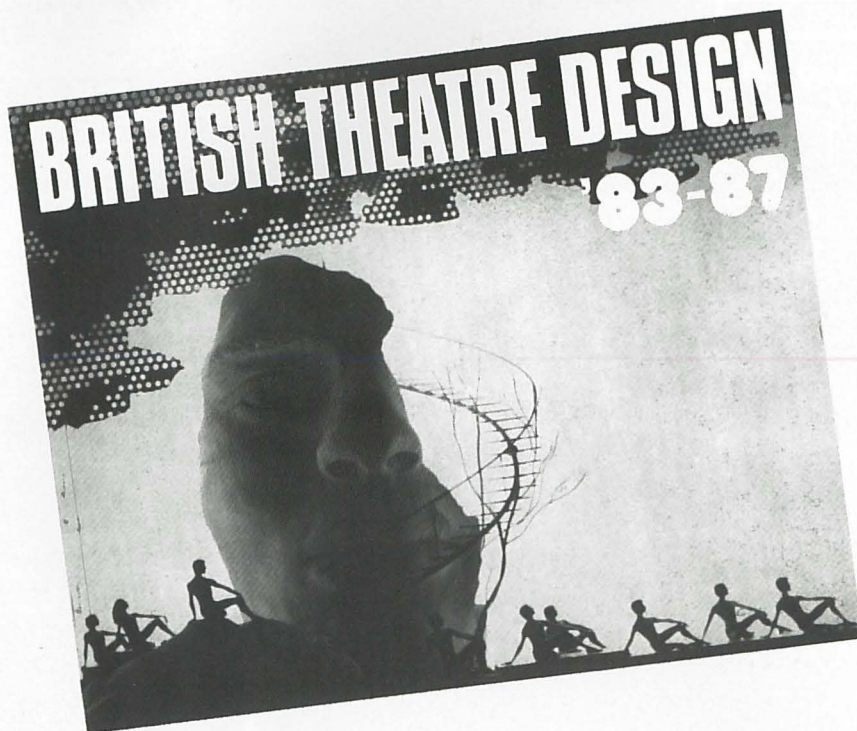


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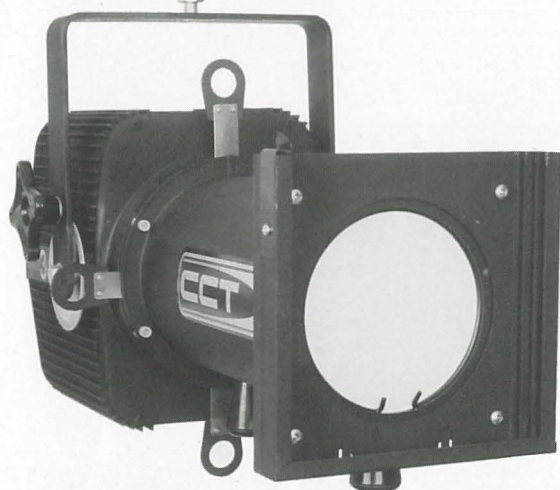
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CONTENTS

A German view on lighting the stage today <i>August Everding</i>	4
Strand's Bristol Spectacular <i>Francis Reid</i>	6
A.D. MCMXXXVII – MCMLXXXVII <i>Frederick Bentham</i>	9
Control Board Alphabet <i>Francis Reid</i>	12
Book Reviews	13
Some Lighting Observations from 1946	15
Correspondence	17
Financing Cultural Facilities in the 80's <i>Louis Fleming</i>	18
Product News <i>Bob Anderson</i>	20

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AT THE 1987 PLASA SHOW

Less noise, less smoke, and perhaps even less flashing – well comparatively less – was our overriding impression of the 1987 PLASA *Light and Sound Show*. Was this a fact or was it just that one is becoming acclimatised? If there was anything really new, then we failed to discover it. There were doubtless lots of refinements in how you can choreograph a motorised truss or sequence its Pars. However our Plasa mission was not so much to examine the niceties of badge engineering, but to seek new interactions between the various fields of lighting for entertainment. Such interaction is now commonplace in the exploitation of new light sources and in the remoting of pan and tilt movements. But what next?

Perhaps it is just that we cuepersons are stuck in our theatrical ways, but we have to say that most of the carefully programmed disco sequences look rather random to us. Certainly they get ever more frenetic, although this year it did rather look as if the growth in frenzy had peaked. The growth curve may only have settled on the horizontal but is likely to be perceived as a fall by the punters. The disco bubble could well burst if more attention is not paid to the old theatrical craft of pacing.

So what could theatre learn from the show? Alas, not a lot. Rigging? Styling? Perhaps. But mostly let us just be thankful that the rock/disco market is big enough to sustain the level of competitive product development that leads to the JEM HF2000 Heavy Fog machine which really does simulate the effect of a dry ice carpet on the stage floor.

Perhaps we expect too much. After all, stage and disco lighting are for different environments: the one for passive observers, the other for active participants. Nevertheless we are all in Showbiz together and so have surely everything to gain from cross-fertilisation.

A German View on Lighting the Stage today

AUGUST EVERDING

As a lot of us in U.K. or North America have appreciated for a considerable time now, lighting plays is no mere supporting role to back-up decor, costumes, colours, actors and singers; it is in its own right part of the very substance of any production. The lecture below given by a distinguished German director during a "Light" symposium in Salzburg will come as something of a surprise as it was aimed at professionals. After all, we must remember that sixty years ago it was Germany who had so much to show the rest of the world in the art of stage lighting, particularly for large-scale naturalistic effects based on the use of a cyclorama. For example, the new 1934 stage lighting installation for the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, although the equipment was designed & made in England, was quite literally based on German practice. What follows is a translation of the reprint of the lecture as it appeared in *Bühnentechnische Rundschau* (Heft-1 February 1987) edited and adapted for the "Anglo-Saxon" reader.

Since October 1985 twelve students have had the chance to learn lighting from the bottom up. Which spotlight throws what sort of light, how many different qualities a different quantity of light has, how lighting can change the reality (of any picture), how light can follow a person, how a *memory* control is worked and the resulting lighting change can be used. We all have learned by doing; but this is not enough. We have watched our 'teachers' and cribbed from our colleagues. We have often trusted the lighting engineers and stage designers, and have unnecessarily lengthened the lighting rehearsals; because we only developed a lighting plan there and then as we went along. Lighting was not thought of as part of the original concept, it was not an essential part of the production. This state of affairs has fundamentally changed in recent years — partly through the influence of new Media. Many Regisseurs do television and films as well, where lighting is crucial to provide *any* picture.

Lighting Designers came from the Anglo-Saxon countries; if the Beleuchtungschefs allowed it. They *had* studied light and its uses and nowadays in New York, for example, the light-creator sits beside me at every rehearsal, knows why a given position is decided on, senses the atmosphere appropriate to all 'pictures', and lights the piece during the weeks of rehearsal and plans the positions of the sources of light and knows beforehand what is impossible. It is nonsense to start with this plan only when the sets are ready or at lighting rehearsal. Thus this lighting designer, who is trained both in the field of the technical and the drama, gets the Regisseur to explain the motivation behind the lighting he has requested. However,

lighting designers exist only because many lighting engineers have never got beyond the electrician grade and many Regisseurs only organise and don't create. Even great Regisseurs didn't know how to use the lighting control — some *did* play with it and achieved amazing results; some improvised with the toy, some preferred to resort to lighting without change and call it their style. The great Fritz Kortner worked in enormous detail in this way: for each position he called for another spot and as there were an infinite number of positions he soon ran out of lights. When Kortner was forced to admit that this state of affairs could not be ascribed to the ill-will of the Beleuchtungsmeister; either some actors sat in deep darkness, which inspired critics to deep interpretation, or he employed follow-spots in the middle of the show!

I have also experienced situations where the Regisseur and dramatist had completely opposite opinions about the lighting. Hans Schweikert did "The Good Woman of Sezuán" and called for hard cold Boxing Ring Lighting. Brecht came and said "This is Brecht completely misunderstood; it must be soft, coloured light — the cigarette smoke must curl in its rays". I thought I could hear the architect Holzmeister when he spoke of incense in churches. The Regisseur should already during the making of the Regie book not just set down the moves, the props etc; but visualise all these happenings in the right light and that doesn't mean just light and dark, nor light on or off, it means to find out what is the appropriate, adequate light for a piece, a figure, a setting, for a theatre and that town. An important happening every night right at the beginning is the moment when the auditorium light slowly goes out; how smoothly or jerky is it,

or suppose it did not happen to go out at all! And then the curtain opens — how quickly? And if it is light on stage, how light? or if dark, how dark? Or to quote Fry: The dark is light enough. In these first seconds the whole evening is decided. In an opera, how do you get over the unpleasantly grey impression caused by the spill of the orchestra lights onto the flats, especially if it cannot be swamped by the stage lighting at that time.

I think it is bad practice which is increasing, that my Regie colleagues turn the overture into a Pre-Scene. They want to show that they have completely understood the opera and its story, or better that they have conceived it now in a new way and show that Senta or Elsa or the Steersman have only dreamt the opera; because otherwise the reality of what is happening would rationally be impossible. With these Pre-Scenes the most mystical moments of theatre are destroyed — that last free space in the mind of each member of the audience, before the sights & sounds of the combined 'doers' pelt down, is prematurely taken away. This free space, where the imagination of each and every one is challenged to build for himself a scene and to conjure up the actors, to immerse them in the right light. This moment of creation should be left to the visitor before, with the rise of the curtain, he abandons himself to the imagination of the Regisseur, which may turn out to be disappointingly poorer than the product of his own — or else can turn out to be more stimulating, exciting and explanatory than he ever thought possible.

It can be no different for us Regisseurs. After countless preliminary discussions we see a model or a plan in which the lights are shown well — a state of affairs mostly impossible to achieve. Often our imagination is insufficient to project the *model* to the *real* stage. The disappointment at our first sight of the set shows itself in utterances such as: If only we had our rehearsal mark-out, it was so much more appropriate. But then the lighting rehearsals start and lift the whole procedure into a new reality. The sun rises, the grey board appears as figured wood, a bit of material becomes royal brocade, sheeting turns into foaming waves, tin into pure gold and a weedy tenor becomes a conquering hero sculpted in dramatic backlight. Light = lux = leukos = white, brilliant.

The physical explanation of this light beam that it increases in size and lessens in intensity with distance from its source is not at all sufficient. Light is not just light. The quality of light is an aesthetic category i.e. it is not at all relevant physically; the quality of the light, i.e. its beauty, is essentially and purely a matter of concept, a creative act

within the sphere of our sensibility. Light is a fixed point in Theology and Philosophy. If you have ever witnessed the liturgy of Easter Saturday, how the light increases three times with the increasing Lumen Christi, how the Easter light overpowers the darkness of Good Friday. The rigor mortis of nature is awakened by light. Light symbolises eternal life, and darkness disaster. In mythology gods of light reign supreme. The end of the most grandiose lighting scenario I have ever seen is monastery Weltenburg on the Danube. Here the monks built a central chamber which is reminiscent of the Pantheon, a dark cave above and in front of which the painting with the light is realised in a most effective way. It shows the present and the hereafter. Indirect light flows over the domed ceiling and in the reflected light, as on a baroque stage, the mounted figure of St. George on the altar.

