And would you say... have you seen... Were they staged in different ways, or was it the same production?

CW: I think the London company did come up to Manchester, it would be very similar.

EP: Yeah.

CW: But the theatres are a bit different, so it gives you a different atmosphere, you know, a bit different... different ones.

EP: Did you ever used to travel to Manchester maybe in the fifties or sixties, or was it mainly Sheffield?

CW: No, only since you know later on with these musicals. No, I never went to... other than the Playhouse, the Lyceum, The Crucible, at all.

EP: What did you think of the plays at the Lyceum; the ones that came up here and toured around? Did you think they were as good as the ones at the Sheffield Playhouse? Or did you prefer the regional theatre?

CW: Yes I enjoyed them I think more, at the lyceum really. They were sort of a bit basic - the props and everything – at the old Playhouse, because it was an older building and, you know, they hadn't got the modern techniques and the lighting... and everything's different now.

EP: And they'd probably practised it more as well, I suppose, at the Lyceum because they travelled around, whereas at the Playhouse it was just literally...

CW: A fortnight and then a new one, yes that's right.

EP: It must have been good though, having the same kind of actors, almost like a soap or something, that you know – the same people are there every couple of weeks...

CW: A bit like that yes, that's right, we got really used to the actors and actresses – we felt we knew them you know – friendly!

EP: So was it quite popular in the same way that soaps are, would you say that it was almost like...

CW: Yes, it was quite full you know, when we went there was always a full house – seemed to be. Yes we really enjoyed that. We hadn't a lot of other entertainment in those days, so that was a highlight for us, to go there.

EP: How has ticket buying changed? Like before did you buy a ticket for a whole season or could you buy...?

CW: No, we didn't. We booked it each time actually... I think we did... because I think we sat in different seats. I mean, now you can book the same ones, can't you, if you have a season ticket... I don't think they did that in the theatres...

EP: Were the tickets quite expensive for the theatre back then?

CW: I really can't remember, I honestly don't know. They wouldn't have been very expensive, because we didn't have a lot of money in those days.

EP: So you started going to the theatre when you were quite young really? Did you say in your teens you went to the theatre...?

CW: In my teens I went to Harry Hanson's Court Players, yes, but I didn't live in Sheffield then so I didn't get to an awful lot because I had to get home back late at night.

EP: So I suppose that was quite a central form of entertainment when you were a teenager, the theatre. Although now I suppose it's coming back again, young people are starting to go again I suppose.

CW: Yes, I suppose.

EP: What do you think about the topics of plays these days? Do you think they are so relevant, do you think maybe...

CW: Sometimes, I don't know... I like the old stories best. The old plays, you know, from the authors that we've been used to, really, but I suppose that's my age and... Some of the modern ones I'm really not into. And it brings up then this question of language again that they use, and sexual connotations, you know. I don't know. I don't think it's altogether necessary, a lot of it, really.

EP: Do you think theatre should reflect real life, or do you think it should be a form of escapism?

CW: More escapism really, because today real life is not all that... it's not too good really, a lot of it, these days. We are deteriorating in our morals and everything to be honest. But of course, at my age I've lived through a lot of different morals and that, and I feel now we are going too far, and teaching the young people the wrong ways, in my estimation but as I say, that's my age.

EP: Do you think maybe in the past - when you were younger - it should have reflected real life, or do you think theatre should always be a form of escapism?

CW: Well I think it should be an escapism really, because you go to be entertained, and taken out of everyday life sort of thing, you know.

EP: What do you think about theatre being a way of educating people and raising people's awareness of political issues? Because lots of the...

CW: Well I don't know about political issues... I don't think that helped really, an awful lot.

EP: You don't think it's a good place to air political views really?

CW: No. Personally, no. I might be wrong...

EP: Because I suppose lots of the plays on that list, they were more political plays weren't they?

CW: They were a bit, yes.

EP: And do you think that affected people, the political views shown within the play, or not really?

CW: No, I don't think so. I don't think they would take it home and think about it, I don't think it would affect their thoughts or ideas particularly, you know. I go now to be entertained really, more than anything.

EP: Was there ever really much debate really back in the fifties or sixties over the theatre over the political views shown or did it not really come up?

