

LONDON CONTEMPORARY

DANCE THEATRE

Forest

THE SECOND week of the London Contemporary Dance Theatre's Sadler's Wells spring season — financial considerations will deny the company this venue next April — brought two new works into the repertoire, one a world premier. This was Robert Cohan's "Forest" to a haunting soundtrack compiled by Brian Hodgson which used wind sounds interspersed with bird twitters and the beat of rain to create the atmosphere of a primeval world where sound and light are alike filtered through trees so tall and so old that they link the bowels of the earth and the utmost arch of the sky in one indestructible sweep. Unfortunately, Norberto Chiesa's ungainly splodged costumes failed to echo the effect.

The choreography to express this wandered naturally between yearning arm and leg movements and double work which at times appeared a little too strained. It held, however, the audience's attention with the utmost seriousness — indeed, seriousness was the keynote of most of the programme, lightened only by the other London novelty, "Harmonica Breakdown" which Jane Dudley choreographed in 1938, during her Martha Graham days. Danced by Siobhan Davies to the charming harmonica and washboard accompaniment of Igg Welthy and Denis Smith, this jokey look at a liberated society, from a woman's point of view, which has been mewing away for well over 100 years, has some delightfully offbeat movements and a welcome sense of sending up its own conventions so sky-high that they were returned to us fully aerated. "Diary 2" (Siobhan Davies) and "One Was the Other" (Noemi Lapzeson and Robert North) completed the programme.

Anne Morley-Priestman