In ecclesiastical rooms even in the rococo style and since, light was never used for its pure effect. Each light had its theological or anthroposophic dramatic meaning. It was spiritual light. We should think of the drama of light in every important instance. Colour too should have congruity with the substance to be lit.

Let us remember that until the end of the 19th century the auditorium remained lit during the performance, that the oil lamps and candles were enhanced by reflectors and that with every change of light hundreds of light sources had to be changed manually. Gas lighting was a big step forward but we need to remember the great fire danger. In the 19th century there were 200 theatre fires. The first electric installation happened in 1882 in the Ausstellungstheater Munich; in 1885 the Residenztheater and Hoftheater followed. The installation in the Prinzregententheater by Karl Lautenschlager was one of the most modern ones. It was Adolphe Appia who demanded that light had to express the precise vision of the Regisseur. Previously one only wanted to improve the lighting of the painted flats. Gordon Craig too had tried to circumvent by means of simple scenography the decorative pseudo realism of his time. Max Reinhardt had taken up the ideas of Gordon Craig. At the Bauhaustheater light at last raised to the same level of other means of production: Colour, Shape, Movement and Sound. Light had at last become one of the actors. The physical light takes shape, symbolic forms of light are developed. The stage is filled with naturally even-seeming light in the minutest steps from grey to silver. Lautenschlager was an important influence on stage lighting. The concept of the lighting of the Prinzregententheater was based on the 4-colour system by Brandt. This was a switching system for light sources, each with 12 to 120 lamps in the colours, white, green, red and yellow, each circuit being sub-divided into several colour circuits to which the different colour groups were connected. The exact circuitry of such a great number of lamps of different colours was at that time a problem. Lautenschlager constructed especially for the Prinz-

regententheater a control with 69 regulating levers. Also forty-four plug-sockets were built into the stage floor – then quite unusual.

At this point in his lecture, August Everding went on to contrast the great range of stage lighting equipment today and to speculate on what was just round the corner and what in addition he would like to see one day, including of course a beam of light which would stop dead after hitting the actor. He then continued: –

People often ask us, when there is a need to economize on the cost of scenery why we don't do it like, the now sainted but formerly unfashionable, Wieland Wagner and equip the stage only with lighting. Firstly, I wouldn't be allocated sufficient time for lighting and even if I could get it, it wouldn't be cheaper. Secondly, Wieland Wagner himself has used lighting in this extreme form only when the symbolism or dramatic effect of the piece called for it.

You can show a scene on an empty stage; it can appear as a work of art, or it can try to convey the natural most naturally or most unnaturally. It can be artificially artificial. But the scene always take place in a space and must convey a given space. This is why pure painters have such difficulties to get away from the two-dimensional. In our stage space there are not only painted walls but living people move around in it who sometimes behave like people and sometimes like marionettes. The measure of everything to do with theatre is man and every theatre which imagines it can do without people is a "theatre of machines". The greatness and triviality of man determines all dimensions into which only the Deus ex Machina can break.

In this context let us consider the differences of the same piece in the open air or in the artificial light of the stage. Next year I shall make a film of "Faust" and apart from the scene in the study, I want to do this in the open air. I have found all the right locations; but I have not yet lost all my doubts whether the natural light goes aesthetically with Goethe's rhymes and verse; or whether artist's words call for artist's use of artificial lighting. Real trees *have* appeared on the stage; the back-lighting from the sun hung among cloud effects has streamed onto our stages. Direct front-light was less in use, the follow spots not used at all if possible. Thus one wave of fashion takes the place of another. Hundreds of lighting cues are memorised and cancelled with lightning speed. Formerly with the old Bordoni dimmer controls it was slower and the Beleuchtungschef had an absolute say. There was no VDU then to consult as to how many spots were used and at what intensities and *above all* how many were still free!

Darkness on the stage, unlike in theology, does not signify evil. It enables us to wait for the light, it is merciful when a murder scene is over or capricious when it envelops the end of a love scene. Darkness on the empty stage at night has an impermeable poetic quality. It waits timelessly but is

anxious to be sucked in and eaten up at the next rehearsal by the light sources. The old proscenium stage is secretive. Many people meet of an evening in beautiful or ugly theatres: by the way an architect has proved to me that one hears well in beautiful theatres even when the acoustics are bad, and badly in acoustically perfect rooms which are ugly. Everyone talks, yet suddenly become silent before the auditorium lights go out. I always wonder who has given the sign. The curtain opens and out of the darkness of the stage mouth there originates light, theatre light which exposes the empty or furnished stage and seizes our interest. I think that it is thus because the stage influences us to believe that it is the whole world and not just a section of the world, the universe in which then in a very small scale and in a limited space fate, which I know or which I get to know, runs its course.

Whatever the locations they must appear in the right light. What this is shows the imagination of the Regisseur and his helpers. The Lighting Designers have the good name here of Lichtgestalter, which means that they create (fashion) light. Licht-Inszenierungen is the theme of this lecture. The scene designer realises drama and opera on the stage, designs spaces in which human beings live, die, love, fight, go under and are resurrected. We often say after lighting rehearsals, that they unfortunately can only take place with the statisticians – or as at Herr Von Karajan's rehearsals, with Bundeswehr-soldiers. To actors we say: Find the light I have arranged for you. The actor has to stand where the light is; but it would be more correct if the light were where the actor is.

However, light may not make the scene, because it can easily disintegrate into a show effect. The concert of the Philharmonic was unforgettable when suddenly the light failed and the orchestra played on because the music was well lit inside their heads. Equally unforgettable was the "Electra" performance in Paris in the presence of the German Bundespräsident, where suddenly darkness broke out, the audience froze; only the secret police jumped up in order to secure his box and were unveiled by the quick return of the light.

We must begin our lighting rehearsals sooner – not as the last ingredient of the last rehearsal. Just as we are late in issuing the costumes to the actors in which they are expected to live, so we light too late. They are not 'supposed' to be lit, they themselves must light from the inside-out; or to be blunt, they should be gifted with the aura of light. But all the light in the world does not help if the person lit is not an illuminator, all the microphones and follow spots don't make a personality out of a Nobody. "Where there is no spirit, there can be no presence of the spirit" said Nietzsche, and Stravinsky has taught us: "The Regisseur is the aspirant who unites the author and the theatre, the midwife who helps at the birth of a work of art." To which I add that the Light makes it possible that I can visually appreciate this miracle. (IAB/FPB 12/10/87)

STRAND'S BRISTOL SPECTACTULAR

Lighting for Entertainment at the Theatre Royal

FRANCIS REID

Strand Spectacular played Bristol Old Vic's Theatre Royal in a performance lasting some eleven hours over three September days. This was not a Strand attempt to produce a lighting answer to Wagner's Ring. It was just that they had so many new product goodies to reveal and explain to their distributors.

Launching product in a real theatre gives a chance for some showbiz razzmatazz in the presentation. But, more importantly, a theatre allows the lights to be shown in their natural environment. Both manufacturer and user suffer from the traditional spotlight demo where the light is projected flat-on to a white wall at the wrong throw distance.

Strand invited me to demonstrate the new spotlights at Bristol. My brief was not to sell these lights but to put them in situations where they could speak for themselves. So I strutted the stage as a lighting designer, focussing them from the positions where they might be used in a theatre. I have also had an opportunity of visiting a theatre where prototypes of the new **Cantata** range were field tested as part of the rig for a couple of months: the condition of the shutters and focus mechanics was very encouraging, as was the response of the electricians crew.

The Bristol event also gave me an opportunity of checking through the new and revised filter ranges with the aid of a model (Nicola who appears on all the new swatch books, no less). Therefore in summarising the new product ranges, I can speak with the advantage of some hands-on experience of the spots and filters; and of closely observ-

ing the function of the control systems and performance of the remote-operated luminaires.

Spotlights

Harmony is dead — long live **Cantata!**

The new Cantata range comprises three variable angle profiles, a PC and a Fresnel. The profiles are known by their beam angles:

Cantata 11/26

Cantata 18/32

Cantata 26/44

I suspect that the Cantata 18/32 could become the average theatre's workhorse profile over the next decade. The series has a number of mechanical updates which will cheer those who meet them at the top of a ladder or on the maintenance bench, including a new robust fail-safe plug & socket connection and a versatile suspension fork. I particularly welcome the lamphouse/shutter assembly to which the lens front can

be quickly attached in alternative attitudes so that the focus controls are positioned at either side or at the top or bottom. These focus controls are well presented with the lower control knob track for beam angle and the upper for focus, used in conjunction with a best-yet rear knob for flat/peak field adjustment.

All this is the routine progress which, if we do not dare to expect, we certainly hope for! But the real excitement of Cantata comes from two features which Strand are entitled to propose as breakthroughs.

Firstly, all Cantatas use the new RSE 29 1200watt lamp. This means more light, yet a pair can still be controlled from one dimmer. All Strand dimmers (and most others) from the dawn of thyristors, even when labelled as 2kW, are 10amp dimmers and will not only handle the load in theory but have been soak tested in practice. Cantatas may, of course, also be used with 1kW lamps: the new lamp has a different light centre length from the RSE 19 lamp, but lamp height is quickly adjustable via a



CANTATA 18/32 Profile Spot

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two-position slot for the lampholder base.

But for me the prime new feature is a gate which can be rotated through a full 360 degrees and locked in any position. This is going to make life much easier and faster in all sorts of situations from the focussing of box booms to the orientation of gobos.

The PC has improved lens and reflector: it seems now fit and ready to replace fresnels as the standard for quick-focus on-stage lighting bars. Smooth beam and soft-edge but lacking the fresnel's flare. The new barndoor, with longer flaps, is common to the new fresnel which has been engineered to Cantata style and standards.

Lekos go International!

Although the versatility of variable angle profile spots gives the flexibility essential in multipurpose rigs, such versatility is gained at the expense of size, weight and complexity. For one-off shows there is much in favour of the simple compact profile with a fixed beam angle. The long established classic in this category is the Leko. Indeed, although Leko is the Century name for what the Americans formally call ellipsoidals and the rest of us know as profiles, it has become the american generic name for all such spots. Lekos have always been available through Strand since Century joined them under the Rank gong in the early 1970s, and they can be found in many current London musicals. Now the Leko has formally joined the european Strand Lighting catalogue.

