

# LIGHTING+SOUND *International*

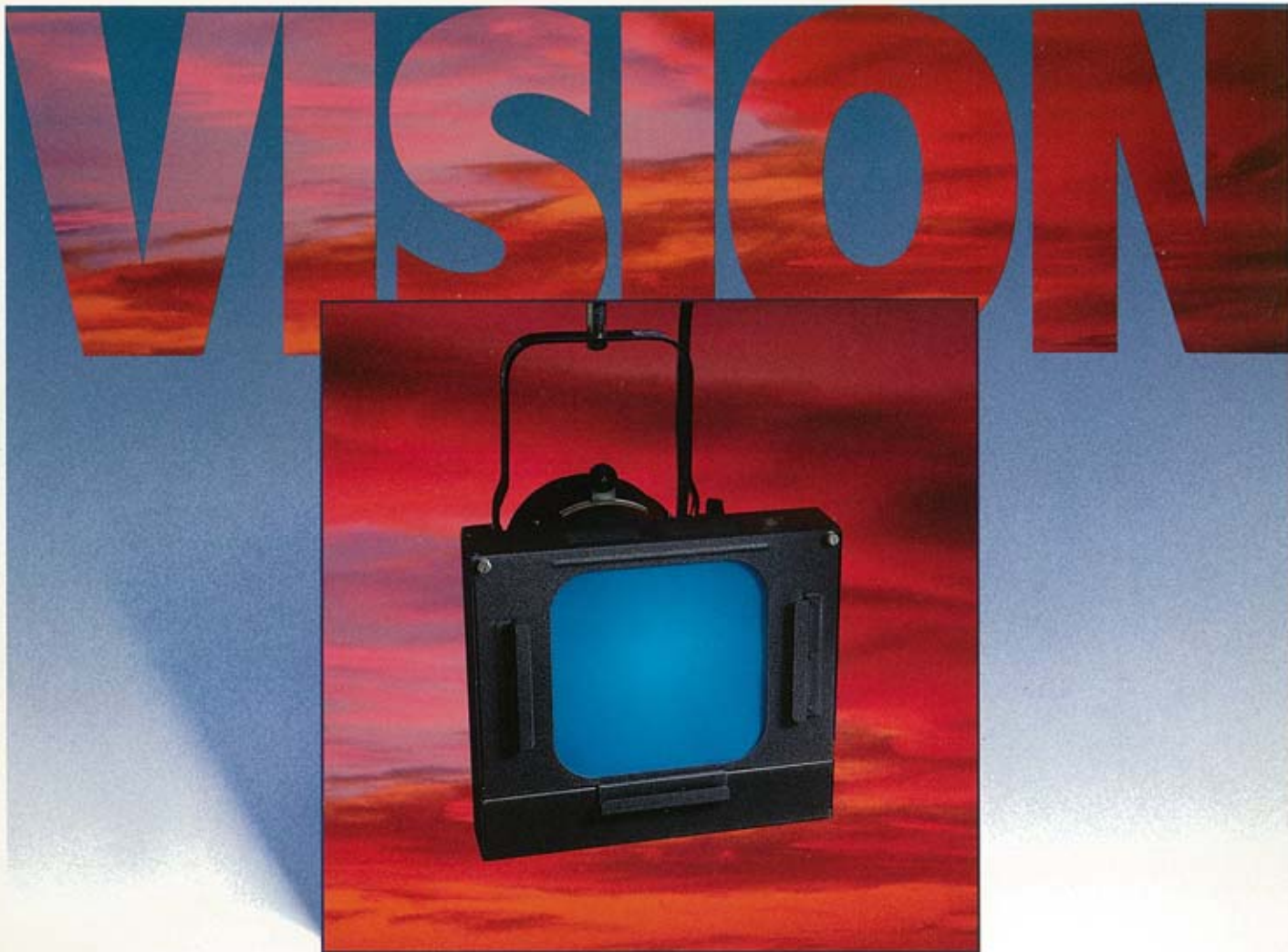


ROCKET IN STEAM AT YORK: A SHOWLIGHT EVENT SPONSORED BY LIGHT & SOUND DESIGN AND L+SI

- Showlight 93: exclusive coverage of the Bradford-based colloquium
- Italian Collection: first in a series of company and product profiles
- L+SI Special Interview: Patrick Woodroffe
- Robert Halliday at the ABTT Trade Show
- Viva Cabaret: Meyer sound for Berlin's last review theatre
- Company profile: SLI International
- Soundcheck Reviewed

MAY 1993





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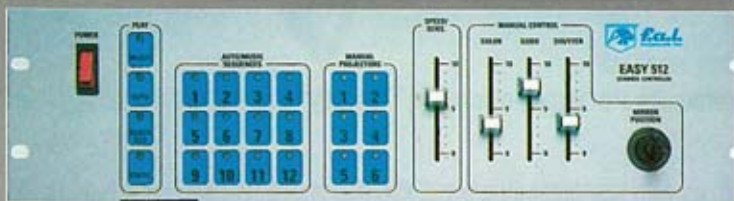
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Supercleverscans and Primoscans in action on FAL's stand at SIB Rimini 1993

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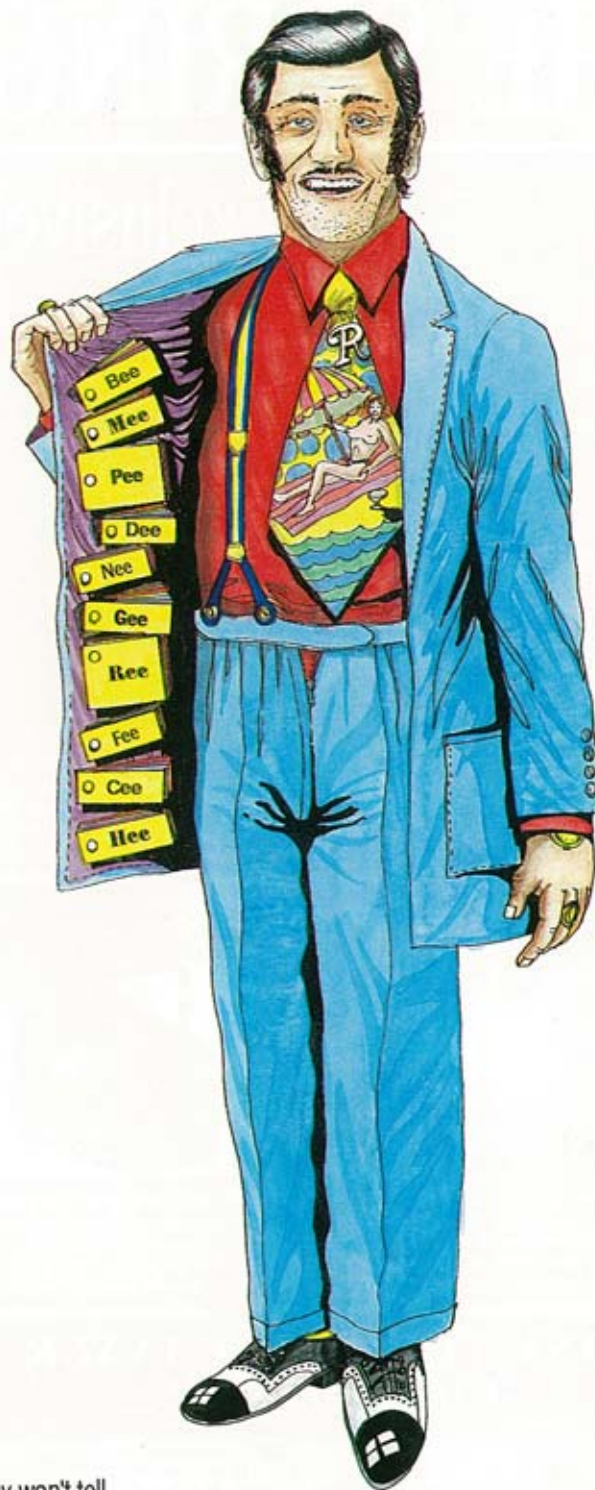
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# LIGHTING+SOUND *International*

**MAY 1993**

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

# LIGHTING+SOUND *International*

published monthly by the Professional Lighting and Sound Association

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ISSN 0268-7429

Editor: John Offord  
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Published from the PLASA Office  
7 Highlight House, St Leonards Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN21 3UH England  
Telephone: (0323) 642639 Fax: (0323) 646905

No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the permission of the Editor

The magazine is available on annual subscription

UK £45.00 Europe and rest of world £60.00 Airmail £85.00. Single copy price £3.50 plus postage

Editorial Advisors: Tony Akers, Peter Brooks, Wyatt Enever, Mike Gerrish, Matthew Griffiths, Kevin Hopcroft, Tony Kingsley, John Lethbridge, Ian de la Vingne, Iain Price-Smith, Neil Rice, Jackie Staines

Lighting + Sound International is published monthly for \$90.00 per year by The Professional Lighting and Sound Association, 7 Highlight House, St Leonards Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN21 3UH. Second class postage paid at Rahway, N.J. Postmaster: Send USA address corrections to Lighting + Sound International, c/o Mercury Airfreight International Inc, 2323 Randolph Avenue, Avenel, New Jersey N.J. 07001

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## Icon Goes Public at Showlight

Light & Sound Design's Dave Smith (left) with Mike Jefferies of the STLD with the first public showing of the Icon at Showlight in Bradford. The event was a huge success with over 240 delegates and visitors taking part in the colloquium. 27 exhibitors took space and visits included the IMAX cinema at the National Museum of Photography Film & Television, Emmerdale Studios, the West Yorkshire Playhouse and the National Railway Museum, York (see main feature this month).



## Arri Hits Ten

Arri GB notched up 10 years in the industry with a party at their Heston premises which brought together their distributors from all over the world. Members of the STLD, ALD and Guild of British Cameramen were invited, and given the opportunity to sample the complete range of Arri products as well as the famous Arri hospitality. Pictured above are part of the Arri GB team (from l-r): Robert Williams, Angela Denton, Ian Fanning, Tim Burnham, Richard Maskell, Nick Shapley, and Randall Miles, with John Turpin at the front (more pictures on page 19).



## Heinz Fritz Departs

Strand Lighting have with regret advised L+SI that Heinz Fritz left their German company with effect from April 1st. Heinz originally joined Didier Buschmann, the agent for Strand, in 1963 and was then made the managing director of Rank Strand GmbH in 1977.

## David Martin

As L+SI went to press news was received that engineer Colin James has been remanded in custody accused of murdering David Martin of Martin Audio who disappeared from his home on December 29th last year.

## PLASA Pulls Them All

More than 15 per cent of the companies already signed-up for this year's PLASA Light & Sound Show, Earls Court 2, London, 12-15th September, have never exhibited in their own right at the exhibition before. The show is so popular that only five per cent of stand space remains and there is a growing waiting list of interested companies.

Tannoy is taking its own stand for the first time and will be using the show for the European launch of SuperDual, a major new product for the sound contracting business. LSC Electronics, the Australian-based lighting control manufacturer, is also exhibiting under its own banner for the first time, as is specialist laser manufacturer, Laser Grafix.

Totally new to the show, France's largest lighting manufacturer, Robert Juliat, will be exhibiting with Decoupe, their newly appointed sole UK distributor. As with previous years, a large number of companies will be launching major products at the show.

Further information is available from Philbeach Events Limited, telephone: 071-370 8215.



## Showlight in Steam

Pictured above during Showlight are Dave Smith of LSD who sponsored Rocket in Steam, Ruth Rossington of L+SI and PLASA chairman Tony Kingsley.

## Action News



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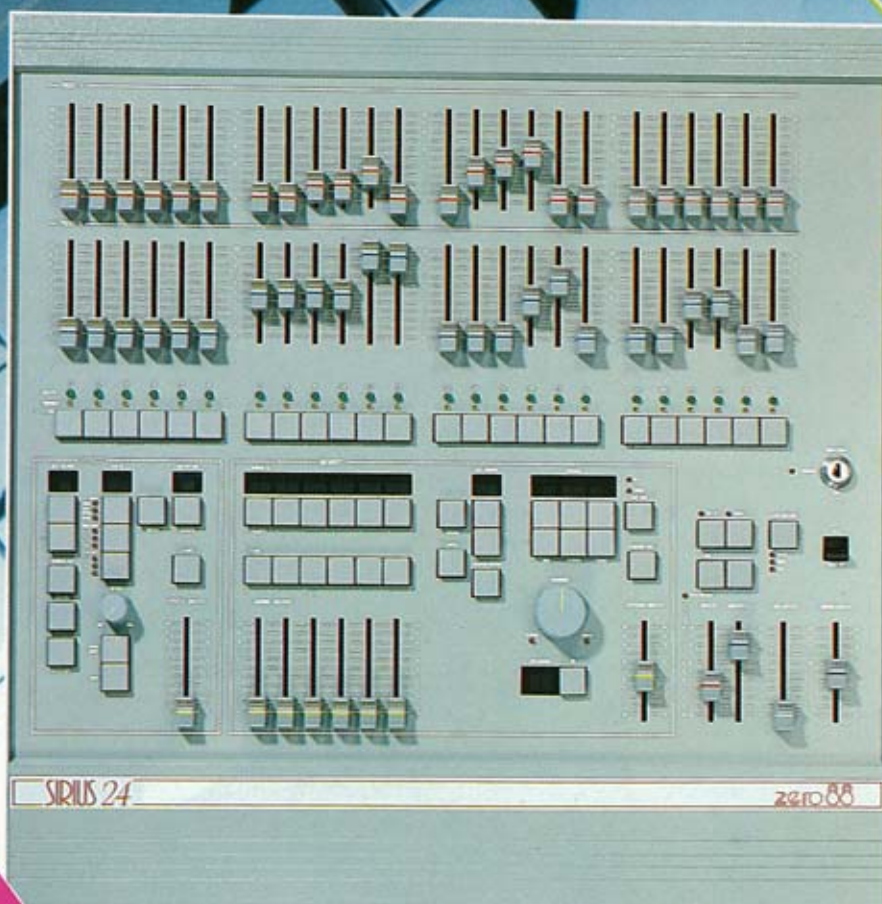
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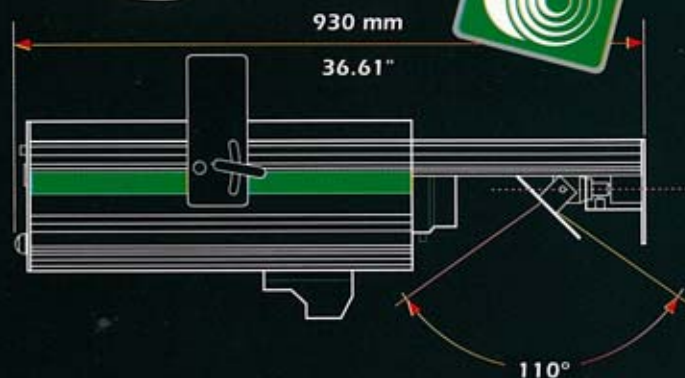


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Showlight star speaker John Watt with L+SI's John Offord at the Showlight dinner (see feature).



A bundle of Showlight lighting industry dignitaries climb into a Victorian carriage for a 200 yard run up the track behind the replica of Stephenson's Rocket at the National Railway Museum in York.

## PLASA Ukraine Mission

A small but powerful group of around ten PLASA members is set to visit Kiev in the Ukraine from May 26th-31st. PLASA chief executive John Offord and membership and marketing manager Anna Pillow will lead the mission which is being organised jointly with Illusion UK and their Kiev-based partners Podol Arts Project (PAP).

An exhibition will take place in the converted 'House of Actors' in the city and a publicity campaign to draw a wide sector of visitors was underway as L+SI went to press. It was also hoped to arrange visits for PLASA members to establishments within the Kiev area.

Exhibitors booked include Strand Lighting, Arri GB, Avolites, Lighting Technology, Glantre and Pulsar. Copies of L+SI will be available on the PLASA stand.



Gordon Smith, director of Lite Smiffs (right) with Paul Tipple commercial director of Power Gems, on signing up the UK and European distribution agreement for the 'Gem' series electronic ballasts.

## Clay Paky's Gala Dinner

As promised, further photographs from Clay Paky's dinner hosted during the SIB/Magis exhibition in Rimini.



Barry Howse (L+SI), with a Pulsar quartet of Ken Sewell, Derrick Saunders, Paul Mardon and Andy Graves.



Günther Olbricht (CP&P), Peter Blach and Ralph Jörg Wezorke (CP&P) with Clay Paky's Pio Nahum behind.



John Glover, Steve Thomas (Luminar Leisure), Nigel Hudston (Haven Warner), Derrick Saunders (Pulsar) and Tony Marshall (Rank Leisure).



Keith Woodcock and Ivor Green of Carlsbro Teknikal Services.



Pulsar's Ken Sewell with First Leisure's Mike Payne and Shaun Doyle.



John Lethbridge (Cerebrum), Vinny Finnegan and Norman Wright (Celco Inc) and Tony Gottelier.

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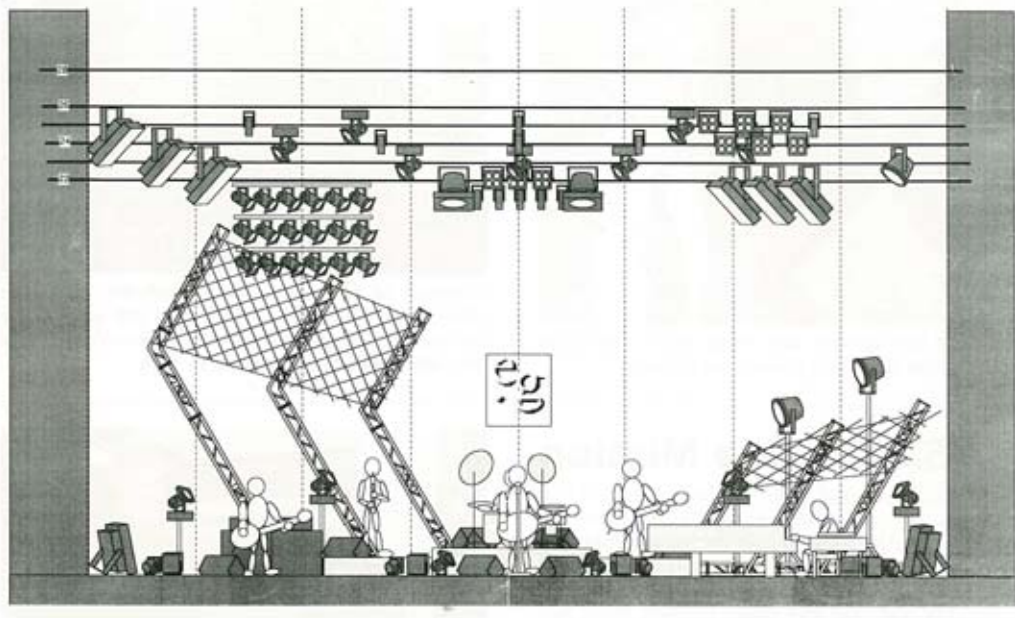
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江口洋介 1993 TOUR



## Rock President Sets Challenge

On the recent tour of Yosuke Eguchi, lighting designer Kazuo Inoue, president of The Rock Corporation of Tokyo, set himself the challenge of eliminating as many Pars as possible, and to greatly reduce the overall number of lanterns on the rig. "It's something I've been wanting to try for a number of years," he told L+SI. "I finally met a client who understood what I felt. I also set the rig out of symmetry in an attempt to bring a different perspective to the stage and the performance."

The final set-up, as shown in the interesting perspective above, incorporates a black Rosco screen and a light blue/grey carpet, and involves the use of varied range of floor lights. Average venue size was 1,300 seats.

Equipment included standard Thomas Par36 and ACL 8-Lites with Rainbow colour changers; seven 3k fresnels (two with Rainbows), 18 Thomas Par 64's and another 10 with Rainbows, nine Thomas Par 36 4-Lites, four 1.5k fresnels with Rainbows, 13 ITO's, 11 Posi-Spots with Geljet changers, five x 1k convex, four Pulsar Jumbo strobes and four 3k xenon followspots. Stands and hoists were by Powerdrive. Desks were two Pulsar Masterpieces (one for lighting, one for colourchangers), a Posi-Spot controller and a Zero 88 Orion for the strobes.

Design, operation and scenery was by Kazuo Inoue, Tatsuya Kobayashi was Posi-Spot operator and Miyuki Kurokawa followspot operator/cueing. Below are pictures of Yosuke Eguchi in performance.





## White Light into Busy Season

White Light will supply the lighting equipment for the Dublin production of 'Les Miserables' this summer. Produced by Cameron Mackintosh, the show will transfer to The Point in June and White Light has worked closely with production manager Andrew Olsen to plan the lighting equipment for the new venue. The basic rig is similar to the original design for the production, using banks of moving Par 56 light curtains and approximately 300 conventional units. The rig will be controlled by an Arri Imagine 500 with Avolites dimmers. The movement of the light curtains, Rainbrow scrollers, Skywalker smoke machines and the Howie Dry Ice machines are also controlled directly by the Imagine 500.

White Light's Irish subsidiary Lighting Dimensions (WL), will be providing the rigging equipment for the front of house areas, supplementing the rig and offering local support. 'Les Miserables' will be in Dublin until September and then moves to Edinburgh. Meanwhile Lighting Dimensions (WL) is supplying a 96 channel control system to the Samuel Beckett Theatre in Trinity College in Dublin and a 48 channel control system to the Tivoli Theatre, also in Dublin. Other theatre business includes a package of Golden Scans and control for 'Jury's Irish Cabaret', which is believed to be the longest running cabaret in the country.

## School's Out

St Peters School of Lymstone in Devon has unearthed some new lighting and sound talent during its touring production of 'The Plotters of Cabbage Patch Corner'. Two 12 year old pupils took on the technical challenges: Joseph Cooke designed the Trillite framework which spanned the set and from which Par cans, drapes and sound equipment was hung. He also had his hands upon the faders and switches of a Soundcraft Delta working with Bose speakers. Alex Geikie undertook the lighting design which he controlled from a Zero 88 Sirius desk. PLASA members Stage Electrics acted as joint sponsors for the tour with Barclays Bank.



