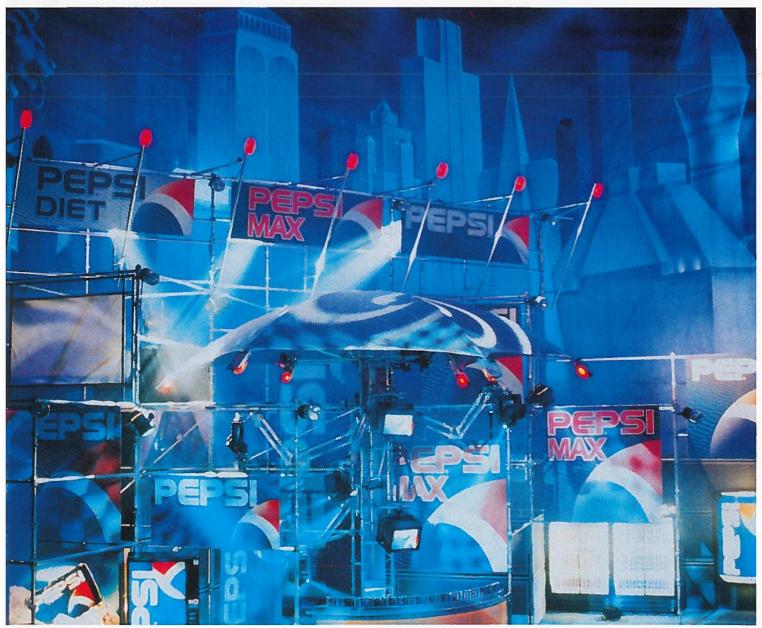
LIGHTING SOUND International



ROJECT BLUE: PEPSI'S NEW LOOK FOR THE MILLENNIUM

- L+SI Special Report on the new Stephen Joseph Theatre, Scarborough
- Pumping up the Volume at Adrenalin Village
- Hollywood's Night at the Oscars
- Optikinetics: Moving up a gear
- Poles Apart: ABTT (UK) and Entech (Australia) Reviewed
- Pepsi gets the blues: L+SI covers the relaunch of the famous drink



MAY 1996



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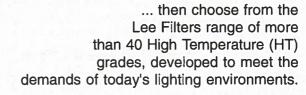
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LIGHTINGSO

MAY 1996

6 News In L+SI

A full round-up of the latest news from across the industry

35 Scarborough Fair

Special Feature on the technical installation at the new Stephen Joseph Theatre in Scarborough, including an interview with Alan Ayckbourn by L+SI editor John Offord

43 Excess All Areas

The biggest single-room sound system in Europe is in London's massive Adrenalin Village. Mark Cunningham talked to the people behind this new dance music venue.

47 Oscar Winners

Tony Gottelier looks at the technical innovations playing a leading role at the recent Academy Awards in America

49 Spanish Cortes

Steve Moles catches up with Joaquin Cortes at the Sadlers Wells Theatre.

51 Moving up a Gear

Jerry Gilbert visits Optikinetics to learn more about the investment programme that has led to the current success of the K2 projector

54 On Tour

Steve Moles reviews Sting and Mike and The Mechanics.

56 The Wizards of Oz

Ruth Rossington reports from Sydney on the Entech Show

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 5

61 Afraid in the Stalls

Ian Herbert finds himself in unfamiliar territory in Transylvania

62 Project Blue



Steve Moles witnesses the relaunch of the Pepsi brand

65 Second Take

John Watt's monthly musings on the trials and tribulations faced by television lighting directors

67 The Lottery Effect

As funds from the National Lottery begin to filter through to the market, Robert Halliday reports on the positive evidence of this at the ABTT Show

71 PLASA Members

Full contact details for over 400 UK and International companies

76 Directory

81 International Directory

82 Profile

Mike Robertson talks to award-winning lighting designer Rick Fisher

The views expressed in Lighting and Sound International are not necessarily those of the editor or the Professional Lighting and Sound Association



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LIGHTING SOUND News

Never the Twain

No End in Sight for Vari-Lite/High End Patent Infringement Dispute

In what is fast becoming a rival to the OJ Simpson trial in terms of longevity, Vari-Lite and High End Systems continue to fight it out in court over alleged patent infringements involving each company's intelligent luminaires.

Following testimony from both parties, the court recently denied a Vari-Lite Inc motion for a preliminary injunction for the alleged theft of trade secrets against High End. The injunction sought to prevent the latter from manufacturing and selling the Studio Color wash luminaire until the claims of theft of trade secrets could be tried before the court later this year.

A preliminary injunction asks the court to take some action prior to the final resolution of a dispute by means of a trial. In this case, Federal Magistrate Judge Jeff Kaplan elected not to halt the manufacture and sale of the Studio Color fixtures prior to the trial and advised both parties of the court's decision on April 17th. A written decision has not yet been released and is not now expected until after L+SI goes to press.

Readers will recall that last month L+SI reported on the filing of an additional claim to Vari-Lite's existing lawsuit, followed swiftly by a counter claim from High End Systems. It is understood that Vari-Lite will continue to pursue a resolution of these issues in court

PLASA Members Fly the Flag at Entech, Sydney

There can be few more ideal locations for a trade exposition than Darling Harbour in Sydney; the organisers of the recent Entech Show certainly know a good thing when they see it, and over 100 exhibitors knew it too. An international collection of companies travelled to Sydney to participate in what was only the second exhibition organised by Connections Magazine. In its short life-span, the show has matured quickly, and its increased size, together with a more professional feel, augur well for next year in Melbourne.

The event provided exhibitors with an ideal platform on which to gain access to what must be one of the fastest-growing markets in the industry. With the Olympics looming in 2000, the positioning and timing of this show could not be more apposite.

PLASA played host to a group of 24 UK companies with international members also well represented across the two halls. On the eve of the show, PLASA members, together with local companies, were invited to a reception hosted by the British Consulate-General. PLASA members also had a high profile at the show's Awards Dinner, particularly Jands who collected no less than eight awards and Bytecraft, who picked up the award for export achievement.

Full report and pictures starting on page 56.



Richard Harper of the British Consulate-General, Sydney (centre) with PLASA committee member Freddy Lloyd of Zero 88 (left) and chief executive John Offord.



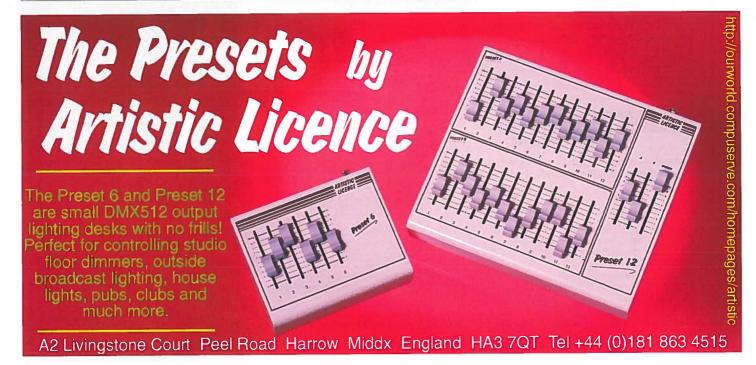
John Offord presents the Entech Award for Export Achievement to Shirley Jensen and Stephen Found of international PLASA Members Bytecraft.

What Price Information? Act Now

Accompanying this issue of L+SI is a registration form which all readers are asked to fill in and return as soon as possible, either by fax or post. This information is vital to us and not only allows us to fulfil our membership of the Audit Bureau of Circulations, but also contributes to our ongoing commitment to maintain the quality and coverage of our mailing list. In order to continue receiving L+SI, please sign, date and return the form, together with relevant details, to the address on page five or fax it through on (01323) 646905.

Leisure Resources

Shepperton-based Leisure Resources International, who formed just three years ago, have ceased trading. A creditor's meeting has been called and the company is expected to be liquidated shortly. LRI is known for its club installations and more recently completed Adrenalin Village (see feature this issue).



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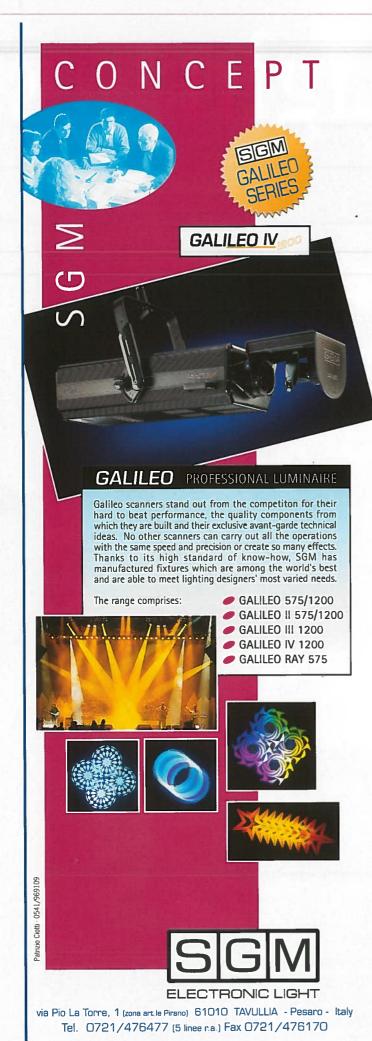
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LSD at the Atlanta Olympics

The Atlanta Games in '96 is the second consecutive Olympic Games to use the resources of Light & Sound Design. Of greatest interest from a lighting perspective is the AT&T Global Olympic Village. One of the more prominent buildings within the Centennial Olympic Park, this 100m wide, tensile structure, constructed from curved trusses and stretched white fabric, is designed by Railton and Associates. The village has three functions: a base for the athletes, a focal point for both VIPs and the media (NBC has one of their many broadcast centres here) and as a consumer pavilion.

Candace Brightman, famous for her heroic designs for The Grateful Dead, has been engaged to light both the inside and outside of the Olympic Village, a move quite typical of the way in which the producers, Ad:vent, have chosen to marry rock and roll expertise and equipment with the more mainstream corporate-style approach. Brightman has specified over 1,400 lamps of every type from the LSD inventory, all run from a Show Control System through an Icon console, and 25 crew technicians have been engaged to run literally miles of cable throughout the Olympic Village.

LSD are providing the floodlighting systems for the badminton and boxing event arenas, as well as the interview areas for the Press and TV, and spotlighting for the Awards areas. This reflects very much the simplified approach taken at the Barcelona Games in 1992, when single lighting companies were given a brief to attend to all lighting needs within a single venue. The Centennial Olympic Park lays in the heart of Atlanta, adjacent to the CNN HQ and The Georgia Dome. This huge area, close to many of the central venues, is a free space for the public to rest and relax in. Large video screens around the park will relay not only re-runs of the day's main events, but also show anecdotal footage of people in the park, and LSD are lighting areas of the park as a visual entertainment.

Although a fair proportion of the equipment comes from LSD's Los Angeles office, much of the work is being serviced from their operation in Nashville. At only four hours drive from Atlanta, the Nashville base is ideally situated to provide full service back-up for the duration of the event.

L+SI will carry further news on the Olympics in future issues.

Floodlights at the Millennium

The Millennium is the latest venue to specify Turbosound's skeleton Floodlight cabinets. The club, which opened near Birmingham in March, is owned by Eddie Fewtrell, an entrepreneur who owns several other venues in the area, and who is masterminding its design.



The Millennium has over

6,000sq.ft of space, providing capacity for 2,000 people, and features a number of Turbosound speakers in a complex sound installation, ranging from Floodlights on the dancefloor to the new Impact Series BGM speakers in the reception area.

With the help of installation company Kelco, the venue has been divided into several zoned areas: first of these is the main dancefloor, which features six flown skeleton Floodlights and six TSW-718s. There is a separate stage area which has its own system of four Impact 120s and four Impact 180s for live performances and cabaret. A further four zones cover the rest of the club - its three bars, conservatory and reception areas. A total of 18 Impact 80s provide background music to these areas, with independent local volume control for each zone.

Multiform on Song at Aldeburgh

Jim Laws Lighting recently sold a Multiform Zodiac 36 lighting control desk to the Aldeburgh Jubilee Hall. The Hall is a multi-purpose venue, hosting concerts, recitals and opera performances linked to the Aldeburgh Festival, with the year's longest booking being for Jill Freud and Company's Summer Theatre, which will run for most of July and August. As the Aldeburgh season shares productions with the Southwold Summer Theatre, the two venues plan to have identical lighting rigs and controls, so that memory cards can be swapped between productions to speed up plotting time, and to this end the Southwold will soon take delivery of its own Zodiac 36.

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Forty years after he began telling stories with light, Richard Pilbrow remains one of the industry's greatest visionaries - not only in his approach, but in his efforts to advance the field.

As someone who started his career working with four-frame "color semaphores" Pilbrow is perhaps more appreciative than most of advances in industry technology. More than just welcoming the computer age, he has helped usher it in, serving as a guiding light for its application in theater lighting.

Most recently, that has meant leading the charge for the establishment of industry standards. To Pilbrow, it's about letting designers do what they do best. "We've been consumed for decades with digits and coordinates, and they've absolutely nothing to do with lighting. We're not engineers after all, we're designers."

"The exciting thing to me is the prospect of all these different components working together - moving lights, color changers, The Autopilot, - and, more than that, the ability to program it all off line. The combination is really quite powerful.

"The technology used in Wybron's Autopilot was obviously a very significant step forward in that process," Pilbrow says. "What The Autopilot does is wonderful, but *how it does it* is what's really exciting."

Pilbrow says The Autopilot, and the development of DMX technology, are only the beginning: "In 10 years time, the idea of manually operating theater lights will seem a bit preposterous, I think."

We think so too. And we're sure that in 10 years time, Richard Pilbrow will be telling a whole new generation of lighting designers just how preposterous it was.



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Iron Maiden Visit beyerdynamic



Pictured Left to Right are: Thomas Baier - marketing manager, beyerdynamic, Blaze Bailey - vocalist and Nicko McBrain - drummer, Iron Maiden and Klaus Wischgoll - director, beyerdynamic.

Blaze Bailey and Nicko McBrain from Iron Maiden recently visited the beyerdynamic factory in Heilbronn, Germany, during a break in their European tour. Blaze has been using the U 700 UHF Wireless system with a TGX 80 capsule which he says has performed "extremely well". They presented director Klaus Wischgoll and marketing manager Thomas Baier with a Gold CD in recognition of beyerdynamic's support and technical expertise.

Effective Start

PA company Alpha Audio and its sister company Alpha Visual Services have joined forces with Midlands-based Hermitage Productions to form Effective Productions Limited.

Based at their new premises in Sunbury-on-Thames, Effective Productions plan to provide the complete production management package. Managing director Rick Price told L+SI: "We have expanded our sound and lighting design facility with a new 24-track digital recording studio and WYSIWYG/Starlite programming suite."

The new company has already designed and managed the new touring production of 'Sinderella' including the sets and costumes. Alongside their on-going commitment to existing shows, the company is currently designing sound, lights and sets for four new touring productions.

Loads of Lodestar

PCM now represents Columbus McKinnon in the whole of Europe. The deal was tied up during the recent Frankfurt Music Fair by PCM's John Jones.

The company pride themselves on speedy turnaround and delivery and this was demonstrated once again by an order via AC Lighting for the Smashing Pumpkins tour.

Other orders include a half ton fast speed hoist to Vertigo Rigging that is being used for moving set in the current West End run of Tommy. This was necessary to reduce the interval time from 25 minutes to 15 minutes. Brit and MTV award winners Bon Jovi are commencing their UK and European tour along with 30 Lodestars purchased by Light and Sound Design, Birmingham. Meanwhile, Bolton-based rental company Concert Lights UK have added 20 new Lodestars to their hire stock for the forthcoming season.

SSE Hire have also added Lodestars to their stock that have gone to the US for the Tori Amos tour, whilst Screenco have confirmed an order for 16 two ton motors for use with four of their new venue screens, together with control equipment. John Jones conducted two motor schools last month for Screenco, and is now keen to continue the programme.

Sony Scores in Bremen

Top German football club Werder Bremen is to install two 50sq.m Sony Jumbotron JTS-35 large-scale video display screens at the Weserstadion in the north German city of Bremen.

Following in the footsteps of Karlsruhe (Germany), Arsenal and Tottenham Hotspur (UK) and Firenze (Italy), Werder Bremen is the fifth major football club in Europe to specify Jumbotron equipment.

Breaking with tradition, Werder Bremen has become the first football club in the world to opt for a panoramic 16:9 aspect ratio for its screens, rather than the traditional 4:3 format. Installation will take place in two stages with the first screen going into the Weserstadion in July/August and the second in October.

For Sony Jumbotron Europe, a newly-formed division of the company, Werder Bremen's purchase follows the successful installation of a 7.14m x 9.52m Jumbotron screen at Tottenham Hotspur's home ground at White Hart Lane at the start of the current season.

Sony Jumbotron Europe recently announced that it has won its largest order ever for the supply of mobile equipment for the rental market in a £7m deal with Screenco.

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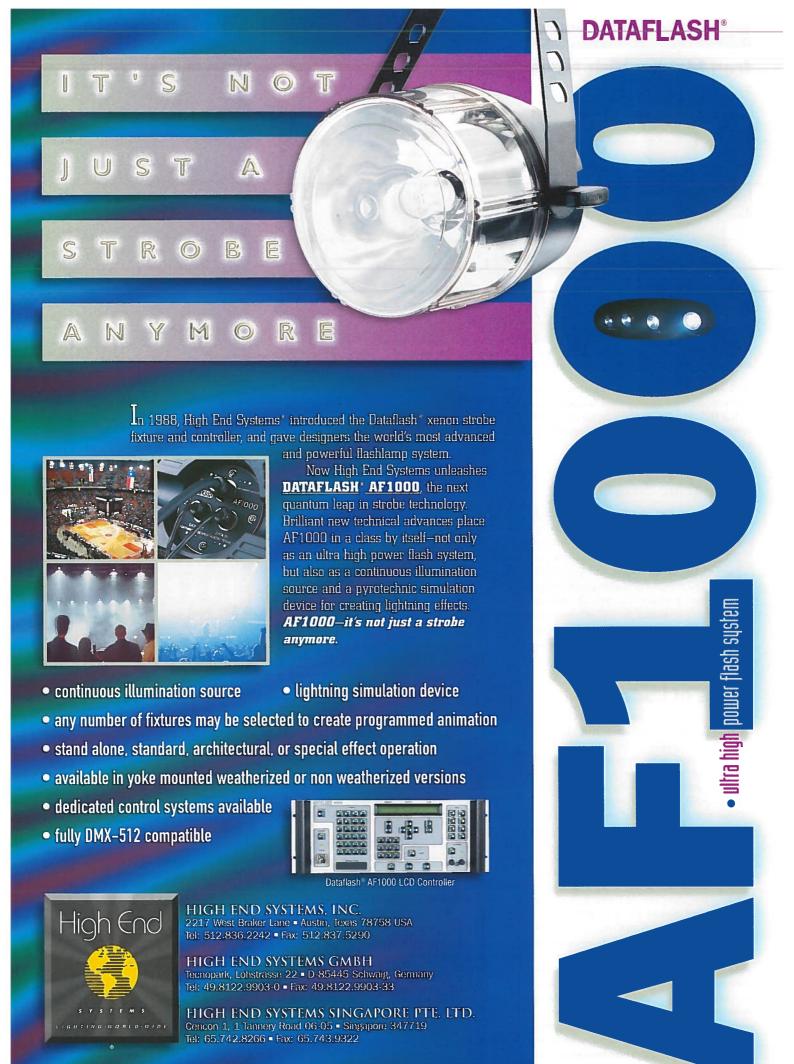
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Brit Row Take Stock

Britannia Row Productions have taken delivery of their first 64-input Langley Recall audio mixing console (configured 48 mono and eight stereo). At the same time they have confirmed an order for six Rupert Neve 9098 EQs for use on the Cure tour. The company will be using the desk on many of their major projects throughout what promises to be one of their 'hottest' summers on record.

When the Cure open their world tour in Aberdeen on May 21st, they will be added to a roster which includes Simply Red, The



Smashing Pumpkins, M People - and now both Neil Young and Santana, for their European stadium and festival dates.

BRP will have sound engineer Jon Lemon at front-of-house for the Cure shows, which will also take in America and Europe before the end of the year. He will be mixing from two Midas XL3 consoles through a Turbosound Flashlight system. Monitor engineer Bryan Olson, who will be using a Yamaha PM4000M desk, will be supplying his own Firehouse monitor system.

Intellectual Initiative

The Association of Professional Recording Services (APRS) is organising a seminar focusing on Intellectual Property (IP). Entitled 'Name, Rank and Serial Number - How identifiers could change the face of the Music business', the one-day seminar on June 18th 1996 at Le Meridien Piccadilly Hotel, will examine current and future methods of information collection, handling and dissemination for media applications. Speakers will address a range of topics, covering the purely technical through to the commercial and legal aspects of copyright management.

The seminar is being supported by the DTI, with representation from the main international leading bodies and associations - including IFPI, Imprimatur, MCPS, National Discography and Re-Pro. The preliminary programme of panel members and speakers includes: Chris Barlas (Imprimatur) Philippe Person (IFPI Secretariat), Michael Turner (International Numbering Group, CISAC), Chris Gardner (Performing Rights Society), Pete Rodgers (PPL), Chris Clark (British Library National Sound Archive), David Worlock (Electronic Publishing Services Ltd).

For further details contact the APRS in Reading on (01734) 756218.

Owl's Winning Ways

Owl Video Systems has announced a record turnover for March breaking the £1 million mark for the first time. This has been helped by a rise in demand for video and projection equipment in the run up to the European Cup.

The past year has seen increasing expansion at Owl Video Systems: the company moved to new and larger premises in February '95, and has also continued to expand its product range while continuing to retain exclusive UK distribution for the Seleco Professional range of products. Owl have also added NEC's award-winning Multisync projection systems, Sanyo's LCD data projection systems and the OVS100, the first Owl Video Systems branded portable data graphics projector.

Screenco's Delivery

Screenco Ltd, who have just announced a two-phase £7 million order for Sony Jumbotron equipment, are bringing forward the delivery date on the second phase. With this year's summer shaping up to be their busiest ever, demand for Screenco's modular daylight video screens continues to increase. To meet this requirement, 18 of the 36 JTS17 modules will now be completed in June, with the remaining 18 following later in the year or early in 1997.

The Southampton-based subsidiary of Avesco Plc will be the first European screen rental company to own JTS17, with only 54 modules available for rent worldwide.

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TP LD Busy

In the last few months Mike Odam, Theatre Projects' in-house lighting designer, has lit some vastly different scenes. December saw him at the Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham lighting Great Expectations, starring Darren Day, Nyree Dawn Porter and Colin Baker. In January, a hectic 10 days was spent in Wolfsburge, Germany, lighting a new European touring production of The Rocky Horror Show. During February he had to dust off his design for Rocky in the UK when that production went out on tour again.

The Club Inferno PLC is the new improved Hell, according to Richard O'Brien in his new musical Disgracefully Yours, which Odam lit in March for its short London run, before it transferred to New York for a limited season.

Mr Mister Sales Award

M & M has once again won The Smoke Factory of Hanover's Dealer of the Year Award. Making the announcement at the recent Frankfurt Musik Messe, Florian von Hofen said that a contributing factor to the company's achievement was the tremendous success of their Mr Mister.

Proving popular with film and TV hire companies, the Mr Mister is the first haze system which can be customised to suit any size venue, from small theatres up to large stadiums. Designed specifically to generate haze from water-based fluids similar to those used in standard smoke machines, the Mr Mister also works as an oil cracker.

beyerdynamic Move



beyerdynamic has recently moved its UK operation to larger premises in Burgess Hill, West Sussex. The new facility has not only quadrupled the warehouse and administration space, but features showroom and conference facilities allowing a future programme of seminars and

The company can now be reached at 17 Albert Drive, Burgess Hill, West Sussex RH15 9TN, telephone (01444) 258258.

Upping the Lux

Following the Siel review in the March issue of Lighting+Sound International, ADB have brought to our attention that their new DS105 15-31 degree zoom profile yields 1000 Lux, not 100 Lux as stated in the caption on page 49.

UK Office for Gemini

Following our news story last month on Lamba and Gemini going their separate ways, Gemini have announced the launch of their UK sales office, and the appointment of former Vestax MD Rob Peck as managing director. The new office is part of a strategic plan to increase market share and extend exposure to Gemini's products in the UK. With his wide industry knowledge, Rob Peck, who will report directly to Gemini CEO Artie Cabasso, will enable Gemini to take full advantage of the UK club market.

d&b in Symphony Hall

A little over a year ago d&b audiotechnik speaker systems were installed as part of a major refurbishment programme in the Symphony Hall, Birmingham. To extend the Hall's existing flown music system, d&b supplied further free-standing 402s and 902s which are used at stage level.

Mick Lown, head of sound for NEC Group, told L+SI: "When the Symphony Hall opened, it set new standards in European Concert Hall design with its acoustics. The new 402 ground stacks add still more to the flexibilty and quality of the

the radio systems specialist



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People on the Move

Production Arts Lighting has appointed Guy Benjamin as production manager for Robert Juliat lighting equipment.

Tony Griffiths is joining Harkness Hall's stage operations as Northern technical representative, whilst Richard Charles is joining the stage sales office. He joins Doug Heather as the company's main stage contact, with Richard Wright handling technical queries and Chris Hitchins heading up the division. Colin Riley is now technical design manager.

LMC Audio Systems have taken advantage of the sudden availability of Steve 'Bunty' King following the recent changes at Dimension Audio, by adding him to their London sales team.

Lee Wakelin, office manager for Crest Audio Europe for the past six years, has been promoted to the position of UK operations manager for Crest Audio UK.

Mushroom Lighting have appointed Andy Sugars to handle their lighting design and project management services.

Following a decade working within the industry, *Cynthia Carraway* has joined the sales team at Vanco Lighting Services.

Gray Interfaces have appointed *Graham Likeness*, formerly Canadian sales manager for Strand Lighting, as director of sales.

Audio 96 Places Emphasis on Debate

Audio 96, the annual exhibition staged by the Association of Professional Recording Services (APRS) in London, looks set to provide a topical forum for debate across the spectrum of professional audio.

The show is again hosting a series of Briefings and Workshop sessions, running in parallel with the exhibition. The programme reflects Audio 96's five main focus areas - broadcasting, post-production, recording, project studio applications and new media. The preliminary programme includes 'Pulling the Cobwebs from Speaker Design' by John Watkinson; 'The Format Jungle' by digital guru Bill Foster, looking at compatibility issues surrounding multitrack and two-track recording; 'Hints and Tips for Project Studios' - a combined presentation by Sound on Sound and Gateway School of Music, with a major emphasis on workshop, hands-on sessions; 'Sound for Multimedia: Formats, Standards and Techniques', presented by Paul Gilby of multimedia specialists Co-Active and Gateway's Mike Pratt and Dave Ward.

