

CUE

Technical Theatre Review 35

May/June 1985

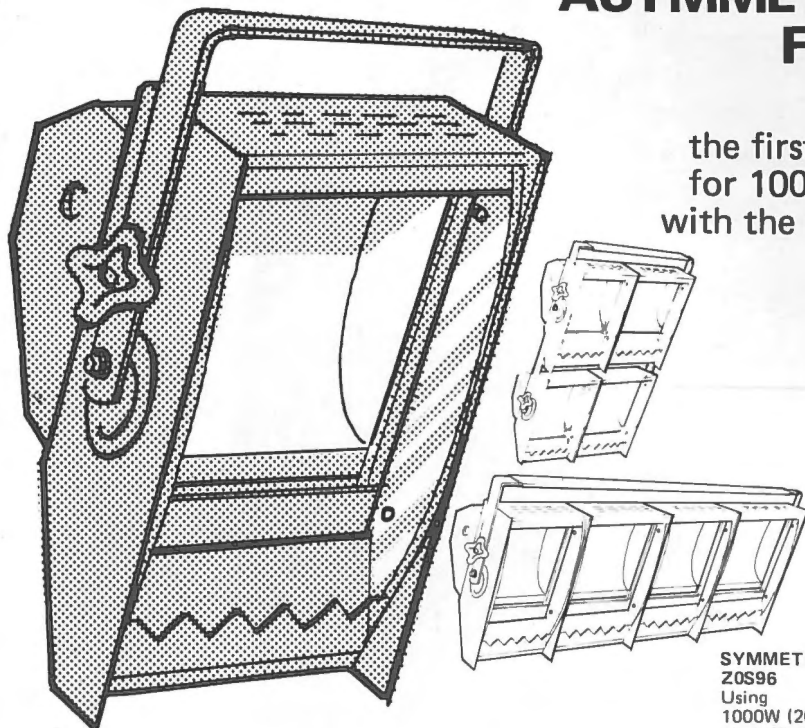
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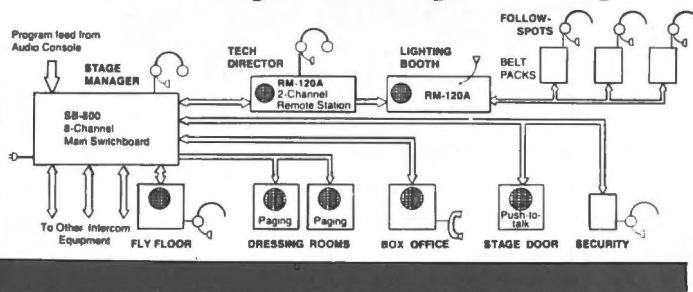
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Cover

A well used and cherished mask from the collection of the National Theatre Nougakudo Tokyo. Robin Don describes a visit to this new home for the famous Japanese Noh plays.

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Editorial Board

James Twynam (Managing)
Francis Reid
Jeremy Twynam

Editorial,

Advertising and Subscription Office:
Twynam Publishing Ltd.,

Kitemore, Faringdon, Oxfordshire SN7 8HR
Telephone 0367 21141

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CAN WE AFFORD PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY?

In our more cynical moments we are given to wonder how much of the national arts budget is devoted to funding the machinery of public accountability and the procedures of democracy. And what is the cost — in salaries, telephones and photocopies — of the protests that theatres make about their inadequate funding? How much of this expenditure is counter-productive? . . . the theatre industry, which exists by communicating the subtle nuances of laughter and tears, seems quite incapable of giving a simple explanation of its own economics.

Although there is, as yet, no formal statement of intent to return theatre to the private sector, there is growing pressure to seek sponsorship from the business community. Indeed public accountability now includes the necessity to be seen to be seeking sponsorship. But what is the public cost of touting for such private money? Again, if salaries, telephones and photocopies are being costed, our cynicism leads us to suspect that they are being costed creatively. We could extend our cynicism to the cost effectiveness of that great sacred cow of the moment — marketing (any theatre seeking public funding favour must be seen to have a marketing department, even if it might be cheaper to have a few more empty seats). But our thought for this CUE is to ponder whether there could be a revival, even an expansion, of the private investor. After all, who would have predicted that the once maligned piece of low-tech, the British telephone, would become the investment darling of its users? Will the taxation reliefs of the Business Expansion Scheme revitalise commercial theatre? Will more theatres be freed from the expensive apparatus of public accountability and the need to conform to the latest fashionable notions of the committees who hold the purse strings? Will more entrepreneurs be freed from the constraints of democracy?

Theatre will always require substantial injections of public money: but is there not a cheaper way to hand it out? Without expensive accountability strings? Perhaps just a simple matter of trusting entrepreneurs until they fail and are sacked.

Diary of a Stage Designer

ROBIN DON accompanied the Society of British Theatre Designers Exhibition to Tokyo recently. While there he was invited to visit the National Theatre Nougakudo which houses the Japanese Noh plays. We are indebted to Sadahiko Tachiki, Technical Director, for permission to use several of the pictures taken from the official brochure.

The first week of rehearsals for *Tamerlano* in LYON had been a busy one. A glance at my watch told me it was Friday and I remembered Sunday's entry in the diary had TOKYO underlined. Time to get moving, I thought.

I had been looking forward to this trip, it was to be my first to the FAR EAST. My mission was to set up the exhibition of models of Theatre Designs from the British entry that had recently been showing at the Prague Quadrennial. The exhibition is making a world tour organised by the Society of British Theatre Designers and the British Council. Members of SBTBD have to make themselves available to supervise at each venue. I put my hand up for Japan.

Breathlessly, I caught the plane. It was midnight when we landed in FRANKFURT and it almost seemed like a hijack when fifteen or so rather butch unsmiling ladies stormed into the cabin wielding their vacuum cleaners. Little did I know that the night was to hold more.

KARACHI 4 a.m. — A very much more polite team arrived and the vacuum cleaners were quieter. The dawn was beginning to break at the stop-over in BANGKOK but there appeared to be twice as many vacuum cleaners. One wouldn't have minded but the plane didn't look at all dirty. Seven hours later we have a rather bumpy landing in MANILLA. This was to be an overnight stop till the morning flight to TOKYO. I'm afraid I missed whatever exotic entertainment that was to be found there and collapsed into bed.



A quiet haven in the heart of bustling Tokyo.

SUNDAY 4 p.m. — This must be TOKYO!

A charming young Japanese designer eventually met us. She was understandably late because of an understandable traffic

The harmoniously textured auditorium allows instant focus on the acting area.



jam. Her name is Kazue and you've got to meet her if you pass that way. My visit would have been an ordeal without her gracious and friendly assistance. On the first day, the exhibition hall was expertly transformed in four hours by an eager team from OISTT (Japan) to make a very pleasing show area for the British expo. The inclusion of costumed mannequins, made the venue infinitely more varied and interesting.

David Walker's *Man and Superman* from the National Theatre, Carl Thomas' *Mrs Tanqueray* and Maria Bjornson's *Don Giovanni* were a few of the costumes that really took the eye. *Die Soldaten* from Ralph Koltai, *Rigoletto* from Patrick Robertson and *Strife* from John Bury were some of the most talked of models. I had dared to show my own designs for *Madame Butterfly* from Opera North and fortunately there was no great scandal. (That reminds me, — I have to get to Belfast next week for it's revival).

I had met Ichiro Takada two years ago in Prague. He is the OISTT (Japan) chairman and the prime mover in organizing this event along with the commercial organization PARCO. It flowed extremely efficiently but between meetings and seminars throughout the week there just was not enough time to explore what I'd hoped would have been possible, apart from one magic morning.

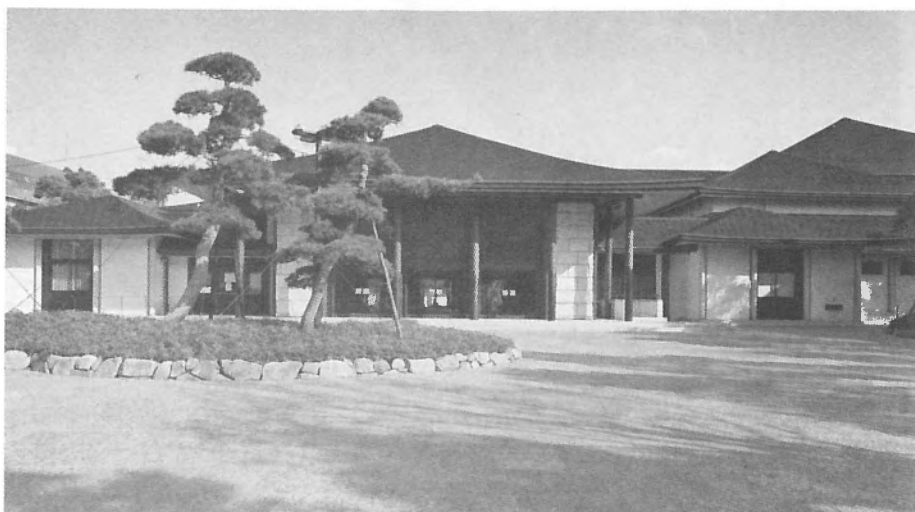
Thursday a.m. was free and Sadahiko Tachiki (Technical Director, National Theatre Japan) invited me to visit the National Theatre Nougakudo. This handsome building in the centre of Tokyo was designed by Hiroshi Ohe Architect & Associates to house the Noh plays and has been completed now for just over one year.

Walking through the entrance hall was my first moment of tranquility all week. The space, the light and the vistas immediately made one feel at ease. I sat for a while enjoying the aspect of the courtyard garden before continuing through to the main foyer, savouring the traditional details which are incorporated into the warm wood structure. The filtered daylight from the slatted screens facing the courtyard gives a remarkably soothing effect.

One is now ready to enter the auditorium to concentrate on the drama. The traditional stage area is instantly the main focus. The surrounding walls and ceilings appear to blend into such harmonious textures that one is barely aware of them. The whole complex is undoubtedly a tremendous achievement; an experience I will never forget.

My visit to TOKYO was short but nevertheless, gave me time to become acquainted with many new friends and charming customs. A return trip is a necessity.

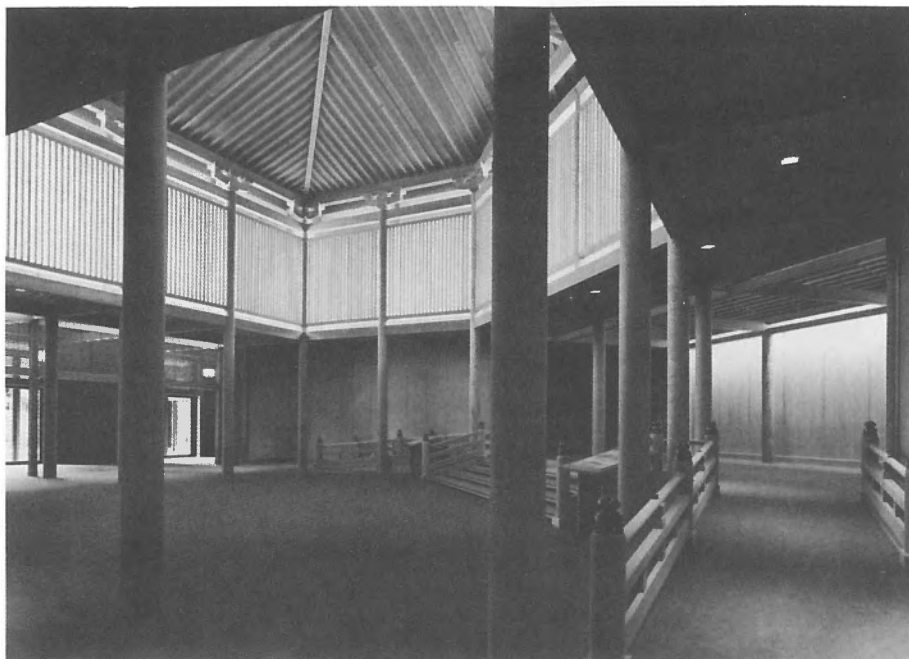
However, it is now another Thursday and mid May as I write this from my hotel room in ICELAND. It is almost midnight, the sun continues to shine but I'm somewhat tired after our first technical day on stage at the National Theatre with the musical *Chicago*. It's approximately 3 months since I started the design for it back in that hotel room in LYON.



