

■ Since lighting designer Mark Henderson began working professionally in 1978, he has lit over 200 productions throughout the United Kingdom, from opera and dance (1, Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet's production of *Metamorphosis*), to theatre.

• Depuis qu'il a commencé à travailler de manière professionnelle en 1978, l'éclairagiste Mark Henderson a réalisé les éclairages pour plus de deux cents spectacles à travers le Royaume-Uni, de l'opéra à la danse (1, *Metamorphosis* du Sadler's Well Royal Ballet) en passant par le théâtre.

▼ Seit Beginn seiner Karriere als lighting designer im Jahre 1978 hat Mark Henderson ueber 200 Produktionen im Vereinigten Koenigreich beleuchtet—Oper, Tanz (1, Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet Produktion von *Metamorphosis*), und Theatre.

# Mood Maker

BY KEVIN COTE

Lighting designer Mark Henderson can best be described as casual and seemingly unfazed by his success. Dressed in blue jeans and basketball shoes with a shock of thick chestnut hair gathered in a pony-tail, he comes across as a composed, soft-spoken young man, content to let his lighting speak for itself.

"It's instinctive I guess," Henderson replies when asked how he uses light to create the proper moods for 19th-century dramas such as *The Shaughbraun* and *Hedda Gabler*, both of which he lit at the National Theatre, and West End musicals such as *Follies*. In fact, the 1987 London revival of *Follies* may be the largest show Henderson has lit, but as to how many lanterns he actually used, Henderson's response is as casual as his nature. "I don't really know," he says. "I never really counted them up."

Henderson lit his first production during the summer of 1978 when the English Music Theatre Company staged *Transformations* at the Young Vic Theatre. The financially strapped company did not have the budget to hire an independent lighting designer, so, at only 20 years old, Mark Henderson, EMT's touring chief electrician, was hired.

"Up until then, I had only been receiving other people's lighting patterns," recalls Henderson. "But then I was asked to light my own show because near the end of EMT's life there wasn't enough money to hire anyone else." So with no formal lighting education, Mark Henderson entered the world of design.

"I only went to school through the sixth form," he admits, "and was always interested in the theatre. My first job was as an assistant to the technical director at the Palace Theatre in Newark. It paid £12 a week." Henderson credits his real lighting training to his work with Adrian Dightam, chief electrician at London Contemporary Dance Theatre in 1976 when Henderson first arrived in London. This led to the job at the English Music

MARK HENDERSON LIGHTS UP LONDON

PHOTO: LESLIE E. SPATT