In addition, a series of Forums are to be held, which will feature invited representatives of leading industry associations and other participants. Amongst the line-up for each day will be: the Broadcast Forum, hosted by the Institute of Broadcast Sound; a lunch-time slot designed to raise the temperature on 'Hot Issues', presented by Audio Media and the Live Sound Forum, with PLASA leading the panel. The Briefings and Workshops are being organised by Dave Ward, director of the Gateway.

Audio 96 is taking place at the National Hall, Olympia, London from 19th - 21st June 1996. Entry is free of charge, with a ticket information hotline (01734) 312211 for visitors to source further details.

Houston Grand Opera

For the Houston Grand Opera's recent production of *Norma*, lighting designer Duane Schuler used two Robert Juliat 2.5kW HMI zoom profiles provided by Production Arts Lighting.

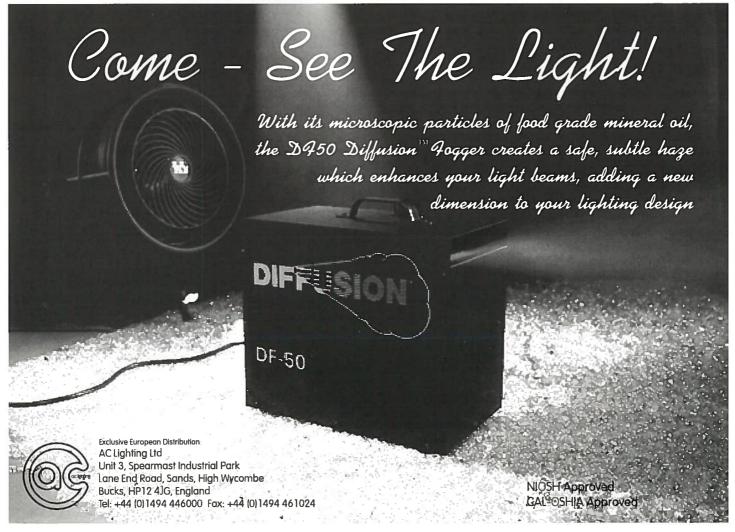
HGO's resident lighting chief Kathryn Eader was pleased, not only with the performance of the Juliat, but with its ease of use. "It was very straightforward to incorporate the fixture into our system and control it with our house console."

The DMX-compatible ballast allows control of the internal mechanical dimmer, allowing smooth fades from a standard lighting console.

ESTA Appointment

The Technical Standards Committee of ESTA has appointed Karl Ruling as its new technical standards manager. His previous experience as the technical editor for Theatre Crafts International and Lighting Dimensions magazines, as well as a designer and technical director, will serve him well in his new position.

He also brings to the role a wide knowledge of standards affecting the industry and is already familiar with ESTA's Technical Standards Programme, having served as a member of the Fog and Smoke Working Group for the past year.





The Dimmer that Changed the World

The dimmer that won the hearts of the North American lighting community is now available in Europe. Which is surprising, since 120 volt dimming systems are pretty different big wires, tiny chokes, not a hint of a VDE mark! But we didn't see why Europe should be deprived of the world's most elegant dimming package.

ETC's Sensor CE is designed specifically for the top end of the European professional market. It was a challenge for our engineers on both sides of the Atlantic.

The big wires bit was easy - we kept them. You can terminate up to 25mm2 cable to any output terminal.

Chokes? We completely redesigned them. Now you can have two 25amp dimmers, with true 500µS risetime, in a diecast module not much bigger than a video cassette. Circuit breakers are fully magnetic, so they don't derate when they get warm (oh yes, and they are VDE approved).

We reengineered the custom thyristor modules to provide additional RFI filtering

and isolation, and we insulated everything in sight,

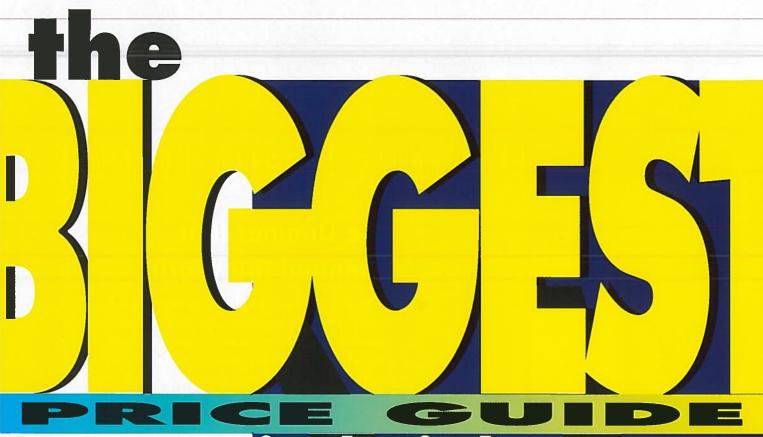
We even added a dual electronics option. Use one plug-in control module. Or two. Your choice.

Of course we didn't change the things we knew you'd like: up to 96 3kW or 5kW dimmers in a rack, dual DMX512 inputs, ETCLink diagnostics, assisted faultfinding, 32 backup looks, superb regulation — the list goes on.

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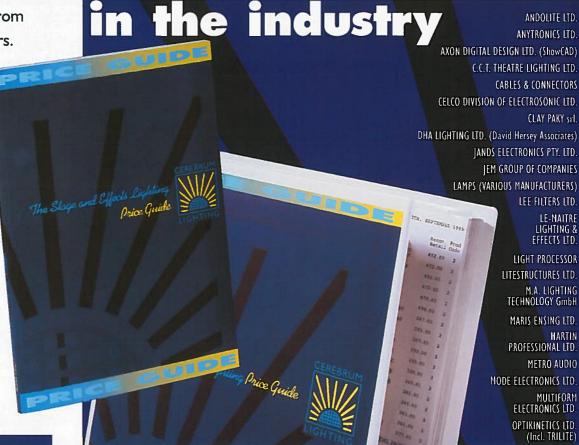
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Yellow River Concert Flows Along



Following our news story last month on the Yellow River concert, the largest concert production yet staged in China, our photograph above shows the scale of the event, which was held in the Guangzhou Tianhe Stadium in southern China.

A television audience of over two billion people and a stadium audience of 60,000 were entertained by a massed choir of 15,000, plus 2,500 dancers, as well as a symphony orchestra of over 500.

ARX sound equipment featured prominently and comprised 48 922 three-way Hi Q loudspeakers, 30 215 stage monitors, 12 Power Max loudspeakers, 60 units of equalisers and line splitters and over 90 SX series power amplifiers. The 100,000W ARX sound system was supplied by Dah Chong Hong Ltd, ARX's Hong Kong and Chinese distributor.

Keep on Shelling

Shell Shock Firework Company provided pyrotechnic effects to help open Legoland at Windsor in March (a full report on the technical installation will appear in a future issue). Upon their return, preparation work began for a large display to celebrate a Royal Wedding in Ajman in the U.A.E.

The company has spent the winter researching pyrotechnic material in the US, and has signed an exclusive contract with one of America's pyro manufacturers which will enable them to offer a range of indoor material not seen in the UK.

Dire Case

Autopia Vanquip, manufacturers of custom-built professional flight cases, recently supplied Mark Knopfler of Dire Straits with an order worth over £2,000 for his forthcoming tour.

Having recently been taken over by EBD Systems Limited (see news last month) and having changed the company name from Autopia Terakat, Autopia Vanquip will soon be moving premises to a new 25,000sq.ft. facility and will embark on a major investment programme in response to a growing order book.

ShowCAD Shuffle

Axon Digital Design, manufacturers of the ShowCAD PC-based memory lighting control system, have moved premises. The company can now be contacted at 6 Argyle Road, Swanage, Dorset BH19 1HZ. All other details, including telephone, fax and information lines remain the same.



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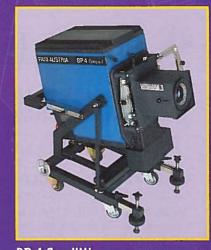
Compact



BP 2500 C - Halogen



BP 2.5 C - HMI



BP4C - HMI

The PANI "Compact Line" is once again setting new standards in projection.

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Ludwig PAN1 - Company for Stage Lighting and Projection A-1070 Vienna, Kandlgasse 23



Hz Show of Hands

The recent 'Show of Hands' concert at the Royal Albert Hall proved a great success for loudspeaker manuacturer Hz International who sponsored the sound equipment for the show.

A total of 42 HE300 full-range speakers were provided, with 34 of these being flown in a single array. Six SB300 mini sub-bass cabinets were also flown FOH and a further eight HE300 were used as monitors for the musicians and their guests. The system was powered by Hz's DPX1100 amplifiers.

The company have also announced the formation of a new joint-venture distributor deal for their range of loudspeakers and amplifiers. The Sii Corporation in Oregon, USA and the Cube Corporation in Osaka, Japan, will work together in a programme representing Hz International in the USA, Canada, Central and South America, Korea, Japan, China and Saudi Arabia.

Sitting Pretty

Audience Systems Limited, the public seating manufacturer, has been honoured with the 1996 Queen's Award for Export Achievement. The company has exported to over 40 countries during the last 20 years, but is perhaps better known for its work in the UK, having provided the seating for Sir George Christie's new Glyndebourne Opera House, The Edinburgh Festival Theatre, The National Indoor Arena, The Manchester Nynex Arena, The Manchester Bridgewater Hall and The Belfast Concert Hall with The Royal Albert Hall to follow shortly.

C Audio Awards



C Audio recently hosted a distributors' dinner at which awards for outstanding achievement during the year were presented.

Pictured above with Hans Freytag (left) is Bruno Bertrand of Harman-France, who picked up the Outstanding Sales Achievement award. Lyd Systemer in Norway, represented by Terje Engedahl and Hansa Blomquist, were voted Most Improved Territory.

USITT Expo

Over 3,000 attendees enjoyed the flavour of the old west and the latest in performing arts technology at the USITT Conference & Stage Expo which took place in March at Fort Worth, Texas.

Over 100 conference sessions were held, and workshops provided intensive one and two-day sessions on a wide range of topics including intelligent fixtures, Vari*Lites, publishing on the World Wide Web and chain hoist maintenance.

Next year's show will take place in Pittsburgh, and 56 exhibitors have already signed up. For further information about USITT 1997 contact USITT in New York, telephone 212-924-9088.

Strand on Internet

Strand have joined the legion of companies with a presence on the Internet. Users can now access data sheets, software information, dealer addresses and an E-Mail support service by keying in http://www.strandlight.com.

Stepping Stone Studios

This month sees the official opening of Stepping Stone Studios in north-west London. The acoustically air-conditioned and sound-proofed studios include three rehearsal rooms, also designed for recording, and the 'buzz-room' for relaxation. The studio management team actually live on the premises, allowing the studios to operate 24 hours a day.

Stepping Stone can also offer fixed and mobile recording facilities through their in-house recording company Penta Productions, and an associated production company, House of Sound, provides production and distribution services.



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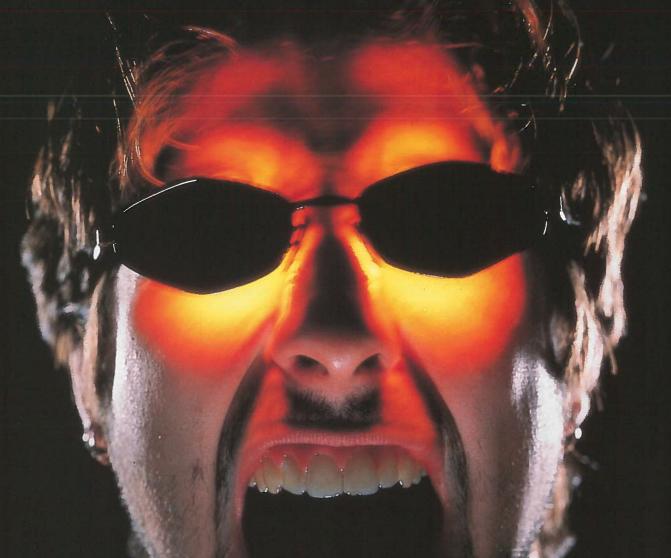
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Raper & Wayman 02R Training



Raper & Wayman have introduced a training course (shown above) for customers who purchase the new Yamaha 02R digital recording console. Half-day training sessions will be conducted either in Raper & Wayman's demonstration rooms, or on-site at the customer's own location.

Sound City in Leeds

Sound City, the annual music business event, took place in Leeds in mid April with Audio-Technica providing microphones to venues across the city.

Now in its fifth year, Sound City has previously visited Norwich, Sheffield, Glasgow and Bristol, bringing with it live music from both new and established acts, informative talks, seminars and workshops and, most importantly, drawing the attention of the music industry out of London and into the regions.

The Italian Job

Blackout provided a comprehensive range of starcloths, drapes and tab tracking for the launch of the new Toyota Paseo and the upgraded Carina E in Rome. The two-day event, which took place in the Sheraton Roma in front of 400 people, marks the continuation of a long and successful relationship between Blackout and PCI, the organisers of the event.

Blackout has also been employed to provide equipment for a range of musical projects including a number on behalf of Robbie Williams Productions (RWP). The company supplied RWP with blackout drapes for Oasis, Pink Floyd and the Big Twix Mix event, in addition to drapes and rigging for the Acoustic Alchemy pop video, which was recently filmed at Pinewood.

Blackout is once again supplying equipment for Simply Red's tour of the Far East and Australasia, as well as gaining new business from Tina Turner and Lou Reed.

Gobo Technology

John Andrews Digital have launched what they claim to be a revolutionary new gobo design service.

The company employ a fully integrated suite of software, including CAD, vector drawing, photo-manipulation and ray tracing programmes and can interpret a client's brief, create or capture any image ranging from corporate logos to brain-twisting 'cyberdelia' and transform it into artwork ready for application to the substrate within hours.

The new service is primarily targeted at clients who require high-resolution glass gobos. However, the company can also supply artwork suitable for reproduction on metal substrates, effects wheels, image scrollers and slides in all formats.

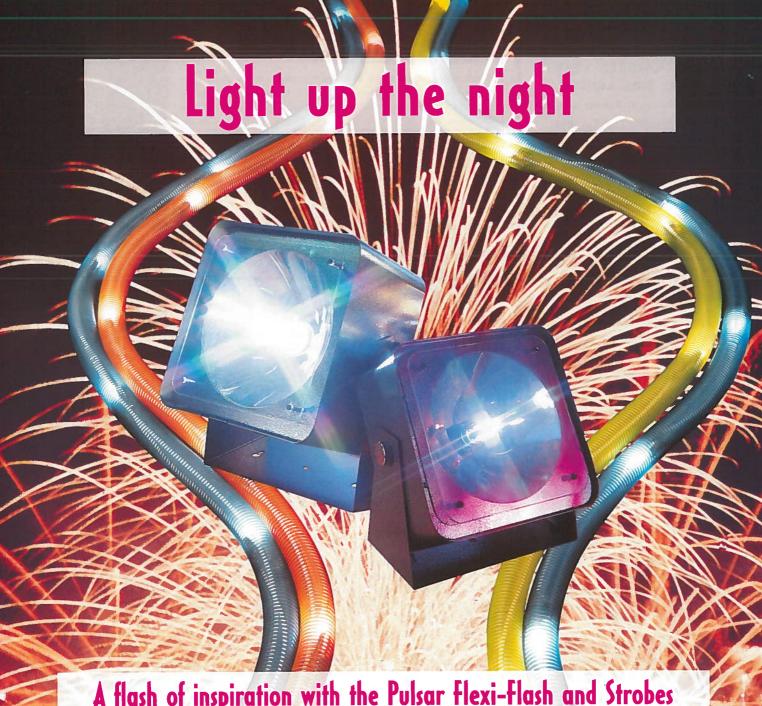
Theatres Win Awards

Early in March, the Edinburgh Festival Theatre, together with Glyndebourne Festival Opera, won two of the top three theatre architecture awards at the USITT Annual Conference in Fort Worth, Texas from an entry of 41 theatres including many by America's leading architects.

In late March, The Edinburgh Festival Theatre, with its design team, led by Colin Ross of Edinburgh architects Law Dunbar-Nasmith, were also announced winners of one of the 1996 Civic Trust Awards. Only two other performing arts buildings were honoured and they were in the lower 'special mention' category.

The theatre consultants for both Glyndebourne Festival Opera and the Edinburgh Festival Theatre were Theatre Projects Consultants, led by directors lain Mackintosh and Alan Russell.





A flash of inspiration with the Pulsar Flexi-Flash and Strobes

There's nothing like Strobe lighting to really liven things up. Whether you're using Strobes on a dance floor for occasional dramatic effect, or Flexi-Flash around the rig for an eyecatching streak of lightning, Pulsar Strobes fit the bill. Four models of Pulsar Strobe, using

specially-patented power-enhancing circuits, give you a choice to fit your room size. The Single Channel Remote Controller can control up to five Strobes but the best effects come from the Rainbow Controller which runs up to eight Strobes in sequence



with sound/light chasing built in. Flexi-Flash and Rigi-Flash use strobe circuits enclosed in tubing to generate a synchronised sequence of flashes which can follow the edge of a ceiling rig or any other structure as it can be cut and bent as required. A range of flourescent colours are

available for extra effect under ultra violet light. The Flexi-Flash controller allows you to control up to fifty metres on each zone, and offers the unique facility of firing sequences forwards, backwards or both simultaneously and at different speeds.



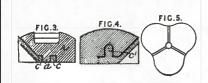




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ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

British Theatrical Patents 1801-1900 Intro to Patent 11,013 of 1896



Robert Courtneidge was a 'theatre manager and author' and also a man with an eye for detail, with a working knowledge of the backstage techniques of the period. This patent demonstrates the concept of the removable stage brace, which is weighted down with a removable stage weight. Many pieces of scenery at this time still relied upon the 'French Brace' being a hinged prop physically attached to the scenic flattage. However, this is merely a variation on a theme, as portable stage weights had been in use backstage for many years.

'British Theatrical Patents' will be published later this year by The Society For Theatre Research and will be officially launched at the PLASA Show at Earls Court in September.

All Smiles at ABTT

There were certainly plenty of smiles in evidence at the recent ABTT Trade Show at the Horticultural Halls in London where over 50 exhibitors came together for two days in mid-April. Conversation at the show, the eighteenth in the ABTT's history, naturally fell to the role the National Lottery has come to play in the make-up of the theatrical services industry and whilst there was disappointment that the Lottery had so far failed to live up to its early promise, there was a general air of expectation that more fully funded projects will come on stream in the next few months. A full report on the ABTT Show, together with further photos, starts on page 67.



Rick Wilson of Le Maitre (left) with Rod Bartholomeusz and John Garner of Lightstorm.

L+SI editor John Offord joins

Peter Brooks of Zero 88.



Ian Lake of Ark Light promoting their lantern repair service.



Paul 'Snowy' Johnson of Pulsar demonstrating Masterpiece.



Del Trew of Cyberdescence.



Graham Merritt (left) and Paul Topliss of Lee Filters.



Matthew Gilbert (left) and Richard Ganley of Trantec.

Showlight 97: Looking to the Future

Showlight '97 will mark the fifth international colloquium aimed at lighting for the performing arts, covering television, film, theatre and concert lighting. Taking place in the heart of Europe at the beautiful Flemish Opera House in Ghent (28-30 April, 1997), the event looks set to break all previous records.

Exhibitors and delegates from all over the world will attend Showlight which features a full conference with invited speakers presenting papers covering a wide range of topics, together with a trade show where a range of lighting equipment and information will be available throughout the conference. Well over two-thirds of available stand space has already been sold, and the organisers expect to have commitments for all stand space shortly.

A call for papers has been issued (a copy accompanies this issue) inviting lighting designers and associated professionals working within the entertainment field to submit papers as part of the forum for discussion and exchange of ideas that has become the hallmark of previous conferences.

Recent advances in technology have created a myriad of new opportunities for lighting professionals, without eclipsing the value of more traditional skills. As a result, it is anticipated that the papers programme will offer a broad sweep of the industry, from the latest innovations in CAD software, including a look at what the future may hold as we approach the Millennium.

Sited at the crossroads of Europe, the city of Ghent is an ideal place to host this international colloquium. As usual, a programme of social events and visits to venues of interest is currently being planned to complement the conference.

Exhibitors confirmed to date: ADB, Arri (UK), Avolites, Beo Brackman, Dedo Weigert, DeSisti Lighting, ETC Europe, EVDV, Glantre Engineering, Lighting Technology, Lite Structures, M&M Group, Optikinetics, Philips, Pulsar, Roscolab, Sachtler, Selecon, Strand Lighting, Sylvania, Teatro, Vari-Lite Europe, White Light and Wybron.

For further information on Showlight 97, contact the administration office in Eastbourne, telephone (01323) 642639.

Compulite for Rental

Compulite's UK distributor Stagetec have sold the first Compulite Spark moving light console to conference rental company Essential Systems Ltd. The console had its first outing with LD Andy Grant on the Sony Event Conference in Vienna.

Other sales include 21 Compulite Whisper scrollers to Bristol-based Fineline Productions for use on the current Gary Wilmot tour, an Animator 48 to White Light North and an Animator Compact to Playlight for the West End production of *Elvis*.

Hogs Hog Limelight

Flying Pig Systems' WholeHog II console has been taking control of several prestigious projects recently. Lighting designer Marilyn Lowey used the Hog II for the recent Neil Diamond tour, while the musical *Big* has just opened on Broadway after a successful run at Detroit's Fisher Theatre. The show was programmed on the Hog II by Paul Sonnleitner. A new WholeHog II has also recently been purchased by the Golden Nugget, Las Vegas, for use on the *Country Fever* show.

Light Switch

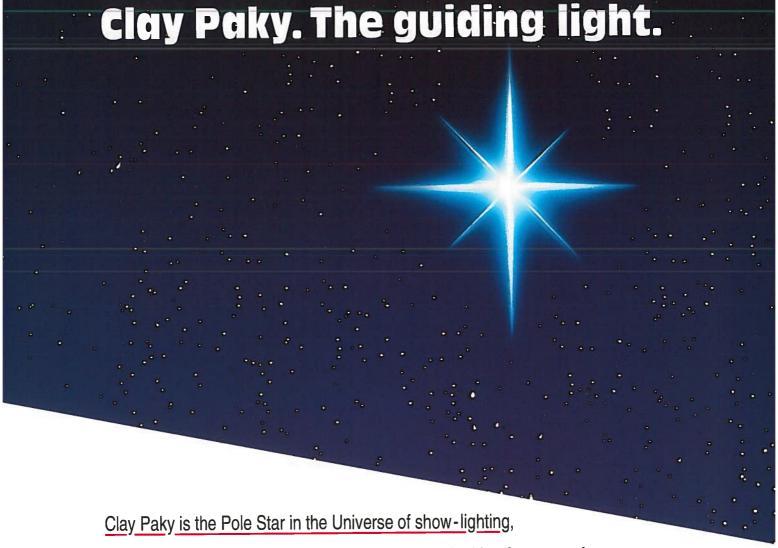
The more astute readers among you may have noticed an uncharacteristic error in the April issue of L+SI (page 66), involving the pictures of the new luminaires from Martin Professional and FLY which were featured in the Rimini review. The two pictures became transposed in the latter stages of production. Naturally, our sincere apologies go out to the two manufacturers involved, and just to show that we do know which product is which, we are printing the pictures again, this time with the correct captions.



Martin Professional's new MAC 1200 yokemounted colour-changing spotlight.



The Trichroma Yoke: FLY's new yoke-mounted version of the colour-wash luminaire.



the only unmistakable reference point if you are looking for top performance and the certainty of perfect service. Clay Paky luminaires continue to change the face of show-business, with the amazing variety and creativity of the effects they produce, the accuracy of focus, the purity of the light beam and the striking precision of movement.

Through our philosophy of total quality, at Clay Paky we guarantee you the highest level of reliability and safety in all our products.

Wherever you are and whenever you call, Clay Paky is there to assist you with solid experience in professional lighting applications. Clay Paky means you can be sure of making safe, intelligent and profitable investments for the present and future of show-lighting.

Clay Paky, is your guiding light.



Sensible's Nights Out

Sensible Music supplied a Clair Brothers PA for the Hard Rock Cafe's 25th birthday celebrations and for BBC Magazine's 'Big Night Out' comedy show.

In early March, Hard Rock celebrated 25 years of wining and dining at the world-famous restaurant and featured a set from Sting's new album. The system included Clair Brothers R4 III speaker system, P4 piston cabinets and 12AM floor monitors, Crest and Carver amps and a Soundcraft SM12 48-input desk. Sensible also supplied the complete backline for Sting.

The previous day saw the Sensible Clair Brothers PA at BBC Magazine's 'Big Night Out' comedy show at Notre Dame Hall in Leicester Square. The company used Clair Brothers R2D cabinets and Crest amplifiers for the show's PA.

Celco Canadian Deal



Celco have signed a new Canadian distribution deal with Novatec. Pictured on the Celco stand at the recent SIB Show in Rimini is Novatec's vice president John Bilyk (centre), flanked by Celco's Colin Whittaker (left) and Keith Dale (right).

Martin at University

Ten stacks of Martin Audio Wavefront 8 and 8S, configured as two separate systems, have been installed at the University of East Anglia, Norwich. The installation forms part of a £60,000 audio contract including Crest amplification and Martin MX4 controllers.

The system will be predominantly used for dance reinforcement, and be run in eight-stack and two-stack configurations. There are three amp racks, one each powering four stacks in mono with a separate rack powering two stacks in stereo.

In a separate project for Martin, the pilot for a new Bass Leisure theme concept - the Star Trek Bar in Westminster - has been equipped with eight Martin EM25s by Chrysalis Retail Entertainments. The system is driven by Citronic amplification.

Soundcraft First to Answer Warchild Plea

Soundcraft has donated a BVE 100 broadcast production mixer to the Independent Radio and Television (IRTV) Studio 99 in Sarajevo.

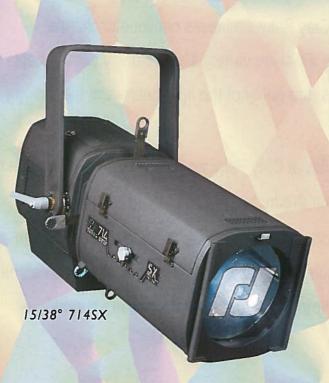
Since the beginning of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia in 1992, Studio 99 has struggled to maintain an independent voice for the population of Sarajevo. Constant shelling and military attacks forced it to move into a small, damp basement where it continued to broadcast up-to-the-minute news bulletins, using what serviceable equipment remained. However, damage to the equipment has proved too severe for the station to continue its work. Following the donation from Soundcraft, IRTV Studio 99 is appealing to audio manufacturers and other broadcast companies internationally for assistance in order to get back to broadcast standard. Registered charity organisation 'Warchild', which is supported by David Bowie, Brian Eno, Luciano Pavarotti and others, is organising the appeal for broadcast and studio equipment to help the Sarajevo station.