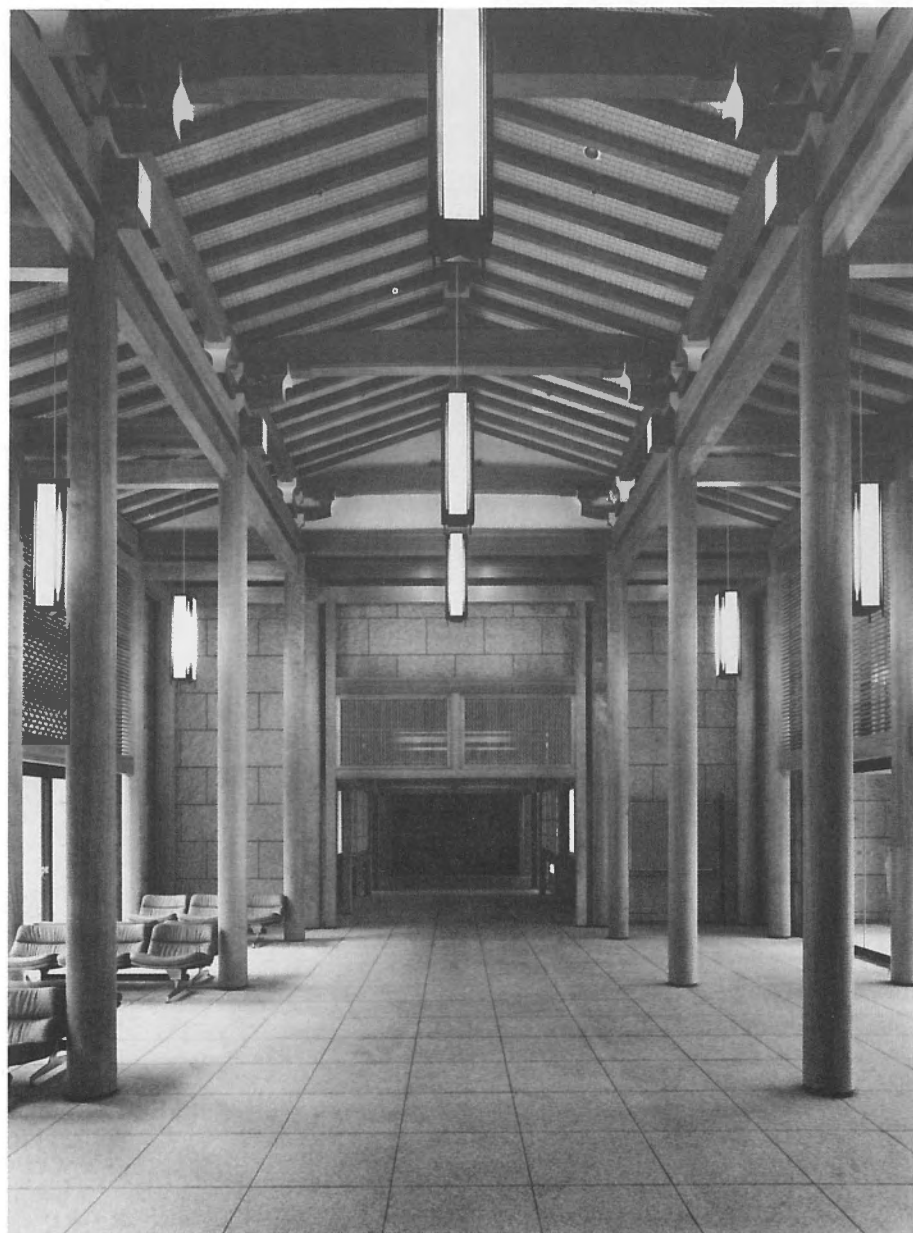
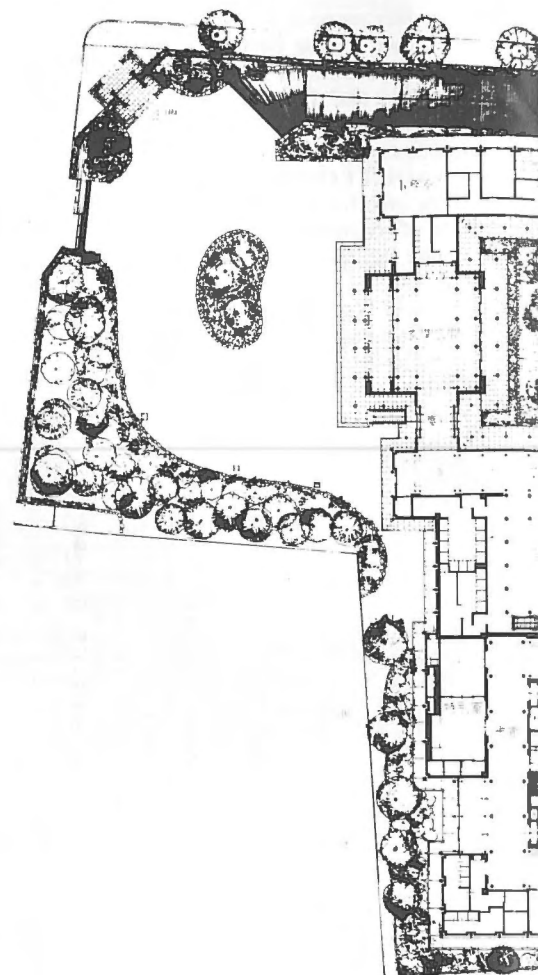
Delightful rendering of the approach facade to the National Theatre Nougakudo.

The Garden Courtyard echos the strong verticals of the wooded beamed interior.





The impressive quietude in the entrance hall and restful atmosphere from the filtered light in the inner foyer.



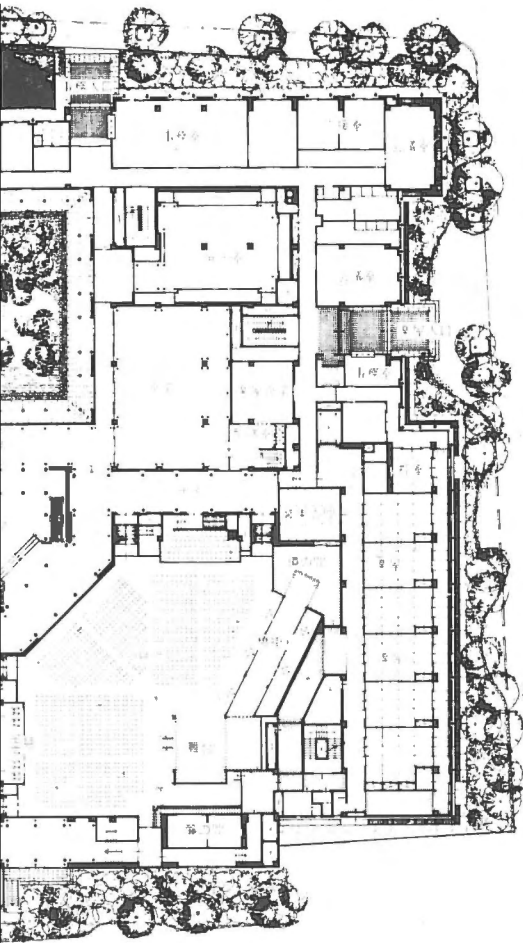
They have been a fairly busy three months. I didn't mention it, but somewhere along the line I was back in LYON to get the premiere of *Tamerlano* on. A fortnight later I delivered my preliminary renderings for *Don Quixote* to New York City Opera and on my return to London I've been coaching a neighbour called Anthony. He's the perfect PUCK. I'm sure that if he gets through the auditions he'll be excellent in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* that I'm preparing for the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. At the same time I'm progressing the model of *Peter Grimes* for Sydney Opera House, which has to be delivered in June. Also a play from the Bush which has to be augmented to fit The Lyceum at the Edinburgh Festival.

There is still no news of an opening night that I had in London last week. It was a delightful little play. I'd enjoyed designing it but unfortunately had to leave after the final dress rehearsal with just enough time to have a quick supper at Joe Allen's with Maria Björnson and Bob Ringwood before flying north to Iceland again.

There is however one good point for other designers to note if they find themselves working up here in REYKJAVIK. The major problem has been the dance shoes from Anello & Davide's. The required size certainly arrived on time, sturdily constructed but I really underestimated the width. There would have been little problem in Japan (or elsewhere for that matter) but up here the feet are really quite unique.

The Leeds Playhouse Competition

FRANCIS REID



Plan showing entrance, Garden Courtyard and walkway through to main auditorium. Designer Hiroshi Ohe Architect and Associates.

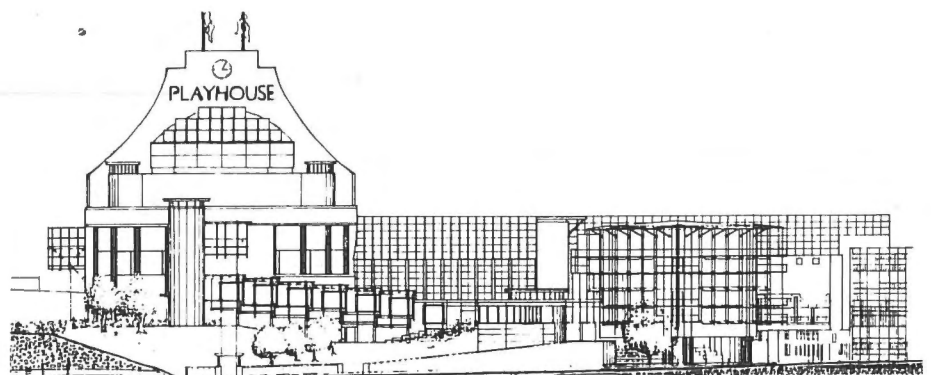
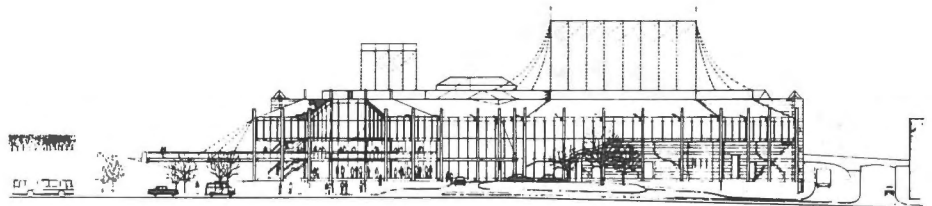


I lack competitive spirit. I am allergic to balls and to all scoring games played with them — although I am prepared to throw one for the entertainment of a friendly dog. I admit to weekly participation in the football pools but my numbers were selected fifteen years ago and I have forgotten them: the computer will tell me if I win. I have, of course, never been to a soccer match and, being a truly ethnic Scot, never know whose playing who in a test match. I was educated at a rugby dominated school and captained their nineteenth team (there were twenty). We regularly won our matches without my ever getting mud on my knees and rarely even handling the ball — so I got the 'leading from the rear' syndrome out of my system at an early age. My favourite marketing strategy is the fairground's prizes in all classes.

So my participation in the Leeds Playhouse Architectural Competition may

seem a trifle surprising. But I am happy to cast all prejudices aside when invited to join a team who are civilised and talented. Having thus declared my interest as an adviser to architect Bill Houghton-Evans, let me hope that my inability to comment with absolute objectivity on the Leeds Competition will be some extent compensated by my intimate knowledge of the brief, gained from debating it and responding to it over some three months.

In a recent moment of cynicism I suggested that there were three main periods of theatre building: Georgian (when one sent for the carpenter), Turn-of-the-Century (when one sent for Matcham) and Post-war (when one sent for a pundit). In an effort to break this mould which has produced every kind of flavour of the month from 'juliet balconies' to 'point-of-command' and has ignored the actor-talent factor in endless debate about the actor/audience



Most schemes were rather routinely serviceable buildings, using their fly towers to make an honest proclamation of their theatrical function. However there were appropriate hints of frivolity in Howell, Killick, Partridge & Amis suggestion of a circus 'big top' (above); while Ted Cullinan's facade (below) is bold and likely to provoke that love and hate which are at the heart of any audience response to theatre experiment.

Key to all drawings:

- 1 Stage/auditorium
- 2 Scenery assembly
- 3 Restaurant
- 4 Band Room
- 5 Orchestra pit
- 6 Box Office
- 7 Dressing Rooms
- 8 Scene Dock
- 10 Foyer
- 11 Green Room

relationship, Leeds stipulated that

The Promoter reserves the right to act as theatre consultant. It is accepted however that there may be certain specialist areas where a consultant's technical advice may be required over and above that available through the Promoter's own specialist staff.

