

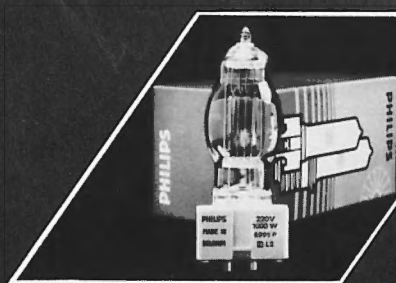
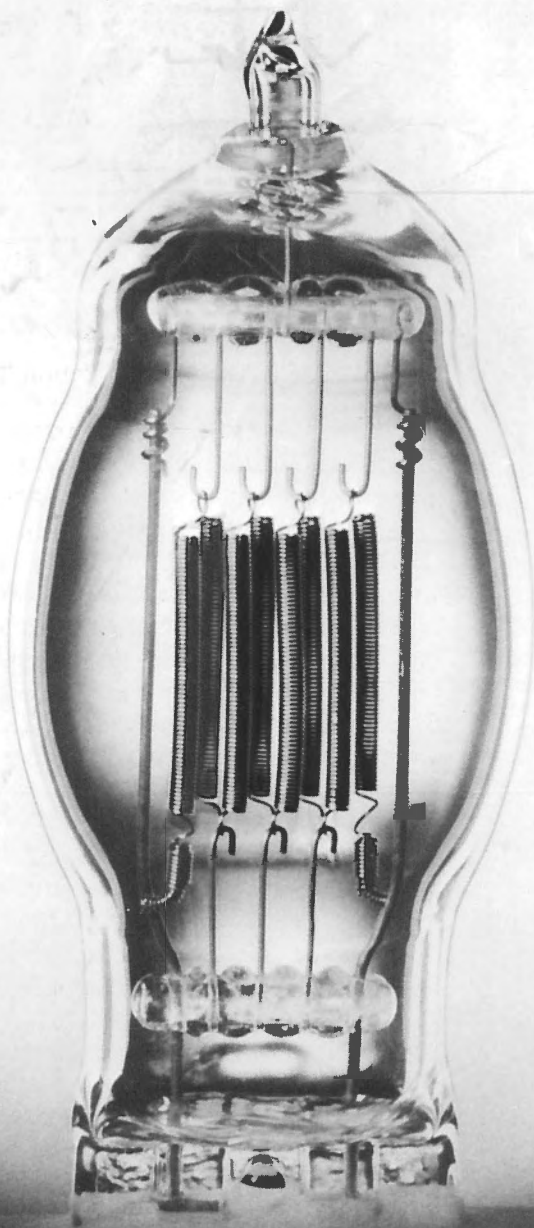
CUE

Technical Theatre Review 31

September/October 1984 £1.75



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Is the form of 21st century theatre becoming clearer? Will it be based on an understanding that intimacy depends upon an audience togetherness rather than mere smallness of scale? Bracknell's *Wilde Theatre*, illustrated on our cover, is the latest example of the rediscovery of the virtues of encircling shallow boxes and balconies.

Photo: Peter Cook.

CUE

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THE I.T. REVOLUTION

This is the age of Information Technology. We are living through a period of change that seems destined to have perhaps the most profound social consequences since the industrial revolution.

I.T. is fashionable. You are expected to have a response to it. And if you are in some areas of endeavour, such as education, then that response is mandatory. So far theatre has been exempt from formal policy making rituals about information technology. But it cannot be much longer before an I.T. policy becomes an integral requirement of every Arts Council grant application.

After all, properly used I.T. can be a major route to the kind of efficiency that combines growth in quality with reduction in costs.

This has already been amply demonstrated by theatre's initial use of I.T. which made lighting better and quicker. Box offices now have multiple access to their plans, and information on sales progress is instantly available to assist marketing decisions. In both cases, what started as simple electronic filing now involves ever increasingly sophisticated processing to present the information in a way which makes the alternatives clearer for the process of decision making.

Stock control programmes allow supply monitoring of everything from ice-cream to pin-hinges. Software can convert working drawings into timber requirement schedules.

Lighting design programmes, which started as simple electronically-filed catalogues, now calculate the missing variable in the "angle-throw-area" triangle.

At last we are experiencing progress in luminaires to match that in intensity controls. Television paid for the control developments, the Rock Bands are subsidising the new luminaires. To memorised remote pan, tilt, focus, iris and colour filters there has been added instant colour changing by prisms. It cannot now be long until we have infinitely flexible shuttering and gobos. By liquid crystals? It is multiplexed I.T. that makes all such devices operable within a rehearsal and performance context.

The manufacturers use I.T. to design all this equipment: the work is too complex to be financially viable at the speed of a conventional drawing office.

The components of a set design can be juggled and scaled. Selection of alternative sightlines can be instant. How else can a director be shown the sequence and sizing of projection images?

Many of us old hands may prefer the language of pen, brush and paper. But to new generations, I.T. is more and more a natural language. The keyboard, cursor and video display are natural tools.

Information technology can be a valuable support provided that we always continue to remember that it is based on logic — and logical decisions have very little place in art.

STAGE DESIGN

DAVID FINGLETON

Back home in Covent Garden, Royal Opera's *Turandot* repeats its Los Angeles success. The Royal Ballet's elaborate design for dance upstage the choreography. Much visual and dramatic enjoyment at Drury Lane and the National Theatre.

Having found depressingly little to praise in the last three operatic productions of the previous season at Covent Garden, it gives immense pleasure to welcome the Royal Opera's first production of its new season, of Puccini's *Turandot* as a stimulating and thoroughly successful staging. This was the production which the company premiered in Los Angeles — a brave move that — during their visit for the Festival which preceded the Olympic Games. The Californians apparently greeted it with standing ovations, and its opening night in London was deservedly met with similar enthusiasm.

Puccini's final and unfinished opera about the ice-cold Chinese princess whose heart is finally melted by the unknown Persian prince is set in Peking, but most productions nevertheless look remorselessly Italian, are dominated by a massive central staircase, from which *Turandot* presides, and carry minimal dramatic conviction. Happily however for this new production the young Rumanian director Andrei Serban, whose work with Welsh National Opera has had considerable success, and his very experienced British designer, Sally Jacobs, much missed here since her memorable work with Peter Brook and the Royal Shakespeare Company during the 1960's, took both the Chinese and Italian bulls by the horns and presented *Turandot* in terms of traditional Peking Opera, blended with Italian *commedia dell'arte*. It worked splendidly.

Instead of that dreary staircase we saw a galleried wooden setting, apparently the inside of a Pagoda, but looking not unlike Shakespeare's Globe, from which the Chorus — spectators in shabby brown overalls — watched the full panoply of the Chinese imperial court. There were thus masks and dragons, shining swords and rivers of bloody gorgeously ornate costumes, and the Chinese characters wore either full or half masks in all public scenes. The Persian characters did not, relying merely on wigs and make-up, which made Plácido Domingo's Calaf bear an uncomfortable resemblance to Boy George. *Turandot*'s ministers, Ping, Pang, and Pong, when at home in Act 2, dropped their 'devil' masks and became the *commedia dell'arte* characters that are depicted in Puccini's music. The Chinese rolling painting that backed them here was however rather too crudely and imprecisely executed. *Turandot* herself resembled a Chinese puppet — very striking in long, straight black wig, white robe, chalk white face and half mask — and her father, the

aged Emperor Altoum, made a stunning entrance flown in on a gorgeous pale blue and gold, tasselled cushion, backed by a golden cut-out cloud.

Costumes were otherwise primary-coloured, excitingly designed and admirably executed, and the entire audacious scheme wholly succeeded in fixing our interest and conveying the drama of the opera. My only reservation concerned the lighting of the American designer, F.

Mitchell Dana, whose plan seemed strangely bland and indecisive. Maybe he was hampered by unfamiliarity with Covent Garden's plan and rig, but his work looked tentative and imprecise, seemingly afraid of the bold statements of a Hersey, Bryan or Chelton. Happily lighting can relatively easily be amended, and for the rest the Royal Opera has opened its new season with a production which should remain a firm favourite for many seasons to come.



The Royal Opera's new *TURANDOT*. Production and design team Andrei Serban (producer), Sally Jacobs (set design and costumes) Kate Flatt (choreography), F. Mitchell Dana (lighting). Illustrated, the execution and finale from Act 1. Photographs by Zoe Dominic



Sadly the Royal Ballet ended their summer season on a rather less successful note. I am always ready to applaud the use of artists as stage designers, especially for dance. But I must question whether the Royal Ballet's management had really thought its design policy through in presenting their two final new works of the season. Was it really worth asking as distinguished a painter as Patrick Caulfield to supply admittedly superb, and highly characteristic, designs for as trite and trivial a 12 minute work as Michael Corder's *Party Game*? Did Deanna Petherbridge, with her huge surrealist architectural fantasies, really have anything meaningful to offer to Ashley Page's mannered, abstract, non-dramatic ballet, *A Broken Set of Rules*? Both works left me feeling that design had supplanted choreography as the point of the evening, as though admitting that the Royal Ballet had little stimulating to say choreographically nowadays, and thus hoped to dazzle us with design instead.

