

# Letters to the Editor

From Mr. Reg Bartram

Dear Sir,

In your March-April issue you covered a range of Memory Controls from various manufacturers and granted to AVAB of Sweden the 'Pandora's Box Award'.

My version of the box is from the Theogony of Hesiod and apart from minor variations, remains the same throughout history.

It was Prometheus who gathered all the spites and evils of the world and imprisoned them in a box (therefore strictly *his* box), thus enabling people to live the perfect and innocent life as intended.

Zeus, jealous of Prometheus, fashioned a beautiful creature, Pandora (which means 'all-giving') and using ungentlemanly means, arranged a marriage between her and Prometheus' brother, Epimetheus. Thus, having the freedom of the house, Pandora found and opened the box and out they flew; old-age, sickness, hard-labour, insanity, vice, passion etc., which then attracted all the mortals. Delusive hope however, whom Prometheus had also shut in the box, discouraged them by her lies from a general suicide.

REG BARTRAM,  
11 Raymond Road,  
Neutral Bay,  
N.S.W. 2089  
Australia

From Mr. A. J. M. Stevenson

Dear Sir,

PAR64 lamps

Many technicians will not have been surprised to read Francis Reid's reply to Dr. Tarrant's article, showing as it does the difficulty of expressing artistic judgement together with technical information.

Confidence in series-wired 120V lamps has perhaps been developed in organisations with time and money to spend on extra types of connectors and heavier cables (to avoid mismatch and excess volt-drop), whereas blithe acceptance of 240V lamps ignores an important restriction, their non-rotatability in the lantern.

It is agreed that the narrow 240V produces less *oomph* (peak intensity) than the narrow 120V, so Mr. Reid and Dr. Tarrant might do best by combining to persuade 240V manufacturers to use a biplane filament of more compact area, and to make only narrow-beam versions which could then be shaped by directional frosts as required.

Yours faithfully,

A. J. M. STEVENSON  
Lancelyn Lighting (NI)  
Ash Park,  
Knockan,  
Dungiven,  
co Derry,  
N Ireland

We asked Francis Reid if he accepted peak intensity as a measure of oomph. He replied ..... No, intensity is only a part of the oomph story. Other contributing factors include distribution, colour temperature, and clarity. Directional frosts are currently my favourite toys, but they do rather act as de-oomphers. (Editor)

## Between Cues

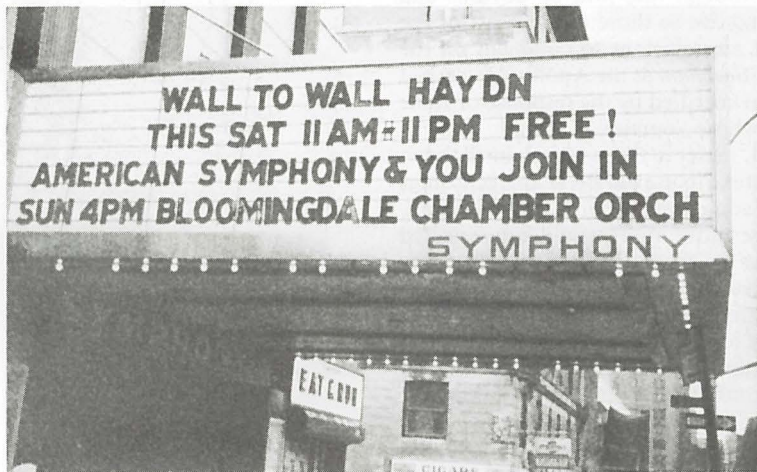
The thoughts of  
Walter Plinge

### Houselights Go

Economic factors play a bigger role in theatre life than many of us often care to recognise. It is generally accepted that the development of lighting controls was largely due to such factors as supply company payments to lubricate the change to AC, performance manpower reduction and, more

### Symphonic Wallpaper

The alternative was a *Dramathon* (53 hours of non-stop theatre from Chekhov and O'Casey to new playwrights plus sundry celebrity spots, stand-up comics, jugglers and pie-throwers scattered between the plays – and a continuing auction offering theatre memorabilia, tickets to shows, vouchers for



recently, rehearsal time savings. Artistic gains were a result rather than a cause. I had always assumed (and so did Terence Rees in his *Theatre Lighting in the Age of Gas*) that the fading of houselights was introduced for artistic reasons. I am now fascinated to learn that there was also an economic motive. Eric Irvin in *Theatre Notebook* quotes two Australian examples. A Melbourne stage manager was instructed (in 1859) that the Theatre Royal was losing money and that he must see that the gas was turned off 'behind when the curtain is down, and before when it is up'. A Sydney newspaper reported (in 1892) that 'Actors complain of the darkening of theatres, because they like to see the happy faces before them. They might as well be playing to Dante's Inferno, under this cheap system'.

dinners, tap dancing lessons, a horoscope reading, a handwriting analysis and an autographed cookbook by Salvador Dali.) But I opted for a slice of *Wall to Wall Haydn* where it took a mere 12 hours to play through 5 symphonies, 4 trios, 3 concertos, 2 quartets, 2 sonatas and 1 oratorio. I can think of no better way to use a battered and redundant but acoustically sound cinema than to label it *Symphony Space* and programme it with just this sort of musical imagination.

### Tickets at TKSTS

London's West End theatre is experiencing a period of diminishing affluence (I choose my words with delicacy). I will resist the temptation to offer a full-scale Plinge analysis of the

