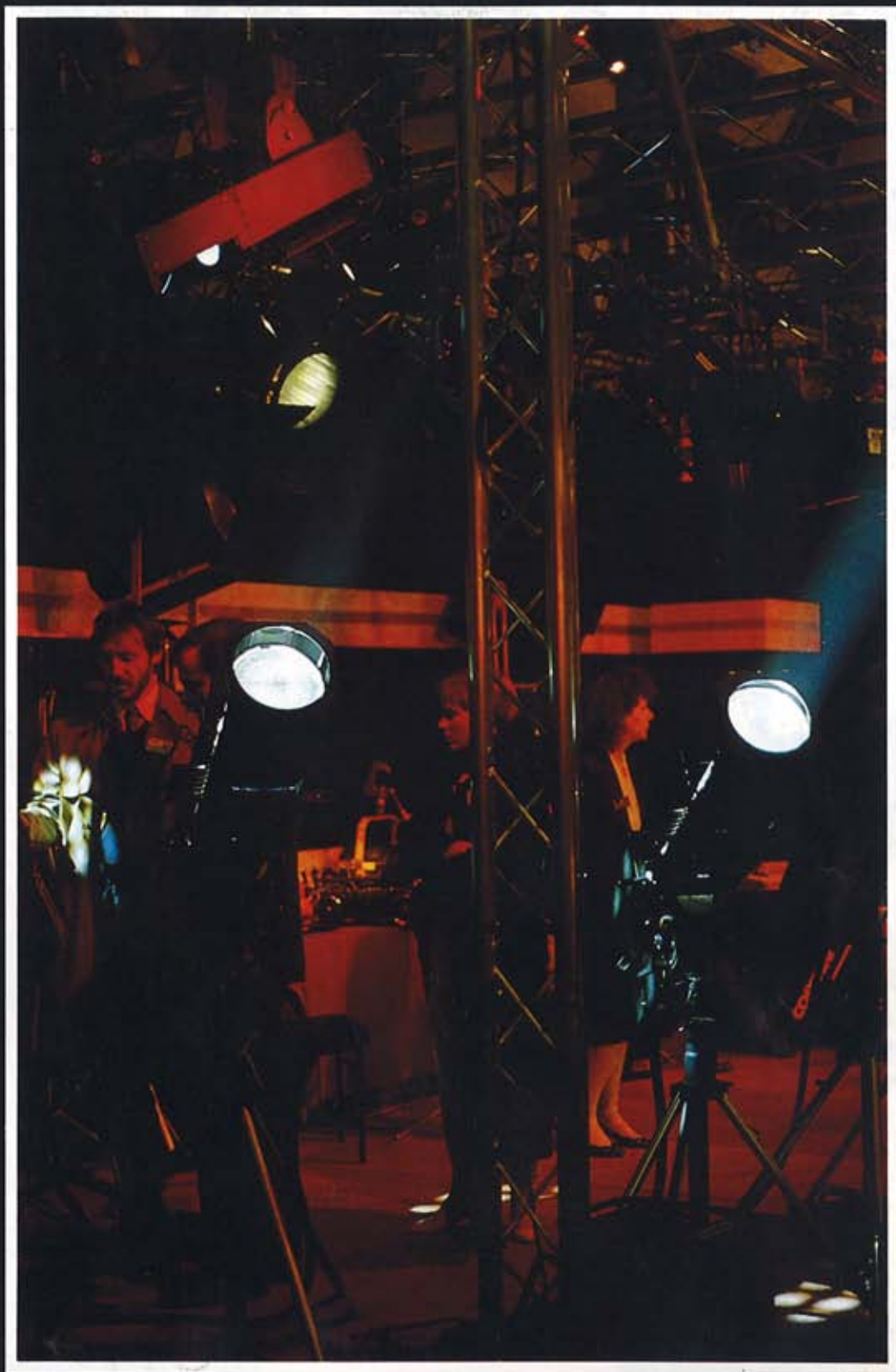


LIGHTING+*Sound* International



ABTT Trade Show 1986 - the stand of WB Lighting
a preview of the 1987 Show is included in this issue

PLASA

published in association with the Professional Lighting and Sound Association

February 1987

Volume 2 No.2

£1.50

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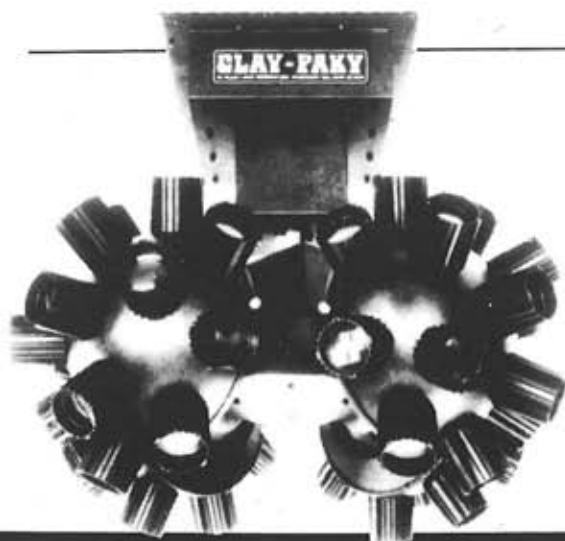
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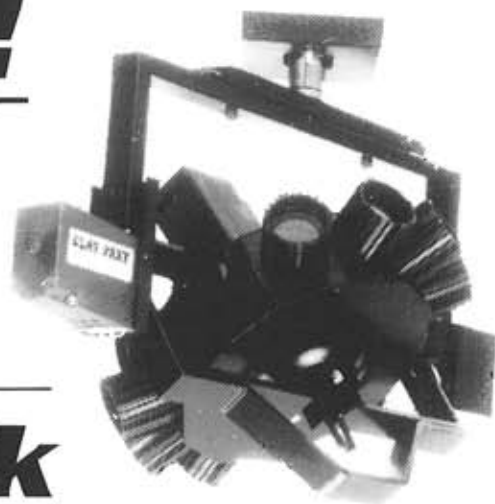
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More Clay Paky products, together with fuller details, are shown in Avitec's 1986/7 colour catalogue, available on request, as is Avitec's new price list, showing Clay Paky's new, lower prices! Clay Paky is also on demonstration in Avitec's comprehensively equipped Hitchin showroom —

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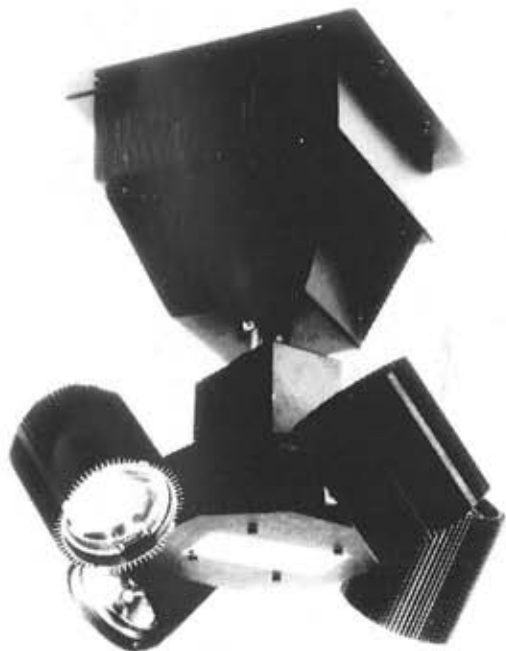
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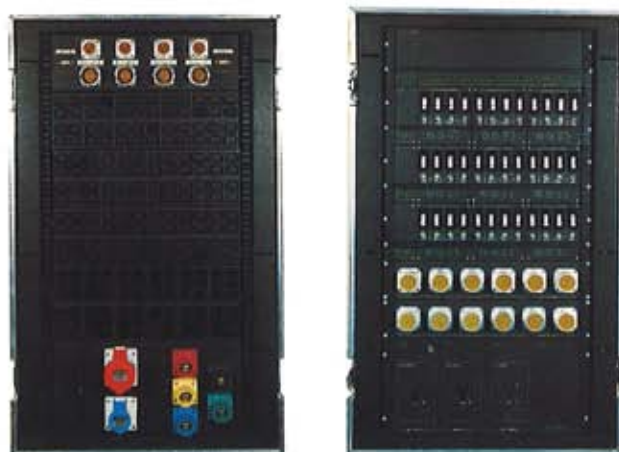
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Strand's New Distributors in London

Strand Lighting has appointed Luff Light and Sound and L.H.S. Limited as exclusive distributors for their lighting equipment in London and the home counties. Both companies will also supply Strand's Quartz-color studio lighting and Environ dimmers and controls for commercial lighting applications.

To mark the occasion, framed certificates confirming the appointments were presented to Robert Luff, chairman of Luff Light and Sound and Hugh Leslie, managing director of L.H.S. Limited, at Strand's Brentford headquarters. Making the presentation, Russell Dunsire, general sales manager of Strand Lighting, stressed the exclusive nature of Strand's distributor network in the UK and welcomed the two companies to the 'club', which now comprises 15 distributors.

In the picture above Russell Dunsire (left) hands the certificates to Hugh Leslie (centre) and Robert Luff.



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LIGHTING+*Sound* News

International

Laserpoint move into Scandinavia

Fast growing Laserpoint Limited have announced the formation of a new company, PTS A/S (Presentation Technology Scandinavia A/S), to provide a complete audio visual equipment hire and sales service in Scandinavia.

Based in Copenhagen, the new company began operations on January 1st, and will offer the latest projection, dissolve, video, staging systems, sound and conference lighting hire equipment in addition to laser projection hire. Laserpoint told L+SI that this 'total capability' company has been formulated to satisfy the needs of the growing conference industry in Denmark, Sweden and Norway.

PTS is also offering a comprehensive equipment sales service for both complete systems design and installation, and also individual product sales. It has also been announced that the company has been appointed as importers and dealers for AVL in a major deal.

Electrosonic announce link with Helvar

OY Helvar of Finland, major manufacturers of fluorescent lighting ballasts, commercial dimmers and professional lighting control systems, have taken a substantial minority shareholding in Electrosonic Limited in a move that both companies say will strengthen their marketing positions.

Helvar, with a turnover of £25 million, employ

over 400 people in Finland, and over 80% of their output is exported, mainly within the rest of Europe. Electrosonic Limited employ 240 people in the UK and sell worldwide 65% of their £10 million turnover of product and services.

An official statement says both companies depend on exports for their continuing expansion, and both have realised that to maintain present markets and penetrate new ones requires greater resources than either one of them has at present. It continues: 'Helvar will bring to Electrosonic finance for future growth, specialist product know-how, and shared sales opportunities. Electrosonic will bring to Helvar its Systems Engineering capability, extensive knowledge of world markets, and a wider field of activity'.

Soundcraft Sponsor Blood Brothers

The current tour of Willy Russell's hit musical 'Blood Brothers' has been sponsored by Soundcraft Electronics Limited who supplied a 24 channel Series 200SR and three SA Series power amplifiers.

The show is playing middle-scale venues, so a very powerful system was not required. However, with the lyrics crucial to the telling of the story, the highest quality sound equipment was specified by the show's technical team, Soundcraft told L+SI.

According to Robert Longthorne, production manager of the show, the equipment has proved ideal, with comprehensive facilities coupled with compact size. "The power amps combine the rug-



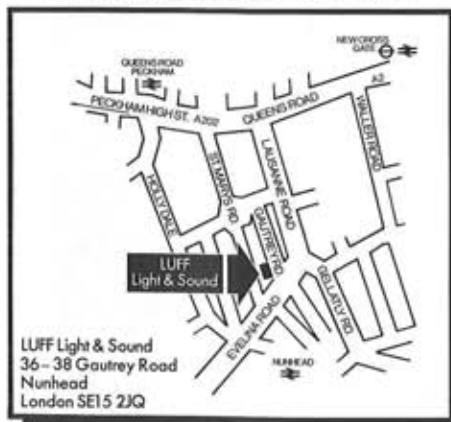
Sound engineer Peter Morris with actress Liza Spenz, who plays Mrs. Johnstone in the show, pictured during rehearsals for the 'Blood Brothers' tour. Sound equipment was provided by Soundcraft as part of a sponsorship deal.

gedness required for road use with compact dimensions and clean sound and power required for the variety of venues on the tour," he said.

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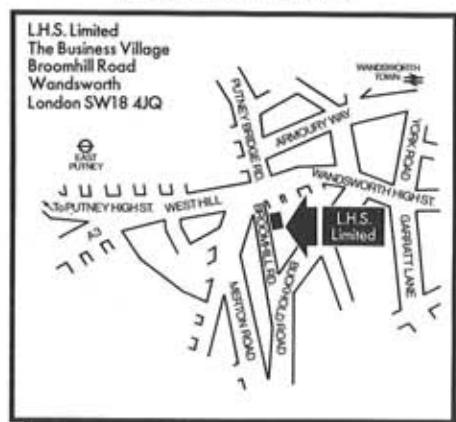
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Major Donmar Deal

Donmar Limited have recently completed delivery to the Queen Elizabeth Hall on London's South Bank of over £60,000 worth of new lighting equipment - a contract won against five other major companies. Apart from follow spots, Donmar supplied all the equipment put out to tender which included Strand Century, Strand, CCT, and ADB luminaires, Thomas Parcans, low voltage light battens, cabling, bars, and rigging equipment.

Donmar's sales manager James Bishop told L+SI he was very impressed with the ease with which CCT responded to supply 40 Silhouette 30's at very short notice. "At the time they were out of stock, but rearranged production schedules to complete the order in under 10 days. We are looking forward to a good relationship with them in the future," he said.

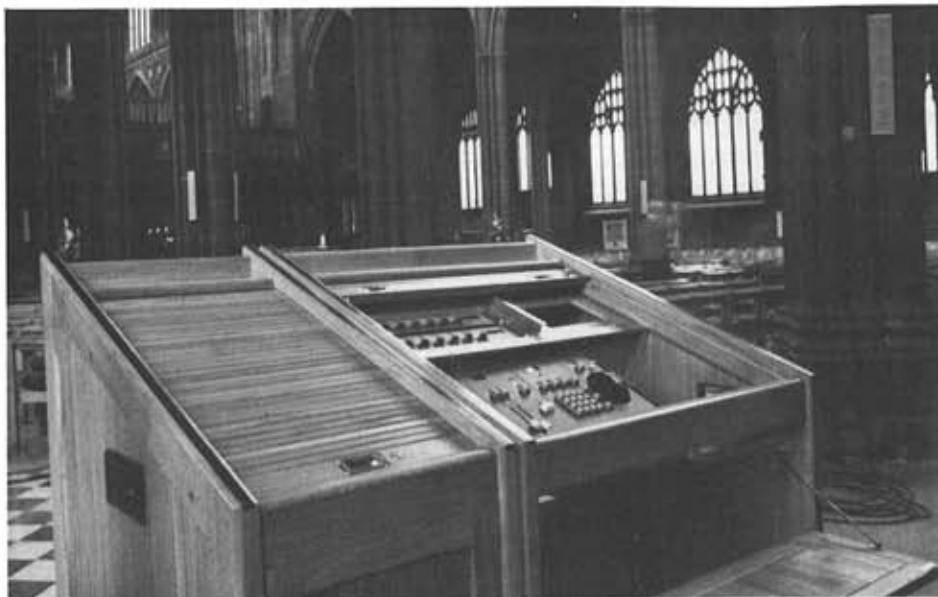
Jands appointed by Soundcraft

Jands Electronics Pty. Limited of New South Wales, Australia, have been appointed sole distributors for the entire range of Soundcraft sound mixing consoles and stereo and multitrack tape machines. Other major agencies held by Jands include JBL loudspeakers and CCT luminaires.