That said, Patrick Caulfield's bravura send-up of a box at Covent Garden as a setting for *Party Game*, with its vivid colour sense, witty trompe l'oeil, strong graphic grip and typically Caulfield lampshades, deserved the highest praise as a stage debut. Less admirable were his rather sloppy and dated, colour coordinated costumes — surely a case here for a working stage costume designer to have assisted the artist. I liked Ms Petherbridge's designs altogether less, largely because they appeared to bear little relationship to what was needed on stage, being rather another example of her usual work, but this time in a stage setting. Her cluttered chromium column with its unwieldy rods was redolent of the Festival of Britain, the dingey costumes in shades of grey were unflatteringly cut, and the very mannered red wigs extremely ugly. To have lavished money on ballets as slight as these by using elaborate design must in any case be an error: the works clearly have a very limited potential for revival, and thus the money will have been wasted.



The Royal Ballet's *PARTY GAME* by Michael Corder. Stage design: Patrick Caulfield. Photograph Leslie E. Spatt

(Below) Deanna Petherbridge's surrealist design for Ashley Page's ballet *A BROKEN SET OF RULES*

Photograph Catherine Ashmore



David Merrick's *42nd STREET* at Drury Lane offers some enjoyable set designs and costumes by Robin Wagner and Theoni Aldredge evocative of the Hollywood '30s. Lighting: Joe Davis and Leonard Tucker. Photograph Catherine Ashmore



Elaborate sets by Saul Radomsky for Feydeau's farce *A LITTLE HOTEL ON THE SIDE* at the Olivier. Costumes: Alexander Reid. Lighting: Mick Hughes



John Gunter designs at their best for the National's production of *WILD HONEY* at the Lyttelton. Skilful lighting by Robert Bryan. Costumes: Deirdre Clancy. Photograph John Haynes

Altogether more enjoyable design for dance can be found at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, where *42nd Street* will no doubt pack them in for months to come. Adapted from Darryl F Zanuck's 1932 Hollywood movie, with choreography and design by the legendary Busby Berkeley, this David Merrick production in Robin Wagner's sets and Theoni Aldredge's splendid costumes, truly evokes the Hollywood of the 30's in its prime. All Busby Berkeley's trademarks are there: those glorious curling staircases, the endless mirrors, those craftily compartmented flats – the 2nd Act dressing room scene and the *Night Sleeper*, shuffling off to Buffalo, are masterpieces of their genre. So too are the meticulously period costumes – just the right cuts and colours – the impeccably painted art deco

flats and the splendidly positive and precise lighting by Joe Davis and Leonard Tucker – a worthy memorial to Davis's long, valuable, and totally professional work in the West End theatre.

Further visual enjoyment is to be had at the National's Lyttelton Theatre – and dramatic enjoyment too – in Christopher Morahan's production of Michael Frayn's skilful adaptation of Chekhov's early play, *Platonov*, now retitled *Wild Honey*. John Gunter has delivered here designs that show him at his very best, well on a level with those he did for the National's *Guys and Dolls* and *The Rivals*. Happily Gunter has the knack of filling any stage at the National in which he is working, because he is clearly aware of the proportions involved and thinks three dimensionally as well as of the relationship between stage and audience.

Thus in the Lyttelton's dull, cinematic auditorium with its blank, picture-frame stage he has used those very qualities to convey the sheer vastness of a country estate in 19th century Russia. He also has the happy device of turning a set upon the audience so that consecutively we see both sides, and, allied to Christopher Morahan's powerfully sustained direction, his unerring sense of perspective and proportion makes the atmosphere of his settings wonderfully powerful. The remarkable railway that runs through the auditorium uses a very short stretch of track, but, abetted by Robert Bryan's superb lighting and Anthony Waldron's admirably accurate sound, achieves an altogether more convincing effect of trains than the costly and elaborate technology of *Starlight Express*. A word too for Deirdre Clancy's costumes, which for once look as though they actually belong to the wearers, rather than having been hired for the night, and for Robert Bryan's skilful lighting which achieves a striking contrast between hard-baked Russian exteriors and the pre-electric softness of gas or candle lit interiors.

I dare say that the National's other recent new production, Feydeau's *A Little Hotel on the Side*, might have looked very well in the Lyttelton too. But in the huge Olivier, with its unwieldy open stage, Saul Radomsky's skilful and elaborate settings, though having all the doors you could want, a credibly Parisian, if architecturally improbable, roof-line, and gutters which run real rain, along with Alexander Reid's lavishly accurate costumes, rather miss out. The trouble is that, in order to perform Feydeau in the Olivier, a false proscenium has yet again had to be constructed and behind it is suspended yet another of those blank cyclo-ramas upon which cloud clusters are projected. The total effect is distracting, uncomfortable and inauthentic. Why ever was it staged there when the Lyttelton would have suited it so much better? Surely not simply because the Olivier has more seats to sell.

The Jose de Alencar Theatre

RICHARD ANDREWS

Brazil's iron theatre made in a Glasgow foundry

On anyone's list of the world's most unusual theatres, the Jose de Alencar must surely rate a high place. It is to be found in the Praca Jose de Alencar in Fortaleza, the capital of the Ceará province, of north east Brazil.

In style, the auditorium takes the English Georgian Horseshoe form, with a pit, boxes on dress and upper circles, and a balcony. The form has been adapted to local climatic conditions however, by the removal of most of the walls! The three circle levels and their access stairs, are a free standing structure of cast iron and steel, constructed under a "dutch barn" roof. It is — if you will excuse me bringing this down to a mundane level — rather like the set of Celebrity Squares or Punchlines. The "rear wall" of the auditorium is completely open. The "side walls" are partially filled in, and have louvred shutters. The boxes have the cast iron equivalent of plasterwork detail on

them, which includes the titles of works by the writer Jose de Alencar, who was born in the province of Ceara, and in whose honour the theatre was built. There is a classical frieze above the proscenium, painted by Rodolfo Amoedo, depicting the writer and his work.

The stage, in effect a separate building from the auditorium, has few facilities, with restricted flying, since there is no fly tower. There are galleries up and down stage at first floor level, connecting with a gallery on all three sides at second floor level. The modest lighting rig and control is of local origin.

The theatre comprises four separate units. You enter through the two storey administration building, with its classical facade, which houses the box office. This opens on to a courtyard garden, at the far side of which is the rear of the auditorium. Beyond this is the building containing the stage,

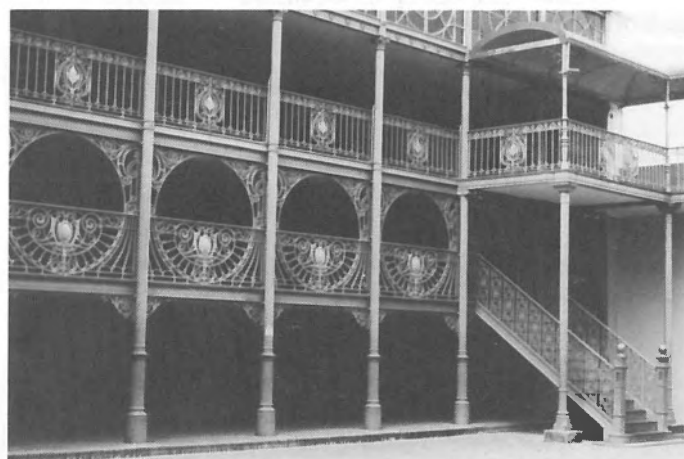
dressing rooms and offices. The shuttered doors down the left hand side of the stalls open on to a further garden.

The foundation stone was laid in 1896, but construction did not begin until 1908. The ironwork was fabricated in the Sarracen Foundry of William MacFarlane in Glasgow, and shipped out to Fortaleza, like a giant Meccano set. Building work was completed on 10th June 1910, with the first performance seven days later. The official opening was on 23rd September 1910, with the play "The Dot" by Arthur Azevedo.

The Jose de Alencar has no permanent company, but has a mixed programming policy of local and touring companies, performing plays, musicals and concerts. It is associated with two ballet companies, and houses a museum and library of theatre in the Ceará province.



Administration building with auditorium in background.



Rear of auditorium from courtyard.



Auditorium from stage, note absence of any cladding to the end.