V-L Appoint Limelite

Vari-Lite Europe Ltd have appointed Limelite Srl of Rome an authorised Series 300 dealer for southern and central Italy.

Vari-Lite Europe have an established relationship with Limelite having worked with them over the past few years, and most recently on the current shows by the Italian singer 'Claudio Baglioni', for whom they are main lighting contractor. Limelite are also active in providing technical production services for the industrials, events and television markets.

The company are leasing 12 VL5 wash luminaires, six VL6 spot luminaires and two Mini-Artisan 2 control consoles.



2000w SX profile

High performance and build quality
3 zooms; 9/26°,15/38°, 30/53°

Easy to use and maintain

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Super Scan Zoom Golden Scan HPE Golden Scan 3



CHARACTERISTICS	SUPER SCAN ZOOM	GOLDEN SCAN HPE	GOLDEN SCAN 3
Lamp	HMI 1200	HMI 1200	HMI 575/1200
Standard lens	Electronic Zoom from 8° to 16°	24 and 15 degree	11°
Optional lenses	_	13 and 9 degree	16°-13°-11°-9°
Electronic focus	*	*	ALMA .
Wheel with 7 colours + white	_	*	*
Wheel with 7 special colours + white	*	*	_
Special light blue filter	_	*	_
Rainbow effect, two-colour beams	*	*	*
Colour temperature correction filters	2	2	2
RGB colour mixing systems	*	_	_
Max. No. of colours	Infinite	113	24
Rotating gobos in dichroic glass	Optional	2	Optional
Rotating M-size metal gobos	4	2	4
Fixed M-size metal gobos	4	4	_
Variable speed indexed two-directional rotation of gobos	*	*	*
10 additional gobos in metal	*	*	*
Fixed prisms	_	1 (5 facets)	1 (4 facets)
Rotating prisms	2 (4 facets, 3D)	4 (4 facets, 3D, wake, image doubling)	_
Frost filters	2	2	1
Iris	increased speed	increased speed	*
Dimmer 0-100% - Stop - High speed strobe	*	*	*
Rotation of mirror adapter on projector body	360°	360°	360°
DMX 512, RS 232 (PMX), analogue 0-10V controls	*	*	*
Number of control channels	12/16 selectable	12	6/8 selectable

The following are available as standard on Super Scan Zoom, Golden Scan HPE and the T.V. version of Golden Scan 3: lamp hourmeter, side carrying handles, graduated scale on bracket and mirror, built-in power factor correction system, safety cables. Silenced versions available on request.

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Shuttlesound Preview EV T-Series

In mid-April Shuttlesound invited L+SI to their Mitcham base to hear the new T-Series from Electro-Voice being put through its paces. The T-Series is almost certainly the missing link between E-V's successful System 200 and concert sound DeltaMax. Aimed squarely at working musicians, DJs and smaller venues, the new range combines concert sound components with heavy-duty, tour-resistant build. Shuttlesound, E-V's distributor in the UK, have launched five T-Series products, and heading up the range is a new MT-1 system.

Taking care of the top end is the two-way 350W MTH-1, whilst the MTL-1 is the MTH-1's partner pushing

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T-Series launch: Shuttlesound's Jasper Whittaker (left), Chris Laffey (centre right) and Bill Woods (right) link up with Chris Alfiero, Electro-Voice's export sales manager for Europe.

out thumping bass at 800W continuous, via a SubScoop enclosure. The 400W T251 is an ideal trade-up for existing Sx200 users, the T252 delivers a massive 800W and looking after the bottom-end is the T18, a 400W SubScoop-design bass bin.

Shuttlesound also announced that it has formed several new companies to help them meet the demands of their increasingly diversified business. Systems engineering contracts are now the province of The Systems Company Ltd (known as Sysco), under respected systems consultant Hugo Roche, while Rob Robinson heads Vertical Data Ltd, responsible for development and international sales of software products such as ShuttleCAD and ShuttleView. Graham Allen's PAG Direct already handles sales of pro audio equipment to the concert sound market.

One of Vertical Data's first actions has been to release a utility enabling users to remove copy protection from their ShuttleCAD software. Although the copy protection sub-routine is not itself at fault, it is extremely sensitive to operator error and rogue elements in the host computer, particularly on modern operating systems. Running the disablement utility, which is free of charge to registered users of ShuttleCAD 3.0, does not affect ShuttleCAD's normal operation, and even has a side benefit in reduced system resource requirements, particularly for Window '95 users.



Allen & Heath Debut

Before the tears of a million Take That fans had a chance to dry, Gary Barlow took time out from recording his debut solo album at Metropolis Studios to give a showcase performance of his new material to a private audience of around 50 record company executives at BMG's London HQ. Utilising experienced back-up from members of George Michael's touring band, Barlow's mini-show was the highlight of BMG's AGM and was notable on the technical front for the first star use of Allen & Heath's GL 3000 live sound console.

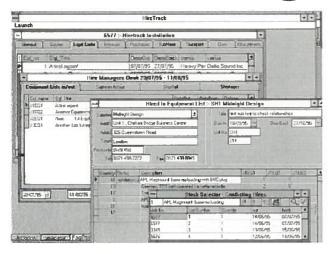
Provided by Capital Sound Hire, along with a Martin trapezoidal loudspeaker system, the GL 3000 was placed in the capable hands of engineer Roger Lindsay, who said after the show: "It's a nice desk, quiet with a smooth, glitch-free EQ, and I like the fact that it can be used as either a monitor or house board. I found it intuitive." He did, however, have one small axe to grind. "The only thing I found distracting was the presence of offset faders. You instinctively adjust an effects send and then move down to the fader, but the fader on the GL 3000 is placed between channels, but I'm sure I'll get used to it!"

SOL North East - The next SOL exhibition will take place on Sunday May 19th at The Springfield Hotel in Gateshead. Abstract, NJD, Martin Professional, Wharfedale and UKD will all be participating. Further details are available from organisers Entex on 0973-122484.

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Lightmasters Raise FAL UK Profile



Lightmasters UK, FAL's UK agent for just 18 months, have tripled the Italian manufacturers UK performance expectations within the first year, and are currently working on six new installation projects. Pictured above is James Foster (right), head of Lightmasters UK, with FAL's sales director Mauro Zoppini (centre) and managing director, Primo Bertani.

London DJ Course

Aspiring professional club/mobile DJs will soon be able to enrol in a course specially designed to provide practical hands-on training in the growing DJ industry.

The course is being run by the School of Audio Engineering (SAE), the largest audio and multi-media training organisation in the world, with 21 colleges in 12 countries. With 20 years experience in training and education, SAE operates more than 100 practical work stations worldwide using state-of-the-art equipment. Besides theory classes twice a week and practical mixing sessions in SAE's London studios, the DJ course will also offer several field trips to major club venues.

Professionals from both the club and mobile circuit will be invited to give lectures on particular subjects or techniques. For further details contact SAE in London on 0171-609 2653.

Canon Work-Out

Two Berkshire-based fitness centres, the David Lloyd Leisure Club and Nirvana, have installed Canon's V-100 wide dispersion sound loudspeakers for their new sound systems.

The David Lloyd club in Reading is on three floors with a cardiovascular area, computerised weights and free weights sections, covering a total of 5,000sq.ft. Installed by Atmospheric, the cardiovascular area has two pairs of Canon V-100s clustered together against the wall, whilst the other two floors each have four V-100s in the centre of the room, fitted together in a hanging 'cluster' so that the sound reaches all corners.

Canon V-100 speakers have also been installed in the Nirvana complex just outside Reading. The gym at Nirvana has a simple and modern theme, and single wall speakers have been installed around the gym to provide unobtrusive background music.

The second gym in the complex, Sindleshams, is a vast converted badminton hall. Its difficult acoustics mean that conventional speakers are not suitable, so Atmospheric recommended hanging three clusters of four black Canon V-100s from the ceiling along the centre of the room.

Cadac Spreads European Net

Clive Green & Co Ltd, manufacturers of Cadac consoles, has appointed three new distributors across Europe. In Spain, Twin Cam Audio joins the Cadac network, with the first major contract announcement expected shortly.

dbm has been appointed as the company's sole French distributor. dbm was originally formed from the Siemens installation team, with a string of project credits to its name. In Holland, Radio Europa Nederland has been appointed in line with its high degree of technical competence and existing representation within the sound reinforcement sector.



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Space Ghost

A tour featuring lasers, music and an animated cable TV talk show host, has been breaking new ground in entertainment in Planetariums across the United States. The tour, called the 'Dark Side of the Ghost Planet Extravaganza', features the cult cartoon character Space Ghost (a caped superhero who appears on Turner Broadcasting's Cartoon Network) at the centre of the show.

The tour marks the first co-operation between the three companies involved in Planetarium shows in the US, with Laser Fantasy International and Audio Visual Imagineering using their venues for a show that features effects from Laser Images. A projected image is framed with a 'laser television set', and the audience are provided with ChromaDepth glasses to view 3D effects.

Sales Awards for PAG

Following a successful year, PAG Direct have been declared Best Klark Teknik Distributor of 1995. Graham Allen, the driving force behind PAG, told L+SI: "The award should really go to our dealers. Our success reflects our relationship with, and the hard work of, people like Dave Wiggins at LMC, Mark Brown at Marquee Audio and Graham Paddon at Autograph Sales. We see a partnership with a strong dealer base being our investment for the future."

The number of touring bands using Klark Teknik digital products, including the DN3600 digital graphic EQ, has grown and systems have featured on the tours of Simply Red and Wet, Wet, Wet.

Graday's Grand Prix



A trio from L+SI recently joined Graham Threader (pictured above) and his team at Gradav Theatre Services in London for a whistle-stop tour of the facilities, followed by some vigorously contested Scalextric, at the company's open evening held in late March. Despite L+SI's valiant efforts, not one of the team could steer a straight course and each was quickly dispatched to the sidelines to watch as the Gradav team short-circuited to victory.

AJS Catalogue

AJS have just published the ninth edition of their Green Pages Catalogue. This A5 size handbook has 168 pages of product information and tips on lighting, sound, make-up, scenics, staging, special effects and other useful items.

For a free copy, contact AJS on (01425) 470425.

Video Theatre

The Sigma Design Group has signed a contract with Trinity Broadcast Network to provide theatre consultation, projection and screen engineering, seating layout, sightline studies and acoustical analysis for two high definition video theatres.

The venues in Costa Mesa, California and Dallas, Texas are scheduled to open this autumn. Sigma also designed the theatre for Trinity Music City in Hendersonville, Tennessee. The interior and lighting of both theatres will be based on designs created for the Hendersonville facility and each will feature a Torus Compound Curved Screen and two Sony VPH 1292W high definition projectors.

The company also provides theatre design and projection engineering for film, video and multi-media presentations. The Group's other recent projects include the design of a dual theatre for the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio, the design of a 78-seat high definition theatre at Sony Wonder at Sony USA headquarters in New York City, the screen engineering of new film simulators for Ridefilm Corporation, and theatre design for the Nauticus/National Maritime Centre in Norfolk, Virginia.



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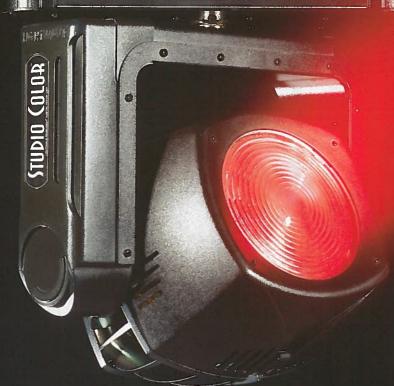
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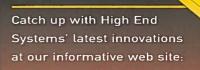
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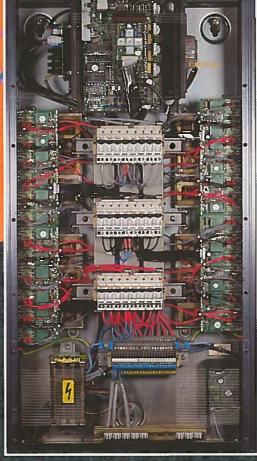
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IN THE ROUND

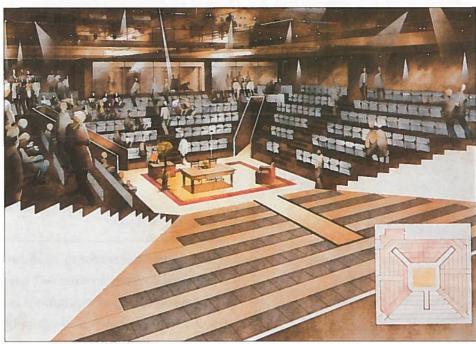
L+SI looks at Scarborough's newly refurbished and re-opened theatre-in-the-round, the Stephen Joseph Theatre, followed by an interview with Alan Ayckbourn by L+SI editor John Offord

Regular Lighting+Sound International readers will cast their minds back to the June 1993 issue when we ran an article on the fund-raising for the conversion of the former Odeon cinema in Scarborough into the new home of the Stephen Joseph Theatre. The theatre company was originally formed and run in a local library by theatre entrepreneur Stephen Joseph which offered a platform to the then unknown director and playwright Alan Ayckbourn. After Stephen's premature death it seemed only right that Alan should continue the fight to establish theatre-in-the-round as a major theatre institution in the UK and the opening of this resplendent theatre is a tribute to his efforts and all those who have helped him in the long battle.

Three years on from our original article, building work has been completed and the venue has just opened with the premier of the completely re-worked By Jeeves, the Ayckbourn/Lloyd-Webber collaboration in the theatre-in-the-round, and Smoking and No Smoking, the Alain Resnais double feature adaptation of Ayckbourn's Intimate Exchanges to be screened in the McCarthy theatre. The theatre complex now consists of two auditoriums: The Round, sponsored by Alan Ayckbourn, and The McCarthy, sponsored by Sheila and Charles McCarthy which, when used as a conference venue, can be supplemented by use of the Boden Room, a boardroom named after the late theatre administrator, Ken Boden. The whole complex is to keep the name of the Stephen Joseph Theatre, with a new logo and staff uniforms to suit.

A large proportion of the funding was raised privately by the theatre trust with £1.5 million being awarded by the National Lottery to finish the building, followed by another award of £90,000 to equip it. The redevelopment of the 1930's Art Deco grade two listed building took place in two phases. Phase one included all the main structural changes to the complete building and the refurbishment of the studio theatre section. Phase two saw the completion of the brand new theatre in the round and backstage facilities. The original intention was to utilise the studio theatre as an additional performing space, while the theatre was still resident at the old Westwood premises. This was never to come to fruition and in some respects the phasing of the building work possibly created more problems than it solved.

In the early planning stages, there was a great deal of pressure from English Heritage to restore the building to its 'former 1930's glory'. However, it was also fully understood by the design team and theatre staff that the venue should be equipped to the highest possible theatrical standard that the budget would allow. The first part of the work to become visible to the public was the refurbishment of the exterior. The tiles were cleaned and



Artist's impression of the main in-the-round auditorium, one of two performance spaces at STJ.



The former Odeon cinema in Scarborough - the new home of the Stephen Joseph Theatre.

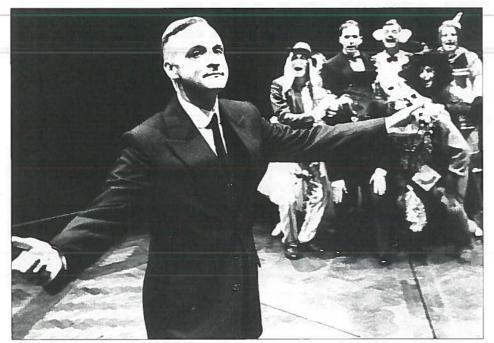
restored and neon lighting installed to the original design, taken from contemporary photographs. Two neon signs, 'Theatre' and 'Cinema' stand proud in an exact replica of the Odeon-style trade-marked lettering, and when this is all lit up in a Scarborough sea fret, an eerie but nostalgic glow emanates from the area known incorrectly to the locals as the 'Odeon Roundabout', although it is no longer either an Odeon or a roundabout!

Inside the building, local and national companies were sub-contracted to supply

replica carpets, chrome door furniture and handrails, light fittings and other period fixtures, not only accurate to the art deco style, but in the very unique and specific style of Odeon cinemas - an art movement within an art movement. The people involved in this part of the refurbishment must have had a wonderful time with the research and creation of non-standard items, but the light fixtures proved to be a little trickier than the other artefacts. Designing and building the fixtures to their original specification is relatively straightforward, but modern regulations urge the use of energy-efficient lamps. Theoretically, the installation of compact fluorescents into period-style fittings will suffice, but these lamps do not fit physically inside accurate reproductions, so a little artistic licence had to be exercised to suit both English Heritage and the building regulations.

To incorporate both auditoria, the existing cinema auditorium (and it was one of the few remaining single-screen cinemas) had to be divided in half at a point a few rows back from the front of the old circle. What remained of the circle was to become the McCarthy studio theatre, restaurant, bar and other public areas below. The remaining half of the building had to be gutted and re-equipped with the theatre-in-the-round module, offices and backstage facilities. This design enabled the original projection room to be re-used, as well as part of the existing auditorium.

The McCarthy studio was re-built as far as possible in the original Odeon design. Two decorative fibrous plaster panels had to be carefully removed from the stalls end of the auditorium, renovated and replaced further



By Jeeves, an almost entirely new musical by Alan Ayckbourn and Andrew Lloyd Webber, based on the Jeeves stories by P G Wodehouse, opened the first season at the theatre.

back on the side walls of the new studio space. The original seating was refurbished, new carpets in the Odeon style laid and a traditional paint scheme applied to complete this 'mini-Odeon'. To keep within the style, lighting positions were created from existing roof structures and in the small flytower. Although there is plenty of room for lighting bars and rudimentary flying, the new projection screen is of a roller design as there is not the height to fly it out during theatrical presentations.

The installation of the theatre-in-the-round necessitated the removal of the original proscenium arch - no mean task and not one undertaken without extensive deliberation. Eventually it was decided that it simply wouldn't make sense to have the proscenium arch effectively cutting the round space in half. The space is almost identical in size to the old Westwood site and retains all the charm and intimacy of the old space, this being one of the most important facets of the design criteria.

Between the two auditoria a new glass Atrium was constructed, effectively dividing the building in half, but enabling a bridge to be built providing a link from the Odeon-style bars and foyer areas into the more modern theatre-in-the-round. The Atrium is surrounded by the majority of the staff's offices, providing otherwise rare natural light. At the base of the Atrium is the Green Room and as this is the only link between the two halves of the building, providing an essential meeting place for all departments in the theatre.

The supply and installation of the technical equipment was divided into two halves, primarily to get the McCarthy theatre up to speed as soon as possible. Futurist were appointed supplier and installer of the lighting equipment for the studio theatre with the Sound Company installing the sound cable infrastructure throughout the building, stage manager's console and communication system. Both these companies were employed as sub contractors to the main contractor Shepherd Design & Build.

This package involved the installation of 96

"It is a testament to all those who have worked so hard on the DMX specification that the interfacing of equipment is no longer an issue and all makes of equipment can now work together in harmony."

channels of ADB Eurodim 3kW digital dimmers in the studio theatre which offer the now almost obligatory range of built-in features which are expected from today's hi-tech products. The original intention was to retain the Gemini 2 console from the old venue for the studio theatre, but as time marched on it was clear this was not going to be practical. Phase two therefore saw the first UK theatre installation of the new Compulite Photon desk installed by UK distributor Stagetec.

The phase one studio theatre lighting installation also incorporated a comprehensive DMX network installation incorporating a number of DMX outlets around the building wired back to a number of DMX patch panels.

As part of this contract, an ADB Vision 10 lighting control desk and fully tracking back-up



The STJ's project co-ordinator Stefan Gleisner (left) with senior technician Kath Geraghty and Andy Stone of Stagetec UK.

system was supplied. Originally intended to control the dimmers in the studio theatre while the old building was still occupied, it was unfortunately destined to remain dormant for two years before eventually being installed in the main auditorium.

Time dragged on after phase one and it perhaps took longer than originally anticipated for the theatre trust to generate the £5.4 million required to complete the project. In the interim period the theatre staff had changed and the inevitable development of new equipment, along with the desire of new staff to have their own input, necessitated the theatre initiating a search for the most suitable equipment. Eventually, after many months of product demonstrations and evaluations, sound and lighting installation company Stagetec were appointed to provide the equipment for the main auditorium.

The requirement of the sound system was to be as flexible and full range as possible. The original sound design was to incorporate speakers both in front and behind the audience, in addition to sub-bass speakers built into the

seating units. Unfortunately, budget restraints resulted in this specification being reduced.

The sound equipment specification was deliberated over many months. The theatre's resident musical director and Alan Ayckbourn himself always strive to produce the highest quality

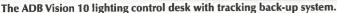
musical standards and for this the very latest digital recording equipment was required. This need was matched to the technical staff's requirements for ease of operation as many shows are run 'single-handed' for both lighting and sound operation.

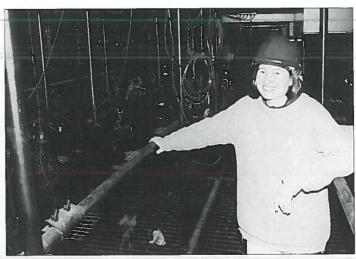
Andrew Stone from Stagetec made numerous trips with lorry loads of equipment for A/B comparison and eventually a system consisting of 11 EAW JF100 full range speakers for the main system and six EV S40 speakers for spot effects driven from four Chevin 4 x 600W Quad 6 amplifiers was chosen. A total of 34 speaker outlets are installed around the building, wired back to a speaker patch in the control room, allowing for the speakers to be utilised in a wide variety of configurations. The speaker patch was the subject of some

deliberation. Ideally, the theatre required some kind of switching system, either mechanical or electronic, but the cost of this proved to be unjustified and eventually a custom-built conventional patch panel was installed.

A wide range of source equipment was installed to cater for the theatre's demanding requirements, and this included conventional CD and cassette machines, two of the new Denon DN1100 MiniDisc recorders (some of the first to be installed in







Kath Geraghty above the 'trampoline' wire grid.

a UK theatre) and a Tascam DA30 DAT machine. Audio specialists MM Productions were commissioned by the theatre to supply the latest version of the Akai DR4 hard disc recorder and S3200XL sampler. Signal processing equipment included industry standard Yamaha SPX990 effects units and a new Behringer DSP8000 Ultracurve. The equipment was housed in portable castored equipment racks to enable the ultimate in flexibility of operation.

Unfortunately, the house sound equipment isn't being used for the opening production of *By Jeeves*, as the intention is for this production to transfer to the West End and it made sense to keep the equipment constant. The sound equipment for the studio theatre is a combination of equipment from the old venue and the cinema sound system.

The requirement for the luminaires was primarily to obtain the best optical performance, but taking into consideration that a theatre-in-the-round requires considerably more lighting units than a conventional proscenium stage, it was also necessary to keep them as light as possible. Hence, a quantity of 241.2kW zoom profiles, 361.2kW Fresnels, 24 650W Acclaim zoom profile spots and 36 Acclaim 650W PC spots, all from Selecon, were supplied - all the profiles being complete with drop-in irises and gobo holders. In addition, 12 Compulite Whisper 1kW colour scrollers were supplied, which can be fitted onto any of the 1.2kW luminaires.

Sceno Plus, the suppliers of the 'trampoline' wire grid detailed later in this article, originally stipulated that it was necessary for the stage lighting dimmers to have a minimum of 700µS rise time between 0% and 100% of the dimming cycle. This necessitated the design of custom dimmer racks, but thankfully, the company revised the requirement to 350µS (or 450µS between 10% and 90% as rise time is normally specified in the UK) which resulted in much more manageable cabinets. A total of five cabinets each with 48 channels were installed, fed from a Compulite 6-way DMX splitter enabling the safe distribution of the DMX signal from the desk to both the dimmers and colour scroller power supplies.

Somewhat ironically, the split in phases of installation and the subsequent development of new equipment has resulted in an ADB desk driving Compulite dimmers in the main

auditorium and a Compulite desk driving ADB dimmers in the studio theatre. It is a testament to all those who have worked so hard on the DMX specification that the interfacing of equipment is no longer an issue and all makes of equipment can now work in harmony.

Theatre-in-the-round has always presented more diverse problems in the focusing of luminaires - ladders perched precariously over the seating units with an electrician hanging over the edge by half a leg and one finger are something many will have seen! One has to look to the Canadians for a solution and Stephen Joseph are one of the first UK theatres to install a tensioned wire grid over the whole of the theatre-in-the-round space - both stage and auditorium.

When the original model and designs for the Odeon refurbishment were presented to the theatre staff, lighting positions for the theatre-in-the-round were accessed from catwalks. In the old venue, everything was done from ladders beneath the lighting grid. Although this was physically hard and prevented lighting and set crews from working at the same time, it did mean that it was possible to rig luminaires virtually anywhere and therefore from an artistic lighting point of view, could not be bettered. The problem with catwalks is that to gain adequate access there must be a considerable number of catwalks, but wherever there is a catwalk, there cannot be a

lighting instrument! The problem necessitated finding a system that allowed maximum access and lighting flexibility, but also allowed other departments to work at the same time.

The Canadian-designed system is simply a series of steel wires at three inch centres, woven together to form an open mesh. The tensioned wires are strong and comfortable enough to walk across and cause minimum optical interference when luminaires are rigged with lenses close to the mesh and focused through it. The structure is lightweight and relatively cheap, as it consists mainly of open air, and allows access and therefore rigging points anywhere above it for maximum lighting flexibility.

As it produces a physical barrier between the lighting rig and the floor area, it is also remarkably safe because it is physically impossible to drop colour frames or barndoors, for example, down onto the floor. We understand that theatre staff are currently trying to persuade the safety officer that in this instance, safety chains are more dangerous than safe as they are one of the few items that can fall through the weave! The technical staff seem very happy with the convenience and feel of walking on a bouncy safety net, despite some initial doubts! The whole 'trampoline' also creates a well-finished ceiling effect, hiding all the cabling and other paraphernalia which usually goes with a lighting rig.



Would like to wish the STEPHEN JOSEPH THEATRE all the success for the future.

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The Compulite digital dimmer racks.

An open area is incorporated in the centre to facilitate some flying, although inevitably this has proven to be a most useful lighting position and the hole is already cluttered with luminaires - the resulting discussion (or dare one say argument) is sure to ensue between the lighting and scenic departments in due course!

The other major innovation in the theatre-in-the-round is the stage lift - innovative in that the whole of the stage floor can be raised and lowered and is a masterpiece of logistics. Many discussions were had as to whether this was to be a theatrical tool, or a fit-up tool. Eventually it settled down into being a fit-up tool but has the possibility of being 'parked' half way down the lift shaft to allow for theatrical devices to be built on top of it.

