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of *Edward IV*, and *Richard III, His Death*, adapted by Charles Wood and directed by Adrian Noble, with lighting by Chris Parry, and sound by Paul Slocombe.

“I didn’t know the plays before I started work,” Crowley says, “I’d never seen them, and I assumed that the people out front haven’t either. They’re pretty involved. It would be nice to think that you didn’t have to keep looking at your programme constantly thinking, ‘Oh, who’s he?’”

Helping to keep track of all the allegiances and realignments, Crowley employed an emblematic approach—white and red roses, large colour-coded crosses—clearly displayed on tunics, flags, armour, and scenery, a device used by many designers before him.

“It was a very emblematic approach,” he says, “but that was born out of the fact that you literally had to know who was on whose side. Obviously, if they’re not wearing a white rose, then they’re gonna get their head chopped off.”

“It was paramount in my mind that I would have to tell the story as clearly as possible—and as excitingly as possible.” This sense of excitement was inherent in the breakneck pace of Noble’s staging of the trilogy, which posed another constraint for the designer.

“Certain physical limitations were set by virtue of the fact that they were going to stage all three plays on one day,” Crowley says, “and there was very little time for change-overs between the morning, afternoon, and evening performances. Whatever I designed had to be put up and down in the 45 minutes between shows. It had to have a fantastic fluidity.”

Solving this design problem, Crowley used the device of storyboards. “We did model it, but I treated it like a film script really. The whole thing was done scene by scene, and every scene was done up as an image, so you could look at the whole trilogy.

“Storyboards are invaluable, you can constantly refer to them. A model, I think, is a means to an end—it deals with physical realities. I don’t think a model is very good at creating a mood—you can’t light it properly, and it hasn’t got actors wandering around it. Somehow with a drawing you can get more of an atmosphere, more of a feeling.

“It’s very interesting, actually. In the end people weren’t even looking at the model. They would say, ‘Let’s look at the storyboards.’ Because I think people respond to a drawing in a way that they do not respond to a model. You look at a model and you’re more interested in the way it’s been constructed and you’re think-

ing, ‘Oh, what a cute little chair, oh look they’ve even made the flower pots.’ Whereas with a drawing, even though it might be as simple and as crude as something on the back of a cigarette packet, I think people respond to them.

“So, Chris Parry, the lighting designer, had them, the crew, the stage management had them, the actors had them, they were all pinned up everywhere—they were there all the time. And it was the only sane way of keeping any kind of control over it.

“Some of the time it showed groupings of people on stage with no actual scenery; and light—there had to be light from a certain angle, so all that was painted in. Also, you could look at a whole sheet of these things and you could see the entire evening at one glance.”

The designer has used the technique of storyboards before, most recently on *Macbeth*. “It’s the only way of dealing with a large piece,” he says, though he notes that for a play with a fixed set like *Hedda Gabler*, storyboarding would be pointless.

Henrik Ibsen’s *Hedda Gabler* sees Crowley reunited with the *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* team—director Howard Davies and writer Christopher Hampton (who wrote a revised version of the translation from the Norwegian). Mark Henderson did the lighting.

“What interested me in *Hedda Gabler*,” Crowley says, “was that Howard wanted to do this on the big stage—the Olivier Theatre, the National’s 1,160 seat theatre—he didn’t see it as a small domestic drama.

“What was interesting was to see if we could make a play like this work on the big stage instead of just putting it in the Cottesloe, the National’s smallest auditorium, or behind the proscenium in the Lyttelton theatre. That’s been the challenge really.”

The resulting set is a massive, circular room. “It’s like the atrium of a building, although there’s actually a huge library with no books in it until the character George Tesman starts filling it up with all his volumes. He’s only happy with his books really, and this room is his idea of Heaven—it’s like his very own reading room at the British Museum, which he can now spend the rest of his married days filling. Which is his wife’s idea of Hell.” Indeed, the play opens with stacks of Tesman’s books on the floor, and as it progresses, the bookshelves, which stretch from floor to ceiling on both the ground floor and the set’s upper level, are gradually filled with them.

This upper level of the set is reached by a huge curving staircase which dominates the

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A former scene painter and art instructor, Bob Crowley (2) established his reputation as a designer when his set and costumes for the Broadway production of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* won him two Tony nominations.

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Un ancien peintre scénique et professeur d’art, Bob Crowley (2), a fondé sa réputation comme scénographe quand il a réalisé les décors et les costumes pour *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* à Broadway, pour lesquels il a été nommé deux fois pour les prix “Tony.”

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Bob Crowley (2), ein ehemaliger Kulissenmaler und Kunsterzieher, begründete seinen Ruf als Bühnenbildner, als er zwei Tony-Nominierungen für sein Bühnenbild und seine Kostümausstattung der Broadway-Inszenierung von *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* erhielt.