Turbosound Full Frontal

North London based Turbosound have been widening their installation net. David Bearman reported to L+SI that they recently won a contract to supply TMS1's, TMS4's and TMW212 wedges to Thames Television against considerable competition. Other recent work includes contracts at three venues for First Leisure: North Pier Theatre Blackpool, Shanghai Sams at Peterborough, and Lexington Avenue at Hull.

They are now in the middle of a major sales effort in the local authority arena, with recent successful installations at Bristol's Colston Hall and Portsmouth's Guildhall.



Memory in the Cathedral

A Strand Lighting M24 memory lighting control, together with dimming equipment, was recently installed in Manchester Cathedral. The lighting and sound desks have both been mounted in a special transportable unit, as shown in the photograph above. Multi-pin sockets in several locations within the cathedral allow control of the dimmers, which have been installed in a utility area adjacent to the nave. The system provides 120 different lighting states to be recorded as well as timed sequences of lighting for use during processions.

The dimmers allow the cathedral lighting to be matched to the requirements of a particular service, from full lighting for the well-attended Evensong, to low maintained lighting of the aisles during a candle-lit service. The M24 will also be used for drama and dance events in connection with the cathedral.

Gone Public

Although only 16 months old, the Letchworth-based company Sound Technology went public as from 1st January, managing director Robert Wilson told L+SI. New products expected to be announced during 1987 include equipment from Alesis, Bokse, Aphex, Symetrix, Oberheim and Ashley.

You Have Been Warned

"Goan follow spot operators are the worst follow spot operators in the world." (Overheard aboard the S.S. Canberra in Southampton Docks before she sailed off on her current three month world cruise).

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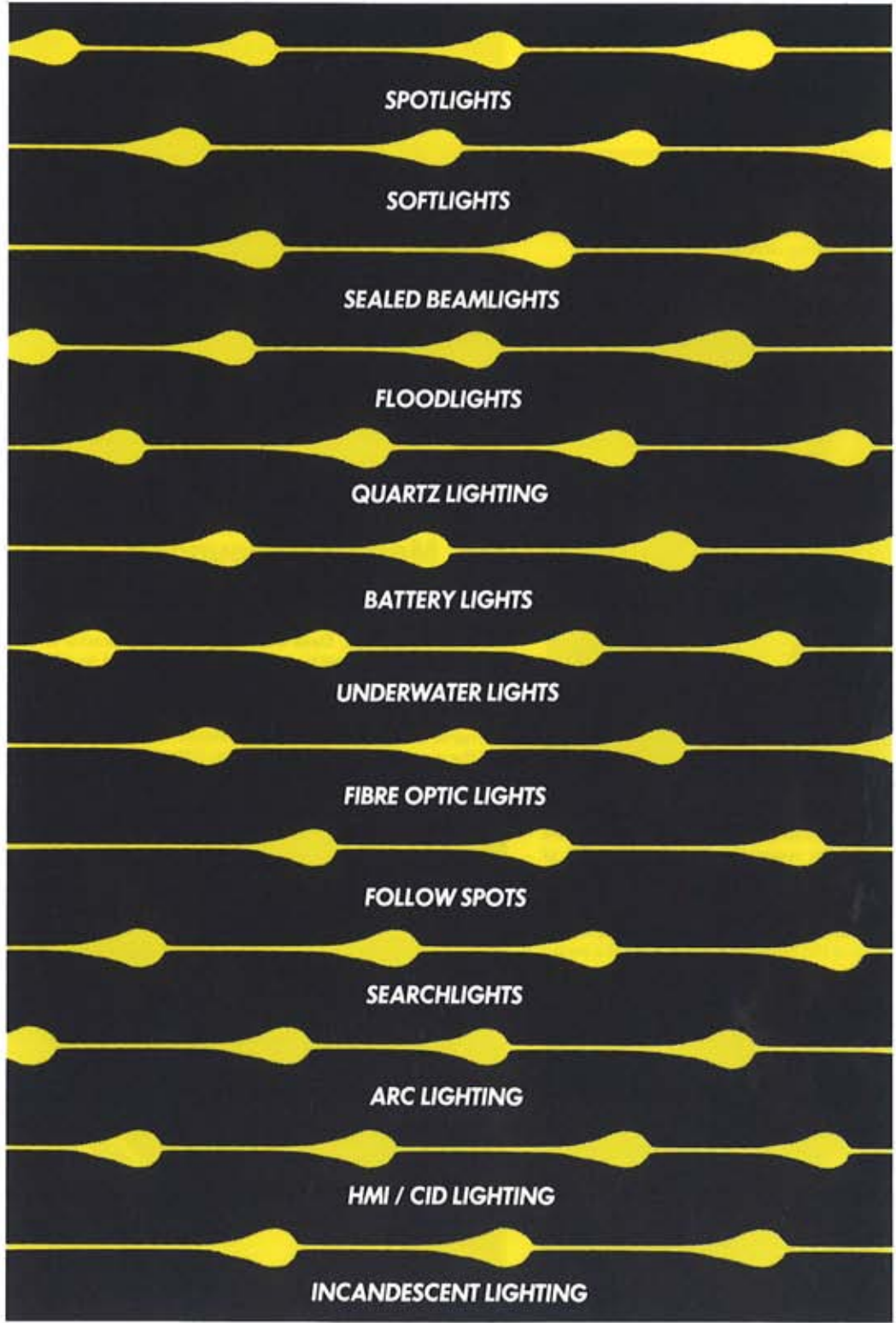
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People . . .

New Soundcraft Appointments

Soundcraft Electronics have announced the appointment of **Philip Hart** to the position of managing director. Philip has been in electronics for over 20 years, and joins the company from Thorn EMI Datatech, where he held the position of manufacturing director.



Philip Hart

Soundcraft chairman **Phil Dudderidge** told L+SI that since the resignation through ill health of **Colin Mason** in 1985, their team has been incomplete. "Philip Hart's general management and electronics manufacturing experience will be an essential factor in the achievement of our planned growth and the intended stock market flotation," he added.



Ian Downs

Another new appointment at Soundcraft has seen **Ian Downs** join them as sales engineer. Under the direction of UK sales manager **Steve Gunn**, he will be responsible for the continuing development of the UK market, which has shown an increase of over 60% since the beginning of 1986. Ian has over 15 years experience in professional audio, covering every facet from P.A. and recording to audio visual and broadcasting, and he joined Soundcraft from Simmons Electronics where he worked in the R & D department.



DTL Merger Announced

Dynamic Technology Limited, who recently announced a management buy-out of the company from London Weekend Television, have merged with IGTV Limited. The result will be a streamlined systems group with the back-up of DTL's manufacturing base, say the company.

In a joint statement, **Dave Craddock**, managing director and **Steve Edmunds**, technical director, stated that: "In today's competitive market-place, we need to offer the complete spectrum of equipment and services to satisfy a discerning industry. The consolidation of DTL and IGTV will enable us to better satisfy both a clients needs and budget constraints."

The new company will trade from a modern 20,000 square foot factory at Park Royal in London under the name of Dynamic Technology Limited. The changes came into effect from the 1st January 1987.

In the picture above are (left to right) DTL's financial director Mike McHugh, technical director Steve Edmunds, and managing director Dave Craddock.



Held on Ice

Having 'snapped' them at the PLASA Show, we've at last been able to research the facts behind this photograph. ICE Electrics **Rob Peck** (right) tells us that **Arthur Taylor** (left) ran Direct Sound in London's East Ham from the early 1940's until a couple of years ago. "He used to send out about 20 mobile discos every week-end, added to which he and his wife Rene would do one themselves every week-end, all the year round at the age of 65! All 20 mobiles belonged to him, and local boys would supply their own transport and do the job, with Arthur and Rene doing their own disco, and being back at the shop to see all the equipment returned any time up to 2.00 a.m."

"He must have been one of the very first mobile shows," explained Rob, "and had the legend 'Dancing to Gramophone Records' displayed in front of his valve driven equipment. During the day the Direct Sound shop would sell electrical appliances. Arthur latterly used ICE equipment (of course) and is now semi-retired at Southend-on-Sea. I understand he still does the occasional disco to keep his hand in, and it was good to see him in such fine form at the PLASA Show."

Lightronix Stays

L+SI has been informed that the Lightronix operation will continue as a division of Audilec, despite rumours that it would be closed down, and that in future it will be concentrating on a few major lines rather than acting as a general wholesaler of lighting equipment. Two exclusive ranges are to be announced in the near future, together with

three other major lines. Sales Director **Phil Price** told L+SI that Lightronix would concentrate on specialist equipment areas only.

"We still consider Lightronix as an important part of Audilec's plans for the future," he told L+SI, and also stated that **David Nibbs**, who ran the Lightronix operation, left by "mutual agreement" in early January.

Le Maitre, established market leaders in Pyrotechnics and Special Effects, take another great leap forward with their new generation of Smoke Machines - the most powerful yet.

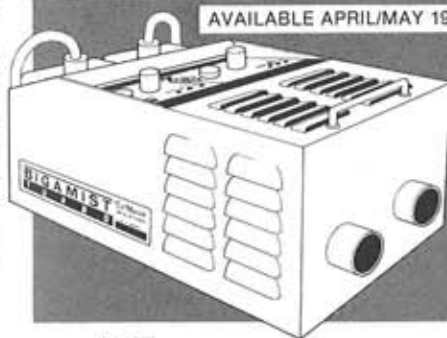
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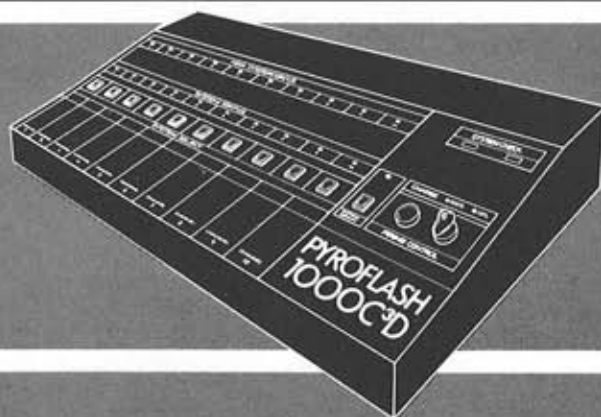
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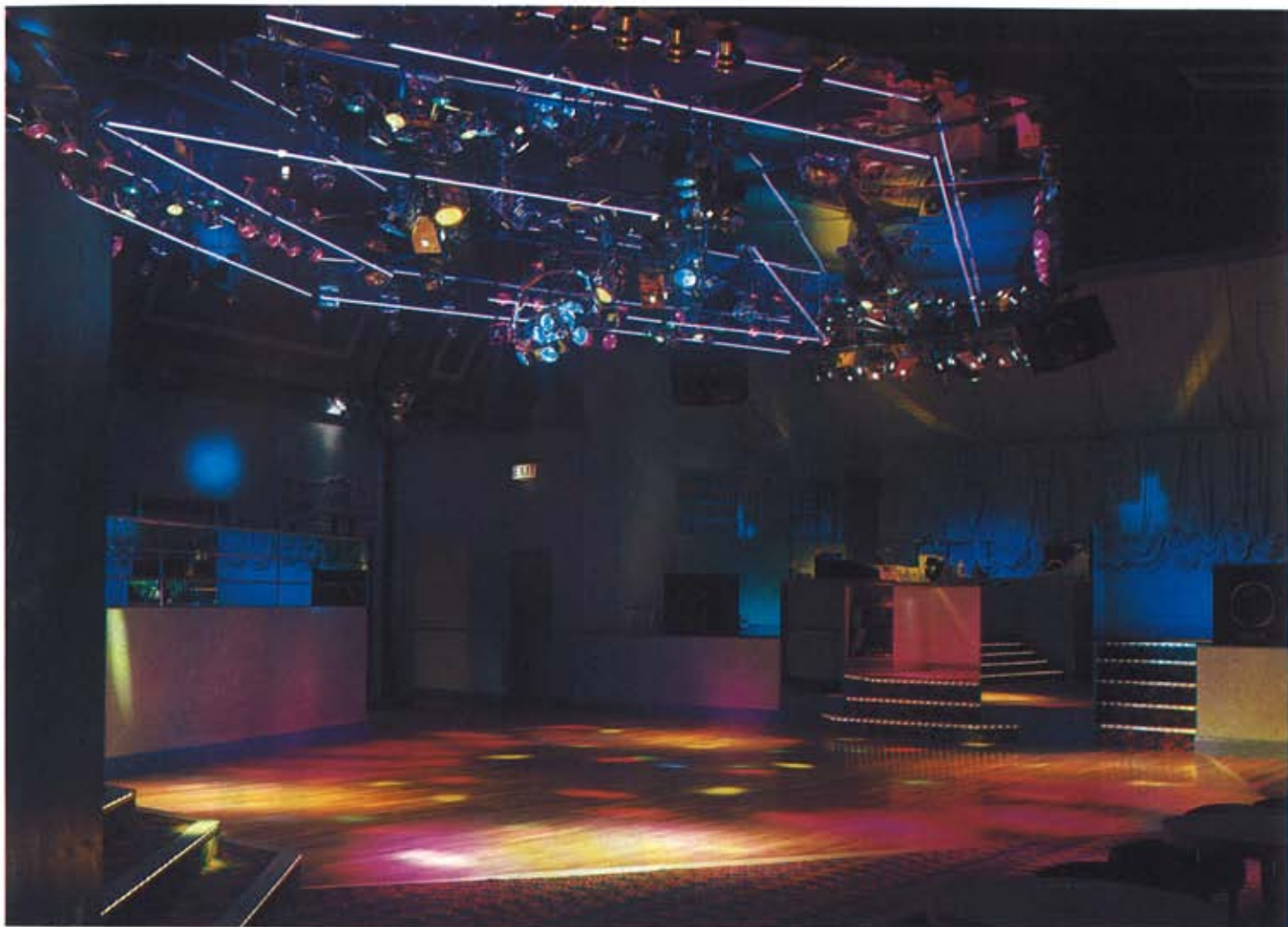


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INTO THE FUTURE



Aureon Entertainments' Ronelles International at Lincoln (above) was re-opened on December 10th 1986 after a £430,000 refit, and The Aviary at Leicester (below) was re-opened a day later after a £500,000 spend.



Aureon Entertainments

Roger St. Pierre talks to Steve Dennis, national promotions manager

It was just over two years ago that the Whitbread brewing giant decided to set up Aureon Entertainments as the discotheque and leisure division of its activities.

"Aureon was started from a caucus of just a dozen already-established Whitbread discotheque venues," explained the company's national promotions manager Steve Dennis, a character well-known in the industry for his own deejaying expertise over the years and for his organisation of such events as the original deejay conventions and the national Deejay of the Year competition, which is now in its fourth year.

"Whitbread decided on an expansion programme and thought that the best way to go about it would be to set up a specialist team - and that's how Aureon was born," Steve explained.

