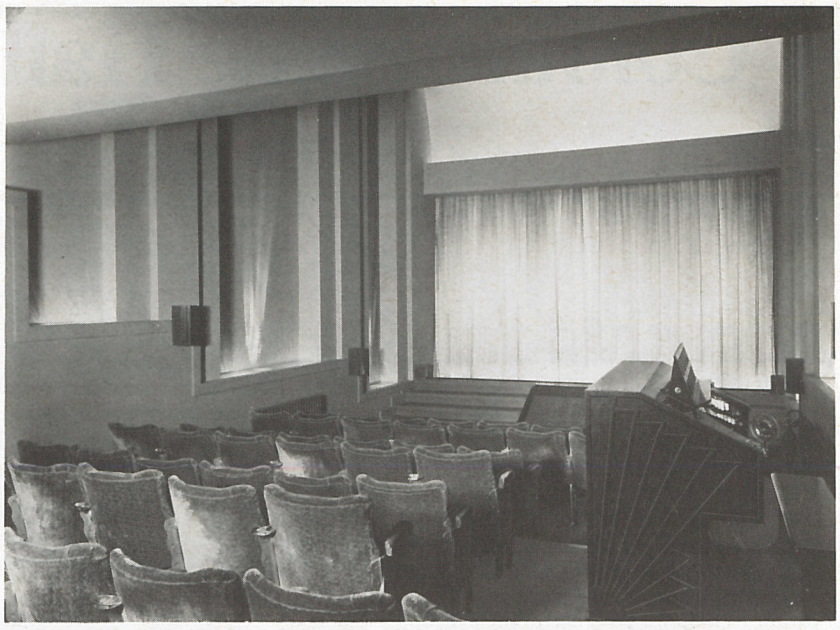
Five paragraphs followed in which none of the seven cinemas (including the New Victoria!) receive a good notice except as decorative exercises and the young author concludes his introduction with:

> "The average cinema or theatre owner has no real idea of the possibilities of lighting. He knows that many others are installing suitable apparatus with apparently pleasing box-office results, and, lured on by the advertisements of some firm or the other, thinks that all that is necessary is to ask his architect to provide some cornices in various parts of the auditorium. The architect has but the vaguest of ideas, and would prefer to leave the coloured lighting out altogether, while the manufacturers only worry themselves as to how, not as to why, their apparatus is to be fitted into the cornices. These three gentlemen thereupon embark on a contest which does not cease until the cinema is open."

This last sentence finds an echo today: but there follows the expression "psychological lighting" which emphatically places the article back in the early thirties. It was the great word of the time. Harold Ridge, for example, used it often in the context of the lighting at Terence Gray's Cambridge Festival theatre in the twenties. Brought up on his book it was second nature to use the term then. Today I think I would prefer 'atmospheric lighting' but to continue:

> "In designing a theatre for psychological lighting it should be borne in mind that lighting, in which the sources are concealed, depends for its effect on the following factors: (1) Colour, (2) Intensity, (3) Direction. These factors give rise to reactions on the human being of two kinds: (a) Physical, (b) Psychological. So far the factors 1 and 2 – Colour and Intensity – are the only ones that have been really considered, presumably because they are the most obvious. In the case of 1 (colour) the reactions stirred are both physical and psychological. For instance, a red light is uncomfortable to the eyes and leads to a corresponding reaction of unrest.



> Some other well-known reactions are: Green blue light for melancholy, middle blue light for meditation, deep blue or pea green for mystery. Some colours, such as amber, may cause reactions of two opposite kinds according to its direction, these reactions being either of gaiety or of intense monotony."

After a digression on the type of equipment necessary for the mixing of the primary colours, the subject of intensity comes up and speed of change:

> "An auditorium illuminated by a bright cold blue inspires a different feeling (possibly exhilaration) from a dim cold blue (probably mystery). There is also a value in the actual dimming process. Light increasing or decreasing in intensity, together with the speed with which these operations are carried out, has a great use in psychological lighting. This, has been made no use of whatever, up to the present; the changes from one colour effect to another have been regarded as an unavoidable evil and not considered at all."

All this could be achieved with lighting on the stage but as we come to the part of the article dealing with direction, it becomes obvious that our author was not only talking about the effect of the direction of light on the object viewed but the effect on the viewer himself. He had to be made conscious of light around and above him at will. I don't think this part of the article although detailed makes this as clear as it could have; probably because the reader of fifty years ago would not need it stressed, being quite accustomed to lighting changes going on *around him* in the cinema. The final paragraph leaves one in no doubt as to the intention:

> "From these remarks it is, I hope, clear that the architect designing a theatre or cinema should aim at providing a background to the lighting, the lighting being atmospheric rather than architectural. With an auditorium designed on the lines indicated, it would be possible to bridge the gaps between the scenes on the stage, be they shadow or flesh. The auditorium would take up the mood of the preceding scene and merge into the mood of that to follow, or, if need be, provide an interlude itself with the aid of music. There is considerable doubt in the minds of many as to the efficacy of psychological lighting, but hide the formidable title from the public's eye and they cannot fail to be moved even as they are by nature's display of light and colour."

Six years later I got the chance to build such a theatre, albeit a small one seating only eighty but, as can be seen, in great comfort in well-padded tipups. A luxury Strand's post-war audiences were never to enjoy! The lease of the old Seecol theatre on the north side of Floral Street had terminated and we moved to 29 King Street; behind which was a long and narrow ill-lit warehouse full of cast-iron columns carrying short cast-iron beams supporting three floors above the basement, making four in all. The bottom two levels were to be cleared to house the theatre. Although hidden behind plaster the pairs of RSJs to pick up the short beams and allow the columns to be removed can be sensed in the ceiling photograph. The outer wall of the two floors above actually ran along the right

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