

Light Palette 90 system in operation. Three full control desks, a remote submaster wing and three hand-held remote control units mean a potential of six simultaneous inputs to the system. Six individual crew members, designers and assistants can, and often do, direct their commands to the electronics tower.

During set-up, all controls are operational as specified by the master control desk (known as 'God' to the crew). Crew members are each given sections of the lighting plot and work independently



to hand, rough focus and colour their section of the plot. The ability of the hand-held remotes to call up dimmers or channels without interfering with the command line of any other control point keeps communication confusion to a minimum. It also frees the designer to record cues without the accidental incorporation of lights activated from other control points.

At the close of the 1991 season, Wolf Trap's technical staff said they were pleased with the new system. But if history is anything to go by, their increased capability will soon encourage them to push the system to its limits – and beyond. ■

Since 1914 we have been leading the way in lighting innovation. Here we look at some of the:

Milestones In Lighting History

1914 Strand Electric begins as an office with workshop in Garrick Yard, St Martins Lane, in the heart of London's Theatreland.

1918 Theatre electricians Arthur Earnshaw (Duke of Yorks) and Phillip Sheridan (Strand Theatre), who founded the firm are joined by Moss Mansell, a manufacturer of arc resistances and dimmers in Cecil Court.

1922 *Round in Fifty* at the London Hippodrome marks the first use of the Sun-ray compartment batten. It becomes the backbone of any Strand installation. The use of these with filters instead of colour-dipped lamps was essential to Aidrian Samoiloff's scenic tricks using complementary colours.

1923 The Theatre Lighting department is started by LG Applebee, later to become Strand's first well-known lecturer writer. He ran it until retiring in 1957.

1924 The Old Vic of Lilian Baylis: Strand's first 'dead front' switchboard was installed. Until then, contacts and busbars had been mounted on the front of polished slate panels.

Shepherds Bush Pavilion (later to become The Gaiety Theatre, then the Odeon) was the first of the great 3000-seat super-cinemas to have full stage lighting and concealed colour-change lighting around the auditorium.

1924/5 Wembley Empire Exhibition: complete installation with cyclorama for Oliver Bernard's *Battle of Zeebrugge* in the Admiralty Theatre.

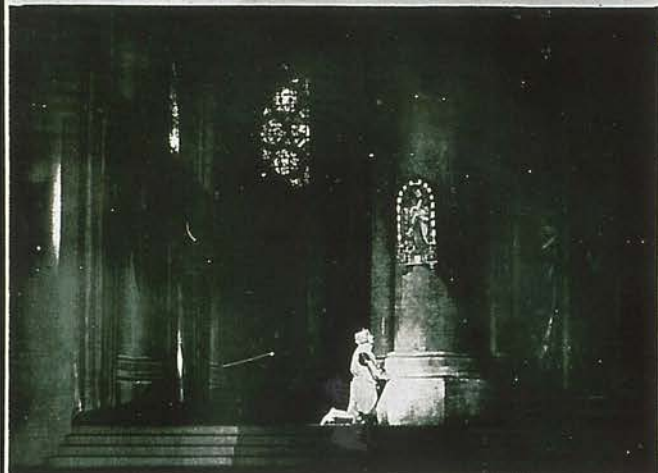
Except that its stage was a water tank, this single tier, steeply-stepped house anticipated by 35 years a form to become popular in the 1960's.

Special lighting effects were also created in the new stadium for productions of *Fire of London* and *London Defended*. Special effects in other exhibition pavilions, especially the optical projection of the British Guiana waterfall.

STRAND FIRSTS

MISS SYBIL THORNDIKE PRODUCTION
OF ST JOAN - 1924.

PHOTO BY BERTRAM PARK



PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN UNDER NORMAL STAGE LIGHTING CONDITIONS
APPARATUS FOR WHICH DESIGNED AND SUPPLIED BY
STRAND ELECTRIC ENGINEERING CO

From the archives

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