Today, Aureon is one of the most important discotheque operators in the country, with some 50 units - 41 of them discotheque/night club operations while the other nine are in the fun pub category.

"Up till now, the expansion of the company has been achieved through taking over existing discotheques and re-vamping them. Many of the early clubs in the chain were bought from Rank Leisure when that company decided to pull out of the discotheque business which it had once dominated."

That was how clubs like the famed Busby's, in London's Charing Cross Road - currently the largest venue in the chain - came into the Aureon fold.

"In future, though, it is possible that we might open brand new venues on virgin sites though, of course, that presents greater problems in obtaining drinks and dancing licences," commented Steve.

One thing that really marks Aureon out from the old Rank set-up - and from such present-day multiples as Mecca and First Leisure - is the company's policy of operating each of its venues as a virtually autonomous club when it comes to image and entertainment policy.

"The sign outside Ronelle's International, for instance, says just that, and not 'Aureon's Ronelle's International'," said Steve.

"We are not a company which operates by national policies and carbon-copy clubs.

"Each unit is highly individual, operated by a manager who knows the needs of the particular area, but with the advantage over an independent venue of having national back-up in terms of finance, administration, staff training, promotion, and so on.

"This provision of first-rate decor, sound and light, entertainment, hospitality and service are the conditions we apply, but given that all our venues have to meet that yardstick, each does it in its own unique way. This stamp of individuality applies as much to lighting and sound as it does to anything else.

"Our set of criteria for designers is that they should work to the geography of the unit in



Steve Dennis

question and produce a design which will complement the needs of the area. We are always looking to be innovators and to introduce new equipment of the highest standards - crystal clear sound and dynamic lighting effects.

"For instance, we would never consider equipping a venue with anything less than

vari-speed decks of the Technics SL1200 variety and we insist on a monitoring system for the deejay so that he doesn't have to drive the system full blast so that he can do mixing or hear the sound for himself. Most of our systems are supplied by Dick Carrier of Light and Sound Distribution, who works closely with our various designers.


"In putting a club together, we definitely think total environment. A lot of thought is given to the lighting of the non-dance floor areas and the surround system. People sitting in a club restaurant do not want to hear either sound escaping from the dancefloor or a belting surround sound system.

"Lighting is a very effective means of mood setting and we try to use its possibilities to the full. As for decor, we are generally against the strict 'theming' of clubs - plastic palm trees, fountains, rocks, that sort of thing - which is rather old-fashioned these days and limits what you can do with a venue.

"Coming up with the right name for a venue is very important. After finding the right location, the second hardest thing is to come up with the right name for it."

For the record, Aureon locations include such well-known niteries as Martine's in Leeds, Easy Street in Nottingham, the Millionaire in Manchester, Rick's Place in Norwich, the Aviary in Swansea, Busby's and Harper's Bazaar in Bristol, Liberty's and the Millionaire in Birmingham, Ronelle's and the Coliseum in Luton and Easy Street in Croydon, which last named club recently

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won the Disco Mirror/Royal Gold award as London Club of the Year.

Aureon's national headquarters is located in Luton where the venue which saw days as Caesar's Palace cabaret club and later as the Tropicana Beach has been recreated to a Mike Gibson design as the Coliseum.

"That was an outstanding development - something with was superb rather than lavish and over-expensive. It isn't always necessary to spend a fortune to get the right effect though, of course, a budget of half-a-million pounds is not unusual for a total refit these days."

Steve sees video as an area of continued expansion. "As the software becomes more readily accessible, video will assume an increasingly high profile, but, as with lasers, it has to be used properly. If a place is designed round video or lasers then the effects can be quite devastating.

"These days, integrated design is of vital importance, where, in the past, clubs were fitted out bit by bit. Too many operators used to see new effects come on to the market and rush out and buy them. They would be slapped into a vacant place and look ridiculous and often end up hardly being used. Nowadays, you have to consider the total concept whenever you do anything with a club."

Now 40 years old, Steve has been around the club scene for a long time, though initially as a part-timer. "I was a school teacher and semi-professional deejay," he said. "I taught science and careers and became head teacher of the upper school of a large secondary in Birmingham."

Ten years back, Steve gave himself some

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career advice and became a full-time deejay. "I love this business, you know. Nothing else entuses me like it."

Expanding beyond being just a deejay, Steve became a promotions consultant with independent operators, becoming best known for his work with Faces, in his native Birmingham, before moving on to work with the Millionaire discotheque in the same city.

"My contact with Aureon began when they took over the Millionaire early in 1985. They kept me on as deejay and I began doing freelance promotion for them on club openings in other places. Then, when Stewart Hunt left the company, the opportunity came up for me to join the company full-time as national promotions manager.

"In my independent days, I ran the National DJ Convention for three years then joined forces with Tony Prince's Disco Mix Club to expand the event in celebration of their first anniversary. I've also been running the Deejay Of The Year competition which has been sponsored successively by Guinness, Courage, and Citronic. We will be announcing this year's sponsor shortly."

At Aureon, Steve has quite a wide brief. "I arrange promotion nights on a nationwide basis. For example, Babycham are sponsoring the Valentines weekend. I get involved in special events - such as our sponsorship of the Miss Wet T-Shirt competition as a charity event.

"It is my job to co-ordinate both the promotion and entertainment sides of new club openings and I'm also responsible for the company's public relations activities. I run our monthly internal newsletter, the 'Aureon Buz', and organise the company's annual convention and I'm also responsible for the financial organisation of my department and for departmental training - all of which keeps me pretty busy!"

Steve told me that Aureon is undertaking a policy of consolidation up to the end of the present financial year, and then revealed that new openings are being undertaken in Bath and Southsea and negotiations are underway to take over clubs in Brighton, Southampton and London.

Some consolidation!

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1987 ABTT Trade Show Preview

One voice told me the 1987 ABTT Trade Show will be the year of colour and moving light. Another that last year was the year of moving light, and that this year would be the year moving light sorted itself out. Organiser Roger Fox reckoned it could well be the year of the curtain track - again - following on from Triple E's award-winning engineering last year.

"I certainly think it will be the year when more firms enter the market place on the lighting side of things," he said. "I hear there are a number of people going to declare themselves as theatre suppliers rather than anything else, and I think it may well be the year that everybody, and I mean everybody, will be trying to take in as big a market as possible in order to survive."

Later than ever, the booking plans for this year's show were only sorted out in late January, a mere six weeks before the event, and all sites were gone within four days according to Ethel Langstreth at the ABTT office, with exhibitors generally looking for larger stands than last year.

L+S's last-minute survey, just before we went to press, and right on the point of hopeful exhibitors knowing whether they'd actually got a stand or not, confirmed that the 1987 event from March 5th to 7th at the Riverside Studios in Hammersmith will be an exciting and different one for a variety of reasons.

There **will** be many companies exhibiting colour-change and moving light systems. There **is** a major development on curtain track technology. And there are several companies about to enter the fray for the first time, including one big name in the sound field eager for a slice of the local authority installation market.

The Swiss-manufactured ACR **Spectron** is billed as 'the most revolutionary colour change system of the decade', and will be demonstrated for the first time in this country on the stand of the UK distributors, **Optikinetics Limited**. Featured in our December 'Equipment News' section, the

system is based on the variable addition of the three primary colours of red, green and blue to create almost any colour imaginable in a manner similar to colour television.

Apart from the variable and programmable light levels, the Spectron system allows rapid as well as smooth colour changing and/or



The Posi-Spot moving spotlight system.

cross-fading of colour programmes or pre-sets. It contains no moving parts or motors, and the only parts subject to wear are lamps and the air filters of the cooling fan. There is a detached dimmer pack to deliver the power required for the halogen lamps, and the dimmers are controlled by the 16-channel Colour Processor.

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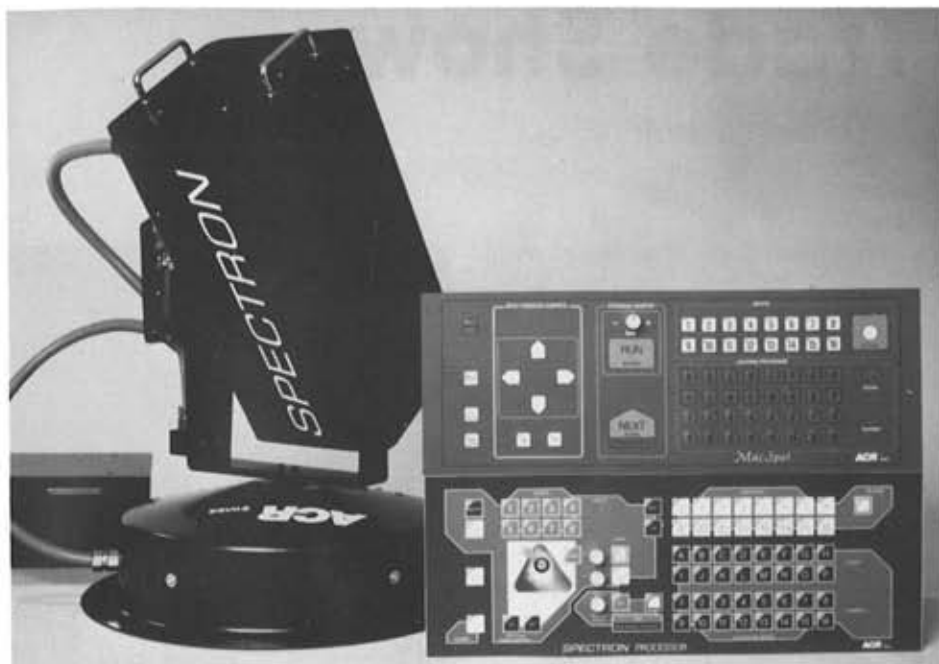
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The ACR Spectron with Colour Processor.

some users, the Spectron is available in two versions. The 750 produces any colour except the darkest red, green and blue. The 760 produces any visible colour and the purest colours are produced when the joystick of the Colour Processor is set to the extreme positions of the colour triangle.

Also on view on the Opti stand will be their complete range of 1986-introduced products including Quatrafog, all no doubt to be ensconced within a mantle of Trilite trussing.

The Posi-Spot moving spotlight system will be demonstrated on the stand of distributors

Cerebrum Lighting. Manufactured by Amp-town Lichttechnik GmbH of Hamburg, the unit has a 180° horizontal and vertical swivel range, and swivel duration is infinitely adjustable from one to six seconds per 180°. It has a built-in 10 amp dimmer with high grade interference suppression, a common 220/240v cable for lamp and electronics, and one 2-wire screened control cable for dimmer and positioning by multiplex control.

The Posi-Spot controller has three different modes. The 12-channel controller has a built-in joystick of manual, synchronous con-

trol of from one to twelve Posi-Spots, and a further four positioning buttons are provided for exact alignment of the spots. The memory section mode has a total of 250 different positions, again for up to twelve spots, which can be stored and called up in any desired sequence. The chaser section gives a total of nine free programmable chasers with a maximum of 99 steps. 'Memories' can again be stored in any desired sequence.

Also on stand will be the **Celco** Series 2 range of lighting control boards including the impressive 90 channel 'Gold', now in full production, and the Series 2 dimmers. On show for the first time will be the new Celco **Connexion** system - something Cerebrum feel will cause the most interest on their stand at this year's event. Over the next few years digital multiplex control systems are set to revolutionise the professional lighting industry, and by using the Connexion system it is possible to patch up to 450 desk channels to a maximum of 960 dimmer channels.

Cerebrum are also exclusive dealers of **Powerdrive** products and a selection of new stands will be on display. The show will also see the launch of Powerdrive's new 5-language catalogue.

Now fully integrated within Arri (GB) Limited, the Imagination Technology range of lighting control products will appear on a first-ever **Arri** stand at the 1987 show. The popular 'Image' system has been upgraded with new features including remote control, manual effects, and back-up options. The **Imagine 250** is a brand new system, at 250 channels and 512 dimmers and with every conceivable function, say Arri. It will have its world premiere at the event, and they see it as a 'world beater' and star of this year's show. The top model in the range, Imagina-

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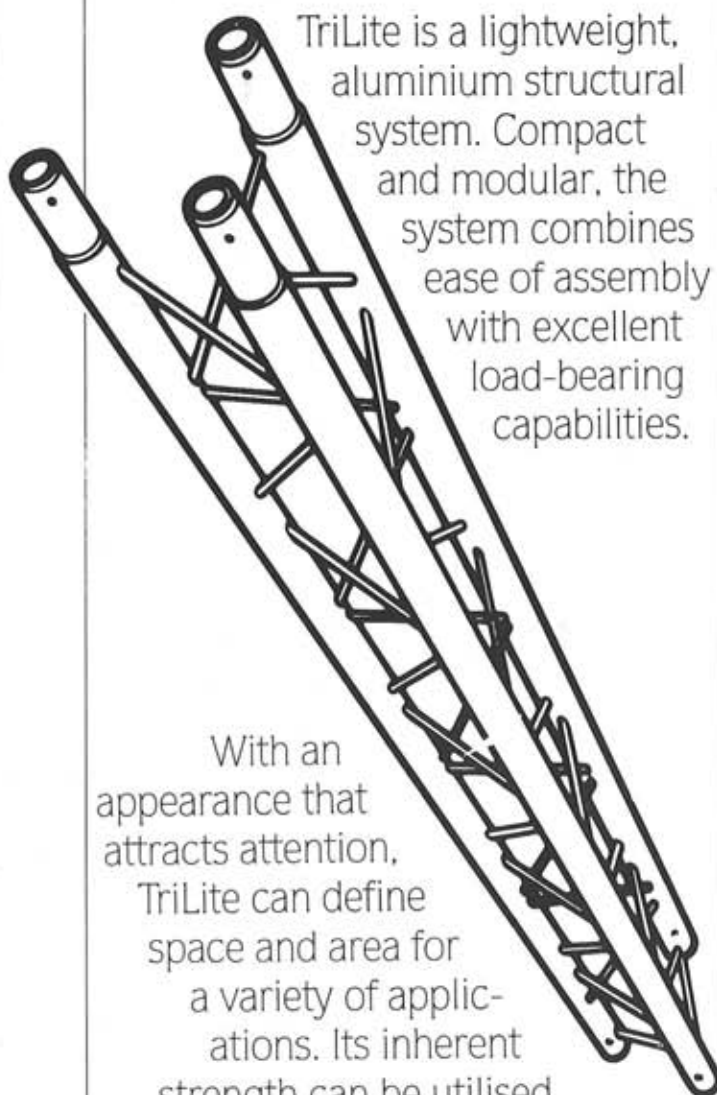


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tion, is shortly to be expanded to 500 channels and 1000 dimmers.

Also on display will be the 'Connexion' system - to be demonstrated live, and the Arri Junior range of fresnel spotlights and their HMI high-power fresnels, now available with electronic dimmer shutters.

Dealers for the Arri lighting control systems are **Playlight Hire Limited** (Manchester and London), and **Donmar Limited**.

