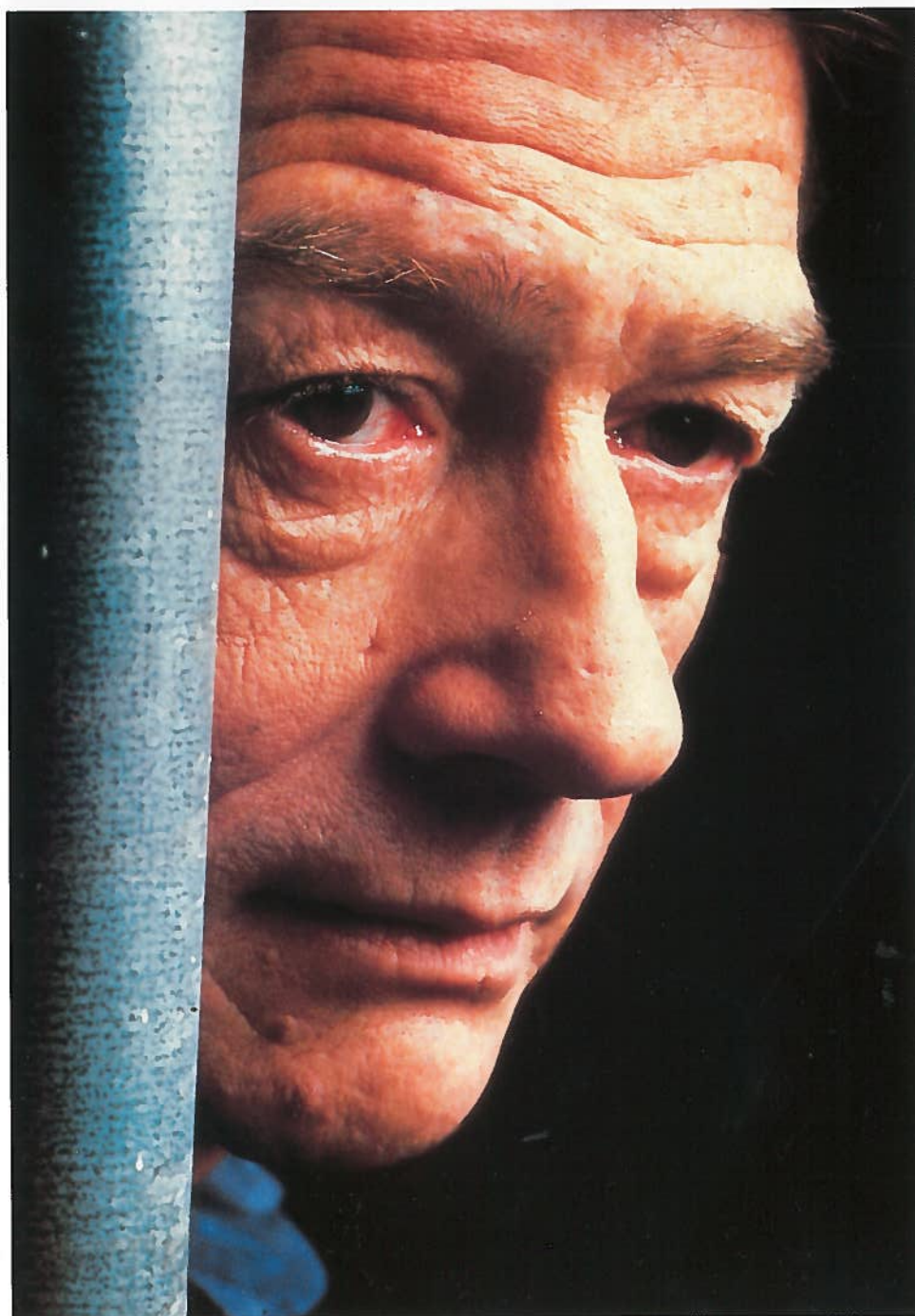


SOUNDING OUT THE LIGHTS



Since the 1960's John Hurt has built-up a considerable international reputation as a dramatic actor, having appeared in films as diverse as *Midnight Express* and *The Elephant Man*. And who, since seeing *Alien* has experienced even a mild stomach-ache without fearfully anticipating a similar alarming fate to that befallen by the hapless Mr Hurt?

All of which means that one of cinema's most instantly recognisable 'faces' has developed some very firm ideas of his own on dramatic lighting over the years.

He said, 'I think that lighting is something that a performer must know about. It is one of the essentials.'

'Sadly, nothing at all was taught about lighting at RADA. Oddly enough you are taught everything but lighting.'

'All kinds of things were taught in terms of stagecraft but there was little else when I was there. Very little was taught about film or television for that matter.'

'They have more in the curriculum now but I very much doubt whether there is anything to do with the technicalities of lighting.'

John was speaking at his temporary home in Dublin, where he and his family are anxiously waiting to move into the house they have just bought in County Kildare.

‘LIGHTING IS SOMETHING A PERFORMER MUST KNOW ABOUT. IT IS ONE OF THE ESSENTIALS.’

As a highly respected performer, with an enviable clutch of acting awards to his credit, he feels that personal attention paid to the lighting of a film or TV set helps him to turn in a notable performance when the cameras start rolling.

He explained, 'Obviously there are lighting men that one gets to know over the years and you can tell that the more they work with you the more they understand your face. That's one side of things.'

'The film which stays in my memory for dramatic lighting was *The Elephant Man*. I think that was a piece of genius lighting. It was lit by one of the greatest black and white lighting men we have. Freddie Francis.'

'Lighting was extremely important for me to understand what was going on. For me to make any sense with particular movements, I had to understand the lighting and the lighting had to understand me.'

'Certainly lighting for black and

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