Four Lekos have been selected to form the initial international range and their names

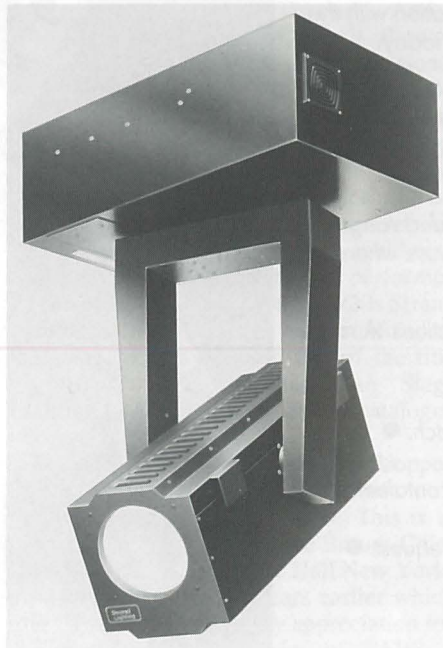
have been translated from american into a more internationally recognised form of lighting english: they will be known by their beam angles rather than by the diameter and focus of their lenses. Thus the range will comprise (US name in brackets):

Leko 11	[8×13]
Leko 18	[6×16]
Leko 26	[6×12]
Leko 40	[6×9]

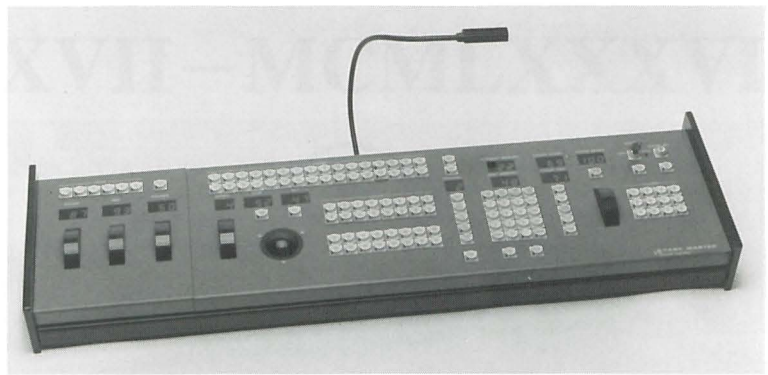
When choosing a profile to do a specific job in a specific show the simple Leko has a lot to recommend it. Apart from its light, the units have a simple elegance that looks particularly clean when they are massed together on box booms. And it is good news to find high hats in the catalogue: I have always admired the way that these snoots are used on Broadway to lessen the distraction for the audience of seeing lens fronts out the corners of their eyes.



LEKO 1000W Profile Spot



LITESCAN spot 400W HTI



TASKMASTER desk for 99 channels

Remotes

The development of remote control for the positioning and focussing of spotlights is gathering impetus. Strand are manufacturing Charlie Paton's PALS [Precision Automated Lighting Systems]. This allows many of the Strand luminaire range (including Cadenzas, Pars and Quartzcolours up to 5kW) to be supplied with motor drive assemblies for pan, tilt and either focus or iris. The drives and associated processors are safely and compactly housed in a clean looking rectangular yoke.

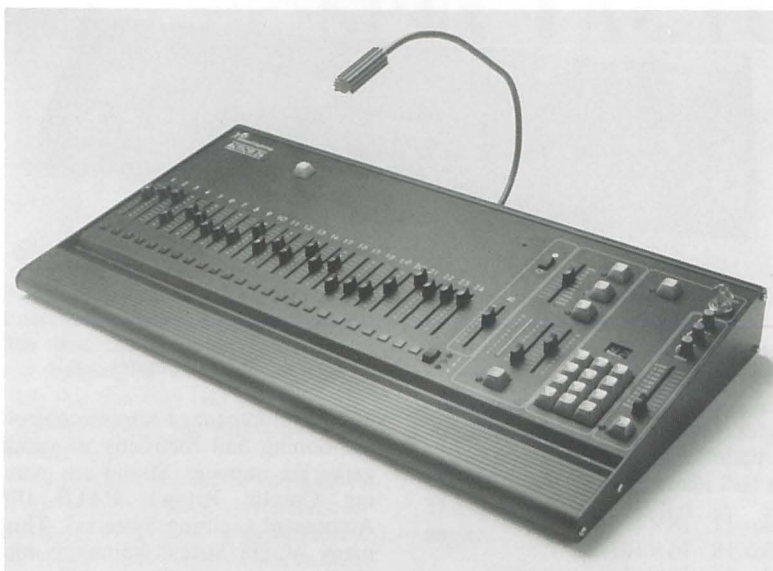
From America comes Litescan with a 400w discharge lamp, doing many of the things that have hitherto been unique to Varilite. (And Litescan is for buy, not just rent.) They Pan through 340° and tilt through 320° with a point-to-point variable speed of 2.5 to 15 seconds. There is an iris, five gobos, and dimming dowser. The focus offers an edge control which includes a hard edge capability on throws from 5 to 30 metres. The dual frame colour changer provides 32 individual colours or 256 combinations.

Control

All these moving spots need controllers. PALS has its own dedicated control and Taskmaster will control all the functions of Litescan as well as the earlier American Strand developments in colour scrolling. But, looking forward to the fast approaching time when remote positioning and focus will be standard practice in the biggest theatres, Galaxy 3 has integral facilities for PAL. This latest Galaxy is for up to 999 channels and 1536 dimmers. And integral at last, something that was briefly but expensively prototyped more than a decade ago in the Albery Theatre's MMS: a dimmer fault monitoring system that detects, displays and logs whether lights are receiving and using the juice sent to them by the dimmers.

If Galaxy 3 extends the control range upwards, Action brings memory to budgets as low as £999 which buys 24 channels, each with fader and flasher, 99 memories with keypad access, split crossfader with time control, plus 9 effects of the flash, flick and chase family.

In between, the control range includes Light Palette 3, Gemini, MLP2, Lightboard M, Celebrity Plus 2 and M24. The aim is a



ACTION 24 manual control channels

comprehensive range covering all scales of operation and all operational philosophies.

Colour Filters

Strand has made a comeback into the colour business. They admit to having lost ground, both in the width of the colour ranges and the service offered. But they are now making a serious bid for colour leadership

with three filter ranges and a service approach that includes 24 hour despatch and an avalanche of free swatches.

Cinemoid continues as the strong rigid film, still with the colour integral, but made by a new process to ensure consistent quality.

Chromoid continues as the top quality high temperature filter, but with an expanded range of colours.

Cinelux is introduced as a heat-resistant polyester film, dye coated on both sides. The colour numbers begin with 4 and if you knock off that 4, most of the numbers correspond to the vanished cinemoid numbers that veterans like me know and love. Welcome back some of my old loves, particularly (4)38! But, dear Strand, when you start expanding these ranges, as expand them you must if you want to retain your newly gained market ground, please can I have the equivalent to double 50 that I have been requesting for over twenty years! The Cinelux range also includes thirty one correction filters, nine of them for diffusion.

With all this, it should be possible to light most shows with only Strand filters, thus eliminating the number confusion that can arise when using gels from several suppliers. Also, if all filter comes from one source, it is easier to have a meaningful debate about filter quality!

All these new Strand goodies will be on show at the ABTT North Trade Show (October 28th-31st) and in a Strand Roadshow starting in Cambridge on September 29th and travelling via Bognor Regis, Southampton, Bristol, Cardiff, Dublin, Belfast, Birmingham, Newcastle and Edinburgh to end in Glasgow on November 10th. And there is an informative comprehensive 16-page brochure available from Strand and their distributors.

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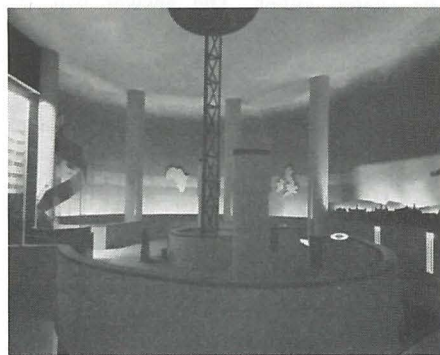
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A.D.MCMXXXVII – MCMLXXXVII

Tabular Nostalgia from Fred Bentham

Fifty years ago in October 1937 a new 'journal' appeared. It was foully printed in house on an offset litho machine just acquired called a Rotaprint. There were twelve pages, of which one was blank, two had a schedule of hire charges and two formed the cover. In spite of the fact that it had an article "Introducing Mr. P. Corry" and his new Manchester branch and an anon one by myself "A New Lantern" introducing the Patt.73 Mirror Spot, who then could have predicted the role this tiny journal was to play and the run it was to enjoy. The idea that Strand should publish it originated with Hugh Cotterill; but the *inspired title* TABS came from James Twynam and the memorable front cover drawing from his freelance colleague Oxlade. Cotterill had turned up on the Strand Electric board one year earlier when the company had gone public. Prior to that he had been a well known member of Major Equipment; one of Strands' four real competitors and in consequence was then regarded with some distrust by the rest of

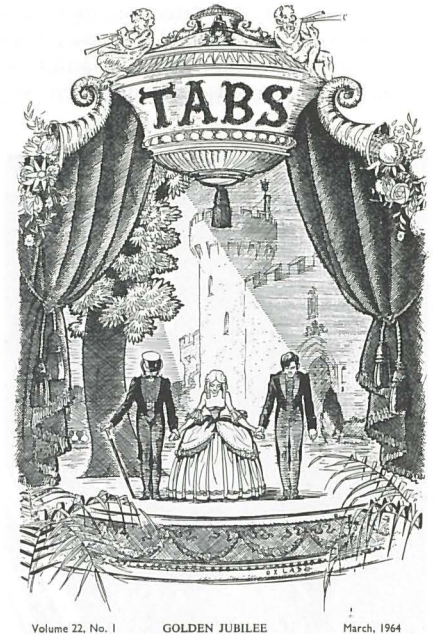
Prompting the memory with those pre-war issues of TABS I get the impression that the next three, each of twelve pages, also rolled off our Rotaprint. They are dated Nov.37, Jan.38 and April 38. The fifth issue was Vol.2 No.1, September 1938. This was professional job and looks it. There were 20 pages and at the very end there appears the code "8.5M 1626 W.P.938". The last is the date and the initials stand for Watkins-Pitchford, the firm James Twynam worked for at that time; but it is the "8.5M" which fascinates me. Is it really possible that after less than a year with four such simple issues



*The G.P.O. Pavilion at the Glasgow Exhibition 1938
A professional job which never got a mention in Tabs.*

our directors thought it wise to print 8,500 copies of a free journal "Issued in the Interests of the Amateur Theatre". And it was just that: although Cotterill allowed descriptions of an occasional professional stage lighting job, such as the Wimbledon theatre and the Buxton Opera house, to appear; really big and ingenious jobs like those for 1938 Glasgow Empire exhibition did not rate an entry of any kind. TABS readers had to wait until the Golden Jubilee issue of March 1964 before they could read of the wonders we in Strand had performed up there! Right from the early 1920s Strand lighting had by no means been confined to the stage, hence my own use of the title *Theatrical Lighting* rather than Stage Lighting for the brand new Strand catalogue two years earlier.

The word "Amateur" was not dropped from "Published in the Interests of . . ." until Vol.17 No.3 in Dec.1959. This is in spite of a tribute from Eugene Braun, Chief Engineer Radio City Music Hall New York, printed in TABS seven years earlier which said "I want to express my appreciation for the many wonderful copies of TABS. I really enjoy reading the contents, since they are very interesting and informative. We have nothing here to compare with it and I would feel very let down if I could not look forward to its continued receipt." The issue

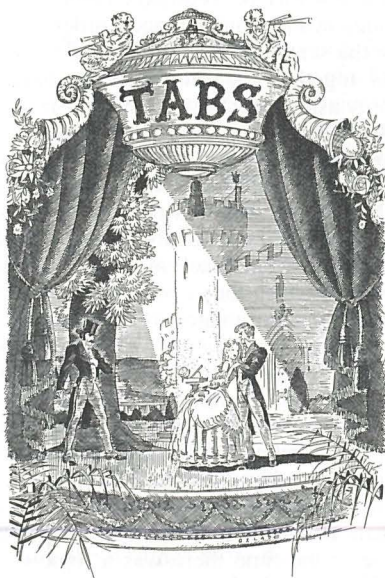


Volume 22, No. 1 GOLDEN JUBILEE March, 1964

Our front cover characters take their curtain call for the Golden Jubilee number in 1964.

which dropped the "Amateur" at last was also the first ever to have a photograph on the front cover. A picture showing Patt.23s dumped in the snow during a get-in had turned up from Norway and was irresistible for a December issue. Our next cover photograph did not appear until June 1964; but this initiated regular use from then on. The honour fell to the Questors Ealing's production of *Brand* which opened their new theatre. By appropriate chance an *amateur* company's venture but introducing a pioneer form of theatre building.