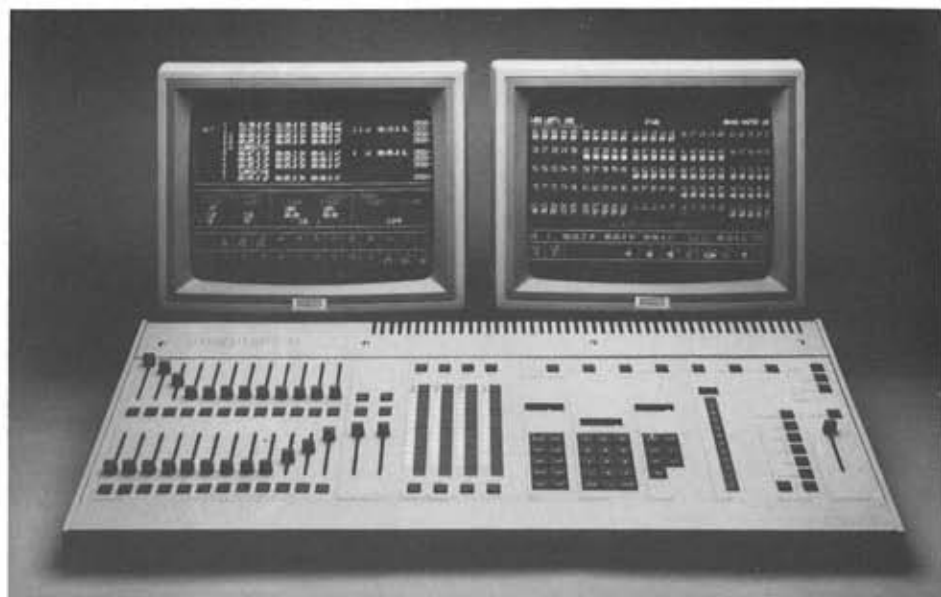
Crown House Furse Theatre Products of Nottingham and **ADB** of Belgium will be presenting a joint exhibit of their products. Recently appointed sole UK distributor for ADB, Furse have described the tie-up as possibly their most important move in recent years.

Of special interest at the show will be the ADB **S20** theatre lighting control desk, a highly advanced unit capable of controlling up to 120 independent lighting circuits and offering 250 lighting cue memories. It will be on full demonstration.

Due to be launched at Riverside is a Furse interface for the popular BBC model 'B' and 'Master' series micro-computers which will enable them to be used as a low cost lighting control system. Intended for schools and



The ADB S20 lighting control.



Arri's 'top of the range' Imagination lighting control system.

amateur theatre the system can drive up to 96 channels of dimmers and support up to 240 lighting cues.

Also on display will be the Furse 'Crown' range of flood and spotlights and their comprehensive range of stage equipment.

Still on the subject of lighting control, all the regular names will be busy at the Trade Show. **Zero 88 Lighting** will have their **Eclipse** modular lighting desk, together with the **Lightmaster 1200**, **Rackmaster** dimmer packs, and their full range of club control systems.

Nick Mobsby's **Eurolight** operation will be showing their complete range of memory

lighting controls plus a new 'state-of-the-art' stage management control desk.

Concord Controls are switching back to their **Green Ginger** tag, and in addition to their standard range will be showing a new **Micropack** six channel lightweight dimmer.

Dynamic Technology are returning after a year's absence to show their full range of lighting controls including **Multiset** and **Camelion**, plus a new lighting effects control unit which can be used as a 'stand-alone' unit for 64 direct control channels with electronic patch for up to 1000 dimmers.

Following up on their first appearance last year when they persuaded organiser Roger Fox to purchase a **QM500** memory lighting

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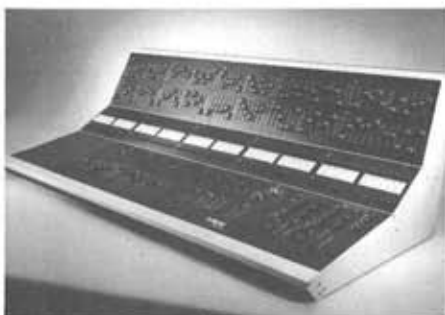


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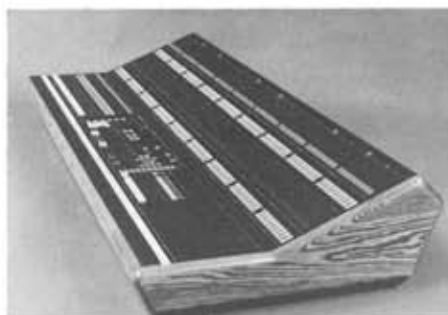
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Zero 88's modular 'Eclipse'.



The QM500 from Avolites.



Strand's Parscan 1000w halogen beamlight with variable pan and tilt movement and integral colour change.

control for the Barbican Concert Hall, **Avolites Productions** will have two new developments to announce at the Show. The QM500 will now have a timed cross-fade as an optional extra (a la Barbican), and a new VDU unit. Totally new will be a 30 channel computerised hoist controller. Also on display will be the Rolacue series of memory consoles, the C series of manual consoles, and dimming systems.

In addition to a selection of their established products, **Pulsar Light of Cambridge** will have on stand the latest modification of their Portapak - Portapak 3 - an improved flight-cased version, with 36 channels of dimming at 10 amps, complete with mains patch and signal patch.

Strand Lighting see their stand as a 'distributors' stand' and it will actually be run and manned by representatives of distributor companies. Products will include spotlights from the Strand range of Minim, Prelude, Harmony and Cadenza luminaires, Nocturne and Coda floodlights - all rigged for demonstration. ACT 6 and the Tempus portable lighting controls will be complemented

by the M24 memory lighting system, and Gemini memory system with programmable special effects. Strand's **Showchangers**, a comprehensive range of products to control and memorise light position, movement, quality and colour of a beam of light, will also be demonstrated on the stand.

Also featuring the Arri range of memory lighting controls mentioned above will be **Playlight Hire Limited**, who will be giving away free T-shirts and/or sports bags - "to selected people".

A Report and Pictures of the 1987 Trade Show will appear in our April issue

In their 21st year of operation, **CCT Theatre Lighting** promised us there will be some surprise packages on their stand. However, although there are rumours that they are busy developing a new colour-change system with moving filters that can be used on many standard luminaires, it is unlikely we will see it at the 1987 show. Why not ask Phil Rose about it anyway? (But please don't say you heard about it in L+S!). Moving over to other specialist areas,

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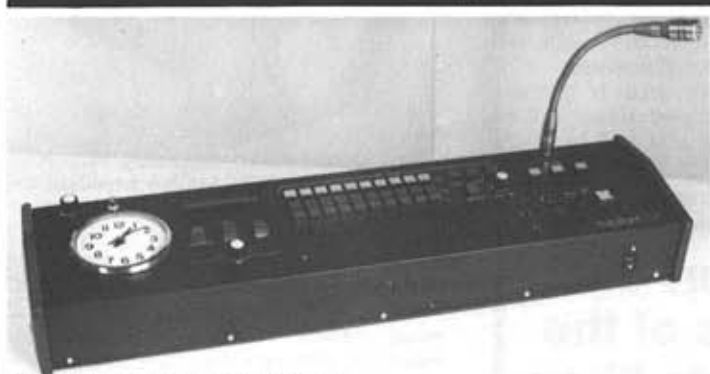
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Valiant Lighting will be taking their usual stand and their theatre representatives will be joined by Nigel Cleave, the company's low energy lighting specialist. They will be showing the T class and CP ranges of lamps.

Roscolab plan to adapt their Trilite road-show rig and carry on with the show at Riverside. On stand will be their complete range of filters, fabrics, textiles and screens, and the up-dated Rosco range of smoke machines. Visitors to the stand will be able to pick up the new Rosco Supergel Guide discussed in our January issue by Francis Reid, together with the latest swatch books with new colours.

In addition to their established range of gobos, **DHA Lighting** will be showing 36 new gobo designs, new revolving effects (including vari-speed) and screen-printed fabrics and backdrops.

Last year's award winners, **Triple E** will using this year's show to launch their revolutionary new motor. Designed exclusively for use with their **Uni-Track** system, this linear motor is virtually silent, maintenance free, can be installed by any competent electrician, and is extremely versatile in its multiplicity of uses. In addition to this there will also be a new winch, designed to do away with the conventional cable drum and using standard cord to operate the curtains. It is also very compact in size.

Since its launch at last year's ABTT show, sales of Triple E's Uni-Track system have risen dramatically. Now distributed in France and Germany, as well as being used by major companies in this country, it is proving a very successful addition to the company's range of precision stage hardware.

For those wishing to gain 'hands-on' experience of the system, there will be the

company's hire kit 'Track in a Box' on display. This unique idea has been used since its introduction in mid-1986 by such groups as the Bolshoi Ballet, Kool & the Gang, and Prince, and by companies such as Spectrum Communications, MSL, and Commercial Presentations.

Finally, we move over to sound. One has to admit that the ABTT Trade Show is really a fully fledged lighting show, and sound and communications products have had limited exposure in the past. Lighting can be demonstrated quietly, but sound can't. You've got to build a sound-proof booth to be able to demonstrate your wares, and in the small amount of space available at Riverside things just haven't happened that way.

Until 1987, that is. **Turbosound** have booked their space, and riding on the back of some recent major installation work for local authorities, will be showing their full range of TMS and TSE speakers and TMW4 monitors. A new version of the TSW124 with the brand new LS2403 24" speaker chassis will be on view (and demo) as will the new TFM2 turbo concentric floor monitor with new V2 manifold technology as fitted in the TMS3. Turbosound's associated company in the EdgeTech Group, BSS will be showing their new DPR502 noise gate and the MSR604 active mic splitting system along with other equipment.

It will be interesting to see how a sound stand of this nature fits into the overall pattern of the show, and what effect it will have on the shape of the exhibition in future years.

MAC of Manchester are always at the ABTT shows, and this year they celebrate ten years of sales equipment hire nationwide. They offer a complete consultancy service backed



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The Donmar Master Plan



Ian Albery - "more dealers will realise they have got to sell a full range of equipment."

Ian Albery, managing director of Donmar Limited, has over thirty years' experience backstage as stage manager, production manager, technical director and producer. He has produced and co-produced many shows, including 'Chairman Alf', 'Last of the Red Hot Lovers', 'Can't Pay? Won't Pay!', 'Accidental Death of an Anarchist', 'All My Sons', 'Vieux Carre', 'Piaf', 'Educating Rita', 'Hamlet', 'Pal Joey', 'Children of a Lesser God', and 'Duet for One'. He was director of productions for the London Festival Ballet from 1964 to 1968, and has acted as a theatre consultant on a number of studies and projects in the UK and overseas. President of the Society of West End Theatre from 1977-79, he is currently on their executive, a trustee of the Theatres Trust, a member of the Society of Theatre Consultants since 1964, deputy chairman of the London Festival Ballet since 1984 and also managing director of the Wyndham Theatres Limited.

L+S's editor John Offord talked to him in his office high above the foyer of the Albery Theatre in London's St. Martin's Lane, with discussion centring on the new direction of Donmar Limited, and the third edition of the ABTT award-winning Reference Manual.

"In your January issue you referred to the Donmar Reference Manual, and I feel I must point out that the concept of having a Reference Manual as against a catalogue was mine, and that the whole principle was to have something that would be acceptable in book shops and public libraries, and would also be kept on people's shelves not only as a sales catalogue but as a reference for the industry.

"In that sense it's worth going back to what I used to consider was the bible in the same way - the Strand catalogue of the fifties, when Strand was about the only manufacturer of stage lighting equipment, and one

really did use it as a basic work of reference.

"Quite clearly I wanted to go further than that and represent in the Manual all the dealerships we had and in addition to provide cross-referencing information of all the different colour media - which colours from Super Gel match the colours on Master Line, Chromoid, and so on. So as far as I was concerned it was envisaged as a work of reference, and not purely a sales catalogue.

"These same principles will be followed through in the next edition. I had always planned to do another edition of the Manual in 1987, but there will be a delay in preparing it because Donmar now has seven or eight new dealerships and we want to assimilate all the new equipment before we actually get down to work. The Reference Manual is intended to give comment - that is factual, not purely just subjective - about the comparative uses, strengths or otherwise of the various equipment that we are selling, and it isn't just a manufacturer's blurb. We retain editorial control over everything that goes into it. I can promise you it will be a well-written work, and it will be published later this year."

What were the reasons and philosophy behind the changes you have just announced for Donmar Limited?

"The philosophy behind the changes we have made also follows on from the Strand catalogue of the fifties and sixties. Strand products were a kind of reference or benchmark because they were literally the only manufacturer around, and they were 'God' in terms of what one could actually use in the theatre - because nobody else was actually producing anything. You could have anything you liked as long as it was Strand.

"As we moved through the seventies things were already changing in our industry. Practitioners, lighting designers, production

managers, production engineers, and technical managers began to look at different equipment overseas, and different ways of doing things. Also the wave of inventiveness that came over the industry with the growth of new technology has enabled even small back-yard companies to come up from almost nothing to produce very sophisticated control boards. This would have been unthinkable 30 or 40 years ago, when to set up and manufacture grand master switchboards would have involved enormous capital investment. Unless you were very well established you wouldn't attempt to do it.

"Modern electronics have therefore enabled a great number of competitors to come into the market, and there is no doubt about it, that where a company was in such a pre-eminent position for a long period of time, they can tend to relax, and not take note of what the customer wants. As far as they are concerned they will produce it - and the customer has jolly well got to use it.

"In the seventies the industry had become a customer-led industry where the buyer states what he wants, and he shops around for whatever manufacturer will provide it, whether it is a 'special' they manufacture for him, or just somebody who listens to what the trade requires and actually comes up with an answer to the problem. Returning to the Reference Manual, it provides opportunities for these comparisons, and it is also a tool which in fact creates demands for new products because it opens peoples' eyes to the potential.

"As far as trading is concerned we had been a Strand distributor for 10 years, but we were getting worried because a couple of years ago pressure was beginning to be put on us to lose some of our other dealerships which Strand considered were competitive. It was therefore infringing on what they felt should be an exclusive dealership with total loyalty to Strand, where we should not sell anything else but a Strand product. In particular this applied to Lee Filter, for whom I had had a dealership for nearly 12 years, and we had been dealers with them before we took on Strand dealership. In fact we were asked to take over the Strand dealership when Strand moved out of King Street in Covent Garden.

"I had never been very happy about the total exclusivity, but 12 years ago there weren't the same number of manufacturers around, and it wasn't as limiting as it has become in recent years. With Strand's recent change of managing director it became clear that they were going to demand total exclusivity to their products, and one wouldn't be able to sell competing product.

"The warning bells started to ring as we became aware that we would not be able to supply everything that the customer wanted and have on the shelf the more common products from all the other manufacturers in the industry.

"When Strand started to pressure us on this question Hughie Leslie and I undertook some research and contacted several manufacturers, discovering that they would all be very pleased to do business with us. As the largest dealer for Strand we were perhaps a kind of focal point for expressing concern with other dealers about the way

things were going. The one thing that any 'big brother' doesn't like is someone they see as a focal point of dissension.

"My view is that the customer is always right, and if we are not delivering what the customer wants we deserve to have our wrists slapped. It's the customer, the end-user, we are actually serving - not the manufacturer. This is the philosophy that has governed our decision to represent a far wider range of manufacturers.

What lay behind your decision to close the Donmar hire department?

