

involved with other members of the design team in all stages of planning and technical detailing. This is not to say they attempt work outside their own speciality but, by attending meetings, preparing briefs and suggesting use of proven solutions, they try to ensure that the primary theatrical purpose of the project is given priority and that the enthusiasm of newcomers to the theatre world does not result in attempts to re-invent the shaft and wheel.

TECHNICAL DESIGN

Technical detail is the responsibility of Peter Angier. The practice has accumulated drawings and specifications for all sorts of theatrical devices and these are used to explain what is required to the services consultancies and to prepare specifications for equipment to be purchased directly. These are rarely detailed designs, more a statement of required performance and workable dimensions and relationships that, if incorporated into the flytower structural engineer's design, for example, will put fly gallery, loading, gallery, pin rail and counterweight locks in positions where they will work correctly.

As a practice, Carr & Angier are cautious about technical innovation. Their views seem to be that there are already tried and proven solutions to nearly all technical problems and that these should be used wherever possible. Their theatres usually have standard counterweight flying; lanterns, dimmers and control from one of

the established manufacturers; sensible communications and cue lights for stage management and a basic sound installation; though, in this field and this field only, they find that fashions and equipment designs change so frequently, their choice of technical hardware necessarily made six to twelve months before opening day rarely pleases the operating staff who bring their own preferences and priorities. Their solution, when possible, is to provide generous wiring and ducting and a basic system while reserving money in the budget to be spent at the last moment when the views of the theatre staff can be determined. Nevertheless, despite this basic policy of caution, Carr & Angier are quite prepared to provide special solutions for special problems and have proven designs for power flying and rolling stage wagons, for example, incorporated in recent and current projects.

FUTURE

Without probing too deeply, it seems that the partnership is prospering at a time when all agree the boom in theatre construction has long passed. Building on their reputation for personal service, early involvement and attention to detail, Carr & Angier have widened their scope to advise on all forms of auditoria or place of public assembly including conference centres, cinemas, concert halls, exhibition galleries, arts centres, leisure centres, class rooms and lecture theatres and sound and television studios. The current job list includes

more work on the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, a performance space in the Queensway Plaza also in Hong Kong, the Leeds Playhouse, the design brief for the Cardiff Centre for the Performing Arts, renovations at the Cardiff New Theatre and for the Royal Academy of Music, and a theatre for The Magic Kingdom in the Trocadero in London.

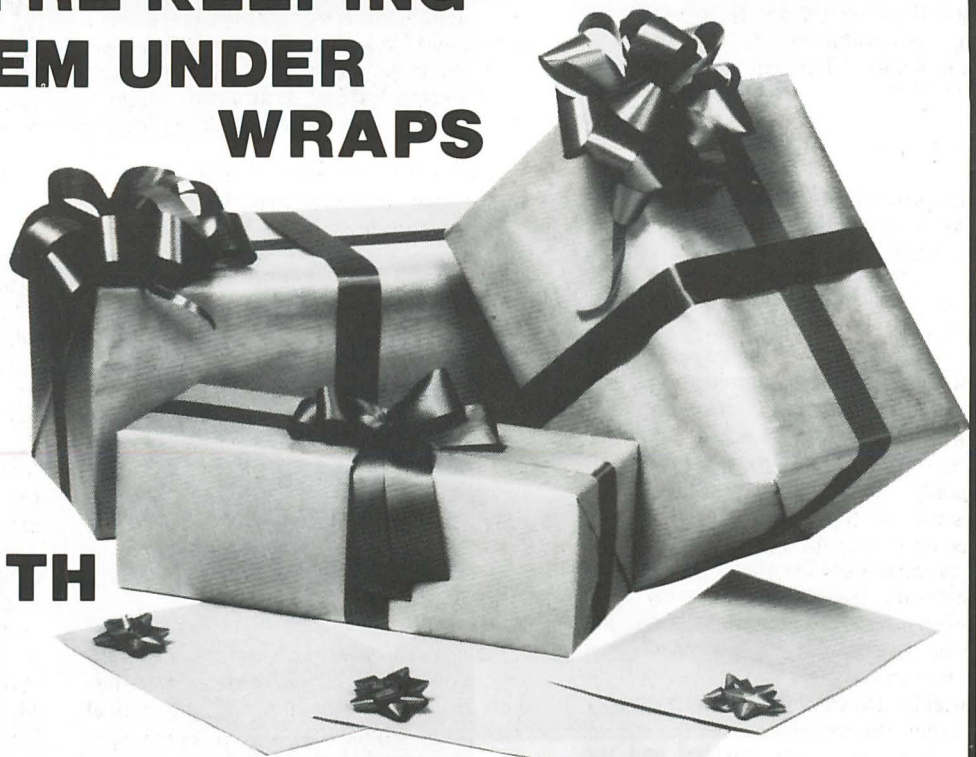
Both Martin and Peter are long standing and active members of both the ABTT and the Society of Theatre Consultants and Peter is currently chairman of the latter organisation. Martin also finds time to serve on the Theatres Advisory Committee Council and has been its vice-chairman and SACLAT delegate. He is a visiting lecturer at Bath University School of Architecture and is a Member of the Boards of Management for the Theatre Royal, Plymouth and St. David's Hall, Cardiff.

There are many world beating top class professionals working British theatre, both on-stage in the public eye and behind the scenes. Theatre consultancy is further behind the scenes than most of the activities of the profession but, even though unrecognised by the majority of theatre-goers, the quality of any performance rests eventually on the quality of the building and its technical equipment. The world needs good theatre consultants and those in the know agree, the Carr & Angier partnership are among the best.

21
YEARS

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