This use of photographs was prompted by Sean Kenny remarking, as we sat in a taxi on the way to a meeting at the Arts Council, that he found it difficult to refer to back numbers because they all looked alike. It was news to learn that he read TABS, let alone kept them for reference. It is funny how we took it for granted that only amateurs could, or at any rate *would*, read our stuff. It was a tradition which never really died in the *old* Strand Electric that pros only responded to person to person contact. Electricians in their stage door pub as a matter of habit (this is a long time ago!) and 'top' brass in our demonstration theatre if we thought we had something to interest them or a special tryout rig for their new show. In fact the original Seecol theatre in Floral Street was constructed with that purpose in mind. Out in the auditorium there were only a dozen or so more or less



*Tabs No.1. appeared in October 1937
dedicated to the Amateur Theatre.*

us. For the record the other competition was Venreco and Holophane in London and Furse from Nottingham.

Except that it was in an atmosphere heavy with Hovis flour milling down by the river Thames in Millbank but a short step from Big Ben and all that, I am in a haze how Hugh Cotterill and James Twynam came together. To make all clear I have prevailed upon James to tell that story himself.

comfortable chairs and a large table on which to set out plans if any. For the house-full grand opening by C.B. Cochran in March 1933 all sixty chairs, along with the buffet, were hired from J. Lyons at Cadby Hall.

Personal contact in the heart of London's theatreland was the rule and jolly well it worked too. Within weeks I was, as a one time enthusiastic amateur myself, able to make a case to the directors that keen amateurs would stay behind after their work in town or train it into Covent Garden for lecture-demonstrations; so four dozen very

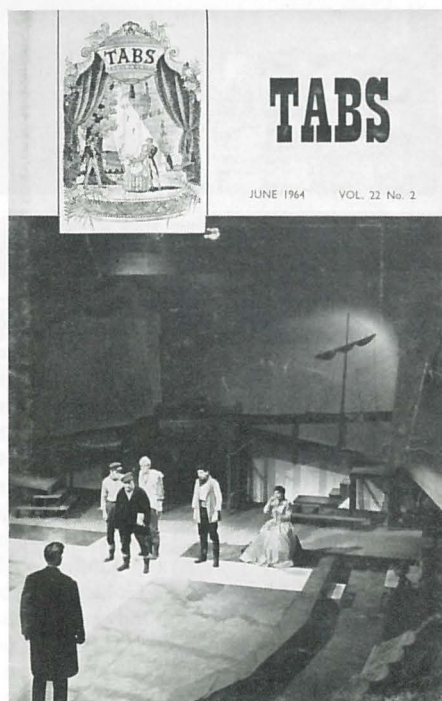


The picture from Norway we couldn't resist.

cheap bentwood chairs were purchased. This was to lead, about the time of that 8.5M TABS issue, to the building of the Colour Music Hall in King Street described & illustrated in CUE No.17. Lecture visits whether from or to amateurs became quite an 'industry' during the 1950s, as did writing for TABS and the 'trade' press. But post-war except for the theatre boy, more often than not a girl, this was not what anyone had been employed to do. Speaking for the members of my R & D department during the major part of the 1950s & 60s, we were literally amateurs doing it mainly out of hours. Perhaps our work in or for stage lighting was so interesting that it was natural to want to help our arcane world understand it. What is now called Marketing and Public Relations *happened* instead of, as nowadays, such activity forming a career in itself.

A good example of the way things evolved is provided by Paul Weston. When out in Caracas Venezuela in 1954 in order to install a Light Console and complete lighting installation in the new Aula Magna; he was attracted by a highly coloured mural in an otherwise drab and dusty city. In order to photograph it he bought his first 35mm camera. This simple action was the start of

what can best be referred to as the TABS slide archive. As with TABS itself it was not restricted to Strand's own work; but included that of other relevant firms plus architecture, the lighting of sets and so on. While we still employed a professional photographer for the black & whites, it was Paul who provided the majority of the slides with *his* camera. Of course he went on with his engineering job though quite how it could have been accurately described if we had had proper job descriptions in those years I don't know; but such precision did not materialize until we were 'organised' after the Rank takeover. Another of Paul's many technical interests – sound – was soon to become an asset to us. Not because Strand was about to go into that field but because the demand for daytime lectures had become such a nuisance. I had found my own work more and more frequently interrupted by the need to go downstairs during the day to give a lecture; nor could Brian Legge, who had developed a flair for this, be spared either. The answer was Paul Weston and a Ferrograph. A lecture would be taped as a commentary to slides interspersed with demonstrations. Someone could go down afterwards to answer questions.



June 1964 saw the first cover change using photographs.

For one hour our theatre 'staff' would rush around as directed by The Voice. Rush around was the operative word, because the staff was a certain Ann Harris. At the time I recorded the show, off the cuff of course, she was wearing a knee length pleated skirt and blouse. As she dashed from one role to another, including switchboard operator out-front, her skirt swung high. For some reason this tended to make me increase speed rather than slow down. She was fun to work with. From this it was but a step to record slide lectures to lend out. Thus TABS of September 1957 announced that

"an experiment is being made of offering a completely canned lecture in the form of miniature slides and tape for use by Societies and other interested groups who are normally unable to come to our demonstration theatre".

The aim of Recorded Lecture No.1, was "to show the steps that have to be taken to produce the naturalistic lighting for a box set production." Entitled "Lighting the



The first Strand Demonstration Theatre was opened by C.B. Cochran in 1933.

Scene" it consisted of forty 35mm colour slides based on a lecture/demonstration given by Bill Lorraine from time to time in our King street theatre. Variety of voice being important in the taped version, I joined in; and a later version included Percy Corry as well. As with others which were to follow it was all recorded extempore as the slides in their pre-arranged order came up on the screen. It was up to Paul to cut and put together the final version minus the *many* asides and the occasional big, big D. There were no carousels then and the operator of the projector had to do some slick work each time The Voice demanded "Next". All this was thirty years ago and for a long, long time now Audio Visual has been a commonplace method of putting a story over; but one cannot help wondering how far we amateurs rank among the pioneers. One thing is certain it arose in house, it seemed a sensible thing to do and did not require import of talent or ideas.

It is time to return to the printed word. The September 1957 issue of TABS was my first as editor; what might have been, but wasn't, called Publicity dept. was once again part of R & D. In a firm of Strand's size at the time there was a logic to this. After all we had always covered writing of instruction books, technical articles and so forth. The change of editorship produced no revolution. Under Hugh Cotterill its identity and the range of subjects covered was well established. If there was to be more on architecture in the later years of my reign, it was because that was when this country's civic theatre building boom had got going. It is a fascinating exercise to compare TABS of April 1955 with *The Arc* of one month earlier. The latter (Vol.17 No.3) was "Issued in the interests of better projection." by Charles H. Champion & Co. Ltd of Wardour Street, suppliers of "Ship"

LIGHTING THE SCENE

by Frederick Bentham, William Lorraine and Percy Corry

Recorded Lecture No. 1

(Revised Edition)



The object of this lecture is to show the steps that have to be taken to produce the naturalistic stage lighting for a box set production. By professional standards the equipment used is limited in quantity but the same principles can be used by those with more modest resources.

Stage Dimension and Setting

The colour slides were taken of the effects used in mock lighting rehearsal staged in our Demonstration Theatre in London. The width between the red curtains at the front of the forestage is 18 ft. The forestage is 9 ft. deep to the line of the proscenium tabs and 9 ft. 6 in. from there to the central window in the setting. The window backing is only 2 ft. upstage of the window opening so as to present a common problem. The set is covered by a ceiling so hanging lighting can only be used immediately behind the proscenium and upstage of the window.

A more usual stage plan would reduce the forestage to 5 ft., increase the total stage depth to 18 ft. and increase the width of the proscenium opening to 20 ft. or 24 ft. The same lighting equipment would still be suitable.

Stage Dimmerboard

Junior HA Slider type (HA24) for 24 circuits with six 500/1000-watt and six 250/500-watt slider dimmers. Two of the new Junior 8 dimmerboards providing a total of 16 circuits and eight 500/1000-watt slider dimmers would be suitable as these have plugs and sockets which allow circuit substitution.

In 1958 canned lectures were made available to Amateur Societies unable to come to our Demonstration Theatre.

carbons to cinemas etc. It was the same size page as TABS then; but of 22 pages to our 32. An article on "The Early Development of the Carbon Arc" was chosen by Cotterill for reprint in that very issue; but the rest of The Arc's content was certainly not *our* kind of thing. The peak is an article by a Major Partridge describing his recent tour of India. It was just over 1000 words long and has 17 photographs, all but one of which are groups of people meeting the Major one way and another. That exception shows him alone descending from a plane "at Dum Dum airport". It is a fact that, contrary to tradition, the last of the four editors of TABS Richard Harris could hardly be described as *anon* by his readers; but seventeen pictures of the Major in one short article and not a view of anything else – not even the Taj Mahal!

Prior to the war we authors on the staff were *anon*. Post war we were allowed our initials. Once I took over as editor, all articles were signed. Well not quite all; for the editor remained *anon* and could enjoy himself in the unsigned editorials up-front. And enjoy himself he certainly did; and those are the writings more than any other he would like to be remembered by. Writing in the third person can be very convenient and great fun. That other prolific author in Tabs, Percy Corry, used the *nom de plume* Busker to much the same effect. Indeed he was in this guise our only humorous writer for many years.

It is a nice discipline for an author as editor to have to see his own material in terms of a particular space on the page. I did however let myself go on much too long under "One Ten-millionth Part" in Autumn 1976. It was about metrication of which, unlike decimalisation, I did not approve. It should have been cut by at least a third.

Then there was the editorial entitled "Svoboda" written in a passion at the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia which, after much thought, I then spiked for ever. At this moment it is piquant to write about the unique one in Sept. 63 (Vol. 21 No. 3). It dealt with the strange award of the Sydney Opera House control contract to the *highest* tender. It only appeared in copies of TABS intended for Australia. Strand Electric's equivalent of Prime Minister at the time having wanted to keep this secret from the rest of the world. They had to read about "Adaptable England" instead, and wait 22 years before I got the chance to reveal all – in the Harris *Tabs* (Vol. 42 No. 1) complete with my photograph!