"The hire department is something that has given us concern for a good number of years. I started in the hire business back in 1963 - in fact next year will be the 25th anniversary of the business - and it was about four years ago we started feeling the margins being squeezed. Five major hire companies including TSL and Theatre Projects were competing against us, and everybody was fighting for the same market and undercutting until there was very little profitability left in it.

"With the relatively high costs of premises in the West End, Hughie Leslie and I had to consider whether it was wise to actually move out of the area altogether to save on costs and to gain more space in which to expand, as our own premises were limited in size. Quite frankly, what it came down to was that sales had to stay in the West End because that's where the sales customers wanted to find us, and where they wanted demonstrations, etc. The trade counter is situated dead centre between all the main line railway stations, and is a nodal point for the entire United Kingdom. We can service faster than anyone else from the heart of the West End for sales, but for hire there were problems. We investigated Docklands, Wandsworth and Kings Cross, but none of them provided the solution if it meant we had to have a company where sales were in the West End and hire based elsewhere.

"I don't see any end to the present war of attrition in the next two or three years, and there will inevitably be greater and greater competition because it is not an expanding market. The lesson was clear to me that we needed to re-consider our entire strategy.

"Our experience has also been that sales representatives out in the field don't need a hire department behind them to sell, nor is it actually helpful to them to have to try and hire goods at the same time as trying to sell. It merely confuses the customer, and very often you are not able to actually hire the comparable piece of equipment that you are selling because they don't match across or the customer wants something that is specially tuned to his purposes. You are not therefore necessarily working in the customer's best interest if you try to mix those two functions.

"Meanwhile, the sales side had expanded to a point where its turnover was over four times the hire turnover, which tells a tale because if you go back five years or so, sales business was less than hire. Quite clearly we were getting it right with sales, and that was the area that needed to be expanded. Developing our view that the 'customer was right' we needed to have wider dealerships, and coupling this with the fact that our space is limited and competition intense, it was a logical decision to try and see if we could make a positive arrangement with another hire company to actually sell our hire interests at a profit.

"This I negotiated very cordially with John Simpson, the managing director of White

Light, who has taken over our theatre lighting equipment and our customer lists, and we've worked out a very sensible arrangements whereby our two companies help each other. An interesting point is that now we are only selling equipment, we are not competing with hire companies, and they in turn feel free to buy equipment from us - whereas in the past they were somewhat reluctant to buy from us as a direct competitor.

"An area of expansion we have identified is in the education market, where drama is now a standard part of the curriculum. Another area is in the audio visual sector including video television productions. Here again, the West End location is very important, because this is where most of these independent companies are located. We have retained a hire department for Quartzcolour and Arri portable film, TV and photographic equipment, and this is an area that will be expanded because it has relatively high profitability, and the equipment doesn't take up much space. It is also something very much local to the West End.

"Another area of specialist hire is the Le Maitre range of smoke guns, because they go hand-in-hand with the consumables that we sell in the shop."

Could you highlight some of Donmar's new dealer arrangements?

"Having been locked into the Strand dealership, and we were very happily loyal to them for a good number of years, one did tend to be a little bit blind sometimes - even though we were selling against other manufacturers. We tended to believe that Strand equipment was the best for every purpose. But there is no doubt about it, particularly when you start looking in depth, and really going across the range of facilities and options and price, that in fact there is an enormous wealth of good equipment in this country.

"Obviously we are pleased that in our view we have managed to get all the top manufacturers of equipment. You only have to look at the range of facilities and pricing of the new Image range of desks to see that it is going to be a very potent new force in the market. And with the backing of Arri, one of the largest television, and film manufacturing companies in the world, let alone Europe, who have put their full force by lending their name to the product, this is going to be a world-beating range of equipment.

"The other strong point across all our



James Bishop - Donmar Limited's sales manager.

manufacturers is that we are not just service agents for Strand, Environ and Quartzcolour but we are also service agents for Green Ginger, Pulsar, CCT, Arri, and Electrosonic, and are therefore able to offer to our customers throughout the country a full range of authorised service facilities, carrying all spare parts for virtually every major manufacturer in British theatre.

"Now that's something no one else can do at the present time. Furthermore, we will be announcing shortly a totally new concept in providing a national service operation throughout the UK, where we will be able to pick up equipment within 24 hours from anywhere in the country and get it serviced and back fast, usually with an exchange of equipment on site within less than 24 hours. This has the advantage if people buy equipment from us they will also have the knowledge that we will be able to service it.

"Everything I have done is part of a master plan that I have been working on for a long time, and I hope a logical development of where our strengths are. I think what we are now doing will be reflected throughout the country in due course, and I think more dealers will realise they have got to sell a full range of equipment. Furthermore, dealers will question whether a sales operation should stand alone, and not exist just as a tacked on addition to a hire department."

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Change-over in the City

Just five years on from its opening, the lighting control at the Barbican Centre Concert Hall has been re-gared to cope more effectively with the demands being made of it. John Offord talked to technical director Roger Fox in his office at the Centre to question why the changes were necessary, and how the project had been approached.

"When we opened the building five years ago, we had what at that time was specified as perhaps the most up-to-date lighting control - where everything had been unified into one console. We had house-lights and aisle lights, independents, and lighting control all on one MMS console, and there were also facilities for remote operation of certain lighting states, so that one man could run a concert.

"From this resource - quite similar to that in existence at the Royal Festival Hall - we discovered from about day one that this was not going to work for us in the way in which we found ourselves operating, and we felt at that point that the MMS particularly was not going to be appropriate for our future use. As the five years have been and gone, this has proved to be more and more the case.

"One of the problems we had was that in order to replace the stage lighting control, we had to look at the problems of the other facilities that had been carefully integrated into the original console, and instead of just changing one lighting console we had to do the lot. One of the particular things with the house lighting that was missing was the ability to stop half-way. We had ten states of lighting and we could go from one to the other at a predetermined speed with a very great degree of difficulty in making any variation. You had to go inside the desk, get out a screwdriver, alter a potentiometer - and I think there were 144 potentiometers on the card - and you had to be sure that you had the right one.

"We looked around and we were in total despair as to what to buy, until we saw the programmable Environ system at Photokina last September. We said, 'right, that's for us', because what Environ has which no other house lighting control we've seen has, is the ability to have pre-set states on push buttons and the ability to transfer faders, so you have absolute control of the situation for a given activity or a given change. You can stop it half-way, take it down in two seconds, take it up in 20 seconds - do whatever you like. As we are aware no other system has that, and we have put in a system of Environ which enables us to have permanent control points in our main control rooms, and also the ability to have a plug-in module to operate from the projection room or in the auditorium or indeed in either of the other two places where we want the faders. The basic stations are just push-button. Having just got it installed it appears to be working nicely!"

The main news story was the Barbican's decision to install an Avolites QM500 memory lighting console, and this has possibly raised a few eyebrows around the industry.

"We took the decision about four years ago that we were actually going to have to replace the lighting control. In the meantime we looked around the UK and Europe and had great difficulty in finding the kind of board we wanted in the size we wanted. Our first problem was that we had an excellent board for repeatable shows - very good for Shaftesbury Avenue and for running shows with a theatre-type of operation.

"But we were rarely repeating a show. Although we present many orchestral concerts that look very much the same, we are often doing two or three shows a day - mostly ones that we had no time to rehearse. They were entirely 'busking' efforts - even the simplest conference is a busking show. We wanted the ability for 'hands-on' and lots of manual and operator input. At the same

time we decided that we did not have enough circuits. So, in effect, we had a board with 120 circuits, and we wanted to upgrade that, and we needed a manual desk.

"We found after a degree of investigation that probably the maximum number of circuits we could get up to was 168, the magical number achieved by adding 48 to 120. We came to an early decision that we were going to keep the Strand dimmer rack with 48 ways which would fit in the only available space we had, and by juggling our mains supply found we had enough power for the purpose. The desk was a very long



Checking up on the change-over.

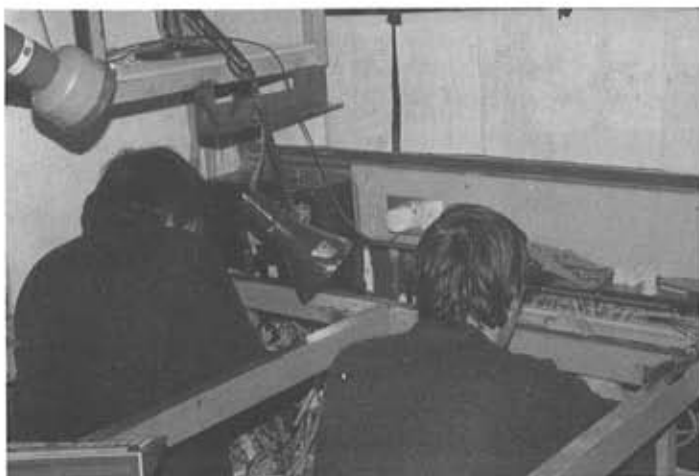


Barbican Centre technical director Roger Fox with the new Avolites QM500 memory lighting console, awaiting its final siting in the Concert Hall control room.

headache. We searched around. We looked at the T.B.A. boards, we looked at the various ones from Rank and Colortran, and we looked at the Siemens board. We were at a bit of a loss. About a year ago we didn't know which direction we were going to go, and couldn't see where we were going until we fell across the Avolites control at the A.B.T.T. Trade Show last year.

"We looked at that: we looked at Celco's. The problem was that the Celco board didn't easily go to 168 channels. They really stopped short of that, and this was a problem with most systems. 120 seems to be the magic number. Because they work on the patching, and we actually wanted a fader per channel, this led us down the line that given what we were after, Avolites was the one to go for. At the end of the day there was not a great deal to choose between them.

"We spent a lot of time looking at conventional theatre boards which give some degree of manual operation - the big Galaxy's and so on. Although they are excellent boards and we do not in any way doubt their ability to perform, we didn't think they were the right board for our particular requirements. The Avolites board has many facilities which we perhaps won't use



Lighting engineers prepare for the arrival of the QM500.



Northern Light's Mike Smith (left) and Roger Fox in discussion during the height of the installation work in mid-January.

for ages, but I must say that on the first show we ran within ten days of it going operational we used the chase - and it wasn't because we had to use a chase.

"At the time we purchased it we thought that this would be one of its least used facilities. It is also interesting to note that our youngest member of staff, our trainee, is the best 'instant operator' we have - probably because he never learned the 'old' systems, and has gone into it with a completely fresh mind."

Obviously there will have to be some changes in operating philosophy?

"We are having to learn a new language, and a new way of doing things. I think we have been very used to trying to box around problems and use memories for this, and pin patch back-ups for another thing, whereas

now we have already been able to spread things out on to manual sub-masters and I think without exception it's a total revelation. I have to ask myself why we didn't do it before. We are very, very happy.

"The one thing we have done which makes everyone even happier is to remote 10 of the pin patch sub-masters so that for conferences and so on where you have only one-man operation we can actually operate the board from another room. The board also has the facility to initiate a time cross-fade which is a new facility on Avolites boards which they have developed specially for us. This facility is due here within the next week or so, and it will go on the front panel. Come and see us again in six months time, and see what we have to say about it then!

What costs have been involved, and how

long is the life expectancy of the new installation?

"This particular installation or 'change' cost us around £35,000, and that includes all the contracting work. We are hopeful that we will be looking at ten years as a life-span. That's the plan. We will obviously be looking for goodies that may be added to the software for the desk which may help us to change things as we go. We have certainly found Avolites responsive to our suggestions as to things that they might put on, or alterations they might make or panel layouts, and so on. We are looking forward to a long relationship with them.

What other changes have taken place during the up-grading of the Concert Hall installation?

"The original installation was specified at a

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time when television was very keen on 5k lamps, and we had in the region of 40 5k outlets out of 120, and these were nearly all switchable to 2 x 2½ with separate fusing. Certainly in the 5½ years I've been here we have never connected a 5k load in earnest. We've never had a 5k lantern in the place, although we have used the 2½'s. We felt it would be more helpful to have 2 x 2½'s, even if we actually drove two of them together, but it gives us the opportunity to swap and change.

"In order to achieve the power capacity for putting in the extra dimmers we down-rated many of the 5k's to 2½k's, and we have removed the changeover switches and the 5k outlets, replaced them with standard 15 amp B.E.S.A.'s and have also taken the opportunity of grouping the new circuits and the locally existing ones to put them on Socapex outlets so that we can either pick up on B.E.S.A.'s or Socapex. In fact, we are using more of the Socapex than the standard outlets and we are likely to go even further that way when we install electric hoists for our main lighting bars in the next six months or so.

"We have been using Socapex connectors for over three years now, mainly to move lights around for temporary installations, and we are very happy with them. I think a lot of other people are doing the same sort of thing, and it's very interesting to note how the light entertainment and pop industry has influenced theatres and established venues like ourselves.

"What we haven't done is to make any change in our lantern stock and we have no particular plans to do so. We are quite happy at the moment with what we have. We use Strand Pattern 743's for orchestral lighting, basically downlighting, using Phillips T19 lamps, and we've got Strand Pattern 808's for most of the front of house lighting, and a few new Cadenzas. We carry 60 Parcans in our standard rig which we use mostly for light entertainment and conference lighting because it's a quick way of getting a lot of light around fast, and we are likely to purchase some more of these.

To conclude, do you have any personal views on the shape of the British lighting and sound equipment industry?

"I think it's interesting that the philosophy

of the light entertainment industry has developed from a manual type of lighting control to a computer-assisted manual control, and seems to have stayed in that area whereas theatre went fully computerised years ago. And it did so to an extent where it was so computerised that it was very difficult to get your hands on anything.

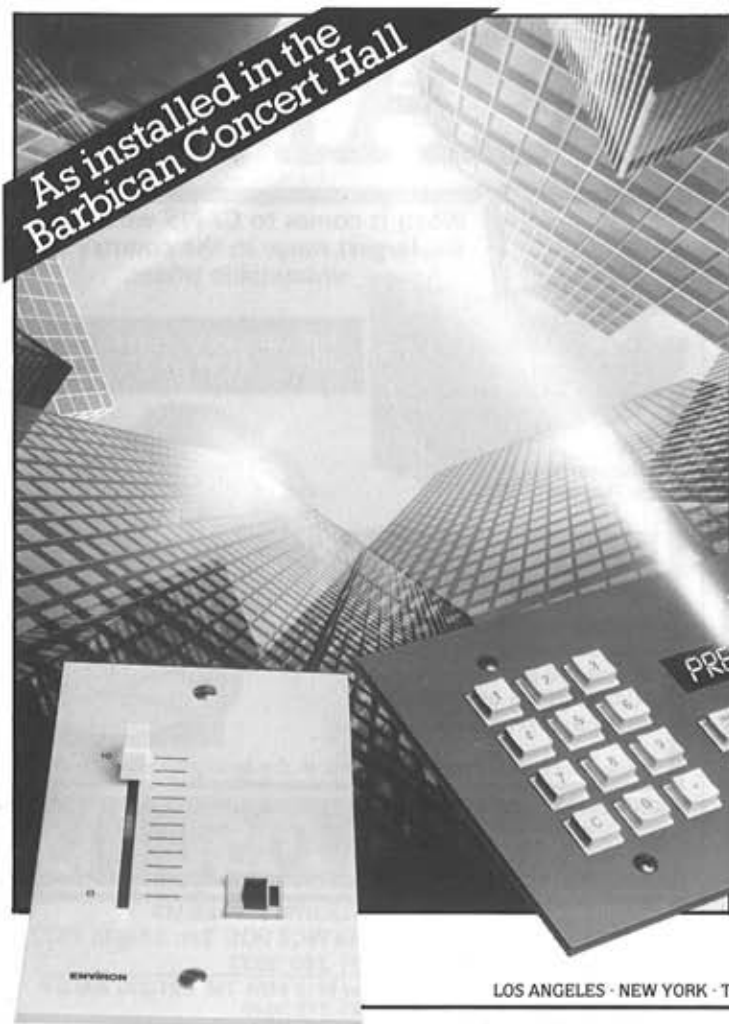
"Now there has been a noticeable drift back towards a desire for hands-on involvement, and this has been apparent particularly in trade shows and product launches. I think the standard theatre manufacturers have been slow to recognise that this is quite an important part of their market.