The logistics of the system comprise three stage 'palettes', one on stage, one in the rehearsal room and one in the workshop. There is a 'parking place' at each of these locations and a spare parking place on a mezzanine level so that any single palette can travel to any other location at any time, a sort of three-dimensional sliding puzzle. During the design of this system, it was realised that if the lift is parked at stage level, it is impossible to move a palette from the rehearsal/workshop level to the mezzanine, and it required a second lift to be installed beneath the first one, in the same shaft.

Different lift mechanisms were contemplated, taking into account noise, speed, cost and maintenance etc. Eventually it was decided to use a rack and pinion system for the main lift, and a scissor lift as the second. In the very early stages of construction, after the steelwork mechanisms had been installed, the company that originally held the design and build contract for the lift went into liquidation, and the project had to be contracted out in its partially-designed, partially-built state! The lift is now fully installed and working but ironically, the set design for By Jeeves spreads itself across the stage and into the front row of the auditorium, thus rendering the stage lift irrelevant for the first two months!

The stage lift, the black mesh 'ceiling' and the wise choice of subdued blues and purples for carpeting and upholstery make for a well-finished, modern theatre space which is extremely welcoming. The restoration and refurbishment of the majority of the building in the original art deco style is a brilliant



Looking to the grid showing the 'open' section.

reconstruction. The building was an unused eyesore for eight years, so any local person entering this part of the building will have a real treat. The new restaurant offers an extensive menu and the recent PLASA/ABTT trip can certainly vouch for the quality of the food offered. The restaurant/bar area itself is a wonderfully bright place, full of natural daylight provided by the 90 degree curved window stretching around the front corner of the building. The only complaint received so far is that the scaffolding around the railway station opposite spoils the view!

Certainly one thing that has always shone through adversity at the Stephen Joseph Theatre has been the dedication and loyalty of



Alan Ayckbourn pictured at the launch of the Stephen Joseph Theatre in May 1993.

the staff. It is that dedication which will make the building work, and it is good to see, not only on the technical side, but also artistically, many staff and performers that have worked for the company in the past, returning for this inaugural season at the former Odeon cinema standing as a monument to one of the founders of this most theatrical of theatricalities - the theatre- in-the-round.

By Jeeves promises to be a roaring success in Scarborough, but remember, when asking for directions to the theatre, that there is neither an Odeon or a roundabout!

Concept Architect for Stephen Joseph Theatre: Harry Osborne of Osborne Christmas Associates.

STEPHEN JOSEPH THEATRE - EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATION

LIGHTING

ROUND:

1 ADB Vision 10 control desk with tracking back-up system

240 channels of Compulite high density modular digital dimming in five racks

36 Selecon 1.2kW Fresnel spots with barndoors

12 Selecon 1.2kW Condenser Optics 16/32 degree profile with drop-in iris and gobo holder

4 Selecon 1.2kW Condenser Optics 24/40 degree profile spots with drop-in iris and gobo holder

8 Selecon 1.2kW Reflector Optics 24/40 degree profile spots with drop-in iris and gobo holder

36 Selecon Acclaim 650W PC spots with barndoors

24 Selecon Acclaim 650W Condenser Optics 24/44 degree profile spots with drop-in iris and gobo holder

12 Compulite Whisper 1kW Type C colour scrollers

2 Compulite Whisper DMX power supplies

12 MR16 birdies

12 Mode ET75 transformers

1 Compulite 6-way DMX splitter

McCARTHY:

1 Compulite Photon LX lighting control desk for Studio theatre 96 channels of ADB Eurodim digital dimmers

SOUND

11 EAW JF100iR Full range passive speaker cabinets

33 heavy duty chains/safety bonds for above

6 EV S40 effect speakers

4 Chevin Quad 6 amplifiers

1 Behringer DSP8000 Ultracurve

2 Yamaha SPX990 effects processors

1 Denon DN-650F CD player

1 Denon DN-790R Cassette deck

2 Denon DN-1100R Mini-disc recorder/players

1 Tascam DA30 DAT machine

1 Akai DR4 hard disc recorder

1 Akai S3200XL sequencer

3 20U high equipment racks

1 30 x 16 custom made speaker patch panel



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A CONVERSATION WITH AYCKBOURN

L+SI editor John Offord talked to Alan Ayckbourn in late January at the studios of LWT in Kennington during a break in rehearsals for the London production of Communicating Doors, now running at the Savoy Theatre.

Three months prior to moving to the new Stephen Joseph Theatre, I asked Alan Ayckbourn about his personal feelings as he looked forward to working in the new space. It will be strange. We've been in the 'old' for over 20 years, and at the moment I'm just furiously looking forward to the new. I know from our last move from the Library to the present building my life flashed in front of my eyes on the last night and I was suddenly aware of all that history in that particular building: 'The Norman Conquests', 'Relatively Speaking', etc that launched me off. I suspect this one will have much the same impression because I've had another huge chapter of my own personal life, apart from the lives of a lot of people also involved. We've known about the move for over two years, and in that time the technology of the present building and the up-keep and repair of it has been standing still because we've all been looking towards the new. The new is very exciting technically, and in terms of artistic output, it's going to be huge compared with what we have been doing.

It's also very frightening, because one knows that with a new building you get another vote from the public. They are going to come out of curiosity to see what it's like. We will have a shop, a restaurant, two bars, an art gallery, music events which will build up I hope to platform performances - a mini-National theatre on a very mini scale, with two auditoria. It's going to be

When do you actually move in to the new theatre?

We start rehearsals in the new Stephen Joseph in the middle of March. Typically, the last thing the builders have guaranteed to deliver is the main auditorium, so hopefully we can get everything else sorted out before that! I've seen the grid in place - which is reassuring. I've yet to see the stage in place - which would also be quite reassuring! We preview from 23rd April -Mr Shakespeare's birthday - and then we go into paid previews on the 24th and have our gala opening on the 30th April. Two weeks later the McCarthy opens - the smaller upstairs end-stage - which we'll bring on line in mid-May. A week after that we'll begin cinema on the Sunday and be running films on Sunday and Monday and plays in the McCarthy from Tuesday to Saturday. We're hoping the McCarthy will become our touring auditorium, as we're planning to bring in other shows.

The new theatre will obviously widen your own aspirations, but you have to admit you've done some pretty dramatic stuff in the

'old' building! When you think, for instance, of a production such as 'Way Upstream', it is amazing what was achieved there. Are you starting to think bigger already?

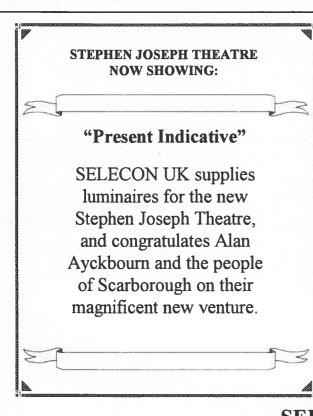
I want to see what the venue does in-the-round. Once it's all complete I'm sure my playwright's head will start revolving. I'm not doing any brand new plays in the new building for about a year. I'll probably do my first new 'new' play in time for Christmas. I'd like to do a kid's show for that. I hope by then I will be able to use the full range of the auditorium, once I find out what it is! I want to know what the lifts do, how we can use heights and levels and also, what, if anything, we can do with the new grid. We will be able to do a certain amount of flying, which was totally impossible before. We'll try it out on other people's plays first! - and on my old work, which I know is fairly safe for the new space.

I'm also quite intrigued about working in the smaller space.

I think I've only written twice for an end-stage so I'll be very interested in working in a space of its size (170 seats) but also within its shape and width. It's a very wide stage - a bit American in a sense - with very little depth. I'm already beginning to think of plays that require width and not depth! But I would hesitate to write them until I had a very good idea for one - the idea of setting off and writing a 'wide' play . . !

You mentioned earlier other shows coming in to the Stephen Joseph Theatre. Will this see the start of touring 'in-the-round'?

We are negotiating with Northern Broadsides, and we are hoping they can come in the autumn in-the-round. With a custom-built theatre, we





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might also get more people interested in playing in that space. We haven't really talked to our sister 'rounds' as yet. We've had some preliminary discussions with Stoke (Victoria), but we haven't really talked to the Manchester Royal Exchange who are often of a scale we can't accommodate. The real opportunity, although it covers small to middle-scale touring, will be in the McCarthy Theatre.

This also serves as a cinema and we may well end up doing some multi-media work in there, which would be very interesting. I'm also very keen to get hold of what you might call community events, children's events and so on, that can be used as an ancillary to the round. I want to make use of the building as an entity and I don't want it to become two separate auditoriums chuntering away under their own steam. They must always be aware of each other, and I'm deliberately staffing them so that they have to share things. With the technical side, for instance, the teams can be drawn together in the same way as the actors. The directors are working in both spaces, and hopefully, I shall have a presence in both to set an example.

How much of your own time will be spent in Scarborough? Will you continue to spend some of your time directing in London?

I'm aware I'm going to have to be in Scarborough a lot more, and particularly in the first year. I've no plans to move anywhere, certainly until 1997. We are looking to set up a proper touring arrangement in 1997 and we're talking to the Arts Council about getting a Royal Shakespeare-type touring rig which would allow us to take our productions on the road, pretty well intact. We've already got the Bowness (Windermere) link, as you know, and we might use that as a launch-pad to take the tent, not just into the North, but into the Midlands and the South West and so on. Certainly I'm going to be very much involved with the new theatre.

It seems you enjoy the organisational and management side of theatre, and you are well-known for being thoroughly involved with all aspects of production. How will you cope with a much enlarged theatre complex? Well, I've supplemented the team. We've got Stephen Wood coming in from the National who was head of the press office there and who is going to be our general administrator. He's a key figure in all of this, and he will, I hope, take on a lot of the day-to-day executive work, and running of the theatre, off my shoulders. It will also be his concern that the theatre's image is pushed out.

One of the problems for a working director like me is that you spend a lot of time in the rehearsal room, and there is very little time to keep your head up. I've sometimes arrived back from a rehearsal and found things have happened that I've been unaware of because nobody likes to bother you. So that will change, but none-the-less I am solely responsible for the artistic policy.

From a technical point of view, are there any particular aspects of the new theatre that you are particularly looking forward to involving in your productions?

Obviously, to start with, there is the lift. I can't remember who suggested including it, the original architect Harry Osborne or myself, but it is an essential part of the new building. In fact, the building doesn't work without it. I am aware that the building is going to be with us for at least 99 years and I was also aware that turn-arounds are totally limited by the hours in the day. If we go back to a repertoire situation, I want those turn-rounds to be quick.

I'm looking forward to using the technology in the round, but I'm not quite sure yet what it will do apart from making the turn-rounds easier. I suspect that I'm going to be using something that is quite common to a lot of people but to me is completely new - which is understage access. This hasn't been used a lot in the round because as far as I know, most in-the-rounds don't have that facility. When you consider that the floor is your back-drop, and most designers realise that when they're working for the first time in the round - 'oh! this is where my main statement is, it's on the floor!' - one can see why we could well have quite an interesting array of perspectives going on here!

We could have quite a lot of technical fun with

that depth, and I've got a few ideas - underfloor performance with an overfloor area, pushing things up - we have to be careful with sightlines of course, but everyone can see down. So, I think you had better watch this space . . !

You made a statement in the Appeal Brochure about providing a facility for dramatists of the future. Do you now have concrete plans for this?

Yes, we have plans. As a result of this building, as a result of the fact that we are effectively doubling our repertoire, we have much more space, both for classics, modern classics, and for the new work that we always wanted to continue. We've set up a script department with a professional script editor, who's primarily responsible for dealing with new writers, and finding new writers. Often, it is not enough to sit and wait for scripts to come in, because they aren't necessarily the ones you want. You have to go after them and go out to find people you've seen writing somewhere and say 'I want that guy for us'. It's very important we do that. The new work commitment is very much what we had before, but it will be writ a little louder. We are looking for new, interesting, challenging, dramatic mainstream work. We are not looking for basement work. My feeling is that many writers get basement bound if they are not careful. They write something that the critics are interested in, and they seem to get bogged down in that or go into television, and never get 'out'. The greatest thing Stephen Joseph ever did for me was to shove my play into the main house, and demand that it made money or we close. I think we can put out a challenge to writers. We have a choice of spaces but what I don't want to do is to make the McCarthy into a 'new play' theatre, the place where people think we stage all the plays we're not sure about. I would like to think we are doing Tim Firth in the main house in-the-round and Hedda Gabler in the little one. Across the two auditoriums we shall look for contrast.

Yes, new plays are paramount. However, I don't think it's fair, in the first year, to inflict a new theatre on a new play. I wouldn't inflict it on one of mine!



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EXCESS ALL AREAS

The biggest single room sound system in Europe is in London's massive Adrenalin Village. Mark Cunningham talked to the people behind this exciting new dance music venue

Call me an old hippie, but until recently whenever I cruised along London's Embankment, the sight of Battersea Power Station always conjured up a single image in my mind: that of Pink Floyd's famous 'flying pig' album cover. Some 20 years later, on the south side of Chelsea Bridge, a whole different musical culture is at the foundation of the renaissance of the waste ground surrounding that proud, but lifeless, landmark.

Adrenalin Village is a giant 4.5 acre leisure complex, housed within the site of an old, derelict British Rail epot. In 1995, Sherman & Waterman, the operators of several prestigious London retail outlets and markets, leased the area from British Rail with a view to establishing it as a centre for market stalls, car boot sales and parking facilities.

With no neighbours to worry about, Tony Sherman made the decision to develop the empty shell of the depot building as a versatile dance music and corporate events centre and a meeting with fashion entrepreneur Robert Simon resulted in the latter's Wharfside Promotions pumping more than £1 million into creating The Venue, a massive 20,000 square feet, 4,000 capacity facility at Adrenalin Village, and The Club, a 350 capacity satellite venue.

When The Venue opened its doors for its first major dance night on New Year's Eve, it was obvious to all that this was an environment in which 'excess' was the key word. Not only was the capacity crowd greeted by the appearance of Paul Oakenfold and 16 of his top-flight DJ contemporaries, but the audio was relayed through what is thought to be the largest and most powerful system ever to be installed in a single room in Europe. Specified by Peter Dyer of Tarsin Entertainments, this 48kW sound system of superlative proportions includes no less than 52 ASS loudspeaker cabinets, 24 Crest amplifiers, BSS Omnidrive and a range of audio peripherals totalling around £200,000.

Although he ran a club in 'the good old days' of the sixties, Robert Simon now realises better than most the enormous changes which have happened to determine today's industry, and he has responded by delivering what he feels is the ultimate dance venue in the capital, if not



Clubbers enjoy the sights and sounds of Adrenalin Village.

the country. "I recognise that sound is the single most important aspect of a modern dance venue," comments Simon. "That's what it's all about. When it came to deciding on the equipment for Adrenalin Village, we were approached by several manufacturers and suppliers. If you don't have direct experience, you have to rely on and trust those who do know the business of sound. So I deferred to Peter Dyer at Tarsin Entertainments and told him that if he thought he could do it, then he should get on with the job. I wanted the absolute best without any compromises.

"We weren't specifically looking to install the biggest club system, but because we have the biggest venue in the south of England, the system had to fill the space. I believe the only club larger than this in the coun ry is Cream in Liverpool. What we wanted from the system was versatility - to be able to change from dance club to exhibition or corporate event mode. So the system had to be movable and adaptable."

Dyer adds: "Robert listened to the views of a lot of promoters, like Sean McClusky, and our name kept cropping up, so I went along to see him. He appreciated that I was taking a much broader view of his interests in launching Adrenalin Village than just selling him a sound system and felt that the advice was coming from someone who owned clubs, understood promotions and knew about the dance scene. We were anxious to win the deal, but we were equally concerned to get the job right."

The relationship between Wharfside and Tarsin showed signs of faltering at first when Dyer was asked to present a quote for a 30kW system, which he instinctively knew would not be sufficiently powerful for such a cavernous venue. "The club would have failed and we probably wouldn't have been paid," says Dyer. "So after discussion with Tony Rossell of ASS, I persuaded Robert that we should quote for what turned out to be a 48kW rig, knowing that because of the dimensions of the project, the final



The former derelict British Rail depot near Chelsea Bridge.



Peter Dyer of Tarsin Entertainments (left) with Tony Rossell of ASS.

product would be subject to intense trade scrutiny, so we were cautious."

KICKIN' OUT THE COMPETITION

Now in his 24th year of trading, Southendon-Sea's ASS has been manufacturing for Tarsin for almost three years and realised that Adrenalin Village provided not only an opportunity to reap the benefits of a large order, but also to gain the rare notoriety of building for, and installing, Europe's largest single room system.

"With most installations, one of the difficult aspects is that in spite of being confident of receiving the contract, club owners are never going to sign anything too far in advance. So until Peter Dyer has a contract signed, we don't get the go-ahead for a job," comments Tony Rossell. "We can discuss it and know exactly the kind of products and work required, but because of the high cost of everything involved there is no way that we can speculate and put together £50,000 worth of gear when there's a chance of the deal falling through."

With the Adrenalin Village project, however, ASS was given a more generous than normal production lead time between completion of the contract and the opening night. Working solidly over the five days which separated Boxing Day and New Year's Eve, Rossell and his three man crew installed 16 ASS SB121H 21" sub bass cabinets, 16 BS12002 x 15" bass cabinets and 16 MX50012" mid/high cabinets, along with two 12" DJ monitors and two foldback monitors. "We delivered on site on Christmas Eve in two 7.5 ton trucks and off loaded all of the cabinets, which was an awesome sight - one which convinced

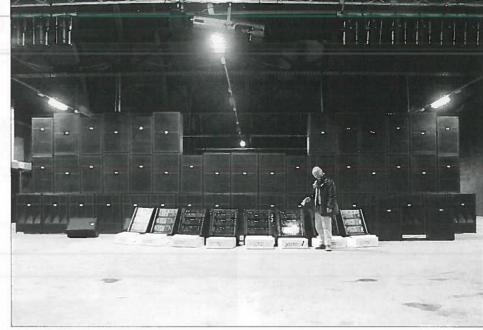
us that the system would be big enough! The amps were delivered to the site on December 27th and we built everything up in time for the New Year's Eve event.

The high power requirements of the lighting and sound systems have been catered for by a monstrous generator, housed outside the building in a converted 20' container. Amplification

for sound was narrowed down to just two models from Crest: the P8001 and P6001 Professional Series amps.

When it became obvious that 30kW was not going to provide enough sound pressure for such a large single room, Rossell was forced to think again about the amp configuration: "Peter's original specification for the job stated that there were going to be four different Crest amplifiers. But because of the modular requirements of the total system, I came up with a plan which involved a little more money on Peter's part although I supplied the eight custom-built amp racks at no cost, so that we could operate a bridged amplification regime.

"We have put three amplifiers in each rack: two P8001s and one P6001. One of the 8001s is used to drive the subs and, using it in the bridged format, it gives us 3000W into 4 ohms to allow us to put 1500W into each single 21" sub bass cabinet. The next 8001 is used conventionally to give us 1200W into 4 ohms and that is how we fed each bass cab. One side of the 6001 feeds the 2 x 12" mid range cabinet, which is then paralleled over to another identical cabinet. The other side of that amplifier feeds the CD horns in the same way. By reconfiguring in this way, we went from a 31kW rig to 48kW, which is the exact rating into the appropriate impedances. By employing that configuration we have got it down to the most logical way of powering up a given number of



Tony Rossell with the massive ASS sound system and line up of Crest amplifiers - the largest single-room system in Europe.

boxes from one rack."

In total, ASS supplied 63 boxes to Tarsin for use throughout the main venue and the small club, which has 10 ASS BS1200 2 x 15" bass cabinets and an FB115SA foldback monitor for DJ use. Originally, these ASS cabinets were working alongside eight JBL cabinets, but they have since been replaced with ASS boxes after a trial proved popular among the patrons.

Dyer is not short on compliments when

"I recognise that sound is the single most important aspect of a modern dance venue. That's what it's all about."

paying tribute to Rossell's considerable experience in the audio industry: "Tony engenders great respect in the trade because he has such a wide knowledge of loudspeaker construction and when people start talking about the sound reinforcement business, his name is ultimately mentioned.

"His association in the manufacturing of many big name products by the likes of Martin and Turbosound automatically gains respect, even though it is not widely known that his expertise helped today's club and touring system market leaders become what they are."

Having used ASS for many of its projects over the last three years, ASS became Tarsin's automatic choice for Adrenalin Village. "When the dance scene moved back into clubs, I had to satisfy promoters that I could deliver the best sounding and most reliable systems," says Dyer. "I undertook an installation at The Academy in Stoke which ran Golden, the top house promotion, and it was there that I began to experiment with some of his speakers. Tony saw an opportunity to get into live venues through Tarsin, and that's when he developed a sophisticated matrix speaker from his original Arena design. That is the product now in place in the Astoria, Mean Fiddler, Powerhaus and many more of Vince Power's top live music venues. Together we have done several millions of pounds' worth of business, but it has been the result of two-way co-operation, with

Tony and I pushing each other."

Despite his strong ties with ASS, Dyer is not about to get sentimental. "If somebody were to come out with a product which was at least as good, but cheaper than ASS, there would be an awful lot of pressure on Tony to match the price and quality, otherwise I would be forced to move. The same thing applies in amplification. At the moment I'm tending towards Crest on the basis of its reliable high powered product,

but I have also run with C Audio."

Through working at other Tarsin-supplied clubs, Adrenalin Village's house engineer, Ken Day, has become accustomed to the distinctive ASS sound. "I was looking for something more interesting after being at the Coliseum for a while, and as soon as I heard about Adrenalin Village I was hooked, because it

has certainly been a challenge", explains Day. "ASS gear is very reliable with a faithful, clean sound. It doesn't deliver the kind of coloured sound I notice about some other products. I find that dealing with a small company means you are always talking to the main man and the people who actually built the equipment, rather than facing the red tape of big corporations. I've used the equipment so often now that it's always a disappointment when I hear other systems."

CONTROLLING THE EAGER DJ

Another key element of the sound system is the BSS Omnidrive Loudspeaker Management System FDS-388 which, having made a significant contribution in the live rock and roll field, is making its presence felt in a growing number of dance clubs. At Adrenalin Village, it is racked along with a BSS dual mode graphic equaliser FCS-960, a Harrison GQ302 stereo graphic equaliser and a dbx 166A compressor/limiter, and is used to programme for instant recall the different sonic characteristics required by each dance night, whether it be house, jungle or garage.

"People do like to feel that their own subjectivity has been put into the sound on a particular night," Dyer explains. "Nearly all DJs feel competent to play with a graphic EQ, but an Omnidrive is somewhat alien to them. Of course, you can lock an Omnidrive and the

fundamental settings of the system are fixed and cannot be interfered with. With the kind of power levels we are playing with now, that is quite important. At The Complex in Islington, the graphic EQ has a 2U blanking panel over it to prevent DJs from abusing it. We also have the graphics in the rack at Adrenalin Village, but they are guarded by an engineer who stands by the rack wielding a cane!"

Ken Day is the man assigned with dealing out this correctional punishment: "It's the first time I've used an Omnidrive and it seems to have become an industry standard. In practical terms, I am using it as a crossover. We were doing Friday nights here with a house and garage club called Home World where the room was divided into two equal halves with an acoustic screen in the middle with a gap of around 15 to 20 feet for a bar area, also used as part of the sound barrier.

"We had two sets of decks (Technics SL1210MK) with the Rane MP24 and Citronic SM550 mixers and operated it as two separate clubs, running the system in mono on both sides and using one channel of the Omnidrive and the graphic EQ per side. Having to monitor both sides keeps you on your toes! For other nights, the club is used in its entirety, so we rebuild the rig at one end of the room and run the Omnidrive in stereo."

LIGHTING BUDGET

In keeping with his no-holds-barred attitude to the sound at Adrenalin Village, Robert Simon issued the same criteria to Leisure Resources International for the specification of the lighting system: "Whatever it takes, make it work!" With a budget of around £80,000, LRI installed and programmed 12 Martin Pro 1220 XR



Entrepreneur Robert Simon with assistant Genevieve Harwood.

intelligent heads and, for the generic lighting, eight six-way Par 64 internally-wired bars with CP61 lamps.

These formed part of a system digitally-controlled by a Pulsar Masterpiece 108 with twin DMX outputs to the generic lighting packs and additional effects, and interfaced with a Martin 3032 computer controller. Digital dimming is catered for by Anytronics Series 193 Professional 12 x 10A 3-phase packs with individual channel breakers, phase indicators, channel level controls, pre-heat and thermal cut-out facilities. The house lighting system for the smaller club includes two Anytronics Superstar 150W strobes and eight Martin Pro 812 intelligent heads, under Anytronics ESC and Martin 2308 control respectively.

Dominic Calvert, systems design manager of LRI comments: "Everyone involved in the project built up to fever pitch around Christmas

time and just as they were beginning to ease up for the seasonal holiday, Penn Fabrication were called upon at little more than one week's notice to supply all of the triangular trussing and the IWBs." Penn trussing, Calvert says, was specified for its high strength-to-weight ratio and stiffness over long lengths. "It had to be! It's a very big venue and there are four 25 metre runs of trussing which span the entire width of the room, fixed underneath structural beamwork on spansets."

The months following the New Year's Eve launch have

seen an array of dance and theme nights, such as the iD/ Deconstruction Records party and the high society Pushca catwalk event. Its multi-functional design has also allowed Adrenalin Village to host promotions including Walt Disney's UK media launch of the Toy Story movie.

"Coming into the summer we have some major programmes lined up and we want to have the ability to use the whole site. We are holding the London Ball on June 22, and the London Motorcycle Exhibition which will attract around 25,000 people. Another event is a single and album launch party for Sony in connection with the Euro '96 football championships. We have another building to the east of The Venue which is 38,000 square feet and we haven't even started to look at that yet, so even bigger things can be expected of us in the future!"