Copies of Roget's Thesaurus were hastily consulted by the theatre consultancy profession and it was discovered that an advisory role was indeed compatible with the conceptualising basis of their angust calling. Readers of Cue may gain some entertainment from speculating which Leeds scheme bears the hallmark of which consultant's advice. And, at the risk of promoting another competition, it would be interesting to have readers' suggestions for a collective noun for theatre consultants (ie the equivalent of a brace of pheasants or a gobo of lighting designers).

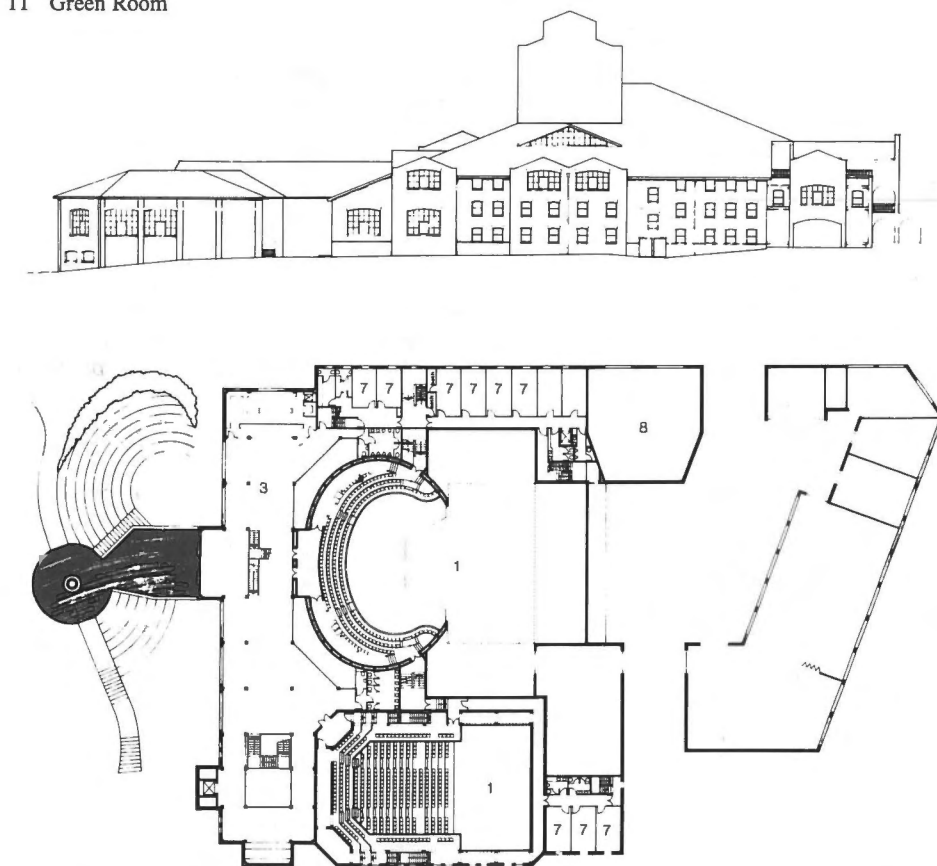
It is rather curious that Leeds should choose to promote a competition for their new Playhouse. Design through competition is a new development for British theatre architecture. Until now, mere response to a brief has been considered much too simplistic an approach to a problem whose complexities seem to be better served through a creative debate between architect and client increasingly with an independent theatre specialist (the 'Theatre Consultant') as catalyst.

Where past problems have arisen, these have frequently been caused by difficulties in identifying the potential user. Consequently the brief has been forced to speculate upon the theatre's intended programme policy and therefore the scale of accommodation provision. Where the user is known, the brief can be developed through dialogue between architect and user, with the theatre consultant ensuring that the resultant design does not reflect too many of the user's personal peccadilloes which might inhibit future development. Particularly as users frequently move to pastures new during the long gestation between brief and opening night!

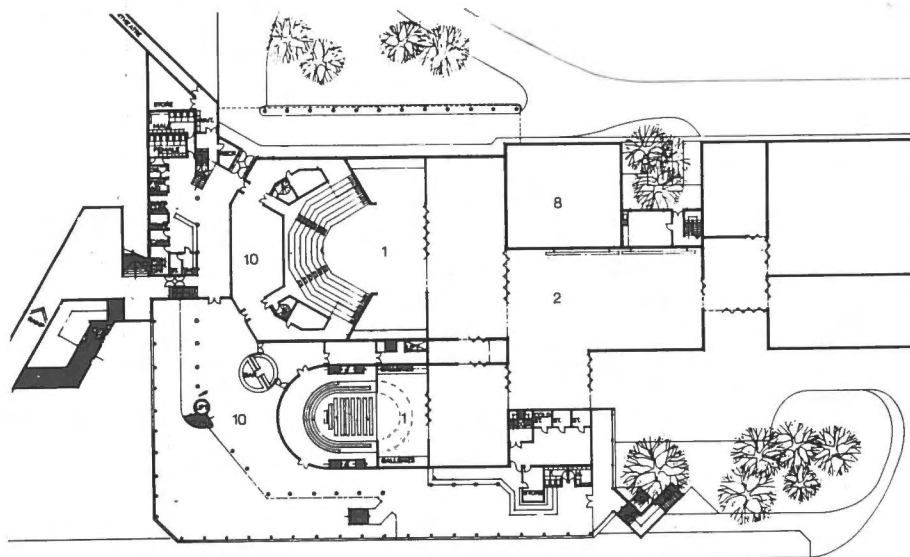
Leeds Playhouse, however, is a successful established theatre company under stable direction and therefore eminently ready to engage in a dialogue. Why they should choose to go to competition is therefore something of a mystery. I hope that the decision was not made out of consideration for public accountability. In this, as well as in creative aspects, they would surely have been better served by entering into deep interviews with half a dozen architects to discover a mutual compatibility for a collaborative approach. They could have approached practices of wide theatre experience (such as Rod Ham) and those whose tentative theatrical essays show understanding and excitement (such as Ted Cullinan) plus, of course, the author of their successful current house (Bill Houghton-Evans).

Nevertheless the preferred mode was competition and we must be grateful for the chance to study such an experiment.

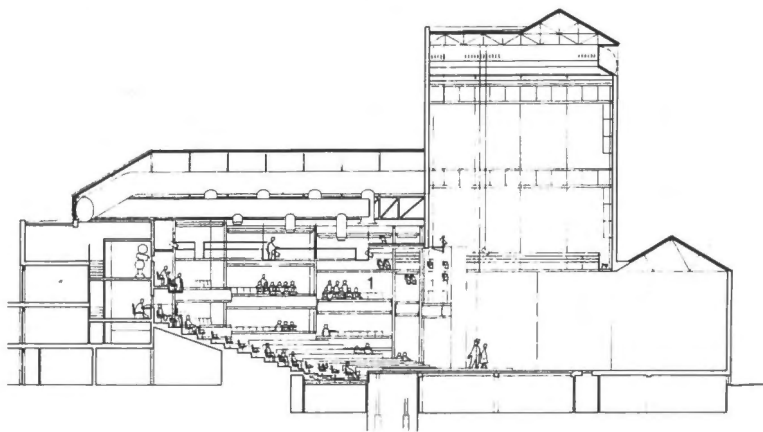
Over 129 architectural practices expressed a desire to take part and 13 were shortlisted. One of these, Renton Howard Wood Levin Partnership, withdrew — presumably because they were too busy building theatres all over the place to spare resources for a mere speculative competition. This left 12 entrants: the Appleton Partnership, Edinburgh; Edward Cullinan Architects, London; Tim Foster Architect



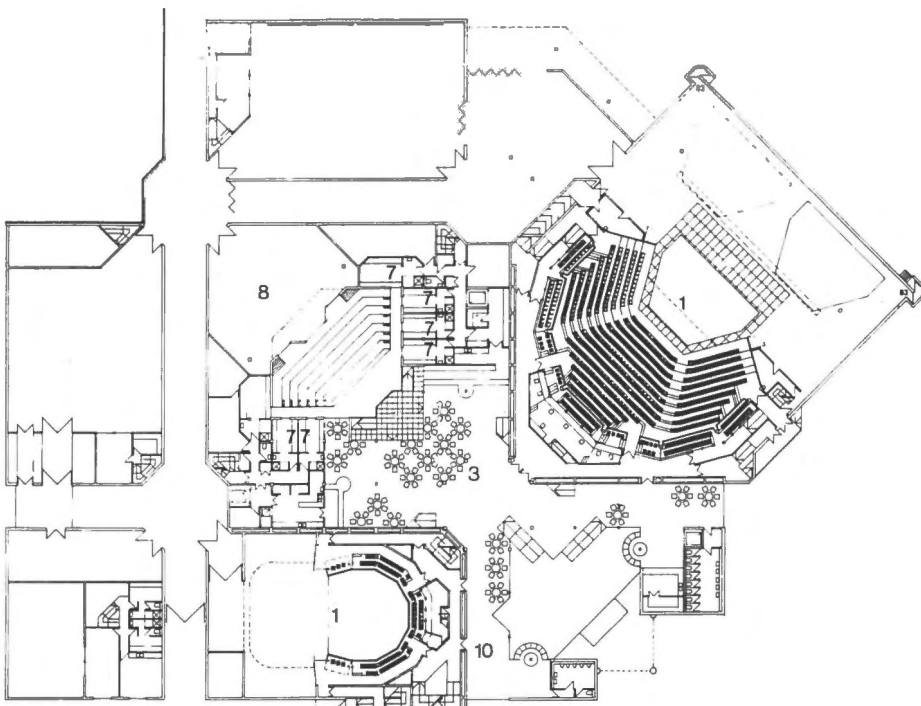
Rod Ham's domestic exterior has echoes of nineteenth century warehousing. Like several other competitors he places his two auditoria (a thrust and a courtyard) alongside each other, allowing a logical sharing of common accommodation both for the audience and in the technical areas. His thrust theatre is curved, using an encircling balcony to bring more of the audience closer to the stage.



Bill Houghton-Evans, referring to his theatres as the *Guthrie* and the *Priestley*, developed the thrust of his existing Leeds Playhouse, adding seating slips to break up the side walls. He puts an eighteenth century curve back into the courtyard form, using a single row of seating in the side galleries, coupled with demountable walls to offer an option of opening up the enclosed intimacy for promenade performances. With air castored galleried units, an oval can be completed for arena staging.



Levitt Bernstein Associates offered an interesting experiment in the addition of boxes to a thrust theatre as a development of their Wilde Theatre at Bracknell, a theatre which seems to have influenced several other competitors. The juxtaposition of auditoria, almost back to back, makes for a sympathetic foyer arrangement.



return for this outlay by the architectural profession, prizes were £6,800 (as an advance on fees) to the winner and consolations of £3,400 and £2,300 for the second and third respectively. The other nine just had to put it all down to experience.

Written questions were invited and the answers circulated to all competitors. And there was an open consultation session at the theatre. With that cost upped a little (to £5.8 million) and the drawing requirements reduced a little, there was about three months for a dozen schemes to be prepared for assessment by David Allford, John Moya and Peter Moro.

