

Every few weeks one of our Product Managers issues a circular called "Technical Topics" to our own staff and our agents around the world.

Your Editor considers that some of the items covered would be of a more general interest, so I have decided to lift at least a corner of the veil on the odd occasion.

TECHNICAL TOPICS



by Andy Collier

memory systems to stop, and in extreme cases damage may result to the equipment or control wires.

Although this problem has been identified at several sites using a variety of equipment, the most vulnerable installations are temporary systems, and in particular the touring memory systems. We have therefore issued a clear warning to all M24 users with sketches of mains supply arrangements which will eliminate the problem.

To summarise, if a separately earthed mains distribution system is not available, then all equipment earths have to be connected to one central point and *not* distributed.

M24 MULTIPLEX INTERFACE UNITS

When planning any M24 installations with the D type general purpose 24 way multiplex units, please remember that mating connectors and cables have to be ordered separately.

The product codes are:

- 02 360 00 5m dimmer output cable with plug fitted.
- 02 361 00 5m control input cable with socket fitted.
- 07 225 91 D type plug and socket.
- 35 606 00 25 core control cable.



WARNING

REYROLLE MD10 FUSES

We have received a number of complaints recently of Reyrolle MD10 10 Amp fuses failing prematurely. On investigation, these fuses were purchased from an electrical wholesaler

and not Rank Strand or one of its agents.

Although the fuses were similar to those supplied by Rank Strand, they do not have the same current surge characteristics which are specifically included to reduce the possibility of fuse failure when a cold lamp is connected.

We strongly recommend that only the fuses obtained from Rank Strand be used, and they may easily be distinguished by the white ink used to print the rating on the fuse body. Any fuses printed with blue ink do not have improved characteristics and may prove unreliable.

CADENZA RANGE

We are pleased to say that we have been awarded the GS Certificate from Germany, which means that our complete Cadenza range has been tested by the TUV test house in Berlin and found to conform with all the German VDE Electrical Requirements.

Whilst the GS certificate is only

recognized in Germany, it is an excellent standard that can be quoted in almost any country in the world and indicates to the customers a high standard of electrical safety.

MINIM 23

Two notable improvements have been made in the Minim 23 since the first batch was introduced. The lens movement when focusing could create a slight "judder". We have since modified the unit and included P.T.F.E. pads between the lens assembly and the bottom of the housing. This results in a really smooth operation without "judder".

The second improvement concerns the top spring which retains the colour frame. It was found in practice that the springs were extremely hard to depress with the thumb whilst removing the colour frame. We have since reduced the gauge of the spring material to enable quick and easy access to the colour frame.



BOOKSHELF

by Andy Collier

parental advice from one producer to another, all members of the cast would benefit from eavesdropping on the conversation. There is no hesitation as Peter Spencer launches into advice on keeping the rehearsal under control, the attention to detail, sensitivity to the pace, the creation of a style and the polishing of the production: factors which affect everybody's performance.

The production of musicals is not limited to the amateur dramatic societies. Schools are not disregarded by the author who dedicates a chapter to reviewing some of his previous subjects, but with the emphasis placed on the drama lesson rehearsal periods, the school platform, and methods

of inveigling other members of staff to assist with music and scenery and props and...

Lighting practice is described in detail with a practical example, which follows an introduction to the variety of luminaire types available. One aspect of lighting musicals which is unfortunately not mentioned is control of the lighting to give emphasis; to draw an audience's attention to a principal's entry or to stimulate applause at the end of a duet. A few lines on follow spot technique and some advice on the usage and abuse of blackouts would be appreciated by many performers who have had a moment of high drama reduced to farce by an ill-timed lighting cue. ■

"THEATRE ADMINISTRATION"

by Francis Reid

Published by A&C Black £7.95

It would be easy to pass over a book with a bland title like "Theatre Administration" as a dry textbook for an esoteric readership. But behind this unassuming title is the latest product from Francis Reid, whose talent as an author would make a West End seating plan a best-seller.

We are told that, having accepted the position of administrator at the Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds, Mr Reid searched in vain for a "beginner's book on the basics". It is only now, following his successful tenure in Suffolk, that he has been persuaded to produce the authoritative book for which he was looking.

Far from being a stitch by stitch description of the underwear of a theatre, the book is packed with well illustrated, clear and unequivocal advice, which will be a source of inspiration to theatre managers and amateur producers alike.

The author sets the scene with a classification of the various types of theatre most commonly found,

and his cast of theatre staff is introduced with each of their jobs described individually. No longer is the delicate financial balance of a theatre a mystery. A marvel it remains, but the monetary plot is gently unravelled in the four chapters giving first-hand advice on seeking funding, ways of boosting the theatre's own income, and control of expenditure and budgets.

Francis Reid's fluent style of writing is a joy to read. He even succeeds in holding the reader's attention throughout the chapters on legal contracts (I found myself reading the small print in case I missed something!).

As momentum peaks after the sections on finance and contracts, the all-important audience is brought back into the arena. Every theatre needs an image as an aid to marketing its product. The advice offered here on advertising, selling seats, and looking after the audience will be an inspiration to some theatres, a revelation to others, and like the proverbial marble from the mountain for amateurs.

A must for your bookshelf, this book cannot fail to educate, amuse and fill you with Francis Reid's contagious enthusiasm for the theatre. ■