

# Between Cues

The thoughts of  
Walter Plinge

## Royal Advertising

The Plinge Award for Autumn Advertising is shared by two Theatres Royal... Bristol and Norwich. Bristol with a small repertoire by its own company requires only an eye-catching poster with a simple listing of show titles to ensure a clean clear sell. Norwich with a vast varied mixed programme has to get across a more detailed message and so uses full-page newspaper ads in colour. Both Theatres earn full marks for imagination, impact, and information. Unlike the Edinburgh Festival which has adopted a new trivial squiggle meaningless logo. Apart from the logo, Plinge enjoyed this year's Edinburgh and so he wrote the rest of this page between cues at the Festival's *Troilus & Cressida* – one of the longer and less poetic pieces of Mr. Shakespeare.

morning was Haydn's Mass in the Time of War played not as a concert piece but within the context of the Mass. Authenticity of context. Authenticity of scale. Authenticity of architectural environment. This is the stuff that festivals are made of.

## Lighting Anonymous

Enjoyed the live music at *Dancers Anonymous*. Enjoyed what I could see of the choreography. Didn't see much though. Never did so many dancers miss so few light pools. Lighting Designer was anonymous too. Poor chap (or chappess) . . . must have had a frustrating afternoon.

## Plinge goes a-haunting

My first appearance on any stage was as Covetousness in Marlowe's *Faustus*. My single speech in this neuter part must have been reasonably acceptable because, although I never graduated to leading lady, I did enjoy a respectable career as an up-stager of leading ladies by going well over the top in my portrayals of sundry maids, aunts and grandmothers. Then my voice broke and I was relegated to playing a series of breathless messengers. My passion at school, however, was certainly not to act: I wanted a slice of the real action, I wanted a bash at the scenery and lights. No way. My curriculum was based on classics and biology: by mutual consent I took no part in woodwork, metalwork or technical drawing. Therefore I was totally barred from any association with stage technology. The only way to get in on the school play was to act. I have been overcompensating ever since by ruthlessly pursuing a career in theatre technology without qualifications of any kind, and on the most rudimentary



## McCandless Lights On

Stanley McCandless is alive and well and living with the University of Rhode Island Summer Theatre Ensemble. Recommended reading for their lighting crew: chapter five of Howard Bay's *Stage Design*. There is probably more lighting sense concentrated in this single chapter than in all the other lighting books (including Plinge's) lumped together.

## Raising Standards

The Rector's pulpit announcements included an anniversary reminder of the Raising of the Standard of Prince Charles Edward Stuart. The linking theme at this year's Edinburgh Festival was, after all, *war*. But the main business of the Sunday

## Procession Management

The prompt corner was a street corner, or a T-junction to be more precise. The bands of music were assembled to the left and the carnival floats to the right. The stage manager (probably not his title, but certainly his function) cued them as required to form a well-balanced procession. Simple really. Wish it had been my idea.

knowledge of mechanics and electricians. Having survived on this basis, I am now turning my unqualified attention to theatre administration without the slightest knowledge of the basic principles of accountancy or marketing. But I ramble . . . the purpose of this paragraph is to relate how (nearly) forty years on I found that old stage in Edinburgh and declaimed Marlowe to an empty auditorium. Did it make me feel good? No, rather silly actually.