Except for some special reason, like sitting at a control to give it scale, it was rare indeed for staff, whether authors or not, to have their photos in the pages of TABS. In contrast the final nine issues have so identified forty or more members of Rank Strand U.K. alone, many of them several times. It wasn't British to show off in our day, I suppose! What the Rank takeover did bring to TABS was the money to spend on colour. But when in 1973 yet another managing director strode on stage to decide, after but six weeks, to discontinue TABS and get rid of our King Street theatre, it was time for me to go. I signed off therefore that December with our 101-th issue and the code 26M. at the bottom of its back page. Protests from within & without the firm followed and by April a lavish A4 version of TABS under Francis Reid as editor appeared. Uncertainty struck again at the end of 1978 and TABS made its exit for two whole years. When at last it did reappear it was a case of "Bless thee! thou art translated." Except for an occasional author the old gang and the old ways had gone. Readable it may have remained but its content and modern marketing were never far apart. Now TABS is no more – or is it some may wonder? There must be something addictive about 'labouring' to produce TABS. Thus I went on to start *Sightline* for the ABTT; and James, on whose skills we three editors – Hugh, Fred and Francis – had depended to shape up each issue and get it to bed on time, launched CUE; now, after eight years, at No. 49.

Editorial P.S.

Peering into the past, now in very soft focus, I recall that Hugh Cotterill then a director of Major Equipment Ltd decided to appoint my company to handle the Major advertising account. Cotterill and I were then near neighbours in bachelor establishments in the Hovis Building and nearby St. George's Square respectively. Both overlooked the Thames except that my view was soon to be interrupted by the giant Dolphin Square then in course of erection. This was in January 1935 and my particular involvement at this time was in the production and

printing of Major's house magazine started by Hugh Cotterill the previous year and some three years before the advent of TABS.

The year 1936 saw Cotterill joining the board of Strand Electric by now a public company. It was only to be expected that his promotional ideas for Strand would include another house magazine. TABS was to be different however and its dedication on page one of number one says unequivocally "in the interests of the amateur theatre". Probably the main reason for this was the very fine Hire Department which Strand had built by this time, a service much in demand by Amateur Societies. Indeed the free mailing list for the early numbers was based on the NODA and Drama Society Membership almost entirely.

At the beginning my contribution was limited to christening the enterprise and supplying the cover drawing and typography. Strand having invested in a Rotaprint wanted for reasons of economy to print it themselves. A false economy I persuaded them after 4 issues so that Volume 2 No. 1 was printed professionally.

Alas, the bill was too high and Cotterill returned to what printers used to call 'winkle bag printing' for all the other pre-war numbers.

Came the peace and a call from Cotterill to pick up where we left off in 1938. This began a new era in which we worked amicably without having a microscope trained on our production costs. There were other difficulties of course.

Paper in 1946 was still rationed and what we did get was of very poor quality. This situation gradually improved so that by 1956 TABS had increased to a reasonable 28 pages with a mailing list of 9,000 requested copies.

The rest we know but the genius of its founder, Hugh Cotterill, in creating what was to become the most successful soft sell of all time must not be forgotten as we indulge our regrets at the passing of TABS.

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CONTROL BOARD ALPHABET

Continuing Francis Reid's ABC for 1987

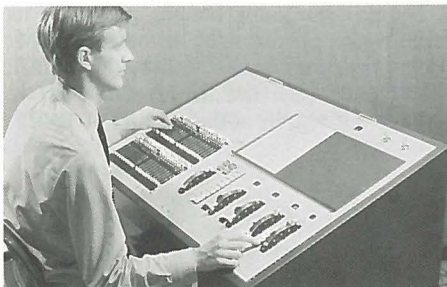


is how we write the cues (qv) which are so fundamental to theatre that they inspire the title of this magazine. The recording and repeatability of lighting cues has been so revolutionised by data processing that two of the most evocative names ever given to boards are still Thorn's **Q-File**



Q-File

and **Q-Master**. Q-File was before the wheel. Channel access was digital but level selection was by a single analogue lever whose servo-motor permitted the selected live channel to be accurately but rapidly matched to its current memorised level prior to modification. Q-Master had an analogue lever per channel, and prior to modification, a channel's lever had to set at its current recorded level with the aid of a pilot light, before flicking a switchlet to gain manual control.



Q-Master

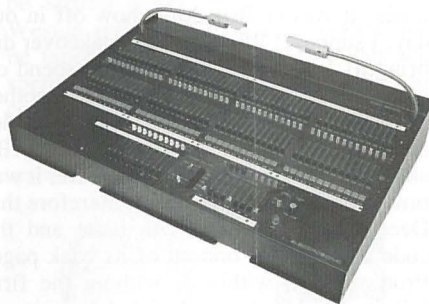


is for the **Racks** in which the dimmers are mounted in the dimmer room to distribute electricity to the lights in accordance with instructions received from the operators fingers playing on the board's control surfaces. All dimmers have a **rating**, formerly always expressed in watts but increasingly now in amps, which indicates the maximum load that they will control. When the dimmer was **resistance** it required loading up to its rating to function properly, but all modern dimmers and the

more sophisticated of the ancient ones, are able to handle every load from a very few watts up to their rated maximum.

Relays were the backbone of remote control in pre-electronic days. Banks of basic post-office relays selected channels and polarised relays transmitted levels. The climax of relay technology was probably the Compton organ system which could capture groups of channels for memorised recall.

A hand held **rigger's control** allows dimmers to be activated during rigging and focussing without the need for a board operator to be present in the control room. Rigger's controls may transmit their information by wire or be wireless.



Electrosonic's 1977 **ROCKBOARD** became the generic name for boards planned to offer maximum designer/operator playability in production situations where a completely pre-recorded plot is inappropriate.

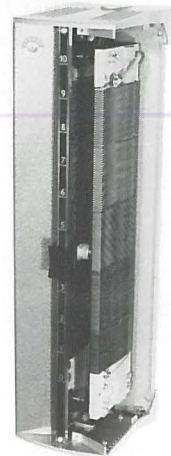
Rockboards allow designer-operators maximum freedom and flexibility in creating and playing instant light during a performance. These boards usually allow access to all channels at all times via dimming faders and switching pushes. Effects facilities include complex flash and chase programmes.



is for **Switchboard** perhaps a misnomer when the key function of a board is to dim rather than to switch. However, with modern thyristor dimmers working as ultra-rapid switchers, perhaps an old word has a new life. These thyristors were originally called **SCRs (Silicon Controlled Rectifiers)**. Such **semi-conductor** dimmers are **solid state** and free from the movement associated with resistance and transformer dimmers which had to be activated directly by hand or through motors, clutches and relays.

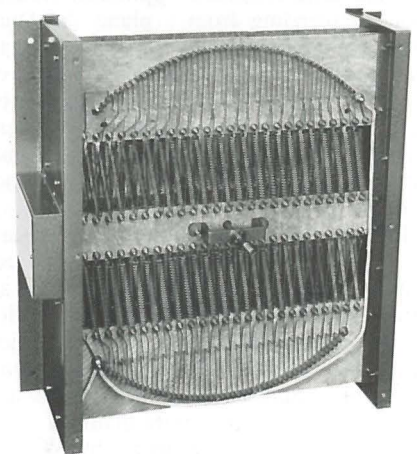
Solid state dimming has made **servo** motors redundant in boards for intensity control but they are alive and well in remotely positioned and focussed spot-lights. Organ **stopkeys** were the elegantly

playable means of selecting channels to move in the Light Console (qv) and C.D. (qv)



Slider Dimmer (with Scale)

The simplest moving dimmer was the **slider** making a direct contact with a portion of the continuous resistance winding, whereas the more sophisticated **stud-contact** type had a series of individual resistances selected by a sweeping arm. Strand's **Sunset** dimmers were stud-contact, often wall mounted for houselights or incorporated in bracket handle (qv) boards.



Stud Contact Sunset Dimmer

The commonest dimmer **scale** has always been 0-10 and, despite a computer board's preference for displaying percentages, many older designers still call for twenty seven at point five rather than fifty percent. The really old 'uns tend to call for twenty seven at a half because they date from an era when, although most dimmers had ten-point scales, it was optimistic to hope for even quarter, half and threequarters on a very fast show. On the fastest shows it needed some luck to get total accuracy on full and out;

although on slowish plays, a good operating team could deliver such finesse as a quarter plus or minus.

SR was an early solid-state Strand board named from the initials of its **Saturable Reactor** dimmers (see *choke*). It had a single preset and each channel had tablet (qv) switching for grouping to alternative A & B masters. The larger models had a second switch per channel to allow the grouping for instant **snap** cues to be different from that for dimming. But the heavy control currents precluded the addition of a second preset.

S.P. (Senior Preset) was the upmarket cousin of J.P. (qv) when Strand brought thyristor presetting to the mass market in the second half of the nineteen sixties. It was available in two or three preset versions, and a set of grouping switches allowed each channel to be routed to alternative masters. Although there were a pair of masters for each preset, the grouping was common to all presets and this considerably reduced the operational flexibility of the system. S.P. was probably the first board to have vertical sliders rather than rotary knobs for masters.



S.P. Desk. (Earlier models had quadrant faders and groupong switches that became known as *flying buttons*)

Shift allows a set of control surfaces on a desk to perform more than one function. This is common practice in the design of today's boards. The term and the technique was used in Strand's experimental punch card board of 1969. Was this the first shift?

A **Stalls Control** allows board operation at rehearsal from the production desk position in the auditorium. Although some Light Consoles had a sufficiently long control cable to make this feasible, the first board to be used specifically planned for use in this way (and regularly so used) was probably the Glynbourne(qv) installation of 1964. The design required a lot of multi-core and relays for a facility that now needs but a single wire for data transmission.

The final S is for **Strand** and for **Siemens** who have probably been the twentieth century's most consistently active european names in board design and manufacture.

REIDing SHELF

Craig Zadan's **SONDHEIM & CO** starts from a baseline assumption that Stephen Sondheim is *the* great genius of the musical. Personally I get more pleasure from Ebb & Kander, but this did nothing to spoil my enjoyment of the book. I love the American Musical and I am fascinated by its creative processes, even if my own work experiences have involved all the complexities of a love-hate relationship. Zadan's book is full of truths about the structure of musicals, mostly in the form of anecdotes and quotes. The basic structure is a show-by-show sequential study of Sondheim's theatrical development, broken up with chapters on such aspects of musical production as orchestration, posters, casting, recordings, staging. . . indeed most aspects except design. An appendix lists major productions and there is a discography.

The Sondheim enigma lies in the box office. Reading this book reveals no logical reason why many of these shows should have failed to become hits. With such concepts and structures, allied to Sondheim's undoubted masterly use of words and his ability to integrate his libretto with a musical text that is never merely decorative, these shows should surely have swept audiences along into a great theatrical experience. Perhaps everything is just a little bit too calculated, a little bit too logical. When I go to a Sondheim musical, I keep dropping into analysis. I find myself admiring the technique when I should have surrendered to it.

I wonder if my reading of this book will change my perception of Sondheim on my next visit to a Sondheim show. The theatre experience is a strange one indeed. And it will doubtless continue to defy logical analysis. It is part of the enigma that *Sondheim & Co* is at its most potent when it reveals detail of the old backstage hokum of trying to get a show on despite all the conflicting advice from those who are convinced they have the answer. Theatre's interplay of power, money, philosophy and old cobblers never fails to make a fascinating read.