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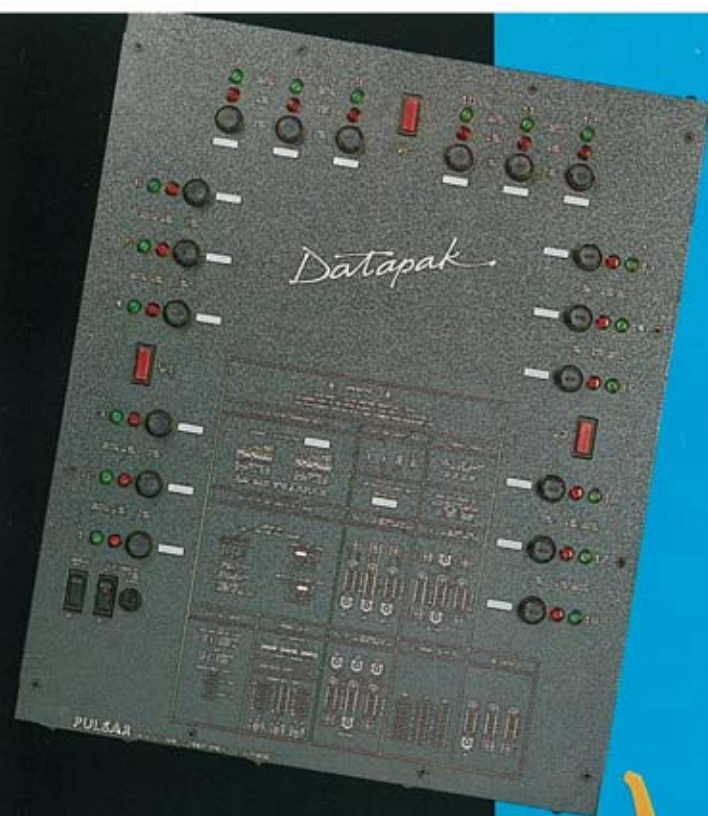
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PROFESSIONAL SHOW LIGHTING



## People in the News

JYG have appointed **Larry Dane** to head up the operation of the newly formed JYG Export Ltd. Larry, who is best known for his work with Citronic and Le Maitre, will retain his contact with Le Maitre products and in particular their range of pyrotechnics.

Revox UK has appointed **Geoff Yates** as Northern UK sales manager for its professional products division, as Revox restructures as a result of expanding business in the UK. Managing director **Dave Wood** heads a team which now includes technical manager **Nigel Fordham** and sales manager **Charles Cook** together with **Geoff Yates**.

d&b audiotechnik has recently made management changes within the company at its Backnang headquarters. **Kay Lange**, for a long time administration manager, has taken over as the sole managing director. **Uli Mall**, previously managing director external affairs, will now be free to concentrate on sales and marketing, while co-founder **Jürgen Daubert**, who was in charge of internal matters, can now concentrate his efforts on research and development.

**Philip Aminoff** has joined Electrosonic Ltd as managing director. A graduate of INSEAD and fluent in many languages, Philip was previously a marketing manager for Boeringer Mannheim. For several years he has also been a non-executive director of Helvar. **Andreas Oehlert** has also joined the company as products director. A graduate of the Goethe University, his business experience has been mainly in the computer industry. As products director he is responsible for the development of lighting control, video and AV products, and for their marketing and distribution.

**Alan Archer** and **Anthony Francis** have recently joined the AV Display department of the Products Division of Electrosonic. Alan, until recently a European products manager for Soundcraft, is in charge of northern Europe sales, and Anthony, who has extensive experience as an AV

consultant, joins the sales support team.

Well-known industry figures **Bill Curbishley** and **Brian Croft** worked together in the early '70s for such groups as the Rolling Stones and The Who. Now, their sons are working full time at Vari-Lite Europe. **Mickey Curbishley** is a customer production manager and **Matthew Croft** is a customer technician. Both are currently working on the Van Halen tour. Old father Croft told L+S: "Things haven't changed much in 20 years - Curbishley is management and Croft is a lampie, but then the Crofts get the good looks". You can judge for yourself. Pictured from left to right below are Matthew Croft, the handsome Mr Brian Croft and Mickey Curbishley.



## Ned Bowman

Ned Bowman passed away on May 6th, after a 13 year battle with cancer. Ned's life was a long celebration in theatre. He was head of the Theatre Faculty, University of Pittsburgh from 1960 to 1976, one time president of the USITT and an active member of OISTAT. Since 1976 he worked with Rosco in New York. He was a prolific writer and publisher on technical theatre subjects and made sustained friendships around the world. He will be sadly missed. He leaves a wife, Gloria and four children.

Michael Hall

## Jim McCarthy

On 22nd April, the funeral took place of Jim McCarthy. The ceremony was attended by many of his friends and workmates in the entertainment business. He was Samuelson Concert Productions' crew chief on the current Paul McCartney tour. He was killed in a motor accident in Mexico on 7th April, shortly before his 36th birthday, whilst taking a short vacation during a break between legs of the tour. He worked as a lighting technician and designer in the early days of Rainbow (Lairhurst) and followed that company's journey through Richard Hartman's TTR to SCP. He was never one to overplay his talents, whatever he did was performed in an efficient, no-nonsense way. He will be missed in the touring and stage lighting industry by everyone that had the pleasure to work with him. Anybody who wishes to can make a donation to his favourite charity - Elefriends, dedicated to the preservation of elephants in the wild.

Brian Croft and John Coppen

## Andy Hartley

The funeral of Andy Hartley took place on April 21st at his local church in Maescyrgiau, Dyfed. As many people will by now know, Andy died suddenly of a heart attack on April 9th, on a day off during a job in Coventry. He had many friends from his days working in rock and roll as well as those who got to know him through his work in conference lighting. I knew Andy for 12 years during which time he became a close friend, as well as a highly trusted colleague. He was kind and considerate and always unflappable in a crisis. Andy leaves a wife and three young children. A fund for their welfare has been set up and any donations should be sent to 'Andy Hartley Fund', Theatre Projects, 20-22 Fairway Drive, Greenford, Middlesex UB6 8PW.

Simon Tapping

## Golden Scan '3' has arrived



The sensational Clay Paky Golden Scan '3' is now available from stock. Contact: Cerebrum Lighting Ltd Units 4/5, Shannon Commercial Centre, Beverley Way, New Malden, Surrey KT3 4PT, England. Tel: 081-949 3171 Fax: 081-949 3649

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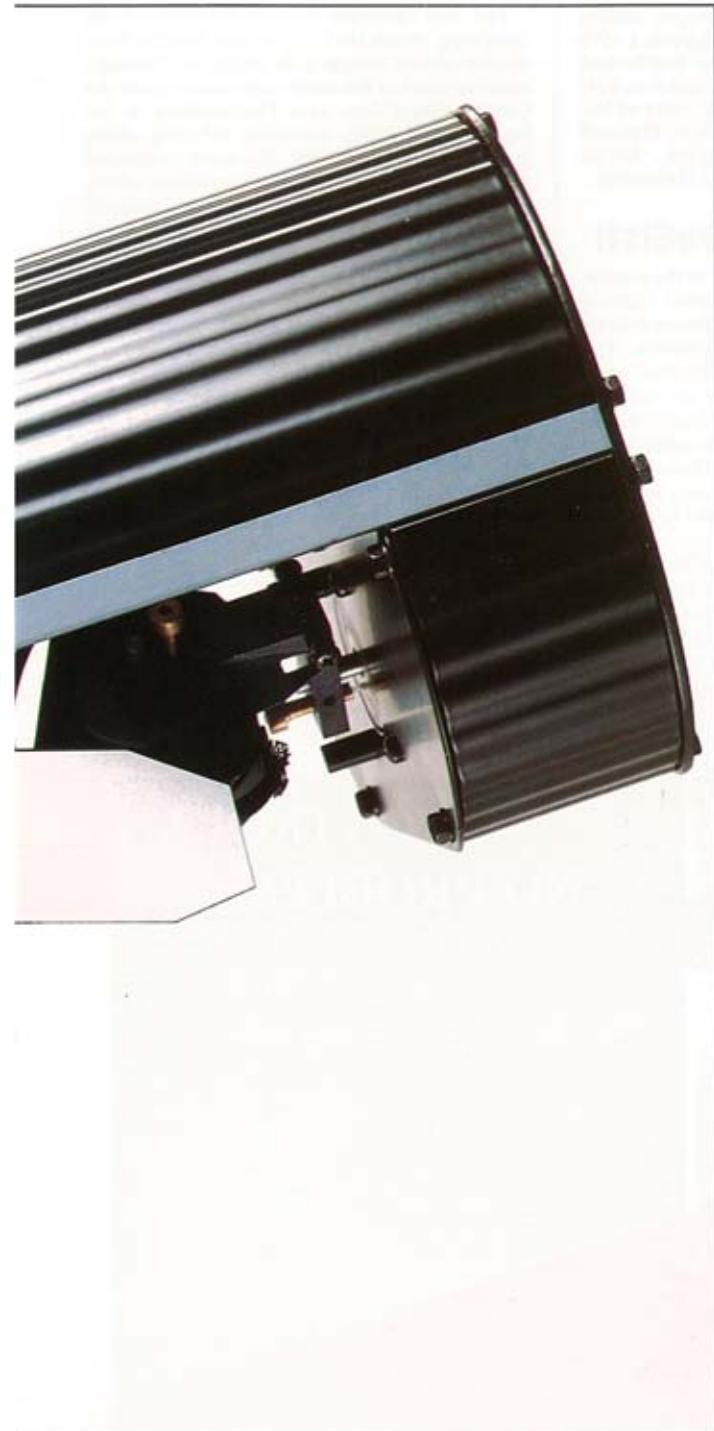


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# Scan PRO218



## Compulite on the Up!

Compulite sales have seen a significant upturn during the first quarter of 93. The Applause lighting control desk has been chosen by Playlight Hire in London for the upgrading of their lighting control stock with the purchase of three systems. These are currently out on hire with the National tours of 'Good Rockin', 'Tonight' and 'Pirates of Penzance'. A fourth system is on loan to Playlight for the new Saturday morning children's show 'Parallel 9'. Other Applause systems have been installed at the Everyman Palace Theatre in Cork and MGM Centre in Slough with a further three systems due for delivery during April.

The Animator range of desks have been steadily rising in popularity since their UK launch at the PLASA Light and Sound Show last year. Systems have already been purchased by Richard Martin Lighting for exclusive hire to the BBC and have been used on the recent Wogan, Paul Daniels and Tomorrow's World series. The BBC in Belfast have one Animator 48 system which was supplied through Lightfactor Sales as part of a complete package including 30 High End Intellabeams. This system will be used on the Eurovision Song Contest in Dublin during May.

## Ex-Julianas pair form LRI

Paul Endersby, who recently left Squire Light and Sound, has set up in business with ex-Julianas colleague Mike Coker. Together, the pair formed the rump of the last Julianas equipment selection department following the original buyout from Wembley Leisure.

The company, to be called Leisure Resources International, starts out life with one big advantage. They already have a client - The Julianas Leisure Group have apparently commissioned LRI to undertake all their lighting, sound and video needs worldwide. LRI can be found at Studio 12, Shepperton. Strangely their letterhead does not list a telephone number as yet.

## Picture Story



SLI Sylvania provided all the delegate folders for Showlight 93 at Bradford last month. L+SI's Ruth Rossington (second left) who had looked after the administration of the event was duly presented with a 'limited edition' copy of the original painting used for the folders. Pictured above with Ruth are Carla Maris, Rocyn Williams and Ken Rickman of SLI (Sylvania).

## New Shape of DeSisti

Conscious of a renewed buoyancy in the market, DeSisti Lighting UK, have appointed Lighting Dynamics Ltd in the south and Environmental Lighting Ltd in the north as dealers. The companies will oversee the recent introduction to the UK market of the 20kW Super Leo tungsten spotlight, the 300W/500W/650W Magis tungsten spotlight, the 6000W Raffaello HMI softlight and the soon to be launched 200W Rembrandt single ended daylight spotlight. John Burgess, ex Lumo Lighting has also joined the company to aid their direct marketing.

On another front, Bill Smillie, Jon Reay-Young and Greg and Alba Moger have become the shareholders of Novalight (International) Ltd. The company markets architectural/display lighting systems and represents Starkstrom-Elektronik ag of Switzerland and Architectural Dedolight, a name already well-known in the Film, Television and Photographic markets.

## Latitude with Attitude

Sir Christopher Wren would probably have been delighted with the refurbishment of the Royal Observatory at Greenwich to improve its tourist appeal, but he would surely have been mystified by the permanent installation of a laser to shine along the Meridian Line at zero longitude. Claimed to be the UK's first permanent outdoor laser display, the Spectra-Physics 6 Argon Ion unit was installed by Horizon Laser Graphics as part of a performance event to re-launch the ROG as a London tourist attraction.

The May Day water borne performance event involving musicians, light and pyrotechnic displays as well as large scale projections, brought together some of the same team who created the Canary Wharf new year illuminations at the beginning of 1992, including initiating artists Anne Bean and Peter Fink. The event celebrated the country's pre-eminent maritime history which enabled it to create and secure the, normally invisible, meridian for London, and its significant contribution to navigation aids and early astronomy. Horizon also plan to use the installation as an opportunity to study the value of lasers as an aid to mariners. Apparently, up to 400 laser sites are planned in the UK over the next few years for navigational purposes, and this study will assist in assessing their potential.

## Avolites in Indonesia

The Subentra Group of Indonesia have commissioned Avolites to supply a wide range of lighting equipment for the conversion of a cinema into a live music venue.

Apart from two Rolacue Sapphire desks and a pair of dimmer racks, Avolites also selected 36 Gel-Stream colour scrollers from AC Lighting, eight Amptown automated lights and 136 Parcans as well as smoke machines and strobes. High End Trackspots and ColorPros were also included in the extensive inventory.



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## ARRI Celebrate 10 of the Best



Reinard Kutterer (Arri Lighting), Derrick Ross (MD of Arri GB), Jurgen Matthaues (Arri Lighting GmbH), and Wilfried Brauckmann (B+S).



Christian de Schaetzen (left) and Philippe Grandclaude of ARC Belgium with Richard Maskell of Arri GB.



Lighting director threesome: David Lock and Geoffrey Thonger of the BBC with Warwick Fielding of LWT.



John Cooper (Media Film), Karen Good (Arri), Adrian Hicks (M&M), George Ashley-Cound (LSD) Tony Lucas (Lee Lighting) and Graham Kerr (Legend).



Nick Shapley, Randall Miles and Richard Maskell from Arri, sandwich Witold Gorniak (second from left) and Sylwester Adamski (second from right) from Polish Television.



Derrick Ross with John Lee, founder of Lee Lighting.

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## Oscar Night Spectacular

Hollywood's stars shone especially brightly at the 65th Annual Academy Awards Presentation, thanks to the efforts of Bob Dickinson and Vari-Lite Inc. This year's Oscar Night gala broadcast saw the debut of the largest, fully-automated lighting system ever assembled for one production. It was the brainchild of lighting designer/director Bob Dickinson, with the assistance of Vari-Lite Inc. Dickinson is a multiple Emmy award-winner in the lighting field and a six-year veteran of Academy Awards broadcasts, and his grand-scale lighting concept marked his return to the Oscars after a three-year absence.

Dickinson's ambitious design employed 62 VL2B spot luminaires, 96 VL4 wash luminaires and no less than 226 VL5 wash luminaires.

The sheer size of the lighting system necessitated an unusually heavy measure of advance planning for the Vari-Lite staff. John Morgan, the show's Vari\*Lite operator, met in Dallas with Vari-Lite Inc president Rusty Brutsché and senior management in advance of the load-in to prepare for the event. The 384-lamp system was first assembled in its entirety at the new Vari-Lite Inc Los Angeles shop, prior to loading into the Chandler Pavilion. P.L.S., a conventional lighting supplier, brought over the dimmer racks, Socapex, and power disconnect required for the system. They were included in the test set-up to ensure full compatibility between the Vari\*Lite system and the conventional house dimming system. "We were able to predetermine where we might run into problems and deal with them before going into the show," said Morgan. "We learned a lot about loading in a system of this size."



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## North East Clothes Show

The cat-walk was set last month for one of the major fashion events of the year. It was held at the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre. Putting the spotlight on on the North East Clothes Show was a mammoth task, but lighting designer Steve Mackie of the Creative Lighting Company obviously took it all in his stride.

Contracted by project managers, Format Communications Art, it took his crew less than a day to lay the foundations for the show which was lit by a 20m x 10m LSD truss rig. The £250,000 project included 3,000 metres of cable to power 120 Par 64s, eight ACLs, two Lycian longthrow followspots, and four Trackspots. Control was provided by an Avolites QM500 working with a 72-way dimmer rack, and a ShowCAD control system.

The Creative Lighting Company was set up a

year ago to work in the trade show and exhibition markets. Although based in Aberdeen the company works throughout the UK, and recent credits include shows for BT, Shell and several major design companies. The rig is pictured above left, with the Avolites QM500 and ShowCad above right.

## Arri at the Vic

The 'off' West End' Victoria Palace Theatre is the latest UK venue to get Arri's SmartRack digital dimmers, with a new installation of 108 SmartRack 2.5kW dimmers, along with a 500 channel Imagine 2 console. Chief electrician Tony Coats told L+S that the choice of Arri kit was based on its reputation, which was much appreciated as the new dimmers went in over a busy production weekend. Meantime, Arri have taken on more sales and production staff to deal with the high level of SmartRack orders, which shows no sign of abating.



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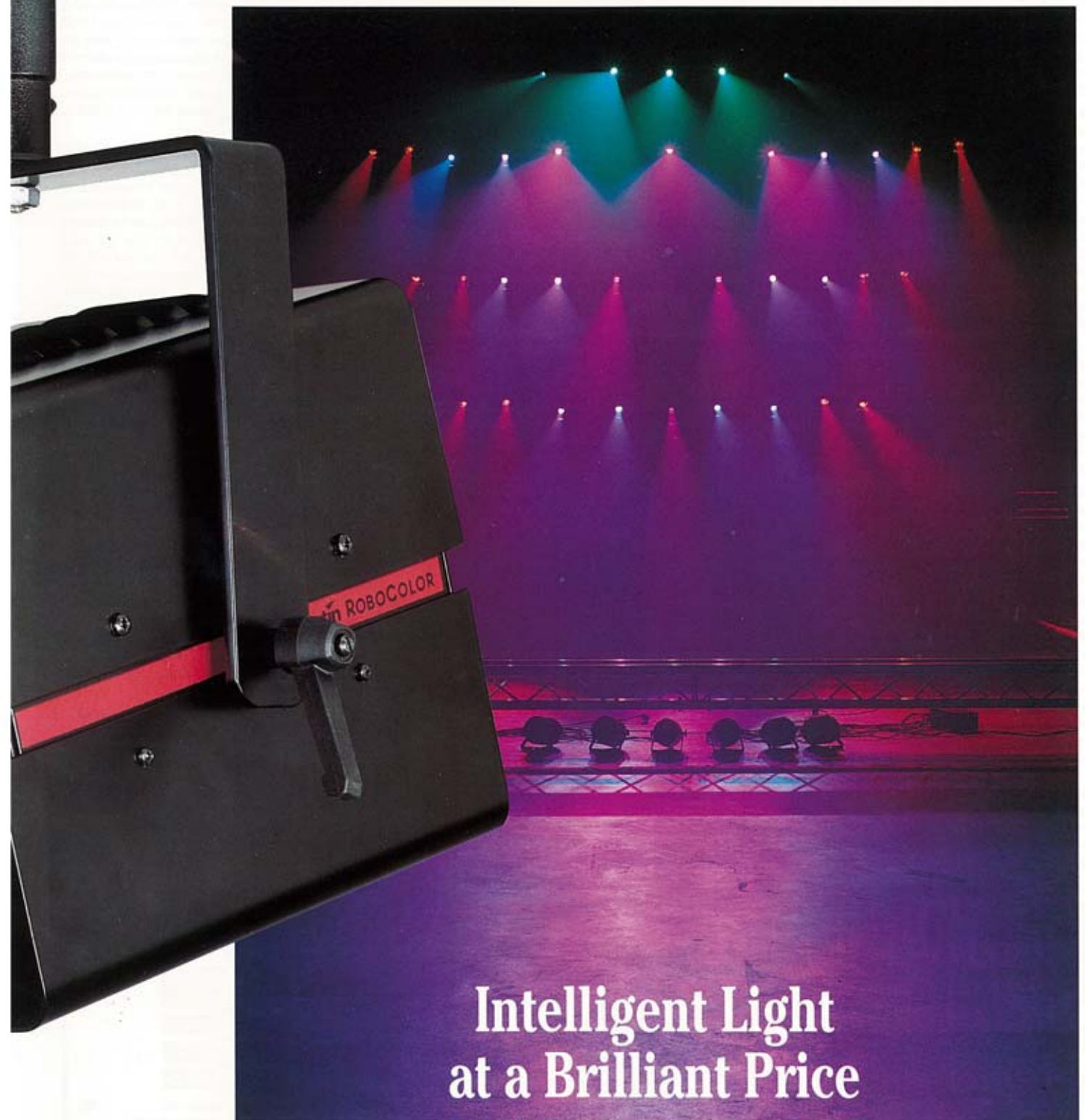


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## News Shorts

The Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) at the Barbican Theatre has bought three of the recently launched LAB2000 amplifiers from Network dealer **Paul Graham Services**. LAB2000's were chosen as part of an update of audio equipment at the Barbican and will be used for the new production of 'Beggars Opera'.

Following a revision of planning for the **BKSTS Biennial Conference**, the society has announced new dates for their 1993 international event, devoted to key developments in film and television production. Moving Images '93 will be held from 30th November to 2nd December 1993 at the Cumberland Hotel, London W1. Further details are available from Suzie Brewer at the BKSTS, telephone 071-580 2842.

**B & H Production Services** have been awarded a three year contract with the Royal Albert Hall to provide a sound amplification and enhancement system. Meyer systems supplied by B & H Production Services have been used extensively in the venue over the past two years for general speech and medium level sound reinforcement. The systems are normally configured as a centre cluster suspended from the newly installed house truss system, using either Meyer UPA or MSL enclosures according to the nature of the event being covered. Systems are driven by Crest and QSC amplifiers with Soundcraft desks for control.

The fifth world-wide production of the Cameron Mackintosh musical 'Miss Saigon' has recently opened in Toronto Canada, with the sound effects being controlled by two **Out Board Electronics** SS2 theatre automation systems. UK sound designer, and Out Board pioneer, Andrew Bruce of Autograph, specified the units, now standard components in all 'Miss Saigon' productions.

**Martin Audio** have recently supplied an EM Series system for installation at the Borderline Club, off Charing Cross Road, London. The system comprises four EM185, two EM75, EMX1 and two controllers and also LE400s and FSX sub-bass, and was installed by CAV of Stroud.

Northern sound company **Yorkshire Audio** have just bought a Crest powered EAW KF850 concert loudspeaker system from main dealer LMC Audio Systems. The new rig has its maiden four week run with Roy Wood before plunging into a busy summer schedule. Meanwhile, **LMC Audio Systems** have supplied the first new 48-channel Yamaha PM4000 to audio giant Canegreen. The console's format allowed it to be custom-loaded with 12 stereo inputs instead of the standard four on its first job. This made 60 full-function inputs available within the same width frame as a 40-input PM3000. Currently out with the acoustically-critical sounds of Suzanne Vega (see On Tour this month), the console is set to be very busy throughout '93.

