



Talbot Theatre Invests in Latest Technology

by Darryl Crichton,
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Talbot Theatre at The University of Western Ontario has replaced its lighting system.

The old system, a Strand 72 dimmer four scene preset board, was the original system installed when the theatre first opened in January 1966. It provided lighting control for more than a thousand performances as the theatre's programming grew from approximately 30 shows in its first year to 106 in the 1986-87 season.

The expansion of theatre usage, the increase in maintenance, an accelerating failure rate of components and the scarcity of parts for repairs all contributed to the decision to replace the lighting board and dimmers.

Even more important though was the realization that the theatre had fallen far behind the times in the technology of

lighting control. Often we could not accomplish what many designers considered routine lighting practise. A change of system was inevitable and long overdue.

After an exhaustive review of available equipment, Talbot Theatre elected to install a Strand 'Light Palette III' as the main control console and a 'Lightboard M' as a back-up console.

In addition, 192 Strand CD 80 dimmers were purchased to create a dimmer per circuit application. This part of the installation was probably the easiest decision to reach since the Strand CD dimmer is the standard for the industry.

In the six years since its development it has proven to be a reliable and efficient instrument for dimming lights.

The increase to 192 circuits (from the old

133) allowed the placement of receptacles where time and experience had shown they were needed and eliminated extensive and potentially dangerous runs of cable.

Also, by going to a dimmer per circuit application, all patching could be accomplished electronically, avoiding the time consuming, error-prone manual patch method.

With the purchase of the 'Light Palette III', Talbot Theatre has moved into the forefront of light control capability.

The system itself is a dedicated micro-computer designed specifically for the control of theatrical and television dimming systems and allows up to a thousand cues to be stored on one floppy disk.

The electronic control of the dimmers eliminates the need for a person to sit at the control board during focusing sessions as any dimmer can be accessed from anywhere in the theatre via a hand held remote unit.

Single cues can be created with up to six separate parts each running at their own time rate. Multiple special effects such as fire light or chase lights for signs, using up to 80 steps, are possible.

A designer's remote console, which can be located anywhere within the theatre, allows lighting designers to monitor dimmer levels visually and cue sequences while seated in the house.

The new Talbot Theatre will provide a much needed increase in the theatre's technical capabilities, and will allow us to serve both our theatre users and our audience better.

Lightboard M Junior

Edgehill College in Ormskirk, Lancashire is fortunate to have both a theatre and a studio to provide its students with training in the technical aspects of live performance. Recently, it began the search for small lighting control desks for two spaces that met its budget.

The hope was to find consoles which provided simple controls but with adequate facilities for the needs of both types of production work. It was also hoped that the control philosophy could be similar,

so that students moving from one production facility to the other would not have to learn two entirely different methods of operation.

Strand has recently introduced a smaller version of the popular Lightboard M console. Known familiarly as LBM/Junior, the new desk offers everything in the larger system but the manual faders — still a powerful memory system with 24 submasters, special effects, colour VDU and disc storage, but without the cost and

space requirements of a full two scene preset system.

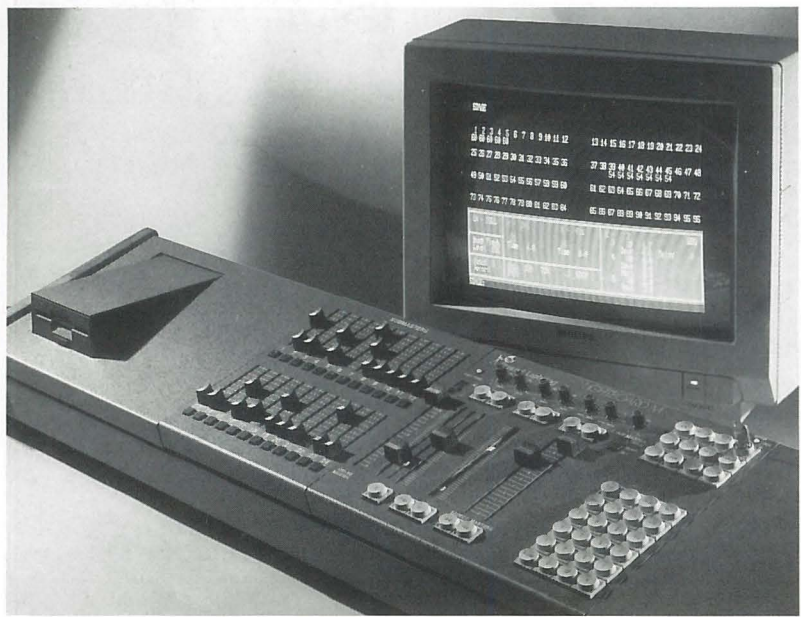
While we thought a full size Lightboard M and a LBM/Jr. would have been an obvious choice, after thorough review of the options available on the market, Edgehill settled on an Action 24 and the new LBM/Jr., believing that the two consoles complemented each other quite nicely and offered the best value for money.

The school also felt that Action and LBM/Jr. provided ideal common teaching facilities by blending manual operation with basic memory control. The two desks suited the needs of both studio and theatre production work. Common output means they can move both desks between the studio and theatre as production needs vary.

Action offers 24 individual channel faders for set up and recording of 99 memories. The memories may then be replayed via a split crossfader, either manually or according to a preset fade time.