Rodney Milnes has revised and updated Leslie Orrey's concise history of **OPERA**. This book has to be one of the best buys for any theatre bookshelf. 252 pages with 253 illustrations, 32 of them in colour, and a text which is accurate, informative, entertaining and balanced. Rarely has a history been so precise and concise. And all for £4.95. Will my enthusiasm never end? No, not while this handy volume offers so many of the key reference illustrations of opera houses, composers, productions and singers.

Stephen Gallup has written **A HISTORY OF THE SALZBURG FESTIVAL** which is rather different from the usual festival biography. This is no mere string together of performers and productions, illustrated with photographs chosen for their implication of success. The book is an analysis of the complexities of finance and politics that always seem to be associated with any attempt to make the arts available. Perhaps this is inevitable when the final product cannot be valued by the same criteria as the costs of its manufacture. The personalities and money may be bigger but Salzburg mirrors anywhere's struggle for the arts. I have made it to the Salzburg Festival a couple of times and I am saving up to go again. Quite simply, my life was renewed there twice by the quality of the Mozart opera. I was intrigued to read how it all happens because of, yet in spite of, people who care.

DESIGNING DREAMS is about art at its summit. Contemporary art interacting with contemporary life. Donald Albrecht's book describes how the architectural modernism of the 1920s and 1930s was both promoted through, and stimulated by, film design.

Upward mobility has always been good box office, whether the victorian play, the television soap or the Hollywood musical. The sleekness and spaciousness of the new architecture provided an environment sympathetic to the scale of the screen. In the movies it was sufficiently heightened from reality to enhance the heroic stature of the stars, yet sufficiently credible to hold out a promise of attainability. And the plausibility of the architectural dream was increased by the similarity of the cinema's own architecture.

But if glamour was the most obvious use of modernist design, it was not the only one. The new architecture featured in all styles of film making everywhere, and Albrecht's book looks to Europe as well as to Hollywood in its analysis of the dream and the reality in an era of environmental design. Splendidly illustrated, it fuelled my increasing desire to rush out and save the remains of an architectural style which I reacted against for most of my life and thus helped to destroy. Thank goodness we still have, and can continue to have, those movies.

When the curtain falls, a stage performance can only live on in the memories of the audience, perhaps prompted a little by the frozen images of ephemera. But the very nature of film virtually ensures perpetual repeatability provided the print is properly

(to be

conserved. So, whereas **THE IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE BOOK** would be a fascinating record if it had been about a stage production, it is particularly interesting because it refers to a movie which can still be seen and will continue to be around as long as there are museums of the moving image. The core of the book, about two thirds of it, is the final script as shot, liberally illustrated with stills from the movie. The remainder is background material on the film, its genesis, making and critical reception. Makes me want to see it again.

Norman Marshall's *The Other Theatre* was very influential on the young me: it seemed to offer a greener prospect than the weekly rep and post-London tours that were the staple theatregoing fare of my late adolescence. In retrospect I am not so sure; indeed sometimes I yearn for the simpler, more direct theatre that was born of short rehearsals which left little time for the agonies of analysis. Andrew Davies acknowledges Marshall and borrows the spirit of his title for **OTHER THEATRES** in which he analyses the development of alternative and experimental theatre in Britain. The subject is now too big to be written about, as Norman Marshall could, from personal experience. But Andrew Davies has researched his subject well and he presents it fluently. He takes us from the

late nineteenth century independent theatres via early twentieth century regional, nationalist, feminist and Yiddish theatre to the little theatre movement and political groups who alternately flourished and languished during the inter-war years. From such wartime seeds as the CEMA tours and the embryonic Theatre Workshop he charts the development of the major companies who, having absorbed the original 'other' concepts, have spawned a new range of alternatives. For each chapter there is a comprehensive annotated list of further reading and all major references have their source listed. This is a book which provides a very good balanced view of how theatre has developed by a process of offering alternatives and then absorbing them.

For those, and there are many, who want to know **HOW TO MAKE IT IN THE ROCK BUSINESS** Mary Wilson discusses gigs, records, managers, agents, promoters, bookers, pluggers, charts, videos, accountants, contracts, royalties and all the other varied aspects of the music business and its associated media circus. Those who wish to make it are assumed to be performers, although there is much that will interest prospective managers. Nothing specific in it for would be rock technicians but they should read it nevertheless in order to get some idea of what everyone else is up to. Should be in every school library.

Following so many large plushy photographic books on G & S, Charles Hayter's pocket sized **GILBERT AND SULLIVAN** in the *Macmillan Modern Dramatists Series* might seem redundant. But it is written from the viewpoint that these works have a special significance in British theatre history since they are the only ones written between 1800 and 1890 that are still performed with any regularity today. Gilbert's influence as a director is not well documented: he worked in an age when directors were rare and their contributions anonymous. But Charles Hayter has reconstructed W.S. Gilbert the Director from an analysis of internal evidence in the texts.

Another new volume in the same series is Gerry McCarthy's **EDWARD ALBEE** which amplifies analyses of the plays with discussions of Albee's approach to theatre and his method of implementing his ideas through his understanding of, and involvement in, the creative processes of theatre.

SONDHEIM & CO. The authorized, behind-the-scenes story of the making of Stephen Sondheim's musicals. Craig Zadan. Pavilion Michael Joseph. £16.95 (UK).

OPERA. A Concise History. Leslie Orrey. Revised and Updated by Rodney Milnes. Thames & Hudson (World of Art Series). £4.95 (paperback) (UK).

A HISTORY OF THE SALZBURG FESTIVAL. Stephen Gallup. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £18 (UK).

DESIGNING DREAMS. Modern Architecture in the Movies. Donald Albrecht. Thames and Hudson. £10.95 (paperback) (UK).


THE IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE BOOK. Jeanine Basinger (In Collaboration with the Trustees of the Frank Capra Archives). Pavilion Michael Joseph. £9.95 (paperback) (UK).

OTHER THEATRES The Development of Alternative and Experimental Theatre in Britain. Andrew Davies. Macmillan. £20 (UK) £6.95 (paperback) (UK).

HOW TO MAKE IT IN THE ROCK BUSINESS. Mary Wilson. Columbus. £4.95 (paperback) (UK).

GILBERT AND SULLIVAN. Charles Hayter.

EDWARD ALBEE. Gerry McCarthy. Macmillan Modern Dramatists Series. £18 (UK) £5.95 (paperback) (UK).



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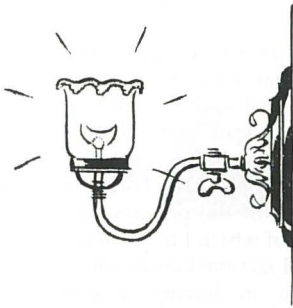
BOSE

Main Distributors

This abridged, instructive and amusing article by Hilton Edwards, Actor, Director and Producer appeared in the first post-war issue of *Tab*s, September 1946.

Forty years on have seen many changes in technique, but readers will recognise much that is unchanged in the basic philosophy expressed.

Gordon Craig tells us that the gaslit stage of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry was flecked with little motes, but nevertheless gaslight had a glamorous softness and quality unachieved by electricity. This may be; I have no experience of it except on one occasion when, playing in South Africa behind a row of gaslit floats, I realised why there are two rows of jets in a gas oven; so that the other side of the chicken will also be roasted brown.



It is difficult to know what to say about Stage Lighting. To a beginner, yes, one can instruct in its fundamentals; but what can I, a producer who for twenty years has lit his own plays, say that can possibly be of interest to others who have done the same and have their own ideas; and what can I say to the electrical technician who, doubtless, knows more about it than I do before we start. All I can do is to summarise my findings over these twenty years, and pray that the result may be of interest to somebody.

I have long ago discovered that when a set is perfectly lit from the pictorial point of view, it is certain there will not be enough light for the action of the play. One can be equally sure that when enough light has been added for the action the pictorial quality of the set has been in a great measure disturbed. So there is created a perpetual battle between the desire for the perfect stage picture and the desire for the perfect performance, and by performance I do not only mean that of the actors, but of the play as a whole.

I have been working here in Ireland so long in our own little Gate Theatre and at the Gaiety that I have lost touch with the outside theatre world, and I do not even remember very well how these things were done when I was a youngster at the Old Vic. I only know that very fine results were achieved by Robert Atkins with the aid of Egan, the Vic's electrician, and these effects were obtained with the simplicity of greatness.

Having lit well over four hundred shows and approached the subject as scientifically as I can with my limited knowledge of electricity and optics, and relying chiefly upon my requirements as a producer and the aesthetic sense that I have endeavoured always to cultivate, I approach each new play with a feeling of confidence, saying to

myself: "Now, after all the shows you've lit, this ought to be easy"; and always I find that any experience that I am conscious of is of little use to me and that each show, each set, has its own problems of colour and form and dramatic requirements, that make it yet another individual task of lighting, to be built up *sans* theory from black-out to full-up, or where you will between; and always I return from each lighting rehearsal murmuring that this was the most difficult lighting job to date.

This may be a result, I often suspect, of a natural stupidity on my part, and there is no doubt that there is a certain lack in me due to uneven memory, which does incline me to go over the same ground twice. But there is also a desire to guard against working on cliché which is so inevitably a result of experience and is such a dangerous master whether it be in writing, in acting or in stage lighting — "This is a good way of doing it, it worked well before" — hence the new angle is not discovered, time is saved but another opportunity dies.

I suppose in some theatres, lighting is a matter for the designer of the set; one would think at first glance that he was the proper man to put in charge of it until one remembers that the perfectly lit set from the artist's point of view is often dramatically inadequate. Authors so often inform you, at the end of a rattling comedy scene, during which every mobile flicker of the face is of value, that the lamps must be brought in as it is now too dark to see. Or again — in a scene in which the accent of the light is concentrated on a limited area and achieves the most exquisitely modulated chiaroscuro, that the producer has distributed the action all over the stage, or at least one important piece of action takes place in a now dark corner where even with due allowance for theatrical convention, no light could possibly fall at that time from those windows. Therefore, although he may not be as intense in his knowledge as the expert in all departments, I think it is an advantage for the producer to light his sets, provided, of course, he is in sufficient sympathy with his artist.



But then I am working on the assumption that if the producer is not in sympathy with the design, has not indeed passed it, he will not be working on it. This again probably explains why I prefer to work in my own theatres, for unity of design can only be obtained when it has been forged on a common anvil.



My limitations include the fact that I am no electrician, though I cannot let this statement pass without adding that I have once been known to mend a fuse, and, I would have it known — the result was successful! I have a vague suspicion of what goes on electrically — hardly more concrete than my knowledge of what goes on under the bonnet of my car. But, once the juice enters the dimmer and therefore under my control, and gives a certain promise of entering the lamp, I know where I am. This limited knowledge puts me at no disadvantage with the theatre electrician because from the moment I have decided in what way the play is to be done, I have borne in mind what effects of light I have desired to achieve, although not necessarily how to achieve them.

