

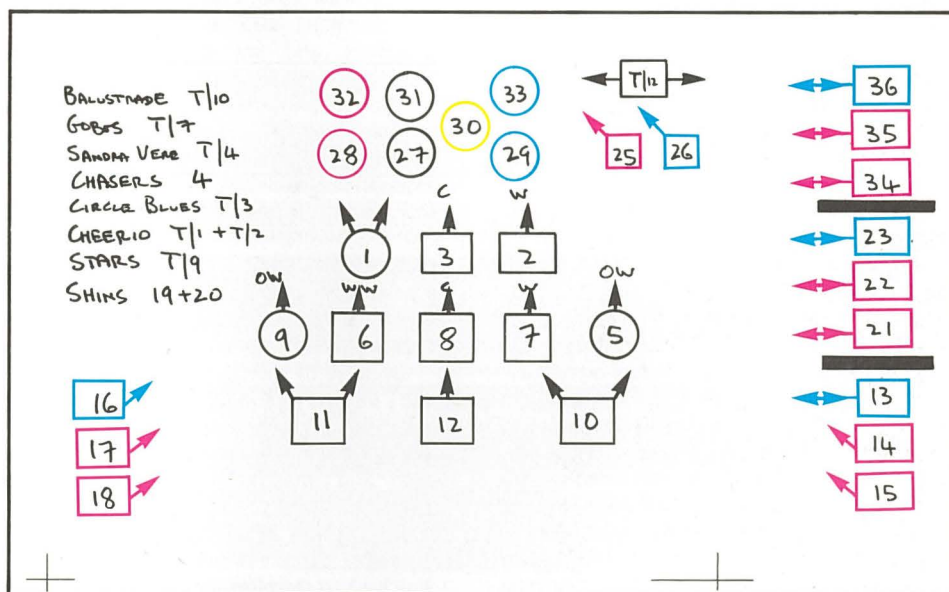
little point in splitting left, centre and right (or even just left and right—for the one scene requiring this, there were a couple of specials) so the area split was *inners* and *outers*, to give control of the degree of tightness of any particular scene. All these instruments were profile spots with pale tints.

The down and back lighting was provided by 1kW PAR 64 units (120 volt in series pairs) giving high intensity from saturated near-primary colours and creating that depth-enhancing haze, characteristic of backlight in general and sealed-beam lamps in particular. Surely the PAR 64 is one of the most exciting things to happen for years in the world of stage lighting.

Side lighting was from three booms a side—a pair in each onstage bay and a pair on the apron. These booms provided a cross-wash in three layers (downstage, midstage and upstage) and in three colours: blue, pink and amber.

The dialogue scenes were lit mainly from the front with just a low-level toning from above. The backstage working light scenes were rather harshly white, while other locations were given softer tinting. For musical numbers, side colour was added and the single follow spot used rather discreetly. For onstage “musical within a musical” scenes, the colour became much more contrasty and the follow spot more obvious. And some obviously “stagey” devices were introduced: such as chasers, dry ice, flash boxes, flashing photofloods, gobos and shin busters (beamlights at floor level).

To provide a link with the movies, the show’s credit titles were run on the Regent’s



The standard 1:25 scaled lighting layout plan can be rather unwieldy during lighting, technical and dress rehearsals. However the essential information can be condensed on to a standard 8" x 5" index card. A big show may need both sides, but The Great American Backstage Musical fitted easily on to one side.

cinema screen during the overture. This was achieved (at less expense than film and projectionist) by crossfading a pair of 35mm slide carousels from a bar on the front of the balcony—a useful position often omitted from new theatres because it would produce a bad (i.e. horizontal) face angle, but often vital, as here, for such jobs as picking up sparkle on tabs and projecting a silhouette gobo to cover a radio announcement.

The house control was a 36-way Mini 2 which carried the main load with a temporary 12-way Mini 2 carrying specials. These twin boards were handled by one (excellent)

operator from an end-of-balcony control position. There was no conventional lighting rehearsal—the show was plotted by a fast pencil during a cast stagger-through.

So! There we have two small shows which were lit according to the book and whose production schedules in all departments worked according to the book. To complete the picture it should perhaps be recorded that although they were both well received by the critics, neither show proved to be a big enough draw to achieve a decent length of run. Ah, well!