Auditorium interior showing boxes with cast iron "plasterwork".

We are indebted to *The Architects' Journal* for permission to reprint the following article which appeared in their issue of 6 June. Photography by Peter Cook.

THEATRE OF CHANGE

The new Wilde Theatre, Bracknell, Berkshire, designed by Levitt Bernstein Associates. Francis Reid analyses the building and concludes that it is 'a pointer to the twenty-first century'.

The form that seems likely to characterise late twentieth century theatre building is becoming clearer. If the nature of the performances to be housed in these buildings is less clear, that is because audiences expect a theatrical experience to encompass an ever-widening range of styles. However, it is this very width that has determined multi-function as an important requirement in nearly every brief for a performance space.

The desire for an adaptable theatre is not new. It was pursued with particular vigour in the immediate post-war years, but never developed beyond some tentative tinkering with the proscenium zone. This provided only a notional adaptability in fan-shaped auditoriums, based on clear sight-lines for every member of the audience. But this democracy foundered on the distances between much of the audience and the performers — even when the actors thrust through the proscenium frame.

Change in sight

Future historians may identify George Izenour's *Theatre design* of 1977 as the major turning point in twentieth century theatre architecture. Written as total support for the rising fan-shaped auditorium of pure sight-line, his book catalysed the reaction against such a theatre that was already forming among those who were looking increasingly to the *contact* provided by 'papering the walls with audience'. This philosophy had never been lost in central Europe but in Anglo-American architecture it was a major rediscovery which required a label. That label is courtyard, which has somewhat dangerous implications of rectangular geometry.

Earlier this year I welcomed the marriage of courtyard philosophy with new technology in Northampton's multi-form Derngate Centre. With seating configurations providing for up to 1500, Derngate

requires the technological help of air-casters and elevators to change form. When the audience is only 350-400, as at Bracknell's Wilde Theatre for the South Hill Park Trust, adaptability can be achieved manually.

These theatres, in terms of their own scale, represent the most satisfactory solutions yet devised for housing audiences who want to feel part of a theatrical performance. If the Wilde Theatre is my favourite of the two, it is mainly because I prefer the small and intimate. But I also welcome a more decorative use of colour: Bracknell has avoided the municipal bland that I felt urged to decorate at Derngate.

The overriding strength of the Wilde Theatre is that, whatever form is in use, the shallow balconies link with the main seating to ensure that the audience is always more than just the sum of its parts. An individual will always be aware of the rest of the



1. Main entrance; there is an alternative way in through the arts centre building.

2. The bar overlooks the garden with the option of an open terrace.



audience. This increases the strength of corporate response so that, while good performances will seem even better, there is also every chance that poor performances will seem worse.

The feature of the auditorium that prompts most debate is the stairways linking the three levels of side galleries. I can accept their virtue when the stalls are floored over at stage level in what has become known as 'promenade performance' mode. But in conventional lyric or dramatic end-stage format, I hanker for the more enclosed feeling of the shallow boxed theatre from which the Wilde Theatre is derived.

Critical reactions

The most critical area in any theatre is the meeting of stage and auditorium. The Wilde's solution is more elegant in conception than in execution. The idea of a swinging unit, a 'hingeing proscenium tower', which can vary both the amount of stress given to the proscenium shape and its degree of focus is good thinking. But there is something visually wrong. Perhaps experiment will find a stronger image than the present tentative curtain.

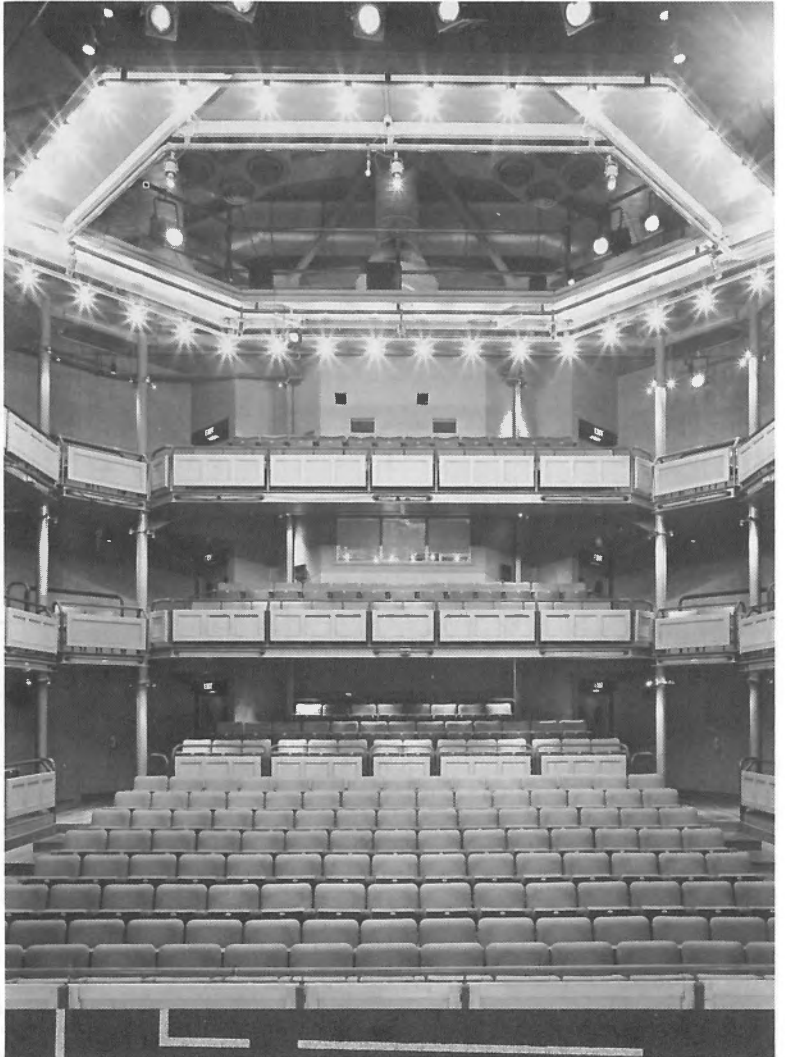
The function of this swinging element in the structure also interferes with a critical

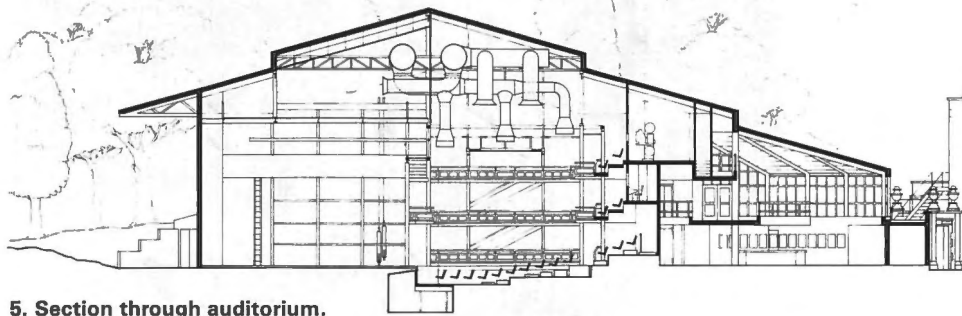
A single row of seats in the side balconies increases the feeling of a corporate audience yet gives a reasonable view.



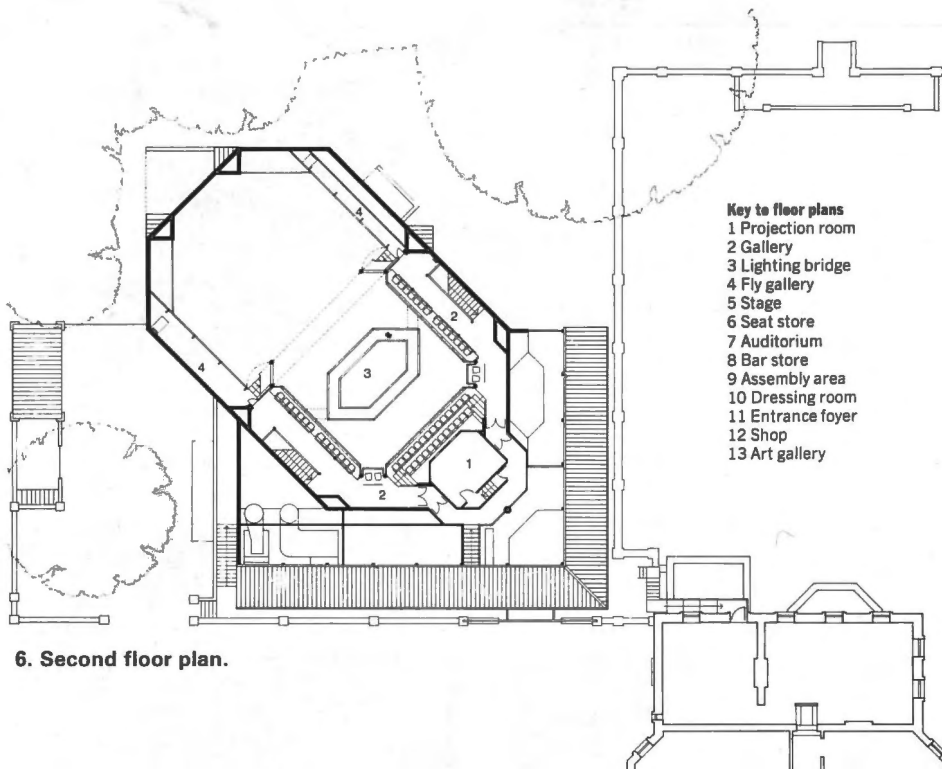
3. There is clear access to all levels from the foyer, yet it is compact enough to provide an exciting atmosphere of expectation.

