

sockets and an early telephone being particularly noted.

By contrast there were suppliers who thought that the show was about meeting people and the hardware didn't need to be present. **White Light** for their 15th Anniversary produced a splendid hire and sales list (weights, measurements and projection distance/size charts). They market the ADB range including an effects disc compatible projector. With an expanse of carpet, soft furnishings and greenery this was a very relaxing stand. **Playlight Lighting & Sound Service** for their 10th Anniversary had a smaller version of the same; easy chairs and one or two technical objects d'art. Playlight now have 4 main depots and their curtain making up service will be of interest to Londoners and Mancunians alike. At **Ancient Lights** for our 5th Anniversary we decided to bring our usual clutter along in spirit rather than the usual bulky flesh and beneath our 24 light (count 'em) cut crystal chandelier hung from Cyberdescences. Trilite Trussing, we had tables and chairs backed by a 16' x 8' mural by Sarah Pew of some of the items we keep in stock including our unique Period Theatre lighting collection for hire. We were commended for this but admonished for having the chandelier two points high and the Venreco floods two points low, who said you can't go wrong with a simple lighting rig?

It was heartening to see a number of very specialist stalls. **RAT** (Manufacturing) make nothing but music stands but their range is neat and comprehensive and has been supplemented this year by their microphone boom. There were two stalls featuring marking tape. **Cambrian-Stuart** whose range of adhesives and decorative laminates will be familiar now offer flame proof floorings and screen printed signs, stickers and advertising specialities. A colour catalogue is available on request. **Le Mark Self Adhesives** have a new 'Studio Vinyl' being a strong, durable self adhesive material in a choice of colours and widths. **Pakman Research** again brought their snow-shower machine with fire-resistant paper snow. Their 'Formis' range of vacuum moulded scenic panels continues to expand and their floor-pattern painting machine must be a boon for busy T.V. studios. **Peter Evans** range of mouldings has now been extended to include metallic as well as clear PVC-stamped out legions of gilt cherubs are now a possibility.

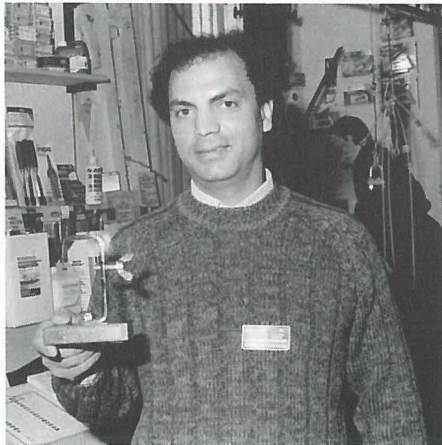
**Northern Lights** speciality is making up lecterns, stage managers desks and other control/distribution points.

**Nerva Metals Ltd.** are makers of Aluminium mirror finish sheets and they have a variety of special finishes. They can supply pre-scored sheet to ease covering rounded surfaces and they are stockists of alloy scaffolding tubes. **Foy Inven enterprises Inc.** had their heavy duty aluminium track - as used to fly Liberate (all up weight inc Cape & Candlestick 250 lb) as well as smaller versions.

Most of these specialist stalls were in the smaller Hall 3 as was **Graham Walne's Leisure Plan**, which is now divided into

Leisure Plan Services, where advice is given and the equipment sold and Leisure Plan consultants where a consultant service only is required. Across the aisle from this stand was **Radeliffe Transport Services**, who have just completed a European Tour for the Almeida Theatre production of *The Possessed* in two 40ft vehicles. They have bought 7 new vehicles this year, replacing four and adding three to their fleet.

**Roscolab** again had a large and theatrical stand - I thought their backcloth of an auditorium as seen from the stage was magnificent. Rosco is rightly pleased to have been given a Scientific Technical Award by the Hollywood Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences for the development of the Rosco Fog Fluid. There is now a more powerful version of the Popular Rosco Fogger with 4 times the output. Supergel and Sparklene designer products all have new colours and the faceted Fleximirror is a new concept.



*Flint Hire & Supply Ltd won the 'Best Stand of the Year' award.*

**Theatre Flooring**, specialists in stage flooring are particularly pleased because their Harlequin dance flooring was used by the Olympic Arts Festival in Los Angeles last year. They now have a wide choice of flooring materials for every performance situation.

There seems to be a hotting up of competition on the textiles front this year. **Neville's Textiles** specialises in dancewear and was showing fluorescent lycra for leotards, flesh-coloured stretch body stocking and lurex stretch jersey. On the scenic side **Gerriets Great Britain** were showing their welded back-projection and other plastic screens and coverings, and **Varia Textiles** had a vast range of scenic materials on display and pattern cards. Their sequined velours are particularly interesting and one has the feeling that any reasonable request can be met. For the lighter side, **N. & I. Costello** displayed slash shimmer curtains and a range of christmas garlands, tinsel and stars. Their Penny Disc was used for the rainbow in the recent Ideal Home Exhibition.

Besides **Flint Hire**, scenery was represented by **Hall Stage Products Ltd**, whose rearfold track is an innovation, enabling a design on a cloth to be kept in view without progressively folding as it moves off stage. Halls also have a points

system for the remote switching of cyc cloths along different tracks and their new rope lock for counterweight systems is adjustable for different rope sizes. **Edelstein Engineering Ltd.** showed their unjack system of truck lifts and brakes, including a removable version. They are steadily expanding their range of scenery fittings.

Now at last, do I hear you say, to Sound. **M.A.C. Sound Hire** is a regular to the trade show and their range of sound equipment includes the largest stock of Radio Microphones outside London. M.A.C. Communications also sells its own intercom units. **Spectrum Audio** also showed their intercom, their Tipspot remote wireless lighting call-up system and a new 200 watt Amplifier. **Canford Audio** showed some of their large range of mail-order sound equipment all listed in a good catalogue. We find their musiflex cable very good for headsets.

**Technical Projects** have been making their way mostly in the communications side but they are now expanding into acoustic and audio measurement and their Auditorium 2000 sound mixing system is a top of the range machine. **Sennheiser** was displaying their extensive range of microphones with emphasis on 816 Rifle Mics and the miniature MKE2 SK2102 Radio Mic/Transmitters. **John Offord** specialises in books for the entertainment industry. Two among them, *The British Theatre Directory* and *British Alternative Theatre Directory*, are to be found in my own bookshelf. Offord also runs the entertainment and arts exhibition. Last year it was at Eastbourne and is scheduled for Bournemouth in 1986. Membership details of Entertainment Express, the discount travel service for the entertainment industry, were also available here. This seemed a far cry from the old "Book a railway coach for the company and the scenery travels free in a cattle truck". **Cara Lancaster's** book bazaar is a great favourite with me: A goldmine of theatre books and catalogues. On an archival note I also enjoyed the display of drawings, models and documents about the old Playhouse, Charing Cross presented by Joe Aveline and his students from the **Central School of Speech and Drama**.

**Jane Rumble Display** was the only craft practitioner with a formal stall - she specialises in costume accessories and small props but there was a craft display area with some very interesting work - furniture, puppets, masks, fabrics applique and embroidery were all featured. Trainees in the ABTT Training Scheme mounted an excellent exhibition of the whys and wherefores of their courses. That this training scheme could fold through lack of grant funding is a disaster to be avoided. I cannot understand the thinking behind giving large grants to theatres and companies for Hi-tech equipment and then denying financial support for training in the proper use of this equipment.

Jim Laws is senior partner of Ancient Lights, Attleborough, Norfolk.