One of the first installations for the new Canon background music loudspeakers is the Lloyds Lanes bowling centre, part of the David Lloyd sports complex at Raynes Park in Surrey. **Atmospheric Audio & Lighting** were commissioned to install the audio, lighting control and satellite TV systems. Mounted in cluster pairs flush to the wall, and either side of ceiling beams, the Canon V-100s provide comprehensive coverage throughout the club. In the control rack are Millbank TA1 series amplifiers, five of them operating over four zones, and two other 100W amps covering the lanes.



At the recent distributor seminar during the Frankfurt show, **Nexo** handed out its annual awards. Recipients this year included THADA Research from Thailand who scooped Best New Distributor 1992, and Belgium's EML gaining Distributor of the Year 1992. Pictured above are winners Metha Thienprasiddhi (right) of THADA Research, and Luc Hermans (left) of EML.

**Towards 2000**, having moved to a new 8,000sq.ft location in Burbank just six months ago, is expanding again. With a total of almost 20,000 sq.ft the company plans to install a larger showroom dedicated to High End Systems' equipment complete with flown, motorized truss rig and stage. The area will also be available as a soundstage for film and video shoots. A complete retail division is also to be opened in the new space to address the growing mobile DJ and small club market. In addition a comprehensive service department is being installed. The new location is 4114 Vanowen Place, Burbank, CA 91505, telephone (818) 557 0903.

**Alchimea**, the College of Audio Engineering, based in Britannia Row (the street, not the studio), have taken delivery of their first SSL G-Series console. The console was installed in the third studio in the complex, the largest purpose-built audio engineering college of its kind in Europe.

**Samuelson Communications** has added the latest Barcodata 5000 and Barcovision 700 HQ colour LCD projectors to its hire stock as well as the Dual Genesis Switcher. **Samuelson Concert Productions** meanwhile have increased their stock with the addition of 14 Avo dimmer racks and a new RTS 36-way intercom system.

Now available from **APRS** is 'The Handbook of UK Recording and Duplication 1993'. The Handbook provides key information on APRS members (covering studios, post-production, duplicating facilities and producers) plus a valuable reference section and topical editorial feature. It can be obtained direct from the publishers, APRS Ltd, 2 Windsor Square, Silver Street, Reading, Berks, RG1 2TH.

**Light Processor** are to hold a series of open days between June 7th and 11th at their Greenford, Middlesex premises to introduce the attributes of their new Integrator controller. Integrator is a 265 channel multiplex controller, operating on DMX 512, with special features making it suitable for programming and control of articulate projectors in a discotheque environment. Demonstrations will be by appointment and interested parties should call Graham Norman on 081-575 8828 to arrange a convenient time.

When **Squire's** parent company, Allied Radio Plc., appointed Keith Isaac managing director two years ago, little did they know that he would end up acquiring their 85% stake. As an independent company, Squire can now concentrate on its own diversification and expansion in the UK and overseas. Various activities are planned on the retail side, commencing with special promotions on certain product ranges, with further expansion of the Contracts Division already underway.

**Lighting Technology Group** has leased a further 4,703 sq ft on Slough Estates' Tudor Estate in Park Royal, London. The company, which has supplied Oxford Street's Christmas Lighting for the last three years, has recently designed and supplied a new floodlighting scheme for Admiralty Arch and was also involved in the floodlighting of the Hoover Building on the A40. The new building, which is in addition to the Park Royal facilities on the Tudor Estate, will be an engineering base and will also be used for the design, manufacture and storage of specialist lighting products.

**Vari-Lite Benelux** provided 24 VL5 wash luminaires to the Netherlands Opera for a short tour of Holland. The production was Benjamin Britten's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' directed by Brigitte Fassbaender. Lighting designer Chris Ellis specified the VL5s which were programmed by Andy Voller who then trained the opera company's technicians to run the show for the tour.

**Soundtech** have begun shipping their new Panoramic mixers. First introduced at the NAMM winter market in Anaheim, the Panoramic mixers are available in three ranges.

Over the next two months **Action Lighting** are offering a unique deal part exchanging any old smoke machine for a new machine. Call Action Lighting in London on 081-965 6800 or Manchester on 061-876 0576 for further details.

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## Shakespearian Double Bill Comes to an End

After seven months which saw two shows covering much of England and Scotland, along with Cork, Tokyo and three venues in Germany, the English Shakespeare Company's tour of Macbeth and The Tempest came to an end recently.

Macbeth was a revamped version of the show which toured through the first half of 1992, and which was covered in the May 1992 issue of L+SI while The Tempest was a new production directed by Michael Bogdanov and designed by Chris Dyer. Both shows shared a composite lighting rig designed by Chris Ellis, supplied by White Light and driven from two of their 48-way 2k Arri touring racks, along with a 12-way 5k rack, all controlled by an Arri Imagine 250. The basic lighting for Macbeth remained similar to the previous production, although with variations to accommodate the re-designed set (which also added an extra set of hydraulics to the famed Macbethoscope).

Two Kodak Carousels were added to the rig to create the cauldron apparitions. The Smoke Factory Skywalker smoke machine remained, but was supplemented by a pair of Le Maitre LSX low smoke machines. These were originally booked to provide falling smoke from the sewer pipes of the Tempest set, but were quickly pressed into double duty generating the rolling mist of the Scottish highlands.

It was the sound system used for the shows that underwent the most radical change from the previous tour. The demands of John Leonard's complex soundtracks meant that the Sonifex cart

machine was replaced by an Akai S1100 sampler for spot effects, with the two Revox B77s being retained for music cues. Some complex cueing sequences led Leonard and sound technicians John Owens and Simon Baker to use a PC-based control system.

Using the software originally written to control Cadac G-type desks, the PC was used to control all of the MIDI devices (the sampler and reverbs) as well as to trigger the B77s, everything being run off a single 'go' button. A MIDI keyboard was used both for system checking and sound cues which formed part of the musical score. The tour also featured four diversity radio microphones and an assortment of conventional mics used for the band in The Tempest battles and Tempest storm scenes. The control software and additional sound equipment for the tour was supplied by Autograph Sound Recording.

The tour rounded off with two weeks in Germany, playing one West German and two East German venues. All were still based on the Germanic methods of large lighting bridges containing batteries of PCs and beamlights, yet the last venue in Leipzig, contained a huge quantity of brand-new ADB profiles and PCs, showing that, despite the economic problems of re-unification, the arts are still valued highly enough to have huge amounts of money spent on them. Leipzig is rapidly becoming one of the biggest business centres of the old east and so cannot be completely typical of the rest of Germany, but the opportunities for suppliers in this now-reunited country would seem to be huge.

## Pulsar Opens Doors

In the midst of the exhibition season, Pulsar have decided to plan ahead and have their own 'in-house' mini exhibition every month for the rest of the year! Free of charge and located at the Cambridge manufacturing complex, Pulsar are not only offering a full working demonstration and training on any Pulsar or Clay Paky product - but also the opportunity to see how many of them are made!

The mini exhibition dates are planned for the 5th May, 2nd June, 30th June, 28th July, 1st September, 29th September, 27th October and 1st December. All the events are open to anyone, but advance warning in writing is essential! For further details contact Pulsar in Cambridge on (0223) 66798.

## Another Award for Triple E

Triple E have notched up another award for their Linear-Drive System to add to the 1988 ABTT Product of the Year award. This time it was the 1993 Bavarian State Prize for Technical Excellence which was awarded at the 45th Internationale Handwerksmesse in Munich earlier this month. The award was collected on behalf of Triple E by Walter Gerriets of Gerriets GmbH who distribute the Triple E Unitrack System throughout Europe and the rest of the world under the name of King Track. David Edelstein, of Triple E, told L+SI: "As the only suppliers of linear induction Motor technology to the entertainment industry it is good to know that our policy of constant improvement is recognised by this award."

## AES Berlin

Simon Croft reports from the AES Convention which took place at the end of March in Berlin. Following our feature on Frankfurt last month he reviews only the products that weren't featured in that report.

Amek's latest live sound console has a noticeable feature, it talks. Fitted with the Vocal Recall system introduced on the Big console launched last year, Amek's 'Recall By Langley' live desk tells the operator how far to turn each control in order to restore it to a previous set-up. The highly automated desk is also the first in a decade to come out under the Amek banner, rather than that of sister company TAC.

BSS has added a slave unit to its Varicurve equalisation system and also has a remote control. The FCS-920 Varicurve Equaliser Analyser Slave has the same stereo six band parametric equalisation - 12 band mono - as the existing FCS926. With no front panel controls, as many as 16 slaves can be controlled from a single main unit. The FPC-900 Varicurve Controller is a hand-held device which will address up to 16 units via a coaxial cable or a radio link.

DDA Q2 is a new sound reinforcement console with LCR (left, centre, right) routing and is said to be the result of three years of research into user's requirements. Centre clusters are increasingly used in concert and theatrical situations. The eight bus desk has a matrix which derives mono sums of the four LCR groups, along with stereo, mono and foldback busses. A compact 40 channel version costs about £20,000.

EAW has expanded its line of JF Series compact enclosures. The new models include the JF260 and JF560, both fitted with 60 degree horn and 50mm compression driver, plus 300mm or 380mm woofer. The manufacturer has also added the JF100i which is said to produce an SPL of 124dB from a 255mm bass driver and a 25 mm compression unit. The larger JF200i is said to produce an SPL of 126dB and uses a 300mm ported LF unit with a 50mm compression driver coupled to an EAW designed wave-guide.


Klark Teknik has launched the DN3600 programmable graphic equaliser which uses a combination of back-lit LCD, dedicated membrane switches for each band and two scrub wheels to alter parameters. There are 66 memory locations and the unit will emulate the popular DN360 and DN27 graphic equalisers. The centre display shows 30 'virtual faders' for each channel. Two notch filters with sweep frequencies plus sweepable HP and LP filters are also fitted.

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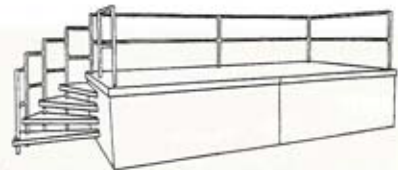
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# A LIGHTER SHADE OF PARLE

Showlight, the colloquium for film, theatre and television lighting people, comes but once in four years. But what a joy when it does. Tony Gottelier reports

For what else would you get such lighting 'greats' as Freddie Young, John Henshall, Francis Reid, Richard Pilbrow and Patrick Woodroffe all together in one room in Bradford? Where else would you find an audience enraptured by the latest digital imaging technology at one moment, but captivated at the next by the simple, beautiful kinetic images created by a gentle man who came from a continent where even simple dimmers are a rarity? Indeed, it was a great credit to the organizers and the reputation of the event that, in the wake of a massive recession, and in the midst of the turmoil in UK television production, that so many delegates attended Showlight '93. Sadly, this was not true for one speaker from 'liberated' Eastern Europe and one from Austria, neither of whom were able to make the trip at the end of the day.

The last time I enjoyed such an inspiring career experience was in the NOB studios in Holland some four years previously at Showlight '89 and sure enough I found the same humbling emotion washing over me in Bradford this time. For Showlight is all about sharing: the sharing of lighting ideas without petty commercial consideration or ego, the sharing of lighting experiences 'sans frontieres' whether geographically or sectionally, the affirmation of a common interest in the past, present and future of all shades of the application of the lighting art.

Nowhere was this more apparent than in the individual reaction of the commercial guys, present to ply their wares in the simple exhibition area. Without exception they were spellbound by the congeniality of it all. One hardened American show person actually collared me in the hotel specifically to tell me, with stars in his eyes, that "it couldn't have been better, I can't wait for the next one!" I know exactly where he was coming from, and I too was glad that I had begged for the assignment.

The word colloquium always raises eyebrows, though nobody should be ashamed of their ignorance - it has been out of common use since long before the first Showlight in the, then, brand new Barbican Centre 12 years ago. The only vestige of the word left in the language today is colloquial (as in c. expression) meaning in 'common speech', which seems a curious twist since its bigger brother certainly



VIP Showlight line-up: Bill Klages, John Watt, and Ken Ackerman (chairman) with Michael Samuelson and Freddie Young (seated).

isn't. Anyway, the other 'c' word used to mean 'an assembly for discussion', which, of course, is spot-on for this occasion. Ideas which aren't exchanged in the formal sessions, are percolated in the bar over coffee or a drink, or in the coach to and from the venues, or at the various socials attached to the event. It is the inherent atmosphere which creates such fertile ground for those seeds to take root and mature. In fact, it's what the Yanks would call a giant 'brainstorming' session, but without the pressure.

This year's event was centred around the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television, which also happens to contain the only Imax cinema in the UK (bit of a surprise that), and more particularly the adjacent Pictureville Cinema which provided the arena, while the Studio of Bradford's famous Alhambra Theatre hosted the sustenance, both liquid and solid, and the 26 exhibition stands. This latter format is also a great leveller which, by keeping to the street market principle, gives everyone an equal shot, while making the viewing a great deal easier for visitors. The

programme also means that exhibitors get to attend the sessions, which has to be a good thing and something for other shows to emulate, perhaps.

Exhibitors are listed at the end of this piece, but for the moment it is sufficient to know that, in an emulation of their better known progenitor, LSD introduced Icon in public for the first time though without emission.

Nevertheless, the schedule was pretty strenuous for the whole three days with very little possibility of pause for thought. If, like me, you travelled up on the Monday morning, by the time you checked into the hotel and got back to the city centre to collect the massive 'telephone directory' delegate's pack, courtesy of Sylvania, the first of the afternoon's five sessions were already underway. This was also pretty breathtaking stuff, worshipping the 75 year long career, and the man, Freddie Young at 91, and eulogized eloquently by Michael Samuelson. Here was a man who had been around since the Silents, revealing a lifetime's anecdotal experiences, many of which parodied the 'simple' tricks he often employed.



An exhibition lunch session at the Alhambra Studio.



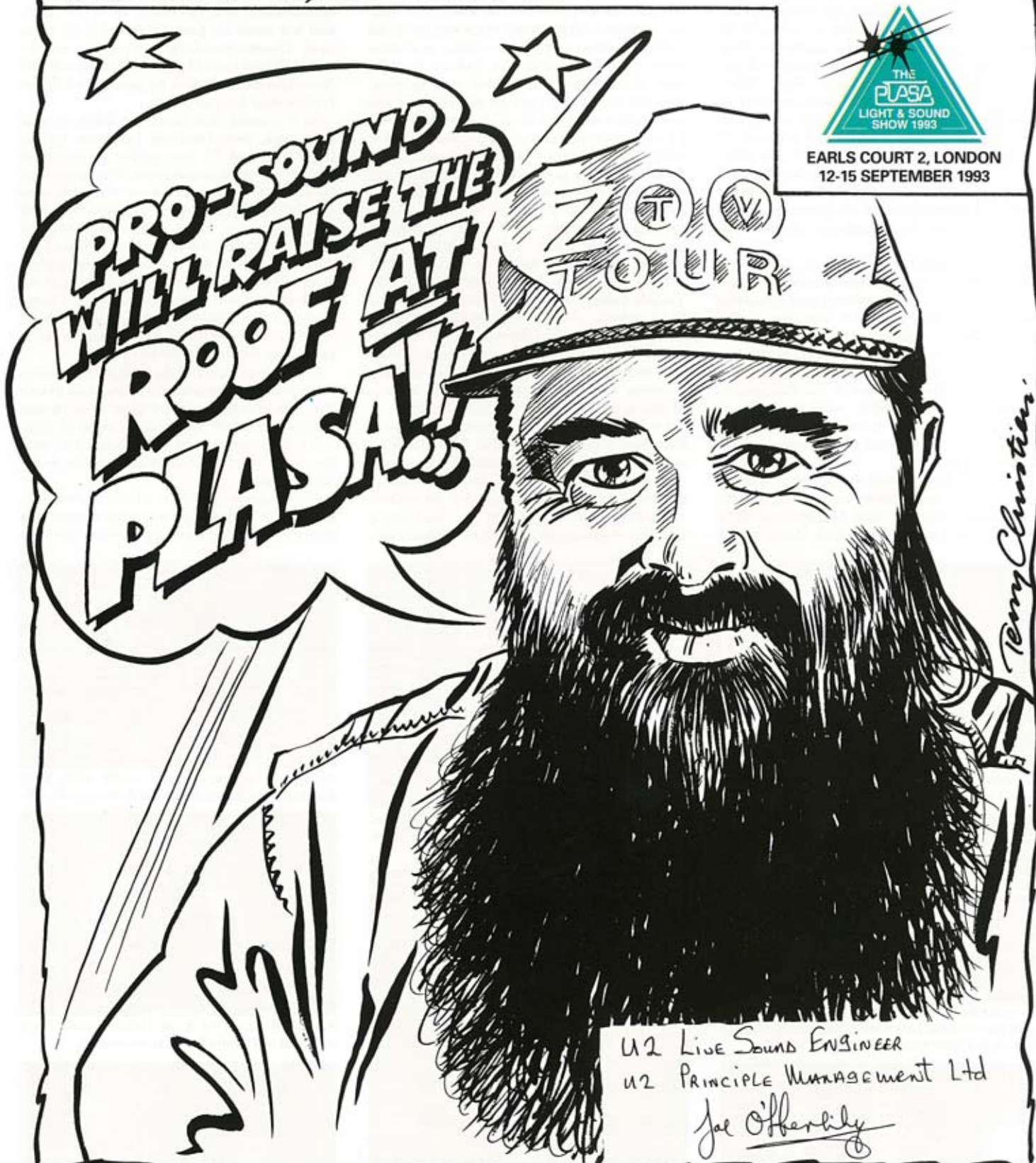
Delegates visit the West Yorkshire Playhouse in Leeds.



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Yet prior to his performance I caught him in deep conversation with John Henshall on the subject of digital video, no doubt fascinated by the laser disc of his great movie 'Lawrence of Arabia' which was in John's possession. For more antics of this living legend read on.

Henshall, in the usual flamboyant style which has made him a sought after speaker at such events, berated us as professionals for our lack of support of the Philips technology which created the laser disc some 25 plus years ago! (Oh yes it was). I blame our rental culture myself, for in other countries, in particular in the US, the video disc has caught on. That aside, we are about to be swamped by a sea change of digital imaging, according to John, and he had Kodak's word (and product) to support that claim. Indeed, by the end of the year domestic players which will transmit all forms of optical disc, music, video and stills, will be in your friendly neighbourhood stores. For those with a serious interest in the subject, John has turned part of his premises into a training centre for all aspects of this new science.

After the brief tea interlude, we were immediately treated to a little gem delivered by Richard Thompson, the lighting manager of the amateur Bingley Little Theatre, who masquerades as a dentist in his spare time! The small company stages eight productions in the adjacent 350 seat Arts Centre and four in their own studio. The audience in the Pictureville Cinema was captivated by what Richard had been able to achieve in restricted space, with an amalgam (sic) of small change and minimal lighting facilities.

If the last item proved that simplest is often best, the next had the delegates gasping with its impressive geometry and breathtaking light moves. Jim Douglas and Neil Darracott of

Unusual Automation (perhaps Awesome Automation would be more appropriate), presented their paper 'Moving moving-lights', which addressed the business of linear tracking of automated luminaires in the theatre or concert venue. Basically an update of the 'Track Event' seminar given at PLASA '91, the pair explained the application of Mechnronics - the integration of mechanical, electronic and computer technology - which provides an engineered approach to automated motion control. Jim and Neil will be writing up their experiences with the Marc Brickman designed Yumi Matsutoya mega show in Japan in a future issue of this magazine, so I don't want to upstage that effort. But to whet your appetite, here are their voice cues for the video of just one number from that show. *1. Yumi steps onto a traveller and is conveyed to centre stage. A Vari\*Lite pod (four luminaires) tracks her overhead. 2. The pods on the down-stage and centre tracks climb up to the top. 3. These pods lower almost to their full extent, to meet up-stage pods rising. 4. The same pods retract, except centre track. 5. This pod descends behind Yumi, she climbs on, and-lifts off. 6. Yumi returns to earth, steps off, and the 'people mover' returns to resume service as a light mover. 7. Note - Telescans tracking throughout.* Our two fearless flyers will no doubt do a better job than I describing their own technology, which is claimed as virtually 'wireless' following the successful application of sliding contacts for both data and power.

For once, the venerable Francis Reid must have had a feeling of 'follow that' when he mounted the stage to ride his latest hobby-horse - the art of diffusion in the theatre. Basically, this was Francis at his best playing the wicked alchemist, stirring the pot and berating a supplier. In this case the luckless Michael Hall,

because, having delivered Half Hamburg, there is now a crying need for Rosco to deliver a Quarter version. The demonstration proved the point that diffused profiles can do a better job as side stage lights than fresnels, and "why spend the extra money?" Francis asked. Various sandwiches (hamburgers?) of assorted frosts and silks were pulled out of the wizard's copious pocket to support his case, culminating in a piece with the centre cut out in a carefully crafted, multi-pointed star shape, which we were assured was calculated on a computer, and not made by pastry cutter. But all to no avail. Quarter Hamburg it has to be, and if I were Michael I would put it on the line with the American parent before he gets buried by the Francis Reid fax campaign.

As if proving that Rosco do listen to their customers, they launched four new gels at Showlight, and 72 new gobos, a mixture of Hersey and their own designs. The colours are three blues, which will amuse the cynic who cracked the one about the '37 blues which all looked the same to him', and a pink. What is interesting is that two of these new colours are aimed directly at the concert lighting market. Neon Pink is a bright, dark pink useful for creating fake neon effects with fluos. Congo Blue is a rich, saturated, 'midnight sky' blue, which, if it's anything like its namesake in the Lee range, will be a good one.

Everyone agreed that the first day's speakers were an inspired and eclectic mix. So off to tour the Alhambra, with its rich and recent redecorations still showing no signs of wear and tear. Actually, in my book, it could do with the patina of age, probably lacking due to the smoking ban.

After 'opening drinks' at the exhibition, courtesy of White Light and from thence to a splendid civic reception at the Town Hall for a



Opening session: Ken Ackerman, Freddie Young, John Henshall and Michael Samuelson.



Derrick Saunders (left) and Ken Sewell (right) of Pulsar with Steve Hawkins of the Guildhall School of Music & Drama.



Showlight organiser John Smith with Ruth Rossington (left) and Sheila Bartholomew of L+SI.



Richard Pilbrow (right) and Tapas Sen (third from right) with Dan Watkins, Lucy Carter, Alan Espley, Amanda Garratt and Gene Jacobs from Central School.



Ken Rickman and Rocyn Williams of SLI (Sylvania).



Adrian Hicks of M & M Lighting with Peter Marshall of Theatre Projects Services.



Ken Ackerman (left) with Bryan Raven and John Anderton of White Light.



Robert Achlimbari of Rosco with Jim Douglas of Unusual Automation.





Richard Pilbrow at the Showlight podium.



