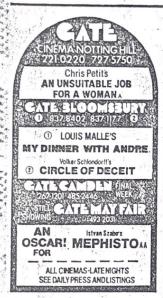
And in the end the lines will probably have to be closed because they have become unsafe. A lot of it is happening in ing in areas like mid-Wales and Cumbria where one government after another has drum up jobs and encourage

industry to thrive.
For the same money, said one enthusiastic rationaliser, you could give the people a more frequent, more effi-cient, "and possibly even free," bus service. He didn't seem like anyone who would give the public anything free as long as income tax still exists, but apart from that the theory sounds fine.

the theory sounds fine.

Except that anyone who has spent a lifetime waiting for buses and trains knows which is more likely to turn up when it says it will; and which is more likely to be stuck two miles down the road in a traffic jam, according to season chilling or broiling any paying customers foolish enough to broiling any paying cus-tomers foolish enough to tomers foolish enou



MOIRA KELLY

Waldemar Januszczak

Sue Coe

SUE COE is a mad dog artist. She barks loudly at everyone, presumably on the principle that one of them is sure to be the burglar. Her victims range from prosti-tutes to President Reagan, from junkies to the Pope, from Bobby Sands to Mac the Knife. None of them get-either respect or sympathy— all of them have been forced out on to the streets where they are shown keep-ing one foot in the gutter. A pre-holocaust society is shown behaving itself like a post-holocaust one.

Sue Coe's excesses are based on those of her victims (and also those of George Grosz and the German mad dog artists who went sniffing down similar alleyways in pre-war Berlin). Where her junkies use too much heroin, she uses too much black, smearing in their features with what looks like last year's mascara. Where the British police use too much force, Sue Coe describes it with too much red paint. England is a Bitch, screams one blood-soaked title. Defend Yourself to Death, advises another. advises another.

The work likes to give the impression that it was made in a hurry, collaged, drawn, splattered, improvised in the nick of time. In the magazines in which much of it originally appeared this must have seemed telling and appropriate. But here, with three roomfuls of pictures, it soon becomes clear that rabid haste is just a stylistic feature, like the blackmail-note lettering of the titles. Sue Coe's viciousness is as

"Masterpiece!"

carefully affected as the tears 1 in a punk's T-shirt.

Her shock tactics are often too obvious. The Pope gives a Nazi salute by Bobby Sands's death-bed. Our newlywed royals perform oh so unspeakable acts together. In her back-street version of Brecht's Threepenny Opera the cast is headed by Charles Filch, "whose ambition is to be a successful beggar." Sue Coe's ambition is too close to Filch's to worry us for long.

Sue Coe at Moira Kelly's Fine Art, 97 Essex Road, Islington, N1, until June 19.

FESTIVAL HALL Edward Greenfield

Del Mar/ RPO/Ogdon

THE TRAGIC break in John Ogdon's virtuoso career may have dimmed memories of how powerfel and poetic he could be playing Rachman-inov. It was more than usually heartwarming to welcome him in this triumphant per-formance with Norman Del Mar and the Royal Philharmonic of the Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, all his old flair restored and even intens-

At 48 hours notice he was stepping in to a concert which was originally to feature James Galway, while Del Mar was replacing Riccardo Chailly, simultaneously stricken down. I suspect that that challenge to everyone helped to give the special flavour to this Rachmaninov performance in particular. It was faster than I have ever heard the piece before, but such was Ogdon's command that it never for a moment sounded merely breathless: as it should, the speed added ex-citement, at times almost the thrill of a roller-coaster.

If Ogdon's reading was in some ways exaggerated—with extreme tempi in both directions and molto pesante instead of poco for the Dies Irae theme—that brought extra clarity in the structure.



Far more than usual each variation was sharply characterised, with the great climas of the lyrical 18th variation made the more powerful when Ogden started it so gently and sweetly.

For the orchestra too if is a virtuoso piece, and Dei Mar directed with keen sym-pathy. I suspect he had beer unusually generous with his unusually generous with his rehearsal time for it Sibelius's Fifth Symphoni after the interval was rougher, passionate and volatile as one would expect of Beecham's orchestra under the baton of a Leecham disciple, but finding full intensity only at the ends of move ments, powerful in the outer movements, crisply cut off ir the central Andante.

The special delight Prokofiev's Classical Symphony as starter was the delectable flute-playing o Patricia Lynden, guest'princi pal for the occasion. Anothe guest principal, John McIn tyre, played the darkly gor geous cor anglais solo i Sibelius's Swan of Tuonela and there his finesse was wel matched by a half doze regular RPO soloists, no least the cellist, Davi Strange.

ALMEIDA Meirion Bowen

Prokrustes

PROKRUSTES, or the Law of Hospitality, is an opera b of Hospitality, is an opera by the Swiss composer Jear Jacques Dunki, updating the Greek legend, with presentions to some comment on the relation of violence in music in modern times. It cleverly staged by Pierre Augas the Almeida Theatre, with a fine cast led by Donald Research and the cast led by Donald Research and the cast led by Donald Research Legendre (1997). at the Almeida Theatre, wit a fine cast, led by Donald Be in the title role, and Ja Latham-Koening conduction his own ultra-proficient se semble; the performance se repeated tonight.

Embarrassingly, the pier comes across more as a kin of black comedy with Tra sylvanian overtones. The guests at Prokrustes hous are greeted with drink, mus room soup and murder. Assis room soup and muruer. Assisting Prokrustes in his dir deeds are his servants Ar (Graham Titus) and Phil mela (Jenny Miller). Whe Prokrustes refuses to become an instrument of the state of the army using h tion, he is abandoned to I on his own bed. Overnigh a woman makes his bed mo comfortable, but in the mor

