

REVIEW

LEEDS ARTS CENTRE PERFORM TALKING HEADS/LEEDS CIVIC THEATRE

YORKSHIRE playwright Alan Bennett's six monologues, *Talking Heads*, were written and recorded for television 11 years ago.

Some have been performed in the theatre, but Leeds Arts Centre is staging in effect the amateur premiere at the Civic Theatre this week. And they have done Bennett justice, with the cast putting in some fine performances.

The opening night kicked off last night with *A Lady of Letters*. Gwyneth Hadley was excellent as the bored busy-body. Her 40 minutes on stage were almost faultless.

Next up was Sarah Oldknow as aspiring actress Lesley, whose career highlight to date has been a walk-on part in soap *Crossroads*.

When the role of scantily-clad action girl Travis comes up, it's *Her Big Chance*.

Mary Nelson excels as 75-year-old widow Doris, desperately fighting off the spectre of moving into a home. Her hilarious observations about her home-help are mixed with poignant words about her dead baby and late husband Wilfrid.

There are three different monologues tonight, and *Talking Heads* runs until Saturday – don't miss it.

CAROLINE COOK