John Watt widens his list of friends at the Showlight dinner.

splendid buffet courtesy of Yorkshire TV, and a local pep talk from the Mayor - all to be finished by 21.00 to make room for the IMAX demonstration, sponsored by Optikinetics and M&M Lighting, back at the emulsion Museum. This produced the usual 'oohs' and 'aahs', even from such a hardened audience, which is an indication of the impact of such big screen techniques. The steep rake of the seating brings the audience close to the huge screen, so that the image 'bleeds' to the edge of peripheral vision which, together with excellent acoustic techniques, fools the brain into a strong sense of reality. This is achieved with a film format five times larger than conventional 70mm and a 'rolling loop' projector.

The clip from 'Steel Wheels' was a trailer for Patrick Woodroffe's talk to follow later in the programme. Of course, Patrick had good reason to remember this very location, for it was here that they had to trek, often in the middle of the night, to view the 'rushes' during the Steel Wheels tour, there being nowhere else, other than Futuroscope in France, with the same facilities. The mind boggles at the image of it all.

Day two, and with breakfast barely out of the way, we are straight into Eric Wallis whose lighting work for the BBC is legendary. For one of the senior figures in the field, it was perhaps surprising to find him such a fan of automated luminaires, though, of course, it's the high colour temperature of the HMI source which has really turned his head. He believes that movement is generally overdone in TV, except on programmes like TOTP where wide angles are feasible, but sees the ability to sculpt in light with these devices as part of the integral design, as a great advance. He cited the Vari\*Lite VL5 as a particular leap forward, though he thinks that it has further to go. Like others, Eric closed with an expression of concern regarding the absence of training in the current turbulence surrounding TV production. On which subject, the next speaker from the Netherlands was an expert. Frans Muriloff, lighting director of NOB, has developed, with a colleague, a simple system of stencil overlays for both vertical and



Edward Pagett of Strand Lighting (left), and Michael Hall of Roscolab (right) with lighting designer Tapas Sen of India.

horizontal beam angles based originally on delivering 1500 lux. All set on the standard 1:50 studio plan, this has now been extended for modern CCD cameras, a system which he says has proved invaluable with trainees. Television lighting designer Bill Lee was not a man to be impressed with the power of HMIs, as he demonstrated with a gaggle of equipment - for example a 500W Mizar fresnel will deliver 25 foot candles at 20 feet from the subject. With today's light sensitive cameras this is usually all you need to create the atmosphere in which wax candles, matches and practicals provide a touch of normality, according to Lee. Furthermore, he suggested that there may be a case, in energy and other cost saving terms, for some studios, but obviously not all, to be specifically designed for low light levels, as opposed to all studios being multi-functional. Bill has even been looking at MR16s for studio use!

The rest of the day belonged to John Watt, one way or another, and it started with his introduction of the next three speakers. Alan Birmingham told us how he lit the news studio at Westcountry TV entirely with Videssence, an American made flood employing high frequency fluos. Sold in the UK by Michael Samuelson Lighting, these units are available from 104 to 832W, with colour temperatures from 2700 to 4100K. They operate at a frequency of 33 kHz, offer a life of 10,000 hours, and the in-built dimmers can take the level down to 20% using a system of reverse

pulse-width modulation. Honeycomb screen attachments provide 9060 and 30 deg. dispersion characteristics. Tom Littrell gave us the product promo for the Vari\*Lite VL5, in a performance which will long be remembered, by some, for his use of the phrase 'audience abuse lights', when referring to 'blindners'. He made a strong case for the artistic use of his company's automated luminaires, emphasizing that they should not be looked at simply as 'wiggle lights'. Increased brightness and a wider range of colour tints are the future promise. We were then treated to a very laid-back, but nonetheless fascinating preview of how Asbjorn Hagen from NRK, the Norwegian public service network, plans to light the 1994 Winter Olympics for television. With temperatures sometimes down to minus 20 degs C. and the regional winter darkness, it is probably necessary for him to be a cool customer! However, with the use of the snow as a canvas he plans some spectaculars of his own, quite aside from the excitement on the piste. No doubt rental companies from all over Europe are already forming a queue at Hagen's door for testing starts in earnest this winter.

By now the coaches were revving at the door to whisk delegates, most of whom must have seen the inside of more TV studios than I've had hot soaps, for the tour of the Emmerdale Farm set. From thence to the West Yorkshire Playhouse in Leeds, home of Opera North and, according to the ubiquitous Francis Reid, the 'National Theatre that we failed to build on the South Bank', for a look-see and then onwards to the National Railway Museum in York for the official dinner. This was an astounding location for such an occasion. You could literally hear the collective gasp as each coach-load of delegates arrived at the door. Those massive and ancient dinosaurs of the track laid out in a gleam of bright gloss paint and polished brass - "fair took us breath away!" Now I understand why the prehistoric galleries at the Natural History Museum, and places like the London Dungeon are so successful in the hospitality stakes. After a short interlude playing with Stephenson's 'Rocket', following 'Mallard' and



STLD lighting director stalwarts Eric Wallis and Mike Jefferies.



High level discussion on the Arri (GB) stand.



Stephen Ottewell (left) and André Mussert of Osram.





**L+S's EXCLUSIVE  
PHOTOCALL  
FROM THE  
SHOWLIGHT  
DINNER AT  
THE NATIONAL  
RAILWAY  
MUSEUM, YORK**



Ken Ackerman lists the accolades for a highly successful Showlight 93.



Brian Croft (Vari-Lite Europe), Margaret Riley (Focal Press), Patrick Woodroffe and Ken Sewell (Pulsar).



Derek Gilbert (Glantre), Pat Mackay (Lighting Dimensions), Matthew Tonks (Glantre), Donald Cameron (Ocli) and Michael Finch (Northbrook Theatre). Standing are Jim Douglas (Vari-Lite Europe) and Tom Littrell (Vari-Lite Inc).



Mike Lowe (Teatro), Dave Bertenshaw (Strand Lighting), Denis Irving (Entertech, Australia) and Philip Rose (Showlight exhibition organiser).



John Watt (standing) attempts to keep the peace with John Reville, Claude Walters and Tony Freeman of Central Television.



Bill Lee with Mike Pendrowski and John Johnstone of Q-Light and Martin Christides (Philips) with (standing) David Taylor (Theatre Projects Consultants) and Bridget Anderson and Luigi Bisioli (Cannes Energy).



Ian Lake (Optex), Dave Smith (Light & Sound Design), Brian Fitt (Showlight committee) and Rick Dines (STLD).



A taste of steam for Showlight chairman Ken Ackerman and organiser John Smith in the Great Hall of the National Railway Museum.



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- ▲ Temperature achieved at exchanger - 80 Degree C (-100 Degree F)





the like, we all sat down on platform 9 for tuck.

This, of course, was the moment for John Watt's 15 minutes of fame. In a speech of acerbic wit from end to end, he managed to tdestroy the reputation of almost everybody in the industry, including this journal, without actually offending a living soul. Brilliant stuff! Mind you several people were seen diving for cover under the tables when their letter of the alphabet came up, and Watt was about to set light to the next fuse. During this performance there was one moment of exquisite poignancy as Freddie Young, who had arrived in a wheel chair, launched himself on high so as to get a better angle to snap the speaker. Collectively, again, we all held our breath as he stood on a spare chair for this purpose, wobbled a bit, but then got the shot he had come for, before being persuaded down by a much relieved Daryl Vaughan, who was doing his impression of a safety net from behind. Not one to miss a photo opportunity young Freddie!

A terrific evening and a pat on the back for the sponsors who included Light and Sound Design, Roscolab, Syncrolite and ourselves.

Reveille, the following morning, was given by dear Richard Pilbrow, who had flown in from his home in Connecticut for the purpose. In the 35th year of TP, this was a nostalgic trip down memory lane for the man who is without doubt the father of modern theatre lighting design in the UK. He remembered old friends, some long gone, some recently like Wally Russell and Bill Platt. He reviewed lighting technology in the same vein, but like Eric Wallis two days earlier, he revealed that old pioneers never give up, though they may bare the scars of numerous close shaves. Not only has Richard embarked on two shows with the silent but deadly VL5, the second opening that very night on Broadway (a big revival of Showboat directed by Hal Prince), but he is always looking forward over the edge, as he calls it. He has recently discovered, and fallen in love with, the Macintosh - no, not the Cameron variety, though I am sure he is fond of him also, nor the Burberry - but the computer. Now he is doing lighting designs on-screen, and visualizes a time when the computer will provide a 'virtual theatre lighting' environment from design to performance. Had he stayed beyond the mid-afternoon session, he would have found his vision incarnate, though for the PC.

David Taylor, a current TP protégé, gave us

the commercial for DHA's light curtain currently starring at the Haymarket Theatre. However the apogee for most delegates was to come, with the humble delivery of Tapas Sen, who had come all the way from India to hold us all in thrall with his low-tech lighting techniques. Some of which were vaguely reminiscent of ones' own poor experiments with 'dream screens', and the like, in the late 60s. Yet his were more poetic and far more ingenious in the materials employed. Very striking and very beautiful - light reflecting art, if I may distort the prose. Then, Edward Pagett of Strand gave us another commercial, neatly wrapped in a paper about stage lighting techniques applied to architectural illumination, as traditionally, they certainly were. And as the next speaker, better known as a concert designer, and not forgetting Andrew Bridge, have both lit buildings - he may have a point. Just make sure you use Strand's Premiere system to do it with that's all!

The star of the final session was Patrick Woodroffe, who completed the crossover, started in the exhibition hall, between the disciplines. As we include an interview with Patrick in this same issue, suffice to say that he challenged us with the question: 'Lighting Designer - Artist or Artisan?' Conclusion: if you are porous you are an artist, if you are a soup tureen, you are a craftsman. Or something like that. Patrick's lecture, bravely unsupported by the kilometres of video and visuals which he surely could have produced, nevertheless ran the gamut of the R-n-R experience. The highlight for me was the concession that the rock and roll artist often assumes the role of producer, director, designer and performer. One example quoted was Mick Jagger's pragmatic lighting direction: "bright for the fast numbers, dark for the ballads."

There followed three 'commercials': Ken Sewell and Andy Graves of Pulsar gave us an insight into the features of the new Golden Scan 3, PMX and their Masterpiece controller; Peter Byard of Modelbox gave us a whiff of what lighting design by CAD on Laplight and Autolight would hold for us; then finally LD Carl Dodds gave us the benefit of his experiences operating the PC-based lighting control system, ShowCAD, in a variety of different situations.

And so, there just remained the long goodbyes, until Showlight 97. And where that will be no one knows. Like the Olympic

committee, Ken Ackerman, the chairman, is seeking applications for possible venues, and presumably for the millennium thereafter.

One lasting impression of this year's colloquium: the crossover forecast in '89 seems virtually complete. The disco boys, then absent, were certainly there in plenty in the exhibition area - for the 'waggly mirror' has certainly come in out of the cold. The concert guys were already on the platform, and their combined techniques are seen nightly on our screens and stages. Had the speaker from Austria showed, he would have talked about the Viennese musical production of Freudiana which dipped aggressively into all these pockets including laser.

It shows that we are actually far more receptive to sharing skills than I had imagined four years ago, after the previous Showlight when, bemoaning the lack of crossover into lighting for the performance music industry, I wrote: "I suppose there is still a feeling of the rebellious young turks turning establishment norms on their head, either intimidated by all the learned chat, or simply too impatient to take the time". They will have discovered that, as a group, lighting designers are, without doubt, the most professionally generous people you could ever hope to meet. And this is what is reflected at every Showlight. And it infects us all with its enthusiasm.

#### EXHIBITORS AT SHOWLIGHT 93

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*White Light Ltd*



Brian Fitt with Richard Thompson of Bingley Little Theatre.



Sheila Bartholomew of L+SI with PLASA standards officer George Thompson.



Freddie Young joins the paparazzi with the aid of John Henshall.



Philbeach Events' James Brooks-Ward (left) with Neil Rice of Optikinetics.



Well done that band! Sponsor Daryl Vaughan of Syncrolite thanks the Intercity Band at the dinner.





Michael Samuelson and John Watt.



Strand's Alan Luxford (left) with theatre consultant Steve Friedlander.



PLASA vice-chairman Mike Wood of JEM with Pat Mackay of Lighting Dimensions (USA).



Denis Irving (Entertech), Andy Collier (Strand Lighting) and Richard Pilbrow.



Lighting director Chris Clayton (left) with LD Eric Wallis and Martin Christides (Philips).



Mike Adams, Judy Jones-Vaughan and Daryl Vaughan (right) of Syncrolite with Shad Anwar and Rick Salzedo of Avolites (left).



Francis Reid with Rodney Clarke on the stand of Le Maitre Fireworks.



Jon Reay-Young of DeSisiti Lighting UK and John Farr.



A close-up look at Martin projectors, with Ian Kirby's hand on control.



Myrtle and Robin Victor Rae of Telestage Associates.



Animator and Intellabeam in action with John Adams (Lightfactor) and Andy Stone (Computite).



Ken Sewell of Pulsar with Gayle DeWinter of Vari-Lite Europe and a VL5.



Philip Nye (left) and Nikki Scott of DHA with David Taylor of TP Consultants.



Nick Mobsby of Lighting Systems International with John Farr.



Vari-Lite Europe's Brian Croft with George Howells of Philips Lighting.



Rosco on stand: Mike Hall, Robert Achlimbari and Anna Sassi.



Alison Wheeler of The Creative Organisation with Adrian Brooks of Lite Structures.



L+SI's On Tour scribe Steve Moles (left) with George Ashley-Cound of LSD and the new Icon.



# PROFILE

## Tony Gottelier in conversation with Patrick Woodroffe

I heard Rod Stewart on the BAFTA awards show say that he owed his career to a chance meeting with Long John Baldry on Reading Railway Station. So it seemed rather appropriate that the site chosen to talk to the lighting designer who got his big break via Stewart, and who incidentally lit those awards for television this year, was a railway station platform. Well, I suppose that may be stretching the 'realite' somewhat, as it was under the cover of the National Railway Museum in the walled city of York. The occasion? Showlight '93, at which Patrick Woodroffe was to be a keynote speaker.

I was to discover that Patrick started his lighting career, 20 years ago, literally at the top - as a followspot operator! "It came about because my brother was working for Rikki Farr and Brian Croft at TFA Electrosound, so I used to help them out. And it is true I started out as a followspot operator on a David Cassidy tour." The relationship with Croft of course continues, but more of that later. "I thought this was the life for me. It seemed very glamorous, I could travel the world, smoking dope and getting all the girls."

Later, at the age of 18, he was the third-string lighting man on a Rod Stewart tour, when the star sacked his lighting designer just two days before the tour started. "He looked around the room, and as I was the only lighting man in sight that was it! "If this sounds a bit like a fairy story, the understudy who gets the big break when the star is taken sick, Woodroffe is quick to disabuse any such thought. "Actually it happens all the time, in fact it happened to a friend of mine only the other day. It proves a theory of mine, that the team is only as strong as its weakest member." Nevertheless, I bet the solids hit the fan at that moment. Wasn't he nervous? "Not really, in my arrogance at the time, I suppose I thought I knew it all." This seemed like a good cue to discuss the notorious temperament of a typical rock-n-roll client, but I thought we should catch up with the history first.

The timing was just about perfect for Patrick - after all the shows were relatively small at the time - so his skills were allowed to grow as the venues increased in size, from clubs and theatres, to small sports halls, to arenas and, later, the bigger acts starting to play 80,000-seat stadiums. "This was a market-driven decision by the bands and their management; a night at Wembley Stadium made a lot more sense than four nights at Earls Court. In fact, we found the scale of such venues harder to cope with than the accountants did."

It took some time to realise that here was a positive opportunity to do things never attempted before. According to Woodroffe: "If it is done well, the sense of occasion and communion at a well-produced show, in front of 100,000 people, far outweighs any of the discomforts to the audience, wherever they are in the stadium." He explains that video, pyrotechnics and other SFX have all extended the range and scale of the visual effect, while sound systems have also grown in size and sophistication to fill the void. "I've found that the secret with stadium shows is to paint with very large brush strokes and to make the



Patrick Woodroffe.

dynamics work over a space that is 2 or 300 feet wide, rather than the usual 60 feet of a standard indoor stage." He suggests that a simple colour changer over this large area is far stronger than the most sophisticated lighting system going through its paces in the small area of the stage.

The union with Fisher Park, which was cemented firmly on the Steel Wheels tour, was a big step in the right direction of scale. "Mark Fisher is a brilliant conceptual thinker and a visualizer on the grand scale and I think that we make a great team. In fact, I remember when we started on that particular tour in 1989, the design group was really very small to start with: Mark Fisher, Jonathan Park, myself, Mick Jagger and Charlie Watts. There comes a time, however, when lots of other people get involved and I felt a moment of sadness and loss as we had to give up and then share our creation." Nevertheless, Woodroffe acknowledges that producing these large shows is obviously a massive team effort and that the really successful shows have been the ones where the symbiosis of people has created something far stronger than the sum of its parts.

At one time Woodroffe thought that it would be good to get involved with the equipment on a more direct basis, but he says, fortunately, learned his lesson early on. He had asked LSD to make some HMI specials, thinking that he would own them at the end of a particular tour. "Of course, the bloody tour was cancelled at four days notice and I had egg all over my face."

Now, Woodroffe told me that he is not really into the technology except as a means to an end. "I suppose I am a bit of tart really. I simply go with whatever kit makes sense at the time." He claims that he is not even passionate about Vari\*Lite, although they have been very firmly linked with him, and he admits that they have been instrumental in greatly increasing his range and the geometry of his shows. "It really was a quantum leap for all of us when the Vari\*Lite first appeared 12 years ago: the map was redrawn in a way none of us thought possible. With instant access to such a large palette of colours and textures, the idea of painting with light became a reality."

The only disadvantage he has found is that the Vari\*Lite is so obviously electronic and there are times when this is difficult to square with the mood and simplicity of the music. For this reason he often uses followspots on the stage when they are not strictly necessary. "I like the human quality that they create and I dread the day, which must surely come, of the

remotable followspot which will track a man electronically." Nevertheless, for Woodroffe, it's the organisation that Vari-Lite in the UK provide which sways him most of the time. "Of course, Brian Croft and I go back a long way and he is great, and it's the system of providing dedicated project managers to each job which really does it." But Patrick also works with LSD. In fact he is taking the Icon on the road with Depeche Mode shortly, and he used Golden Scans with Simply Red's summer shows last year. "The guys at LSD are great, especially at quick engineering solutions, and we all get on because we've all come up together. They solved the problem when I wanted to colour eight-lamp Molefays with scrolling colour to create an eight feet square block of light in one go." Patrick had settled for two four feet scrollers, as eight feet wide gel strings were not a possibility, until some bright spark at LSD suggested turning the whole thing through 180 degrees. A matter of lateral thinking, with a vertical solution. "I hadn't seen the wood for the trees," admitted Woodroffe.

Patrick believes that the huge advances in board technology over the past ten years have subtly changed the roll of the lighting designer. His direction and plotting of cues can now be reproduced faithfully every night regardless of whether he is there or not. This not only frees him to do different jobs and widen his experience, it allows him to step back within a production and understand all the elements of the show. For example, Woodroffe likes to experience the lighting on stage with the artiste so that he can 'feel' it. He remembers Tina Turner once telling him in rehearsal, "I'm not getting the energy I need from the lights. I'm not feeling it." Patrick also needs to feel what performers mean when they say things like that. "If there's a big beat and it goes into a key change, and the singer is trying to deliver it and the lights just sit there - it's not good enough. We've all got 'looks' that will get us through a song, the intro, the verse, a look for the chorus and a 'fill' here and there. But there has to be something more."

He misses the lack of spontaneity which has come with all the automation. "We should be interpreting the music in an immediate fashion," he says. He sees the lighting board more as an instrument, and rues the fact that in the bigger staged productions much of the interpretive interaction has gone. Although it may be programmed and the choice of colours and permutations carefully thought out in rehearsal, when it comes to performance Woodroffe still believes that it should be an emotive thing. "The guy who's running the board is following the music and playing it like a synthesizer." Conversely, there are times when a single followspot can be taken from the side, to end a song with just one person in a simple shaft of light, without the ballyhoo and craziness. "You can suck the emotion out of the song," he says.

So while he welcomes all the advances that have taken place, he doesn't like his shows to be technologically driven. "We should always strive to produce new and innovative designs but we must also take on the responsibility to make the equipment work for us rather than against us."

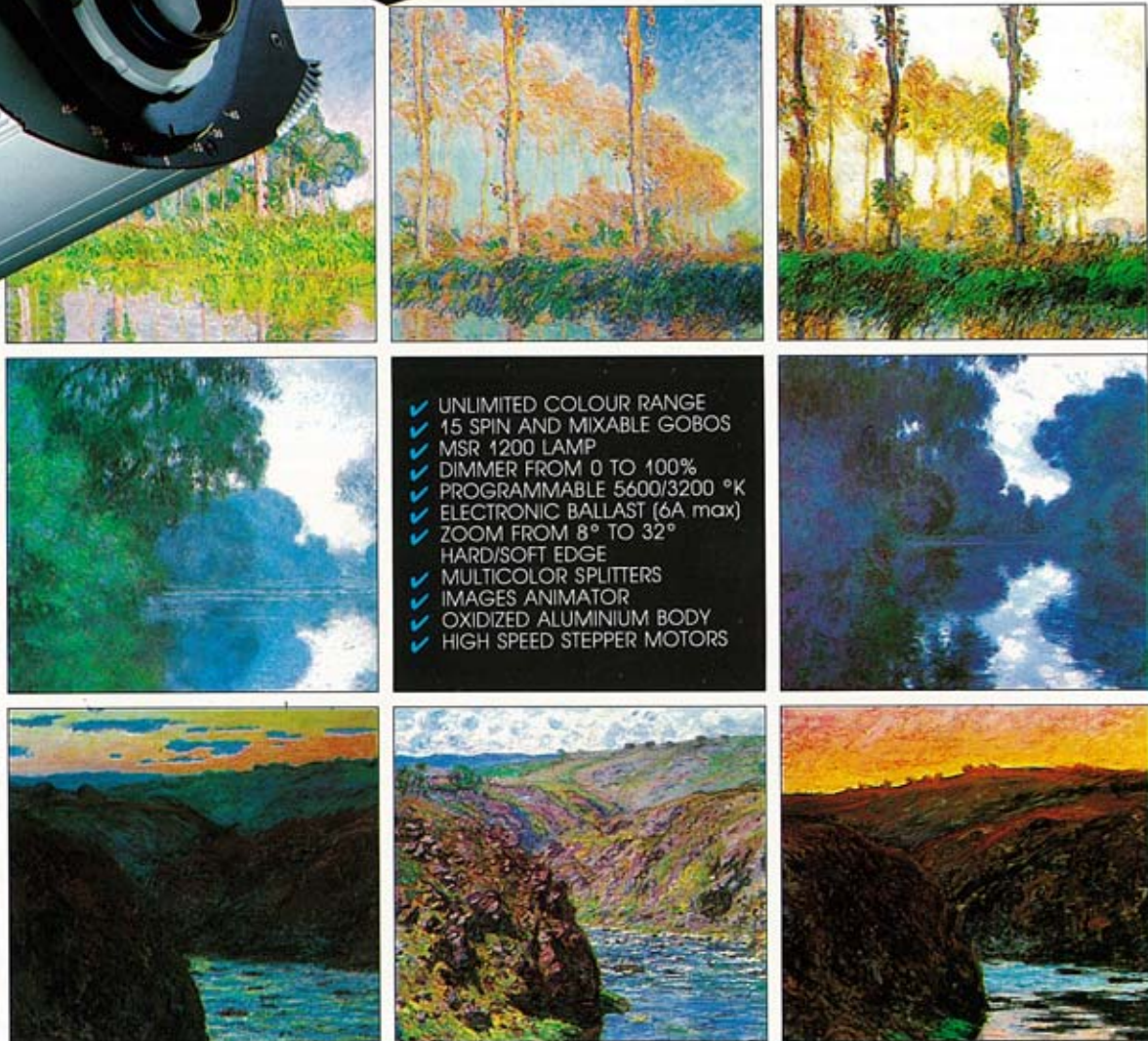
In fact, he told me that he doesn't see himself as a very technical designer. "I use pencil and paper, but I am actually rather lazy and if I get the number of Parcans wrongly spaced, or



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Golden Scan 3 catches the eye at Showlight.