4. The auditorium from the stage. Lighting bridges form an attractive ceiling and provide access to good spotlighting angles.

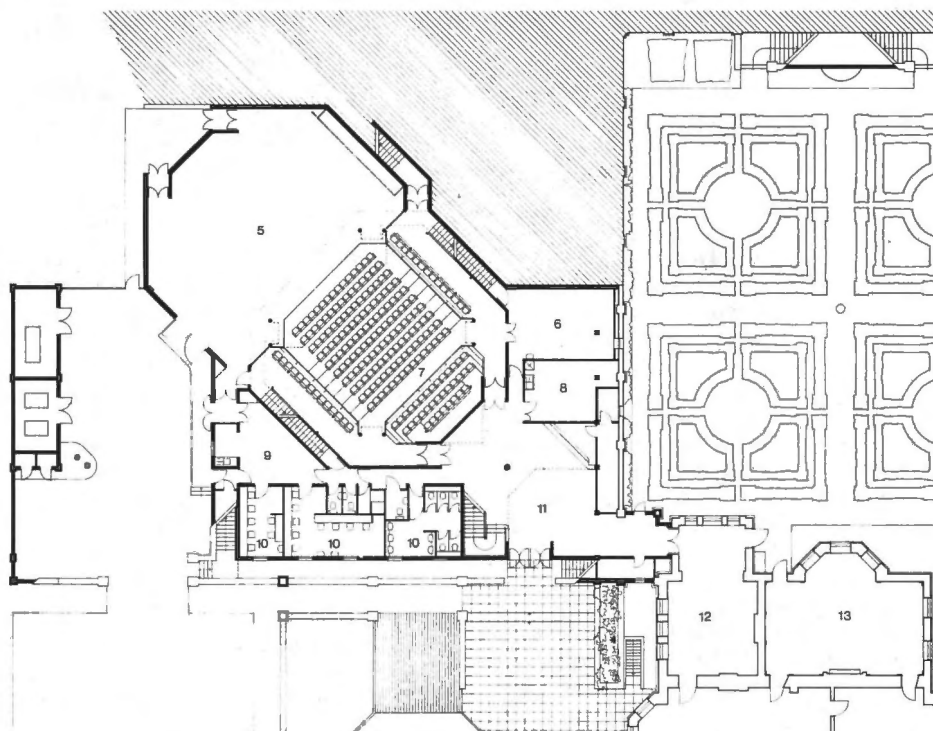




5. Section through auditorium.

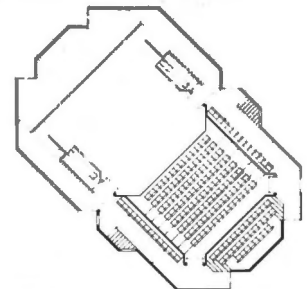


6. Second floor plan.

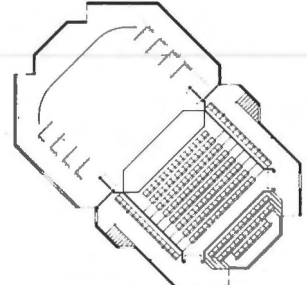


7. Ground floor plan.

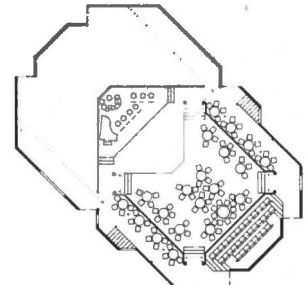
8. Six possible formats with different seating capacities for a range of activities.



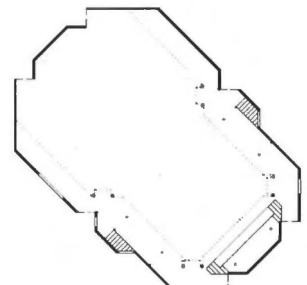
'End stage': 300 seated, 70 standing.



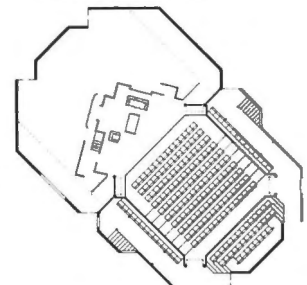
'Opera/dance': 300 seated, 70 standing.



'Cabaret': 235 seated, 50 standing.



'Promenade': 400 standing.



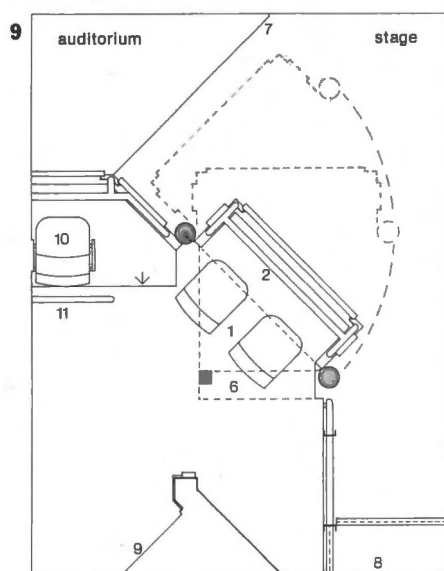
'Proscenium': 330 seated, 70 standing.



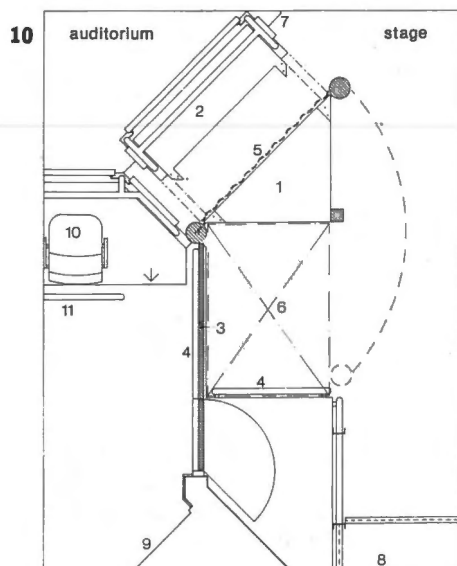
'Orchestra and chorus': 315 seated, 70 standing.

In lyric format the apron stage is removed to reveal an orchestra pit. The swinging unit forms a gently stressed proscenium.

9, 10. Details of moving proscenium tower with open stage, 9, and traditional proscenium arch, 10



Key to proscenium tower
 1 Hinged proscenium tower
 2 Demountable balcony front
 3 Removable solid panels
 4 Removable rails
 5 Removable masking
 6 Removable floor
 7 Stage edge
 8 Counterweights
 9 Escape doors
 10 Gallery side seating
 11 Leaning rail



stage lighting position. However, the lighting bridges in the auditorium ceiling are one of the best compromises yet devised between visual design and technological requirements. Alas, the auditorium lighting is not very sympathetic. There is the germ of an idea in the diffusely focused miniature spotlights used as subsidiary units, but the main lighting is boringly bare-bulbed. What we need here, and in most new courtyard theatres, is a reappraisal of the use of chandeliers in 1984 – but by sculptors rather than technocrats.

The painting is bold and clean with strong but rather inappropriate Habitat resonances. A scenic artist's brush would produce subtleties of tone and texture more sympathetic to this theatre than the uniform technical smoothness of a house-painter.

But these are mere details to be adjusted in time. This theatre is a pointer to the twenty-

first century. To approach it, to proceed through its welcoming foyers, to refresh at its pastoral bar and then to enjoy the complete experience of joining its audience and performers is a rich evening indeed. With its orchestra pit raised by 1 m or so, the Wilde will become England's ideal home for Handel Opera. That it will also serve jazz, rock and every style of dance and drama makes it a space the like of which we have not seen since the Georgian era.