"There are now large numbers of municipal and other locally funded halls around the country, be they 500 or 2000-seaters, where I think there is a great need for hands-on use - most of them are playing one-night stands - and if my staff are anything to go by they desperately want to get their hands on, because they never know what show is coming next.

"It's all very well to say 'you can always remember the pinks are on cue 52'. It isn't the same as knowing that if you go three degrees with your left hand that is the pink circuit you want. I don't think it's a lead that is being met, at the moment, by the main-line suppliers. I think that it's something they should look to - and we would be happy to advise them!

Note: Installation work at the Barbican Centre Concert Hall was carried out by Northern Light of Edinburgh and Glasgow under the direction of Mike Smith.

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Lights on the Ocean Wave

Graham Fathers

Cruising the oceans of the world was once the prerogative of the wealthy few. Today the television commercials tell us that what would have been a pipe-dream for our parents is now an attainable reality for an ever-widening market. A growing number of companies offer exotic trips in sleek, modern vessels to passengers whose average age is much lower than it was 30 years ago, and whose expectations in terms of entertainment facilities on board are much higher - based upon their familiarity with present-day theatres, clubs and discotheques.

A.J.S. Theatre Lighting of Bournemouth and London has for a long time been a leader in the field of cruise ship installation work, and has carried out a number of successful projects either on new vessels or during the refitting of existing ships. Although the company has designed schemes for other shipping lines, it is particularly proud of its association with P&O Cruises, for whom it has installed new lighting systems since the days of the S.S. Oriana, now sadly in the breaker's yard. Several refits have been carried out for S.S. Canberra, the most recent in December 1986, and a comprehensive lighting system was designed for the majestic new S.S. Royal Princess. Another recent refit was carried out in Malta on board the S.S. Sea Princess.

L+S invited Graham Fathers, sales director of A.J.S. to outline some of the problems his company faces when designing and installing lighting on board ship.

In the case of a refit, the initial difficulty is to get on to the ship in order to carry out a comprehensive survey of the physical characteristics of the public rooms which are to be improved. This is usually done when the ship is in a UK port, but may from time to time involve going abroad to the home port. As the vessel may only be in port for a day or two, you have to be sure to come away with every measurement, every electrical detail, and every available drawing in order to prepare a scheme.

With a new ship, literally on the drawing board, you have only measurements and ar-

tist's impressions to work with. In both cases you have the certain knowledge that the specifications will be changed many times before the work commences, and in some cases design changes happen during the installation. For instance, dance floors may have their shape changed and location altered after the lighting has been designed, ordered and delivered on board ready for installation.

This state of affairs is understandable. Cruise line operators are in business to make a profit, and that profitability is directly related to the number of passengers that can

be safely accommodated and provided with the maximum number of services and recreational facilities. Entertainment, although an aspect which is assuming a greater importance than hitherto, is still only one part of the package which must be sold to the discerning customer.

Successful ships are a hive of different activities from morning to night - a situation which creates another headache. All public rooms, whether designated officially as theatres, ballrooms, night clubs, or discos, must be open for passengers use for 24 hours per day, and during a large proportion of that time, may be used for any purpose. For example, flower arrangement classes, afternoon tea or bingo could be held in any of the 'entertainment' spaces.

Decor, therefore tends to be light in colour tone, and the majority of the rooms are fully lit during the day, usually with the combination of artificial and natural light. There is therefore no question of a purpose-built disco being a large black hole with the ceiling covered with the familiar ironmongery of rotating spheres and whirling black arms. All lighting effects have to be fitted as discretely as possible, with the added problem that the pale surrounding textures splash and spill light, requiring very careful siting of fittings.

Because cruising ships have to be cost effective, the luxury of the huge public rooms common to the great liners of the thirties has largely disappeared. It is rare these days for the frustrated lighting designer to be offered a deck-head (ceiling) height in excess of ten feet, excluding the height of any staging - a situation that creates another army of problems in terms of lighting angles, unwanted spill, and so on.

When endeavouring to recess lighting, even fitting as small as pinspots become a problem, as one finds above the deck-head panels a vast array of air conditioning trunking, water supply and sprinkler pipes, cable trays and structural girders. Installing lighting to present, say, a cabaret on a circular stage surrounded almost completely by a seated audience therefore imposes choices on the designer in terms of the size and performance characteristics of the lighting equipment.

Compromise is thus an inevitable result, and this is made further complex by the need of the ship to maximise the use of the public rooms wherever possible as multi-purpose venues. In addition to the likely uses referred to above, a room with a small dance floor or stage may be used in the course of one evening for the presentation of a small-scale show, followed by a late-night cabaret, followed in turn by disco dancing into the small hours.

The limited deck-head must thus provide high quality professional stage lighting and special effects, lighting of bands and groups, and disco effect lighting to an acceptable standard, with an associated level of quality being provided in terms of highly flexible



CCT's David Manners (left) and Zero 88's David Catterall (right) meet up with Adrian Sant of A.J.S. Theatre Lighting at Southampton to take a look at the recent upgrading of the Canberra's lighting installation.



Graham Fathers (right) sorts out a last minute problem aboard the Canberra prior to her January round-the-world sailing from Southampton.



David Manners and David Catterall discuss the Eclipse lighting control in the Canberra's Stadium theatre space.

sophisticated control equipment to operate virtually any combination of these facilities. Building control areas which must also accommodate sound systems of comparable quality and versatility in places where floor space is at an absolute premium adds another dimension to the problem.

Modern communication systems have allowed control booths to be sited more suitably than in the past: multi-channel intercom allows operators to communicate with backstage artistes, band-leaders and follow spot operators, and in certain areas this has resulted in the lighting technician being placed in a position from which he can, for the very first time, actually see the show he is lighting.

The reference to follow spots brings us to one of the most difficult areas of all. The siting of these units, given the low deck-head, is fraught with difficulties. Generally speaking, the angles are simply too flat to use them in a professional manner. Nevertheless when they are used, the ship may require up to two operators in addition to the lighting controller (who will also be the sound technician). If the ship is running functions simultaneously in four public rooms, it does not take a mathematical genius to realise that staffing becomes a serious problem. Entertainment staff take up cabin space, and profitability requires that the operators strive to reduce the staff to passenger ratio wherever possible. It is vital, therefore, to create lighting designs and control systems which are, as far as possible, planned to minimise the amount of setting-up and service time. Accordingly, A.J.S. is installing systems which use, wherever possible, a high degree of pre-programming for both live stage performance and dance effect lighting.

In the case of P&O this policy has resulted in the installation of the Zero 88 Eclipse lighting desks in various configurations for the principal show stages, but always with extended level memory, programmable chaser and cartridge effects panel, incorporating sound-to-light. The combination of these facilities with the two-preset manual aspect provides the operator with the main shows in protected memory, and the flexibility to respond to the many occasional demands upon the space.

As far as the disco/dance effect lighting is concerned, a high degree of flexibility has been achieved by using Zero 88 Sigma and Delta 4-channel packs controlled by banks of Mercury packs which in turn can be operated by touch panels. This enables the operator, when time prior to a function is limited, to predetermine the type of lighting effects and patterns he requires, and set

them up as a simple touch-pad series to be selected during the event.

This is particularly helpful during a disco presentation, when the operator has the additional tasks of using a microphone and simultaneously selecting records, compact discs and tapes. The wide range of functions built into the Mercury system, permitting the independent control of neon, UV, tungsten, low-voltage tubelight and strobe fittings, can create stunning displays from a surprisingly compact control area. On the Sea Princess, for example, the disco incorporates an internally-illuminated multi-programmable glass dance/cabaret floor which was designed by A.J.S. and built in record time by Novas Limited, who also supervised the installation. The range of effects, in series and matrix patterns, coupled with the effects built into the deck-head create a dazzling display. When we got to a potential million different lighting effects we stopped counting.

In the case of the smaller public rooms, where stage sizes do not permit large-scale show presentations and thus cannot justify the use of an Eclipse control system, A.J.S. has installed the Zero 88 1200 series desk, combined once again with effects lighting driven by Sigma and Delta packs, Mercury controllers and touch panels. The 1200 series, with protected memory, offers a scaled-down version of the flexibility of the Eclipse system, providing manual two-preset operation, sound-to-light and chase facilities,

and 15 memories for cabaret presentation.

The choice of dimmers for these multi-purpose areas is further affected by other requirements on board ship.

Entertainment, it has been pointed out, is not the only priority. Passengers are to an extent captive, and all public areas have to provide atmospheres that are as attractive and relaxing as possible. Lighting therefore becomes crucial to these areas, and in lounges, casinos and restaurants, for example, flexible control of mood and area is vital. On the Canberra A.J.S. have installed new control systems and lighting for the restaurants and the main lounge. In the latter, for example, there are six different types of lighting, incorporating downlighters, spotlights, wallwashers and decorative chandeliers, both mains and low voltage.

In order to provide the maximum number of lighting permutations for this situation, A.J.S. use the Electrosonic Digirak system with remote low-voltage multi-programmable Multiscene panels. The client may then choose his own lighting patterns, and, by wiring the control panels in series, enjoy the ability to operate the system from any number of positions around the room in question.

The need for similarly controllable house lighting for the main entertainment areas, particularly in the case of refitting older vessels where there may be a preponderance of tungsten and cold cathode lighting with subsequent additions of fluorescent and



The Ocean Room in the S.S. Canberra - the low deck-head poses obvious problems for any lighting installation.



Novas manufactured and installed this Graham Fathers' designed illuminated dance floor in the Carib Lounge of the Sea Princess. There are five wiring circuits, two 4 x 4 matrix, and three 4-channel geometrically interlaced, but electrically separated, giving numerous effect options.

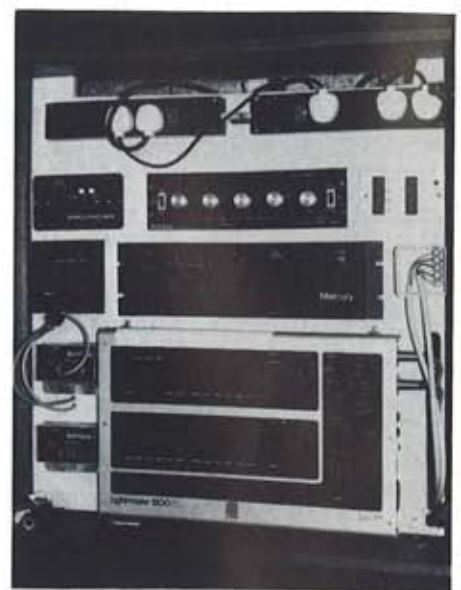
low-voltage tungsten fittings, naturally suggests once more the flexibility of the Electrosonic system. Although in earlier years it had been natural to install either hard-wired multiple dimmer racks, or subsequently six-channel rack modules specifically for the entertainment lighting, the flexibility of the Digirak system was seen as an ideal solution for both show/cabaret and general all-purpose zone lighting, in the latter case obviously only where the size of the room and the required flexibility could justify the cost. This solution simultaneously solved one major problem and provided several advantages to the ship operators.

The principal problem when designing and installing electrical equipment on board ship is to obtain sufficient power in the right place. With older vessels, this can be a serious difficulty, as the original power generation calculations would not have taken into account the potential demand of a modern professional stage lighting system. In certain cases it has been necessary to design the control board in such a way that the operator cannot use all the facilities together, simply because the power in that part of the ship is inadequate for the job. However, given that ample power is available, one is faced with the fact that ships

are different from everywhere else that a lighting designer will normally find himself.

Ships are normally powered with a three-phase supply, with no earth and no neutral, on a star-delta configuration. In order to use standard dimming equipment it is therefore necessary to transform this current in order to create a neutral for either three or single-phase operation. Happily, Electrosonic have resolved this problem with a range of equipment deliberately designed for the ship's standard supply, thereby saving equipment and installation costs.

Having a range of dimmer racks which can be directly connected to ship's power enabled A.J.S. to design systems which were basically common to all major public areas in any vessel. The dimmers themselves, being plug-in modules, were therefore ideally suited to cope with the wide variety of types of fitting and loads. Where loads exceeded the basic range of the standard production module, additional racks and modules were installed, and the modules controlled in tandem by the low-voltage multiscene master module. On the Sea Princess, where the house lighting in the main show lounge was designed to be both controllable in zone and mood and also integrated partially into the entertainment system, and where



Controls in a cupboard on the Canberra.

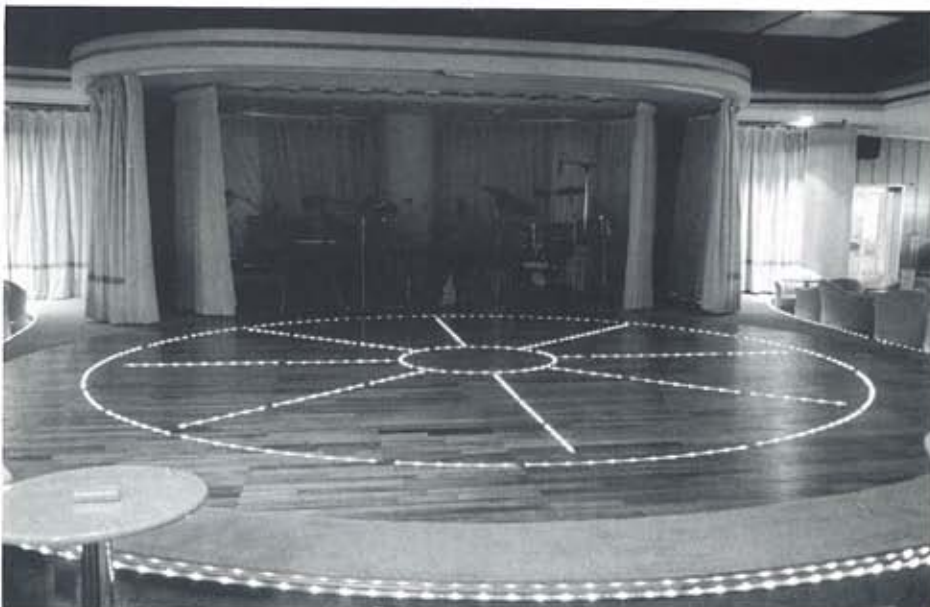
the night club and casino complex required independent zones running from the same dimmer bank, A.J.S. installed the more sophisticated Scenaset system, which has its own central processor in each room and is set up with a hand-held mobile programmer.