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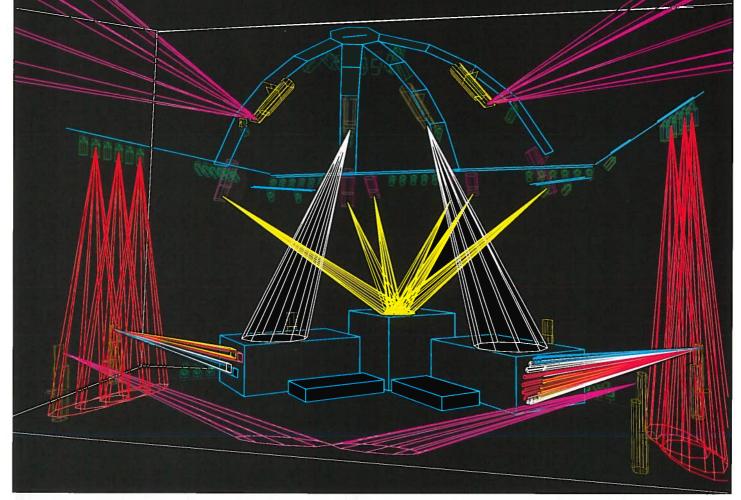
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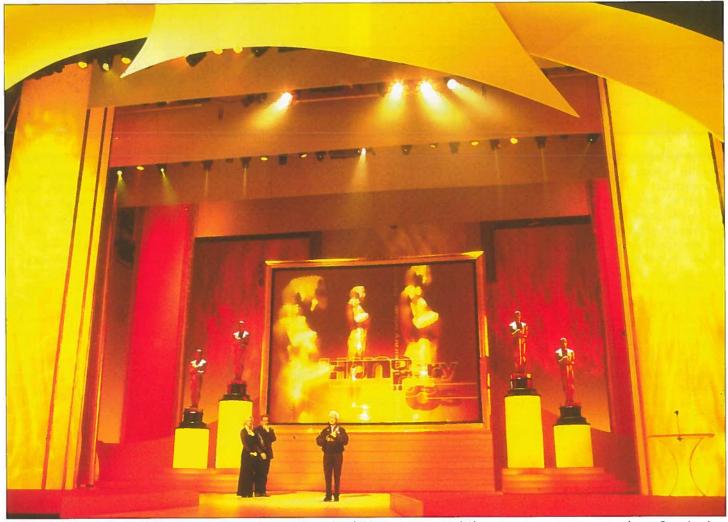
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OSCAR WINNERS

L+SI looks at the stars among the technology supporting the recent Academy Awards in Hollywood



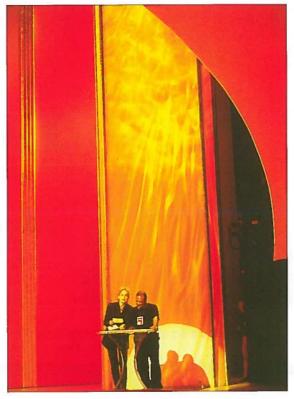
The impressive set was lit by Martin's PAL 1200s and ETC Source 4s, in addition to over 350 Vari*Lites.

photos: Steve Jennings

The annual presentation of the Academy Awards, or 'Oscars' as they are known to their friends, is always an incredibly glitzy affair, seemingly attended by every mega-famous face on the planet. For the lucky few that are called up onto the stage on Oscars night, the future invariably becomes a rosier prospect, bringing with it a longer string of noughts on pay cheques than was previously thought possible.

For the lighting and sound industry, the awards, which took place at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles, have moved on from being a dry one-dimensional presentation with stilted introductions followed by over-long acceptance speeches, to much more of a showcase for the technology which makes an ever-increasing contribution to the output of the film industry.

Of course, this being the Oscars, the ceremony is still a homage to 'luvvieness' and despite the best intentions of the creative and production teams to keep things moving, Hollywood cannot resist its one great night of self-indulgence.



Nevertheless, this was a relatively slick performance delivered on a set designed by Ray Klausen which, through cleverly reworking the traditional proscenium-arch look, produced the perfect backdrop on which a range of lighting moods and effects could be created.

The bulk of the lighting cast was made up of a large contingent of Vari*Lites - 366 in total - programmed by Andy O'Reilly and Matt Firestone and consisting of 12 VL2B and 86 VL2C spot luminaires, 216 VL5 wash luminaries and 52 VL6s. Also appearing was an up-and-coming young star, currently enjoying a heightened profile across the Atlantic in the UK, the ETC Source 4, of which there were no less than 54 in use. Other equipment included two 7k and four 4k Xenotech Britelites (the 4ks with automated heads), three 10k Strand Fresnels and more than 60 Strand Palas and Iris fixtures on the cyc.

Further moving light honours go to Martin Professional's new automated framing spot, the PAL 1200. Following so soon on the heels of its successful debut at the Brit Awards, the appearance of 24 of the units at Hollywood's





annual back-slapping spectacular was a double whammy for the Danish manufacturer.

Lighting designer Greg Brunton, of Hollywood-based Design Partners, used the PALs as keylights and for effects during the extravagant live performances which are fast becoming a hallmark of Oscars night. One of the highlights was a catwalk-style presentation of some of the most striking costume designs of the year from films such as Sense and Sensibility and Braveheart. Brunton used the PALs to create highly effective swirling patterns behind the line of fashion models. The set ended with a solo PAL 1200 focused centre stage. The front columns of the stage set were 'dressed' with slowly rotating gobos, also courtesy of the 1200W automated luminaires.

The full lighting inventory was provided by Towards 2000, the Burbank-based rental company, and the Martin PALs were supplied by Tracoman Inc, Martin's distribution arm in the US. Personnel from both companies were involved in the programming and direction of the lights, which were controlled from a Flying Pig Systems' WholeHog II desk. A second WholeHog II was provided for back-up purposes, but as the evening progressed without a hitch, was not called upon.

The sound system was no less complex. Sound designer Patrick Baltzell specified a main speaker system consisting of a pair of EAW "The Awards have become much more of a showcase for the technology which makes an ever-increasing contribution to the output of the film industry."

KF860s and four EAW KF861s positioned in two clusters to the left and right of stage. Further infill systems were situated around the venue to provide the necessary balance. Under balcony coverage was provided by five EAW UB82 speakers, whilst front-fill came from a collection of 10 Ramsa speakers. Apogee AE5s provided side-fill, whilst a distributed system of six Electro-Voice 1152s were positioned on the top balcony behind the acoustic panels. Tucked away behind the scenic elements was a small number of JBL long-throw horns which were integrated into the set to create a central cluster.

Crest amplification was used to drive the system with all delays and EQs coming from Klark-Teknik kit. The sound control was provided by a single Cadac Concert board, supplied by ProMix Inc of New York, whose Simon Nathan worked on the project. The 60-channel Concert's small footprint and sophisticated automation facilities were especially useful for the multi-act event which counted Bruce Springsteen, Bryan Adams and Gloria Estefan amongst the line-up.

One of the main factors in the choice of

Cadac desk, according to Patrick Baltzell, was its A/B input switching, eliminating the need for repatching during the show. A further significant factor was that the desk occupied the minimum of seats. Space is at a premium at these events, and The Academy are notoriously mean with

allocation of tickets and even members of the voting Academy themselves have only a one in 10 chance of being present at the ceremony. Working alongside Baltzell at the mix position was EQ specialist, Alex Huell-Thornton, who was responsible for proprietary equalisation and parameter correction.

The rig was fairly comprehensive for a one-off television event, but, as Baltzell pointed out, the nature of the show has changed. The category for Best Song has opened up considerably and more mainstream performers are now contenders in a way that they never were previously. Inevitably, this means that the demands on the sound system have expanded and a much more sophisticated rig is required.

This is now the eighth year that Baltzell has designed sound for the Oscars and he is well known for his work on other major US TV specials, including the Grammys, Emmys and Golden Globe Awards. He is also the sound designer for the opening and closing ceremonies at the forthcoming Olympics in Atlanta, a project that he has been working on for two years.



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SPANISH CORTES

Steve Moles catches up with Joaquin Cortes at the Sadlers Wells Theatre

For those of you who missed the brief, but extensive, media whirlwind, Joaquin Cortes is a Flamenco phenomenon whose ecstatic dancing has swept through Mediterranean Europe and is now on the brink of a major tour through South America.

This is no ordinary dance show (no disrespect to the genre), but a quite different performance embracing not only a variety of dance styles, but also a host of controversial presentational devices. For a start, Joaquin is promoted by Spain's leading rock and roll promoter Pino Sagliocco, a man more used to dealing with the likes of Mick Jagger and REM than the more classical oeuvres. As his star has risen, Giorgio Armani, ever keen to re-position fashion close to pop, has taken on the mantle of costume designer for the tour. Thus Joaquin has been thrust into the populist mainstream of promotion, a pop star who neither sings nor plays. He does, however, conform to the other prerequisites for stardom: smouldering good looks, lithesome body, and a controversial personality, unafraid to challenge the conventions of his art.

The production was brought to England by promoter Jef Hanlon, a name we more usually associate with Gary Glitter. His production manager on this occasion, Steve Nolan, introduced the show to L+SI as: "A Spanish flamenco artiste that everyone is raving about over there. What's interesting is that the show is using the tools of rock and roll: stage trucks, Brit Row PA, and lighting from CPL and Vari-Lite, with advice on the lighting design from Patrick Woodroffe".

Patrick and Steve have a long-standing relationship, pre-dating even their association with 4:1 Studios, so we might not be surprised to see Patrick's involvement, but it does give some insight to the muscle that's being applied to push this man's career forward.

The sound system is relatively modest, with three Turbosound Floodlights per side and an Midas XL3 out front. The band performed on stage informally, not quite a Mariarchi troupe, but in the vein of strolling troubadours, with four vocalists, two guitars, double bass, violin, flute, and two drums. The singers wore lapel mics with radios, for very necessary reasons. It's not so much that they move about a great deal, but the intrusion of mic stands would have ruined the taverna atmosphere that was so very much a part of the show. These mics proved to be the one weak point in what was otherwise a flawless evening. It wasn't through any great failure of technology that these mics proved a problem though one went intermittent, either through flat battery or dodgy lead, but because there appeared to be no-one on stage empowered to cope with these little emergencies. The sight of the other singers trying to lean forward to offer their own mic as a pick-up to their stricken colleague was pure farce, and also quite obviously unsettled the singers, who for some time thereafter sung with such great projection that the sound engineer, Gonzalo Fernandez, was obliged to back their channels right off.

A Flamenco Floor had been laid across the stage and flat plate pick-ups fitted beneath it because so dead and baffled are the theatre's acoustics that the floor alone did not provide



Spanish star Joaquin Cortes performing at Sadlers Wells Theatre.

the necessary resonance for the percussive stamping that embodies this dance style. Despite this, the engineer erred on the side of caution, and the floor still seemed less lively than it should, a fact confirmed by Sonia Martin from CPL who said that back home in her native Spain the noise of the floor would be much more present.

On home ground, Cortes performs to 10,000 people a night on scaffold built stages in bullrings, and in such surroundings the click of his heels will crack like pistol shots with little need for help from the PA. It's a balance that Fernando will need to find if theatre performance is to become the norm.

The lighting is designed by Juanjo Beloqui, who has been lighting Cortes for just over a year now and has already built a real rapport with the star: "Joaquin imagines the lights," he said. "I have to figure out what he means (ever the LD's dilemma)." Beloqui went on to explain that Cortes is always developing new routines and looks at the entire presentation, not only

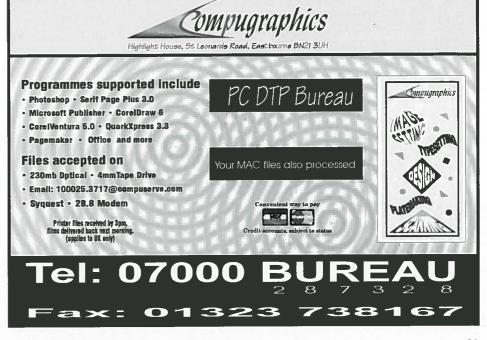
It's a straightforward lighting system: the performers are in a black box so, as Beloqui so eloquently put it "I have to use the lights to decorate everything and nothing." 12 VL5s and six VL6s are augmented by 48 2kW PCs, nine 2kW profiles and four 5kW Fresnels, all of which he runs from an Artisan Mini II. Lighting is evenly split between cross-stage horizontal beams, from shin busters rigged from floor to about head height, and five fly-bars evenly spread front to back stage. Beloqui uses lots of smoke, not only to achieve the atmosphere, but to put colour in the air. Much of his work was static lit - a blend of saturated colour from above, with perhaps a 50 per cent fade from the 2ks on the side. When the cues did come, he was super tight. (This was confirmed by Patrick, who in summarising his role said: "I could never achieve the precision Beloqui has on the cues, that data, d'tat dat dat. That lift on the third foot fall can only be learnt from long hours working together.'

The dancers worked right on their marks and Beloqui had to be right on them too. The knife throwing scene, in what was a vivid interpretation of the poet Lorca meeting with 'Death' on the road to Cordoba, could almost have had an Autopilot on each dagger as Cortes

hurled each one into the floor.

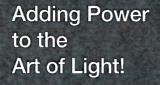
The band was lit in the background, separated from the dancers by a distinct line of darkness. Moments of great passion were lit in profile: just highlights playing across Cortes' naked torso, while other movements filled with power and athleticism appeared in the full glare of the spotlight. That's not to say this was all balls and braggadocio, not some Latin lover with slim hips and a neat little arse playing to the ladies. This was a show of grace and elegance, power and fluidity, and it must be said, not afraid to inject moments of great humour.

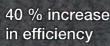
I'm a typical Englishman with two left feet when it comes to dancing, and both made from clay at that. I can, therefore, give no greater praise than to say the two hours I spent at the back of the theatre were absolutely riveting. There's an inevitable momentum to this show, and if it is to be a new form of mass-appeal entertainment, then I'm all for it.



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MOVING UP A GEAR

Jerry Gilbert visits Luton-based Optikinetics to learn more about the investment programme that has enhanced the current success of the K2 projector

At the end of last year, Optikinetics celebrated the milestone of having reached a quarter century - most of that time spent in the familiar buildings and outhouses of Cromwell Road, Luton.

Such companies who stay the distance are relatively few and far between, especially so since the hard-hitting recession of the late eighties/early nineties certainly rocked the industry and shook a few companies from the trees. Optikinetics held firm and indeed were themselves engaged in one of the bravest and costliest adventures in their history. By the time the K2 projector finally came off the production line, the company had spent

around £200,000 and consigned to the archives the seminal Solar 250 projector - a product that for its ability to ascribe the entire development of the disco lighting industry, deserved something of a ceremonial burial.

Still, £200,000 would have bought a hell of a party. "I guess I've come to terms with the cost," says the company's co-founder and chairman Neil Rice, with typical understatement. But sales of the K2 are right on course, with demand greater than anticipated. For all its 'replacement' tag, the new incarnation is no traditional effects projector aimed squarely at the dance market - even though that market has again embraced the idea of ambient projection techniques.

Production facilities are moving up a gear at

Cromwell Road, with the construction of a dust-free clean room, inside which chrome-etched gobos are being produced for larger scale projection, alongside the traditional method of silk screen printing. Demand for custom gobos is also booming and graphic design has also been brought in house for the first time since the early eighties, under Steve Cooper, who has four sales brochures earmarked for this year.

The K2 itself is encased in a glorious precision pressure die-cast aluminium chassis - an aesthetic that matches that of the new Trilite 100 structural system to which it will ideally clamp for the booming display and shopfitting market. Optikinetics, sensing that the 'tin box' method was now destined for the archives, considered five alternatives, of which extrusion - the method typically favoured by moving light projector companies - was the favourite.

"When we compared our chassis with an extruded version, the latter looked like junk alongside," remarked senior development engineer Dave Thomas, who with his design engineers Mike Bond and Aaron Custance, brought the product to fruition. The product (along with Trilite) enabled Neil Rice to emerge from the huge triennial EuroShop fair in Dusseldorf with 1,000 sales leads, which he split with his German distributor, Josef Lasek of Aha! GmbH.

It is Lasek who is credited with pushing Optikinetics for a midrange projector; the K2 today forms a family with the K1 and K4 (audio mixer company Soundcraft already have the K3, so that name was out).

"EuroShop was a turning point for the K2," observes Rice, "since Aha! had approached us prior to the previous show in 1993, asking us to make a mid-range projector because the German market had cracked gobo projection for advertising.

"As Germany is our third largest market we took the request seriously,



Black and white versions of K2, on the Trilite rig.



Optikinetics' chairman Neil Rice.

but at the time our R&D resource was fully involved in developing the Solar 575 and Solar System, as well as down-engineering the Strobeflower; it just wasn't feasible to produce it in that time to the quality we would have been happy with."

Once Opti's R&D team had completed work on the other three products and were in a white board' situation, the K2 projector was quickly voted in as the next priority. "Although there are a lot of products we might have preferred to make from an artistic point of view, it was obvious that mid-range projector was the most commercially viable," added Rice.

And so, in February 1994, a vast amount of time and financial resource was committed, and work on K2 commenced in-house.

GOING BACK . . .

To trace the lineage it is necessary to mention the in-house capability that had grown up around Optikinetics in the early eighties. This was when the company's brief and unsuccessful flirtation with Lightning Tower Hire (Astralloy) had led them into production of their own trilite system, while nearby in Huntingdon a sheet metal shop was starting to produce parts for a new range of lighting effects. "In the early eighties," remembers Neil, "we brought out all the lighting effects which underpinned the company's

survival - Soundscanner, Crystal Pulse and different beam effects for the Solar 250."

The era of producing beam effects through smoke, rather than projecting moving images onto walls, had been hailed and was manifest at the famous BADEM 1982 Superdisco. But, the definite turning point in Optikinetics' fortunes was the runaway success of medium-sized Trilite, and by now a third production facility in Huntingdon had swamped the old sheet metal facility.

Part of the success was due to the recruitment of a salesman who had previously sold Meroform to the UK exhibition market, followed by that of Jeff Broitman in the States. Coincidentally he, too, had been working for Mero US. Trilite production was already well established at their Canadian factory, backed by considerable new investment. Under Jeff's guidance a North American sales office was established in Virginia. Importantly, it brought Optikinetics up to a total of five separate locations, with UK Trilite production on virtually 24 hours-a-day production since last March.

It was this schedule that facilitated the introduction of the Trilite 100 Series, launched at Intershop last spring, and aimed at the exhibition, shopfitting and display market. Its unique split-spigot joining system provides the discreet finish essential in display applications. Previously split-spigot designs have relied purely on friction, Opti's is screwed, with the heads remaining captive in the outer wall of the tube. "The original Trilite had completely transformed the market place and profitability of the company," remembers Rice. "Lighting product was now flooding into the UK from abroad and everybody needed something to hang the lighting from."

It marked a significant step forward for the company and also brought



Andy Welch of R&D on K2 assembly.

with it a return to the volumes that had been a major feature during the heyday of the late seventies. Maintaining a policy of profit retention did not stop the company (who had started life in the communal existence of a Hatfield chicken farm), from goofing off into the unknown from time to time, sometimes successfully, sometimes not. For instance, in the mid-eighties they had decided to establish a full R&D department and employed David Thomas. Two years down the line they placed a recruitment ad to find a second design engineer in Viz comic! "Apart from inviting the world's nutters to come down on us as one, it did reach the graduates," says Neil. A package went back to the applicants containing three biographical articles written on the company with the request: "This is our story, now tell us yours." In the end, we couldn't decide between the final two applicants, so we enlisted both."

David Thomas had been left to design the celebrated Strobeflower virtually single-handedly, but the task awaiting the new team - in the wake of criticism that the Solar 250 simply wasn't powerful enough - was to design the Solar 575, which put them back on the projection map.

There was early market resistance, largely because the effects had to be changed manually. At £2,000 for a 575, customers decided they would prefer 10 £200 Solar 250s, each with a different effect, and switch between them. Thus the Solar System, with its multi-effects changer was a natural development. It was also Opti's first DMX device, which accepts 16 interchangeable gobos (eight on eight producing 64 combinations), all remotely-controllable. But when the Manchester rave scene burst into life around 1987, the effect on sales of the 250 was both sudden and devastating - Solar 250s were being dusted off in garages and sheds everywhere.

A NEW GENERATION OF LIGHTSHOWS

"A new generation of lightshow artists started to appear, many of whom had beaten a path to our front door as a result of frustration at not being able to get our full range of products from the dealers to whom we had referred them," remembers Rice. (Ben Sullivan, later of the Spot Co, was among them).

"It was understandable because the lighting market had become so saturated that dealers were full of other brands." Faith in the creativity of projected coloured light sweeping through smoke had been rekindled, but Neil Rice maintains that while it was classified a 'psychedelic revival' the graphic images of the sixties had, for the most part, made way for



Kevin Whooley working on gobo production in the new dust-free 'cleanroom'.

eighties and nineties themes - the 'open gate' architecture of the machine offering an artist's palette of creativity.

But some 50,000 units down the line, the open gate on the Solar 250 has been closed for the last time. Sales peaked in 1979 when 2,000 went out the door in one month and it enjoyed something of a revival in the early eighties where the role of the projector changed. Sales were not confined to the entertainment market, either, as it enjoyed healthy sales in the sensory rooms of special needs schools, both as a calming effect and as a stimulus (while a panoramic rotator, fixed with a prism is also used as a physiotherapy aid).

The mid-eighties was also the period when Optikinetics' products graduated to a rock and roll concert stage for the first time. It was through their brief distribution of ACR product that they met Paul Selwood, Level 42's lighting designer. Selwood was using MacSpots, Spectron and other ACR products and when he tried Strobeflowers in the design, he proved that the high-power xenon, mounted in the flower optical arrangement, had the necessary stage presence.

Like the Solar 250, when strobing became de rigueur in raves, not only 'Strobeflower' but the name 'Optikinetics' made it onto flyers. Yet the product succumbed to the technical gremlins and was eventually withdrawn from sale for redevelopment, while units went out on a hire-only basis. "Getting that product right was traumatic - and still is. Strobe tubes are linear with the electrodes a fair distance apart, whether in a straight line or curled up in a pig's tail, but we brought these electrodes very close together to create a point source," explains Rice. It was something that they had uniquely developed for the Quasar Xe900 - the same



A Trilite welder dressed and ready for action.

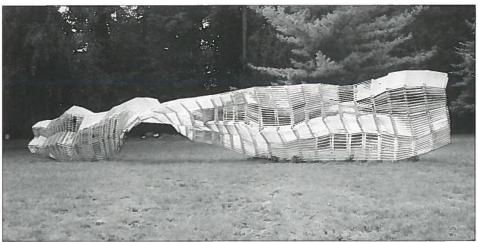
power supply and light source were then embodied into the 'Flower's optical arrangement. (Optikinetics later downengineered Strobeflower for the club market, while retaining the larger models for touring).

Although the company made a conscious decision not to put R&D effort into their strobe range at the time of white-boarding the K2, they are now working vigorously to meet current regulations regarding interference (given the difficulty of containing emissions given off by a flash tube) and the Health and Safety guidelines, which are now limiting strobe flashes to 5-per-second across any combination of strobes in a given display.

Neil Rice would like to see further steps being taken: "I feel that as an industry we should have self-policed earlier - not just for the sake of strobe manufacturers. I believe the HSE are looking at the shutter flash rates of high-powered intelligent lights, simulating strobe effects mechanically. I have yet to see the GLC's original scientific evidence that the HSE guideline is based on, although I'm not disputing the fact that it can produce fits." It's certainly enough to put shivers up the Fruit Salad Lightshow's zapping of the Ozric Tentacles stage.

WACKY DIVERSIONS...

On the peripheral front, Optikinetics have always been game for a wild diversion. "Every year we get involved in some madcap thing like helping Chris Craig to light the Orb on a floating stage in Denmark," remarks Rice. Last year they were approached by three artists/architects based in Paris who had been commissioned by the UN to produce one of 60 works of art for the UN's 50th anniversary celebrations. After others had turned down the request to build



Ether 1- a sculptural challenge requiring 12,500 welds and weighing 3.5 tons.

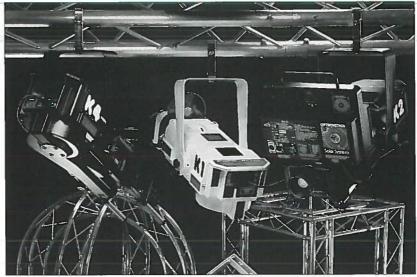
this aluminium sculpture, measuring over 20 metres long and utilising in excess of four tons of aluminium, their path led them Optikinetics, who happily rose to the challenge.

The construction of 'Ether 1', designed on a full size CAD and requiring 12,500 welds, was no easy task and ate up considerable amounts production time. Production director Mick Wells will willingly talk for hours about the siting of the sculpture in the grounds of the UN building in Geneva, and how they burnt out three welding plants - but the simplest wav to communicate what was

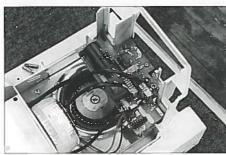
involved is to leave the explanations to the picture accompanying this article which will have to serve those thousand words.

At the design stage of K2 it was evident that a large investment in tooling was required, as well as the investigation of a number of different methods of metal forming to house the existing lamps from the Solar 250 and 575. The result is a range of three products, all in the same basic body, but with different light

The K1 is designed as the replacement for the Solar 250 and the K4, which will be launched in the summer, the replacement for the Solar 575, with the popular K2 as the mid-range model. Dave Thomas explains how the optical



The K1 and K4 projectors, rigged and ready to go.



The modular layout of the K2

system was developed. "The lamp was sent out to an optical designer, skilled in designing two-lens condenser systems and working to a

15-page specification although there was quite a bit of dialogue in the process.

"We wanted to use all the existing accessories and the biggest constraint was the amount of physical space available for the condenser system, which is limited by the physical size of the motor and gear box of effect rotators." Nevertheless, they have produced the optical system they wanted, providing an even field of illumination and image uniformity.

For instance the K2, formed on seven separate die-castings, boasts optics far superior to the Solar 250. Its modular panel design

includes a plug-in hour meter to monitor lamp life, a shutter and dimmer board and Animator option, with provision for a DMX interface, which will follow later. Also evident are a state-of-the-art electronic ballast and retractable support bars, onto which front-of-lens effects can be mounted. The basic retail/exhibition version for the display market, with facilities restricted to a simple mains input, is priced down to £965.

The recoupment period for the K2 project is set at around three years - but judging by current success, it may well cross the finishing post ahead of deadline. Maybe Optikinetics should put that party on hold for a millennium special!

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BM II' Mixer, 'QCLS' Interface and 'QSV-2' Speed Variator
Mission PCM 7000 CD Player Sony, Shure and Denon CD Players, Aiwa and Alpine Cassette Decks, Aiwa and Trio Tuners

Audio Effects
Dolby 'XP-24-SR' Noise Reduction Unit
AMS 'S-DMX' Dual Channel DDL/Pitch Changer/Sampler (2-off) AMS 'RMX-16' Digital Reverb stex '4030' Synchroniser (4-off)

Fostex '4010' Timecode Generator and '4010' Subsystem Fostex '4010' Timecode Generator and '4010' Subsystem Yamaha 'SPX-50D' Digital Sound Processor Drawmer Compressor/Limiters, dual and quad, Orban and Klark-Technik Equalisers, Klark-Technik 'DN500' and Symetrix '425' Compressor/Limiter/Expander, Audio Kinetics 2.10 Q-Lock Synchroniser, Audio Kinetics 'ES1.11' ES Bus Synchroniser, GML 'TBC-400S' Editing Time Base Corrector

Speakers, Amplifiers and Microphones Rogers 'PM710' and 'PM510' Speakers Genelec '1030a' Speakers Quad '510' and '405' Power Amplifiers Neumann 'U87' and AKG 'C-41/4EB' Microphones (5-off) Denon 'PMA-250' Microphone Amplifier Beyer 'D-100' and 'D-102' Headphones (4-off)

Film Equipment
Sondor Model 'V20MA3' Standard Super 16mm Film Projector Converted to Telecine use with 'Sony' Camera use with Sony Camera
Perfectone 16/35mm Record/Reply Sound Follower
Perfectone (6mm Sound Follower (4-off)
Sondor Libra 'MO3a' (6mm Film Dubbing Recorders (2-off) and Players (10-off) PAG 'B-16' 16mm Film Dubbing Recorders (3-off) and Players (6-off) PAG 4:2 Audio Mixing Desk with PAG Recorder and Replay Machine CCR Splicer (3-off0 Film Horses (2-off) rewind Arms

General Studio Equipment ACMA 'SC-2000' Mobile Air Conditioning Unit Time Code Display Units - 8 Digit and 4 Digit (2-off) Pair of Pre-Read Lights and Amplifier Hitachi 'V212' 20MHz Oscilloscope

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ON TOUR

AND PRODUCTION NEWS



Sting - a popular performer in France.