CW: No I don't think so, I don't think it did. We didn't think it concerned us somehow, in those days.

EP: So it was just taken more at face value really, would you say?

CW: Absolutely. Yes, I would think so.

EP: Did you see... Did you ever go to see any of the murder mystery type plays?

CW: Yes, I like the Agatha Christie ones. I do like reading about all those and I've got tapes of them and I enjoy seeing them. Yes. I don't think I've seen many of those in the theatre though. Oh, I saw *The Hollow* a few weeks ago at the Lyceum, that's an old one sort of come back again, but I don't think I've seen many of them. Some filmed I think perhaps... but I like listening to the tapes of those.

EP: Did you ever read many of the plays in the fifties and sixties, or did you just mainly see them?

CW: I've always done a lot of reading, yes, I did read... because I went to the library quite a lot in those days.

EP: Were they performed the way that you thought they would be?

CW: Yes, I think so.

EP: How would you say that props and those kind of things have changed in the last few years? Would you say that the use props and staging... have you seen quite a...

CW: Oh, they've got much more realistic and you know... much more of an improvement.

EP: So you'd say that's a good thing?

CW: Well, yes.

EP: Or do you think maybe with more minimal props you focus more on the storyline of the play, or not really?

CW: Probably, yes. You have to imagine an awful lot then, with the basic props. But now they seem to go over the top with some of them. Really, you know, the lighting and the props and everything... but it makes it more realistic - I think you can enjoy it better.

EP: So you think it's better with the better props?

CW: Yes I think so. And the dresses and everything, especially the ballets I have seen. I'm not really into ballet because I can't understand it, and that bothers me. I don't know the story particularly, but it is very lovely to watch so I've seen some ballets.

EP: Who do you think has been the best director at The Crucible or the Playhouse? Has there been any particular timeframe when it's...

CW: Well it was always Geoffrey Ost at the old Playhouse... Do you know, I don't really know! I can't remember the names at The Crucible now. We've had a few changes, but to be honest I can't recollect the names of them because they change quickly. No, I can't remember them. My memory is a bit short lived at times now, so I don't know! They've all been really good though, I can't think of anything I've really not enjoyed.

EP: Yeah. So you think it's probably a good thing there were so many different types of theatre? Even though there were contemporary plays, traditional plays... I suppose it's just more choice really, isn't it?

CW: Yes that's right. It depends what you're interested in as well. I like Shakespeare but not the heavy ones... I don't like the historical ones too much, but Merchant of Venice, I

quite like that - I suppose that's because I studied that for Matriculation you know, about 1936 time! I've seen the film recently as well, because I go to the Showroom a lot to see the plays – the films.

EP: Oh OK, yeah.

CW: And the Odeon, but they're very old ones that we have at the Odeon, that I go to: the OAP day on Wednesdays have old films... but the Showroom have very up-to-date ones – some are... too up-to-date for me, because a lot of them are subtitles as well because they are in other languages. I can manage the French, but that's about it.

EP: What do you think about the theatre in comparison with the cinema?

CW: Well I like the theatre better I think really - your mind can wander at a film really, whereas at the theatre it seems to hold you. You know, your concentration is better and you follow it better. I do like films, but I think the theatre is better really.

EP: Can you recollect any particular maybe travelling workshops that you've seen, or... I mean maybe, have you seen anything by the Theatre Workshop, or...?

CW: No, I haven't been to any of those.

EP: Yeah. Did you hear about them quite a lot though?

CW: Yes, well, I read in the... I'm on the mailing list for them all, and I read about these and wonder about them, but of course nowadays I can't get very easily into town. I rarely go, only just to see a film that I think will be suitable you know: problems with travelling...

EP: At the time was there quite a lot of hype about the Theatre Workshop? Do you remember hearing about them?

CW: No. Well, some of the young people you could hear talking about them sometimes, but no, not people of my age sort of thing, we don't talk about them much. Don't think there was any interest in them really - we just go to be entertained, and accept what's happening rather than having an opinion on everything.

EP: Did the other people that you went to the theatre with feel the same? Did some of them believe that the theatre should be political, or not?

CW: No, I don't think so, we didn't really.

EP: It was more of a pastime really?

CW: Yes, I just think we were out to be sort of entertained and... we talked about it sometimes if... You know, political, and we had a definite idea on it - said what we thought, but on the whole...