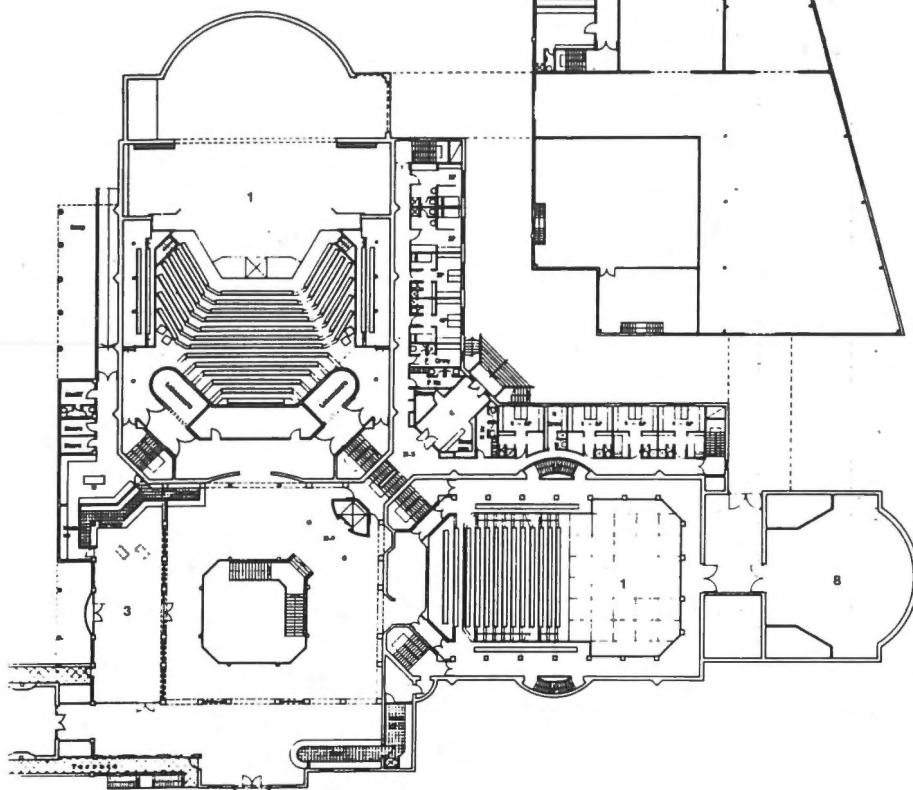
The winners were the Appleton Partnership, with Derek Walker Associates second and Tim Foster with Burrell Foley Associates third.

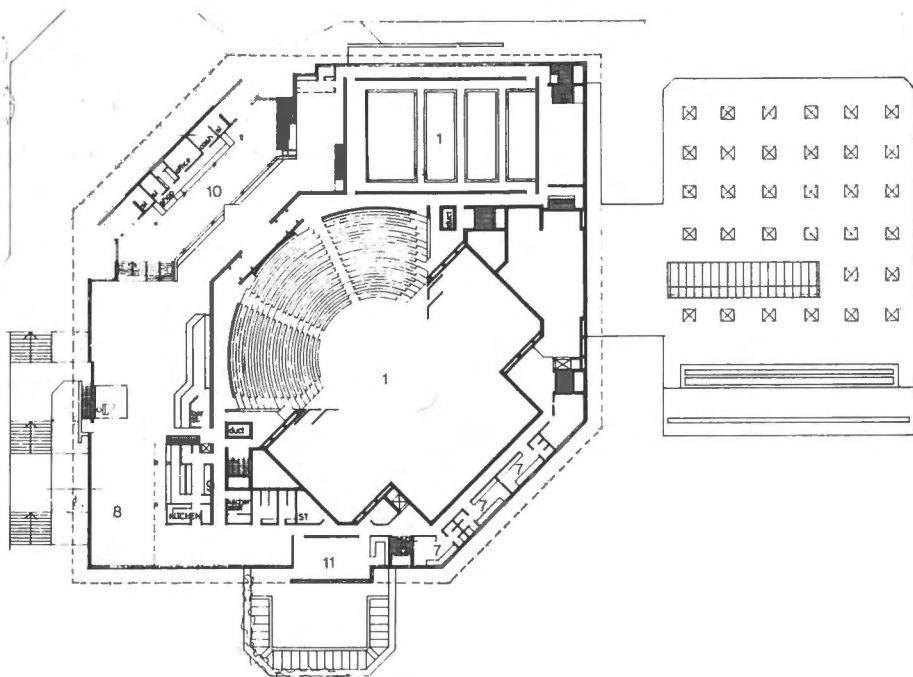
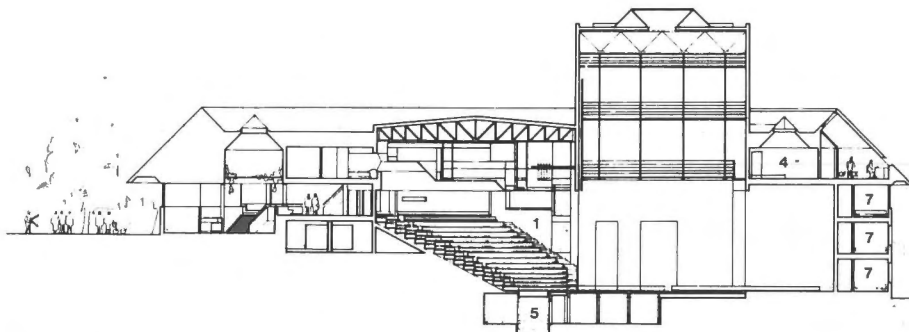
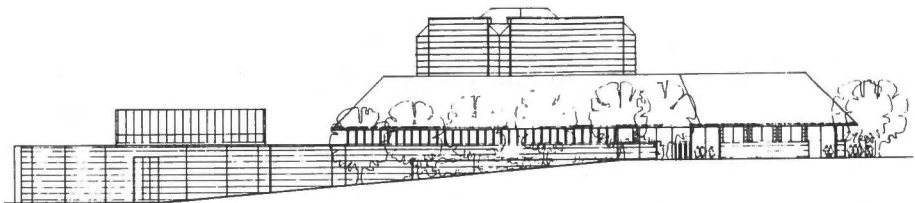
The brief showed evidence that each specialist department of the theatre's staff

with Burrell Foley Associates, London; Barry Gasson Architects, Glasgow; Roderick Ham and Partners, London; William Houghton-Evans (Stephen George and Partners), Leeds; Howell Killick Partridge and Amis, London; Nicoll Russell, Dundee; Derek Stow and Partners, London; and Derek Walker Associates of Milton Keynes, London and Leeds.

The arrival of the 95 page brief caused some muttering. A report in 'Building Design' noted that several competitors thought that £7 million would be nearer the real cost of the scheme than the £4.5 million regarded as possible by the client's quantity surveyors. And there was unhappiness at the amount of design work being required from entrants — one estimate was that this amounted to £60,000 worth of design fees, i.e more than half-a-million pounds worth of free design work was being sought. In

By placing the theatres at right angles, Tim Foster elegantly solves sound isolation problems between the theatres and between workshops and theatres. His foyer could be an exciting place with the audiences from both theatres mingling amid music from the raised centre area which also breaks up the big space when occupied by only a few people.





Ian Appleton won the competition with a tight design that made effective use of every corner of the space. By opting for the minimum dimension suggested in the brief, the complex has been contained within a volume appropriate to the proposed budget. It will be interesting to compare this design with the final building after a period of detailed consultation with the client, a discussion which will doubtless be concerned with acoustic isolation between auditoria in such a tightly contained building.

had stipulated their ideal requirements. The rationalisation of conflicting requirements and subsequent agreement of priorities — matters which I have suggested can only be satisfactorily resolved by debate — were left to each competitor's judgement. With an optimistic quantity surveyor it was just about possible to provide a building which would meet all the requirements for the revised budget of £5.8 million. But such a budget made it difficult to design a public building of the quality that should occupy a city centre site.

Moreover, the volume alone of a building incorporating all the brief's requirements implies a crippling annual overhead. And an easy to maintain building implies capital outlay. However, it is a tradition of British

theatre that running costs are assessed creatively at the project stage — otherwise new theatres would never get built!

By dealing rigorously yet ingeniously with the brief's suggested dimensions, the winning scheme by the Appleton Partnership has produced a compact building. However one wonders how the balance between the various elements can be maintained in such a tightly organised building during the phase of development and reworking with the client. For example the band room, where coats and instrument cases are left is a record distance from the orchestra pit (fly floor level, behind the backwall of the stage): can it be moved without significant knock-on effects for the rest of the accommodation? And is there

sound isolation between the theatres?

The client's desire to maintain the extensive Graecian thrust of Bill Houghton-Evans' successful existing auditorium, yet add the technology of a fly tower and a wagon stage system, produced a conflict for which, in the absence of resolution by debate, no competitor was able to propose a sufficiently elegant solution. While the termination of the side walls suggested a notional proscenium where full height flying facilities might begin, this would be to the rear of a point where scene designers would be likely to find such facilities most useful. A fire curtain falling across the wagon stage so that each scene had to be designed with a gap at that point is surely unacceptable. Yet the absence of any fire curtain could cause the authorities to restrict stage storage to current production only, and insist that scenery be constructed entirely from inherently fireproof materials throughout. The budgetary consequences could lead to minimal scenery and therefore little justification for the fly tower, the wagon stage or even the extensive workshops specified in the brief.

Although the basic form for the main theatre was pre-determined by the client's understandable wish to recreate the essence of the successful actor/audience relationships of their present theatre, competitors had almost total freedom to suggest a format for the second theatre in the complex. Most offered a variation on the courtyard form, acknowledging that, while it is capable of flexibility, this particular form provides an opportunity for the proscenium and end staging of plays that do not respond happily to an open thrusting relationship with the audience. However a few schemes, including the winner, opted for the adaptable box that has found decreasing favour in recent years.

Having responded to the requirements of a performance and its network of associated activities, little of the budget remained for an aesthetic statement of any power. Most submissions were serviceable buildings, using their fly towers to make an honest proclamation of their theatrical function, and their windows to show the attraction of life within. But in my view most of these buildings would make rather routine visual statements, except perhaps the appropriate hints of frivolity in Howell, Killick, Partridge and Amis' suggestion of a circus 'big top' and the resonances of nineteenth century warehousing that accompanied Roderick Ham's appealing essay in domesticity.

Ted Cullinan's exciting piece of rather dangerous living highlights the negative aspects of a competition. Cullinan's design for Leeds is full of creative energy and risk-taking. His debate with the client might have produced a Playhouse that pointed the way ahead rather than, as is the case, the series of essays in state-of-the-art cost-effective professionalism which have resulted from this experiment in competitive design.

And so it only remains to confirm that the experiment certainly did nothing to develop any latent competitive spirit that may be lurking in me personally!

Pictures at the Palace

FRED BENTHAM

Having alighted and left our chauffeur with the Volvo to make his peace with the police; my companion and I made our way to the familiar Nash portico, ascended a few steps and entered it for the first time. With a quick glance around he, Richard Greenough the former head of television design for Lord Grade, murmured to me 'Granada Tooting'. Mind you he had not even got the architect right, for the decoration we saw was by Frank Verity in 1903 whereas that was by Theodore Komisarjevsky in 1931. But the glitter and sparkle were there and I knew exactly what he meant. By now our chauffeur, architect Roderick Ham, had joined us and we three set out to climb the grand staircase.

In my youth I was not unfamiliar with the climbing of grand staircases but age has taken its toll, I was out of practice and there was a lot of this one stretching out ahead. Arriving at the top or piano nobile level we turned right drawn by the buzz of animated conversation in the large foyer with crystal chandeliers and all, where the others awaited admission to the show. When the time came there were no girls to usher us to our places or to try to sell us ice creams; but the man on the door, HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, did shake hands with each of us. The picture show which followed came up, in every way, to expectation. But the palace itself, the Buckingham one half-way between the Victoria Palace Theatre and Hyde Park Corner, was surprisingly low-brow in its decorative style inside. And this the reader will gather was what fascinated me. So at last I had proof that those 'picture palaces' of my younger days really were palaces! They were palaces for everyone. We all could go in by the grand entrance, across the richly paved and carpeted floors to take the seat our purse would permit.

One did not have to be in funds to do this regularly once or twice a week, admission was but a fraction of that charged for the greater part of the class-ridden theatres. It was a resort to welcoming winter warmth or air-conditioned comfort in the heat of summer. And they did not, as they came to do after the two monopoly groups took over, switch off the conditioning in order to stimulate ice cream sales. I have always suspected that the smaller family circuits, which preceded these monopolies, did what they did not only to attract the paying customers but to show off to the others, most of whom would be known to them personally. Rather like the dukes and princes did with their opera houses on the continent of Europe.

There is a lot of discussion today on where have the cinema audiences gone, and television and videos are rightly given as the reason for the vast fall in attendances; but some of us have been appalled on our rare visits at what the cinemas themselves are

like. Five years ago I was so affected by such a visit that I let off steam in one of my 'editorials' under the title "The Fall of the House of Ushers"* and I cannot do better than use some of it now. "The walls and ceiling are covered in a nondescript mid-brown — a sort of non-colour.

Overhead a sparse sprinkling of down-lighters dribble puddles on a carpet of the same non-hue." What I described then did not have its origin in the death throes of some local cinema but in something virtually new — the quadrupling of the once proud Plaza Regent Street in the heart of London's West End. "It is not just the lack of colour and of any decor, it is the total lack of proportion or scale in any of the spaces that jars. Walls and ceilings come where they come; what they do to those into which they cannon appears to have been left to chance. The result is an architectural slum and it is brand new!"

