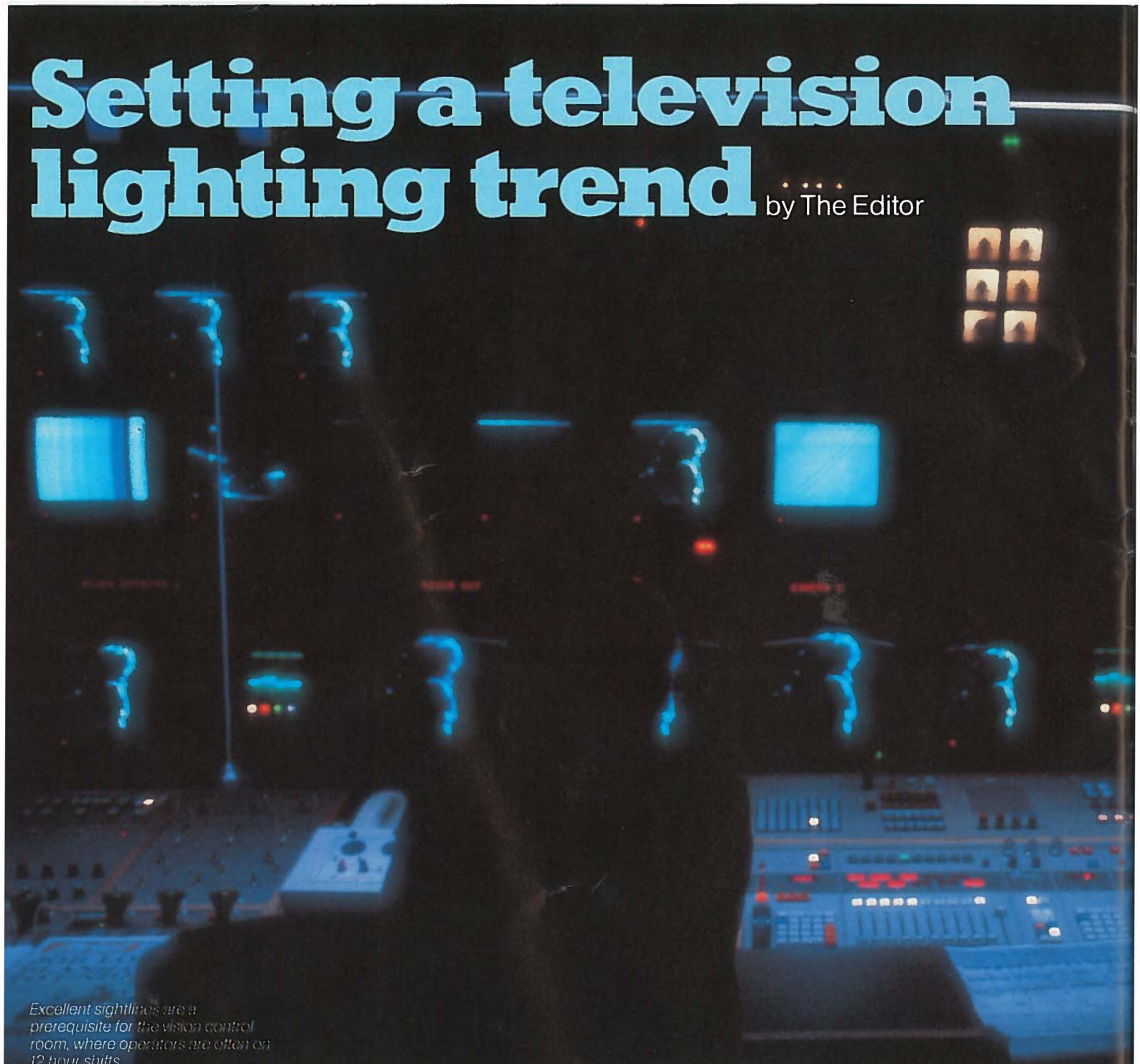


# Setting a television lighting trend

by The Editor



Excellent sightlines are a prerequisite for the vision control room, where operators are often on 12 hour shifts.

The Editor takes himself to Glasgow to look at the latest Strand T.V. lighting control in Studio A, B.B.C. Scotland.

ONE recent Thursday I had the pleasant anticipation not only of crossing the border – at several miles high by Shuttle – but also of seeing the latest application of Galaxy and Gemini technology.

I was met by Rick Dines, of B.B.C. Studio Capital Projects, who, with George Raggett and Project Leader Trevor Parkins, has been heavily involved in both technical design and site supervision for the complete refurbishment of Studio A. This is the main B.B.C. Studio in the Glasgow complex and is used for the whole gamut of productions; drama, quiz shows and light entertainment, both networked and local. The technically very polished 'Maelstrom' serial set in Norway had all its interiors done in Glasgow's Studio A.

As part of the project all the equipment, from the actual resin studio floor, whose billiard table level surface owes much to lasers, to the overhead scenery and lighting winches have been replaced or refurbished. Attached to some of these latter the Editorial eye spied Ianiro Iris 4's, a clutch of Polaris units, a dozen Cadenzas and, for the light entertainment to come, a Solo follow spot mounted on a

studio gallery.

But my main interest was in the unique control set up – an arrangement which makes such excellent operational and economic sense that I believe it will be widely copied in other heavily used multi purpose studios around the world.

Basically, the system consists of a 356 way Galaxy with four channel controllers, pre-set masters and studio playback. This Galaxy has a specially modified programme known as 'Channel Controller Time Out'. This is described below by Tony Brown for the benefit of readers who know more about the operational details of memory systems than the Editor.

The Galaxy Studio programme, for T.V., automatically brings channels to the 70% level when selected. After adjusting to the levels chosen they will, subsequently, automatically be re-called to the selected level until altered or until that particular lighting plot is erased. To guard against accidental plot erasure a disc unit in the normal Galaxy manner acts as a safety dump.

The traditional manual back up by pin patch has now become a rather costly option, particularly on such a large system. B.B.C. Glasgow had also frequently found that they needed to hire in a special effects set up. These two situations have been met by a rather elegant engineering solution.

A Gemini was specified to act as the back-up for the Galaxy, and also as the effects generator. The Gemini is mounted on a wheeled trolley, so when there is a very heavy lighting plot the control suite can be re-arranged to allow for two board operators.

Effects are set up on the Gemini, and triggered from some of the unused channels on the Galaxy. Sound to light converters have been provided to drive in parallel with the Galaxy pre-set masters and with the Gemini sub-masters.

The Gemini floppy disc unit is used to preserve, if not for posterity at least for another show, an effects library and dimmer patch information.

A hand-held designers control is to be provided in the future.

A geographic studio mimic panel, with full mimic lamp test, and fed from the dimmer outputs tells the operator what is what, and if in a moment of panic he feels he needs actual visual reassurance he can glance over his right shoulder through a shop window sized glass panel into the studio.

So carefully has the whole project been planned that this window is even tinted to 'illuminant D' which I am sure all Tabs readers with know is the standard television white!

A small five fader unit has been provided to control camera headlamps.

In the equipment room there is a special junction