

UK/DESIGN FACILITY

THE ROSCOLAB PAINT FRAME

On the 1st November 1989, Roscolab Ltd. of London opened a new facility for the scenic artist at their Sydenham, South London works — a large paint frame. This facility offers a large-scale, self-contained paint shop with one wall supporting a full width battened wood frame with an electronically-powered access platform.

The frame is 54' 6" wide and 25' high, with a centre apex section that extends to 30' high. Four wide gates open at the base to allow cloths and scenery to be easily loaded onto the hardwood batten frame. The rise and fall platform is the full 54' 6" in width and is 4' 6" deep. At the rear of the platform is a sensibly designed storage area which runs continuously across the work platform giving safe and useful storage on two levels. A solid upstand stops paints or buckets from being knocked or spilt and underneath power outlets with 13 amp plug sockets allow compressors and lighting to be used on the platform at any height. The ubiquitous paint-splattered radio will also benefit from this thought.

The platform travels smoothly and accurately to any height from ground level to the top of the frame and

numerous safety devices are incorporated to ensure that the platform only moves when the gates are closed and clear and the operator is in full control. Up to six artists can use the platform at any time and the front edge lifts and folds back to allow wide scenery to be painted or artists to paint past their feet.

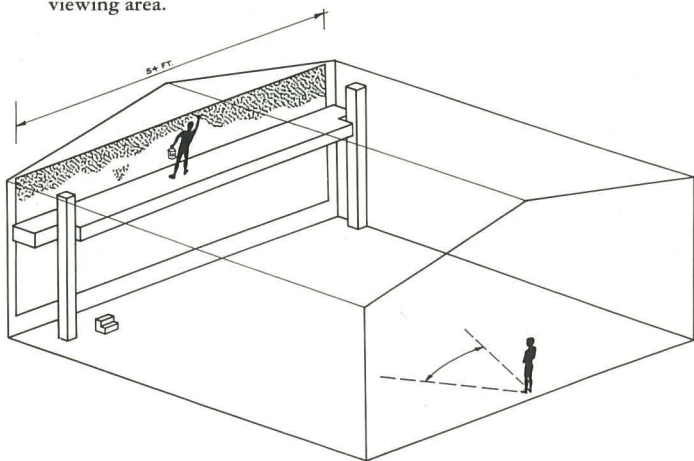
At floor level, a 60' by 35' scenery assembly and construction areas allows for unrestricted viewing of the full frame — a very important facility that is lacking on most other frames.

Managing director of Roscolab, Michael Hall, says, "We studied available facilities from a scenic artist's point of view and suspected that they had never really been consulted before about conditions they would consider ideal for development of a design on a full scale cloth or gauze."

The Paint Frame and the associated construction area have been in almost constant use since the launch. The users have been freelance scenic artists and set construction companies combining the use of the frame with painting flats, and theatres needing the unusual width of the frame. Long term lettings are being negotiated for the spring.

DAVID I. TAYLOR

The Rosco Paint Frame is 54' 6" long, 25' high with a 30' high centre section. The work area measures 60' by 35', providing an uninterrupted viewing area.



FINLAND/LIGHT

MODERN FINNISH CAVE ART

While primitive man drew animal shapes on the walls, modern man has more sophisticated means with which to decorate his caves. Witness the work of Finnish lighting designer Ekku Peltomäki who created *The Stream of Life*, an installation made of thirteen light sculptures, in a large cave 300 kilometers from Helsinki, near the border of the Soviet Union.

Commissioned by Finland's Retretti Art Center, the installation was based on Peltomäki's vision of poems by Eino Leino, one of Finland's most celebrated classical poets. "I wanted to recreate my visions of these poems using light on a combination of sand, water and stone, or in the air," says Peltomäki in describing the project, "and each sculpture is accompanied by text from poems by Eino Leino and music from the first and fourth symphonies by Sibelius."

Using the natural lighting of the 3,000 square meter cave as a background, Peltomäki used Thomas 1kw PARcans, Thomas PAR 64 and PAR 36 ACL's, Thomas PAR 36 pinspots, ADB and CCT 1kw profiles, 500w profiles with gobos, and 500w flood lights to create his light sculptures. Other effects were created with flicker candles, as well as a 6w argon laser. Main power came from a service building located 1,000 meters away.

Thousands of tiny serially wired white Christmas tree bulbs hidden in a sandy floor create the effect in *Growth*, one of the thirteen light sculptures. Slightly dimmed and running between two stone walls, the lights create a shimmering path leading to a cross of light in the distance.

The burst of colour in

*Explosion* emanates from hundreds of meters of 3 mm florescent rope attached together at one end, then pulled tautly in many different directions. The effect is heightened by rocks coloured with florescent paint and light from 120 cm UV/Blacklight neon tubes.

In an adjacent theatre, Peltomäki created an 8 minute laser art performance set to the Finlandia Symphony by Sibelius. His light show and special effects were considered a success, although he took a risk in using music so dear to the hearts of the Finns. Much of the show was pre-recorded, with two technicians at the controls of a Celco board.

A theatrical lighting designer in Helsinki, Peltomäki designed the Finnish production of *Cats* which ran from 1986-1989 at the Helsinki City Theatre. He has also designed lighting for touring dance companies such as Alvin Ailey and Paul Taylor on their visits to Finland, and he has designed operas ranging from *Porgy and Bess* to Verdi's *Requiem*. "My vision of opera is very similar to that for rock 'n' roll," says Peltomäki, the owner of the first Celco 60 lighting control board sold, and the first Celco board to go to Finland. "I use my Celco board for opera as well," he says, referring to his designs for the world premiere of *The Knife*, a modern opera by Heininen which was seen at the Savonlinna opera festival in Finland last summer.

The Retretti cave installation was open for four months during the summer of 1989 and attracted 233,000 visitors.

ELLEN LAMPERT