



Detail of showcase containing Nijinsky's boots for Petrouchka, etc.

units.

The combination of the equipment and the final pulsed tape resulted in a thirty minute 'son et lumière' programme that was divided into two sequences of fifteen minutes each.

Commencing in total darkness except for the faintly glowing footlights, the audience were first made aware of the exhibits during the initial bars of music as spotlights were gradually brought up onto costumes that were identified with the relayed ballet sequences. Each of the music sections lasted between two to four minutes and the lighting was timed to change not only between each sequence but also during it, so that cross-fades of profile lighting created a

simulated sense of movement in counterpoint to the music. During certain moments of the programme the spotlights dimmed to be replaced by the lights within the large showcases revealing costumed figures. The small 5W lamps not only lit the interior but were also reflected in the mirrored glass which projected their image beyond the showcases, creating an illusion of extended space. At the climax of each of the two sequences all the lighting faded in the auditorium, but with the grand finale of the music (Stravinsky's Firebird suite in the first sequence and the Adagio from Act 1 of Tchaikovsky's Sleeping Beauty in the other) the lamps in the roof were brought up casting shafts of light onto the spectators.

Then with the last notes of the orchestra they faded gradually to leave a momentary pause of darkness and silence before the next sequence was heralded by a fanfare of trumpets.

The majority of the fifteen thousand people who saw the exhibition during its four-week run at Edinburgh seemed to enjoy the experience of a theatrical 'performance' rather than a static display. I was told that it was an innovatory technique that had been used, but in fact I have been using similar techniques in exhibitions for about twelve years! The difference with 'Parade' was that the whole rather than a part of the exhibition was dependent on electronics, and this was only possible because of the reliability of the equipment, which was certainly not the case when I first started in 1967! Parade was open for seven hours a day for thirty days without a single breakdown. The equipment will receive a more critical test in 1981 when 'Parade' will be shown in London over a period of five months; however, from my experience recently with permanent installations using electronic equipment, I do not anticipate any problems.

I personally believe that future developments in exhibition design will utilise the potential of electronics in ways that can only be dimly perceived at present, and will revolutionise our traditional attitudes to an extent that an awareness of the intrinsic quality of displayed objects or pictures will be the prerogative not of the few but of the many.

Design for Lighting

PERCY CORRY

A Revised **STAGE LIGHTING** by **Richard Pilbrow**, Studio Vista (£14.95).

In 1954 I thought it necessary to protest in print about the unjustifiable anonymity of those who devised the lighting of stage settings. It soon became clear that many of the designers had the same idea and had done something about it. Their names began to appear in the programme credits and even, occasionally, on playbills. In 1970 Richard Pilbrow, who had by then acquired an international reputation, produced a comprehensive survey of the art and techniques of lighting design. The fact that reprints were necessary in 1974 and 1976 was evidence of the need for and the quality of the book. It has now been revised and expanded. Included are authoritative comments by Bill Bundy on the lighting of opera and by John B. Read on ballet and dance. The Foreword originally contributed

by Sir Laurence Olivier is revised only by the recognition of his elevation to the peerage.

There are a score of additional photographic plates, many in colour. Unfortunately, photographs of stage settings, however good, and many of these are very good, never completely capture the actual lighting effects produced on stage. This was emphasised for me by the illustration of a scene from Michael Elliott's production of Ibsen's **BRAND** at Hammersmith's old Lyric many years ago. Frederick Bentham and I saw this production together and were greatly impressed by the lighting devised by one Richard Pilbrow, a name that was then unfamiliar. The lighting had a dramatic unity with both setting and performance, a unity that proclaimed the creative sensitivity of an artist. It must be assumed that he had fewer lanterns and a less sophisticated control than would now be available to him.

The aspirant lighting designer would probably be slightly daunted by the multiplicity of lantern symbols scattered over the Pilbrow layout diagrams prepared for particular productions, especially if he is unfortunately compelled to work within the limitations of half a dozen F.O.H. spots, a sparse selection of lanterns of dubious versatility over the acting area and an obsolescent manually operated board to control his maximum of something like forty dimmer channels. He would be wrong to think that this book is not for him. In the early chapters Pilbrow quite clearly and emphatically establishes the basic principles which are the same whether he has forty circuits or four hundred. The need for artistry is constant: it is the technicalities that differ. If vaulting ambition is not allowed to o'erleap the practical facilities the visual effects produced can still be theatrically satisfying if there is sensitive use of the facilities available, however limited.