"Gone now are the platoons of uniformed staff. Ushing is reduced to tearing the ticket in half. And they don't even bring the ice

cream into the auditorium! Addicts have to go out into the 'foyer' and get it in the interval. This interval is completely *de trop* anyway. Since performances are quite separate and it comes after a twenty-five minute compote of shorts and adverts. It is inconceivable that anyone should want to go to the toilet. Some do, however, presumably to give themselves something interesting to do. The rest of the audience are musacked while they gaze bleakly at two splodges of light (from a couple of Patt.23 spots) on the screen — there being no screen tabs — or at the metal brackets which fix the seats to the bare floor."

The Plaza of 1926 which this mess replaces was designed for Paramount by Frank Verity and was one of those picture palaces to which the term 'palace' could truthfully be applied. It was an exact term, and as we saw at the start of this article Verity was not unfamiliar with the 'real' thing. What is it that makes a palace? Is it necessary for a monarch or a duke to reside there? Is Blenheim Palace really one,

Picture 1.





Picture 2.

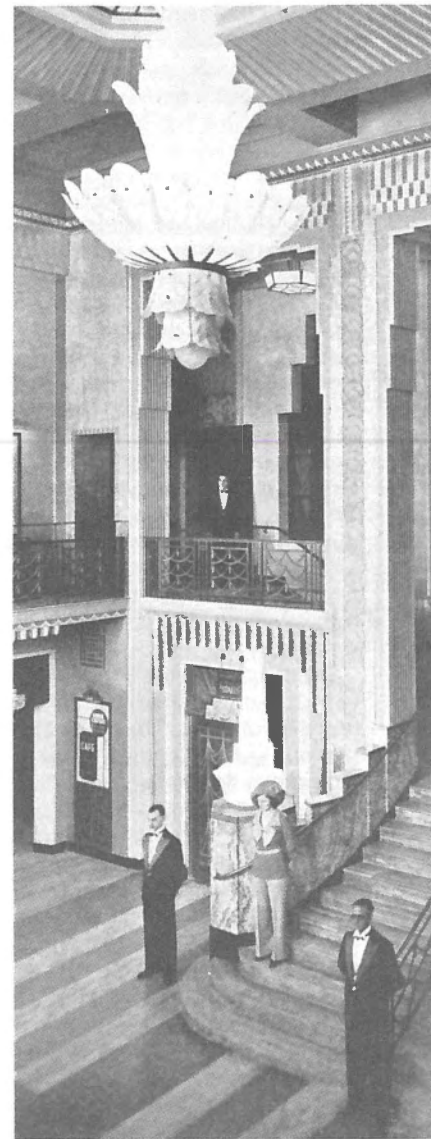


Picture 3.

goodness knows it is big enough? To my mind the answer to these questions is no! Let us take two other examples: the Titania Palast in Berlin and the Mermaid's Palace (otherwise New Victoria) in London. A glance at photographs 2 and 3 will confirm that call them what you may, it is 3 that really is a 'palace'. And yet both were designed and built in the late twenties. The truth is that whereas our own Wamsley Lewis was at home with the idea of fairies at the bottom of the garden or of the ocean; architects Schlöffler, Schönbach and Jacobi were not. The fact is that there is no word in the German language for 'fairy' — of the

Grimm context that is, of course! Here lies the secret of the recipe for a Palace; it has to belong to Fairyland or Ruritania. And both of these mean lots of tinsel, preferably of real gold, to sparkle and shine. The New Victoria has never been the same since the giant stalactite fittings around the dome were removed.

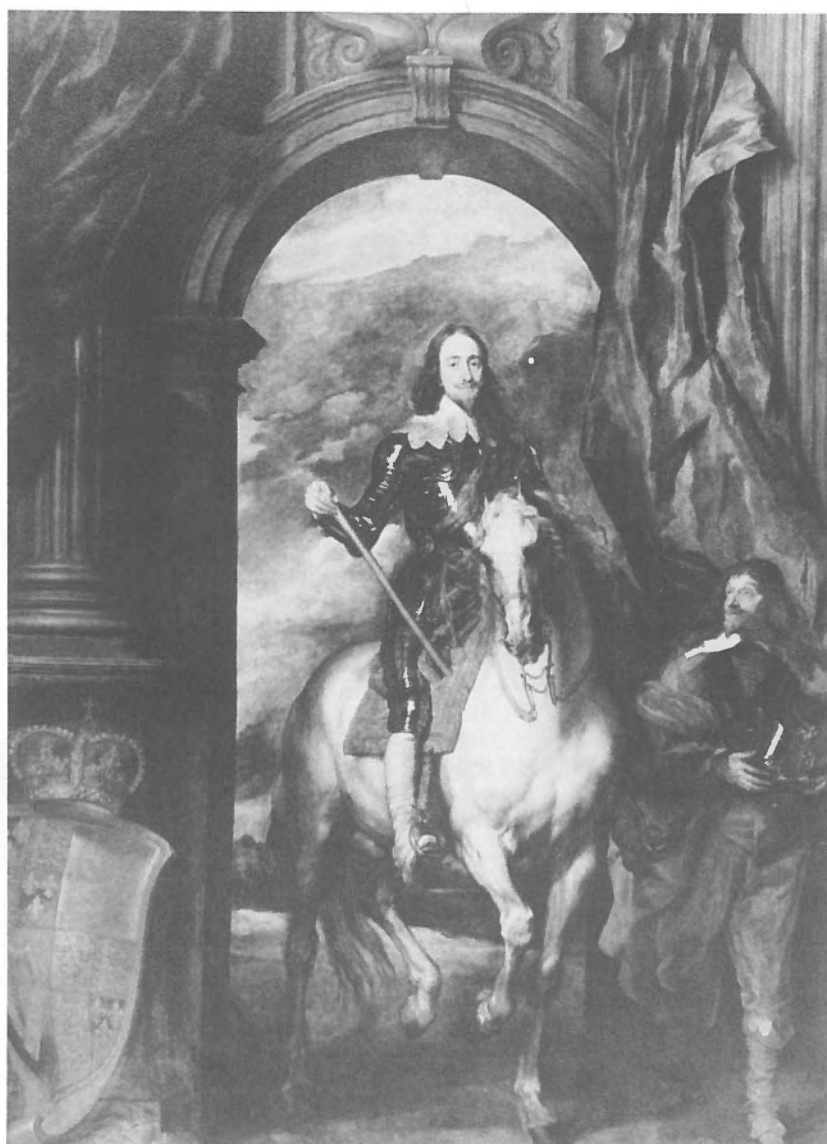
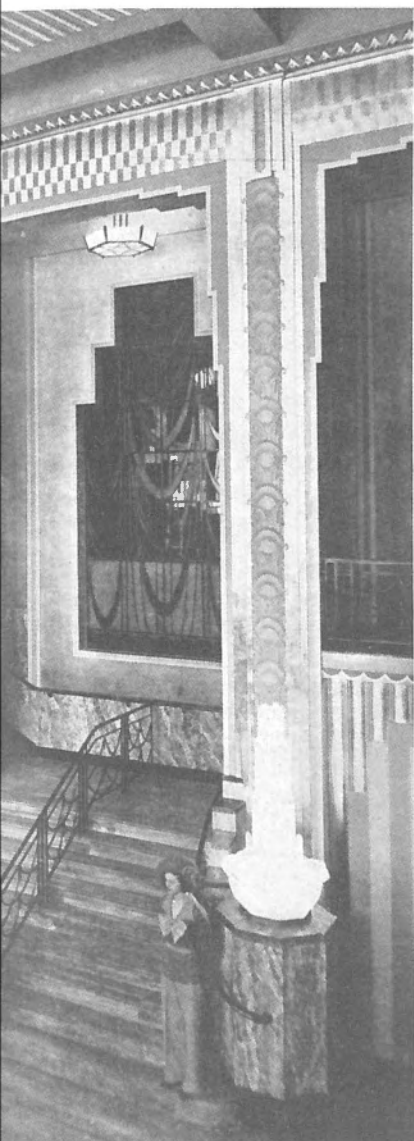
When one sees traces, or is told, of the lavish and colourful painting of our cathedrals in medieval times there is a sense of shock, of blasphemy. Even that 'pure' marble monument to classic architecture — the Parthenon — was, it is said, brightly painted and gilt. Are there no limits to



Picture 4.

which man (and persons too) can sink? Perhaps, we should put the question the other way round: What gave architects the idea that we *should* like large plain surfaces and the strict disciplines they impose? At the very time the owners and their architects were building the picture palaces which attracted the vast and regular audiences, a book was published whose author — P. Morton Shand — had not a good word to say for them.⁺ And I agreed, then, with almost every word he wrote! His ideal was presented therein by a series of photographs mainly German and from Berlin. One of these is that of the Titania Palast used here. (2) The picture of the grand staircase at the head of this article (1) certainly did not come from his book.

I wonder what Mr. Shand would have said of the staircase at Buckingham Palace. Nickolas Pevsner⁺⁺ declares that it is "one of the most impressive apartments in the palace". Of course, the buildings alone cannot make a palace, there must be flunkies a-plenty. As the photo (4) of the art-deco Troxy in Stepney by George Coles proves such attendants were a feature in even the poorer parts of London's East End in 1933. In the days before the Talkies the staff of picture palaces also included a large



Picture 5.

number of musicians. There has been a tendency, fostered by the trivial accompaniments to revivals of Harold Lloyd and Buster Keaton on television, to suggest that the musical side of the silents was primitive. This certainly was not so in any of the real picture palaces — as well as the organs there were orchestras. Attending some of the 'classics' at the National Film Theatre on the South Bank it often seems to me that the accompaniment fails to come up to the mark. It is not sufficient to rely on a veteran extemporizing at the piano. With the revival of the great silent "Napoleon" there has been a movement to use or compose a proper score, whether live from the pit or by adding a sound track.

One thing is certain; that whatever has happened to the British Empire or the Empire Leicester Square or the Plaza Regent Street or the guard at Buckingham Palace during the past forty years, there has been no changing of the light inside the palace. Leaving aside the crystal chandeliers there is a lot of concealed lighting behind the cornices. This is typical of the twenties and thirties super-cinemas. From Verity's Shepherd's Bush Pavilion of 1923 on, line upon line of low-wattage lamps at close centres were shoved behind

every architectural promontory which afforded the slightest chance of concealment. Another favourite was the laylight; a glass-panelled ceiling with lamps mounted behind in such a way as to look like daylight. Sometimes a further skylight above allowed the real thing to be admitted also. Such a ceiling way up aloft runs the entire length of the picture gallery where we three were now drinking and nibbling with all the others to celebrate the centenary of our Art Workers Guild, while gazing sporadically at the superb paintings hanging along the walls. Due to the great height of the gallery relative to its width the lighting of them presents a problem. This has been solved by the time-honoured linolite fittings bracketed from the top of each frame — with two exceptions. And what exceptions; the Van Dykes of Charles I on horseback and the one with his children.

I was quite unprepared for the size of these. No wonder no one had bothered to bracket any fitting from the top of their tall frames. Some experiment had been made however and it would appear quite recently. There on the top of the great doorway through which we had all entered was a piece of unpainted white wood and screwed thereto — one old Patt.23! Aimed at King

Charles, it was not alight and if it had been the specular reflection at that angle would have been most disturbing. As it was, it was not until after a couple of whiskys that I noticed it up there. To meet that dear old friend from my past shoved up there on a bit of wood among all the treasures in the heart of that gilt and crystal palace, was spot on as the crowning touch to the evening. One niggles remains: how *should* one light those two paintings!

*Sightline Vol.14 No.2

+ Modern Theatres and Cinemas (published by Batsford 1930)

+ + The Buildings of England, London (Penguin 1973)

Key to Illustrations:

1. The staircase of the Los Angeles Theatre by S. Charles Lee (from *The Best Remaining Seats* by Ben Hall, pub. Bramhall House 1961)
2. Auditorium of Titania Palast Berlin (from *Modern Theatres and Cinemas* by P. Morton Shand, pub. Batsford 1930)
3. Auditorium of New Victoria London in 1930s
4. The staircase of the Troxy, Commercial Rd. Stepney. (*The Builder* 22/9/1933)
5. This impressive portrait in The Queens collection measures more than 12ft in height.