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GARDEN THEATRES

FRANCIS REID

Garden theatres are not always what they seem. If I had stumbled across the stage in the park of the Hermitage at Bayreuth (see Cue 21), I would have assumed that it had become a ruin. But my history books had prepared me for finding a theatre that was conceived and built in 1743 as a ruin suitable for the performance of romantic pastoral entertainments.

In the garden of **Hellbrunn Palace**, on the outskirts of Salzburg, there is a 17th century **Roman Theatre** built for the performance of one rather specialised form of drama. The audience would probably have called it a comedy but this view is unlikely to have been shared by the performers — especially as these performers were the guests of the Archbishop who constituted the audience. A small semi-circular tiered auditorium, decorated with classical statues, focuses on the permanent set of table and stools. On summer evenings the archbishop would invite his guests to be seated at the long stone table which has a centre trough of running water to cool the wine. At a suitably relaxed moment in the course of a merry evening, the archbishop would cue his butler to turn a tap causing a jet of water to spout through each stool. Etiquette decreed that no one should rise until the archbishop did so. Hellbrunn's distinguished guests in the 17th century included the Emperors Ferdinand II and Leopold I, the Electors of Bavaria and Cologne and the Grand Duke of Tuscany. Presumably they sat in the theatre's audience tiers while lesser men were goosed with the archbishop's jets!

This Roman Theatre is part of a water garden which is full of opportunities for drenching the unsuspecting visitor. Its ecclesiastical architect appears to have had more than a passing obsession with the water jet, and the custodians of today try to keep up with the spirit of his humour. Throughout my tour, on a rainy day (sic), I expected the guide to announce 'we have ways of making you laugh' as he surreptitiously operated the taps that would let water gush forth from the most unexpected places. In fairness to the great 17th century master of the aquatic surprise, one must acknowledge the ingenuity by which the water never strikes from the same place twice. His use of cumulative surprise makes for a strong dramatic structure which sustains interest as one proceeds through the garden. Indeed the whole garden design is quite strongly dependent on theatrical devices — like the mask which, on the lower jaw filling with water, opens its mouth, sticks out its tongue and rolls its eyes; or the birdsong produced by hydromechanics.

The theatrical gem of the Hellbrunn Water Garden is its most recent addition, the **Mechanical Theatre** of 1750. With water driven mechanisms that are mostly still the original, the life of a small baroque

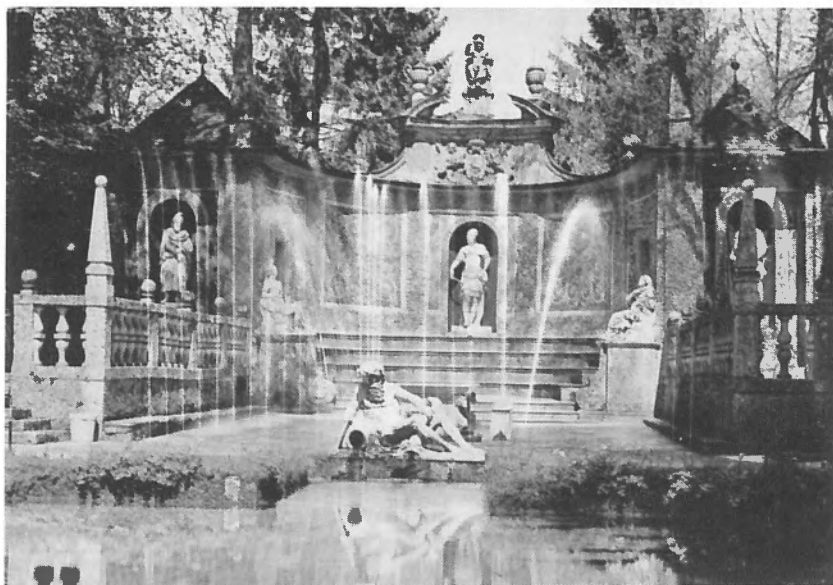
town is performed by figures carved by a salt-worker, Lorenz Rosenegger. Craftsmen carry out their trades, a butcher kills a calf in the street, gypsies dance with a bear, and a band plays while the guard march up and down in front of the town hall. The action is very detailed but the playing of a water organ almost drowns the hammering of wires, wooden discs and metal rods that manipulate the actors. A triumph of hydraulic engineering!

A walk of about twenty minutes through Hellbrunn's park and woods leads to the **Steintheater** where the first opera performances north of the alps were given. Archbishop Marcus Sitticus — he of the water jokes — had this theatre quarried out

of the hillside and the first season, opening on 31st August 1617, included Monteverdi's *Orfeo*.

In this theatre the stonemason was both architect and scenographer, although there are small holes which are said to be for suspending decorative hangings. The permanent set has all the steps and levels that are integral to the staging styles of three centuries later, and a backstage cave is an accoustician's gift for that voice of neptune upon which many a classical plot turns. On a wet August Sunday afternoon, as I clambered about this historically quarried stage set, Monteverdi ritornelli were ringing in my inner ear and my understanding of art and life increased.

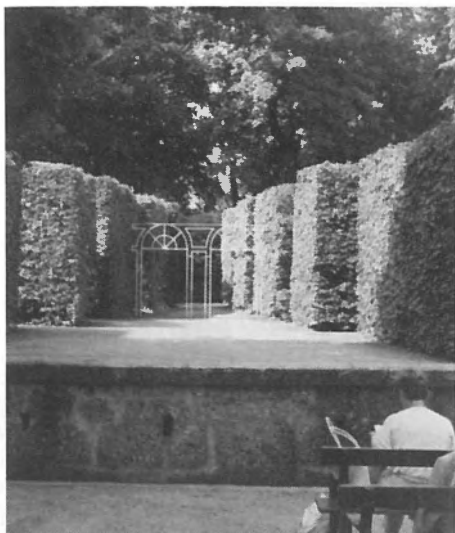
In arranging this summer's visit to Salzburg, my priorities had been the performance dates of 'Cosi fan Tutte' and 'Jephtha' so I was unable to be present on one of the 'Fest in Hellbrunn' weekends when performances are given in the Steintheater and various other locations in the Schloss and its



The Roman Theatre in the Water Garden at Hellbrunn



The Mechanical Theatre in the Water Garden at Hellbrunn



Heckentheater in the Mirabell Gardens, Salzburg

gardens. But I always like to have a constructive excuse for returning to anywhere so stimulating!

Hedges grown to form wings are most people's (and certainly my) idea of a 'normal' garden theatre. There is an example in the **Mirabell Gardens** in the centre of Salzburg. There seems to be very little documentation on this 'Heckentheater'. Many maps of the Salzburg historic sites omit it, although one tourist pamphlet says 'turn left at the fountain for the oldest garden theatre in German-speaking Europe'. I suppose it could be, since the Mirabell Palace dates from 1601, although much rebuilt. However my favourite authority, Margarete Baur-Heinhold's 'Baroque Theatre', which has quite a lot to say about hedge theatres, ignores it completely. Certainly the stone orchestra pit looks old enough, but the positioning of the hedges lacks conviction and they have not been accorded the degree

of horticultural care that one might expect if this were really an important theatre.

The finest example of this type of garden theatre is probably that at **Herrenhausen** on the outskirts of Hannover (and accessible by tramcar). It was built in 1692 and is regularly in use for summer performances. (Once again, I have never timed myself to be in Hannover at the right season — but I did do my Christmas shopping there last year. I am working on next year's schedule and hopefully . . . !)

This theatre probably owes its survival to a 'Sleeping Beauty' period of over a hundred years when Elector George Louis became George I of England, leaving the palace unoccupied and unchanged. The gardens escaped the changing fashions which destroyed so many great formal baroque gardens, thus enabling Herrenhausen to be restored almost to its original glory during the present century.

