

accurate focussing and full control of colour was not helped by the restrictions for overhead hanging in Washington, New York and, eventually, London. Colour, too, was a departure for Phillips, who is often referred to in academic circles as 'a white-light man.' "You are not aware of it as a coloured show," he says, "since the colour moves in blocks." Hwang's play flits from scene to scene, both temporally and geographically, and thus a colour key seemed to Phillips to make sense of the stage, both in parts and in its entirety.

Early on in the play one is taken in a split second from an oppressive cell in a Paris prison to a fashionable French society party. The stage washes with strong, saturated red light, leaving the hero alone in his harsh, white-lit cell. "I didn't see the colour as saturated, originally," says Phillips, as he reiterated that it is not a colour show, "but it developed from the pastels we began with in Washington and became what we have today." On the stage of the Shaftesbury Theatre, *M. Butterfly* is a feast of huge brushstrokes of colour and tiny details of hue. For a 'white-light man' Andy Phillips has given a convincing example of a breakthrough in colour technique.

Achieving control of this colour over such a complicated and dynamic stage led Phillips along another uncharted path. He is a designer who is particularly non-plussed by the junk of modern lighting technology. As a man who cites the Strand Patt. 264 as the perfect lighting instrument, he is unimpressed with the paraphernalia of many of the spectacles on show in London's West End. But the volume of equipment necessary to achieve the colour washes and proper illumination of the play drew him towards the colour scroller as a means to dramatically reduce his instrument count.

The fond memories of the Patt. 264 profile spotlight have remained with Phillips leading him to prefer to work with five feet diameter lighting areas. Twenty-two areas dealt with the curved ramp alone. With colour scrollers he could achieve with a simple double cover what would necessitate at least five times more equipment using conventional colour techniques.

He chose a compact, but relatively new piece of equipment in England, the Rainbow Scroller, marketed by M & M Lighting. This accepts direct control signals from the lighting control board and allows the easy definition of one of 11 user-selected colours on the remote luminaire. Using 60 or so scrollers he

managed to limit the rig to approximately two hundred luminaires, all with the right aspect and angle, and with little compromise in beam texture due to the refinement and rationalization of the layout.

Two CCT Silhouette luminaires cover each area from each prescribed position. At any moment one instrument is lighting the area while the other is quietly scrolling to the colour for its next cue, ready for the cross-fade at the next visible cue point. Thus, the show in performance has a mix of visible and invisible cues. Phillips believes that there is a cue every twenty seconds or so, with some controlled to be longer so as to reduce possible interference from noise. The control desk is an Arri Imagine 250, which is more than happy to accurately memorize both intensities and colour positions.

On Broadway Phillips used 63 Color-Wiz scrollers from The Great American

Market to give him the diversity he needed. Central control via a Light Palette and fast, quiet access times convinced both Phillips and Dexter that the equipment was serving them well.

Obviously such a complex lighting technique, where invisible resets of large numbers of instruments are required within a rapid-fire sequence of cues, necessitates a great deal of design discipline. Phillips ascribes this depth of organization to his assistant in the States, and then in England, Brian Nason, whom Phillips describes as "having professionally trained eyes." A bright and highly qualified designer in his own right, Nason soon gained an almost supernatural ability to watch the stage, annotate what was happening and what was needed, and offer succinct developmental ideas that Phillips found both stimulating and disciplining. It took three days to light *M. Butterfly* in London.

