

number of scenes. What we needed was a control with a multiple playback facility, and within that there would be a number of cues.

'That was what we wanted. The trouble was there was nothing around that would do the job adequately at the time.'



Peter Rabbit in a scene taken from his own story.

Award-winning lighting designer Mark Henderson explained, 'Originally this was going to be a 'dark ride' type of exhibition but the space available would not allow it, so we went for the woodland walk through a number of scenes.'



Mrs. Tiggywinkle and 'visitor'.

'We knew from the beginning what the 'feel' of the exhibition would be but it was almost impossible to draw it up in three dimensions. It was extremely difficult to plan where to place a specific spotlight to light a particular area.'

'What we wanted was a

low-key feel. We wanted the light to be a delicate skim across the scenes - very much a theatrical feel. At the same time, the various models needed to be pinpointed. What we were looking for, in terms of lighting control, was something which would be totally flexible. We had a

number of different scenes to light, some of which change during the 'tour', and a number of items to highlight within those scenes.

'We considered a theatrical-style control board to do the job and seriously considered the Gemini. We realised that although it was possible, it would have been an absolute nightmare to plot something so complex with that type of control, particularly as several moving sections needed continuously cycling channels in addition to static lighting.'

'I called Strand Lighting and someone there hit on the idea of using a Premiere control, which was designed primarily for architectural applications. It proved to be just what we were looking for. Each area of the exhibition could be treated as a separate 'room'.'

Eleven of these separate 'rooms' were used in total, each having its own pre-programmed sequence of lighting scenes.

To simplify the system for the operator, last minute programming allowed a single push-button to start and stop the lighting.

This re-programming took place literally hours before

the exhibition first opened to the public and 'artistically and operationally, it has worked out very well,' says Mark.

The same Premiere® control is likely to be used to run lighting sequences in an 'activity centre' due to be converted from an adjoining building over the coming months.

The evocative effect of The World of Beatrix Potter is heightened by specially-commissioned music providing background accompaniment to the meandering journey. The score by TV composer Ernie Wood captures the mood perfectly.

What makes the exhibition all the more disconcerting is that Beatrix Potter, in her stories, set her characters in real places - the places you left behind, just outside the exhibition entrance overlooking Lake Windermere. It would be easy to dismiss her storybook characters as merely the product of a fertile imagination, yet you are left half-wondering if they really existed.

On the hillsides above the lake, young rabbits who might be the descendants of Flopsy, Mopsy, Cottontail and Peter, play innocently in the evening twilight. Malevolent jackdaws lope around the streets of Bowness, lured by the prospect of thieving keepsakes from tourists.

Jemima Puddle-Duck birds still wander the lanes and

farmyards, mingling easily with hedgehog relations of Mrs Tiggy-Winkle. And somewhere out there, no doubt, is a real-life Mr McGregor, forever coming round the end of a cucumber frame in pursuit of mischievous rabbits.



Squirrel Nutkin high and dry.

Editor's note: Mark Henderson is, perhaps, best known for his theatre lighting designs. In April this year he was nominated as Lighting Designer Of The Year by the Society of West End Theatres (SWET) and received an Olivier Award for his lighting designs on two productions at The National Theatre, *Murmuring Judges* and *Long Day's Journey Into Night*. ■

PREMIERE - FIRST FOR ADAPTABILITY

Strand Lighting's Premiere® programmable lighting control system has already proved to be a huge hit in architectural circles where its complete flexibility and simple controls have made it ideal for applications such as hotels. It is already used extensively in North America, with Britain following close behind, and has recently been used at a new theme park resort near Paris.

Features include 128 channels, each with a possible 128 presets, controlling up to 512 dimmers. Up to 64 control stations are possible, ranging from a simple, single push-button to a sophisticated menu-driven command station with alpha-numeric display. Most importantly, the entire system can be customised.

Other facilities of Premiere include an astronomical time clock, disk storage, automatic events facility, control of up to 32 rooms per system, local programming via standard control stations, or off-site with a personal computer running Windows V3.0 (or later) software.

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Premiere® screen display.