EP: So it did provoke some discussion though?

CW: Just a little, yes, at times - it depended. But I mostly go on my own now. Lost all my friends who used to go with me. That's a sad thought, but that's what age brings I guess. I go to see my son sometimes in his musicals if I can manage to get there.

EP: Did he go to the theatre when he was younger, did you used to take him?

CW: Not really, I don't think he was particularly interested then, in that, you know, in literature: that wasn't his forté, but it seems as he's got older it's the entertaining part – the singing really. Being a solicitor I always think they're good actors - they do a lot of acting you know! Although he doesn't go to court if he can help it. But now it's the singing; we've always been a singing family, in choirs.

EP: So would you say only recently musicals have become so prominent? Were they not really that prominent in the fifties and sixties?

CW: No, definitely not. Well I didn't see many. I think there were some at the Lyceum, but as I said, it was difficult to get there and I prefer the plays really, so I didn't go as often as I would have liked, but they did have some musicals, I know. Can't remember the names of them now... so long ago, before it was renovated and everything...

EP: So, do you have any particular really good memories of the Lyceum or the Sheffield Playhouse? Were there any particular plays that you really enjoyed, or that really gave something to you?

CW: Not particularly, no. I saw so many plays that really... all different kinds you know, all different authors – from humorous ones to really serious things...

EP: Yeah. Have you generally been able to see the progression of the staging and the lighting, seeing how it all comes on, would you say?

CW: Yes.

EP: Would you say the theatre's gone through certain times of maybe...

CW: Yes, that's right. I can't remember a lot, as I say, about the Playhouse's props and everything, but I notice from the Lyceum that has progressed greatly now. Oh! All the amateur shows are so professional now, they really are; with the lighting and the... everything really! The sound and everything seems much improved from when it first opened after the – when it was renovated you know. And I've seen a few at the City Hall. I missed a show last Sunday at the City Hall, I really did need to go – well, I wanted to go! – because I hadn't been in there since it's been renovated, and I was booked to go. But then I had this fall, and wasn't able to go. But they do have big shows in there. But I prefer the proscenium you know... the curtains and all that.

EP: Yeah, the standard kind of stage...

CW: Yes, but you can't get that at the City Hall of course. And at The Crucible... I've got used to The Crucible now. They're going to change it aren't they, I think? Going to extend it or something, but I'm not really sure how it will end up.

EP: Yeah... No, I've heard some vague plans I think, I can't really remember...

CW: I've not seen any, but I did hear that they're going to... well, change it somehow, or extend it. I hope they will really, because it's very difficult with that steepness - nothing to hold on to as you're going down the steps. A lot of my friends are not able to go because of that... just very steep... But you get used to the stage... I suppose it's a lot more versatile, they can do a lot more with it being like that.

EP: Would you say it's more realistic having it, being able to see from all angles?

CW: Yes, that's right; it does make it better like that, but at first I didn't take to it at all. Used to it now, so I accept it. So I don't know whether they're going to change that - I guess they won't, just the seating or something... or the lighting.

EP: So would you say at the time when Look Back in Anger was put on, was... there was quite a lot of controversy over it? Do you remember people being quite shocked about it, or...?

CW: Well they were a bit, but I don't remember a lot of talking about it to be honest, not of people I know. I just sort of read about it, and heard of the controversy about it. But not the people I went with, we didn't really; we just objected a little bit to certain bits you know – things – the way... but not a lot, no. As I say, it's what I can remember you know that's the point now - remembering all the things we did! Such a lot has happened since then, it's quite difficult, really, to go back to it.

EP: Do you like where theatre is right now though? Or did you prefer where it was in the fifties and sixties? Did you like that time of transformation after the war, or are you glad it's...

CW: Well, yes now I've got used to it. At first I wasn't - you know, I thought 'ooh it was better before', but well... you get used to it really, and then you accept it, don't you, and I suppose it is better really.

EP: Because I suppose before, it was purely based on entertaining, wasn't it, really?

CW: Basic, very basic, yes.

EP: Whereas I suppose after the war they wanted more to educate people, so...

CW: Yes, that's right. More than entertain I think. It felt we were learning a bit more, you know, having more plays by known authors rather than not-so-well-known light-hearted things.