These first steps towards an ultimate goal, and indeed, the ultimate goal itself, have been in my mind in choosing the sets, or in selecting the suggestions of the designer. The same target is kept in view with the costumes and the music, and the choice of these have been guided by the demands of the action, that, to the best of one's ability one believes will best serve audience and author. As these various aspects of the theatrical pattern form themselves and coalesce, additions and omissions from the original object manifest themselves, decisions are made, and upon successful selection depends the result. But there usually emerges by now a harder and more defined outline of the result devoutly to be desired. Now, all is assembled, and in the assembly, particularly in the building and colour of the set, it is to be hoped that opportunities for the achievement of lighting results have been catered for — correct angles of windows, pillars upon which the accent of light shall fall, angles that shall keep an alcove in the requisite shadow, etc., etc., and it is now a matter of practicality.

I do not know what is the usual practice — I am told that Beerbohm Tree, great master of lighting in his day, would content himself

with — “More light in this corner, Dana. Tell the electrician I think blue or dirty green!” “More light on my face, Dana.” And Diaghileff would murmur in the stalls of the little theatre in the Casino of Monte Carlo — “Grigorieff, Grigorieff, let me have more or less, *jambou bleu*.”

I hesitate to even suggest my own methods in company with these great names, except to say that I find it necessary to be more definite, and not to leave things to any other mind, but to know the mediums by their numbers as well as to know the manual limitations of the switchboard, and exactly what is the capability of each lamp from its particular position. For this reason, if for no other (and there are many other excellent ones), I have always adhered to one colour chart. Of these colours I seldom use more than a limited number, which I have found adequate for all my needs. The Blues, speaking in order of their density, numerically — 20, 19, 32, 18 and 17; the reds — 14 and 6; the purple — 26. How I deplore the loss of 27 — that magical colour, if used with discretion. The Greens — 24, 15 and 16. The latter called “Moonlight Blue,” when everybody can



“... surprise pink”

see it should be called “Gorgonzola!” Why 18 is not called “Moonlight Blue” I don’t know, when it is obviously Astarte herself. The Ambers — 5, 4, 3 and a fascinating invaluable No. 7 — Rose — dangerous mixer with amber — saviour of many a face and a dress. Lastly come our friends the Frosts — which to me have all the fascination of drink or tobacco, softening those dangerous edges, while insidiously decreasing power.

The other colours I am sure have their uses; I have not found them; and so far I intolerantly class them as “delightful affectations.” So prejudiced am I that when in my moments of doubt the electrician has murmured to me — “why not try a surprise pink?” I am so horrified that I order a black-out immediately and start again.

I have equipped two theatres with stage lighting — the Irish-speaking theatre in Galway, which I helped my partner Micháel MacLiammóir to create, and which I believe is the only state-subsidised Irish theatre in the world, and our own little Gate Theatre. Both these were installed in the late ’twenties, the epoch of cyclorama lighting,

with 500-watt floods, a horizon lamp or so, and 500-watt and 1,000 watt spots. Both are battenless theatres, and, in the case of the Gate — without footlights, partly through choice, partly because of Corporation regulation. Of the work of the Gaelic theatre I cannot speak — my partner and I have long ceased to be connected with it. At the Gate our lighting is now almost worn out, but it still serves. The Dimmers, with the exception of a few coupled floods all control single units. They are calibrated in half-inch points, the small theatre demanding absolute precision, and the effects gaining greatly therefrom.

Often I have longed for the convenience of inter-locking systems, but I am convinced that given an intelligent electrician and a certain ingenuity and patience, there is hardly an effect worth while that cannot be achieved by the manipulation of the single unit, even with the crude device of a rod as an inter-locking device and a piece of chalk as a guide. My plots are so printed as to give immediate information as to the type of lamp, the colour, the precise position of angle and setting, and above all the precise dimmer position. For tour and our visits to the Gaiety I have the same lighting, fortunately not so worn and on a larger scale — 1,000-watt instead of 500-watt in all the spots and twenty four 1,000-watt dimmers on two touring boards.

Several times while setting up in the vast and superbly equipped theatres of Zagreb, Sofia and Athens, the local authorities have looked with askance at the simple equipment and pointed to their huge and intricate switchboards and murmured proudly in German, French or Magya or Greek, and upon occasion in Arabic, and I have falteringly replied in none of these languages that magnificent as I am sure was their equipment it would be better in the short time at our disposal to ride my bicycle with mastery than to toy ineptly with their turbines — or so they seemed to me. This is not a sneer at elaborate equipment; if I could afford it we would have much more and all of the latest — but it is an assurance based upon experi-



“... pointed to their huge and intricate switchboards

ence that elaboration is not necessarily efficiency and, although effects may be achieved with complicated equipment with less difficulty, the result is not necessarily better; any more than one hundred pounds worth of photographic equipment can necessarily turn out a better photograph than

can be achieved with one small camera, a dish-developer and a knowledge of how to use them.

The Gate Theatre is battenless because we do not use cloths, chiefly because of the lack of flies, and upon those rare occasions when transverse runners have been used, floods from the spotbridge have been hardly adequate. In the Gaiety Theatre, also well equipped, fortunately for me, it is a different matter. Here are all the appurtenances of the standard theatre, with its five battens of three circuits each in box compartments — its four circuits of box floats in three valuable sections; — its perch spots, — once despised by me and now my greatest friends, and, for use when the rare occasion demands, its front-of-the-house arcs.

But I am seldom happy with enough canvas up to sail a frigate and a blaze of light twenty feet above the actor’s head, and so here I install each season my touring plant, rig up my spot batten with its 1,000-watt spots, its four floods and four eye level spots for the front-of-the-house, and with the exception of the perches and the off-stage lighting of which I try to make much use for accent, I use the Gaiety set sparingly. I am fortunate in having a good electrician myself who is getting used to my vagaries, and in Mr. Harry Morrison of the Gaiety Theatre I have a friend and a craftsman who is a joy to work with; knowledgeable, infinitely reliable, kindly, unstinting in his labours, and from whose solid experience I have learnt much. I think in the early days he was sceptical of my methods, but we have never disagreed.

To summarise, I have learned that lighting must be divided into three main headings — what I call Open Lighting, for want of a better term — when wings and cloths are used, and the spot-light, apart from being used almost as an acting area light, is negligible and for which one must rely upon battens, perches and that two-edged sword — the footlights. Gordon Craig denied their usefulness and complained that it was an unnatural source of light; but indeed every source of light is unnatural in the theatre, and for a certain type of glamour floats are indispensable.

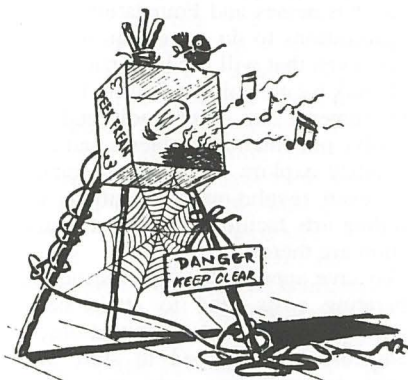
Next there is Spot and Flood Lighting, in which the main source of light is direct and controlled and built up to a focal climax by the spotlights; floods being used for binding the light and for basic colouring; and here I am a believer in controlling the texture of shadows.



“... a certain type of glamour”

That is to say — even if a natural shadow is flung by an object hit by a spot I believe in colouring it discreetly with the floods; the painter controls the colour of his shadow, which is only relative darkness, and this I also try to do.

Thirdly, there is the specialised use of all Lighting, for apparently natural results, and herein lies our greatest problem. I try to



"... fine equipment, allowing for wartime conditions"

bear in mind Goethe's dictum — "Art is art because it is not nature." But our problem in work of this type in the theatre seems to be how far can we use dramatic effect without apparently being too unnatural, not contrariwise. For unnatural it is, and unnatural it must be! — The light apparently coming through windows set up-stage centre, which in life, would throw all before them into silhouette, but for the purpose of action must give an illumination, by what in nature would be only reflected light, greater than the light of its supposed source. And again, the candle brought on, which evokes the 500-watt spot of heaven-knows-how-much-candle-power, even when passing through a No. 3 Medium, and at four and a half points down on the dimmer.

Lighting is half darking; knowing where not to put your light, and this is why I place my faith more in the spot and flood system than the batten, but to me the ideal stage is like the inside of a camera — a magic blackness that we can light as and where we will and therefore my ideal theatre I would equip with battens, with collapsible floats, with a spot-bridge, with a modified cyclorama. I would not instal a system like the Schwabe because I believe this makes of the cyclorama a tyrant.

Each play demands its own colour scale, but I feel that the fewer colours combined the finer is the effect achieved.

Everything depends how much you can make "them" accept; and in this lies the perpetual uncertainty that makes all work in the theatre a potential art. Here again I feel strongly, that if we will concentrate upon our craftsmanship it is a task within our power; whether one becomes an artist or not depends upon our mental approach and the will of the gods.

CORRESPONDENCE

From Mr. Louis K Fleming

September 2, 1987

Dear Jeremy Twynam,

Just a short letter to go with my subscription cheque for continuing CUE which I very much value receiving.

I would like to comment upon an article in your July/August 1987 issue — that by Anthony McCall, including the piece in the box — NEW ARTS POLICY.

I am an arts management consultant and a member of the Institute of Management Consultants. I was born in the U.K. and have worked extensively in theatre in Britain, Canada and the U.S.A. where I now reside, since 1946. For the past ten years I have been advising arts organizations and cities in the U.S. and Canada on the development of arts programs, policies, and facilities. My knowledge of government and the arts includes a stint, in 1975/76 when I was employed by the Government of Ontario to set up and operate what has become a major grant program in aid of the arts and recreation: the WINTARIO LOTTERY PROGRAMS, which contribute annually some \$85.0 million towards capital and operating projects.

Therefore, I possess firsthand, practical knowledge of what incentive programs (Challenge Grants) and sponsorships can, in fact, do to help sustain and develop arts programs and buildings. The truth is that they have been of enormous help to arts organizations — in both receiving government and business grants and, indeed, challenging local governments and corporations and individuals to do more for the

arts. In 1975, the Government of Ontario, Canada, embarked on its WINTARIO LOTTERY — a weekly lottery whose revenues were dedicated by law to be used for arts and recreation programs. Elected officials wanted to simply hand out the cash with no challenge. I managed to persuade the politicians that recipients should be required to match these grants, dollar for dollar in the populated areas of the province, and two for one in the more remote parts. Surprise, this was accepted. What was the result? Organizations and individuals all over the province managed to raise millions annually from private citizens and corporations in order to qualify for the grants. In fact, the program was over booked! And, I can assure you, as I was running the program, that many many smaller arts groups managed to raise extraordinary sums of money for their matching dollars through inventive ways.

I think we must take it as read, that the days of lavish funding of the arts by government, especially in the U.K. and Canada are probably over and will not return. (Government in the U.S. should do more). Therefore, articles such as the one by Anthony McCall do, in effect, impede progress toward the adoption of new ways and new ideas for financing the arts — especially ones which do work, like challenge grants and sponsorships. He appears to be fighting a rearguard action against what is inevitable. Your magazine would be advised to take a positive approach to funding of the arts!

The challenge of the 80s' and 90s' is for those involved in the arts to cease looking to government for all the answers and begin to use their tremendous creative abilities, and imagination toward the good fortunes of the

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Arts Centre in Charlotte, N.C., is to be incorporated in a \$300.0 million mixed-use development at the centre of the downtown. The project, which now is in the planning and design stage, will include a 350-room hotel, 50-story office building with 1 million square feet, 80,000 sq.ft. of retail space, a 2,000-seat concert theatre and a 600-seat drama theatre.