At Showlight again, with Optikinetics' Neil Rice (left) and Dave Thomas.

whatever, so I can't get them all on the truss drawing, I just leave it to others to work out." As he says, this is the joy of working with people like Fisher Park who do a great deal of the practical design themselves, especially when it comes to integrating the lighting with the sets.

He sees the challenge for the lighting designer in choosing the image and style that will dictate the way in which an audience will see an artiste. "In theatre a play is produced by one person, designed by another, stars a third and is directed by a fourth. In rock and roll the artiste often assumes all these rolls at the one time. If he is objective, disciplined, stable and confident then the situation is a healthy one. But often he is not and, although one would ideally like him to have his own interest in the lighting, tempered with respect for one's work and judgement, this is a rare luxury." He points out that the pressures on the artiste at the beginning of a tour are immense. "When I started I would get very defensive in these confrontations because it wouldn't be put in the politest terms."

He realizes now that it is important to understand their motivations. "There are two reasons why they get particularly involved. One is vanity; nobody wants to look ugly. The other is that singers and groups who have written these songs and lived with them for months or even years see them in a certain way. If they're not getting the song interpreted in a way that is right for them, then they'll say something about it." Of course he recognizes that this has a lot to do with the relationship which is developed at the beginning. Once he has won the artiste's trust and shown that he is there to interpret what they are trying to say through their music, he will be pretty much left to get on with it.

"Every artiste is different. Brian Ferry, a marvellous performer and writer, would agonize for hours over a shade of blue and relate his visual ideas to rather obscure Russian painters, or rely entirely on the opinion of his wife Lucy, or a friend. But then, of course, they know him well and understand him both as a person and a performer." He says that Pink Floyd's big concept shows, like *The Wall*, were always meant to be two hour spectacles so there is no focus on the drummer, for example, who might not be particularly flamboyant, or the singer who doesn't race about the stage. He found Rod Stewart more esoteric, in fact the only direction he can remember, in four years, was that the whole stage should turn pink every time the word 'heart' was mentioned in a certain song. Mick Jagger was perhaps the most pragmatic. Before the first show Patrick ever did with the Stones, in Aberdeen in 1982, Jagger delivered this memorable edict: "Bright for the fast numbers, darker for the ballads!"

In fact the Rolling Stones shows are meant to be really staggering and impressive to be sold as a total experience. Yet the focus still has to be with the performer, so there has to be a great relationship between the lighting designer, the set designer and the performer. "The whole thing has to be a complete piece, and I think that is the success of the Rolling Stones tours, because the team has been very strong and we were a very generous team of people towards each other." The end result, he says, was a very complete show with the public coming away saying 'what an extraordinary set', or even 'weren't the band good'.

"You are part of a very large picture, with a lot of technicality involved. It's not like sitting with a paint brush in a studio. You have five people to help you hold the brush, and another three to mix the paints, while two others are there to hand them to you. So you have a team around you, and everybody's observing what you're doing." This is where he says 4:1 Studio comes into its own, as he is able to do a lot of work there, without anyone telling him what to do. "We might have a song that's looking good, but it's a little dead, and you just put in a little ripple chase that runs behind the whole thing. Or you might just repeat three cues, but you find a great way to get from the verse to the chorus and there's a 'fill' - a quick blackout and a spot cue - and then you are back again. Often it's the tiny little things which you have added that suddenly bring it all together."

The team which Woodroffe gathers around him when doing a show is also very important as well. The central person is the lighting director, the person who runs the board and who's going to take the tour out. "He is the key because he has to run the shows, but also because he has to be the one that organizes the lighting crew and deals with the production manager. He has to fight for the things which are important, for followspot positions, or, for example, to hang some black drapes at the back to hide something."

Clearly, he needs to be a confident individual as he has to relate to the group throughout, making sure that they are happy and making adjustments as necessary. Woodroffe acknowledges that the technical crew are very important also. "We have this vulnerable period of programming, ten days or so. You need that support around you," Patrick says. "You also have a responsibility not to do things that involve a lot of work just on a whim - though you must be free to judge that the whim might be particularly successful if it comes off. If you have the right team around you, you just might go with it."

I asked Woodroffe if he took an interest in lighting outside the concert arena. "I find the theatre very appealing. I think it's a kind of childhood thing, the warmth, the magic, the curtains, the velvet seats and the low lights." He has come to find the venues in which he works rather impersonal - vast hockey arenas, big dreary and cold, though the level of comfort on tours has improved enormously.

In fact, though he expressed an interest in doing a lecture tour of the States, he is getting involved more and more in architectural lighting. He did the lighting for the interior of Keith Richard's new house in Miami, which he thought would be fun. "But that was just a favour for a friend, and I lived to regret it when one or two things started to go wrong." With Lighting Technology, he is lighting two new buildings, one in Vienna and another in Rheinberg which he has found a stimulating experience.

More recently he was taken to Dusseldorf with Paul Marantz to look at the 2,000 acre site of a derelict steel mill which is full of twisted, rusting pieces of metal. "Like the set for *Steel Wheels* in real life, an industrial wreck-tech relic," Patrick described it. Some enlightened person has the brilliant idea to turn it into a giant sculpture, a huge and grotesque park.

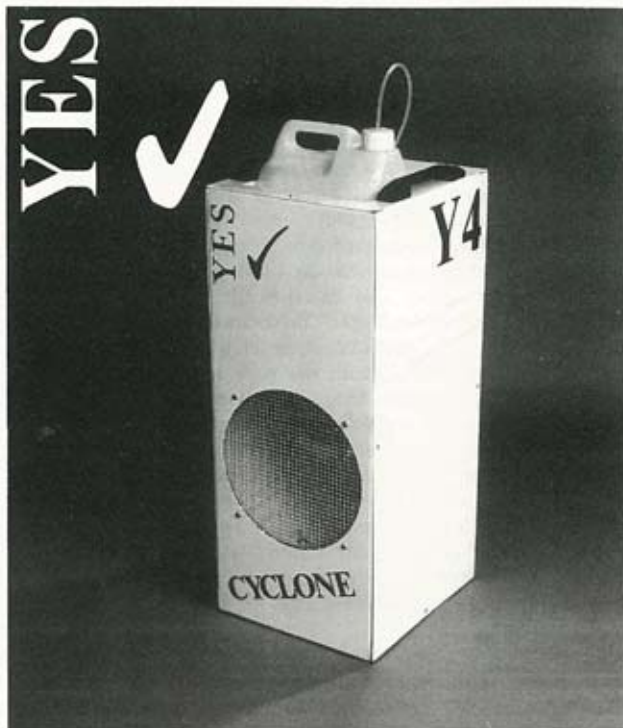
If for one would like to be around to see what Woodroffe makes of that.

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# THE ITALIAN COLLECTION

This is the first of a series of L+SI fact sheets giving information about leading Italian manufactures of entertainment lighting and their products. Successive editions will provide similar information on Clay Paky, Coemar, Griven, Lampo and La Novalite.

## FLY srl

**Director:** Daniele Canuti

**Location:** Mantova, Italy

**Background:** Started in 1978 with only four people, providing electronics for Coemar and remained in their shadow until 1984, when the first FLY - branded products started to appear. At the same time the company set up a similar relationship with Lampo, also based nearby. 1988 saw the release of the first FLY projectors, and a move to new premises in Mantova, which symbolised the final break with the past as sub-contractor to others. This change of location enabled the establishment of a computerized network between the various internal departments to improve efficiency, the installation of four CAD systems in the development department, and the implementation of strict quality control and stress test procedures. The company now employs 21 people and devotes 18% of its turnover to R&D.

In 1989, the same year the company first established a distributor in the UK, sales increased by 80% and as FLY attended other overseas fairs, under the APIAD banner, more and more such arrangements were made in other countries in successive years. In 1991 the Fos range of articulate projectors first came to our attention at the various shows that year. Now, with the Fos models 1, 2, 3 and 4, FLY have a product range well positioned for the concert market and with features which will appeal for television use.

This year Fos demonstrates this flexibility in performance with the Olos controller, by appearing both on the European leg of the Aida opera extravaganza, and French rock star Vanessa Paradis' tour. Add to this a theatre installation in Sweden, an 'industrial' for Fiat, plus four Italian venues which will be incorporating the products, and 1993 looks good for FLY despite the economic situation.

FLY launched a computerized moving truss system at SIB Rimini this year. They also introduced an 'entry level' range of lighting fixtures aimed more squarely at disco and rave scene called Mitos, Nike and Ares, to add to their selection of lower cost scanning projectors and colour changers. FLY also offer a range of dimmers, desks and controllers for a



Daniele Canuti with the enhanced Fos 4 version at SIB Rimini earlier this year.

variety of purposes, and the whole range of products reflects their in-house optical and electronic capabilities. The company holds patents on an optical system for axial gobo spinning, true auto-focus zoom, and a number of other related items.

**Product philosophy:** To be one jump ahead through technological innovation.

**Selected product:** *The Fos range of projectors which offer the following unusual features:* 8A (max) lightweight electronic ballast, MSR 1200W lamp, externally adjustable, remote switching; Modular internal parts; Programmable colours, colour mixing; Linear opto-mechanical 0-100% fader; 7-15 gobos; Programmable strobe; 12 bit res. pan/tilt on rotatable, graduated head, large deflection mirror with 'spill' break; DMX512/own digital data link/analog; Diagnostics and error checking. *Touring options:* Software optimized for Compulite CP40/48; Remote focus adjustment; Multi-coloured glass gobos; 30% increased light output. *Some models offer:* True autofocus zoom from 8-32 deg, hard/soft edge (Fos 2/3); Selectable colour correction between 3200 and 5600 degs K, 15 gobos, gobo overlays (Fos 3/4). Gobo mix, image animator (Fos 3); Iris, frost flood, prisms, axial gobo spin (Fos 4); *Optional features are:* Slide



Fos 2 and the Olos control desk, now with DMX output.



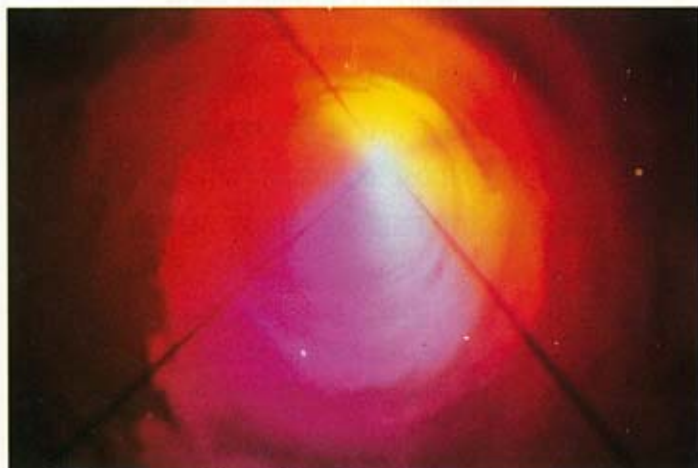
Fos 3 Image Animator in focus.

projection, SFX animation disc (Fos 3/4), fröst disc (Fos 4). Olos control desk (16 + 16 units, 99 programmes), flight case, choice of objective lens, customized gobos, floor stands, and die cast hook clamps (all models).

**Other products:** *Lighting Effects:* Argo\* - 800W halogen, 4 divergent tunnels; Glaux - as Argo but single tunnel; Elfo\* - 500W halogen linear, flat blade; Samas\* - as Elfo but four blades; Ilios\* - 500W halogen, 4 pencil beams; Fobos\* - 500W linear Xenon strobe.

Eos\* - 300W halogen liner, flood; Ares\* - 350-3000W, forward sound animated beams; Nike\* - as Ares, but single emission. Mitos\* range - all the preceding are based on common aluminium extruded body, conforming to ISO 2360-3210 and the electrics to Cenelec HD 21 22.

Hydra - 500W halogen or 575W HMI, fibre optic rotator; Midas - lamps as Hydra, but generates 4 downwards rotating beams with colour and gobo change to sound; Icarus - as Midas but with 360 deg side emission. All three models are based on unusual cone-shaped housing.



Fos 2 and 3 tunnel effect with zoom and colour mix



Fos 1 colour mix.



**Effect Projectors:** **Dream** - 575W HMI articulate projector, pan/tilt, 12 colours, 5 gobos, blackout, optical linear dimmer, iris, strobe, dedicated **Brain** control (up to 32 units). **Raggio** - 250W SN or 575W HMI, articulate projector, pan/tilt, 4 colours, 4 gobos, blackout, dedicated **CP02** desk (up to 8 units, 1000 scenes, joystick), **Raggio Computer** (up to 64 units, 80 programmes, joystick), or **Raggio Controller** (64 units, 3u rack, 8 programmes, joystick). **Raggio 2** - 8 colours, 5 gobos, otherwise as Mk I. **Varicol** - 36V/400W halogen colour-change projector, 16 colours, electronic dimmer. **Varicol 2** - 250W SN or 575W HMI, otherwise as Varicol but electronic shutter. **Ghibli** - 250W SN projector, sound activated pan/tilt, 4 colour change, dedicated **Ghibli Controller** for four banks of up to 20 units. **Split** - 575W HMI chromatic projector, dichroic colours and prism effects, electronic blackout, strobe. **Split 2** - plus pan/tilt, both units controlled by dedicated **Split Controller** for 4 banks of up to 20 units.

**Control Desks and Dimmers (non-specific):** **PMC64** - 64 channel, 32 preset desk, 8 scene masters, 8 flash buttons, 16 non-dims, FLY dimmers only; **LP64** - 64 channel programmer and SFX desk; **EC8** - 8 channel, 2 scene preset desk, crossfade and chase; **TC64** - 8 x 8 channel touch panel; **DC32** - up to 32 channels of non-dims, up to 4 scenes; **ME32/128** - Added 128 memories for EC8, plus 32 channels. **ME64/64** - Added 64 memories for EC8, plus 64 channels; or adds 64 memories to PMC64. All these systems are modular and may be interconnected to build up a complete system. **Master 12** - 12 channel, 2 scene preset desk. **Dimmer 6** - compact, integral 6 channel, 2 scene preset desk with 6 x 1.5kW dimmer channels; **Orchestra** - 4 programmable scenes across 8 channels plus foot switch board; **Light Crescendo** - integral 4 x 2kW controller.

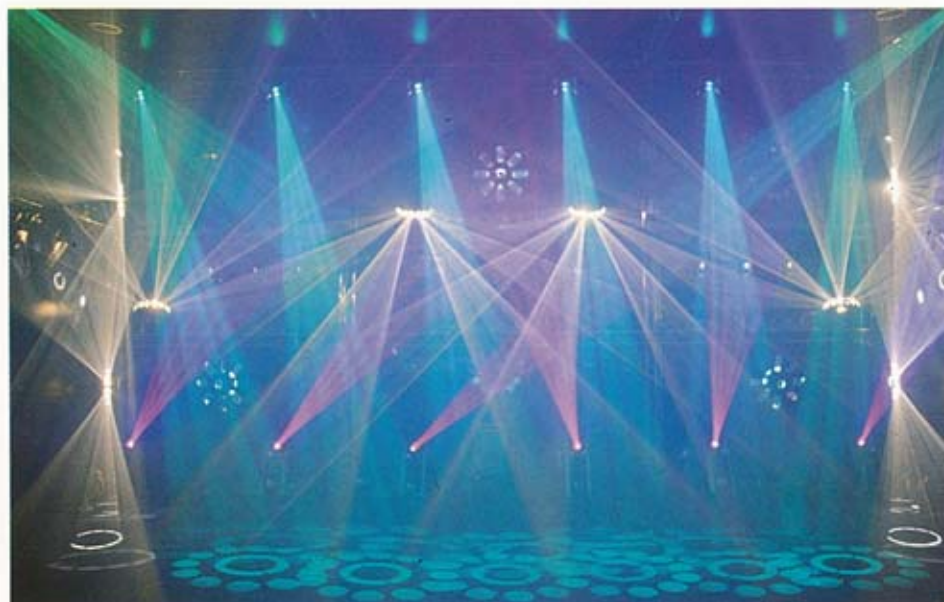
**AD164** - 64 channel demux, FLY digital to standard analog. **DPM8** - 8 x 2kW channel digital (FLY) dimmer pack and electronic patch; **SPM8** - switching version; **DPM16** - 16 x 1kW channel digital (FLY) dimmer pack and electronic patch; **PM12/CEE** - 12 x 2kW, 3ph/1ph, road-cased dimmer.

**Other Items:** **Spark and Spark tube** - 3 channel tubular strobe system and 8 channel programmer; Smoke machine; computerized truss.

\* Designates new product

#### UK Representation:

Nu-Light Systems Ltd.,  
Unit 1, Athertons Quay,  
Warrington, Cheshire WA5 1AH.  
Tel: (0925) 243075  
Fax: (0925) 243077  
Contact: Debbie Clayton



Primoscans with static Skorpions at Rimini earlier this year.



FAL Octopus effect.

## FAL snc

**Directors:** Primo Bertani and Omar Bertani

**Location:** Castel Goffredo, Italy

**Background:** Ten years ago FAL emerged from the now defunct manufacturer of theatre spots Falco, when the original partners split to form two new companies (the other being Lampo). It is no coincidence that there is a clutch of such companies in Castel Goffredo; at some point they can all trace their history back to a single source. Relics of Falco can still be found in this company's product range which spans theatre and disco products.

The company's products are well known in the UK through a long connection with Avitec. This connection led to ex-Avitec in-house

designer Paul Dodd taking charge of the presentation of the FAL light shows at exhibitions.

More recently his influence is also being seen in new product concepts. They are famous for the Italianate use of superlatives in the names of their products, of which the most famous example is Supercleverscan Plus.

**Product philosophy:** FAL make no pretence to be pioneering, rather they set out to make own versions of successful products originated by others, but at 'realistic' prices.

**Selected product:** *Supercleverscan Plus* - Articulate projector with 575W HMI lamp (1200 HMI in Power Scan, which is otherwise identical); 7 colours, interchangeable + clear, 300 RPM rainbow effect; 7 gobos, interchangeable, plus open and blackout (products to include more colours and gobos imminently); strobe, 1 to 7 flashes/sec; 140% pan, 100% tilt, microstepping; DMX512, RS232 or analog; axial fan.

**Other products:** *Lighting Effects:* **Laser Simulator** - 35 beam patterns; **Octopus** - 8 arm centrepiece, single 575W HMI lamp, 8 articulating mirrors and four oscillating effects, triggered from internal mic or analog controller; **Enigma\*** - Centrepiece, single 800W tunnel lamp, 16 colour-changing, chasing beams, from perimeter via fixed mirrors, internal mic; **Twinflower** - 2 animated beams give star or cone shaped coloured beams, 2 x 400W, 36V lamps; **Colourplus\*** - Conical multi-coloured rotating beams, 800W tunnel lamp; **Coloursweep\*** - As Colourplus with

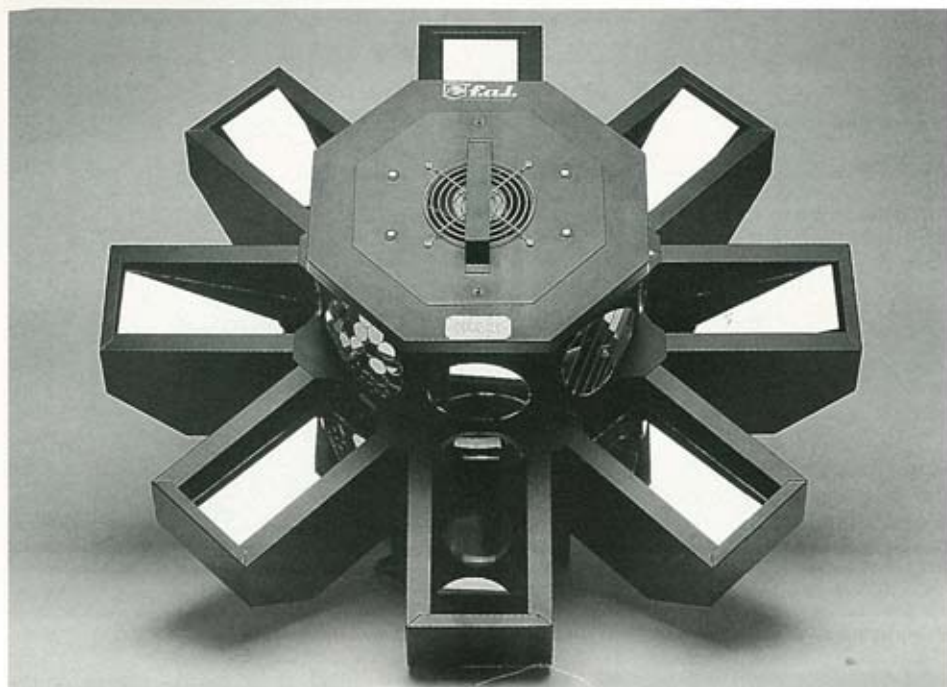


Enigmas in action at the Rimini Show 93.



Multi-tunnel effect.





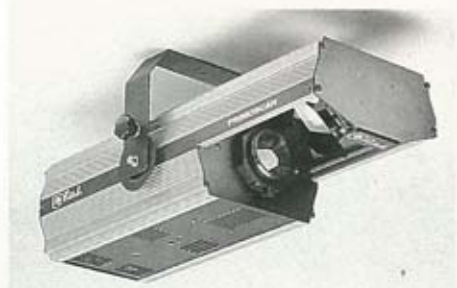
FAL Octopus - launched at Pro Audio & Light Asia 92.

scanning mirror; **Dichrospot\*** - Same lamp, 8 x 4 coloured beams in cone configuration; **Multi-Tunnel\*** - Same lamp, 8 static coloured beams in flat hooped configuration, plus 8 colour-changing, animated beams, internal mic. **Gobo-Twin\*** - Twin ENH 120v/250W lamps, two fixed gobos/colours rotated and scanned.

