

The Fred Bentham Column

THREE EXITS FROM BOW STREET

This Summer was to see the departure of the famous Police station from Bow Street. Here in Covent Garden opposite the Royal Opera House and Floral Street (the home of Strand Electric during the 1920's and 30's) was the birthplace of the Bow Street Runners in 1748 - our first real police force.

The present building dates from 1881; the same year as the Savoy theatre, just down the road from Strand, was "Lighted throughout with Electricity". One gathers that over the decades, many were the distinguished names who found themselves 'lodged' overnight in Bow Street thanks to the influence of alcohol.

It is Summer 1964 which should be of interest to the readers of *Lights!* Firstly because of the departure of the pioneer Strand 1934 remote clutch-control and its replacement by a 240-way Strand thyristor dimmer system. Secondly, for the manner of the exit of the splendid bronze lamp brackets outside the main entrance to the Royal Opera House. Visitors may have wondered at their replacement by six incongruous plain glass ball brackets. True, the architect for alterations up in the balcony-gallery area at that time was Peter Moro, who thought modern, but he was as pained as the rest of us at their departure. The truth is that it was literally a case of daylight robbery and in full view of Bow Street police station opposite. The burglars, disguised with workman's overalls, appeared with ladders and took the brackets down. I wonder where they are now - the brackets that is? ❖



Sixty Years of Light Work is Fred Bentham's autobiography and available exclusively from Strand Lighting. See review on Page 19.



A scene from "Jelly's Last Jam"

Photo © Martha Suope

SIX TONY AWARDS FOR JULES FISHER

by Susan Dandridge.

As one of the most influential lighting designers, theatrical consultants and producers working today, Jules Fisher usually gets what he wants. In 1984, Mr Fisher specified that the new lighting system going into *Wolf Trap* (*Lights!* Vol. 3 Issue 1) provide a control channel for each of the 714 dimmers to be installed at the theatre, thereby providing complete flexibility. Strand Lighting responded with a major redesign of the Lightpalette®, making it the first memory system in the U.S. to offer such high channel capacity.

Wolf Trap was only one of many projects on which Jules Fisher Associates and Strand Lighting have collaborated. Mr Fisher knows Strand best perhaps through his long history on Broadway. Of his six Tony Awards for outstanding lighting design, four shows ran on Lightpalettes: *Dancin'* (1978), *Grand Hotel* (1990), *The Will Rogers Follies* (1991) and most recently, *Jelly's Last Jam* (1992). A fan of the Lightpalette move fade philosophy, Fisher states that the Palette, "enables us to do the fluid cueing that is so important in musicals today, and just isn't possible on any other board". He adds that the Lightpalette series has aided his lighting designs

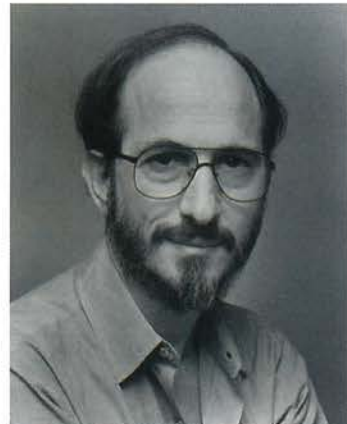
tremendously in the past eight years.

Associate Lighting Designer, Peggy Eisenhauer found the new Lightpalette® 90 to be a tremendous benefit during the cueing of *Jelly's Last Jam*. "There were things we had just been waiting to do that we couldn't do before, like being able to have as many cues and effects going at the same time as we wanted. And programming speed on the board is tremendous, which is so critical." Ms. Eisenhauer found the new special effects capabilities and the ability of those effects run on submasters to be helpful, as well as the new macro keys: "We developed a worklight cue using the macros, where all channels except scrollers and worklights would go out. That saved us time, and wear and tear on the scrollers too."

But it isn't just the Palette series that wins favour with Jules Fisher. In addition to his Broadway work, the theatrical consulting firm Jules Fisher Associates and the associated architectural lighting consulting firm of Fisher Marantz Renfro Stone, find the entire wide range of Strand's products useful. Lightpalettes, and countless CD80 dimmers and Strand luminaires have gone into the acclaimed Joyce Theatre in New York, the Auditorio Nacional in Mexico, Carnegie Hall and numerous

others. Strand's architectural product line is also well received in Fisher's office: in 1990, Fisher Marantz received the Illuminating Engineering Society's award for best lighting for the Rainbow Room at the Rockefeller Center, a Strand Environ installation.

Jules Fisher is now involved in a number of international assignments including projects in Singapore, Jamaica, Egypt and Mexico. As his international work continues to expand, Strand's offices worldwide will be there to continue the collaboration. ❖



Jules Fisher Photo © Henry Grossman

Footnote:
At the time of writing, some twenty four shows were on Broadway. Seven running with LP90's, all others, with the exception of one, use Lightpalette® I's or II's.