The project is a joint venture by the National Bank of North Carolina and Charter Properties, Inc. Land for the Performing Arts Centre is to be donated by the developers — a donation of \$5.0 million. The City of Charlotte will contribute \$15.0 million, and the remaining \$20.0 million for the \$35.0 million performing arts centre will be provided by the local business community, private individuals, and a special appropriation by the State legislature. Joint use of such amenities as hotel lobbies and building services will reduce the cost of constructing and operating the Performing Arts Centre, and it will also help serve the convention and conference needs of the hotel.

3. In 1983, in Montreal, the Cadillac Fairview Corporation proposed to incorporate a new 2,600-seat symphony concert hall for the Montreal Symphony as part of a \$130.0 million mixed-use development which would have included retail stores, on McGill College Avenue.

The arrangement was that Cadillac Fairview would provide the land and pay for the construction of the walls and roof of the concert hall unit; that the Province of Quebec would in turn commit the sum of \$30.0 million to build and equip the concert hall and its ancillary backstage and public spaces.

A final example is, perhaps, especially relevant to the need for more small theatres in Metro Toronto. I would suggest that Metro performing organizations take note and act accordingly, nudging municipal governments to assist them.

4. In 1986, in Washington, D.C., the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation, a unique Federal Agency with responsibility for the redevelopment of the Pennsylvania Avenue area between the White House and The Capitol, called for developer proposals for the redevelopment of the 62,000 sq.ft. former Lansburgh's Department Store site. Developers were invited to submit proposals for a mixed-use real estate development which would incorporate, as a minimum: 225 high quality residential units for rent or sale; 20,000 sq.ft. of street level retail space including commercial art galleries or craft stores, and showcase windows for special art exhibits; 250 below-grade parking spaces; and 28,000 sq.ft. of performing and visual arts space for use by community groups. The selected developer was offered the option of either purchasing the site for \$10.0 million or leasing it. Purchase or lease terms would be reduced in exchange for

the developer providing more than the minimum space mandated.

The selected developer, The Gunwyn Co. of Boston, offered to construct a \$66.0 million project which would include 370 dwelling units, with a swimming pool thrown in; 34,000 sq.ft. of arts space including a cafe; and 30,000 sq.ft. of arts space including a 199-seat theatre and a 400-seat theatre. In addition, Gunwyn promised a \$1.0 million endowment toward the cost of the management of the Arts Centre. Minimum rents will be charged arts groups, just sufficient to pay operating and utility expenses.

If municipal governments in Metro Toronto were to encourage real estate developers to incorporate arts facilities in some major projects in return for development bonuses and abatements, this would lead to more small theatres and galleries being constructed at considerably reduced cost to both government and arts organizations.

Other innovative methods of financing arts facilities, that are used successfully in the U.S. and should now be seriously pursued in Canada are available, although they would require enabling legislation by provincial governments.

1. The imposition in selected cities of a special hotel/motel occupancy, or room tax, the proceeds of which would go to supporting the arts and tourism in those cities, to supplement government funding from general revenues and from government agencies. This tax is virtually painless to residents as it is paid largely by business visitors and tourists who usually have little objection to paying hotel taxes and indeed benefit themselves from the tax. This tax, which is often 2% in many U.S. states, contributes annually many millions of dollars to the arts, often in a 50/50 split with tourism. In Canada it is totally unknown. In the U.S., hotel/motel taxes normally range from 8% to 12%. In Ontario the tax is 6%. An additional 2% added, say, in Metro's municipalities, would bring millions of dollars in additional funding to the arts, and could be of significant help to Metro's major arts organizations and institutions. I can see no reason whatsoever why it should not be applied in Toronto. Of course it would be hotly debated.

In the U.S. the new \$52.0 million Tampa Centre for the Performing Arts, for which I led the planning team, opens in September 1987 and will receive \$500,000 annually from Hillsborough County's hotel/motel tax revenues. In a smaller city where I am involved — Addison, Texas, a town within Metropolitan Dallas — hotel/motel tax revenues are currently running at \$1.5 million annually, with \$100,000 going to their 99-seat Addison Centre Theatre. Soon they will embark on a plan to build a new Addison Theatre Centre which will be funded almost entirely from the hotel/motel tax. In San Francisco and

Houston, hotel/motel tax revenues are a major source of the funding for arts organizations.

2. Although it would be considered very revolutionary in Canada, in the U.S. it is not uncommon to find local sales taxes being raised half a cent or a cent for a limited period to pay for the construction of public assembly facilities including performing arts centres. Of course this too requires enabling legislation by state governments, and very often a referendum of voters. The City of Charlotte intends to raise its \$15.0 million toward the new Performing Arts Centre by raising the city sales tax by .05% for a limited period. The new Kentucky Performing Arts Centre in Louisville was partly financed in this manner. So why not in Canada?

As a Canadian active in arts facility development in Canada and the U.S., I will make some comments about our two countries and the arts and their financing. The arts are basically all about feelings and ideas — strong passionate feelings and creative ideas. It is up to those of us who are trained in and committed to the arts to, above all, be passionate if the arts are to grow and bloom. In Canada we tend to sit back and expect governments to take the lead and provide the creative solutions to the problems which we are far better equipped to solve through sheer imagination and commitment. Governments are created to respond to the demands of their citizens and are not particularly good at providing entrepreneurial leadership. In Canada we have become too dependent on government to solve all our problems. Metro Toronto will never get more small theatres by looking to government to provide them. Nor will enabling legislation for a hotel/motel tax to support the arts and tourism in selected Ontario cities ever be passed without a strong lobbying effort by arts organizations.

In the U.S., it has been the passion of arts organizations and the arts lobby that has caused state and local governments to pass legislation in support of the arts. City Councils and governments can no longer risk not listening to or paying attention to the strong arts constituency. At the same time they have come to recognize the importance of the arts in their communities and what they contribute to society, and the many benefits they bring to the community.

The kinds of initiatives I am advocating can save governments and arts organizations and institutions millions of dollars and are totally relevant and applicable to Canada. These types of initiatives represent a quantum leap forward for the arts in opening up a whole realm of new possibilities without any need for additional government funding. Only a shift in thinking is required by arts organizations, governments and their agencies. And, I am not prepared to accept the all-too-often Canadian response: "But, it wouldn't work here", because I know it can work and is working elsewhere. I believe we must now passionately investigate these new alternatives.

PRODUCT NEWS

BOB ANDERSON

Unlikely as it may seem, the advertising agencies responsible for sending out press releases about theatre personalities and products seem to take a long break over the summer holiday season. Consequently the information passed on from the editorial office is a bit thin this time and this review of their output even more of a rag-bag than usual.

First, the only new product. This is an announcement from Scintilla Technology Ltd. that they have produced a unique low priced computer based foot-operated 4 way lighting control board. Maestros of the Grand Master and the theatre lighting application of the cinema organ of the '30s and '40s were justifiably proud of the uses that could be devised for the operators feet but more up to date controls have totally ignored the pedal possibilities. It is therefore only a slight disappointment to learn that 'Tootsy' is intended for the stand-up musician and is specifically geared to the flash, sound-to-light and chase effects without which no modern musical performance of this genre can be considered complete.



Nevertheless, theatre designers currently frustrated by the impossibility of current house boards to achieve the more inventive of their effects might see a use for the device as an add on. Contact Unit 42, City Industrial Park, Southern Road, Southampton.

The professional publicist may be on holiday but Graham Walne does his own publicity and announced in June that his book 'Sound for Theatres - A Basic Manual', now in use worldwide as a training manual, is to be extensively re-written for a second edition from the publishing house of Adam and Charles Black. In another handout he boasts of clocking up his fiftieth trip across the Atlantic, not merely to earn the free champagne presented by the airline, but as lighting designer for over 16 shows for Sarah Caldwell and her Opera Company. Back home Graham continues a 7 year association with the Vanessa Ford company and announces that from experiences gained while lighting 74 shows for her in 42 regional theatres he intends 'to do something about the lack of trained staff in

regional theatre'. A Walne Academy of Technical Theatre perhaps? Or a series of scholarships and bursaries? Watch this space for Graham's next announcement.

Philip L. Edwards also offers a home brewed press release. His hire service has benefitted from EEC cash to improve and expand the Glossop, Derbyshire premises and Phil's activities in lighting design and as supplier of the lighting rig for the Buxton Festival continue to flourish.

Next in the pile comes a series of announcements about the moves of personalities from company to company and, indeed, of moves of companies to new ownership.

News from Lee Colortran is that Joe Thornley, the greatly experienced designer of theatre and TV lanterns, first for Mole Richardson and then for Strand, has joined them at the Thetford factory once owned by Mole-Richardson to develop a new range aimed at professional theatre. Some day soon the Lee organisation must be planning a really impressive launch of their product into the theatre market.

Having lost Joe and, some while ago, Mike Lowe, Strand announced the appointment of Michael Jukes as Managing Director of their European operation. Michael comes from ITT Cannon and Amphenol. One of his first public appearances to the theatre trade was as host at a meeting of lighting designers at the Swan Theatre at Stratford where Mike and the Strand sales and technical team, supported by a guest appearance of Francis Reid (in a re-write of the role originally scripted for Joe Thornley) demonstrated a wide new range of products that will presumably be the subject of insider reviews elsewhere in Cue and future product reviews.

CCT, not to be outdone in this summer game of musical chairs, announced a new Export Sales Manager, Graham Bowen, filling the vacancy created when Mike Wooderson left to set up his own export agency in the spring. Graham was previously with Green Ginger Ltd. as Marketing Director and at Philips, though he trained originally at the Royal College of Music.

Now to the changes of ownership.

Back in April ADB announced that it had been taken over by the German electrical giant, Siemens. Owned until then by the founding De Backer family, ADB must be the last of the great European lighting firms to pass from private ownership. Siemens intend to keep and develop the ADB operation in theatre, television and airfield lighting which sells successfully in the world market. It will be interesting to see

what the future holds for Siemens own theatre lighting division at Erlangen.

Next, a new company, Lytemode Ltd. announces its formation as a joint venture between GTE Rotaflex and Glenlyte Inc. and has taken over the business of Concord Controls. This is of interest to theatre lighting people because Concord products include the Green Ginger range of stage lighting systems. Lytemode intend to offer highly innovative new products for architectural lighting control based on advanced microprocessor technology developed by Glenlyte in the USA.

Finally, back to people.

Did you know that Glyndebourne are considering rebuilding? Seeking to improve acoustics, increase revenue and provide for long term financial security and to satisfy the continuing increase in demand for tickets, George Christie has appointed John Bury as theatre consultant to carry out a feasibility study. As an eminently successful opera stage designer as well as his involvement as with the design of theatres at the Barbican and elsewhere John is uniquely qualified for this challenge. The feasibility study should be ready at the end of the year and if approved, appointment of the architect should follow in mid 1988.

Strand Galaxy for National Theatre

Strand Lighting announce it has won an order from London's National Theatre for a 528 channel Galaxy memory lighting control system for the Lyttleton auditorium. This completes the replacement programme for the National's three switchboards.

Strand's lighting controls have also been specified and installed in the Cottesloe Theatre, where a 768 channel Galaxy system is in use and a 180 channel Strand Gemini control in the studio theatre.