Sting

Le Zenith in Lille, France

LD: Nick Sholem SD: Mike Keating

The day I arrived in Lille, four North African terrorists were gunned down on the outskirts of the city by the police. Some 24 hours after I departed, Ministers from the G7 Group met in Lille to discuss unemployment in the industrialised nations. The first incident will be quickly forgotten, the second was so dry as to be dust already. What happened in between time, namely a concert by Sting at Le Zenith, will for some have a more lasting resonance. Pretentious bollocks I know, but it is fair to say that the 8,000 or so people who attended the concert will probably relish its memory longer and deeper than the many millions who acknowledged the other two events through the media.

SOUND

Le Zenith in Lille is part of a greater whole, perhaps 35 per cent of Le Grand Palais, a large multipurpose building very similar to the Saddle Dome in Calgary; a venue which many will be familiar with from the last Winter Olympics.

As the name suggests the exterior profile of the building resembles nothing less than the curve of a riding saddle; low in the centre rising high at each end and, viewed from above, oval in outline. With hardly a flat surface in the building it is a kind environment for sound, in fact, the one end of the Palais that forms Le Zenith in many ways resembles a horn enclosure with the stage situated in the driver position and all walls and ceiling expanding away and outwards from it. With a huge, high and wide balcony rising from a relatively small stalls area - almost to where the roof meets the outer wall - the great majority of the audience are well placed, not only for an

unobstructed view, but also to hear an easily and evenly dispersed sound.

Sound engineer Mike Keating has long been a Clair Brothers S4 advocate and has mixed for Sting for several years. Arraying the system in this room was an obvious choice, high and wide with six cabinets across, three deep each side across the main width of the room, plus a slightly tighter two wide, two deep wrap at the extremities of the stage. Overall the sound was, for me, too loud, but there's no denying that wherever you sat, and in spite of the level, an evenly balanced, full-mix was always discernible.

Mike mixes from a Yamaha PM4000 and had one new piece of kit in his effects rack probably not seen in Europe before. (I say 'probably not seen before' as Mike admitted it's made by a friend of his and is virtually brand new). "The EL8 Distressor is a limiter compressor that can emulate any kind of compressor you like," said Mike. "It's designed by Dave Derr who used to work at Eventide but has now gone out on his own and works out of Pennsylvania near me. I like it because it's got really controllable attack and release, nice large knobs with a broad scale, so big turns make very fine adjustments. It's easy to use in a dark gig, when you're busy and don't need to be worrying about over-doing it."

LIGHTING

Lighting too saw some new technology in use. David Hersey's Digital Light Curtains might not be new but this is certainly the first time they've been used on a rock and roll tour, and a lengthy one at that. In fact, Nick Sholem has specified quite an assortment of technology for the tour.

A chevron of three trusses hangs above the stage whilst a fourth, with its apex purposely off centre, holds an upstage wall of Kabuki drops with the DLCs on its downstage cord. A 52 x 44ft box truss with a centre spine supports the whole set, but the vast majority of the lighting hangs from the chevrons. Nick has layered his technology: 43 VL5Bs, 24 Cyberlights, 11 VL6s, six DLCs and three Wildfire 400W UV lights fitted with

Colorfaders as dowsers. All are run from a Wholehog II so that from up-stage the trusses run DLC, Cyber', VL5B, Cyber'. The latter are more widespread than this with further lamps on the front and sides of the box. The chevron shape is reflected on the floor too, with seven rear projection screens 7 x 7ft square arranged in an arc behind the minimal back-line gear of the band. The screens and black-out projection tunnels (built by Brilliant) also conceal a VL5B behind each, so the screens can be used as colour boxes.

The main drop of the Kabuki (there's a potential for seven looks, but only three are currently in use) is used for projection too, all equipment coming from Labyrinth and comprising a 5kW Xenon for the main screen positioned front of house, and 1kW Xenon slide projectors behind each of the smaller screens. By selecting just one chevron of say VL5s, or inter-playing between the Cybers and DLCs, Nick had a whole range of quite distinctly different combinations that altered not only the style of lighting, but also the physical dimension of the performance area. Autopilot sometimes guided the Cybers, whilst at other times they free ranged like all good mirror lights should.

Two things about the DLCs are of significance. You can do mid-frame scrolls, which Nick did to create a subtle sunset red-amber bleed across stage. It was an intended effect, but obviously careful choice of adjacent gel string colours is required. The other is the road cases the DLCs come supplied in. Each takes two lamps laid in opposition to each other.

Because the scroll rollers within the DLCs are sprung mounted at one end this means that which ever way you up-end the case in the truck one set of rollers will fall out of their mountings. Spacers are provided that will prevent this happening, but it's a small fiddly operation, not friendly to foreign stage hands and rapid get-outs. Crew chief Tony Simpson has found it is relatively easy to modify the case lining so both instruments can be fitted in the same alignment.

On another technical note, watch out for high frequency interference to the Autopilot system from cymbals on stage, especially the high-hat. Wybron do note this in their literature but it's worth re-iterating. The simple solution is one or two well-placed small perspex screens around the offending instrument.

All the projection is run from a portable Mac via Dataton controllers by Jason Bridge of Labyrinth who also provided all the artwork. The images are loosely associated with songs, a very abstract sky-scraper skyline for 'Englishman in New York' for example, but long time Sting production manager 'Tam' has strong views on this: 'No literal interpretations. If it's too literal, put it out of focus.'

Sting is a big star in France and gigs all over the country, including two sold-out nights in the Paris Bercy, might arguably be an indication that he is more popular in France than he is at home. Either way, he has broad appeal here - it's always been hip in France to defer to jazz influences as is evidenced by their distinctly different pop music industry, and certainly Sting's more jazzy numbers had the Lille audience up on their feet and swinging. Sometimes it's good to forget about terrorists and unemployment and make like it's Mardi Gras.

Mike and the Mechanics

Sheffield City Hall

LD: Alan Parker SD: Chris Hedge

Mike and the Mechanics are a pedigree band, not only do they have Mike Rutherford from Genesis as founder and leader, but also Paul Young from Sad Cafe, Paul Carrack from Squeeze and Tin Renwick who pops up all over the place (not forgetting Gary Wallis on drums). It's a mixture redolent of a seventies fashion, when super groups were all the rage; great blobs of talent thrown together in the expectation of something musically spectacular. They were usually short lived and invariably left Rick Wakeman scratching around for a new job. Mike's Mechanics are thankfully from a different mould, their aspirations less pretentious and they display their wares in a workman like way.

The band's commercial success might be of lesser significance to a man who enjoys global super-stardom in his other role, but is surely not unwelcome recognition for the musical potency of his group. When you see them on stage, however, it is all too obvious there are another goals in sight: freedom of expression, breathing space outside the confines of his primary role, and a less pressured environment where collectively the musicians can really enjoy themselves.

SOUND

Once again Chris 'Privet' Hedge is in charge FOH and his favoured J Series EAW 850 system comes from Concert Sound. It's a comfortable touring role for Privet to slip into: "A week before the tour starts we go into a working men's club local to where Mike lives and do stage rehearsals, nothing huge, just the PM 4000 and the rest of my front of house gear run through a couple of Tannoy cabinets. There's a fair bit of mixing to be done, a lot of pulling and pushing to put colour in the mix, so it's time well spent." The rehearsals are important for monitor man Geoff Hooper too, the entire band use the In Ear system: "All the band have vastly different mixes. They have to be so precise that you can't just go like that," he says miming a brisk turn to an EQ pot, "just a little with this system goes a long way."

In a curious twist to the norm, the fact that all the band have such diverse mixes had led to a situation where Geoff needs more channels than



Mike and The Mechanics - a 'garage' band with plenty of polish.

Chris, using both an XL3 and a 15 channel XL stretch to total 55 channels in all, whereas Chris uses just 30 for the band, plus 10 effects. For the City Hall, Chris has put in a lot of cabinets, eight per side on the floor, a large flown centre cluster of eight, plus two single hung cabinets each side flown at the extremities of the house grid to cover the downstage tips of the balconies.

He's also squeezed in a couple of KF850s on the inside edge of the floor stacks and a pair of the smaller KF300s on top. The KF850s are aimed right across stage and benefit the band in terms of physical ambience, but, in fact, the whole floor stack is arrayed to cover cross stage so dispersion is obviously the main consideration. "This is the kind of audience that will complain," Chris explained. "They know what good sound is, and expect it." As does the patrician figure of Tony Smith, the band's manager, who sits fastidiously FOH throughout the show and will interject if he thinks the keys are a bit too loud.

It's a typical mature rock band with excellent musicianship and varied material. The music covers the whole dynamic range, and it must be said, was very pleasant to listen to never straying much above 110-112dB.

Although they faithfully reproduce the style and structure of their recorded material they sound better live than the more anodyne output of a CD. It's an imponderable factor, but it's there.

SET/LIGHTING

For Alan Parker this is his first designing job for the band, thanks largely he says, to a hearty recommendation from Geoff and Chris who've worked with him on Marillion tours in the past. Two straight 40 foot trusses front and rear hold a

fairly sparse system of six four lamp ACL bars (dimmed @ 110v), 24 Pars with Colorfaders all from Meteorlites, with eight Cyberlights from SpotCo, and nine of Vari-lite's VL5s.

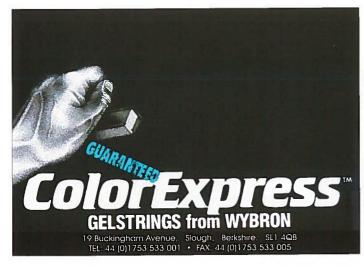
A design Alan explored on Marillion, and one which he is using again here, is to hang main lighting instruments at varying heights. Thus, the VL5s form an arc across the backdrop hung from vertical lengths of pipe, while four of the Cyber's are positioned atop upturned cases or hung from wind-up stands at about 15 feet. The resultant array of

sources helps a great deal in breaking up what is otherwise an austere set with little in the way of risers and is made even barer by the absence of any wedges.

This leaves few potential target areas for lighting, other than the musicians themselves, and a great deal of open space. Beam work from the Cyber's works well to fill this, and the black backdrop, striped by lengths of a curious reflective light silky fabric (courtesy of Hangman) helps a great deal. But this is a show with a couple of big pop songs and on these occasions the band needs strong bright lighting to lift them. By Alan's own admission he needs "a brighter light for the show." Another 100 Pars or three times as many VL5s wouldn't go amiss, but it's hard to justify such things for just a couple of numbers. Everybody's favourite budget conundrum, Alan uses two ellipsoidals mounted front and rear, for each band member, each corrected with various levels of orange CT to balance their skin tones.

With much of the rest of the lighting he is obliged to fill the air so these profiles come in for a lot of use keeping the principles lit, something he finds a bit tricky to do from the Wholehog he is running the show on. As a result, he tends to fade by percentages and will tease lights down as required. This may sound a little out of place for what is an AOR band but it did work, little 30 per cent bumps on the build through the VL5s during 'Web of Life' appeared perfectly balanced to the song. Alan's design may lack a bit of punch for the big numbers, but his treatment of the ballads is nicely coloured by subtlety.

A tasty show and a lot of fun to be had seeing it. Mike and the Mechanics are a garage band without the oily rag, but with plenty of polish.





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THE WIZARDS OF OZ

Ruth Rossington reviews the EnTech Show in Sydney

It's not often that we poor journalists feel the Gods are smiling on us, but sipping a Strawberry Daiquiri whilst gazing across Darling Harbour in Sydney, I actually couldn't resist the impulse to feel a little smug, secure in the knowledge that thousands of miles away the rest of the industry was hard at work.

Work of a different kind was just around the corner of course, but it was a big corner, and this was a particularly large Daiquiri. Nevertheless, all good things must come to an end, the opening day of EnTech dawned and so, like Dorothy, I donned my red shoes, set foot on the Yellow Brick Road, and went in search of the Wizards of Oz.

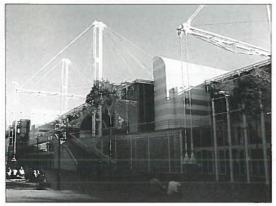
And there were plenty to be found. The Australian market, though relatively small, is certainly vibrant, and whilst you can probably count the major manufacturers on one hand, there's a whole coterie of distributors, installation companies and smaller manufacturers who all add to the eclectic mix that make it such an interesting place to be.

Jands, who recently marked 25 years in the industry, had one of the largest stands at the show, the main focus of which was the first-showing in Australia of the range of luminaires and control systems from ETC. ETC's impact on this market has already been significant and the Obsession console is in use on a number of productions including Miss Saigon, Beauty and the Beast and Les Miserables. Jands has always been strong on product portfolio and their stand was a showcase of some of the leading names in the industry, not least Flying Pig and the Wholehog system, Lycian's range of spots and their own range of products, led by the Jands-Hog. Sound-wise, the company have an equally strong pedigree and act as agents for Crest, Shure, JBL and Rane. Various upgrades to Shure's Beta range were on show, as was a new UHF wireless system running 20 compatible channels. The company is also starting to push heavily into theatre fabrics and is emerging as one of the major suppliers to the local market. Added to which, they have recently been appointed Hoffend & Sons' official representative in Australia and had a range of products on stand, notably the Magic-Loc rope lock system. A total of 11 Jands-distributed or manufactured products were in the running for EnTech Awards and Paul Mulholland, company MD, was called up to the rostrum on no less than eight occasions.

Clay Paky and Pulsar mounted their usual slick presentation, having moved away from a



Geoff Biggs (left) and David Storie of Bytecraft with Norma Hancock of Three Arts Services.



The impressive Sydney Exhibition Centre.

pure lighting show to one with a much more technical bias. Distributors Show Technology report an expanding market for the range with shopping centres, theme parks and major corporates lining up to specify the product. This move has been further bolstered by the re-engineering upgrades across all products and the recent setting-up of Show Lighting Australia Pty, headed by Peter McKenzie, a dedicated company, which will follow CP's overseas lead, establishing an exclusive reseller network concentrating on projects and sales. Pulsar is probably best known for Masterpiece in Australia and Ken Sewell and Andy Graves were at the show to introduce the market to the rest of the range, which included the official release of the Pulsar playback unit. Naturally, the CP&P team, led by Enrico Caironi, were delighted to collect the Full Size Moving Light Award for the Golden Scan III.

In fact, Show Technology were the host for a large number of stands across the halls which meant that managing director Emmanuel Ziino and director Rod Salmon were constantly wheeling around the show, ensuring the best interests of manufacturers such as Martin Professional, Jem, ADJ/MAD Lighting, Geni, Kupo (who released a new range of spot banks and mini strips) and Studio Due. No strangers to prize-winning, Martin Professional collected awards for both the Roboscan 812 and Pro 400s, and introduced to the market their latest innovation - PAL - the first intelligent light with automated framing shutters. Jon Petts of Jem, now owned by Martin, was another award-winner whose ZR31E topped the smoke machine category.

Coemar DeSisti also had a high profile and it was a chance for the Australian market to get its first glimpse of the Coemar NAT MM launched at SIEL, as well as a look at the range of DeSisti luminaires. The stand was also a base for a clutch of UK companies, including Doughty, whose range of stands and accessories was being shown for the first time in Oz, together with Axon's ShowCAD, Starlite's Stardraw and The Effects Company's Cyclone smoke machine.

Melbourne-based Bytecraft, whose efforts over the last year were acknowledged

Melbourne-based **Bytecraft**, whose efforts over the last year were acknowledged at the show with the Exporter of the Year Award, represent **Strand Lighting** in Australia and not surprisingly had the latest Strand releases, including the 530 and 500 desks launched at PLASA last year. Bytecraft also act for **LSD** in Australia and had the Icon washlight on stand. In addition to the lines

washlight on stand. In addition to the lines they represent, they are manufacturers in their own right and probably best-known for the State Automation system and Solution range of dimmers. The company, in tandem with Malaysian partners, O'Connors and Trutech, have won the tender for the supply and installation of the specialist staging and control systems for Malaysia's new National Theatre, one of the most technically advanced theatre complexes in the world. The 2,000 seat theatre features extensive stage machinery with over 250 separate elements, all of which are controlled by Bytecraft's State system.

One of the major players in the Australian market is **Chameleon** (another award-winner), a lighting rental/production company headed by Tony Davies, whose main product lines come from Altman and Wybron. The company have gained a firm foothold in the Australian market and are currently supplying equipment to major shows such as *Miss Saigon*, *The Mikado* and *Hot Shoe Shuffle*, and will no doubt have a stake in *Phantom of the Opera* when it reaches Australia later this year. Chameleon also manufacture their own trussing system following their recent purchase of Advanced Lighting Equipment.

Another indigenous company, **Showcraft**, fronted by a now beardless Lee Conlon, was showing the Series 2 Colourset, an upgraded version of its predecessor, which offers real-time fader tracking operation, as well as locked frame to frame capabilities. New DMX products now include the DMX204 and DMX104 4-way optical splitters.

New Zealand-based **Selecon**, sharing a stand with **Herkes**, added new cyc and flood units to their Acclaim range of 500/650W luminaires. As these products will be covered in greater detail in a company profile in the next issue of L+SI,



Paul Mulholland of Jands (second, right) with Tim Vear of Shure (left), Dennis Varian of ETC US (second, left) and Peter Hoffend of Hoffend.



Pulsar's Andy Graves (left) and Ken Sewell (second right) with Emmanuel Ziini of Show Technology and Enrico Cairino of Clay Paky (right).



Tony Davies of Chameleon (left) with Bob Kliegl of Altman Stage Lighting.

it only remains to add that Selecon too were in the spotlight at the Awards Dinner, collecting the Luminaire of the Year Award for their Arena Profile. Also on the Selecon base was Mike Goldberg of M&M, promoting the Rainbow range of colour change systems.

EnTech saw the largest ever UK group of DTI-supported exhibitors (from any industry) to leave Britain's shores and no less than 24 companies signed up for a trip to Oz. A C Lighting, exhibiting for the first time at EnTech, took advantage of the stand to demonstrate the new Chroma-Q scroller to the market, despite some underhand attempts to disable the unit on the eve of the show. The company also announced a new Australian representative, with Sue Green being appointed to service their expanding customer base in Australia. 1996 has already seen a great many changes for DHA, who recently moved to an impressive three storey building just south of London's West End. The Digital Light Curtain continues to have a large following and if the number of DLCs in use on the performance of Miss Saigon at the Capitol Theatre is anything to go by, then it's no wonder the office is impressive. Despite the industry's predilection for high-tech, DHA continues to acknowledge the need for less high-tech products on occasions, hence their new Gobo Adaptor, which, quite simply, enables a smaller gobo to be fitted into a gobo holder designed to take a larger one.

Stage Technologies, formed just over two years ago, now boasts a staff of nine and such has been the impact of their automated systems



Alan Graham (right) and Andy Meldrum (centre) of LSC with lan Warhurst of Lite Structures.



Richard Hartman (left) and Mitch Clark (right) of Tomcat with Jo-Anna Kamorin-Lloyd of Showtech Rigging.



John Hastie (left) and Nikki Scott of Stage Technologies with Bryan Raven of White Light (second, right) Jeremy Collins of Selecon and John Drummond-Montgomery of Bytecraft (right).

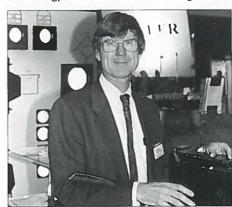
that they are looking to add a further two personnel to their number in the not-too-distant future. Lighting Technology travelled to Sydney with their Limelight followspot and flicker-candle range and directly after the show, hired a truck and headed off to the Victoria Arts Centre in Melbourne to deliver Limelight into the waiting hands of the local tech, the purchase being a result of a meeting at PLASA last year. CCT Lighting and Rosco joined forces on stand where the main push was concentrated on the Hazemaker from Rosco and the Freedom range from CCT.

Having flown out with excess baggage, Bryan Raven of White Light was delighted to be returning to the UK minus any kit as he'd sold all his demonstration stock to Chameleon. As a bonus, he'd also received an order from a theatre company in Perth for the new Wave FX - an effects unit developed using VSFX90 technology animated by the opposing motion of three distorting glasses. The Tubular Ripple effect now has two architectural versions: 2 x 500W tungsten lamp or 2 x 250W sodium lamp. Another UK manufacturer, Penn Fabrication, were showing their small stage system, together with associated hardware, which is finding its way into nightclubs and being specified for a number of small tours.

For Celco, EnTech provided an opportunity to relaunch its name and its range of desks in Australia. Sharing a stand with Electrosonic Systems, their new distributors in the region, the company had a full complement of products on stand and Keith Dale reported a



Rod Salmon (left) and James Evans of Show Technology who created the Martin lightshow.



Lee Conlon of Showcraft with Colourset 2.



May Yam of Avolites (centre) introducing their range of desks to the Australian market.

great deal of interest, particularly from New Zealand. Electrosonic meanwhile were showing their 2xView videowall.

Glantre Engineering Pty Ltd is the Australian subsidiary of Glantre Engineering in the UK and has a pedigree to match that of the head office, having been responsible for the basic rigging, lighting and audio installation at the Capitol Theatre in Sydney, which was reopened last year. As well as complete integrated projects, Glantre's Australian operation specialises in lifts and understage machinery, so it was no surprise to see the Spiralift from Gala (a division of Paco), being put through its paces daily. This provides a cost-effective solution for many stage lifting applications and can be retrofitted into existing orchestra pits.

Peter Willis of Andera Ltd, designer of the SoftCUE stage management system marketed by Howard Eaton, teamed up with Peter Holmes of Integra Systems to build on the unit's increasing popularity down under. SoftCue systems are already to be found in Australia at the Princess Theatre working on Beauty and the Beast and the Victoria Arts Centre.

Jonathan Ciddor of Leichardt-based Lightmoves Technologies was host to a legion of British manufacturers including Le Maitre, whose Harold Berlinski was on stand to promote the G300 smoke machine, Neil Rice and Optikinetics with the first showing in Australia of the K series of projectors, and Roy Millington of Cloud Electronics who



Derek Gilbert (left) and Matthew Tonks (centre) of Glantre with Henry Lewis of Glantre Australia and a demonstration section of the Spiralift.



Celco's Colin Whittaker (left) and Keith Dale (right) flank David Mason of Electrosonic Systems.





Peter Kemp of Coemar DeSisti (centre) with Effects Company equipment in the foreground.

previewed details of a new active filter, the CX2300 - a 3-way active stereo crossover which combines fixed frequency plug-in filter cards with a tamper-proof cover to protect the system from interfering fingers. Also on the Lightmoves stand was Mike Lowe of Teatro, who modestly claims to "fiddle around on the edges of light", but who can actually take credit for a lot more than that. The company's new Colourbox 2 scroller has already been noted, following its pre-Rimini launch and its recent appearance at the ABTT Trade Show in London.

This being home territory, manufacturers LSC Electronics were flying the Australian flag with an impressive array of new products. First up was the Axiom 48, an extension to the existing Axiom family which features separate softmasters to programme scenes and chases and a range of features (16 submasters, 4 x 512 channel softpatches) which should effectively elevate this console range to a higher plane. Also on stand was the new Isoport system - a DMX distribution system which provides optically isolated output with the emphasis on low maintenance. Alongside was the new Wallpak dimmer (enhanced with the addition of circuit breakers and double outlets for each channel), previously intended for the home market, but now attracting international interest, and a new 48-channel touring rack, complete with 3-pin wheel, hot patch and permanently attached leads, which should minimise confusion in 'spaghetti junction'.

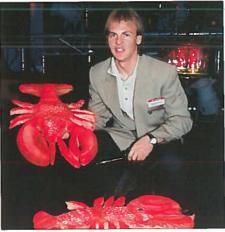
The LSC stand was also notable for a number of firsts for Australia: it was the first chance for the home market to see LSC's Atom, officially launched at PLASA last year; the first showing of Lite Structures' Livelite trussing system, the first too of Smoke Factory's Mr Mister and the first Antipodean expedition for an Avolites trio - the Pearl and Sapphire desks and the

innovative 4D Track system.

The curiously-named Greater Union Village Technology (GUVT) has offices in each Australian state, with further offices in New



Noel Bourne of GUVT (left) with Richard Green of scenic effects company, Wildfire.



Brandon James of Wybron goes lobster crazy in the name of Autopilot.

Zealand and and Singapore. The product range is impressive, with kit from Citronic, High End Systems, Anytronics, Lighting Technology and Wildfire on stand. The latter was showing the new WF-401 flood fixtures.

Dynalite have established themselves as one of Australia's leading manufacturers of architectural lighting control systems, with their roots firmly established in the entertainment industry. The company launched a new generation of concert production dimmers with a host of features, including remote status and fault monitoring, front panel rigging control and inbuilt chasers.

Universal Lighting are distributors for Abstract, JB Lighting and Numark, amongst others, and Nick McGeachin of Numark was busy promoting the Beatkeeper, which does exactly what it says, keeps the beat for you, via a rack mountable beat-keeping device which synchronises to the music.

A company which boasts plenty of experience, but may not be well-known because of its new name is ELSTA (Entertainment Lighting and Sound Technologies Australia), the result of a recent merger between Ae Australia Pty Ltd and Lightsounds Pty Ltd, both Sydney-based companies, which now jointly represent FAL, Meteor, UL and Vestax, to name but a few.

Mitch Clark and the team from American trussing manufacturer Tomcat were busily promoting their latest hardware. The company were sharing a stand with Australian distributor Showtech Rigging, manufacturers of the Suntrak system, who have also developed a new curtain-track system. Further Americanisms were to be found on the stand of Gemini Lytequest Australia, the Antipodean arm of the US manufacturer, who had a new DMX controllable 'spider' centrepiece.

Quantum EFEX are exclusive agents for SLS and Genius in Australia, and whilst they still await Follow-Me, did show the Panscan range from SLS and the Omega range from Genius.



