

Letters to the Editor

Lightboard M

Dear Editor,
I am writing this letter in an attempt to explain my thoughts regarding the Strand Lightboard 'M' lighting control console.

My name is Mark Owsley. I am currently the Scenic Designer and Technical Director for Clark College in Vancouver, WA and was formerly the Assistant Stage Manager for the School of Performing Arts at Portland State University in Portland, OR. I am also Production Manager for Chamber Music Northwest and have toured extensively with professional productions as well as a number of seasons of summer stock theatre.

Clark College recently completed an extensive remodel on one of their theatre spaces which included new lighting and dimming. Being a state school we were subject to putting all projects of this size out to competitive bid. Naturally we had representatives from every major manufacturer make presentations to us. As I am familiar with all of the products in real show situations my opinion was sought out to help with the final selection. We settled on the Strand 'M' board because it contained all of the features we felt were necessary for us to be able to train our students on the most advanced equipment available. To this time these features were out of our reach financially but with the new advances in technology we are now able to provide this 'tool' for our students. Along with Strand's excellent representation in the northwest by Stage Craft Inc, we felt that this would be the ideal system for our new facility.

Installation of the console and the CD 80 dimmer packs was done very efficiently and to our great satisfaction. I was then left with the manual and a date for a training session. Of course I couldn't wait and went ahead with the manual. I found the instructions to be very clear and precise. In a short time I was fully versed in every operation of the board to the point of knowing many of them as well as the training rep the next week. I believe that this was due to the style and layout of the manual and the ease I had following the self training exercises.

Our first production using the 'M' board was 'Indians' by Arthur Kopit, a play requiring the use of most of the features incorporated in the 'M' board. With this board I was able to fully design EACH CUE!, up and down times-waits-chases and even a complete re-patch using the patch tables. The information display is superior to anything I have used currently on the market; clear and useful, friendly if you will. I pre-programmed the board prior to our first technical rehearsal and dropped what would have been a 7 hour day to a 1 1/2 hour rehearsal - truly a time saver as well. We have produced 3 plays as well as a world premier musical since then and have had no hard or software problems. As a training tool it can't be surpassed. I now have students begging me to let them design or run lights for our productions - VERY EXCITING.

So thank you Strand Lighting. This is the lighting system that has finally opened the ART of lighting to all levels of professional, educational and community theatre. I can't recommend it enough! Please keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Mark S. Owsley, Technical Director
Clark College Theatre Dept, Vancouver WA.

More Lightboard M

Dear Mr Harris,

I have just read your article on the Lightboard M in the Spring edition of 'Strandlight'. I have this day placed an order for the board. It is what I have been crying out for over the past few years. It would appear to be the answer for people like myself who have to perform instant lighting design for live shows where anything can happen and has to be covered instantly. The most obvious and heartening point about the board, is the fact that it has been designed for Lighting Designers who can accommodate and welcome the help of modern technology and not the Computer Operator who wants to be a Lighting Designer.

Yours sincerely, Peter Ardran, Director
D.S.A. Production Services Ltd London.

'Lost Stolen or Strayed'

Dear Richard,

Here's one for your 'Lost and Found' Column. From the premises of Roscolab U.K. on the 21st May 1988, 1 Action Lighting Control - Serial No. 172078, during a break-in. If found, please return to Light Relief, Cardiff.

Perhaps you could insert this ad. in Strandlight for us.

Yours sincerely,

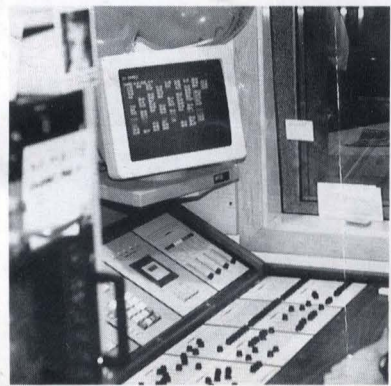
Ian Holden,
Light Relief,
Cardiff.

Television Quatre Saisons



Impasse: a situation in which the editor frequently finds himself!

Actually the new Quatre Saisons studio in suburban Montreal. Like another very well known Quartzcolor equipped studio, it is opposite an underground station. But not this time White City. (Can there be anyone in the world interested in studio lighting, who doesn't know that one alights from the London Underground at White City for the BBC Television Centre?)



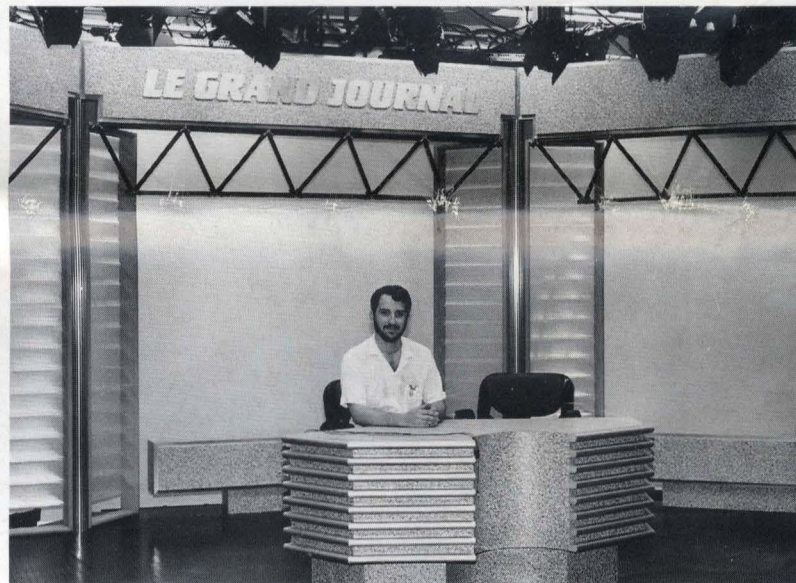
Control by a Celebrity memory system. Now available from Strand world wide.