EP: And I suppose now there are educating plays and entertaining plays so you can choose more, whereas after the war I suppose it was quite focussed on educating wasn't it really?

CW: Well quite a bit, yes, there wasn't a lot of choice any way you know, at first, for a long time, but that all got opened up again and kept going...

EP: And I suppose because there wasn't much choice in plays, everyone really got to see the same few, so I suppose you could all talk about them anyway.

CW: Well yes, it was a bit like that I guess. The amateur companies there did some quite interesting ones really. I go to the Library Theatre in town because the amateur companies put plays on there you know. There's a lot of amateurs in Sheffield, a tremendous lot - Dennis Edwards a fortnight ago, they did *A Perfect Murder*, based on Jeffrey Archer's book. I really enjoyed that, it was quite... they put it on really well. Some are better than others, but Dennis Edwards' are quite good.

EP: Would you say the standard of acting has gone up?

CW: Definitely, yes. Definitely.

EP: Would you say that was down to maybe the drama schools and things these days, or...?

CW: Well I don't know, because a lot of... No, I don't think so, they're more experienced, and felt more confident in themselves, these people I think, as they've done more plays. Because I've watched the same people there again you know, seen the same ones, and they've progressed. They've gone from being quite hesitant to being really confident and professional, you know. It's been lovely to see that happen.

EP: So you've seen both the theatre and the actors progress and...

CW: Yeah, that's right, yes. I enjoy the amateur ones, yes.

EP: So is there anything else that you'd like to...

CW: No, I don't think so; I hope there'll be a lot more to see. I don't know how many more years I'll be able to get to the theatre, you know, but I like the Brontë ones; Wuthering Heights and all those. Dennis Edwards did... they did Wuthering Heights... oh no, Jane Eyre - I like that. I like when they do the older ones, because it's what you've been used to.

EP: Have you seen any of the re-runs of plays, like, did you see The Caretaker at The Crucible recently?

CW: No... oh I remember seeing that years and years ago, can't remember it now, much about it really. No didn't see that... latterly anyway. It has been recently, hasn't it...

EP: Yeah, they have started putting on some of these older plays, have you seen any of...

CW: No I haven't, because I haven't been to see... no, not recently. It's been difficult to get... Because I can't go out in the evenings because of travelling, but if there's a matinée I try to go to that, but it's increasingly difficult to go in the evenings at all, so unless they have matinées then I'm not able to go.

EP: Yeah.

CW: I don't think there's anything coming up that I'm... oh, I'm booked to go to the... in January... now what will that be...? Oh! The Sleeping Beauty I think, that's coming to the Lyceum isn't it? Because they have a matinee, so I'm booked to go on that one.

EP: Do you prefer the Lyceum to The Crucible would you say?

CW: Now this is a moot point. It depends what it is. I like the Lyceum because it is the old type, but I like the big... I like The Crucible stage now, I've got used to it. I really think they could make more of plays and things there now. But I feel more at home in the Lyceum, you know, like the old days sort of - coming to the theatre and they open the curtains and they've got the... Yes, it depends what it is.

EP: I suppose maybe The Crucible stage allows you to relate to the characters more because you feel more part of it would you say? Whereas the traditional stage; there's more of a fourth wall...

CW: Yes, you're not with them are you, separate. I don't know, I'm not bothered about that really, being sort of part of them. That doesn't bother me.

EP: I suppose if you are not so much part of them you are more able to critique them maybe, or to think about what's being said in the play maybe?

CW: Yes, when you are a bit apart from them, sort of thing. I'm not really into opera so much, I do - did - watch the opera sometimes, because they perform in The Crucible don't they, I think. But I've not been recently at all, because I'm not really an opera fan - I don't understand it full stop. It's very spectacular some of it, but it's not for me particularly.

EP: Yes, I suppose plays are more direct, you know what they're saying to you.

CW: Yes that's right. I know they're really good, these opera singers, and all that; I appreciate the singing, but if I can't understand it particularly, then I lose interest in it really, you know - it's more drama that I'm interested in - plays. Anyway...

EP: That's a good place to leave the interview I suppose, we can stop there.

CW: Well, I've told you a little bit I suppose...

EP: Thank you.