In this case, the push-button control panels, located according to the client's requirements, only need a three-core common data highway and thus keep installation problems to a minimum. Apart from the simplicity of operation, these control systems provide yet another advantage, in as much as the spares holding is reduced to that of one dimmer module of each type for the entire vessel, thereby saving cost and space.

Faced with the logistical problems of ship-board lighting as described, the choice of luminaires has to be carefully considered. For most of the stage and cabaret work, A.J.S. has used CCT equipment from the Minuette range. Although there is a wide potential choice, these lanterns offer a perfect solution by virtue of their extremely compact size, low weight, wide range of types and, certainly a factor uppermost in the client's mind, their reasonable cost. With the introduction of CCT's new wide-angled zoom profile spotlight, the short-throw demands of this kind of installation have never been better served. With the exception of the Minuette flood all other units in the range can take a similar lamp, and other accessories, such as gobos, colour frames, barndoors, etc. are common. This again minimises spares holding, and greatly reduced time used to set and focus the lanterns.

This standardisation of product ranges throughout a fleet of vessels has further advantages to the user. Personnel are constantly changing, due to leave requirements, sickness, and so on, and the benefits to the newly-arrived member of the entertainment staff or electrical officer are that although he may never have served on this particular ship in the past, he will recognise instantly the systems he has to operate or service.

Our primary concern is to install efficient, easy-to-operate, but above reliable equipment for our clients, and we are constantly looking at new products with this particularly specialised market in mind. The fact that all the organisations involved with this particular enterprise are British - in a market which faces growing foreign competition - should give us considerable confidence for the future.



The specially-designed wooden cabaret and dance floor in the Sea Princess's International Lounge. Built by Novas it contains 77 individual pre-assembled panels, many of which included lightways.

10/10 FOR PULSAR.

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Please reply to:
25 April 1986

Dear Sirs,

Pulsar Digital Interface

Having just finished the School production of Max Frisch's "The Fire-raisers", I must tell you how pleased we have been with your digital interface for complete computer control of stage lighting.

Our installation is a 36 channel rack with a two preset manual desk. As rehearsals progressed, it became evident that a greater flexibility and speed of response than could be provided by the manual control was needed to do justice to the producer's demands (what's new!), so your digital interface was purchased and installed 10 days before the first performance. Two fourth year boys were completely self-taught by the Tutor program in the package you provide and became fully proficient in operation of the system within 24 hours. They operated the system faultlessly and to great effect for the performances - all 72 cues!

Your software provided the much looked for speed of response to producer's demands during technical rehearsals and completely eliminated the time consuming business of writing out cue sheets. The variety of cross-fades possible was fully exploited during the production with a smoothness which was fully professional.

Many congratulations and thanks for producing such an effective package at such a moderate cost.

Yours faithfully,

Ian H. Rowse
Ian H. Rowse
Senior Science Master

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28 APR 1986

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Training and Touring

Laurence Scofford, a final year drama student at Hull University, discusses the role of incoming touring companies to the Gulbenkian Centre

When Hull University's Gulbenkian Centre, designed by Peter Moro, was completed in 1969 the intention was that it would house the rapidly expanding Drama Department, and its superbly equipped theatre and television studios were to be used in the training of undergraduates. But in its fruitful 23-year existence it has opened its doors to a large number of external companies, ranging from 'alternative' such as 7:84, the Medieval Players, and Trickster Theatre Company, to middle-scale touring like the National Theatre Workshop, and professional companies such as Great Eastern Stage. This aspect of the theatre provides a very direct and useful contact with practitioners, giving students more than just a glimpse of the 'real' world.

From the very beginning the centre has welcomed distinguished visitors. In its infancy it attracted many architects, teachers, and others with theatrical interests. I am told that at its official opening in 1970 even that great man of lighting, Frederick Bentham, was present.

But provision was made for more than just a few casual visits, and it was the Department's policy to invite certain touring companies to perform at the venue. Writing in the Drama Department's 21st Birthday Brochure in 1984 head of department Donald Roy gave an indication of its popularity: "Ever since the Gulbenkian opened we have been besieged by professional companies wishing to use it and have tried to pick and choose from the welter of available shows half a dozen or so each year that we thought might be theatrically stimulating or enlightening."

One of the more pertinent ways in which visiting companies work with the department is through the Easter vacation course, when professional practitioners are invited to work with a first-year group on a particular aspect of theatre.

Another, more academically-based way in which we receive visitors is through the HUDDLE (Hull University Drama Department Light Entertainment). These generally take place in the rehearsal room, a pleasant little space equipped with movable mini-spots on three lighting tracks with switched dimmers, giving us a small element of control. The room occasionally plays host to visiting companies and practitioners, who are invited to talk about their work. Over recent years this has ranged from Mask Companies to technicians from the National Theatre, and more recently the BBC production crew working in Hull on the final episode of the new serial 'Crossfire' (in which certain of our students demonstrate their ability at reproducing Irish curses and wrecking cars!). There has also been the occasional distinguished personality, such as Donald Sinden and Sir Anthony Quayle.

But the main way in which the Gulbenkian Centre enjoys contact with professional theatre is through our programme of visiting productions. This has to be planned around the requirements of the academic year, so



Gulbenkian Studio at Hull University - a view from the stage. When set up for proscenium or end stage it seats 192.

most companies are invited in the Autumn term, when the space is least in demand for assessed work.

A new publicity and front-of-house team is put together for each production, but not having a permanent box office can lead to complications with the degree of expertise inclined to vary. On the technical side, the amount of information companies provide ranges from complete lighting plans with a list of additional requirements, through to garbled instructions over the telephone to simply nothing at all. For this reason, preparation is usually restricted to getting the space ready to work in, and we never undertake anything like major lighting rigs before a company arrives. Minor mishaps can still occur in this area though. During

Extemporary Dance Theatre's visit the heating decided to break down! Electric heaters were eventually drafted in from elsewhere, but nevertheless a few anxious moments were spent with the thermometer.

As far as get-ins are concerned, Jim Lambert, our theatre supervisor, is in charge and works with two or three student technicians. We give incoming companies as much or as little assistance as they ask for. This ranges from just advice to rigging and operating shows. Recently, however, the visiting companies programme has been larger than usual and the need to provide student crews has come into conflict with academic interests. It is to be hoped that better scheduling in the future will remedy this situation.



Entrance to Hull University's Gulbenkian Centre.

Get-outs always take place on the night of the final performance, and things can get quite hectic with one-day and one-night stands, where get-in, performance, and get-out, all take place on a single day. Generally speaking things move smoothly and efficiently. In fact, Hull managed to achieve a record get-out time on Extemporary Dance Theatre's recent tour.

The most casual approach I have ever experienced to date was that of Kokuma African Dance Band, which could only be described as 'laid back! The set and lighting were up with a minimum of fuss and bother, and everything from then on was equally trouble free. At the end of the performance the group got people on to the stage to dance (the writer is ashamed to say he stayed firmly planted in his seat, not even inspired by the hot tropical punch served during the interval), and many people stayed afterwards and helped with the get-out. (I can see theatre purists turning the page in disgust!).

Visiting companies usually have full command of our available lighting stock, and this consists of old generation Strand and CCT lanterns. The lack of financial commitment that the authorities have shown towards the Centre means that our resources are rapidly dwindling - the description of our lighting stock in the current 'British Theatre Directory' is already a fine piece of fiction. Fortunately, most companies without their stock usually have simple requirements. We have 80 lighting channels terminating in paired outlets - 10 channels being patched to a possible 30 paired outlets - so we can cope with the most complex of touring rigs.

One area in which we are particularly flexible is control. We have both a Strand Electric SP80 manual board, and a Rank Strand Duet II, either of which can be put on line to the dimmer racks. This gives companies the choice between manual and computer control depending on the complexity of their show. Steve Rate, on the Extemporary Dance tour used both boards - one for each half of the show!

Similar flexibility is available in the flying department. We have 32 counterweighted bars, two of which are 'up-and-down' bars that can accommodate a wrap-around cyclorama, 20 'three-line' hemp sets, and a motorised winch. These cover the whole of the stage and can cope with fairly complex flying requirements. Together with a trapped stage floor, movable seating, and adaptable proscenium towers this means we can ac-



Donald Roy (standing, left), the head of department, and a student audience enjoy a talk by Sir Anthony Quayle in the Rehearsal Room.

commodate many different stage forms. However, lack of time and the simplicity of many touring shows means that this versatility is rarely taken advantage of.

One area which is not so impressive is our sound facility. The equipment (apart from one or two minor modifications) is as old as the building, and reproduction is always poor. Some companies bring their own sound and communications equipment with them, but others have to put up with the occasional crackle and hum. We also have a workshop (even if it isn't the shining model of efficiency it should be), but companies have rarely had cause to use this, although our wardrobe and dressing rooms frequently prove to be more useful.

Finally, the University Drama Department has also initiated some successful external work of its own. Several productions have been taken out, some going as far afield as Europe. There has also been Z Theatre Company, which has had past success at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and National Student Drama Festival - not forgetting Splash T.I.E. company and its offshoots S.W.I.P.E. and Domino.

We also have a very good working relationship with Hull Truck Theatre Company, well known for John Godber's plays, and



Extemporary Dance's stage manager on duty at the Gulbenkian.

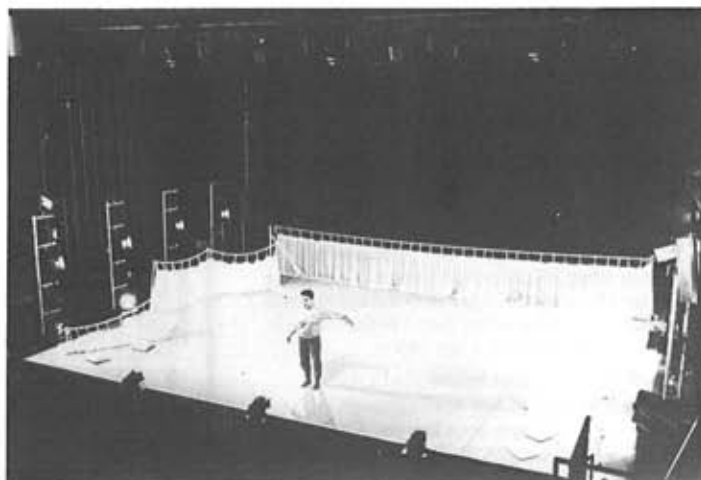
have not infrequently been known to move productions to their theatre in Spring Street.

All in all it seems that our contribution to touring theatre is welcomed, and goes to show that an educational establishment can compete, on its own terms, with professional theatres. Hopefully, the Gulbenkian Studio Theatre at Hull University will continue to do just that for a long time to come, and provide important practical training experience in the process.

Action photographs by Tony Meech.



Extemporary Dance Company take a chance to relax in one of the Gulbenkian Studios' dressing rooms.



A member of the Extemporary Dance Theatre Company 'working out' on the Gulbenkian stage.

ON TOUR

Keith Dale

It's good to be back on the pages of L+S again having just finished my world tour with Joe Jackson. Throughout my travels, with the assistance of Meteorlite's Tony Slee, I met many readers of this magazine - so a quick 'hello' to all of them is required.

Looking through the latest list of PLASA members in the pages of January's magazine it is good to see so many companies backing an organisation which is obviously going from strength to strength.

At this point in time we at Celco are preparing our exhibition stand for this year's round of trade shows, and I'm sure the same goes for many companies. The first stepping point for us is Frankfurt Music Fair followed soon after by the ABTT Trade Show in early March. Sometimes it seems as though the exhibition circuit involves as much travel as touring!

In this month's 'On Tour' Catriona Forcer talks to lighting designer Mike Healey who designed the current 'Aha' world tour, and I have included an interesting equipment list for the tour of Frankie Goes to Hollywood. Finally, I must mention that the lighting rig for the Iron Maiden Tour featured in the December edition was supplied by Meteorlites, a fact omitted from these pages. Sorry Ronan!

Aha

Hammersmith Odeon

Catriona Forcer talks to lighting designer

Mike Healey

How did you begin your career in lighting design?

In the early 1970's I was at Art College in London when I got a part-time job at the Rainbow Theatre. I did follow spot work, stage crewing and humping. Whilst I was there the stage manager started up a lighting company called Rainbow Productions which later became Lairhurst and then T.T.R. who I work for today. This was in the days when bands didn't take out extensive lighting rigs but used the equipment already at the venue. It meant that we could be producing up to six different shows a week, and with bands often liking what we did for them, it ended up with us getting a lot of work.

What was the first band you toured with?

The first band was The Sensational Alex Harvey Band, but that was only as crew. The company I worked for was very respected in the mid-seventies so we were doing big bands like Genesis, Wings, and Bowie. The first band I designed the lighting for was Be Bop Deluxe in 1976. Unfortunately in October 1976 I had an accident with some stage explosives and I nearly lost my right arm. I was out of the business for two years and when I came back I started designing shows for David Essex who I've designed for ever since. I've also designed for Kim Wilde, Ultravox, Midge Ure, Santana and a few more.

When did the Aha tour begin?

We started rehearsals last April although I'd been working on the designs since January. I had to get the band thinking about performing live because this was their first time on the road.

The actual tour commenced in June in Perth, Australia where there was a large teeny bopper



Mike Healey pictured at Hammersmith Odeon.

response and mass hysteria. We then went to Japan for one month where we played 17 shows which I think is a record. Then we had a couple of weeks off in Hawaii before going to the States. We were there for 11 weeks and half way through the tour when Aha won seven out of the ten MTV awards.

It was a management decision that on the tour we would only play 2000-3000 seater venues so that the band could establish good contact with the audience. It has been a sell-out worldwide except for a few shows in the southern states of America. After Christmas we finished the London dates before completing the rest of the UK tour. In February we finish with two weeks in Norway where Aha are national heroes!

Did Aha have definite ideas on how they wanted their lighting?

They had a few ideas about what they liked but they didn't really know what they wanted. Mel Bush assured them that I really knew what I was talking about so they left it to me.

Tell me about the design for Aha's performance

A lot of the show is quite dark and moody even though you probably wouldn't think of Aha as that type of band. It is interesting that the lighting gets cheers from time to time - not when a lot happens, but when it goes down to maybe just one follow spot. It's like teasing the audience by making them feel the band has disappeared. It's a very simple lighting rig with no Vari-Lites but I like to use many floor lamps and feature backdrops so that you can get movement in the lights and not just a beam show.

Do you enjoy touring?

I enjoy working on the show, but this is the 111th of the tour, and although I love working on the design it is difficult being away from home when you've got a wife and children. But I wouldn't like to design a show and then not go out with it. When I was in the States this summer I was asked to submit designs for the Ultravox tour but I didn't because I knew that I couldn't actually go with the them and I don't think that you can successfully put a lighting design on paper.

Are there any lighting designers whose work you admire?

I've seen a lot of shows in my time, although the

only one I've seen this year has been my own! I like Phil Martin's work who did the last Robert Plant show, and I also think that Alan Goldberg is very good.

Can you think of a show which you saw and thought was awful?

I don't particularly remember the shows I haven't liked, but there are things I hate to see in a production. I don't like certain colours mixed from the same direction and when you have a lot of colour on stage - but because it is coming from the same direction what you actually see on stage is a mish-mash of pale white. The colour of the show you will see tonight is quite stark.