**Skorpion** - 8 coloured pencil beams in flat hooped configuration from single 400W 36V, or 400W CSI lamp; **Algorithm** - 400W, 36V animated gobo projector, PF505 has five colours; **Wizard** - Beams from two 300W lamps are deflected from an asymmetrically mounted, revolving mirror-faceted carousel; **Alligator** - Flat beam sweep with rotate; **Jolly** - Analog controlled five colour changer + open, with 3 gobos and strobe effect, MBI 150W discharge lamp; **Colour-Changer** - 5 colour, dichroic colour changer, analog control, optional versions: 400W 36v, 1000W 240v.

**Effect Projectors: Power-Scan\*** - 1200W HMI version of Supercleverscan; **Primoscan** - Articulate projector with choice of 300W or 650W halogen, 150W discharge lamp, pan/tilt, 5 colours and gobos, rainbow, strobe, blackout, DMX 512/RS232/analog.

**Spot Lights:** Black or chrome lanterns for Par36, Par46, Par56, Par64; followspots for 250W SN, 575W/1200W HMI, 1000W CSI, 1000W/2000W halogen with semaphore colour changers, some take 4 dichroics, or gels, some take 5 gels; **Orion** - The 5 gel colour changer as an attachment; **Neospot** - A range of theatre luminaires, spots and fresnels from 300-1000W (GY9.5 base) and one at 2000W (GY16 base); **Sagomatori** - Two framing profiles 650W/1000W lamp (GY9.5 base). **Ribalta** - a range of linear flood battens from



Primoscan discharge lamp version utilising Thorn Arcstream MBI-T 150 lamp with 6,000 hour rated life!



Primo Bertani, founder and managing director of FAL.



Colour Plus beam effect.



FAL Multi-tunnel.



The FAL Octopus operates automatically to music, or its programme patterns can be selected by a simple optional controller which can also synchronise multiple units.

single cell, to 6 cell units.

**Controllers: Easy 512\*** - Will control 2, 4 or 6 articulate projectors from 12 pre-programmed sequences, or in real time via a joystick. FAL also make a small number of other controllers, details on which are available from Avitec.

**Other Items: Stella** - Rotating starburst beam sky light from 2000/2500W Xenon lamp; **Blacklight Wood** - 4 Woods glass UV fittings from 20-400W; Smoke machines, bubble machines and mirror balls; stands and pantographs.

\* Designates new product.


#### UK Representation

Avitec Electronics (UK) Ltd  
80-81 Walsworth Road,  
Hitchin,  
Hertfordshire,  
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# ON TOUR

## AND PRODUCTION NEWS

### Suzanne Vega

St. Georges Hall, Bradford

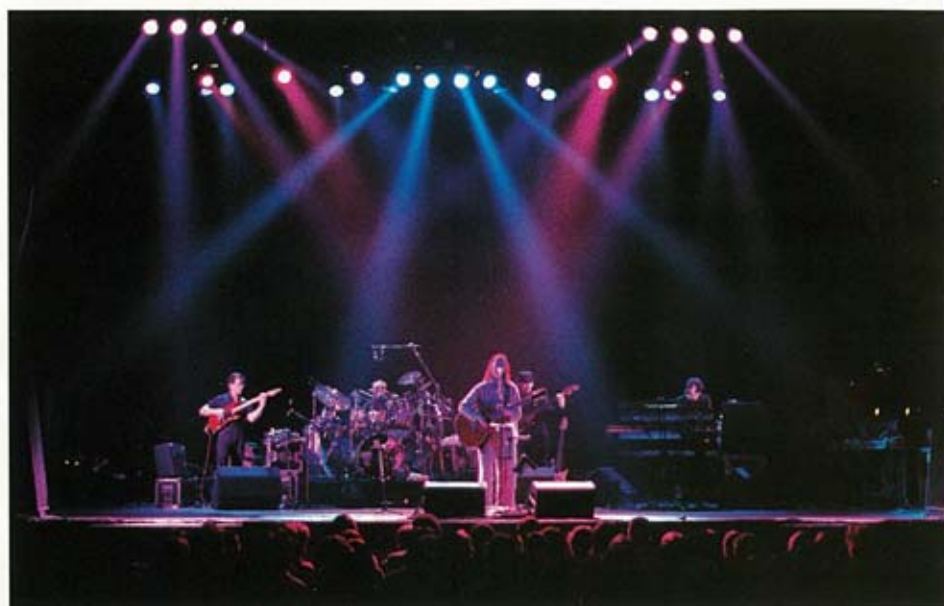
LD: Steve Hall

SD: Geoff Keehn

Friday night's crowd at St. George's Hall for Suzanne Vega was positively ecstatic. As she entered the stage there were 'yee haa's' and 'whoops' from around the hall that would not be out of place in a bar in Texas. For a singer songwriter who has in the past been compared to the likes of Joni Mitchell (though a singing Joan Bakewell would be more appropriate) to receive this enthusiastic greeting was somewhat of a surprise. Tiny and waifish in physical appearance, she is able to command her audience with a mixture of confiding candour (between numbers capturing hearts and imaginations with simple stories of a New York childhood) and strong lyrical images that her audience can easily identify with. She has recently employed the talents of Mitchell Froom (who also produced Los Lobos' recent album 'Kiko') to arrange her songs. Drawing away from the 'small girl plays guitar' image, he has added power and texture to her melodies making them wholly contemporary. With over 70% of the songs culled from her new album '99.9 Degrees Fahrenheit' the response they received indicates approval of this richer musical style.

Steve Hall first designed lights for Suzanne in 1985/6, and for her European tours has done so ever since. In that time he has seen her style change and grow and enjoys the latitude this gives him in his interpretation. On initial examination, the rig, supplied by Supermick Lights, is extremely simple - a 40' Thomas pre-rig back truss fully loaded with Pars also supports outrigger, three 4 lamp bars of ACLs, 11 ellipsoidals and a black back drop. Downstage behind each PA stack is a 20' mini-truss tower with two 6 lamp bars hung vertically on each and another eight ellipsoidals. A scattering of floor Pars and a Patt 750 beam light completes the rig (there are no followspots).

Interestingly, the towers were stood on pre-rig corner blocks adapted to marry to mini-truss. With a base area of only 34" square the towers were remarkably stable only requiring steadying when being climbed for focus. With four front and six rear colour washes and the majority of the ellipsoidals (complete with Colormags) obviously focused on the band positions and Suzanne, presentation would seem quite limited. Fortunately for Steve, the musical mood and tempo changes frequently enabled him to use



A simple rig, loaded with Pars, provides a fitting backdrop for Suzanne Vega.

distinctly different combinations of lights without resort to gratuitous effect. For example, in the opening number, Suzanne is daringly lit at times, by only the Patt 750 on the floor behind her, whilst the band play in a subdued Congo Blue wash. Later in the set the beam light is used again in combination with five Leko 6x22s on the back truss focused on the band. The effect clearly isolates the band members and the use of a very dense steel blue gel (in this case L174) makes a vividly chilling atmosphere. Although for most of the show Suzanne remains at her mike stand and barely uses the stage she does co-operate with Steve in positioning herself precisely when required. During 'Blood Makes Noise' she employs a small mega-phone for dramatic effect, and as she does so, two tightly focused Lekos positioned at head height on the towers are the sole source of light on her, catching just her face. It is a striking image that could easily be lost by lack of concentration and a half step backwards and says a great deal about a performer and designer who both work hard together, for the benefit of the audience.

Geoff Keehn started work as a studio engineer in New York in 1983 and although he's been mixing 'front of house' for the past five years now, he still enjoys studio work and manages to divide his time between the two environments. Although technically he finds little of mutual benefit

between the two disciplines - "live work forces compromises, whereas the studio allows no such thing" - he does believe the difference in their demands keeps him mentally agile.

For this tour he is using an EAW (Eastern Acoustic Works) 850 system supplied by Cane Green of London. A processor-based system, it differs from the Meyer system is not employing a floating cross-over for the upper bands. Geoff feels this gives a clearer high end, good for Suzanne's vocals, though when pushed on the subject he qualified this by saying there is actually little to differentiate between the two and his decision is more a matter of personal preference based upon what makes him feel most comfortable. Amplification is by Crest Audio 8000, the front of house console is a Yamaha PM4000 whilst monitors are mixed on a Ramsa WS 840 and there are 16 three-way top cabinets and eight subs (with the high-mids split 50/50 between flown and stacked). Geoff also accommodated those less well placed members of the audience at the front of the middle balcony with a Meyer UPA wedge atop the floor stack - a nice touch I thought.

The band are loud and robust in their playing, as suits the music and Suzanne has a soft, rather gentle voice. With lyrics being such an important part of the songs it must have been no easy task to blend the two as well as Geoff did. Likewise when she sang unaccompanied, just her and guitar, the intimacy of the ballads was retained. I still find it remarkable how the clarity of these processor PAs can fool the ear into believing the level is low. For example, the song 'Luca', (a plaintive ballad which most people will remember as a hit from 1991) was preceded by the aforementioned 'Blood Makes Noise', a hard and jagged song with intrusive vocals and the band playing full on. Despite this, 'Luca' afterwards sounded neither too quiet by comparison nor too loud for what is a very gentle song.

The audience, partisan and committed throughout the night, only faltered once when she sang a cappella 'Tom's diner' and they failed (with notable exception of one brave man) to join in the Do dah chorus, showing there are limits, even to their unabashedness. However, the show was presented and received with equal ardour. Even Suzanne's brief appeal to support Amnesty International was considered, and detracted nothing from the enjoyment of the evening.

Steve Moles



Suzanne Vega: performer and designer work closely together.



## Classical Spectacular National Indoor Arena LD: Durham Marenghi

'The Classical Spectacular' shows have always featured lighting to a large extent and, from lighting designer Durham Marenghi's original design of 400 Pars and 16 VL1s the rig has grown into a wholly Vari\*Lite rig.

The system at present comprises 31 VL4s which illuminate the orchestra, 63 VL5s with clear lenses which light the choir and the military bands, or provide beam effects when these sections are silent, and 24 VL2s and 2Bs for gobo washes and specials.

There are some 300 lighting cues in the performance, which features 16 classical favourites, and the latest show incorporates lasers from Definitive Laser into five of these pieces. Because the layout of the orchestra is long and low when viewed from arenas, the look of the show has always relied on the lighting rig and its associated truss structure.

Many different formats have been used in the past, but the latest of Marenghi's shapes is the strangest of all. The 'Chinese Puzzle' design has one box section flown through another, in a seemingly impossible 'Esher' design, and takes on completely different looks as you move around the seating in the arena.

Again, due to the long, low staging much use is made of beam effects and the VL5s can be surprisingly strong in this respect. In fact they often wipe-out the aerial beams of the 2Bs. To help the beamwork, three cracked oil machines were used, all fan assisted, with two at the stage end, and a further unit at the mixer, specifically to stop the laser effects from fading at the far end of the hall. Lincoln Parkhouse provides the pyrotechnic effects for the 1812 overture, with members of the Sealed Knot Society who let off all sorts of ordnance which frightens the hell out of the children.

Durham and John Sinden, the Vari\*Lite programmer, were given a free reign by the management of the show and Bob Jolley of Raymond Gubbay, who's not frightened of taking



Durham Marenghi's 'Chinese Puzzle' design for Classical Spectacular.

photo: Phil Dent

things a little further each time, whilst still managing to get 93% of the seats sold. The audience seem to love these shows and often mob the mixer with questions about the new lights: 'Where's the gel? Do they move on their own? etc. Lord knows what they were expecting to see, whilst they listen to 'Bolero' and the 'Blue Danube' but it was obviously a surprise. 'Heavy Metal meets Mozart', 'Rave on Ravel', or as the sound crew have it 'a train crash', have all been used to describe the show. So if you fancy a fun night out with your Granny and your kids, 12 more shows are happening around the country over the Summer and Autumn. But remember your Ray-Bans!

### Classical Spectacular

Producer: Raymond Gubbay  
Director: Robert Jolley  
Lighting design: Durham Marenghi  
Lighting equipment: Vari\*Lite Europe

Vari\*Lite operator: John Sinden  
Vari\*Lite crew chief: John Winn  
Rigging: Light and Sound Design  
Pyrotechnics: Lincoln Parkhouse  
Sound: Wigwam  
Production manager: Steve Nolan (Chromatic)  
Lasers: Definitive Laser

### Equipment:

31 x Vari\*Lite VL4  
63 x Vari\*Lite VL5  
8 x Vari\*Lite VL2B  
16 x Vari\*Lite VL2  
12 x Par 64s  
2 x LSD Strobeblowers  
3 x LSD cracked oil machines  
1 x Avolites dimmer rack  
2 x SuperTrouper followspots  
1 x 25W Argon laser  
2 x Remote fibre optic laser heads  
40 x 2.4m LSD box truss

## Metallica Sydney LD: John Broderick

John Broderick, lighting designer for Metallica, tries his best to avoid being interviewed as he feels most people don't come across well in articles. However, with a little persuasion, he relented to my interrogation. John has been in the business for many years, starting out as an electrician and becoming a lighting designer in the early seventies.

"In 1973 it was easy to walk into a lighting designer's job just by being on the crew," he told me. "As a result, I became Aerosmith's LD and I was with them for almost 10 years. Since then I've worked with The Scorpions, Tom Waitts, Roberta Flack, Ozzy Osbourne, New Edition, Joan Jett, The Cult, Pat Metheny, Taylor Dane, The Village People and, as they say, others too numerous to mention. I really can't remember them all. I also do fashion shows, industrials, and ethnic music when I'm home in New York. I recently did three weeks at the Tropicana Nightclub Review from Havana. Cuba which is great because you learn to appreciate different types of music."

When the Metallica 'Nowhere To Roam' tour finishes in July '93, it will have been on the road for two solid years with very few breaks. The band will play before an estimated 39,000 people at Milton Keynes in May and it will be their third trip to Europe on this tour. The first time was for 'Monsters of Rock' at Donington in 1991 with AC/DC headlining. John also acted as video director for AC/DC on that occasion. Metallica

returned to Europe to perform 35 sold-out arena shows with a diamond-shaped stage and snake pit.

"I'm feeling a little worn," laughed John. "But what's another four months after 20. I look at it in terms of 16 weeks although the next 16 are going to be rougher than normal; we've had our easy run." The 'rough' 16 weeks will take in Jakarta, Singapore, Bangkok, Manila, Venezuela, Argentina, Puerto Rico, Budapest, Athens, Tel Aviv and Istanbul. The lighting rig will be the same as the one used in Australia which was a scaled down version of three trusses. The restrictive factors were, as usual, finance, scheduling, air freight and set constraints.

"It was the travelling and set-up aspect that kept the rig slim, rather than concern about the companies being used," said John. "Most companies around the world are very competent, their crews are very competent and they deal with many different shows, so they have to be efficient. On this six week period we're using 13 different lighting companies, which is a lot of work. You have to advance every one of those lighting companies, interface all the things like moving lights, colour changers, audience lights, consoles, spot lights and intercoms in every country, and at different voltages, as well as organise the stadium tour. But, as we say, it's better than working for a living!"

The recent American league of the tour was particularly gruelling with the band playing five cities a week. John admits to always wearing his ear plugs and has done so since the days of Aerosmith and Ted Nugent. "It has to be done," he stated. "People who don't will regret it when they get to 50."

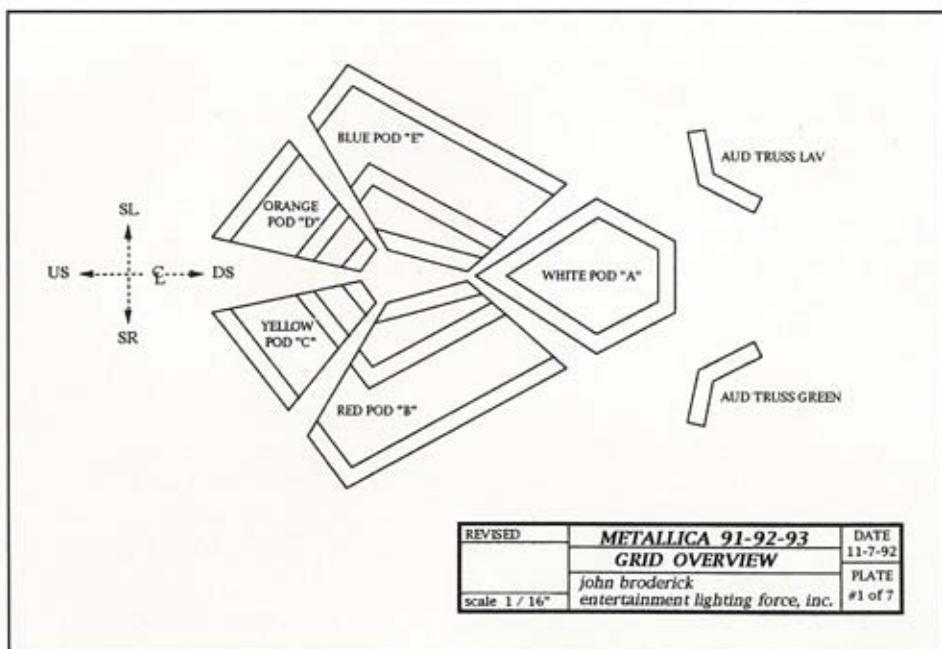
On the American and last European tour, the show was played in the round with the stage at one end in the shape of a flattened diamond. The interior of the diamond became the 'snake pit' and held about 100 fans. The result was a 360 degree show with part of the audience in the middle of the stage. No band gear was on the stage and sound was piped through the monitors. This left a large open space and the show was videoed in every direction with everyone able to see a screen.

"We were very careful about that," said John. "We wanted everyone to be able to see facial expressions, guitar fingering or interaction between the band members when they goofed around with each other on the stage. I tried to design the lighting so that any audience member, in any seat, had a unique view of the stage and the performers. I've never been a fan of the front dead centre look. It's very easy to bring a band member or manager to the console and say isn't that nice. If you can bring them to the high seats at the back or side, to the low seats at the side or onto the floor and say you can see band members from any position, then it's well designed in terms of what the audience is there to see."

"There was no backdrop of course because it was 360 degrees so for the people on the floor, the lighting grid which has stretched scrims in it was a background for the band as they looked up; for the audience above the lit stage surfaces, the grille lights under the stage were the background for the band; people with a straight shot from the medium level seats had audience opposite them. Nowhere was there a black void behind anyone."

"A proscenium stage has a lesser dimension, a false dimension. It's closed off and forces people into a front, dead centre look and the fewest





number of people are on that dead centre axis. The truss shape for Metallica echoed the diamond-shaped stage except that more fabric stretched over large spaces. It was 90ft by 90ft so that any area of the stage had its own lighting design and its own lighting section so it had back light, top light and front light. I also had floor lights so I could create silhouettes and low side lighting which was good for the video shots.

Despite a certain reticence when it comes to Vari\*Lite's John will be using them on the upcoming stadium tour of Europe including the Milton Keynes gig. "I'm using Vari\*Lite's, but I will be shooting them into mirrors," explained John. "I have them hooked onto mirrors because that's the only thing outdoors that will give me the intensity that I need. I'm still pretty much a Par and Molelight person with colour changers. With the Molelights I can wash large areas of the stage or the air. I like the air a lot although I don't like smoke as an effect, I like it as atmosphere and just a tad thin. I don't like to obscure the view of the performer from the audience."

John insists on an Avolites control desk because he admits to pounding the board quite heavily during the three hour shows. "Not only does Avo have the best combination of features to run the show, it can also take that pounding," said John. "I had the same board for 250 shows and had relatively few problems. There are other boards that are quite good in a lot of their features, in terms of modifying programmes during day or setting up scenes, but in terms of the actual operation of the show they're not as good. So I'll go through a little more work in programming and modification so that the show is better."

The European stadium shows will be similar to the Guns & Roses/Metallica stadium tour which was held last summer through the USA. The main feature will be the several large mirrors above the stages as mentioned earlier. There will be very few Pars but about 100 Molelights with colour changers on them. The stage area will be 250ft wide and 70ft deep with the main playing area being 85ft wide. Equipment will be supplied by Light & Sound Design of Birmingham.

"I conduct the focusing by moving the trusses to where I want them so I get a lot of punch, good air wash, strong light and expanse of view out of these units," John explained. "The mirrors I can light as colours, I can bounce beams off, they can act as set pieces or I can get reflective video shots into them and back down on to the stage for the screens which is good for the far seats. I also designed a Molelight truss which is 8ft of truss with two Molelights complete with fan units and colour changers. You just roll the thing in, bolt as many together as you want, hook two motors on and a cable, and take it up. You don't have to build the Molelight in every day as it's all self contained. We

have what we call the 'skull scrim' that cover the PA towers and I have a couple of backdrops just to get more depth.

"Although I describe myself as a traditional lighting designer, I think it's a great thing to have so many instruments on the market. Now that computers are used for artwork, does that make paint obsolete? It's how something is used that makes it good. If somebody takes a Vari\*Lite and all they can do with it in every song is swing it around the audience wildly, then why bother? If you use it as an instrument to get a particular look, colour, atmosphere or quality at any given time, depending on what you're lighting, just as you would use a musical instrument to get a particular sound, then it's worthwhile.

"It has to come from the music first and foremost if you're lighting a concert. You have to know that music and know what the audience is hearing when they listen to it. If that's the particular tool that you think expresses that lighting-wise then that's what you use.

"The potential for conflict between Phil Ealy and myself on the Guns & Roses/Metallica tour was huge. Two complete lighting systems, two bands who had the potential to go for each others throats, a 15 man lighting crew, 35 trucks and two lighting designers, both with full co-headlining status. Phil has his own individual style. He takes his music and lights it totally differently to me, but he lights it brilliantly. I really enjoyed working with him and I learnt a lot, and I believe he did too. You can take a lighting instrument and give it to two people and they'll come up with two very different approaches. Modern lighting instruments are just that - instruments that you use to get an effect. But you must not let them use you."

John admits that he usually has to be dragged kicking and screaming to see a show, especially if he's in the process of designing a show himself. He acknowledges that he's too easily influenced and would rather come up with the ideas first and then go see somebody else's show.

**Catriona Forcer**



**LD John Broderick.**

## Elkie Brooks

### Barbican Theatre, York

#### LD: Ian Cameron

#### SD: Trevor Jordan

The Barbican Theatre in York is a modern late 1980's design, sightlines are good, the seating is comfortable, the stage is a good size and with no proscenium, has the potential for intimacy. It also has all the charm and warmth of a library. Even when all the 1,500 audience is in and chattering away the atmosphere is reverential. Not surprising you might think with Elkie Brooks' audience of largely middle-aged, middle-class fans, most of whom have remained loyal since the start of her solo career and some (like me) who still cherish fond memories of her fronting Vinegar Joe. Predictably enough, the first half of her set was a celebration of her greatest hits which produced a warm enthusiastic response, yet hardly raised the roof. However, after the intermission things changed; whether this is typical of her shows in the past I don't know.