Chinese Street Opera in Singapore

FRANCIS REID at a *Wayang*

The high rise apartment blocks of Singapore are as functional as elsewhere in the world. Yet they lack much of the bleakness that seems to be an inevitable feature of today's low-cost high-saturation housing. The reason is environmental rather than architectural: in Singapore, vegetation grows luxuriously but under strict control. So the approaches to housing estates and the communal areas between their blocks have little of that suggestion of urban blight which is a feature of so many cities where the climate is cooler and the landscape owes more to concrete than to horticulture.

Consequently the rectangle enclosed by apartments makes a good space for the residents to celebrate the Feast of the Hungry Ghosts. During the seventh month of the lunar year, the souls of the dead are released from purgatory to roam the earth. These hungry ghosts are appeased by offerings of food and entertainment. This entertainment is operatic and the banquets are consumed by the opera's sponsors.

The word 'Wayang' is Malay for shadow and, although originally confined to shadow plays, has come to be applied to many forms of staged performance. To Singaporeans of Chinese descent, Wayang has become synonymous with Chinese street opera. During the Feast of the Hungry Moons, many communities hire a street opera company to appease the ghosts and the performance is free to anyone who wishes to attend.

Hailing a taxi with a hopeful *Wayang*?, I found myself in a courtyard contained by rising apartments. It was the 'half' and preparations were moving towards the

climax of curtain time. One end of the space was given over to tables, already laid out and partly occupied. Crates of beverages stood ready and the ladies were engaged in energetic cooking on a grand scale. The inviting smells from the gigantic frying woks mingled with those from the burning joss sticks to add to a special oriental aroma

to the ambience of this 'opera house'. At the other end of the space a stage had been erected. A temporary platform supported on stilts and trestles with flies of lashed timbers encased in tarpaulins and plastic sheeting. But presenting to the audience an elaborate proscenium whose ornate painting conveyed distinct resonances of the facade



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of an opulent temple.

Backstage air-conditioning is provided by gaps between the sheeting walls, and so a stroll around the structure allowed a view of the stage technology including such preparations as making up, preparing quick changes and laying out props.

Scenery is a series of backcloths rolled on battens by pulleys lashed to the timed framework. When a scene change is imminent the stage manager appears in view, hands on lines, watching the actors for his cue. We see him yet we do not *see* him. For, since he is in street clothes and not wearing make-up, our disbelief is suspended. This convention allows a creative approach to masking: large holes are possible in the downstage wings — for the prompter on one side and the musicians on the other. And there is, naturally, no need to black out for the furniture changes because we cannot see the prop men. Within the realism of the painted backcloths, simple objects like tables and chairs, banners and scarves, may be used symbolically to depict mountains, rivers and streams.

The costumes make exotic use of sequins, embroidery and colour. Yet their exuberance does not distract from the faces of the actors who wear a formalised make-up whose style combines clarity of line with subtle grading of skin tones. A constant feature of make-up is the "T" formed by thick white on forehead and nose. Eyes are heavily outlined in black, reinforcing the upwardly slanting sweep that we associate with an oriental countenance. The details of the make-up vary with the traditions of each historical strain of wayang performance, but there are some reasonably consistent characteristics. Pale plain make-up can indicate princes or scholars. Villainy is rather darker. A predominantly red face denotes courage while black and white indicate honest and dishonesty respectively — something of a reversal of western tradition. Green for ghostly and brown for stubborn, while gods and spirits may be gilded.

Lighting and sound technology are simple. The lights are on and they flood.

Anything as sophisticated as a lens would be a stylistic error. The microphone hangs centre and the loudspeakers are basic public address.

The acting style is broad yet controlled, and the vocalisation is high pitched. The plots, often based on legend, tend to revolve around corruption and revenge. There is always a moral with good and justice triumphant at the end. I did not get much further with the plot than the difference between the goodies and the baddies. But apparently there is such a wide range of dialects amongst wayang companies that even many locals do not fare much better in understanding the text. Nor can the stranger expect to follow the finer nuances of gesture. But there was more than enough to sustain and excite me for the single hour that

remained before my onward flight.

'Opera' is a rather narrow description for the width of music theatre techniques included in a wayang production. There is declaimed speech in addition to songs, and all movement is precisely choreographed whether formalised gesture or a dazzling display of acrobatic skills. But a wayang is truly operatic in that the performance timing is rigorously controlled by the orchestra. Gongs bang and cymbals crash while, to a western ear, drums seem to punctuate rather than beat a rhythm. And the intonation of the strings sounds distinctly precarious. I was fortunate that my wayang had a traditional orchestra: the saxophone and the electric guitar are infiltrating.

While I watched, the most attentive audience were the children leaning on the stage, chins on hands, attentive and involved. Their wondrous eyes were shared by a handful of great grandparents. The middle generations were concentrating on feasting at their dining tables with an abandon and chatter that would have drowned the performance — if the performers had lacked their microphonic advantage. But the night was young and, with several hours of performance still to go, there was ample time for the wayang to become an after dinner entertainment.

Like most theatre forms, Singapore Street Opera has for many years been declared to be dying, unable to survive the threat of the newer more technological media. Certainly, the permanent theatres of China Town are no more. But, apart from the formal efforts of the Ministry of Culture and the Tourist Promotion Board to sustain the wayang traditions, the community's patronage system looks set to continue to support performances. Long may there be hungry ghosts to be appeased.

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New Lamps for Old, or The Magic of Light

BOB ANDERSON

Talk about lamps and lanterns over a cup of coffee and somebody will moan that the back room boys have failed miserably to make any meaningful improvement within living memory. If the refreshment is alcoholic the last century, or even longer if there are veterans present and several rounds have been pulled. Looking at facts however can be much more encouraging.

Bulls eye lenses and carbon arcs or lime-light must have seemed very powerful in the days of gas. The performance of the arc is still impressive and its punch outperforms nearly everything else available. However, both these lamps required generous ventilation so there was no question of enclosing the source in a wrap around reflector system to catch and focus as much as possible of the available light. Bright as they were, spotlights of the 19th and the first half of the twentieth century were inefficient because all types of light source were large and had to be kept cool.

Arc lights and the limelight give a good beam because they have high surface brightness from a very small source area. By a fundamental law of optics a focused lens or mirror acquires about the same surface brightness as the source, and this, multiplied by the area of the optical element, is the light available to project onto the stage. With a small source the beam angle is naturally small and the light from the lens much more punchy than if spread over a much larger solid angle. Consequently, from the point of view of brightness, these early spotlights were very satisfactory and

could only be improved on if sources with higher intrinsic brightness can be discovered. So far, physics has found only the Xenon arc as a near equal to the carbon arc and the laser as a major improvement. The laser, of course, is unavoidably coloured and much too small to give a useful beam to illuminate actors.

Improvements must therefore be sought somewhere else. Of all the light sources discovered in the twentieth century, it is infuriating that only incandescent tungsten has enough positive attributes to be of real value for theatre. Fluorescent lamps are too big and rather inconvenient to dim. Low and high pressure sodium are determinedly only available in shades of yellow and will not dim at all. The family of mercury arcs, from the old sickly green lamps that used to be used for street lighting, through the modern industrial mercury iodide equivalent, to the CSI, CID and HMI versions specifically tailored for theatre and television, all prove undimmable in theatrical terms and, although better than incandescent tungsten in terms of intrinsic brightness, still fall well below the carbon arc in this property. Theatre spotlight designers therefore have little choice and have had to learn to collaborate with the lamp manufacturers to make the best of the light that can be obtained from near-molten tungsten.

Physicists discovered long ago that the amount and colour of the light produced by a hot body can be calculated from basic equations with great accuracy. For metals and similar materials visible light output

increases slowly at first as temperature is raised because most of the input energy is radiated as infra-red radiant heat. As the power input increases the body gets hotter and the redish light gets whiter and much, much brighter. If this process could be continued then a temperature of about 6000 degrees and the colour of sunlight would be optimum. Higher temperatures make the light bluer and eventually so much energy goes in the ultra-violet that the eye can no longer make any use of it. Marvelous however for getting sun burn. Unfortunately, most materials melt well below the optimum temperature and the early history of electric lighting was the story of the search for materials that would melt at as high a temperature as possible and also conduct electricity. Tungsten has been found to be the only practicable answer and this melts at about 3655K.

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SUN	165000

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2800K	12000	2000
3000K	20000	750
3200K	27000	150
3400K	33000	15

With the choice of material made, the next problem was how to get as close to melting point as possible without an unacceptably short life. Of course, different users had different ideas about the life they required. For the general public with no great understanding of the trade-offs involved, the longest possible life seems appropriate. But for slide and film projection and theatre, television and film stage lighting shorter lives and more light were found to be necessary. Domestic lamps operate at about 2700K, theatre lamps at 2900K, TV and film studio up to 3200K and the very short life photo-flood at 3350. The table shows how luminous efficacy — lumens per watt — increases as operating temperature is raised and life decreases.

Several tricks have been discovered to improve life. Filaments fail for complex reasons but the most important is that the metal evaporates and this happens with increasing rapidity as the temperature increases. Hence, as a lamp gets older, there is less and less metal on the filament and if this does not happen evenly, one point will

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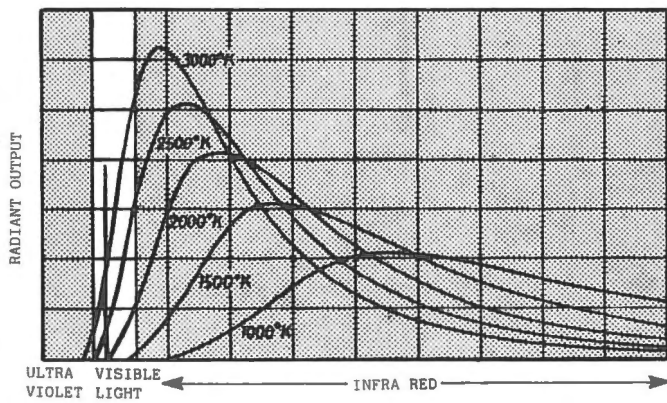
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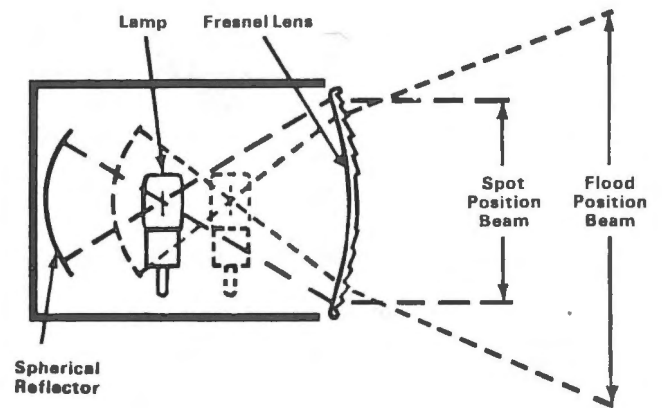
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Proportion of visible to invisible light as filament temperature is changed.
(Diagram with acknowledgement to Thorn Lighting).



Fresnel Spotlight, the lens collects less light at 'spot' so is less efficient although the beam is brighter

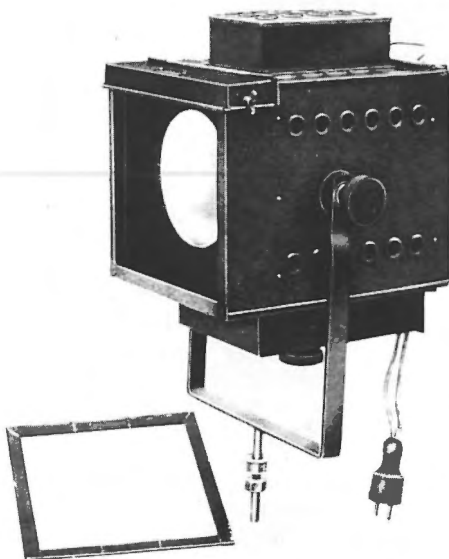
get hotter than the rest and melt. This evaporation can be slowed down by filling the lamp bulb with an inert gas under pressure, but evaporation still occurs and the metal lost ends up on the lamp wall. This results in blackening, loss of light and increase in glass temperature because it is no longer as transparent as when new. To sustain a high gas pressure the glass must be strong. A small bulb is easier to make stronger than a large bulb, but if the bulb is small the evaporated tungsten spreads over a smaller internal surface and blackening is faster and rapid overheating and explosion are the probable consequence. Hence, until the 1960s, high performance lamps were large and for film studios, contained an abrasive powder that could be swirled around to clean up the inside of the glass and, hopefully, minimise loss of light and life due to blackening.

