next. Thus on a changeover any lantern that is accessible may be recoloured, but only the minimum number will be refocused.

At the Old Vic a large number of lanterns are plugged up as required for each show via a patch panel, but this in itself is quite a time consuming process. Lightboard does its own patching. From the keyboard, one can get access to any lighting circuit (called a "socket") throughout the theatre. Each socket has its own dimmer, of which there are 498 in the Lyttleton Theatre and 622 in the open stage Olivier Theatre. Any socket can be used in any show at any time, but it is intended that a maximum of 280 should be in use at any one time. Two hundred and eighty sockets can be shown on the mimic displays which tell the designer which sockets are in use and their level of brightness.

Mimic information is displayed on two VDU screens which state exactly the level of every circuit in use to the nearest quarter point. Opinions as to the amount of detail required from a mimic vary amongst lighting designers. Speaking personally, I find it essential to know the level of circuits in use while I am lighting. Many times in the past, with a written plot giving the state of lighting on the stage, one has been able to spot a problem or discrepancy which is not immediately apparent just by looking at the stage. The television screens give an instant and changing indication of the balance of lighting on the stage (or in either of the two pre-set stores), and also displays on the lower part of the screen the contents of the various masters on the panels below.