The stage was simply dressed, front and rear 40' trusses, a mid span of 60' with the last 10 feet of the off stage ends cranked downstage 30 degrees, and all bordered in black. The PA, designed and built by Trevor Jordan (Elkie's sound engineer), physically resembles Meyer or Showco cabinets being tall and narrow with a taper to the rear, and with only three cabinets per side looked tiny on this wide open stage. The only riser was centre stage for the drummer, the other three members of the band playing in a semi-circle around Elkie. To the rear the stage was finished with a white cyc with black legs. Unusually the bottom edge of the cyc was concealed from the audience by a row of Turbo Festival System sub-base cabinets which were arrayed either side of the drum riser at stage level - an effective mask, they also neatly defined the back limit of the playing area.

Trevor's PA, remarkable for its size, was likewise deceptively powerful. For a cabinet only five feet tall and approximately two feet wide a lot is packed inside. Top and bottom are two front mounted 15" Gauss speakers with a third horn loaded in the middle. Also crammed into this centre section are six JBL drivers, a mixture of 2482s and 41s. Not surprisingly the cabinets are very heavy. Having first built the system in '81 Trevor admits the time has come to revamp the contents of the cabinets with more contemporary and lighter components. Powered by C-Audio amps provided by Starhire (who also supply the sub-base units and the PA crew), Trevor finds this combination powerful enough even for arenas. Trevor mixes the front of house sound and foldback/monitors on a Soundcraft 8000. He is helped in this by a band who use a modest amount of backline amplification; the keyboard player, having non whatsoever, relies only on his monitor.

Although a little apprehensive of the quality of the room (last time here Trevor mixed to a less than full house and the flat walled upper reaches of the auditorium tended to bounce things around) the sound remained clear throughout the night, if somewhat weighted in Elkie's favour. She has a unique voice with a soft rasping burr that makes it highly distinguishable. In the second set Trevor was able to let her voice assume its natural position alongside the mainly acoustic instruments used by the band.

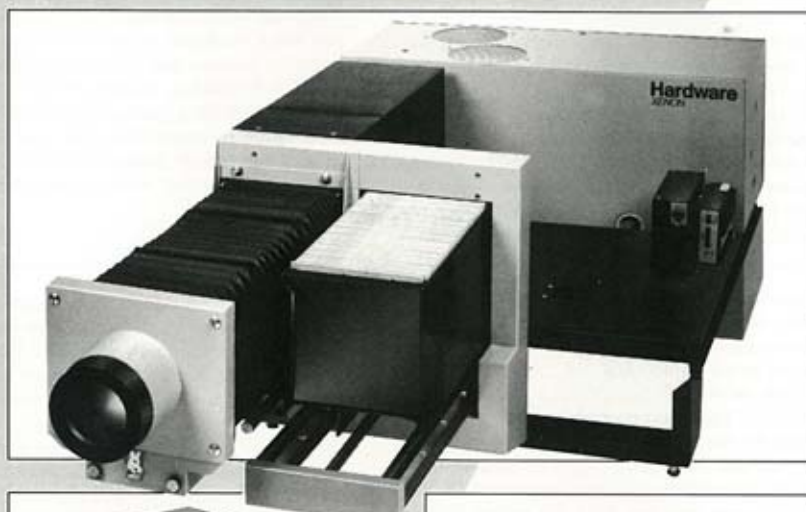
It was this second set that determined Ian Cameron's lighting design. With most of the songs being drawn from the repertoires of Ray Charles, Billie Halliday and the like, it was necessary for him to create a complete change of atmosphere halfway through the evening. For the opening 'greatest hits' section, great use was made of the cyc not only as a wall of colour but also for drama, often throwing the drummer's shadow to fill the screen with the use of a couple of well placed floor Pars. Despite the cyc being 40' wide, Ian lit it with the bare minimum: just a couple of shortnose Pars



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Ian Cameron's lighting design for Elkie Brooks.

with number five bulbs and Rainbow scrollers fitted, placed either side of stage. He also focused the entire back row of Pars on the rear truss straight down, casting vertical slashes of light in three separate wash colours. Apart from the cyc, the lighting was very conventional for the first half - back wash, top keylight and ellipsoidals (also with Rainbows fitted) on featured musicians, as well as a couple of Explorer followspots on Elkie.

For the second half a black sharks tooth was let in from the mid truss more than halving the stage size. A logo featuring the name of her latest album was also hung from the same truss. Once houselights were down and the old Genie X fogger had wheezed out a few puffs of smoke, the stage took on a distinctly clubby appearance evocative of the 1940s. The band re-emerged in black DJs, Elkie in a slinky off-the-shoulder, slit-to-the-waist,

black velvet evening dress followed. With barely half a dozen lamps lighting the stage at any one time, it was noticeable how quickly the informality of what was before them relaxed the audience and a more heartfelt applause ensued.

Carl Burnett ran the lights from a 90-way Celco Series II (Ian Cameron was leaving the tour that day to take up his role as production manager for the forthcoming tour by the Choirboys). Although Carl claimed to feel more at ease with the new Avo Diamond he seemed very relaxed and only jumped a couple of 'on the bump' cues during the early numbers, easily forgivable for his first night.

It is a brave performer who cuts their ties with the past, but certainly the time has come for Elkie. The first half of the show was a wasted opportunity - if people want to listen to her old hits I'm sure they will be quite content to do so on their home hi-fi. What had everybody chattering in the car park afterwards, as they waited for the jam to clear, was the thrill of those great classics like 'Hard Times', 'Spring Time' and even the splendid new arrangement she did of 'Pearl's a Singer'. Over the years she has grown into this role; now is the time to find the courage to recognize her audience has grown with her.

On the subject of the Cliffs Pavilion, Southend, the stage manager (who hails from across the Atlantic) insisted that the tour rigger re-hang his one ton Verlindes, moving them from 3,000Kg beams to 5,000Kg beams. Whilst safety is always of paramount importance this type of 'belt and braces' approach should be left to the small minded 'jobsworths' who initiated the practice in a previous era.

Steve Moles

## Hothouse Flowers State Theatre, Sydney

LD: Terry Power  
SD: Norman Verso

Both lighting designer Terry Power and sound engineer Norman Verso have been with The Hothouse Flowers for the past six years. This is the third tour of Australia by the group, the second was when they opened for Dire Straits in 1991. The tour itinerary is tight with the band playing up to five days in a row with other days given over to travel. The Australian shows on this tour are the first of a world tour which travels on to Europe for 10 weeks, followed by festival dates, including Glastonbury and Roskilde during the summer.

Dublin-born sound designer Norman Verso is using a PA system on hire from Jands comprising of S4 speaker enclosures, configured according to the individual venues. At the State Theatre there were 12 boxes - three either side of the stage and three flown either side of the balconies. Control is a Soundcraft Europa 40 channel desk and Norman also employs a Lexicon 224X, Yamaha Rev/5, two Yamaha SPX1000s and Roland SDE3000, together with BSS402 compressors.

"I'm not using any gates outboard because there are noise gates built into the desk," Norman told me. "I haven't used this desk before. Normally I use TAC boards, preferably a TAC SR9000 or SR6000 and I'll be using a SR6000 throughout Europe provided by Birmingham-based hire company SSE. They have ElectroVoice MT2 and MT4 speaker enclosures so we'll be using the MT2s in smaller venues and the MT4s in larger ones."

"Sound for The Hothouse Flowers is very simple. Everything is played live, there are no samples used of any sort and there is no electronic music. It's all natural sound from either acoustic or electric instruments, so there are no midis or triggers." In London the band will be playing the notoriously difficult Royal Albert Hall and, even more tricky, the show will be in the round. As a result the PA will be hung in a central cluster over the stage which, hopefully, will cover the whole area.

Like Norman Verso, lighting designer Terry Power also comes from Dublin, a city once renowned for its live music scene. "There are now a lot of small bands, but not many larger ones because when U2 got popular all the record companies signed up every band they could find looking for the next U2," explained Terry. "When they realised they didn't have it, they dropped them all. About five years ago there were 12 or 13 bands touring and that kept the whole industry going. When the record companies dropped them, they couldn't afford to pay people and the industry died."

The lighting rig used at The State Theatre will remain more or less the same throughout the world tour although Terry usually has 23 colour changers on Molefays which were not in use at the State Theatre. Also planned, but not available on the Australian shows, are five white cycs which Terry hopes to use wherever he can to create a completely white stage, to which will be added white monitors, white piano, white drumkit etc. "It's been done before but it's usually done by 'Vegas' stars like Barry Manilow and Liberace," said Terry. "Everyone uses black as it's easy and hides everything. With white it's going to prove difficult to hide the black bits! We're buying rolls and rolls of muslin to cover everything. Most of the shows we're doing in Europe are theatre shows with balconies, so a lot of the audience are looking

down on the stage which should look quite pretty. With the lighting I can't go for any severe effects because everything reflects - so it's big colours."

Fortunately, before the tour starts in Germany, there are a two days production rehearsals to see if it actually works - if not it's back to black. For the bigger shows Terry will also be using 16 VL5s, eight VL2Bs (to be operated by Mick Owens) and a couple of projectors, with the hire company in Europe being Samuelsons. "Another reason for using white is that the whole theme of the tour is rain and water. We will be able to project rain, water and the sea onto the white. The intro tape is of lashing rain because the album is called 'Song in the Rain'. At the Albert Hall we'll have a white circle and project down onto it which, in theory, should look good. We were going to use words but I don't think anybody will do that for some time because of their use on the U2 Zoo TV tour. It's a pity because it's a nice idea and a good way to get a message across. Playing in the round you do lose that extra dimension and by using white you lose all your dimensions because everything reflects and becomes a big ball of colour. You can do subtle things, but because it's all white, it's difficult to get mood."

The rig at the State comprised 90 Pars, six ellipsoidals, 17 Molefays (most of which had aircraft bulbs rather than flood), a cracked oil machine and two followspots. The control desk is a Jands Instinct 60-way although Terry normally uses an Avo QM. "It's quite a simple rig because the music is more important than the show, which a lot of people have forgotten these days," said Terry.

Catriona Forcer



Liam O'Maonlai, lead singer with the Hothouse Flowers.

### PRODUCTION NEWS

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# NEW LAMPS FOR OLD?

It's been two long years of change at Sylvania, but the famous brand name now looks set for a long run. John Offord reports from Tienen in Belgium

The recent split-off and buy-out, largely management-inspired, of lamp manufacturers Sylvania from the giant GTE conglomerate (reported in our news pages in January), saw the North American business going to Siemens' Osram subsidiary whilst the rest of the operation, centred largely in Europe, has produced the new independent company SLI or Sylvania Lighting International. This sell-off, engineered in London and reported to have been worth \$1,100m, was backed by several major institutional investors with Citicorp Venture Capital acting as the catalyst. It was led by Norman Scoular, now chief executive of the operation.

All this money market activity, alive across a 12-month period once GTE had indicated it wanted to divest itself of its interest in lamp manufacture, came at a particularly sensitive time for the Sylvania Special Products Group. They were already in the middle of a self-imposed quality improvement programme that had commenced in mid-1991.

Things hadn't been going at all well. In the case of their BriteArc range it became something of a joke that the company were having to give more lamps away as replacements than good ones actually sold.

Rocyn Williams, Sylvania's Special Products Group general manager, based at Tienen in Belgium, and the out-front face in our industry for the company's performance industry lamps, explained: "We had been selling HMI-type discharge Brite Arc lamps for discotheque and film lighting which were made in the USA.



Rocyn Williams, Sylvania's Special Products Group general manager, shows off products from the 'new' Sylvania range.

They gained a progressively worse reputation for quality. It became a very expensive embarrassment and at one point we physically stopped selling the lamps."

The situation couldn't continue in that state for long and Sylvania either had to get out of the market sector altogether or do something about the problems. Obviously, they recognised the potential in the market for high quality product, and took the second course, and are currently about to reap the first small benefits from a harsh re-think of their operations which implied a total dedication to quality, coupled with the appropriate investment.

"We knew that if we were going to come back into the market we had to come back with something special," continued Rocyn Williams. "So we began establishing teams of specialists to attack the problems, and we made it a pre-requisite that before anything left the plant we would all be convinced that what was leaving matched the market's requirements. To that end we built in a lot of things that at first were very expensive to incorporate. We had to have a new ethos of quality all the way from design and manufacture through to the marketing and sale of the products. As you've been round the factory you've not only seen the extent to which we've automated processes but also witnessed many highly skilled artisans at work with quartz - it looks like glass, just costs a lot more.

"We've been running for 18 months now on a basis that if you don't like a lamp you get your money back and a new lamp guaranteed. All you have to do is tell us why you do not like the lamp and help us investigate the complaint," says Rocyn, who continued to say that he did not need two hands to count the number of lamps they've had to replace. "People have to be confident about the quality they're buying. We've come a long way in a short time. Not too long ago we couldn't sell lamps cheaply enough for people to bother using them."

Putting the new SLI Sylvania into context, the

company is no lightweight. There are over 6000 employees world-wide and the annual turnover is \$600m. It has operations in the Far East, Australia and Latin America, but its 35-country strong European base accounts for around 80 per cent of its business at the present time.

Tienen is one of four lamp manufacturing plants within Europe, with others elsewhere in the world. Alongside discharge lamps the plant also specialises in the manufacture of tungsten halogen display lighting, tungsten halogen floodlights and the production of general lighting lamps. The plant in Erlangen near Nuremberg in Germany supplies the company's major fluorescent needs for Europe. At Lille in northern France they have a factory for domestic lamp

manufacture and at Shipley in Yorkshire manufacture energy-saving compact fluorescent lamps. "I see Sylvania continuing with the concept of 'Centres of Excellence'," explained Rocyn Williams, "and Tienen will stay as our centre for discharge lighting with BriteArc and Brite Beam playing a key role."

Investment in the Special Products Group area is set to continue under the new SLI operation, and the millions of dollars spent so far will be topped up. New machinery was being installed whilst I was on site in early April, and research continues ever onwards as suggestions, demands and ideas are put forward, whether from customers or from within the Tienen teams.

"Lamps tend to evolve," said Rocyn Williams.



BriteArc D/E: the complete range of long-established discharge lamps for applications in all areas of STTV lighting. Fully compatible with equivalent HMI lamps, they are available in wattages from 200 to 12,000W.



BriteArc S/E is a discharge source intended for axial mounting in high efficiency systems. Interchangeable with existing HMI lamps and equipped for hot re-strike operation, these lamps are suitable for followspot, fresnel and other STTV applications. The range will soon include 575, 1200, 1200HR, 1200NHR and 2500 watt units.



They are getting visually simpler and we've improved our manufacturing techniques. People can tend to forget when they use a lamp that it is an 'active' component, and that it does actually wear out and need replacing. We are in a fast-moving area of the lighting industry at the moment where many changes are taking place and we're very fortunate that the engineers who started our new programme had the foresight to build in the possibilities of flexibility. In a way, the whole production area here could be looked at as one big research and development studio."

In another visual area, Sylvania's packaging also came under the marketing microscope. "We had one of the most unattractive and user-unfriendly packages," continued Williams. "So we spent quite a lot of money on a new pack design. It's 80 per cent recyclable, folds flat if you don't want to use it, but can be quickly re-constructed to house the lamp safely after it's been out on location."

Procedures for dealing with complaints have also been re-packaged. "First of all it's a bit of a surprise if we get a complaint these days, they tend to be few and far between. Secondly, it comes to the attention of everyone in the team, very quickly. So, within 24 hours of a user making a complaint, everyone in the relevant section of the plant knows about it, and with these days of overnight shipments there's a pretty good chance we'll have the offending lamp back in here and a report out within a matter of hours. The most important thing was setting up the infrastructure to deal with it and getting it onto people's agendas so that if we had a complaint it needed immediate attention."

"Maybe we're a little paranoid about quality because we had such a bad experience before, but for me personally and for our sales managers in the field they have to be confident when they go out to sell a product that they are not selling a quality complaint. So, we test the materials we use, the components, and the lamps themselves as we are making them."

"With discharge lamps it is highly important to keep the processes clean. We have made

considerable advances in the way in which we administer the dose of rare earths and mercury to them. Our engineers, who are a credit to the quality of the Belgian educational system, have come up with some innovative solutions to what were traditional problems. They've worked extremely hard across the past two years to put the production area together from scratch."

"We started with a blank piece of paper, but not a blank cheque! We test and measure every lamp: we know its electrical characteristics, its optical characteristics, its colour temperature, colour co-ordinates and its total light output. And each lamp is identifiable by us. Every single lamp we make is recorded with a computerised equivalent of its birth certificate. If there's a problem we can then trace it back to a batch and an operator."

The establishment of the new company has made the process of decision making and our objectives much clearer. "You don't have to get approval 18 layers up," explained Williams. "In the past, being at Sylvania has been compared to working for the Government, but we've very definitely been privatised, with all the benefits that that brings. Apart from opening our minds and attitudes to new opportunities it also means that we are dealing on a world-wide basis. When we are developing a product we now look at the world market rather than restricting ourselves to Europe."

The new 'privatised' Sylvania is now able to look at developing lamps on an OEM basis. "Traditionally, it's always been in our charter at Special Products Group to be active in making lamps for particular customers. However, in the past we had extreme difficulty if someone came to us wanting a special lamp because they were made in North America, and it was extremely difficult to get special attention."

"Here at Tienen we now do everything on site. It's easy to call together the team to discuss all aspects of a potential new product. We are very anxious to talk to any manufacturers who can't support their own lamp, or their own speciality or modification. It's a case of no



Carla Maris, marketing manager at Sylvania.

customer being too big or too small and we are able to respond to very specific requirements in innovative areas.

"Since the change of ownership we've also been able to be much more open in talking to people and being able to genuinely meet their needs. Until recently we've had to focus totally on our existing range for the replacement market and existing business. The reason you've seen lots of manufacturers' equipment around, however, is that we acquire them for testing lamps and frequently before we go out and visit a particular manufacturer we will have tested our lamps in his equipment so that we are confident we have something good to offer."

Sylvania's Special Products Group is now beginning to show a return in line with the new company's requirements. "What we've seen in the last few months means we are about to break through," said Rocyn Williams. "I am very proud to be working as part of a team that can be relied on to make good products and it's rather nice to be confident about them and not feel overwhelmed by our bigger competitors. It's an area where we are strong, and getting stronger by the day."



Hilde Kinnaer demonstrates the fine work of correctly placing the electrodes in the bulbs of a 1200W single-ended lamp before the seal is made, automatically.



Renaat Beelen shows the careful control of the lathe which is required to ensure the correct formation of the lamp bulb.



Patric Geubbelmans alongside an Ulbricht sphere dedicated to the test procedure for the photometric and electric performance of each lamp.



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One of the computer-operated automatic lathes forming the 'bulb' of a BriteArc lamp.



A long apprenticeship goes into giving Nico Felice and his colleagues the delicate skills to finally adjust the lamps.



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# ABTT TRADE SHOW 1993

Robert Halliday reports

I think the talk at the end of the first day of the 1993 Association of British Theatre Technicians Trade Show, held on the 29th and 30th of April at London's Royal Horticultural Halls, summed up the event's virtues better than anything else. The speaker was Francis Reid, his subject the people that make up theatre. I don't think that the talk would have worked at any of the big trade shows, where the emphasis seems to be on the latest, most expensive toys, and where the international buyers come with their cheque books poised.

But the ABTT show isn't like that. While there were some new products launched, of which more in a moment, my brochure bag was decidedly light in comparison to other shows - most of the big product launches had already taken place in the USA, Italy or France, or were being saved up for the PLASA show. What I did do, though, was meet a lot of people I hadn't seen in ages, and catch up on a lot of gossip. To me, that's what ABTT shows are all about.

Back to those new products, though. First off, to **DHA**, whose Tadpole won the Hook Clamp award for 'Product of the Year.' This is one of those things that you see and immediately wish you'd thought of - circle-sized to take DHA gobos, attached to a long handle and which, when mounted in a standard DHA gobo holder, lets you angle the gobo by over 20 degrees without the need for a rotating gate. A slide-down clip allows the final position to be locked, though the handle does stay remarkably cool to the touch if alterations are needed later. A variety of new gobo designs were also launched, and some swift crash courses in operating Digital Light Curtains (including the new six lamp unit developed for Sunset Boulevard) took place throughout the two days.

The most entertaining demonstration, though, came from **MM Productions**. Their new interactive fx controller takes up to eight switched inputs and uses them to trigger MIDI control data. The demo had a switch attached to a door triggering creaking effects from an Akai sampler as it was opened or closed and - much more fun - a tommy gun which, via a radio mic and tone generator, triggered ack-ack sounds when the trigger was pulled. Highly entertaining and highly useful, it attracted a lot



ABTT Chairman John Faulkner (left) with Tad Trylski of DHA and the award-winning Tadpole.

of attention from sound people.

**Northern Light** were also debuting a control system. Prima uses a touch-panel LCD screen on a PC to switch devices such as projection screen motors, videos and dimmers. On the **Glantre** stand, things were being taken even further by the Richmond Sound Design Stage Manager system, which uses an Amiga computer and MIDI data to control just about any device you can imagine. Howard Eaton Lighting's new SoftCUE memory cue light system was also on show and, indeed, was itself under the control of the Stage Manager system.

**CCT** were showing their new internally-wired bar system, where cabling is run into the bar through a side entry slot which is then filled with a tight-fitting aluminium section. A central strut inside the bar can be used as a common earth, allowing more cable to be packed in, while the outlet units will take a huge range of connectors, making the system very versatile. A running comparison of a new iris design against an old unit involving two Silhouettes left on at full also took place; the result was a clear victory for the new unit.

Some firsts of another kind were the ABTT

show newcomers. Hire companies **Gradav** from London and **Futurist Light and Sound** from Yorkshire are both well established in their own regions but have ambitions to expand, and were enjoying the show as a chance to introduce themselves to people. Both had the new Panaray speaker range from Bose on show, and Gradav were also demonstrating the top-end Supersmoke smoke machines which use a fan to generate impressively high throws. Futurist were attracting interest with their classically-styled Matchan music stand, for those situations where a RAT just won't do, as well as promoting their 1K lamp shoot-out on May 27th at their Dewsbury HQ, which is attracting a lot of attention and seems to be turning into a kind of mini ABTT-North show.

Other first timers were **Midnight Sales**, whose catalogue has established itself as a useful guide for most things technical - a new edition is out soon, and **Autograph Sales**, who had the Meyer speaker system on show, along with a fibre-optic replacement for microphone multicores. One simpler, but equally useful, product was a new single-muff headset from Clear-Com (a range Autograph now distribute)



Geoffrey Joyce, ABTT's development manager, pictured at the award ceremony.



Strand: another showing for the LD90 digital dimming system.