Then the chemistry of the halogen cycle was mastered and the apparently miraculous properties of iodine and bromine to transport tungsten back from the lamp walls onto the filament was made to work in production line lamps. This solved the problem of bulb size. If the tungsten

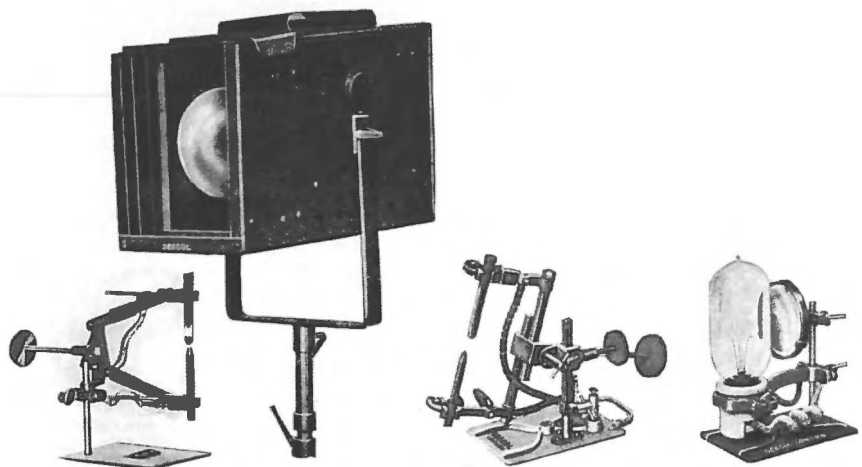
evaporated onto the glass could be promptly removed then small strong bulbs became possible and hence valuable increase in filling pressure achieved and the lamp run nearer to melting point for a given life because the higher gas pressure slowed down the evaporation. Also, although less miraculous than often reported, the halogen cycle really does put a lot of the evaporated metal back onto the filament and this too helps improve life.

So, what other advantage is obtained from a smaller lamp bulb? Any light produced by the lamp that does not fall on the lens must, of course, be wasted. For this reason, a big lens close to the lamp will be more efficient than a small lens at a greater distance. Put more generally, the more the lamp can be wrapped up in useful mirrors or lenses, the more of the light produced by the electricity used can be redirected onto the stage. Big lenses and mirrors are, of course, more expensive than small versions, so, although the optical efficiency can be made to a given value on any scale, if it is small the lamp should be cheaper than if it is large. To make the optical system small the lamp that has to be inside it must be small so, given the usual shortage of money, small lamps usually result in better optical systems and more useful light output.

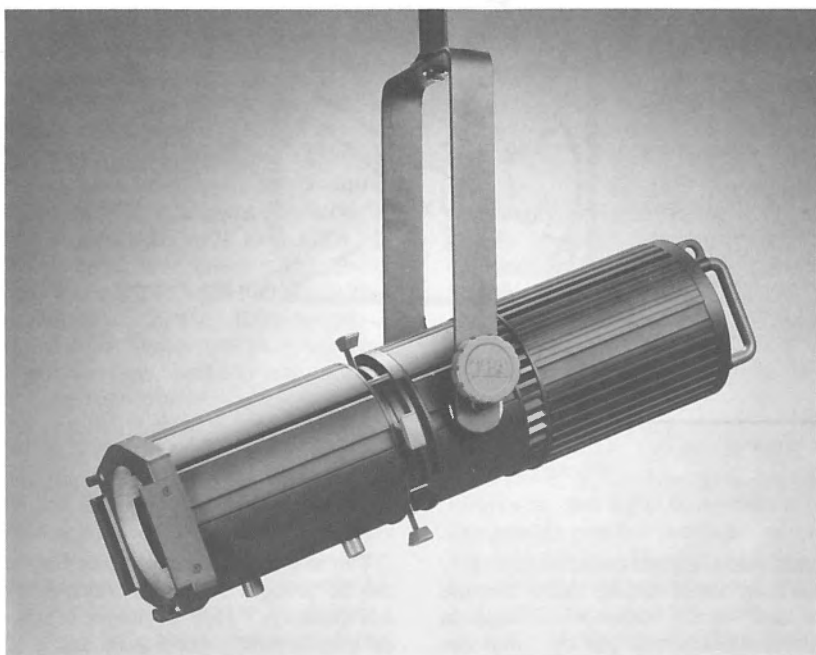
The amount of light produced by a lamp can be thought of in two ways, brightness and quantity. To appreciate the difference, a 60 watt domestic pearl lamp and a 60 watt clear lamp give about the same number of lumens and the same lighting effect unless you look at the lamp. If you look at the lamp the clear bulb looks brighter because the light source is much more concentrated. Project an image from both bulbs and the brighter image will come from the clear bulb. To get an equally bright image from the pearl lamp the effect of the diffusing bulb has to be undone and requires much larger long focus lenses. A similar consequence follows from the size of filaments designed for high, mains, voltages and those designed for low voltages like car lamps. For the same total light output the mains voltage filament has to be long and thin and forms a spread-out grid source even when wound in coils to minimise its size for a projector lamp. For the same wattage the low voltage filament will be thick and short and much easier to wind in a coiled compact format. Losing a few tenths of a millimetre from the filament of a mains lamp results in failure, losing the same from the much thicker low voltage filament has little effect and so the temperature and evaporation rate can be pushed up without



Early Digby half-watt Focusing Projector Lantern (circa 1920)



This Strand Universal stage focusing lantern from 1925 could be fitted with carbon arcs or gas filled incandescent.



TBA Technology's NZ 100 Zoom lantern. 1000 watt performance from low voltage, low wattage lamps is claimed.

falling below target life.

All these developments have, over fifty years or so, resulted in lamps and lanterns that out-perform their predecessors by an appreciable fraction every decade. If you need proof find some old lanterns and lamps and set up an experiment. Take care to compare like with like and you will not fail to be impressed. It is over ten years since Fred Benthams did this at the old Strand headquarters in King Street and there is no doubt that there have been real improvements since then.

The next step, according to Tim Burnham, is to make a whole hearted change to low voltage. His initial demonstrations have met with warm welcome from lighting people on both sides of the Atlantic and we all now await samples to really find out what has been achieved in practice. Unlike the microprocessor revolution, there will be no great leap forward and lighting users in all the entertainment industries will have to be grateful for gradual improvements, unless, of course, we really can come to believe in Magic.

REIDing SHELF

The opening of the Twentse Schouwburg in Enschede — the subject of an article by Ian Mackintosh in Cue 34 — coincided with the publication of a book celebrating and recording the first thirty years in practice of architect **ONNO GREINER**. With a short description, in English, of each project's circumstances and philosophy, the juxtaposition of plans and photographs (320mm x 240mm) documents his buildings in an exemplary way.

The book groups Greiner's work into sections on Education, Living, Working, Public Health, and Culture. His housings for the arts include multi-purpose complexes with areas for the pursuit of creative arts and crafts, while their performance provision includes every form of flexible staging, formal and informal. The documentation of his restoration of the Schouwburg at Leiden to its 1865 condition indicates that there is no exaggeration in reports that it is a model of historical accuracy combined with theatrical practicality. I am motivated to go and look! I have been to Enschede and can recommend a visit by anyone considering how to remodel a cinematic tunnel into a vibrant theatre.

A relaxed cool classicism pervades all Onno Greiner's work — purity of form and and abhorrence of anything that is merely a decorative addition is central to his approach. While my own personal taste hankers after some purely decorative exuberance in certain areas of a theatre, particularly the foyers, I find myself seduced by the clarity of the materials that create and interact with Onno Greiner's spaces. Particularly when the budget runs to marble floors. And I delight in his use of scenic artists paint textures in the Enschede auditorium.

Whether by luck or, more likely, by determination, he has been able to develop most of his designs, even his private houses,

in dialogue with their occupiers. This must surely be a contributing factor to the way in which his internal spaces appear to flow naturally into one another, linking unobtrusively with the outside world. Agoraphobes or claustrophobes should find diminished difficulty in passing in and out of his buildings. If the need ever arises, I would hope that it would be to a Greiner psychiatric clinic that I would be referred — the evidence of the book is that these seem to contrive a therapeutic atmosphere of repose in which tension can only be an alien state. Is there a clue here to the success of Onno Greiner's theatres? It is certainly interesting that he should build so much in two specialist areas related by a common interest in the exploration of the subconscious.

Onno Greiner's architecture is human. Clearly an artist of his stature deserves a book of this quality.

In the days before technical exposure became fashionable, stage managers felt it professionally incumbent upon them to agonise over achieving perfect masking for the few in the front row, even if that masking thereby became obtrusive for the majority seated elsewhere. In vain did I comfort these stage managers with the reminder that Harold Hobson was the only person who sat in the front row by choice, and that he so concentrated on the text and



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the acting that he seemed virtually oblivious, at least consciously, to the details of the designed environment. In Hobson's personal view of **THEATRE IN BRITAIN** there are very few references to designers and only one, Oliver Messel, is indexed. But this book, perhaps rather more than one's memory of the weekly notices, makes it clear that his response was to the totality of the production, even if his discussion centred upon the plays and their players.

Harold Hobson frequently stood apart from the consensus of his colleagues. Probably no other critic, not even Tynan, has ever bettered his record of recognising the occurrence of significant moments in the development of drama. When the dailies had misunderstood and derided, Hobson on Sundays so often offered understanding and support to an exploratory playwright, encouraging the audience to approach the new with open thinking.

Theatre in Britain covers the period from 1920 until the death of Richardson and its confessed aim is to show that all theatre is politically and socially relevant. But Hobson also recognises and appreciates all that is implied in the word entertainment. Here is a man who enjoys theatre going. And it shows.

Although theatre would seem to be a potentially rewarding field for study by sociologists, there has been surprisingly little research. Certainly, if the subject has been explored, the results have not been widely published. Michael Sanderson fills the gap with a social history of the acting profession **FROM IRVING TO OLIVIER**. His chosen span of 1880–1983 takes the actor from the struggle for professional respectability through that for industrial recognition. He traces the actor's position in society through an analysis of working conditions, finances, unionisation and training together with off-stage attitudes, activities and aspirations.

Wars and new technologies are perhaps the strongest and fastest agents of social change: their effect on the actor's life is at least as positive as on those ordinary mortals whose rôle playing does not require a stage or screen. Michael Sanderson offers no particularly stunning revelations. His description of the evolution of the actor's life is much as we have all generally believed it to be. But his statements are backed by solid research. There are 1061 numbered notes to the text (merifully at the end of chapters rather than at the foot of pages) and 16 pages of bibliography. Many facts that were only suspicions are now confirmed, and the book has enough pointers to set researchers off in a multitude of potentially interesting directions.

Books which document their research in such detail often require a struggle of concentration to read. But not this one: it falls smoothly on the brain and I read it like the sort of novel that used to be called a jolly good yarn.

Donald Sinden received a telephone call from Ralph Richardson: "Hello cocky – I hear you're writing a book about yourself and the acting. Don't tell them how it's done." Sinden does not set out to tell us how an actor acts – well not in the analytical way that provoked another thespian to say that Peter Barkworth's books 'make acting seem difficult'. But his writing is peppered with lots of throwaway clues like 'even if the audience thinks that I look the same in every play, I convince myself that I always look different.'

As I seem to be quoting everyone else, I might as well quote from my own Cue review of the first book of Sinden, *A Touch of the Memoirs*, "Actors memoirs can be awful – they are often written in a style of platitudinous insincerity that is only appropriate for backstage visiting on opening nights. Sinden, however, knows the structure of a good tale and he knows how to use timing in the telling. But this is not just an entertaining book. It offers much more insight into the acting process than many a more profound acting text". The second volume in the Sinden saga, **LAUGHTER IN THE SECOND ACT**, carries on in much the same vein and it is therefore only really necessary for me to record that it covers the sixties form the *Wars of the Roses* to a *Girl in My Soup*.

There is a good chapter on the origins, under his chairmanship, of the Theatre Museum whereby 'all the major collections, bar one, were brought together and we were lumbered with a lot of Russian Ballet material'. In a future memoir we can look forward to Donald Sinden's account of the opening of the Museum in Convent Garden – and with the seventies and eighties still to come, his timing seems likely to remain, as ever, immaculate.