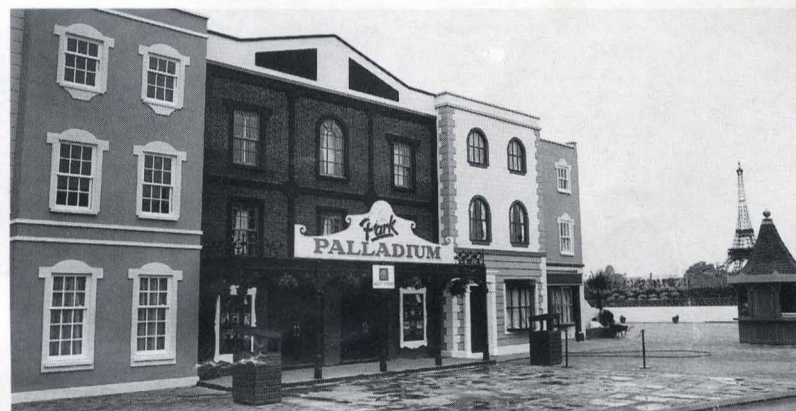
The Designer and his Dimmers, Jody Good of ElectroControls.



Plenty of Quartzcolor aloft! But note the simple barrel grid. These are still being installed in North America in 1988, simply because T.V. 'over there' has a vast amount of studio space and schedules that demand standing sets. The self climbing hoists and telescopes of intensively used European studios are rare indeed in North America.



The Editor visits a theatre in a leisure park, Thorpe Park near Staines.



Britain's latest Palladium at Thorpe Leisure Park. The Eiffel Tower provides a note of fantasy on the sky line. Actually it is only about twenty five feet tall, and is about two hundred yards from the Theatre!

It must be because of England's weather. In spite of rides varying between giant blue and white tea cups in which a whole family can sit and be gyrated and the more vigorous thrills of Thunder River, which adds a dash of water to the dynamics, and numerous other outdoor diversions a traditional theatre in which up to five musical revue type shows a day are offered has now been opened.

Perhaps 'traditional' is not quite the word, as there are only stalls and no circle. What I first took to be intimate side boxes are occupied solely by Cantatas, so at least boxes are dedicated to 'the quality' in the Jane Austen sense even if it be inanimate.

But the Palladium, as the theatre has been named, is a very pleasant auditorium indeed. For example, its 630 seats are of an up to date and very comfortable design, a mile away from the timber benches I have seen in so many 'Theme Park' auditoriums. They are upholstered in several shades of blue, while the walls are of dusty pink and grey. The raked floor is even close carpeted. None of those workhouse strips of carpet between the rows at the Palladium.

The lighting installation is generous. 40 Cantatas, 30 Punchlights, 14 Coda 4's and 2 Solo CSI follow spots controlled by an M24 and effects through 96 Permuss dimmers.

A new Studio Complex with lighting by Quartzcolor and control by Celebrity has recently been completed in Montreal.

Canada was the first territory in which Strand's newly acquired Electro Controls range was offered alongside both Strand and Quartzcolor equipment. And a very successful marriage of products it has turned out to be. The proposal was made in Salt Lake City, the dowry was arranged in London and the ceremony was in Los Angeles. Here, in Montreal, at the Quatre Saisons studios, we illustrate an early consummation.

Note: The project was placed through our Quebec representative:

Servispec-Prolux
6775 Bombardier
St Leonard, Quebec, Canada

Davis Goodman, Technical Director, poses at the presenter's desk for the Editorial Pentax. So much equipment - we are glad to say - to light so few.



Celia Pope



André Barham

Celia Pope Promoted and a New South East Sales Representative Appointed

André Barham has taken over Celia Pope's old territory, while Celia is now an Overseas Territory Manager.

André joined us a year ago in the service department, before that he was involved in computer servicing in the City of London. He is married with two sons.

Celia has now shaken off the dust of Isleworth and is looking after Scandinavia, Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg. As Export Manager Graeme Pusey remarked, 'Winter is on the way, so we have given her Iceland too'.

Vic's Back!



Vic Gibbs, who was a stalwart of R & D for some years has returned to the fold after a spell with another company. He is now our Manager of Quotations, Projects and Customer Service.

Palladium on Thames



Morning rehearsal on the very adequately sized stage.

The Theatre Consultant's hand of Mr John Whittaker, of Theatre Projects, can be seen in the well placed lighting bridges, as well as the general professionalism of the equipment and its installation.

The whole of the stage equipment and lighting was supplied and installed by Strand Agents A.S. Green & Company (Lancashire) Ltd. David Collier, their man in charge, must have made many an M6, M1, M25 journey to get this project so complete on a tight time scale.

So if you weary of a giant tea cup or even of a Mississippi stern wheeler, a lively musical review, well lit, awaits you!



No! I did ask one of the cast to pose as an M24 operator. The glamorous young lady actually is the operator.