Who would you like to light?

I would like the opportunity of working for the Eurythmics. I enjoyed lighting Midge Ure and I would like to work with him again. He's got a reputation in the business for being particularly difficult, and he's gone through a lot of lighting designers. He's very demanding and he has a lot of his own ideas on lighting which are actually very good.

When I did Ultravox he designed the whole show and I just controlled it but when he did his solo tour last year it was more like 70/30 in my favour. Midge told me what he wanted and I went away and designed it. It was a small-scale show with only 100 lamps, one back truss and floor lamps, but it worked well.

What are your plans for the future?

Hopefully, I'm sticking with this band for a while as there are already plans for the next tour. After we finish this tour in February I'll have a rest and then start on the designs for tour number two.

Equipment Summary

350 various Parcans including Raylights; 16 Lekos; 8 x 4 section halogen cyc lights; 3 out-front follow spots (Supers or Panis); 1 cloud projector; 6 floods, 34 x 8' TTR folding truss; 90 channel Avolites QM500 control; 2 x 72 way Avo dimmer racks.

Equipment on Tour

Frankie Goes to Hollywood

European Tour

Lighting and rigging by Meteorlites Productions Limited

Equipment:

594 Par 64 lamps, 66 CCT Projects, 20 Four-cell Grounds, 8 Molefay, 8 U.V. Floods, 8 CCT Silhouette 30, 4 Strobes, 8 Par 64 Floorspots, 8 Orbitor Follow Spots.

30 7'6" Thomas pre-rigged truss section, 8 5' Thomas pre-rigged truss section, 18 90 degree Thomas pre-rigged truss section, 4 Pivot Thomas pre-rigged truss section, 212' Tas-Stage truss.

8 30' Thomas ground support towers, 32 Verlinde 1 ton motors, control and rigging.

1 Celco 90 way board, 1 Celco 60 way board, 3 Avolites 72 way racks, 1 Avolites 36 way rack.

12 Clearcom intercom stations, 2 Smoke machines.

Lighting design: Paul Devine and Ronan Willson

Lighting technicians: Alan Wood, Simon Peck,

Ian Twell, David Nicholson.

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Aha at Hammersmith Odeon - lighting design Mike Healey.



EQUIPMENT *News*

Lee Colortran Launch Intelligent Dimming System

Lee Colortran has just launched a new intelligent dimming system for lighting control, the 'IDS'. The system brings together many new advanced features for studio and theatre use. On the top-of-the-range models optional diagnostic and mimic information may be remoted to a VDU alongside the lighting control panel, and a digital control circuit ensures high reliability and performance in all models.

IDS is a modular system and a full rack can carry 54 modules which are dual in 2.5kW and 5kW ratings or single 10kW ratings, so that 108 5kW circuits may be contained in one rack. The diagnostic functions - which may all be remote - are card fail, MCB tripped, trigger card output mimic, load mimic, and card power. Input voltage range is 190V - 280V AC with output regulation maintained at +2.5V across the dimming range over the full input voltage range.

For full details contact Lee Colortran at Ladbroke Hall, Barlby Road, London W10 5HH telephone 01-968 7000.

Sifam Buttons

Miniature pushbuttons in several shapes and colours have been added to the range of panel components made by Sifam Limited of Torquay. Rectangular (9.8 x 5.5mm), square (5.5 x 5.5mm), round tapered (7.2mm diam base tapering to 5.5mm dia at top) or cylindrical (5.5mm dia) are available, and all are 11.2mm high.



A representative selection of Sifam pushbuttons.

Moulded in matt-finish nylon, to match the style and finish of Sifam collet, push-on and slider knobs, standard colours are black, grey, red or white. All versions can be printed to customer requirements, in black or white depending on pushbutton colours, using a high-definition printing process.

For full details contact Sifam Limited at Woodland Road, Torquay, Devon TQ2 7AY telephone (0803) 63822.

Protective Cable Sheathing

The Reiku range of protective sheathing for bunching and protecting cables is fully described in a 12-page full colour brochure available from H. F. Collison Limited. Made from self-extinguishing PVC or vinyl coated nylon fabric the designs are unique in that they incorporate zips, enabling the sheathing to be wrapped round existing cable installations and then "zipped up" to form the enclosure.

H. F. Collison are at Collison House, Coventry Road, Coleshill, Birmingham B46 3EE telephone (0675) 63670.



Laserpoint's new Power Scan system.

Laser Economics

Cambridge-based laser high-flyers Laserpoint Limited have introduced two new systems on to the market. 'Power Scan' incorporates a brand new Spectra Physics 2010 5W Argon laser with full scanning effects and a graphics capability. Installation and operator training are included in the price tag of £14,600.

The 'Mini Scan' is claimed by Laserpoint to be the ultimate low cost laser display system. It allows patterns and beam zaps to be created at the touch of a button. It utilises a 25mW HeNe laser, and is priced at just £2995.

For full details of both systems contact Steve Johnson at Laserpoint Limited, 44/45 Clifton Road, Cambridge CB1 4FD telephone (0223) 212331.



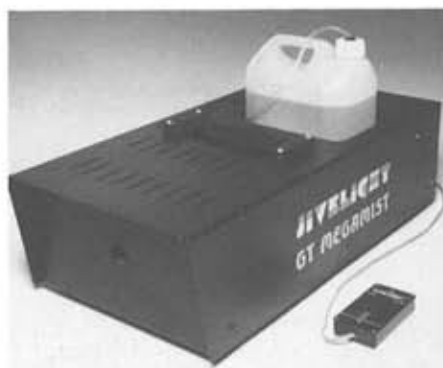
A close-up of the Power Scan control.

Megamist Shapes Up

Jivelight's UK manufactured 'Megamist' heavy duty smoke machine has been given a new shape for 1987. With rugged all-steel construction, it features long life heater plus service replacement facility, electronic temperature control and additional safety cut-out, a fast start-up time (typically less than 10 minutes), and hand, foot or remote operation (remote control is included).

It uses non-toxic juice specially formulated for extended heater life, which can be supplied by Jivelight in five fragrances. The unit houses either 1½ litre or 5 litre containers.

For full details contact Jivelight Limited, 16/18 Greyhound Road, London W6 8NX telephone 01-381 0868.



Jivelight's newly-shaped Megamist.

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SHOW PAGE *with PLASA News*

America comes in from the Cold

The United States has been a slumbering giant for the past five years. Ever since that fateful day when 'Billboard' announced to the unsuspecting world that "discotheque is dead", the club industry has been in apparent recession, allowing the Europeans to leap far ahead in terms of technology and design.

However, many US-watchers have detected moves over the past couple of years, mostly by entrepreneurial individuals such as Blackstone in Texas and Colin Hammond's Meteor, who began to import in large numbers from various leading European manufacturers. This ground swell has finally culminated in the first Club Exhibition to be held in the USA since Billboard in the early eighties, and it was sited in the enormous ballroom of one of Vegas' most luxurious hotels, the old MGM Grand - now called Bally's.

It was always going to be a gamble; everyone agreeing it would be either a disaster or a fantastic success. In my view it was akin to the bursting of a dam. Over 2,000 paying customers showed up on the first day, and paying a \$95 entrance fee they really had to be serious. I had the feeling that the whole North American audience was desperate for information and the exchange of ideas - something we take for granted in Europe. They want to come in from the cold . . .

The Europeans were there in force: Bruno Dedoro of Coemar, Gabrielle Savoldi of Clay Paky, Neil Rice of Optikinetics, Geoff Jones of Laser Systems, Derek Saunders of Pulsar, Roman Walanta of W.B. Lighting, Malcolm Robertson of Effects Lighting with Michael Payne of First Leisure, and those expatriates Paul Twist and Peter Cutchey of Meteor to name but a few.

On the stands, only Zero 88 and Laser Systems were there in their own right, Zero 88 having set up their own US operation in Florida some two and a half years ago. However, both Clay Paky and Coemar had 'black tent' stands under the auspices of Blackstone, who have formed a separate wholesaling/import company called High End Systems to create a separate identity to the Blackstone installation company.

Other local manufacturers such as Litelab and Diversitronics also had stands with Lasermedia's impressive software creating a spectacular show in another of those ubiquitous black tents. Without the Europeans and their products, the show would have been a bit disappointing as far as the paying customers were concerned - the rest of the show being taken up by such heart stopping items as glass washing machines, and indoor form of basketball and 'English' electronic dart boards which to the British contingent left a lot to be desired. Especially those who thought they could throw a bit . . .

Perhaps I'm being a little unfair. The show was very well organised, and Ed Meek and his team put together a series of well-attended daily seminars with guest speakers discussing all aspects of the club business. Neil Rice and Gabrielle Savoldi were on the panel of 'Trends in European Discotheques', and Thomas Vaughan, chairman of Julianas on 'Future Trends of Nightclub and Bar Management'.

Two social evenings were arranged specifically for exhibitors coupled with one large function for exhibitors and customers which attracted around 500 people. In addition to the respected Litelab and Diversitronics products, there was a very impressive video wall with some 20 or so separate TV screens and by dint of some clever software they became one giant screen or 20 individual ones - or a permutation of both. Although I've seen similar presentations at Rimini it could indicate another trend in video promotion for clubs - albeit somewhat expensive. There were two new mini lasers, one of which had been developed by Richard Bellevaux of Blackstone.

The organisers of the exhibition, in their ultimate wisdom, have decided to promote two more 'Expos' this year. The next is an Atlanta during April and the third in New York or Atlantic City in October (ish). This was in spite of vain protests from international exhibitors that the calendar was already full and that we do have to be in our offices from at least part of the year. However, it seems that the organisers were committed to doing Atlanta, and the local exhibitors also want them to do New York.

With the excellent reaction to the show, how was it that disco 'died' in the States? I have a theory I'd like to offer. During the late seventies, the 'Saturday Night Fever' era, I was with the marketing department of Polydor Records, and was directly involved with all the hits of the day by the Bee Gees, Olivia Newton-John, etc. In those days, all the record companies thought they'd jump on the 'disco' bandwagon and all that was necessary to produce a chartbuster was to add the tag 'disco' to a mediocre production with a heavy beat.

What they failed to appreciate was that although these records were popular in the club, and got everyone on their feet dancing, people didn't necessarily want to buy them to listen to at home. Those records that did make it were actually good records whenever they would have been released.

Just to remind myself, I've just listened to the Bee Gees 'Spirits Having Flown' - and it's still a damn good album. Therefore 'Billboard', which

was predominantly a record business periodical, proclaimed "disco is dead". Sure it was in terms of music fashion, but as we all know, the public didn't stop going to the clubs, and neither did they stop in America.

Thank God for Billboard. In my opinion the situation they created enabled us Europeans to make staggering gains both technically and from an interior design aspect. But don't underestimate the Americans. Look how fast they got into space once the competition hotted up.

I can't leave the subject of Las Vegas without mentioning the rain. I've been to Nevada Desert on more than one occasion, and it's the first time I've ever seen it there. The local taxi drivers thanked the Brits for bringing it with them. There was more rain in 24 hours than they normally get in a full year.

Freddie Lloyd

PLASA Seminar

A special PLASA Seminar and Presentation to members of the Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management will take place at Welwyn Garden City's Campus West complex on 27th February.

A buffet luncheon will be provided for guests, and this will be followed by a demonstration of the equipment recently installed in 'West 1' at Campus West by Avitec Electronics - as featured in L+S's January issue.

Start time for the day has been announced as 10.30 am for coffee with the seminar due to begin at 11 am. Full details will be mailed to all PLASA members.

Exhibition Diary

Frankfurt Music Fair

February 7-11, 1987.
Frankfurt Fair Centre, Frankfurt, West Germany.
UK Representatives: Collins and Endres,
18 Golden Square, London W1R 3AG.
Telephone: 01-734 0543.

ABTT Trade Show

March 5-7, 1987.
Riverside Studios, London.
ABTT, 4 Great Pulteney Street, London W1R 3DF.
Telephone: 01-434 3901.

Club Sound, Light + Design '87

March 8-10, 1987.
Winter Gardens, Blackpool.
North West Exhibitions,
Winter Gardens and Opera House,
Church Street, Blackpool FY1 1HW.
Tel: (0253) 25252.

SIEL '87

March 28 or 29 - April 3, 1987.
Porte de Versailles, Paris, France.
Organisation: Bernard Becker Promotion,
161 Boulevard Lefebvre, 75025 Paris.
Telephone: (14) 533 74 50.

Pub, Club and Leisure Show

April 7-9, 1987.
Olympia 2, London.
Angex Ltd., Europa House, St. Matthew Street,
London SW1P 2JT.
Telephone: 01-222 9341.

Nightclub & Bar EXPO

April 13-15, 1987.
Georgia International Convention Center,
Holiday Inn Crown Plaza Hotel, Atlanta, USA.
Nightclub and Bar Magazine,
305 W. Jackson Avenue, Oxford, Mississippi 38655.
Telephone: (601) 236 5510.

USITT Conference/Exhibition

April 22-25, 1987.
Hyatt Regency, Minneapolis.
Show Manager: Richard James, 486 Fullerton
Court, San Jose, CA 95111.
Telephone: (408) 225 6736.
National Office: 330 West 42 Street, Suite 1702,
New York NY 10036.
Telephone: (212) 563 5551.

Expo Musica, Madrid

April 22-26, 1987.
Madrid, Spain.
Organised by IFEMA (Institution Ferial de Madrid), Avda
de Portugal, s/n Casa de Campo, 28011 Madrid 11011.
Telephone: Madrid 470 10 14.

AUDIO VISUAL '87

April 27-30, 1987.
Wembley Conference Centre, London.
EMAP/MacLaren Exhibitions Ltd.
PO Box 138, Token House, 79-81 High Street,
Croydon CR9 3SS.
Telephone: 01-688 7788.

SIB Rimini

May 4-8, 1987.
Rimini, Italy.
Ente Autonomo Fiera Di Rimini,
PO Box 300, 47037 Rimini, Italy.
Telephone: 0541/773553.
UK enquiries: Disco & Club Trade International.
Telephone: 01-278 3591.

Lighting World 5

May 11-13, 1987.
New York.
National Expositions Company Inc.
49 West 38 Street, Suite 12a, New York NY 10018.
Telephone: (212) 391 9111.

Sound Comm '87

May 19-21, 1987.
The Business Design Centre, Islington, London.
Organisers: Batiste Publications Ltd.
Pembroke House, Campsbourne Road, Hornsey, N8 7PE.
Telephone: 01-340 3291.
(Assn. of Sound and Communications Engineers).

NAMM Exposition

June 27-30, 1987.
McCormick Place, Chicago, USA.
Larry R. Linkin, 500 N. Michigan Avenue,
Chicago IL 60611, USA.

PLASA Light and Sound Show

September 6-9, 1987.
Novotel, Hammersmith, London.
Exhibition Bookings: David Street,
Telephone: 01-994 6477.
General Enquiries: PLASA general secretary,
Roger Saunders, 1 West Ruislip Station,
Ruislip, Middlesex.

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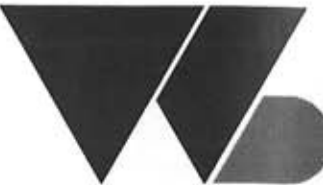
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