

## "BUCKETS OF LIGHT"

**A**s automated Lighting wiggles its way into an ever increasing variety of productions (from rock concert to legitimate theatre), institutes that train and educate lighting designers of the future should awaken to changing trends and industry demands and expectations." So says Head of Lighting for the Academy For Performing Arts in Hong Kong, British lighting designer John A. Williams. "When better for future professionals to gain an understanding of the power and versatility of these tools than when they are studying to enter

colour scrollers up in the rig, cross fades between scenes become so much more interesting when programmed as cross-moves. A sweep of light filling the stage as the PALS move and spread their lumens to build a state (like a bucket of light being poured onto the floor), is a wonderful change from the old cross fade or state build.... especially if a colour change is incorporated at the same time. A moving focus into a performer (as though you are iris-ing in the entire state), rather than the usual reduction and special is just pure magic!"

John is obviously pleased he is able to offer, what must be, one of



PALS at work...

the profession that use them. There is just no time on site, for most of us, to 'learn' how to use robotics to their best advantage. By that, I mean other than effect lighting where many elements can be pre-programmed prior to arrival at the venue".

The Hong Kong Academy has recently taken delivery of a fourteen head rig of robotics. Eight of which might be described as "full wiggle lights" producing effects and dynamics, the other six for a variety of design requirements that include true integration into a basic rig.

John says, "It was to serve the needs of the latter category that we chose Strand's PALS™. I must have been zapped by every wiggle available at LDI, but when deciding on an automated instrument we could usefully use in all the disciplines we work in here (Drama, Opera, Musicals, Dance), Strand PALS became the obvious choice. Of course we need the all singing all dancing instrument as well from time to time, but the PAL is such a good and reliable work horse, and with time you can get an awful lot out of them.

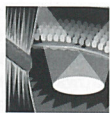
"I have just lit Twelfth Night for the Academy, reducing the size of my basic rig by incorporating PALS. Apart from the obvious advantages of having a set of mobile lights with



...and John Williams at work.

the few formal automated lighting courses anywhere in the world. Now offered in year two of the Academy's BFA degree program, the resource gives every lighting student an opportunity to incorporate automated lights (first PALS then effect instruments) in numerous project productions (including industrials) and, of course, in their final year main house shows.

"All quality lighting programs should offer students the opportunity to work with robotics and to become conversant with their design potential", stresses John. "Drama schools, colleges and universities equipping for the future really should consider including a rig of automated lights in their inventory... and maybe reduce the stand still and point fixtures!"



## STONEWALL AT STONE MOUNTAIN



Laser Light Show. Stone Mountain Park.

**T**oday, millions visit a remarkable work of nature just a few miles outside Atlanta, Georgia. It is the world's largest granite monolith, formed some 300 million years ago by a surge of molten lava from beneath the earth's surface.

Rising 825 feet above the ground, the giant rock is at the center of Stone Mountain Park, a 3,200 acre playground that features woodlands, lakes, recreation areas, inns, restaurants and a convention center.

In 1923 sculptors began carving a bas-relief memorial to the Confederacy, but the work was not completed until 1972. It is now the largest of its kind anywhere. Featuring Jefferson Davis, and two of his most beloved Generals, Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson, it covers a 90' x 190' area on the rock face. It is not therefore surprising that the park reflects the tumultuous history of the South in its museums and attractions.

However, the park's appeal goes beyond history and serves as a complete family entertainment center. One event that thrills millions of visitors are the laser light shows. Every night during the summer, and at weekends during the remainder of the year, spectacular images are projected against the mountain. Dramatic stories, comical characters and graphic images are choreographed to popular music. It is the ultimate "Son et Lumiere" show. Such a show requires state of the art control



Memorial to the Confederacy, a few miles outside Atlanta, Georgia.

equipment. Eight years ago Strand Lighting furnished two CD 80™ racks, and a Lightpalette V6. In 1994 the racks were upgraded by retrofitting Advanced Electronics, and the console was replaced by a mini Lightpalette™ 90. The signals from the console to the racks are transmitted through fibre optic cables, with the DMX signal converted by an interface, then reconstituted at the racks. This provides protection against the effects of voltage problems or electrical storms. A total of 148 Lekos are used to create the lighting effects on the bas-relief, in conjunction with the laser show.

