

# PRODUCT NEWS

CISCO, the biennial trade fair in Paris, was a very different and generally improved event this year. Gone was the dominance of cinema we saw in 1977, products for theatre had a good showing and there was a new addition in the form of DISCOM. Discom was the name given by the organisers to the substantial and certainly vocal part of the exhibition devoted to disco equipment. Purists disapproved of this noisy intrusion but at least some of the exhibitors saw a benefit in the crowds Discom attracted which apparently included some buyers too.

Most of us recognise that the Pop/Disco world has brought benefits for conventional theatre in terms of techniques and equipment and this exhibition certainly demonstrated the point though sadly sometimes with a lack of creative skill which tended to devalue the techniques themselves. Pop may be for the relatively young but surely not for the totally juvenile.

Clémançon that distinguished French company of the theatre seem to be taking the development seriously. They eschewed the theatre section and devoted themselves exclusively to an admittedly impressive exhibition in the Discom section. Questions only evoked a gallic shrug and an enigmatic 'ah yes the theatre'.

In addition to the French exhibitors there was good representation for both British and German companies but CISCO is not yet the truly international fair it deserves to be, probably through youth and past mistakes rather than any fault of the present organizers. The list of the exhibitors was impressive enough but too many important companies relied on a local agent who also represented a dozen other companies (one actually had twice that number) from a stand eight feet square. Doubtless this will improve as the stature of the show grows but this time the absence of American manufacturers particularly com-

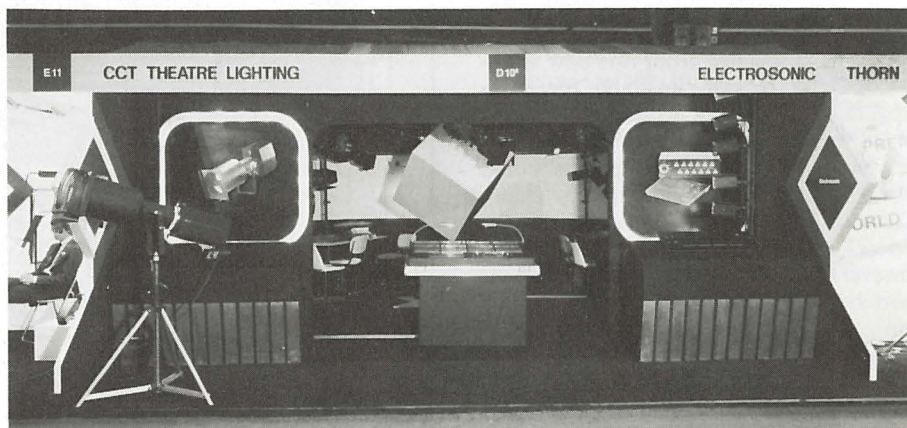
panies like Kliegl was very disappointing.

Most important British companies were there or satisfactorily represented. Rank Strand rather oddly played down their lighting and concentrated on their new subsidiary Telestage which after Light Palette's success abroad seemed almost perverse.

Rank Strand may do some strange things at times but two welcome pieces of news from them recently have been the return of their lectures last month and the introduction of a spare parts service called Strandpart through all recognised Rank Strand stockists.

## Ziller Profile

For those who know their Flanders & Swann this Profile (or cross sectional shape) is made out to be a kind of 'Universal Wom-Pom' of a bar/suspension system/tab track/grid constructor. Ziller Technik of Wesel, Germany, have created a curiously shaped extrusion which enables fittings to



Flying the flag, the British section at CISCO.

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Rank Strand over the counter spare parts service.