Dave King of Allen & Heath (left) with Anthony Russo of AR Audio Engineering.



EnTech organiser Caroline Grafton with Paul Mulholland of lands, collecting one of the many awards the company received at the show.

Mediavision Australia are another distribution outlet and are the local importer for Lee Filters and Zero 88, showing new gobo patterns from the former and the Linebacker from the latter.

Considering the trend towards computerdriven control, there were relatively few computer-based lighting packages at the show. In addition to the UK-designed ShowCAD and Stardraw already mentioned, the only Australian version I could track down was on the stand of Multiscan. Going by the same name, their software claims speed and accuracy when manipulating a variety of DMX512 digitally controlled intelligent lights. The package has recently been installed by Showcorp at Cannes Casino where it is running High End Trackspots and Martin Robocolors.

Not surprisingly, where there are luminaires there are lamp manufacturers and Osram, Philips and Sylvania all took stands to display their comprehensive ranges of light source products. It was also good to see major players like Sony and Pioneer taking space at the show, which, if nothing else, demonstrates the strong conviction held by the major corporates that Australia is a place to do business.

As EnTech follows hard on the heels of Frankfurt, it was surprising to find some audio 'firsts'. One such came from Allen & Heath, on the stand of new distributors A R Audio Engineering, who had the prototype version of the GL2000. This product is pitched at the high end of the 4-buss market for club and installation use. In reality, such a product was largely unexpected, and in typical A&H style a great deal of functionality has been designed into the desk - although it has 24 mic lines, it has 32 inputs, for instance. In the UK, the company is channelling major resources through the GL3000 and though it has only been in production three months, it has outstripped sales of the GL4 in the same time. Dave King promised a big splash at PLASA where A&H plan to launch three new products.

Also on the AR stand was Martin Kelly of



Ion Petts of IEM (left) and Rod Salmon of Show Technology, flank Freddy LLoyd of Zero 88.



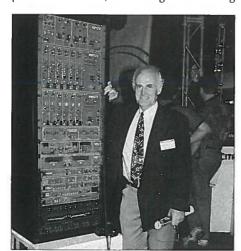
John Carroll of Soundtracs (centre) with Steve Marsden (left) and Iain Everington of Syncrotech.

Martin Audio, offering an Australian debut for the ICT/ICS300 two-way compact full range speaker with accompanying sub-woofer.

John Carroll of Soundtracs was to be found on the stand of Syncrotech. On show was the prototype of the 32-channel version of the Topaz Maxi 8-buss live console, a fullyfunctional FOH console which can be reconfigured as a stage monitor and matrix mixer. Also on stand was the Topaz Project 8, available in two versions, with 24 or 32 channels providing 48 or 64 inputs on mixdown, plus the pre-launch of the all-digital Virtua (featured in last month's equipment news). Syncrotech only took on the Soundcraft agency just over a year ago and have doubled sales in that short time. A major Soundtracs installation is currently running The Sound of Music at the Hill Centre and a Sequel II has just gone into Parliament House, Canberra.

Australian manufacturer ARX, founded by brothers Colin and David Park and long-time friend Duncan Fry, had several new products. These included the AFW-1 anti-feedback workstation, a single-channel unit combining a 1/3rd octave equaliser, peak limiter and DSP-based feedback eliminator and the DEQ228, a dual-channel digital programmable equaliser which is fully MIDI controllable and has 100 user memories. ARX too, had a high profile at the awards and in the Audio Tool category, the ARX Multi Q parametric equaliser won, whilst in the audio contractor sector, the company's MixxMaster mic/line mixer came out top. The company has recently opened a UK office in London, managed by Oliver Reed, who will look after European and Middle Eastern markets.

US manufacturers **Meyer Sound** were at the show for the first time and new for 96 is the series of large-scale reinforcement products, including the High-Q, MSL-4 and full range MTS-4 loudspeakers and the PSW-4 and 650-P subwoofers. **Cadac**'s latest desk, the F-Type production console, was having another airing



Citronic's Tony Allen with rack in hand.



An ARX trio of David Park (left) and Colin Park (centre) with Duncan Fry and their EnTech awards.

on the stand of **System Sales**, whilst **Yamaha** were promoting their O2R recording console, which was also honoured with an award.

British company **PAXT** was established in 1990 as the export arm for a number of UK manufacturers including **Canon**, **C Audio** and **Dynamix**, and the latter two were both seeking to appoint exclusive distributors in the region. **Mark IV Audio** handle a wide range of products including **Electro-Voice**, **Dynacord**, **Klark Teknik**, **DDA** and **Midas**. From E-V was the new T Series of professional speakers (see news this month).

Since its inception in 1987, Australian Monitor has grown to become a respected designer and manufacturer of amplifiers and speakers. Launched at the show were two new amplifiers, the AM2400 - a dual bi-amp and Contractor - a multi-purpose power amp. Also previewed was Q8, a compact high efficiency tight pattern controlled full range loudspeaker.

Unfortunately, space doesn't permit a blow-by-blow account of all the products at EnTech (but there will be further pictures next month), and some not featured here have already been covered by L+SI in recent reports from Siel, Frankfurt and Rimini.

Certainly EnTech is a show worth keeping your eye on. The organisers went to great lengths to broaden its appeal and with 20 hours of seminars covering audio, lighting, AV and rigging, were clearly flexing their technical muscles. Bruce Jackson, founder of Apogee Electronics and a sound designer who has worked with Elvis, Bruce Springsteen and Barbra Streisand, was clearly a big draw. In fact, technophiles were in their element: there were technical side-shows to suit every taste, ranging from a backstage tour of Sydney Opera House, to a technical tour of the Neil Diamond show, currently in Sydney.

One of the most controversial aspects of EnTech was the continuous nearfield monitor and lighting shoot-outs featuring products from all the main manufacturers. It's not possible to



Stuart McLean (centre) of Australian Monitor.



Derek Gilbert of Glantre Engineering (left) with Karl Ruling of Lighting Dimensions.

offer comprehensive commentary here on what this actually proved, not least because some manufacturers felt others weren't playing by the rules, but the exercise, overseen by Karl Ruling, ESTA's newly-appointed standards officer, was well intended and it will be interesting to monitor feedback over the next month or so.

Considering this was only the second EnTech Show, it has certainly grown in stature, but like all things of youth, there is still some way to go. One of the obvious starting points would be to market the event to a much larger audience just over 4,000 attended in total. Most exhibitors would probably agree that it currently attracts a national, rather than international, audience and certainly the organisers would do well to cast their net in the direction of the Far East and Asian markets.

With the Olympics heading Sydney's way in 2000, there will inevitably be a lot of funding pouring into the city, which places the event in a strong position to influence the choice of equipment for the many activities that cluster round the Games. Evidence that the Olympians are coming looms large across the city, as construction sites pepper the inner city and the word 'infrastructure' is regularly banded about by men in grey suits.

No doubt in the years to come, this show will be a major player in the exhibition game if it can strengthen its visitor attendance, but let's hope it loses none of its Prisoner Cell Block H charm. Where else, for instance, would you get the show organiser telling a group of dinner guests, including a major advertiser, to "shut urp or piss orff," in front of the entire industry at the Awards Dinner or a show catalogue which, through a typographical error, unwittingly trampled on the best sign-off line of a trade association named Focus (the Federation of Communication Users and Suppliers) - "no other organisation has this foucs!"

Rough around the edges it may be, but by God it was good value for the money.



Clive Bradley of PAXT with the Canon V-100.

AFRAID IN THE STALLS

Apart from a blood-coloured vodka called Dracula Seduction, Romania's most interesting export nowadays is its theatre directors. Over the last couple of years we've seen them at work in Glasgow, Leicester, Nottingham, Oxford - even Hammersmith, where Gabor Tompa's production of *The Bald Prima Donna* by lonesco was a success at the Lyric despite being played in Hungarian.

This year's festival of Young Professional Theatre in Sibiu, Transylvania, was a good chance to sample the work of some of the country's, er, young bloods. It's an odd mix of a festival, whose main problem is the admirable one of trying to do too much on the slenderest technical resources: the international 'professional' component was almost all pretty ghastly, the kind you'd hope to avoid on a bad day at the Edinburgh fringe. There was a section devoted to the work of drama schools and another for student theatre, where Romanian groups of students showed their wares. But the chief pleasure of the week lay in catching up with the work of some of

Romania's leading young actors and directors, who brought some remarkable productions to this eighteenth-century university town and performed them well in unlikely conditions.

Sibiu is not well stocked with theatre spaces. The town's resident theatre company works out of the Radu Stanca theatre, a 300-seater which looks as if it

started out as a flat-floor multi-purpose space with pros and small balcony. A big thrust has been built out into the stalls, with some banked seating added on either side. It has some standard (as usual, this means sub-standard) East European lighting, big chunky floods and cans hung from the balcony and a few more on battens behind the pros. The locals showed a piece from their current repertory as a demonstration that the stage can be efficient and interesting in normal use. Apart from that, the space came in for some very abnormal use, with productions of all shapes and sizes being shoe-horned in at the rate of two a day.

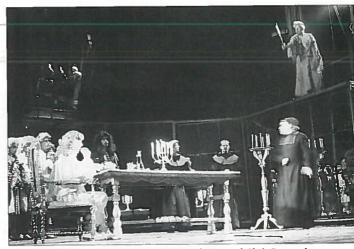
The town's other main public performance space is the Trade Union Hall, an 800-seater civic theatre with a flat stage and a demountable orchestra pit, suitable for visiting rock groups and teams of folk dancers. It was here that Gabor Tompa's Hungarian Theatre of Cluj, near-neighbours of Sibiu, staged his production of Bulgakov's *Molière*. It had been built to tour, and gained from a flexible, mirrored set and its own touring lighting rig, mounted on stands at the sides of the wide stage. In spite of the necessary economies of design, the show pulled off some fine coups, notably in the torchlit cabal scene in which court and clergy conspirators plot the playwright hero's downfall.

All the shows in the Sibiu festival are free, and there are no tickets. This makes for a wonderful opportunity for the town's residents, and its large student population, to overdose on theatre for a week. As word of mouth spreads, it also makes for a safety officer's nightmare. Crowds gather at the theatre entrances, where bewildered doorkeepers are trying to let in official guests and festival participants before the scrum begins for the remaining seats. There was a quite frightening crush outside the TU hall the next afternoon, of folk trying to get in to a Bucharest hit, Maia Morgenstern's solo show *Tonight Lola Blau*.

That was only the beginning. The second show of the evening was due to take place later at the little Radu Stanca. It's a great tribute to the Sibiu Festival and its director, the actor Constantin Chiriac, that this one took place at all. It's also a great tribute to Bucharest's Bulandra Theatre (remember their *Hamlet* at the National?). Bulandra had been due to play Sam Shepard's *Buried Child* the night before, but had just returned from a gruelling Latin American tour. No way could they play the Shepard that night, came the message, but how would it be if they brought one of their current hits, an adaptation of a celebrated Romanian inter-war novel, the next night?

So without rehearsal time, one of the country's leading theatres puts a big show into a truck and delivers it to a strange space, with about three hours to rig, focus and test out a complex set of sound cues. The play, *Procrustes Bed*, was a stunner, enriched by a leading performance by none other than Maia Morgenstern, already exhausted from filling the big theatre, unmiked, two hours before, in her *Lola Blau* portrait of a Marlene-like figure who sings and dances her way from Hitler's Germany to Broadway and back again to post-war (if not post-Nazi) Austria.

If Bulandra's performance was stunning, the conditions in which they played were downright terrifying. All those 800 enthusiasts who'd packed *Lola Blau* up the road wanted to see this one too. About 600 people



Molière by Bulgakov at the Hungarian Theatre of Cluj, Romania.

"This year's festival of Young Professional Theatre in Sibiu, Transylvania, was a good chance to sample the work of some of the country's, er, young bloods." squeezed in. They were standing on the stage, sitting in the aisles and hanging from the balconies in a form of human wallpaper. Sitting under the rickety balcony, beneath Lord knows what weight of theatre-goers, I found myself mouthing Archie Rice's 'Don't clap too loud, its an old building' with an almost prayerful intensity.

You couldn't have asked for a greater contrast in crowd control than that of the festival's final show, a preview of Silviu Purcarete's The Danaids, which is to be the centrepiece of this year's Avignon Festival as well as taking in Amsterdam and Vienna. This huge production, a completion of Aeschylus' little-known tragedy The Suppliants into full tetralogy form, features two 50-strong choruses, female and male, drawn largely from recent graduates of Romania's drama schools. For Sibiu it was staged in the drill hall of the local barracks, with the audience sitting on raked bleachers at one end. It's the first theatre performance I've attended where the ushers carry Kalashnikovs.

As for the piece itself, Purcarete marshals his huge acting force with choreographic skill and a keen eye for stage pictures, without his French version ever betraying the poetry of the original text. His completion of it, using a clever collage of speeches from Aeschylus' other plays, works very well, and there is even a hint of the bawdy satyr play which would traditionally have completed the day. Vadim Levinschi's lighting consisted of big floods hung front and rear, with rows of spots along the side of the hall. A couple of giant followspots, plus the low-tech, but highly effective use of flambeaux and torchlights by the choruses, were all that were needed in addition to create striking effects.

The group of gods who oversee the proceedings of the evening were miked for most of it, which produced some jarring echoes. Purcarete's choice of Mozart's Laudate Dominum as background music was also an odd one, as odd as Ninagawa's borrowing the Fauri Requiem for Medea, but the live choruses gave a fine demonstration of what can be achieved by the human voice unaided, in speech, chant and song. Whether they will be able to repeat their success in outdoor locations without Greek amphitheatre acoustics remains to be seen.

Ian Herbert

Ian Herbert is the editor and publisher of the critical journal, Theatre Record.



PROJECT BLUE

Steve Moles witnesses the relaunch of the Pepsi brand

In the late sixties and early seventies, Pepsi had a long running slogan that entreated 'Come alive, you're in the Pepsi generation'. It was one of the first high profile, large-scale approaches towards the concept of youth targeting in the advertising media. Aiming globally, the slogan was translated into Mandarin Chinese with disastrous results, 'Pepsi brings your ancestors back from the grave' it stated. In the meantime, lessons have been learnt. In early April, in a specially converted Jumbo Jet hangar at Gatwick Airport, a far more polished assault was launched.

Following the ethos of the US's most celebrated living soldier - General Norman Schwartzkopf, whose strategy is simplicity itself, 'Concen-

trate overwhelming force at the most strategic point' - Pepsi has allocated a budget of \$500 million for its advertising campaign this year titled 'Project Blue'. Such was the media blitz there were six coach loads of journalists and photographers at the event - that I'm all sure you know by now that the need for a jumbo jet hangar was to conceal a Concorde, backstage as it were, for a spectacular final reveal.

The supersonic jet had been repainted in the livery of Pepsi's new branding (all Pepsi cans and advertising are now predominantly blue) and at a reputed cost of £1.5 million for the paint job and short term lease, it will hopefully attract more attention than a passing London cab resplendent in its Kit-Kat wrapper. Parking the aeroplane side on to present a more photogenic profile to the Press provided production manager Robbie Williams with one of his first headaches. "The people from Air France flew in under cover of darkness and were expecting to be able to pull into the hangar and park within an hour. It took six, which knocked a big hole in focusing time for the lighting and compounded onto rehearsals."

Concorde, it turns out, is like a front wheel drive car - it only has 30 degrees of steering lock. Despite the plane's relatively small size to a Jumbo, it is very long and only just fitted at a suitably rakish angle crossways. John Wynne who was brought in for his Vari*Lite expertise by lighting crew chief Bill Martin, discovered the next problem as he began to assemble clusters of Molefays beneath the plane's fuselage. "I could smell a strong vapour in the air," he said, "but I didn't take any notice until I'd finished and, standing up, I nearly passed out. I was flying higher than Concorde."



With a post-modern blue cityscape as backdrop, Pepsi's relaunch represents an investment of more than \$500 million.



The Pepsi Blue Concorde, which will visit 10 major cities.

The main lighting contractor for the launch was The SpotCo. Being awarded the role for the event - a major coup for the company - came about more through diligence than sharp quoting. "We've worked with Freud Communications (Pepsi's PR company) for some time," explained Peter Miles, "handling special events and PR launches for them, though nothing on this scale. Through that, we've built a solid reputation." Such was the scale of the event, however, that SpotCo couldn't cover all the equipment requirements from their own stocks, and so CPL and Vari-Lite provided a sizeable chunk, but SpotCo nevertheless crewed and managed the whole lighting production and were not found wanting.

SET & PRODUCTION

When SpotCo were first approached they were asked to recommend a 'heavyweight' production manager, someone who would not

be intimidated by the scale and pressures of such a show. Robbie Williams was an obvious candidate - Pink Floyd being a natural antecedent where aircraft are involved in presentation - and he quickly brought on board people of a similar calibre to take responsibility for the lighting, sound and set design. Patrick Woodroffe, Chris Hay (of the newly formed Spencer, Hay Productions) and Mark Fisher. Fisher, a victim of his own success, had already committed to the start of

the Tina Turner tour which precluded him from giving this event the attention it warranted, so he passed it into the capable hands of Lorenzo Apicella of Apicella Associates. Like Fisher, Lorenzo is a trained architect with a background in major presentational events having spent some time working for Imagination.

For this show the brief could be encapsulated in the desire to create a blue world within the confines of what was effectively a full mock-up 700-seater theatre. "The major problem for us," said Apicella, "was the logistics. We had to fill the space so that it justified the use of the hangar and in a way such that as few people as possible might guess that a plane would be revealed behind the set."

As it transpired, despite contractually binding secrecy clauses for all those involved in the production, news did leak out in one of the Sunday broadsheets just two days before the

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launch, but-like going to a Floyd show—and knowing all about the big mirrorball effect, it didn't really spoil anyone's fun.

The set comprised three major elements - The theatre itself, a high and wide enclosure made with truss and drapes with bleacher seating from Arena on a platform from StarHire; the main stage, a relatively modest flat surface with a singular lectern upon it surmounted by two projection screens, one in front of the other, set above; and to each side a substantial set built on rolling platforms (again from StarHire), comprising a pastiche cityscape with huge mural skyline designs on drapes above and behind them.

The ever able Charlie Kail of Brilliant Stages was responsible for building the set, with the drapes painted by Belinda Clisham, a freelance scenic artist whose work Kail first saw on the new 'Joseph' production. Blackout, specialists in drapes and rigging structures, supplied a huge quantity of rigging, drapes and tracking.

Apicella was able to purloin from Pepsi several vending machines styled to the new image, with which to embellish what was a simple, but effective modernist set. Multi-tiered scaffold framework and stairways were adorned with what, since the Rolling Stones' Steel Wheels tour, have become known in set-speak as Frew, Frews. In other words, curved aluminium pipe with coloured bulkhead lights on the tips.

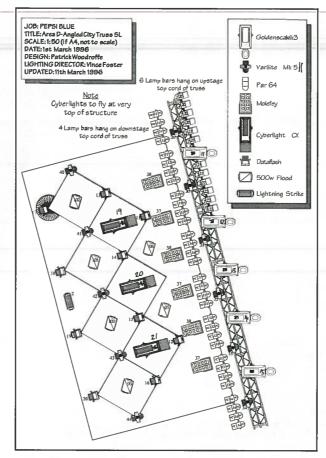
LIGHTING

Patrick Woodroffe is nothing if not a safe pair of hands when it comes to the big picture and with Vince Foster to assist, there was no reason to fret. That doesn't mean what they did was easy, just assured. Both Woodroffe and Foster sported stubbley chins and dark baggy eyes on the morning of the big day, after two long nights of programming the WholeHog.

The theatre area was divided into two main grids - a 60 x 68ft front box truss tapering slightly above the stage - with a regular 60 x 52ft box truss beyond, which covered up to the projection area at the back of the auditorium. Both boxes were fully scrimmed in white on the underside to form a roof, making a huge surface to tinge the room with a blue wash, but, in turn, limiting available lamp positions. The two grids were independent, not just for ease of rigging, but also to enable the one above stage to be elevated to reveal the larger of the two projection screens. To each side of stage, two further 48ft trusses lay immediately above the elements of the cityscape sets, whilst out way beyond backstage a further 200ft hung above

Although the lighting specification was substantial, 37 Clay Paky Golden Scans (HPEs and Mk 3s), 25 Cyberlights, 50 VL5s, 50 Dataflash and 250 Pars, it was the sheer distance of the runs to control points that made

and behind Concorde.



this essentially a very cable hungry rig. Despite Pepsi's understandable desire for all things to be blue (Lee 162 being the gel de jour) Woodroffe and Foster were able to persuade them that a little contrast was essential. "The hardest thing," said Woodroffe, "was getting them to let us put some red Molefay under the fuselage, to give a pulsing red glow beneath the hull for a little more drama on the reveal." As is often the case, conceptualising absolutes on a theme is one thing, seeing a variation presented by an adept is another, thus Pepsi relented when they saw the effect at rehearsal, deferring to Woodroffe's better judgement.

SOUND

By comparison, the specification for sound appears quite modest; no monster arena rig here to match the lights and set, and if not deafening in stature, still complex. Chris Hay explained the set up: "It is multi-tiered with what are, effectively, three layers of sound coupled to the various stages of the reveals." There were two pairs of d&b 602s flown in two positions on the main lighting grids to provide speech amplification onto those seated in the auditorium. Over the main stage to each side was a cluster of four Turbosound Flashlights and further back two more clusters of Flashlight beneath Concorde's wings.

Both these latter were for playback

amplification to accompany the videos. More fills were provided around the auditorium by six Galaxy Hot Spots and further mid/high Flashlights were concealed beneath the cityscapes.

Steve Ludlum ran front of house from a 24-channel Midas XL3 (and a substantial array of delay gear) while Rick Pope had the coveted job of looking after the radio mic' system used for the celebrity cameos. (For some inexplicable reason, crew members were queueing up to help with the clip microphones. Maybe Claudia Schiffer and Cindy Crawford had something to do with it!).

PROJECTION

PSL provided all the video projection gear for the show, although they were obliged to sub-hire in a pair of JVC/Hughes 435 projectors to get the necessary brightness on screen with so much light on the stage area. A pair of Barco 8000s was used on the smaller, opening screen, and three 35mm projectors, plus a pair of 21" monitors were fitted into parts of

the stage set. Live footage of the actual event, especially close-ups of the star cameos, was used on screen to fill between video footage, fed from a three camera PPU team, again supplied by PSL, who were also responsible for the auto-cue.

For Robbie Williams, the most contentious issue was adapting his style to a large-scale show that would only be seen once and had to be right first time. With an overall production budget of a quarter of a million pounds, it was surprising where attention was focused. Parts of the set bearing Pepsi signage had to be re-painted three times with just the subtlest of tonal changes to gain the client's full satisfaction and, just a few minutes before the show, Williams was to be found searching for a drawing pin to make a final adjustment to a gauze in the set. As it transpired, this one-off show was right first time, the client was ecstatic, and no doubt attention to detail by all concerned is what won the day. When the head of PepsiCo made his opening address, he quite deliberately mentioned Pepsi's intention to make the presentation more 'rock and roll' and to introduce even more of this flavour to their advertising.

That being the case, I suggest everyone in the rock and roll industry who didn't get a look-in on this show, jump on a plane to Atlanta and visit the HQ of those people with the red cans.





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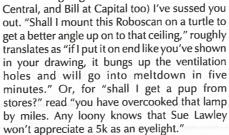
SECOND TAKE

John Watt's View from Beside the Camera

This month has seen another bout of character building experiences. I recently found myself en route from Stansted to Dublin - not the high point of this jet setter's life. I know shuttles are intended to be a bit like buses, but no seat reservations and no snacks, not to mention alcohol, makes this foody feel deprived and a bit apprehensive about a first visit to the Emerald Isles. Following some early demonstrations of Irish idiosyncrasies, I finally arrived at the venue, to find the usual heavy on the gate. "I have an appointment with Mr O' Reilly," I announce. "Well who am I to be stoppin' you," he says with a smile. It's suddenly a good place to be and a marked contrast to a frustrating 20 minutes recently spent at visitor's reception at the BBC's Television Centre trying to persuade an impassive lady to let me in. She was singularly unimpressed by my credentials (a producer in the making) and obviously hadn't read L+SI. Anyhow, watch this space for more Irish experiences - there is an epic in the making but I'll allow it to germinate before passing on the first batch of mistakes, though an early thought for starters had me wondering why manufacturers, having produced the biggest, brightest yet, only publish photometric data for throws of up to 100 feet.

Another first for me a few weeks ago was to light a show in the BBC Pebble Mill studio - how unthinkable this would have been a few short years ago both from mine and their point of view. I have visited mates on the other side of the great divide many times of course, and looked at their widely spaced hoists and pairs of twisters (dual source lamps), at plots with strange hexagonal symbols and pondered on the working practices. I don't know what the Brummies thought of me, but it's with some reluctance that I have to report that the system works! As always, people get round shortcomings if they've a will to do so, and this team had. Incidentally, I love the way the gaffers speak to lighting designers in a mutually

understood code. Yes, Herbie at the Mill (and Dave at YTV and the gang at



So what impressions remain to a visiting lighting man in this alien environment? Well, those hoists are a long way apart and they do run quietly, unlike self climbers or monopoles which you hear coming and can therefore duck before impact. The 'no cups on the floor' rule is observed, which adds at least two hours to any rig involving yours truly.

The formula reads as follows: coffee required = estimated duration of rig in hours, say 8 x grid factor i.e. 2 for barrels and self climbers, x 1 for monopoles, x 3 for spring loaded pantographs, x 1.5 if the designer's working on another show at the same time and x 1.5 if the producer looks good in a skirt. These figures are all to be divided by two if the loos are on another floor.

In common with most studio canteens, the ratio of servers to cashiers is based on summer eating and grazing techniques i.e. to avoid frustration choose something that's good eaten cold and/or with your fingers. So the scenario is: collect food, spend next 20 minutes in the queue eating it, pay and return to studio. It saves on table cleaners and wear and tear on

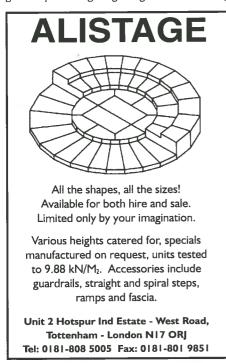
At the hotel, I was given that invaluable feed line to an old joke. Me to receptionist: "I've a complaint about my bedroom window." "Yes sir, what's the problem." "I haven't got one." There are those that think I ought to be thrown in a cell, but I didn't know the word had reached Birmingham.