After fourteen years as an Arts Council listing, **FESTIVALS IN GREAT BRITAIN** has been privatised. A list of festivals 'with forecast dates and policies' must have a limited sales appeal: you either need it desperately or you do not need it at all. Such publications require sponsorship and John Offord, the established patron of the science of arts administration, has taken it over, assisting viability by binding in his own book catalogue.

'Festival' has developed from being a term restricted to thematic quality or orgiastic quantity into a marketing device used with about as much conviction as the now discarded 'prior to London' once offered. However this book confines its listing to those that are held regularly, are more than a one-day event and have professional input. Even so, there are about 230. All make policy statements including quite a lot which share the flavour of 'this is an annual celebration of the performing arts appealing to a wide range of tastes and age groups.' But the core is the names and addresses which makes this book an essential sales manual for performers.

Athol Fugard is no narrow polemicist. The strength of his plays lies in the way in which they transcend the simplicity of mere political stance. By exploring human relationships within a particular environment, in this case the attitudes and legalities of contemporary South African society, dramatic form is used to expose human frailty on a more universal level. Dennis Walder's **ATHOL FUGARD** in the Macmillan Modern Dramatists series, discussing the plays and the creative conditions under which they were both written and initially performed, offers a rewarding insight into the workings of a playwright who seems likely to outlast many, or even most, of his contemporaries.

Universal truths can arise from a dramatist's investigation of the interplay of traditional roles. Gender roles have recently become an area for close scrutiny and, while it is inevitable that the anti-chauvinist movement should generate plays with a tightly focussed polemic argument, many feminist playwrights have used their stance to investigate wider implications of the human condition. (Incidentally, progressive thinking on gender equality must surely soon spawn new words which have the non-sexist intent of 'human' and 'mankind' without including 'man' as deriving syllable – 'peson' has been degraded by beauracracy-inspired jokes.) Helene Keyssar observes that **FEMINIST THEATRE** has celebrated on stage the ability of men and women to resist the roles that imprison them. Successful 'ist' and 'ism' movements become absorbed into mainstream and there are signs that this is happening in theatre. Meanwhile, in what is probably the best volume so far in the Modern Dramatists Series, Helene Keyssar provides an introduction to the history and aspirations of a theatre with a feminist perspective.

ONNO GREINER Architect. Marc van der Marck (Translated by John Kirkpatrick), with an introduction by Karel Wiekart (Translated by Wendy Shaffer). Van Gennepe, Nes 128, Amsterdam.

THEATRE IN BRITAIN. A personal View. Harold Hobson. Phaidon. £19.95 (UK).

FROM IRVING TO OLIVIER. A Social History of the Acting Profession in England 1880–1983. Michael Sanderson. The Athlone Press (London), St Martin's Press (New York). £14.50 (UK).

LAUGHTER IN THE SECOND ACT. Donald Sinden. Hodder and Stoughton. £9.95 (UK).

FESTIVALS IN GREAT BRITAIN. A List with Forecast Dates and Policies. 1985 John Offord Publications. £4.95 (UK) (Paperback)

ATHOL FUGARD. Dennis Walder. **FEMINIST THEATRE**. An Introduction to Plays of Contemporary British and American Women. Helen Keyssar. Both in Macmillan Modern Dramatists Series, £14 (UK) £4.95 (Paperback) (UK).

Product News



A new Floodlight from CCT

Introduced as the first stage and studio floodlight to be designed to the new international safety standards. Available with asymmetric and symmetric optical systems both models use 1000 watt or 1250 watt lamps. Re-lamping is carried out from the rear of the lantern without disturbance of its set position whilst complete safety is assured by an auto eject plug connection. A safety mesh is standard with safety glass as an option. A quick action filter frame is dimensioned to allow optimum use of the colour medium. Very efficient cooling is provided by a unique funnel convection system which effectively prevents any light spill. More information from CCT Theatre Lighting Ltd., 26 Willow Lane, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 4NA.

Co-ordinating the lighting and scenery changes

AVAB Rigging Control offers the same manipulative possibilities for rigging as for lighting. Rigging "presets" can be recorded and played back. Rigging elements are then moved at different speeds to their predetermined positions. Delayed starts are also assignable to these elements. The operator can always take over timed movements, speeding them up, slowing them down or stopping them, as the situation dictates. Several rigging elements can be synchronized to move together as a single element. The system accommodates a maximum of 128 different motors, of which, up to 20 are movable simultaneously.

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AVAB Rigging Control places a great emphasis on safety. A "deal man's switch" must always be activated to allow any rigging movement. The system also detects unwanted changes in load amounts, that is, can sense "lost" or increased weight. Line slack and end positions are constantly monitored.

The system scrutinizes all commands so that those calling for illegally fast acceleration or braking of rigging elements are overridden and altered to remain within operating safety parameters. All necessary accelerations and retardations are executed automatically as a function of the timed "crossfades" between different rigging presets.

AVAB Rigging Control is also equipped with a Remote Control facility, from which most functions can be activated. This means



that the operator can always control rigging from the best vantage point — another significant contribution to safety.

The optional alphanumeric keyboard allows the operator to augment rigging programmes with text information. Finally, AVAB Rigging Control can operate in synchronization with the VIKING light-board for complete co-ordination of lighting and scene changes.

Further information from CCT Theatre Lighting Ltd., 26 Willow Lane, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 4NA.

Nickel Cadmium Battery Analyser

A fully automated test device for camera and lighting batteries is announced by



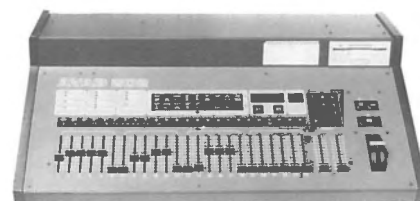
Colortran U.K. Developed to enable T/V crews and OB photographers to check that batteries drawn from stores are capable of being charged and re-charged with reliability in the field. The Analyser provides all essential information on the condition of the battery as well as providing the means for balancing the cell pack for more efficient charging. Thus it will indicate controlled rate of battery discharge and charge levels and can be used to analyse 9v — 12v — 20v — 24v and 30v packs.

More information from Colortran U., Burrell Way, Thetford, Norfolk.

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AVAB has done away with the long chains of commands to execute rudimentary programming routines. Press the key and the corresponding function is executed immediately or enter a number and define it with a functions key. It couldn't be simpler. Even more complex operations, such as programming chase effects, can be reduced to this concise method of data entry. Creating the lighting programme is quick and easy allowing adjustments during the performance with a minimum of effort.

Further information from CCT Theatre Lighting Ltd., 26 Willow Lane, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 4NA.

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COLOUR EFFECT FILTERS

Product	Effect Colour
101 Yellow	Sunlight and window effect – pleasant in acting areas
102 Light Amber	Lamplight effects – dawn sun effects – pleasant in acting areas
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
189 Cosmetic Silver Moss	Pale tints complimentary to Key lighting
190 Cosmetic Emerald	Pale tints complimentary to Key lighting
191 Cosmetic Aqua Blue	Pale tints complimentary to Key lighting

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Bear Garden Shakespeare

Theatric Tourist FRANCIS REID Crosses the Thames

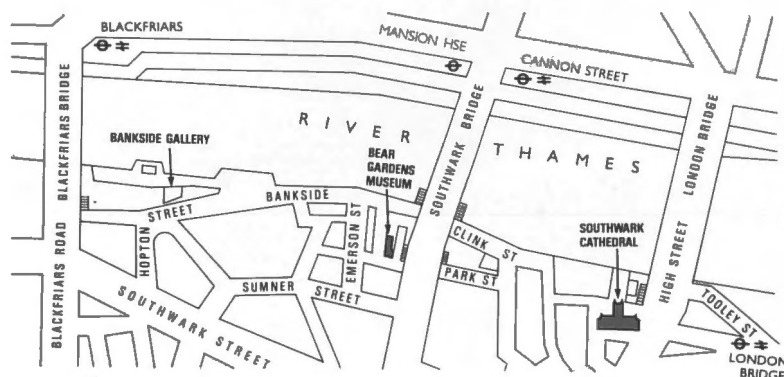
The great days of South Bank entertainment on London's Thames are pre-restoration and post-war. From the puritanical closing of the theatres in 1642 until the institutional opening of the Royal Festival Hall in 1951, the South Bank was an area prominent in commerce rather than the performing arts. However at the turn of the sixteenth century a thriving centre for theatrical and allied spectator arts was located not far downstream from today's cluster of dramatic, music and video houses. Since 1970 it has been an obsession of Sam Wanamaker that a replica of Shakespeare's Globe should arise here on Bankside.

Strangely, the major problem that inhibits action is not the usual one of money but a complex ideological tangle of local com-

an alternative to plays.

Bear baiting was one of the principal recreations of the area which was also notable for its profusion of stewes and brothels. The displays in the museum set out to record the total atmosphere as well as the dramatic performances that flourished there. This is aided enormously by visitors' awareness that they are standing on the very spot where it all happened. And the warehouse itself, now painted throughout in red and white, has an air of centuries of toil and sin which have been hastily but barely whitewashed over.

At the entrance, eight feet of stuffed bear welcomes the visitor: not the sort of teddy that anyone would wish to bait or see baited — and therefore a reminder of the difficulty

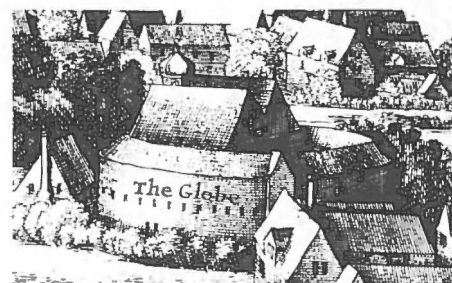


munity priorities. So it may well be some considerable time before Southwark Bridge funnels a stampede of umbrella carrying theatric tourists eager to experience Shakespeare restored. Meanwhile there is a goodly motive for today's committed explorer to seek out Bankside because, less than a hundred yards from the original site of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, there is **The Bear Gardens Museum of the Shakespearean Stage**.

The museum is housed in a converted Georgian warehouse in Bear Gardens, named after the bear baiting ring which stood on the site until replaced by the Hope playhouse. Indeed the Hope was, in today's terminology, a multipurpose venue with demountable stage to allow bear baiting as

of projecting ourselves back into an understanding of that time. Its effect on me was a resolve that if I want to get any closer to an understanding of Elizabethan audience response, my future will have to include attendance at a bullfight.

The museum's display method is to supplement photographic blow-ups of contemporary drawings and documents with model reconstructions. Inevitably much of our knowledge of the Shakespearean stage is based on conjecture. But scholarship is painstakingly filling in the gaps with a skill which is on a par with that demonstrated by the greatest exponents of criminal detection and forensic science. Being a popular museum, targeted at the casual seeker after a broader understanding



rather than at the specialist concerned with niceties of detail, the captions tend to present their well founded conjectures as if they were facts. This is the right approach: the overall story would be confused and diluted by too much balancing of subtle variations of possible, probable and perhaps.

The graphics present a comprehensive picture — and, because we are standing there, an evocative one — of the actors, the audiences and their playhouses, all set within the context of sixteenth/seventeenth century Southwark society. The models of the playhouses, including the Hope, the Curtain and the first and second Globes, acknowledge their debt to the scholarship of C. Walter Hodges. They would benefit from some clearer indication of scale. A model of a Frost Fair on the frozen Thames will stir anyone whose body chemistry includes the merest drop of red entrepreneurial blood.

The exhibited material includes the growth of indoor theatres like Blackfriars and the masques at Whitehall, and its period ends with the closures of these theatres and the Bankside playhouses in 1642. When theatrical activity resumed after the restoration, it was in the indoor theatres north of the river that the drama and opera developed — leaving Bankside to await the departure of dockland and the arrival of Sam Wanamaker.

Above the museum there is a reconstruction of the stage of the Cockpit. Doubtless people enjoy themselves acting and watching the productions there, but I find it a poor simulation. Apart from the stage being meaningless without an appropriate auditorium, the construction and painting are shoddy in the wrong sort of way — there is a world of difference between rough (which it should be) and shoddy (which it should not). I would go so far as to suggest that it might just possibly do harm by creating a misunderstanding of just how splendid are the Globe Trust's development plans.

For, in addition to telling the Bankside story, this museum has a function to act as a promotional shop window for the Globe project which will include with its full sized Globe replica a small indoor theatre (the *Inigo Jones*), a pub, restaurant, flats — and a much expanded Bear Gardens Museum. It is a major international theatre experiment and I just can't wait. But meanwhile, the Bear Gardens Museum is well worth a visit.



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