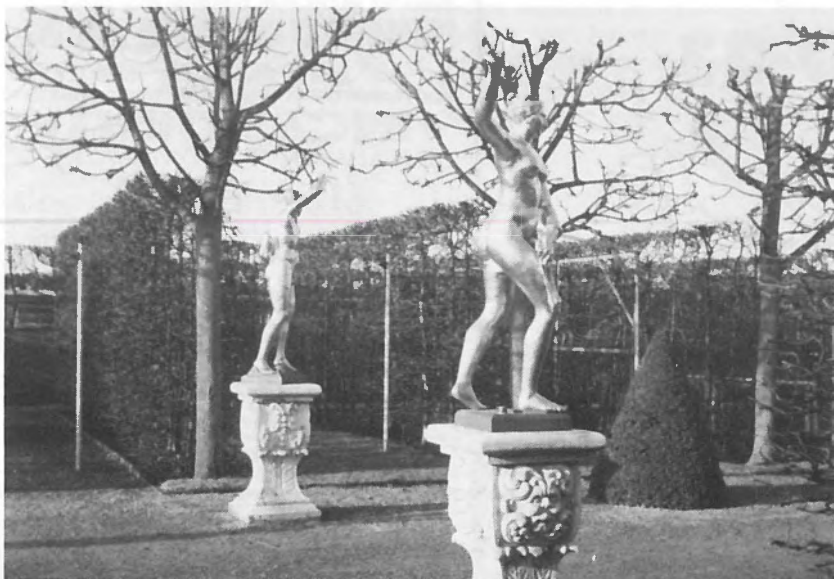
The Gartentheater has a vastly deep stage and a shallow auditorium. So the immediate impression is of a wide and shallow auditorium facing a long and thin stage, separated by an excavated orchestra pit. The auditorium is a stepped rising amphitheatre, screened by trees. The stage has twelve pairs of wings, each being formed from an onstage tree with a hedge leading off. The trees are trimmed up-and-downstage so that the branches link up to form arches between the hedges running on-and-offstage. At alternate wings there is a gilded statue on a plinth, with a conically trimmed bush at the intermediate wings. The proscenium is stated by a pair of inward acting statues on larger plinths. The statues emphasise the perspective effect of the hedges so that the audience view is focussed into the infinity of the park and the sky beyond.

This was the permanent set of masking wings: scenic elements could be inserted as required and this tradition is carried through in modern performances. For lighting there is an 8foot light pole boom in each bay (on a plug count, two circuits a side in the three downstage bays and 1 a side elsewhere), and presumably this was also a lighting position in the eighteenth century. I wonder if there was anything to correspond to the modern tunnel used as a mid-stage crossover?

I am surprised that more theatres are not grown in warm countries!



The Gartentheater at Herrenhausen (performance)



The Gartentheater Herrenhausen — the wings in winter

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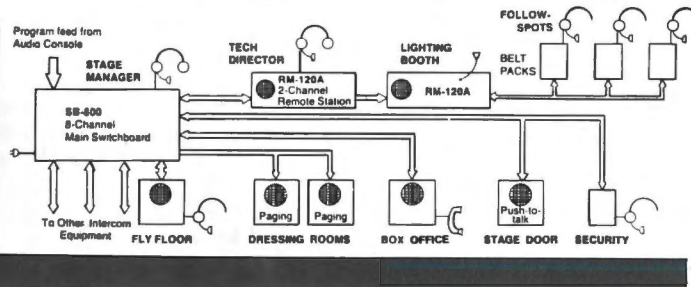
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REIDing SHELF

When I first flicked through **MAKE-UP FOR THE THEATRE, FILM & TELEVISION** — from the back as I automatically seem to do with any heavily illustrated book — I nearly dismissed it as another treatise on the sort of make-up that was required and practised when lighting was a flat illumination without the sculpting quality that is now normal. But Lee Baygan's introduction immediately deflated my initial response. His book is written in reaction against old style make-up where the face was flattened with foundation and an alien exaggerated bone structure painted on.

The nine hundred illustrations are in monochrome so that emphasis is properly placed upon subtle gradations of light and shade, with no temptation to attempt to copy the heightened contrasts of colour printing. In any case, a major part of the author's philosophy is to encourage actors to choose foundation according to character, and so no specific numbers are ever suggested. Lee Baygan's approach to make-up is through emphasising or de-emphasising what is already there. His dimensional textures will cheer any lighting designer. Lighting and make-up designers are both sculptors. They have long been associated in film and television: perhaps this book will help to bring them closer together in theatre.

OUR WORLD WAS THE STAGE is a short (84 illustrated A/5 pages) and cosy account of the origins and development of Watts and Corry, the theatrical contractors who became the Manchester branch of Strand Electric, eventually mutating into the Northern Regional offices of Rank Strand. The author is nonogenerian Percy Corry, the actor, director, lighting designer and general theatrical commentator who founded the firm that incorporated his name. An identifiable knowledgeable personality at the helm is a proven essential for success in any theatrical enterprise. Corry provided this leadership, commanding the respect of not only his customers but his staff. His memoir is a valuable addition to the jigsaw of technical theatre history. I was particularly fascinated by his account of the wartime Torpedo Attack Trainers, fleshing out the tantalising glimpses in early Tabs. These trainers possibly represent the summit of cyclorama and effects projection technology, at least in Britain. I personally would love to see the rig plans and cue sheets — are they in anyone's archive? Perhaps the Imperial War Museum? Or can Paul Weston remember?

When I subscribed to the publication of Sybil Rosenfeld's **THE GEORGIAN THEATRE OF RICHMOND YORKSHIRE** I assumed that it would be about the building. It is not, but I make no complaint. This is a book about the plays and players who performed not just in Richmond but in the other theatres of the circuit: Beverley, Harrogate, Kendal, Northallerton, Ulverston and Whitby. Indeed it is only by researching the playbills, newspapers and memoirs of an entire circuit that it is possible to piece together the content of the seasons in one particular theatre.

Turning sequences of performances into a continuous narrative is not easy, although Sybil Rosenfeld manages it rather better than several other theatre historians I have read recently. However I do just sometimes wonder if, here and elsewhere, the reader might be more comfortably served with a series of facsimile playbills, annotated with any available fragments from other sources together with the researcher's conclusions? Meanwhile I was intrigued by much of the book, whether the descriptions of the performers (when he came to the lines 'The play's the thing', he rushed to the table, snatched up a pen, and with 'eyes in a fine frenzy rolling' began coram populo, to write the lines 'with which to catch the conscience of the king'); the sets (with a variety of scenery and machinery, particularly Portraits, Armoury, Sliding Panels, Grand Oratory, Subterranean Dungeon, Transparencies etc, etc); or the working conditions when 'going on the road' did mean just that (We allowed ourselves two days to accomplish the task, walking twenty miles before breakfast the first day, fourteen to dinner, and fourteen after dinner; thus accomplishing forty-eight miles the first day over a mountainous country, and leisurely walking fifteen miles on the following day.)

I can pay no higher tribute to Richard Foulkes **THE SHAKESPEARE TRICENTENARY OF 1864** than to report that I was sufficiently hooked to complete it during that ultimate test of reading concentration, the 24-hour flight. (Thus saving my fail-safe novel, Malcolm Bradbury's hysterically observant *Rates of Exchange* for the return journey). Shakespeare is incidental: from his researches into the details of the politics, architecture, performers and comment, Richard Foulkes has created a narrative about arts administration. His tale holds strong resonances for today.

THEATREPHILE continues to fulfil all the expectations aroused by its debut, warmly applauded in Cue 27. The second and third numbers have been developed around the substantial themes of design and seaside entertainment. When the request comes I shall rush to renew my subscription with an alacrity that I have never before demonstrated as a cheque writer. For the favourite theatre-nutty niece or nephew (already with a subscription to CUE), I can recommend no better Christmas present.

MAKE-UP for THEATRE, FILM & TELEVISION. A Step by Step Photographic Guide. Lee Baygan. Drama Book Publishers, New York. Adam & Charles Black, London £12.95. (UK) (Spiral Bond).

OUR WORLD WAS THE STAGE. A Personal History of Watts and Corry (1927 to 1984) Theatrical Contractors. Percy Corry. Neil Richardson, 375 Chorley Road, Swinton, Manchester M27 2AY. £2.20 (Paperback)

THE GEORGIAN THEATRE OF RICHMOND YORKSHIRE and its circuit: Beverley, Harrogate, Kendal, Northallerton, Ulverston and Whitby. Sybil Rosenfeld. The Society for Theatre Research in association with William Sessions Ltd. £10. £6.50 (Paperback)(UK).

THE SHAKESPEARE TRICENTENARY OF 1864. Richard Foulkes. Foreword by J.C. Trewin. The Society for Theatre Research. £7.50 (UK).

THEATREPHILE Popular Theatre Research. Edited by D.F. Cheshire and Sean McCarthy. Available on annual subscription from 5 Dryden Street, London WC2E 9NW. £15(UK).

