

ENTERTAINMENT

THEATRE...

Singalong affair is easy on the ears

"SOUND OF THE SOUTH" is a bright singalong affair presented by a bunch of fresh-faced young people who already have more than 50,000 miles of touring behind them. The sound is contemporary without being tough on the eardrums, and the show at the Joubert Park Theatre good, wholesome family entertainment.

As the title indicates, the accent is on music. So, in a production that is essentially a team effort, it is not surprising that musical director Danie Gerber emerges as the star.

As the printed programme is reticent in disclosing authorship of the various songs, it is not always easy to detect which are home products. In the case of the Afrikaans numbers there is obviously no doubt, but I believe Mr. Gerber is responsible for the melodies of many of the others, and it would be interesting to pinpoint them.

I do know, however, that he is to be credited with all the vocal and orchestral

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arrangements. These are exciting and lively, my only criticism being that several need stronger, more theatrical codas.

The lyrics on the whole are refreshing, intelligent and sincere. As is right in a show of this nature, they are more in the world of folk than the world of pop.

Throughout, the company is more important than the individual. In a cast with no dominating personalities this is a good idea, but there would be far more light and shade if the stage were not so full so much of the time.

As it is, though each number is rewarding in its own right, the pattern becomes repetitious. For this reason, the fact that it is done in semi-darkness in contrast to the usual bright lighting, "Water for a Thirsty Land" is visually memorable.

Otherwise, while I remember such songs as "Something Should Be Happening" and "Up With People," I cannot recall their presentation.

Ian Hutton's guitar rang the changes, and so did "Walk On Through," when Maureen Bird moved down into the auditorium. More deviations like these from the full company line-up would vastly improve the production.

There is so much musical worth in "Sound of the South" that it should be exploited to the maximum.