

The additional facilities offered by the building were extensive but unfortunately severe limitations in respect of lighting were created by budget restrictions and the earlier previous simple lighting limitations of the tent were passed into the new building. The cramped, all but inaccessible, positions in the domed ceiling precluded the use of colour and were in any case very few in number. This lighting which belonged to the Tyrone Guthrie "white period" was adequately controlled from a 20-channel, Century 2-preset control.

It is interesting to note that the Chichester Festival Theatre in England was inspired by the design but that the same limitations of lighting did not pass to this theatre when it was constructed. Although similar, the Stratford Theatre has a much larger capacity of 2,258 seats.

During 1971, it was decided by John Hayes, the Production Director, that these serious limitations would cease and a new installation was designed for the theatre by the New York lighting designer Gil Wechsler working very closely with the technical consultants M. M. Dillon Ltd., of London, Ontario. The chief engineer, Emil Czerkowski from M. M. Dillon had to overcome many problems in modifying the ceiling structure to adapt for the new installation.

In the main the new installation is based on five concentric rows of lighting slots in the ceiling. That above the front edge of the stage is almost a complete ring, the others conform to the 210° encompassment of the stage by the seating. The last slot nearest the periphery of the auditorium is broken up into eight short sections instead of being continuous. A great deal of structural alteration has had to be made to the ceiling itself and new catwalks allow access to each lighting slot from above.

The characteristic contours of this theatre's ceiling have been preserved as have the original dome slots which are therefore additional positions to those of the five new rows.

The new lighting equipment supplied comprises sixty 1490 series 6 in. Leko lights (profile spots)—one hundred and sixty 1570 series 8 in. and twenty-five 1520 series

10 in.—245 new spotlights in all. A variety of lens combinations are used and lamps of 750 watt, 1 kW and 2kW, as appropriate to the varying lengths of throw.

The control is from a 120 dimmer channel Strand Century Memo-Q System with 600 instant dimmer memories. This large number is to facilitate quick turn around of productions in the Festival repertoire without re-programming. A Teletype print-out with punch tape is also being supplied.

The Memo-Q Control System supplied is very similar operationally to IDM and in general provides the same facilities. Its manufacture however is by Century Strand in Los Angeles, who have manufactured a large number of these systems for North American theatres. The extensive use of patching is, however, completely characteristic of American practice. The floor standing load-patch panel has 350 retractable cords for circuits and 480 dimmed receptacles, i.e. three per 3 kW dimmer and six per 6 kW dimmer.

There are eighty 3 kW and forty 6 kW thyristor dimmers—eight racks in all. In addition there are five 50 amp non-dim contactors each represented at the patch panel as three receptacles.

There is a stage manager's booth in the main ceiling on the centre line of the auditorium and level with the last lighting slot. The lighting and sound booth is farther back behind windows in the gallery wall slightly off centre. This position provides a better angle of view and the advantage of access from outside the auditorium via the gallery promenade on which the new room encroaches. The sound and lighting operators have separate windows and a door between their two areas. The dimmer room and patch panel is in the backstage area.

Everyone connected with the theatre is very excited by this latest improvement and Jean Gascon their present Artistic Director along with John Hayes, are thrilled at the added flexibility which is already obvious in early rehearsals, for their forthcoming season. New and exciting things are envisaged, making full use of their new lighting and sound facilities.