

## Strand in the West End by Rob Halliday

Two new musical productions in London - one a revival of a hit musical, one brand new - are making use of Strand's 500-series control systems.

*Tell Me On A Sunday*, at the Gielgud Theatre, is a revised production of an Andrew Lloyd Webber show which first played in London and then in New York in the early eighties. Then the show was the first half of a double bill called *Song and Dance*; now the show has been expanded into a seventy-five minute long, one woman show charting an English girl leaving home and moving to Manhattan and the relationships she encounters along the way. The show stars Denise Van Outen, who has become a familiar figure in musical theatre after her appearances in *Chicago* on both sides of the Atlantic.



Directed by Matthew Warchus and designed by Rob Howell, *Tell Me On A Sunday* has been lit by double Olivier-award winning LD Hugh Vanstone, with a rig that includes Vari-Lite VL5 and VL5B washlights, and VL6Cs and VL1000TS spotlights, all supplied by VLPS in London. The entire rig is controlled from a 530i console, programmed for Vanstone by Steve 'Spooky' Parkinson.

Opening shortly after *Tell Me On A Sunday*, on the other side of the River Thames at the National Theatre, was an altogether different musical - the outrageous, explosive *Jerry Springer - The Opera*. Not quite the fare one might expect at the National, with lines like 'Chick With A Dick' and 'My Mom Used To Be My Dad', the show takes as its starting point Jerry Springer's daytime TV show. In the early stages the show is like an over-the-top recreation of that show on stage with singing. Then Jerry is shot and taken to adjudicate on a debate between the Devil and Jesus....

The show began life at the tiny Battersea Arts Centre in south London, before being expanded and presented at the Edinburgh Festival in 2003. There Tony- and Olivier-award winning lighting designer Rick Fisher became involved with the show; lighting it with Martin Mac500s and Mac600s controlled by a 500-series console programmed by Vic Smerdon. For the season at the National's Lyttelton Theatre, Fisher and Smerdon have expanded the rig, which now includes sixteen High End StudioSpots, 28 Martin Mac600s and six Vari-Lite VL5Bs. Once again,

though, the entire rig is under Strand control, using the Lyttelton's 500-series main and backup consoles which run the automated and conventional lighting.

To the surprise of those outside the show - but the delight of those involved - *Jerry Springer - The Opera* is a hit, even gaining approval from Springer himself. As he says, "how many people get to become an opera in their own lifetime?"

## In Memoriam James Fuller

by Donna Appleton

James Charles (Jimmy) Fuller 1920 - 2003

Jimmy Fuller, 2002 winner of the Wally Russell Lifetime Achievement Award for his contribution to entertainment design and technology on the international stage, passed away suddenly on Thursday May 22nd, in Toronto, Canada. Jimmy leaves behind his wife of 58 years, Eleanor; daughter, Susan; and five grandchildren.



*Jimmy Fuller as he received his Wally Russell award with Phil O'Donnell CEO Strand Lighting and Donna Appleton of Strand Canada.*

Jimmy's support of Strand Lighting and before that Strand Century and Century Lighting was unparalleled. Always famous for his deal making, Jimmy concluded his last deal with Strand just two days prior to his passing.

Highlights of a long and successful career in the Theatre:

- President, IATSE Local 58 1962 - 2000, Gold Card (50 Year) Member of the Local
- Chief Electrician, O'Keefe Centre (now the Hummingbird Centre) 1960 - 1987
- President, Canadian Staging Projects, for two decades Canada's premiere theatrical equipment supply company

Jimmy was a tireless supporter of the Canadian Opera Company and was still active as their Lighting Consultant. He was a mentor to Wally Russell and they remained close friends and business associates for many years.

**A man who was honest and fair, a tough negotiator and a benevolent human being, his handshake was his word. Jimmy will be missed by all who knew him.**