LBM/Jr. additionally offers a split crossfader to replay previously recorded memories, but also offers extensive use of submasters where individual channels or entire memories can be controlled manually, and a second timed crossfader for automatic initiation of cues.

Both systems offer special effects; Action offering nine simple programmable chases which can have both level and speed mastered by dedicated controls. LBM/Jr. expands Action's abilities to offer unlimited numbers of effect memories of which two can be replayed simultaneously,



Lights Go Up in Spain's Theatres

Any observer in the Spanish theatre world knows that this market is now developing at all levels.

Cultural policy from central government is giving its first results. Old theatres closed for years, almost destroyed or used for other purposes are beginning to be updated and completely renewed to become again what they should never have stopped being: THEATRES.

Although the steps taken have been important, there is still a lot to be done because of low budgets.

All this would not have been possible if there were no companies with the necessary technology to match the challenge. In this respect Kremesa has been at the forefront.

Kremesa began in 1971 as a distributor for light projectors, and after a few years began to work in disco lighting as a manufacturer and in the theatre together with the world leader, Strand Lighting.

In Spain they introduced specific light projectors, electronic dimmers, control desks with different presets, and gave the market the systems everyone was waiting for.

The company created the most extensive commercial and technical network in

the country to take the new developments to big cities and small towns. With Strand, Kremesa are supplying the market with the most advanced discoveries in control systems and lighting for the entertainment industry.

On the other hand Kremesa, aware of the needs of the national market, have created a stage machinery department.

This department has grown together with the lighting department to the point that today we can design and supply all the technical needs of a theatre.

All this has taken time, effort and investment. Kremesa grew from an office in Madrid to a big company with more than 100 employees covering the mainland and the islands.

The collaboration with Strand Lighting has steadily increased with joint programmes and technicians training courses. Strand is involved in the special needs of the Spanish market and keeps on improving their equipment for it.

Today Kremesa and Strand Lighting successfully cover one of the fastest growing theatre markets in the world.

Miguel Barba Galvez (JA)
MADRID

Cantata Followspot

You may already have heard that Strand are offering a new followspot based on the Cantata 11/26. This luminaire has been specifically designed as a followspot for small theatre and clubs or schools where only a small throw is required.

This low cost followspot comes with facilities normally found on professional followspots.

- Full blackout Iris
- Ergonomically designed operating handles front and rear
- In line switch
- 29mm spigot fitted as a standard for stand mounting
- 11°—26° variable beam angle
- Beam distribution adjustment
- 1.2kW or 1kW lamp

The Cantata followspot is available with a new 4 colour hand operated magazine and can be fitted with aiming sights as an accessory.

Uniquely this followspot can be configured for both right hand and left hand

operators by refitting the handles in the left hand side extrusion slots and reversing the colour magazine on its mounting plate.

Since the followspot has all the features of a Cantata, the lens tube and Iris assembly can also be reconfigured.

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each with level and speed controls.

While Action provided the perfect introduction to memory control by allowing manual control of individual channels to create memories, LBM/Jr. extended the manual philosophy and introduced other memory concepts: pre-recorded split times with waits and delays, blind memory modification, VDU displays of programmed information and digital entry of level information.

Action and LBM/Jr. meet or exceed Edgehill's criteria: two consoles appropriate for student training, and television and theatre production, with similar operational philosophy, and finally, the price was right.

Since LBM/Jr. is a brand new Strand offering, below are just a few of its many features:

- 96 or 144 digitally addressable channels
- 768 dimmers
- 4 Tables of fully proportional softpatch
- Flash buttons with level adjustment and Solo
- Split dipless crossfader for timed or manual cues
- Go button for activation of timed cues
- Programmable split times, delays, automatic follow-on and cue linking
- Any number of recordable effects for channels or memories
- 2 Effects playback faders with levels and rate control
- Memory list with editing capability
- Internal backup system
- 8 Programmable function keys
- 8 additional remote submasters (optional)
- 3 1/2" disc drive supplied standard
- 14" EGA colour monitor supplied standard

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Viva TV!

Spain's decision to de-centralise its Government and give more power to the regions has had a spin-off for the lighting industry.

For regional television is now all the rage, with each area setting up its own local network.

As a result, the Basque region now has Euskal Telebista, Cataluna has TVS, Galicia has Television Gallega and Seville has Canal Sur TVA.

In June 1987, Valencia's regional government, which covers the provinces of Valencia, Castille and Alicante, put a £20 million broadcasting equipment contract out to tender — the most important contract of its kind in the country at the time.

A similar-sized contract had already been awarded for construction of the studios on a site about four miles outside Valencia.

Altogether, 17 companies, including many big 'names' from the lighting world fought for the contract but it eventually went to Strand Lighting local dealer, Sadilsa, who have more than 25 years' experience of cinema and TV lighting.

Sadilsa's contract for a total lighting equipment system included, for four studios, hoists, pantographs, drop arms, lighting control systems, luminaires, lamps, accessories, cyclorama and electrical installation.

Work on-site began in July last year and was finished — despite a five-month halt to allow more building work — commissioned, tested and handed-over by early April.

With testing of the studios carrying on throughout the summer, Television Valencia is ready to hit the screens in October.