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101 Yellow	Sunlight and window effect – pleasant in acting areas
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103 Straw	Pale sunlight through window effect – warm winter effect
104 Deep Amber	Mood effect on backings. Backlighting of floor and colour effect
105 Orange	Mainly light entertainment, functions. Fire effect if used with 106, 166, 104
106 Primary Red	Strong red effect
107 Light Rose	As for 104
109 Light Salmon	Interesting back lighting
110 Middle Rose	Pleasing effects for theatrical lighting
111 Dark Pink	Good for cycloramas
113 Magenta	Very strong – used carefully for small areas on set
115 Peacock Blue	Pleasing effect on sets, cyclorama cloths backlighting (ice rinks, galas, etc.)
116 Medium Blue Green	Pleasing effects for theatrical lighting
117 Steel Blue	Night effect used on sets – cycloramas
118 Light Blue	Strong night effect
119 Dark Blue	Mood effects – jazz clubs etc., back projection. Travelling matt blue
120 Deep Blue	Pleasing effects for theatrical lighting
121 Lee Green	Cycloramas
122 Fern Green	Cycloramas – good for mood effect
124 Dark Green	Cycloramas – good for back lighting
126 Mauve	Cycloramas – good for back lighting
127 Smokey Pink	Cycloramas – set lighting, disco's
128 Bright Pink	Cycloramas – good for back lighting – strong effect
130 Clear	Used in animation and projection work
132 Medium Blue	Set lighting – travelling matt blue
134 Golden Amber	Set lighting – amber with a touch of pink
136 Pale Lavender	Set lighting – the subtlest of the lavenders
137 Special Lavender	Set lighting – lavender with blue overtones
138 Pale Green	Set lighting – less than half strength 121
139 Primary Green	Set lighting
141 Bright Blue	Set lighting – slightly darker than 118
142 Pale Violet	Set lighting
143 Pale Navy Blue	Set lighting – reduces intensity without too much blue
144 No Colour Blue	Set lighting
147 Apricot	Pleasing effects for theatrical lighting
148 Bright Rose	Set lighting – half the strength of 113
151 Gold Tint	Pleasing effects for theatrical lighting
152 Pale Gold	Set lighting – subtle warm effect
153 Pale Salmon	Set lighting
154 Pale Rose	Pleasing effects for theatrical lighting
156 Chocolate	Cyclorama cloths – ¾ back for dark skin tones
157 Pink	Dance sequences. (Useful for softening white costumes without affecting skin tones)
158 Deep Orange	Fire effect – sun sets
159 No Colour Straw	Warm effect – pale tones
161 Slate Blue	Set lighting – a very cold blue
162 Bastard Amber	Set lighting – half the strength of 152
164 Flame Red	Disco effect – developed for hell fire scenes
165 Daylight Blue	Set lighting – keylight for moonlight effect
166 Pale Red	Good for light entertainment
170 Deep Lavender	Set lighting – disco's – theatres
174 Dark Steel Blue	Set lighting – creates good moonlight shadows
176 Loving Amber	Set lighting – pale pink enhances skin tones
179 Chrome Orange	Combination of ½ CTO & double strength 104
180 Dark Lavender	Pleasing effects for theatrical lighting
181 Congo Blue	Theatre and television effect lighting
182 Light Red	Theatre and television effect lighting
183 Moonlight Blue	Theatre and television effect lighting
184 Cosmetic Peach	Pale tints complimentary to Key lighting
185 Cosmetic Burgundy	Pale tints complimentary to Key lighting
186 Cosmetic Silver Rose	Pale tints complimentary to Key lighting
187 Cosmetic Rouge	Pale tints complimentary to Key lighting
188 Cosmetic Highlight	Pale tints complimentary to Key lighting
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LEHAR VILLA

Operetta tourist FRANCIS REID takes the postbus to Bad Ischl

Only a dedicated operetta fanatic amongst theatric tourists would cross continents just to visit the museum in Franz Lehar's villa at Bad Ischl. But for a Salzburg Festspieler desirous of a gemütlich luncheon excursion into the Salzkammergut, the journey can be recommended. It takes comfortably under two hours (each way) in the Postbus, up and down the impeccable landscape architecture of the mountains and valleys, passing the

sort of houses that you expect weather figures to emerge from – or perhaps a cuckoo. (Presumably they keep the pendulum in the cellar, which must be a bit of a hazard when choosing a bottle of wine.)

On arrival in Bad Ischl, stop by the Trinkhalle where the 15-piece Kurorchester play, in a manner reminiscent of more spacious times, for the relaxation of the water takers and newspaper readers. Their programme is

strong on waltzes to prelude a visit to the memorial villa where the river hastens past Lehar's.

The museum is advertised as being open 9-12 and 2-5 but visitors may only go around in conducted groups. However there is a pleasant waiting garden. Lehar made the Villa his home from 1910 until 1948 when his will passed it to the town of Bad Ischl on condition that it be preserved without change.

Apart from the items of historical interest in the context of Lehar's professional life and the emotive power of the house itself, the details of the furnishing help us to know the composer by allowing us to experience the environment that he created for his everyday living. An operetta tape playing softly in the hall sets the ambience, but in the upper rooms the sound is the one that Lehar heard – the river surging by. His desk is by the window, the river visible over his left shoulder, and the sound would also be insistent at his Steinway (a gift from the Budapest Philharmonic).

Much of the ephemera is the predictable memorabilia of a theatrical musician – photographs (particularly of Richard Tauber), playbills (often starring Richard Tauber), scores (mostly with hand-written translations by Richard Tauber), bronze laurel wreaths, a golden baton and the small stuffed brown elephant that was Lehar's talisman at performances. Presented items include a 1912 sideboard bearing a dedication from George Edwardes of Daly's Theatre.

Of general theatre interest beyond purely Lehar mementoes are various prints and early photographs including a theatre interior 'Il Momento Politico', a marvellously atmospheric float lit view of a stage from the pit and a print of the original Stadttheater in Bad Ischl. Built in 1827 and serving as the Kaiserlich Konigliches Hoftheater from 1865 to 1914, this became the Lehar Film Theatre in 1940. Archaeologists can reconstruct the original interior in their imagination by studying the photo and plan at the box office. These show the remains of an intimate courtyard curving towards a proscenium through which cinema seats have now been thrust into the old stage area.

Lehar's bedroom remains as it was on the day of his death, his bedside table with his last personal utensils. In this room are the intimate items like the portraits of his wife.

There is no sense of a mausoleum at the Lehar Villa. It all adds up to a tribute that is strangely alive.



The villa was Lehar's home from 1910 to 1948.

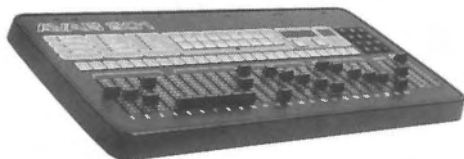


Franz Lehar's music room, within sight and sound of a surging river

PRODUCT NEWS

CCT to market AVAB in U.K.

These major control systems from Sweden include the AVAB 201 so successfully demonstrated at this year's ABTT exhibition. Its operational flexibility and compactness caused considerable interest there. The 'Viking' which is AVAB's larger control had its debut at the USITT conference. CCT will be happy to supply technical information on this latest arrival. More from CCT Theatre Lighting Ltd., 26 Willow Lane, Mitcham, Surrey.



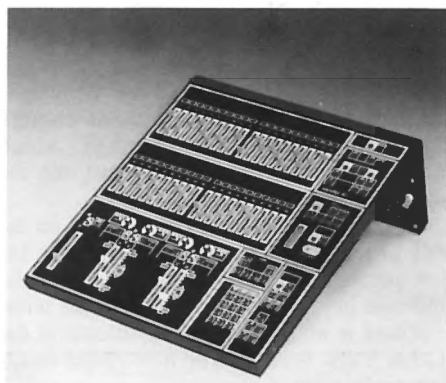
Theatre Consultancy appointments

Mr Graham Walne's company Leisureplan have recently been appointed consultants by the States of Guernsey for the redevelopment of the Beau Sejour Theatre.

Work is due to start next year and involves new seating layouts, enlarged stage and improved acoustics and equipment. The Guernsey appointment follows consultancy awards for several English local authorities including a new theatre to be built in Crawley, restoration of the Mechanics Theatre, Burnley and improvements to equipment in the Gade Theatre, Rickmansworth.

Concord Controls Group acquire Green Ginger

This acquisition will enable Green Ginger to benefit directly from the financial and technical resources of the group in its future product development programme. This will concentrate on extending further Green Ginger's established reputation in the theatre lighting field, at the same time opening up the much wider commercial and display lighting market now increasingly involved in theatrical type presentations. For further information please contact Robert Bruce, Managing Director, Concord Controls Ltd., Unit 3 Dawson Road, Mount Farm, Milton Keynes MK1 1LH.



Joint Venture in Ireland

Bourke Strand Electric Ltd and Stage & Location Lighting Services Ltd of Dublin have combined their operations under the new name Lighting Dimensions. The new organisation is designed to provide Ireland with its largest Theatre Sales and Hire service.