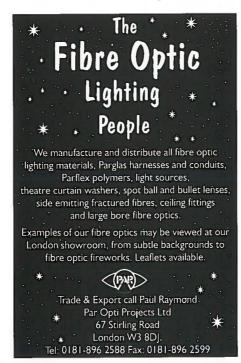
Having checked out and found my way off the Aston Expressway and onto Birmingham's inner ring road, I headed for an STLD visit to the ICC where the BBC were covering 'The Young Musician of the Year Finals'. The backstage tour there reveals an extremely well thought out complex which is a joy to work in (I speak from experience). Part of the complex is the magnificent concert hall, lit on this occasion by Bernie Davis (BBC) with a hybrid rig of in-house equipment, together with some hired-in stock.

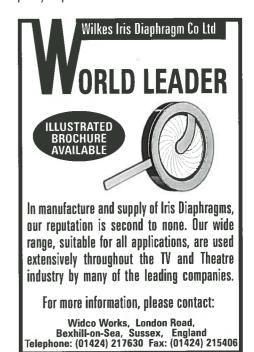
I know it's part of a 'don't the policemen look young' syndrome, but who would have thought that the Par can could become an effective mainstay of such productions. Mind you, the odd VL5 lurked amongst the profiles and Bernie's description of them as 'spares' was taken with a large pinch of salt by the assembled lighting cynics. Together with his colleagues in OB, he gets through a prodigious amount of productions which for us mere mortals are only an occasional treat. He lit the BAFTA Craft Awards recently with his usual flair, but it does strike me that he, along with the rest of us who scratch a living lighting the whole gamut of TV programmes, wouldn't even qualify for an award himself.

The inexplicable category system operated by that grand body seems to have relegated video lighting to a sort of service industry, a necessary, but non-creative trade like washing machine servicing or Dynarod. Come on BAFTA, every second of every hour on all terrestrial, satellite and cable channels is lit by someone. Without the light, the costumes, make-up, design, editing, post-production and direction are all invisible - second rate radio at best. The quality varies enormously of course, but amongst the range, there is some very creative and innovative lighting which enhances and contributes to the programmes enormously.

Maybe I'll start an award. It would still be a face, but one blind eye would be enough. Actually, I was presented with an award by Doughty Engineering last year, a horse shoe on a 16mm spigot to bring me luck. We could do worse than adopt that more widely - we can all do with a bit of luck, and the wit displayed is pretty important too.









When we set about designing a colour changer we decided to look to other industries for inspiration. First we talked to the computer industry. They advised us that investing in advanced software and utilizing sophisticated manufacturing technologies would result in fewer components than we originally anticipated. We then turned to the motor industry. They told us *how* you manufacture a product is just as important as *what* you manufacture. In addition they assured us that mass production was the key to cost reduction.

With these words at the forefront of our minds we designed a 16 frame advanced technology colour changer with few moving components housed in an injection molded UL listed composite shell that is light, quiet and inherently durable.

We also tried to solve some of the more practical problems associated with normal colour changers. For example, we optoisolated the DMX connectors to eliminate control

problems, we made each unit separately DMX addressable to ease set-up, and insisted that if the units temporarily lost power during a show, they would remember where they were without going through that embarrassing calibration sequence when power is restored. Servicing was a design priority too, the complete colour changer can be stripped in under a minute with the removal of just 4 screws.

This uniquely designed product has had quality built in right from the start. All components are manufactured by ISO9000* companies and the assembled colour changer goes through an exhaustive final testing procedure prior to shipment.

Oh, and by the way the motor industry was right. By taking their advice and setting up a mass production facility, we are now able to bring the Chroma-Q to you at only

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THE LOTTERY EFFECT

As funds from the National Lottery begin to filter through to the market, Robert Halliday reports on the positive evidence of this at the ABTT Show



CCT's Don Hindle (left) and David Manners (right), who picked up the Best Product Award for their Freedom range of lanterns.

This year's ABTT Trade Show was brought to you in association with the numbers 1 to 49, and the letter 'L'. L for lottery, that is. This is the year where, by universal consent, the 'lottery effect' is starting to filter through to the market. Last year, visitors were interested in new equipment because there was the possibility that they might be submitting a lottery application, and needed to know what things cost these days. This year, the applications have gone in, been processed and the cheques are starting to appear. Visitors to the show - and it felt like numbers were up on last year - weren't just looking, they were on the brink of buying.

This seemed to have led to some re-shuffling in the line-up of exhibitors. Regular visitors Gradav and Playlight were both absent - lottery money isn't meant to be used on hiring equipment, and that is the main area of business of both of those companies. Their absence was balanced by a number of ABTT 'newcomers', with Unusual Industries being the most obvious (because of their impressive stand right in the middle of the hall) and unexpected (because of the perception that they are a rock and roll company). The company had taken the stand in an attempt to overcome that perception, since through their various subsidiary companies they can now manufacture, supply, install, inspect and maintain practically any rigging or flying system - and, of course, since such systems can be counted as infrastructure, they are suitable



Strand's David Cusworth (standing, right) looks on as Graham Walne (left) and Francis Reid sign copies of their books.

candidates for that lottery cash. The Unusual staff seemed to be having a good time at the show, and were rewarded with plenty of visitors and the award for best stand.

What will prove interesting over the next few years is whether theatres choose simply to refurbish the flying installations they already have, or to use the money available to move into the next generation by adding motorised flying capabilities. In the UK, automation of this kind has never really caught on, largely due to the high cost and perceived reliability problems. That is now starting to change, with modular systems that have proved themselves on the big West End shows now starting to filter through into the rest of the theatre world. First-time exhibitors Stage Technologies were taking time out from the fit-up of Martin Guerre to show how products such as their modular Counterweight Assist motorised flying system, could benefit regional theatres, especially those having to deal with increasingly heavy largescale touring sets. Harkness Hall were showing their range of tracking, rigging and control systems, along with the new Elite range of tested pulleys, which comply with recommended ABTT guidelines for wheel sizes.

Adding an international flavour to the show were the Australian equivalents, **Bytecraft**, who along with their UK distributors **ABB Industrial Systems**, had set up a miniaturised flying system controlled from their automation system. This allows control panels to be freely



The award for the Best Stand went to Unusual Industries. Simon Garrett collected the award from ABTT chairman David Wilmore.

moved between connection points installed anywhere in the stage area, thus allowing an operator to move to the location giving the best vantage point for a particular cue.

Bytecraft were also showing their digital dimmers, though they were not alone in this area either. The 'digital' part of such dimmers used to be their unique selling point, but that is no longer enough; now the move is into higher density, higher power dimmers (cramming 12 3kW ways into racks that would previously have held six 2.4kW ways) with added intelligence, usually in the form of a control panel that allows dimmers to be tested, controlled and switched to different modes (such as to different dimmer curves, non-dim modes or even to a couple of stand-by lighting states) without the need for a lighting desk. Both A C Lighting and Zero 88 were showing such products, the former with Jands' HP12 and HP6 racks and the latter with the newly-launched Contour 12 rack. Contour, with its larger dimmers (3k rather than Jands' 2.4k), automatic voltage and frequency sensing and tolerance of three-phase mains problems seems likely to find favour in the touring dimmer market in particular. Zero also had their excellent Linebacker combined DMX backup and test tool, which should easily find favour in any venue that has a DMX system.

Although not actually showing the product, **M&M** were talking to customers about **ETC**'s Sensor digital dimmers, due to arrive in this



Andy Collier of Teatro UK, in demonstration mode on the new Colourbox 2 colour changer.



Audience Systems' MD Stephen Brackley gives designer Nick Thompson a commemorative photo of the new Bridgewater Hall chair.



Penn Fabrications' Colin Freeman with the new MSB Modular Stage Box system.



Mark Thompson of ETC with the first Express console to appear in the UK.



Rebecca Conway (left) and Monica Arnott of British Harlequin.

country later in the year. These will offer one important advantage over the Jands and Zero 88 units - the ability to talk back to ETC lighting desks, reporting faults such as blown lamps. This kind of ability used to be the province of high-end desks and dimming, but with the capability available in the ETC Express desk, looks likely to move down through the market.

Express, first shown at the LDI Show in Miami last year, made its UK debut at the ABTT show. Though not officially available yet, the first three batches destined for this country have already been sold and, looking at the specification, it is easy to see why. Available in a range of channel capacities from 24 to 250, and with versions including manual faders available for those who like that sort of thing, the desk includes practically every feature of the old Arri Imagine 3/ETC Expression 2X but sells for a fraction of the price. Added to which it's a lovely piece of industrial design. If you're looking for a desk for any small to mid-range theatre, you should look at this product very closely.

M&M were also showing the Source 4 and Source 4 Par lanterns, the profile conveniently also demonstrating the results of M&M's glass gobo making kit! It's interesting to watch people in the UK get excited about a fixed-focus profile spot after years of dismissing the Leko, but for the many sixties-built theatres that are about to upgrade their rigs, the Source 4 has one great selling point - it will fit into those awkward lighting slots designed around the Patt 264, which none of the larger zoom profiles will. It was interesting to note that the 'environmental factor', which has led to several US Source 4 installations being funded by



Left to right are Celia Pope (Strand Europe), Ron Balmforth (ALD), Ed Pagett (Vari-Lite Europe), Fulvio Cotogni (Strand Europe) and Jim Laws.



Tom Mannings of Decoupe demonstrates one of the Robert Juliat range of profiles.



The Rosco team of Anna Western, Mark Beasley and Jonathan Adkins.

environmental grants because of the lantern's low power requirements, is also starting to come into play in this country.

To round off their stand, M&M had a new product of their own - the next generation Rainbow scroller, which keeps all the proven virtues of the existing product, while adding extra colours (up to 33) and simplifying the set-up procedure, with automatic calibration and a universal mounting adaptor that does away with adaptor plates.

At the opposite end of the hall, A C Lighting were showing alternatives to just about every product M&M had, with the Altman Shakespeare lanterns offering similar performance to the Source 4, but with zoom-optic lens tubes also available; Jands-Hog lighting consoles offering a seemingly more rock and roll approach to lighting control and, most interestingly, the Chroma-Q scroller, offering a low-cost alternative to other similar units. This is a 16-colour scroller retailing for just £199 (excluding power suppliers), with the low cost made possible through the bodywork being made from injection moulded plastic. In operation it didn't sound quite as well put together as a Rainbow, but for smaller shows, at the price, who could argue? A C were also demonstrating the WYSIWYG moving light visualisation package, which was attracting a lot of attention: moving light technology really is now starting to be commonplace and, as even the colleges start to make use of the technology, it will quickly spread. But I wonder who will have the nerve to specify moving lights when it comes to spending their lottery money?

Certainly controlling the lights is no longer



Caught on camera: Cerebrum's Graham Thomas (left) and David Wilkins (centre) with Andy Harvey of Le Maitre.



Rob Shuard, Tom Rees and Andy MacDonald of Glantre Engineering.



Jack Watling (left) now returned to the CCT fold with White Light North's Jeff Demain.

really an issue - the little Express has some movement capabilities, while the Strand 430/530 range is coming along very nicely in this area, while still retaining the familiar feel of a theatre lighting desk. Strangely, Strand didn't take a stand at the show though their staff were alternating between demonstrating the 530 on the **Northern Light** stand and holding informal meetings in the bar, re-located this year to the main exhibition hall rather than hidden away in the basement; opinion on this was divided between those who enjoyed the daylight, and those who felt that the smoky, seedy atmosphere in the old bar added to the show's unique appeal!

The only people who still don't seem to have caught up with the moving light game are **ADB**, whose Vision desk promised this capability several years ago but has yet to deliver. In fact, the model on show this year had had the moving light control panel removed altogether! Even devoid of this capability, it seems to be finding its way into venues, as do ADB's dimmers and lanterns. The company were showing the re-designed optics in their 1.2k and 2k profiles, claiming a 20% increase in light output though, as always, this was hard to judge under the glass roof of the Horticultural Halls. They were also showing new two-preset manual desks for smaller installations.

Sussex-based **Multiform** were also showing entry-level memory desks, both companies perhaps anticipating small amateur theatres wanting to upgrade controllers without having to move up to full-blown computer control systems.

Also showing both lanterns and dimmers



Bytecraft's John Drummond-Montgomery (right) and Bernard Frey (left) over from Australia with Graham Barlow of ABB.



Stuart Gibbons of Le Mark (right) returned to ABTT with their range of labels and tapes.

were CCT, though in their case the dimmers were attached to their Freedom lanterns. First shown at PLASA last year, the Freedom profiles can either be run from conventional dimmers or can have a DMX-controlled dimmer module attached to them to make a self-contained unit that just needs independent mains and a DMX signal to run - and, since they run at just 600W, five can be run from one 13A feed, making them ideal for trade shows or rigging in areas with 13A power, but no dimmer outlets. CCT used the show to launch a Freedom PC/F version (with clip-on PC or Fresnel lens as required) and picked up the ABTT Product of the Year award for the whole range. And for those who like the concept, but not the lantern's light colouring, a black version should be available soon.

For those who prefer a more traditional approach to lanterns, AJS were showing the Selecon range, including the new 650W Acclaim range. Selecon have continued to make quiet inroads in this country through well built products at reasonable prices, though how they will compete against the hype of the new low-wattage, high-efficiency products remains to be seen. AJS were also displaying make-up from the Ben Nye range.

Opposite AJS was another new ABTT exhibitor, Decoupe, who were showing the Robert Juliat range of profiles. I think it's fair to say that they don't expect to sell many products to the average British theatre, even with lottery money floating around, but they should be strong contenders amongst theatres looking to replace followspots, since the Juliats are superb in this area. They were not the only company to be aiming at this market area, since Action Lighting were showing the Limelight 2k Xenon followspot, as well as a range of products including the DMX-version of the floppy-disk colour/animation wheel unit launched at last year's show and the production version of Teatro's Colourbox 2 colour changer. This is still the most unusual colour changer on the market; a cross between a semaphore and a scroller that would be enormously versatile if enough thought could be put into selecting the colours. Sadly, most people will probably just go for picking their 30 favourites and throwing them into a Wybron or new Rainbow scroller!

Other ABTT lighting perennials abounded.



Wigs off to David McDade, inventor of the Biancheri wingbolt tool, who bravely donned a two-piece to make his mark on the show.



Richard Charles (left) and Tony Griffiths of Harkness Hall promoting tracking and rigging.

Ark Light continue to offer a superb lantern restoration service - hopefully they, as well as the suppliers of new equipment, will benefit from the lottery. Cyberdescence were showing their wide range of projected effects, with their stock including some of the more unusual Patt 252-type effects disks, as well as the tiny Trilite 100 series truss, whilst Donmar were content to talk to customers, rather than show products. DHA had their animated effects, including the double gobo rotator, on show, as well as their last-minute entrant in the Product of the Year Award - the Gobo Adaptor, a ring with lugs that allows small gobos to be used in larger holders - useful either for reducing projected image sizes or allowing one set of gobos to be used in a variety of lanterns. Pulsar were showing products from both their own range (all now CE marked) and that of Clay Paky, whilst both Rosco and Lee Filters were showing their filter ranges, though only Lee had added new colours for the show - including some gorgeous new deep blues. Both XTBA and White Light were trying to encourage designers to move into the computer age, XTBA with the LuxArt software running on PCs and White Light with MacLux Pro for the Macintosh. White Light are 25 years old this year, and appeared to have gone 'goodie mad' to celebrate, giving out plastic wallets stuffed with brochures, price lists and, somewhat bizarrely (but usefully!), White Light post-it notes!

Sound suppliers were also out in force. Though many must have been disappointed not to be able to get up close to products from Cadac, who had to withdraw from the show at the last minute, other sound products must surely have compensated. The most entertaining of these, though not on sale, was MM Productions' Midi Cat - a toy cat which, via a collection of loose wire hidden in its fur linked to MM's relay controllers and a sampler, would purr when stroked and screech when its tail was pulled. MM were also showing the final version of the StopBox auto-stop system for Akai Hard Disk recorders and other products using MIDI Machine Control shown in prototype form at last year's show.

A more 'serious' display was mounted by Trantec Systems, who were showing their VHF and UHF radio microphones along with their



lan Price-Smith of Multiform (left) with Jim Laws who recently sold a Multiform Zodiac 36 lighting console to the Aldeburgh Foundation.



Stephen Arthur (left) and Vincent Randall of Scanachrome.

dedicated Windows-based monitoring unit that allows the UHF systems to be controlled from the sound desk. Sennheiser were also showing their radio mic ranges, proven favourites of many West End sound designers, as well as their infra-red hard-of-hearing equipment. ASP Frequency Management were on hand to offer advice on where these microphone systems could be used. And Marquee Audio, LMC Audio Systems and Audio Video Systems were talking about the range of equipment they supply and recent contracts; the former's including Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts, the latter's the Glyndebourne Opera House.

As usual, the ABTT show wasn't just a sound and lighting show, as even the societies and trade bodies present indicated; PLASA and the Association of Lighting Designers (ALD) being balanced by the ABTT themselves and their Society of British Theatre Designers subsidiary. Non sound/light people would have found plenty to interest them. Steeldeck staging was on show on both the Parsons/ Steeldeck stand and that of Maltbury, who shared a stand with Triple E. Both of these companies had new products on show - Triple E had their Unirail track system and Maltbury showed two new staging systems. StageMaker is a new, lightweight system aimed specifically at schools that uses square frames and drop-in wooden tops to create raised stages and tiered seating units. 'M::Stage' is a step on from Steeldeck, with adjacent units linking together with drop-in pins rather than bolts and sharing legs, so reducing the number of leg tubes required. The system remains compatible with Steeldeck legs, though, and can also be bolted to existing Steeldeck units where required.

Alistage had their staging system on show, while Penn Fabrication were displaying their new MSB Modular Stage Box system, a collection of 'standard' cutouts that can be mixed and matched onto aluminium frame extrusions to create just about any kind of rack panel without the need for any drilling or cutting. The standard patterns certainly look like they cover practically every kind of connector and switch, and custom panels can be created if required - useful ones will subsequently be added to the range.

The show seemed remarkably light on smoke



A fully CE Marked Derrick Saunders of Pulsar (left) with Andy Sugars from Mushroom Lighting.



Marquee's Spencer Brookes (left) with Nigel Cunningham of Metro Audio.

machines this year (perhaps caution was prevailing because of the row currently brewing in the US) but, given their name, the **Effects Company** could hardly avoid the area, and showed the Cumulus dry-ice machine and the Cirrus Lowsmoke machine that claims to produce an effect that is "indistinguishable from dry ice" - though the difference has always been clear to me. However, the Cyclone high-power smoke machine with fan-boosted output is impressive, and the 'incoming level' indicators on their DMX converter is a useful touch.

Practical bits-and-pieces were also scattered around a range of stands with Flint Hire and Supply having their usual 'shop counter' type stand (and being nominated for product of the year for their 'black screw'), Le Mark returning after a year away from the show with their range of tapes and labels, Varia Textiles showing their wide range of scenic materials and British Harlequin demonstrating their heavy duty commercial floorings, as well as the more familiar dance floor ranges. More unusual exhibitors were Scanachrome, who produce large colour printed images and whose work has featured in several theatrical productions



David Edelstein of Triple E with Maltbury's compact, lightweight 'M::Stage' stage system.

this year (creating an image that looked like a high quality projection without the trouble of using projectors in *A Little Night Music* at the National, amongst others), and **J-Tech**, bringing to this country a US concept of silent pagers lent to audience members to allow them to be contacted if the babysitter phones. Oh, and **Biancheri**-man was back (though this year dressed as a woman), once again selling the wing-nut tightening tool that everyone laughs at until they actually try it. I'm *still* waiting for the ratchet-version, though.

Aware that lottery money is not just for stage equipment but for auditoriums and project management, Audience Systems, seating designers to the likes of Glyndebourne Opera House, the Edinburgh Festival Theatre, The Belfast Concert Hall and The Royal Albert Hall, as well as being recent recipients of the Queen's Award for Export Achievement, also took a stand, as did architectural firm Theatre Futures and design/installation company Glantre Engineering. Audience Systems were showing a new chair, designed by Nick Thompson, that is being installed in Manchester's Bridgewater Hall. Both Theatre



ABTT administrator Jenny Straker (left) with show organiser Roger Fox.

Futures and Glantre have been supporting the ABTT show for many years and, though Glantre's presence in particular has always felt slightly strange (their work in the high-budget world of international theatres and cruise ships seeming slightly at odds with the village-hall feel of the show), this could be the year when it is all made worthwhile: they're used to handling projects involving large amounts of money in a way that most theatres aren't.

So, that about wraps it up for ABTT '96. A good number of visitors, from all over the country. A good level of serious enquiries. Some interesting new products. And, seemingly, money to buy them with. Though the suppliers must be hoping that the orders are received, processed and paid for before the backlash against the Lottery just providing infrastructure gets any further. Hopefully, the seemingly inevitable re-allocation of funds to performance and training will still leave some money to buy new equipment so that the enthusiasm found at this year's show continues at both ABTT North, to be held in the autumn, and next year's London show, the 19th, provisionally booked for April 23rd/24th 1997.

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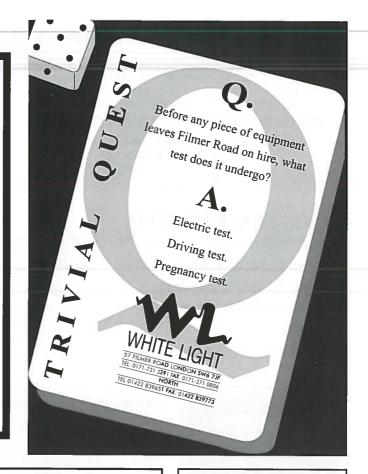
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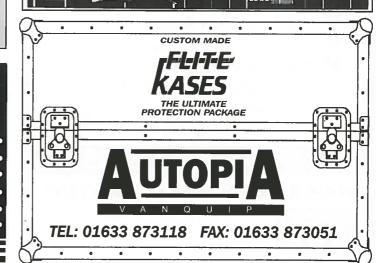
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Mike Robertson talks to award-winning Lighting Designer, Rick Fisher

Rick Fisher is a lighting extremist, with Drama Desk, Olivier and Tony awards and nominations to his credit, whose collaborations have produced some truly perceptive lighting.

In the 1970s he came to the UK and started working life as the technical stage manager of The Oval House, doing a variety of tasks including lighting numerous in-house shows. Later, he moved to The Bush as stage manager: "I did everything, but noticed that my lighting was getting good reviews, so I decided to specialise. I was asked to light *The Seagull* at The Liverpool Playhouse, but I didn't know how to draw a plan for a proscenium show, let alone light one!"

With a little guidance from the then chief electrician, Johanna Town, he pulled it off. Two years later he lit Serious Money at The Royal Court, which was a great success and transferred to Wyndhams and was also presented on Broadway, although it lasted there only a few weeks. His other work for director Max Stafford-Clark included Bloody Poetry and King Lear. Rick first met director Stephen Daldry in York, forming a close partnership whose work was to include Machinal and An Inspector Calls. The latter production, first created in York, bore a close resemblance to the one that would later enjoy a tremendous run in London at The Aldwych, tour the UK, run on Broadway, in Tokyo, Vienna and Australia and which can now be seen at The Garrick in London. They collaborated on Machinal at the National, the incisive visuals for which included a flying bar of Parcans rising with the light malevolently chasing Fiona Shaw downstage. Rick philosophically links these two productions by adding: "Inspector Calls was the hit single, Machinal was more like the concept album."

To get an insight into Rick's thought processes and his approach to design, I asked him if he minded basing our conversation on An Inspector Calls. I remembered the play itself as a rather ordinary period drama and having seen the new interpretation was heartened by the way that a radical approach can alter its elucidation and enjoyment. Over the course of cloning the production all over the world, Rick has been continually stimulated by refining it, cutting it down and making it fit perfectly into each venue. The rig in London is comparatively small in relation to other West End shows, at around 150 lanterns, a large amount of which

concerned with lighting the cyc evenly in a seven-colour Fresnel wash which, cleverly enough, avoids being a dominating cinemascope. The show only has about 80 cues, and from a punter's point of view looks organic and 'unlit' in the theatrical sense.

Rick is devoutly interested in the different qualities of light, and this show reveals these obsessions, the elevated house being very soft and cannily sculpted, given the obvious difficulties of lighting a box with a full ceiling. The downstage, however, where most of the action takes place, is heavily and essentially side-lit and mostly on eyeline level. This, Rick believes 'Supercharges the play'. He avoids the common problem of actors obscuring each other in side-light by setting it "like the spokes of a wheel," in that by sourcing each area from a number of points on the same vertical plane, any problems of obscurity are alleviated, and it appears as if "the actors carry the light."

Once in this supercharged state the introduction of beamlights from a low box position creates a wonderful softness amidst the tension of the cool sidelight, and here again his exploration and interaction of different qualities of light is poignant.

The ideas in the concept of framing the picture mean that in certain venues there were false prosceniums built and headers flown, but perhaps a notable throughline in this are the stunning rain effects, which are solidly lit with Par battens, and by varying the density of the water, the heaviness of the atmosphere is altered and so too is the strength of its 'picture framing'. There are many definable visual elements of this show, as Rick explained: "I've seen it so many times that if the rain doesn't work or the house doesn't tip or the plates don't smash, it is a strong enough production for it not to matter."

Rick has long-held beliefs: "If a show is strong it will tell you how to light it. Shows have their own resonance if they are strong concepts and that resonance takes on a life of its own and makes clear the way to approach it, as opposed to trying to force resonance on a show that is inanimate. Sometimes productions without a clear line will demand you to prepare options because they are not talking to you straight."



Rick has recently lit a highly contemporary Swan Lake, which demanded a good deal of face-lighting, as the expressions were often the main movement, but he had to keep the theatricality high. By contrast, he felt that the key to lighting David Storey's The Changing Room at The Duke of York's was that it had to have a period feel and that by using old fashioned equipment such as 743s, that in itself would

produce the dated quality of light that he needed to evoke the piece, and I can testify to its silent accuracy, not least for the fact that I asked him how he created the fluorescent colour: "Simple," he said, "use fluorescents!"

Rick's raison d'etre is concerned as much with story-telling as it is with qualities of light. *Tap Dogs*, his latest project, unfortunately has little storyline, so he is resigned to the light making up its own 'little tales and internal stories' and I feel that it is this passion which gives his designs their inherent sincerity. *Tap Dogs* is also supposed to have an industrial feel, so he is going to experiment with using moving lights in an unsinging, undancing way.

I asked Rick for a final word for young lighting designers: "Look at the whole show; directors and designers want collaborators to input to and share an overview, not just someone who is interested in lighting. Shows are getting bigger and more complex - everyone expects more. The industry must be responsive to our needs and I'm looking for new qualities of light. I'd love to see a 'chameleon' light that could be a Fresnel one minute and a Profile the next."

Rick is also now the chairman of the ALD and is keen to make a substantial contribution, but is also keen to learn more about what we want, so get scribbling. I wish him luck, and if he continues on orange juice and soda I will be glad to buy him a few 'lunches' whilst he's down the road from me.

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A&B Theatre Services	41	Cerebrum	18	Henry Butcher	53	Pfaff	45	Stagetec	42
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