New 'Economy' range of Rank Strand commercial dimmers

These economically priced dimmers offer the latest electronic circuitry in simple wall mounting enclosures. They are designed for restaurants, lecture rooms, VDU areas, in hospitals and similar situations where lighting control is required.

ENVIRON ECONOMY includes a dual circuit 1.5KW tungsten dimmer plus 4KW tungsten and 16A fluorescent units.

ENVIRON remote control linear and rotary outstations can be used with the new dimmers, or dimmers can be operated by the rotary controllers supplied in each pack.



The 4KW/16Amp dimmer can be used to provide a single preset level. A three button outstation gives a 'full', 'preset level' and 'off' facility. Another outstation allows 'Up/Stop/Down' control.

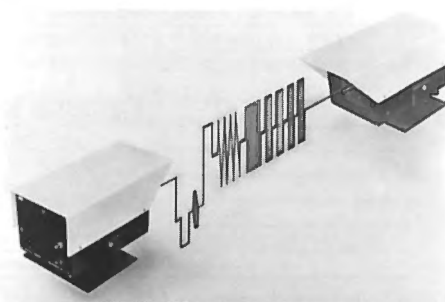
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Recent advances now allow transmission of excellent quality colour or black and white video signal and audio signal to distances increased by 25% and with greater reliability on a free space Optical Infra Red Transmission System.

The Model 761, consisting of one transmitter and one receiver, transmits line of sight on an invisible infra red beam of light without the need for FCC licensing. Built-in alignment telescopes assist in quick and easy installation for temporary or permanent sites. New circuitry ensures dependable, high quality transmission.

For broadcast applications, NTSC, PAL and SECAM quality signals can be attained



at distances of 2,500 feet (.8km) with a signal to noise ratio of 54dB. Applications include Eng, Microwave to Studio, Camera to Microwave and more as alternatives to short-haul coax cables, microwave and fiberoptic cable.

Security (CCTV), industrial and cable TV video and audio signals are lengthened to distances to 4,800 feet (1.5km) with a signal to noise ratio of 48dB and better. Transmitting video across rights of way, natural barriers, campuses and across highways are among the many applications.

Greater distance, extended lifetime, and price reduction are the primary advantages of the new Model 761. The 761 uses an Infra Red optical carrier, avoiding FCC licensing requirements, to transmit any 1 volt (P-P) composite video signal from sources such as TV cameras, VTRs or demodulated microwave basebands.

Manufacturer: American Laser Systems Inc, California, USA.

UK Representative: Dynamic Technology Limited, London.

New Lee Filter range for filming under fluorescent light

Lee Filters Limited, of Andover, Hampshire, England, have introduced a range of filters to overcome the colour reproduction problems associated with filming in fluorescent light conditions.

Using the new Lee Fluorescent range, cinematographers now have a simple method of avoiding the green cast which unfiltered fluorescent lights always throw onto film. The new filters also do away with the expensive and time-consuming practice of covering every fluorescent lamp on a location with magenta filter.

Lee Fluorescent Filters solve the problem by equalising the colour temperatures of all the light sources being used on a set, and then converting the common colour temperature to a value acceptable to the film, without the green cast.

In a situation where tungsten and fluorescent lamps are being used together, for instance, the Lee Fluorescent filters are placed on the tungsten lamps to increase the colour temperature to equal that of the fluorescent light: at the same time, a filter on the camera lens reverses the process by reducing the colour temperature of light entering the camera to 3200°K.

The new filters are available in the following specifications: Light Filters: 241 Lee Fluorescent 5700 Kelvin; 242 Lee Fluorescent 4300 Kelvin; 243 Lee Fluorescent 3600 Kelvin. Camera Filters: FLB 5700 Kelvin; FLB 4300 Kelvin; and FLB 3600 Kelvin.

Lee have arrived at this method of successfully managing the fluorescent/tungsten lighting mix by analysing the physical properties of fluorescence, in relation to the properties of modern film.

Lee's Managing Director, David Holmes, explains: "Because of its spectral character-

istics, the green cast thrown by fluorescent tubes is not seen by the human eye, which perceives only the overall white light effect.

"The camera film, however, analyses the colour using the comparative values of the blue, green and red emissions recorded in the colour sensitive layers of all light, and faithfully reproduces the resultant green hue.

"The problem has been made more acute for film makers by the rapid expansion of tube types available and, of course, the more widespread use of fluorescent lights in

locations like offices and stores, where films are so often made.

"The traditional solution to the problem – taping magenta filters over every single tube in a location – was time consuming and costly. So we decided to develop a light management system which would always work, and which would be simple to use.

"Colour temperature manipulation was obviously the most effective approach, so we combined our expertise in filter manufacture with what we had discovered about fluorescent to produce the new range".

Letters to the Editor

Lighting manager programme credits

Dear Sir,

"Cue" – July/August 1984

With reference to your article "Golden Glyndebourne" in the above "Cue" issue, wherein you refer to your position of Lighting Manager at Glyndebourne being a "first" in 1959, although I do not claim to be a historian, I think I can better you here.

I am a member of Hertford Dramatic & Operatic Society, an amateur group formed in 1919. In 1926 we presented "Lady Windermere's Fan", and I enclose a photocopy of our programme showing amongst the technical team a Lighting Manager! I do not have earlier records immediately to hand, but it is possible that this position was recorded even earlier.

I appreciate that as amateurs we do not always adhere that closely to "titles" for our crew as used in the professional theatre, and should be interested to hear if any other company can beat 1926.

Yours faithfully,

ANDREW COYSTON

Lighting Manager – Hertford Dramatic and Operatic Society

7th Sept. 1984

The Editor CUE:

Sir,

"Does any theatre programme show a credit for lighting manager prior to 1959?" asks Francis Reid in Golden Glyndebourne in your last issue. If Amateur Theatre is included, as it must, then I have one. The date was December 1930, the place the Memorial Hall, Harlesden NW10 (a hall with every defect I have ever had to warn architects of such places about!) and the show A.A. Milne's "The Fourth Wall" – a murder play, nothing whatever to do with Christopher Robin.

The Aeschylus Rep, as it was called, did five productions a year and I joined in 1928 and after a couple of plays the lighting manager post fell vacant and became mine. Still at St. Pauls school, the finding of Greek and Latin homework excuses for every evening of each production week was the real problem. One of these was so thin that I was actually caned for telling a lie. Surely an unique tale of suffering in the cause of the art of stage lighting? One year later in the Autumn of 1929, having left school and got my first job (in the G.E.C.), the Scenic Manager's post became mine as well.

Since writing the above my attention has been drawn to Andrew Coyston's remarks. That Harlesden company only existed from 1926 'thru' 1931 (some of the acting members joined the Ealing Questors, on dissolution); therefore Hertford would certainly appear to have a much better claim. It is possible that the title "Lighting Manager" is of amateur origin. After all a credit line must be given the unpaid chap who managed to rustle up some bits & pieces and dealt with pretty-raw assistants to put light on an occasional show in an ill-equipped hall. In a way Glyndebourne was rather like an amateur theatre in its early years. Incidentally, may I correct two dates top of page 15 in my own article in the last issue: they should be 1934 of course. It was my slip – 1932 was the year I first encountered John Christie.

Francis queries the use of "gobos" before 1961. The term may only have begun to be used in theatre in Britain about that time. Ridge & Aldred in their Stage Lighting



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Mr. Cecil Graham	P. J. F. CHAPMAN WALKER
Mr. Higgens	JACK GARRATT
Pauline	W. H. NICHOLLS
Lady Windermere	MISS DORA WORBOYS
The Duchess of Berwick	MISS ETHEL McMULLEN
Lady Flomela	MISS HILDA NICHOLLS
Miss Gower-Conger	MISS P. RAINSFORD
Lady Jelliburg	MISS O'BRIEN
Lady Stelfield	MISS M. RAINSFORD
Lady Agatha Carlisle	MISS I. CARPENTER
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Miss Evelyn	MISS WALTER S. HOARE

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Scenery by Irby Cope, Chiswick Studios, Chiswick
Electric Light Fixings, Etc., lent by The North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Company

(Pitman 1935) refer to the 1-kW Strand Stelmar and the gate runners into which "any masks, cut-outs, stencils can be inserted, and they will give a fairly sharp image when projected." After that, Patt.73 Profiles became fairly common. Before that, there were spotting attachments for use on Focus lanterns. They used metal slides to spot down (only a few had an iris) so it must have occurred to someone to use something a bit more complicated – like prison bars to pick out the man in the cell. The claiming of firsts on the lantern side rather than the control side is dangerous because the basic optical systems have been around for so long and ingenious vamping a common trait in theatre people.

Sincerely,
FRED BENTHAM

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