Andy Stone and Bev Bigham of the Lighting Technology Group with the Compulite Animator.





Lighting control exploration on the busy stand of Zero 88.



Modelbox showed the latest version of Laplight on the White Light Group stand.



Action Lighting junkies: Jack Excell, Richard Harris and Mike Lowe (Teatro).



A C Lighting had a representative range including Jands control and Vision luminaires.



Mark Morley with Selecon luminaires on the stand of AJS.



Rosco quartet: Peter Richards, Miguel Najur, Anna Sassi and Robert Achlimbari.



Mike Smyth of Northern Light with Kim Little, technical manager at the Barbican Centre.



Golden Oldies: Derrick Saunders of Pulsar with DJ Emperor Rosco and his favourite Pulsar Slave unit.



End of day conflag: Mike Hall (Rosco), Ian Albery (Donmar), Peter Richards (Rosco) and seminar speaker Francis Reid.



Midnight Sales' David Rose with Jenny Williams - first timers at ABTT.

with a mouthpiece that can be rotated through 180 degrees, allowing the user to choose which side the earpiece sits on. Just across the way, **Canford Audio** featured the rival Tecpro system along with a number of new bits and pieces, while **Meridien Communications** showed the RTS system, just so that we all had a chance to look at all of the options! **Marquee Audio** were also on hand to talk about their experience and expertise in audio system installation.

Elsewhere, the show was filled with already-launched or recently-modified products. Despite mutterings from the international trade-show contingent about their being little new, the show did give many British technicians their first chance to see the products in the flesh rather than in a photograph.

**Le Maitre**, for example, had their redesigned smoke machine range, incorporating the new Genesis heater block, on show. Although the casings are identical to the old Minimist/Smoke Processor range (new case designs are due to appear at the PLASA show), the company are promising greater output, greater reliability, and easier maintenance when things do go wrong.

**Rosco**, too, were muttering about new machines for later in the year, contenting themselves for now with launching four new Supergel colours, including a beautiful clear medium blue, number 367; rivals **Lee Filters** made an appearance but without any new products this time round.

**Camelot/M&M** were also showing off smoke machines, in their case those from Smoke Factory, including the new mid-range Captain K machine. The DF50 cracked vapour machine was also on show and very impressive (i.e. it did generate haze, it did so quickly and quietly, and you could stick your nose in the output without even the slightest hint of a cough developing). The new Alfresco Rainbow scaled scrollers for outdoor use were shown.

**A C Lighting** also had the DF50 on show, where it was being put to good use both to demonstrate the output from the Vision Micro Ellipse range of low-voltage spotlights (all controlled by the Events lighting desk from Jands, which now comes recommended by Vari-Lite for controlling DMX'd VL5s), and from the Golden Scan 3 on the neighbouring **Pulsar** stand. The new diffuser built into this product produces a beautifully soft beam when required, and should mean a lot of attention from the theatrical market.

Amongst the more traditional lanterns there were few new products, though some changes of distributors have taken place. **Zero 88** had the smaller Niethammer zoom profiles on show, and these lamps continue to set the standard for others to aim for, even if the 'rotatable gate' is a touch whacky - you spin the entire lamphousing around the lens tube! Zero 88's own 650W range also has a number of useful design touches, such as the lock-off lever which can be moved out of the way of the shutters if need be.

After a slightly chequered history in the UK, the Selecon range from New Zealand seems to have settled down with distributor **AJS**, who had the complete range including the new 2 and 2.5k fresnels and 1.2 and 2k followspots on show. The lamps all remain very competitively priced, and look likely to have a bright future in theatres around the country.

**Action Lighting**, with their impressive 'pile of rubbish' stand which occasionally erupted in great bursts of smoke, had the rival ADB lanterns on show - a range which impressed me on a recent trip to Germany, but which seem to be quite expensive in this country. The company were also showing Teatro and CCT

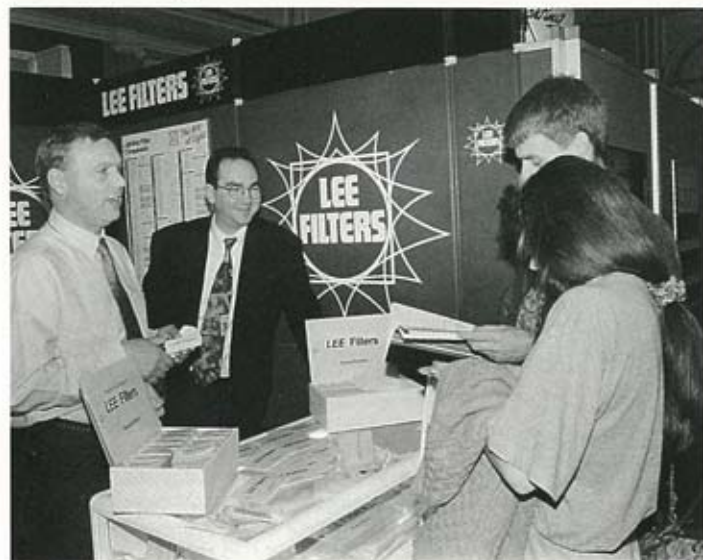




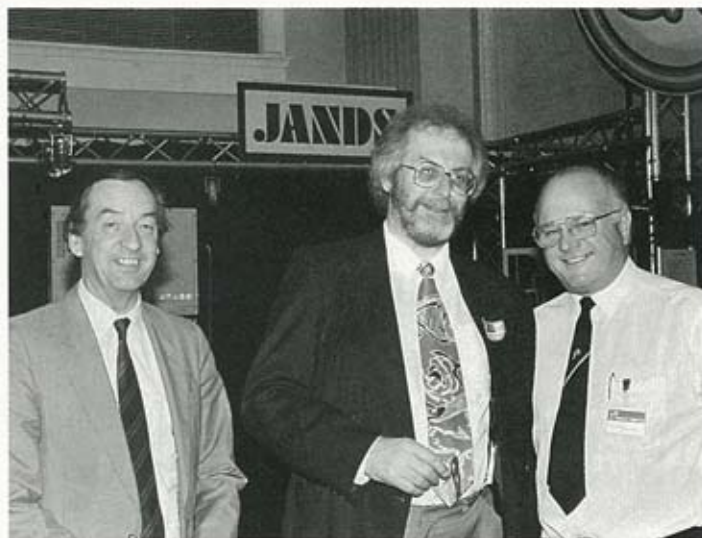
The award-winning stand of Steeldeck.



Strand's business development manager Andy Collier (right) with Michael Lister of Futurist.



Lee Filters' Paul Topliss and Graham Merritt (left) in full colour.



Graham Walne (centre) shares at least 25 years' worth of experience with Denis Irving (Entertech, Australia) and Brian Myers (Strand).



Aviva Ozin and sales director Graham Paddon of Autograph Sales.



The busy spread of Canford Audio: 6,000 items for same-day despatch.



Sound effect realism from MM Productions: their fx Controller was commended.



Mike Sweetland of Manchester-based Mainstage.



A wide mix of products from Gradav Theatre Services ...



... and a broad lighting mix from Richard Broadhurst and RB Lighting Ltd.





Graham Norman of Light Processor with the brand new 5k Q Pack.

lanterns, the Comulite range of control boards, including the Animator desks designed for motion control, as well as Arri desks and Jem smoke machines. Elsewhere, the CCT range also featured on the stand of **RB Lighting**.

**Strand** didn't have any new lanterns on show, though an Alto 2.5k fresnel was on the stand. I hadn't played with these before, but the bomb-bay door and dropping lamp housing seems to be both practical and fun! The featured product on both their own stand and that of neighbours and dealers **Donmar** was the new LD90 digital dimmer, which looks set to bring digital dimming to a new area of users. The dimmers use passive cooling to eliminate fan noise - a feature which would be of most benefit in a touring rack, which I look forward to seeing.

**Light Processor** were on hand with their Q-range of desks and also showed 'hot from the R+D department' their new 5k Q Pack dimmer unit. It has circuit breakers as opposed to fuses, a DMX option, pre-heat and test facilities on each channel and features the use of 40A SCRs. The pack terminates on three 32A Cee Form sockets on the front panel.

For those not wishing to buy, **White Light** were listing the Strand Light Palette 90 and Mini Palette 90 amongst the latest additions to their hire stock, along with Super Scans, Digital Light Curtains and a variety of other products. All will appear in the new hire book, which we are promised soon on both paper and disc. This innovation is probably a result of the Laplight lighting database system. This can now draw plans via the bundled AutoSketch program. A



David Edelstein displays his Bavarian State Prize for Technology awarded for Triple E's linear motor system.

recent change has also added information and date fields to each lamp in a database, making the system ideal for keeping track of PAT tests on units. Some of the stunning fully rendered animations produced for **Cyrano de Bergerac** were also on show.

At the other end of the hall, newcomers **Lighthouse Technical Services** were demonstrating their Meat Rack lighting plan drawing program for PCs. Consisting basically of a standard drawing programme and a set of pre-defined lantern symbols, the system has a low price, but seems to lack even the facilities which should make computers a better option than tracing paper - unless, as they say, you're trying to draw a plan on a train.

However it's drawn, the eventual lighting rig may well present practical difficulties. **Doughty** were offering the new Zenith stand to help with rigging problems, while **XBTA** had a range of solutions for more hi-tech problems with their complete set of DMX test tools and interfacing or conversion products, many of which were featured in April's L+SI.

A show for theatre technicians is not just about light and sound, of course, and many of the stands reflected this. One corner of the hall featured what could have been a fairly pleasant fringe theatre made entirely of Steeldeck, showing exactly what the product is capable of and winning the 'Best Stand' award into the bargain. Opposite them, **Mainstage** were showing Topdeck, a product similar to Steeldeck but made of aluminium. While ultimately not as strong, Topdeck offers a considerable weight saving while still meeting the strength and versatility requirements of many users.

**Triple E** were proudly showing off the 1993 Bavarian State Prize for Technology which their linear motor system won earlier this year. They were also showing a new self-assembly cyc track system as well as their new hook clamp, which will accommodate practically all barrel sizes. Harkness Screens and Hall Stage were



Richard Frankson with the latest in communication from Meridien.

showing their own linear motor system, along with a computer-controlled festoon curtain system, while **Flint Hire and Supply** had their usual varied fare, and **Peter Evans Studios** were displaying what their prop makers could produce from a variety of materials.

But I started off reporting that the show was a 'people' event, and that's how I'll end. Firstly with **The Freelancer**, a new listing for freelance workers run by Cass Jones and Iain Gillie, which was attracting a fair amount of attention. (081-875 1040 for help finding that next job!) Next with **Graham Walne**, who'd decided that in his twenty-fifth year in the industry people could come to him rather than him going to them and so had taken a stand of his own. Happy anniversary Graham! Then with the Association of Lighting Designers, whose ever-growing membership hot-footed it across town from their own AGM on the first day. And finally with **Ark Light**, whose lantern refurbishment service remains invaluable even if we are "moving out of recession" (or so it says on the news!)

More importantly, Jo Taylor of Ark Light was happily announcing her engagement to Ian Lake. Congratulations to both. And congratulations to the ABTT for such a great, quiet, social show. Roll on the next one.

*PS: I went to the two talks on the Health and Safety at Work Regulations and PAT testing given by Health and Safety Inspector Elizabeth Sherman. I didn't really come out all that much wiser. Please can someone produce a clear, definitive, entertainment-industry related set of guidelines on all of this?*

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# SOUNDCHECK ON TEST

Ken Dibble reviews the Parsons/Court Professional Audio Test Disc

I will recall being impressed at the AES 65th Convention, held in London in February 1980, by a demonstration of the (then) new 2 x 38cm bass loudspeaker cabinet when Stephen Court played me a field recording he had made of a Chieftan Tank on a firing range without dynamics compression. It was quite the most convincing demonstration of a loudspeaker system I had heard and I have often thought that it would be handy to have that tank fire as a test track in my own work. Now, an all too short 13 years later, it has turned up on a new, 92-track CD entitled 'Soundcheck - The Professional Audio Test Disc'.

It's the result of a two year joint project between Stephen Court and Alan Parsons and was originally inspired by the latter's search for a suitable test source for aligning and setting up large PA loudspeaker systems. As Stephen Court put it: "I needed a reliable and convenient reference source - pink noise test tracks, unprocessed voice tracks, a reference drum kit, and convenient access to that tank fire track without carting a Nagra about." The disc was recorded at Alan Parsons' studio in Sussex.

The test signal tracks were recorded from a B&K 1049 Sine/Noise Generator Set, recorded digitally with full 16-bit Delta Sigma D/A, and the entire production mastered on the Sonic Solutions system at Abbey Road. It was originally to be released through Polygram but they got cold feet half way through due to a low sales forecast. As a result Parsons and Court have now set up their own production/marketing operation under the name of Soundcheck Productions.

By the Autumn it is hoped that a complete audio analyser system will be available comprising a revised Soundcheck 2 disc, a calibrated electret microphone and bargraph level display system packaged into a double CD case! A self-contained portable spectrum analyser and audio level meter for £60 complete!

## The Track List

This breaks down into nine headings. The first is a series of broad band pink noise test tracks including band-limited noise which corresponds to typical system configuration, i.e. a 20Hz-200Hz 'bass' track, 200Hz-1KHz lo-mid, 1KHz-20KHz mid/hi and 7KHz-20KHz HF only - eight tracks in all.

The second group is a set of 31x1/3rd octave filtered bands of pink noise. The third, fourth and fifth groups are sine wave sweeps of various kinds and sine and square wave spot frequencies.

Tracks #60 thru #79 provide a set of superbly recorded music source reference tracks including unprocessed speech and vocals, a wide selection of musical instruments ranging from a dirty rock-and-roll electric guitar to cellos and violas and a drum kit recorded as separate elements and as a full kit. The kick drum and rim shots are particularly good. There follows four tracks of complete musical items including Yello's 'The Race', 'Limelight' by Alan Parsons (surprise, surprise!), 'Seasons of our Lives' from 'Tradewinds' by Graham de Wilde and Mitch Dalton and an excerpt from Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D Minor played by Daniel Chorzempa on a cathedral organ.

The eighth section comprises five 'sound effects' tracks. Track #84 is a Chieftan Tank sub-machine gun, track #85 is that Chieftan Tank fire, track #86 is a thunderstorm, track #87 steam trains and track #88 an F-16 and Tornado jet flypast with afterburners, recorded on DAT at RAF Cotteshall and Biggin Hill. It's all impressive stuff!

The final set are labelled 'Utility Tracks' and comprise EBU 25 frame timecode, SMPTE non-drop frame timecode, SMPTE drop-frame time code and a 440Hz concert pitch 'A' tuning reference tone.



Stephen Court (left) and Alan Parsons at Abbey Road studios during final mastering of Soundcheck.

## The Test Tones

Each set of test tones is preceded by a 1KHz reference signal at -14dB and the following noise bands, sweeps, etc are recorded at this level. The only problem with this approach is that when bands are combined - i.e. the 31 x 1/3rd octave pink noise bands or the three 'PA Bands' - the resultant broadband signal level is considerably greater than that of the individual bands.

To investigate this aspect further, the disc was played on a Mission PCM-7000 at a set level into a spectrum analyser with a true RMS detector, set to an 'accumulate and hold' mode so that consecutive bands (or sweeps) are combined into a composite 20Hz-20KHz plot, and then plotted to paper. The steps in the plots are largely a result of the fluctuations inherent in a pink noise test tone, although the 1/3rd octave plot (second from top) does represent an actual recorded roll-off in level over the higher frequency bands.

The lower plot is taken from track #4, broad-band pink noise. The second plot up is by combining the three x PA bands of tracks #5, #6 and #7, the third plot is the separate 1/3rd octave bands from tracks #10 thru #40 and the upper plot the 20Hz-20KHz sinewave sweep from track #56. Note that these are all at different relative levels, with the three pink noise plots separated by 10dB and the sinewave sweep by 6dB. This is because by definition, pink noise has equal energy per unit bandwidth, whereas the recording level will have been set to the stated -14dB reference level using a broadband programme meter. Thus, if the 1/3rd octave values between 20Hz and 200Hz in the broadband plot are combined into a 'programme' reading the amplitude in the PA LF band would be 10dB higher - which indeed it is. The same applies to the 200Hz-1KHz lo-mid band and the 1KHz mid/hi band.

Applying the same summing process to the

three PA bands gives another 10dB shift in respect of the individual 1/3rd octave bands. In other words, at a fixed programme level, as the bandwidth is squashed so the amplitude must increase. The same applies to the swept sine wave signal, where, based on a single frequency reference value at 1KHz, the energy in each 1/3rd octave band will be 6dB greater than with a pink noise source - which again is more or less what is happening. Whether it would have been more useful if the narrow-band levels had been normalised to an equivalent common broad band reference instead of to an absolute reference level I shall reserve the option of reply until I have played with it in the field.

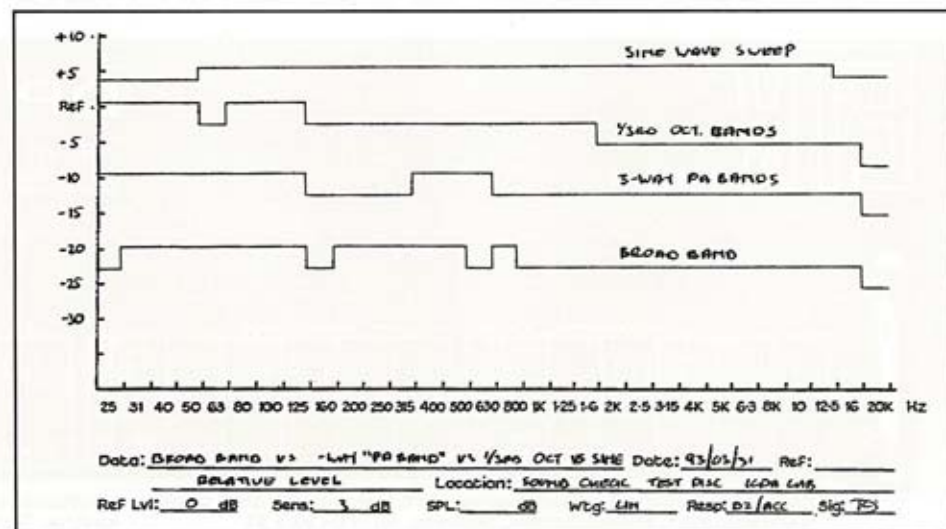
## Viewpoint

The technical stuff apart, as the first commercially available, dedicated pro-audio test disc, Soundcheck is going to be an extremely valuable asset, enabling a complete sound system to be tested and/or set up using just a battery operated Discman CD player instead of a battery sine and pink noise generators, CD player and tape machine, with the added benefit of repeatability and quality reference. I have actually been doing just this for some time now using the Altec test CD, and find it an extremely convenient and reliable way of doing things. In addition Soundcheck offers a far greater selection of material than the Altec disc and is of superior quality.

One clever point is the way the tracks are indexed. Each track is preceded by an announcement of what is to follow. However, if the track indexing facility is used the voice intro is omitted. For example, to sequentially access the 31 x 1/3rd octave pink noise tracks, if the whole section is played through, each band will be announced, but if programmed sequentially, it will be omitted. However, with 92 tracks, there is a lot to be said for using a CD player which has direct track access and programming capability, as a sequential track selector can be rather laborious! The 'sleeve notes' provide a comprehensive listing of all tracks, levels, warnings, etc. The recording is extremely high quality and clearly taken from the original or source recordings, and the tracks which have been selected with a view to stereo imaging - i.e. the Yello track and the F-16 flypast - are nothing short of stunning.

## Availability

As noted in our last issue, Soundcheck was launched at the Frankfurt Music Fair and almost 1,000 copies have already been sold. Apparently the halls of Frankfurt were ringing with the sounds of Yello and Bach's Toccata and Fugue emanating from half the world's loudspeaker manufacturers' stands!





# DEUTSCHE CABARET

## L+S reviews a Meyer sound installation in Berlin's Friedrichstadtpalast - Europe's last remaining Review Theatre

Berlin's theatre tradition is legendary, with the city boasting a large complement of theatres, particularly in the aftermath of the unification of East and West. One spectacular addition to the Western theatre scene, following the dismantling of the Berlin Wall, is the Friedrichstadtpalast - formerly the flagship venue of East German theatre and home to Europe's only remaining permanent chorus-line review.

The Friedrichstadtpalast has been the subject of a major revamp since unification, encompassing a new production and a major update for the theatre's sound system - including a large-scale installation of Meyer Sound loudspeakers and control units in the main 'Grosse Revue' auditorium. The new show 'Jazzlegs' premieres at the theatre on April 10th 1993, directed and choreographed by Charles B Axton and Larry Fuller, and represents the first of a new series of international productions.

A typical performance at the Friedrichstadtpalast involves a wide variety of musical styles - 'City Lights', which was conceived under the old regime and closed in March 1993, ranged from Viennese waltzes to hard rock! With a seating capacity of 1,900, a large orchestra sited sometimes in a balcony area and occasionally on stage, and a chorus line of 62 dancers, the Grosse Revue requires a carefully designed loudspeaker installation to achieve a quality result.

Head of the sound and video department, Herr Henry Zabel, explained: "We had some very specific problems to overcome in this auditorium regarding the acoustics. Although the Friedrichstadtpalast has existed as an institution for many years, the theatre was built in 1984 without the benefit of the acoustic engineering facilities which we can employ today. The siting and control of the sound from the 37-piece orchestra is a good case in point. Obviously we have control of the sound level around the theatre, but when the band really gets going and is sited in the balcony, there is little we can do to tone the level down for



View of the 'Grosse Revue' auditorium showing the gondolas and lighting bridge overhead.

members of the audience closest to the musicians. Ideally, we need a dedicated room for the orchestra, an investment which our director, Julian Herrey, is keen to make. However, it is all a question of time and resource.

"Despite these problems, we have been able to achieve a great deal with the new sound system. We started to upgrade the system during the summer break in August 1992, with the assistance of Jurgen Dudda Audio Service, who provided an equipment match to our requirements. I was already familiar with the Meyer products and impressed with their performance across a range of live applications. We elected to install a combination of appropriate control units.

"We are extremely pleased with the results, particularly with respect to the quality and fine-tuning which we can apply to the overall sound. With the old system, we sometimes received complaints about the show being too loud, largely because of the problems associated with the acoustics and positioning of the band. Today, we have maintained the volume level at exactly that of the old system but without any complaints - largely due to the smooth response of the system, together with its far lower distortion levels and improved coverage. In short, we can exercise the right degree of control where it is needed."

Meyer speakers have also made their way into the Friedrichstadtpalast control room, where a pair of HD-1 monitors have been installed for mixing. Henry Zabel again: "Our initial mixes for 'Jazzlegs' were done on our old control room monitors, and the result was truly awful when we played it back in the auditorium. After remixing on the HD-1s, the transformation was amazing. We were able to get exactly the same sound in the auditorium as in the control room."

The full line-up of Meyer Sound products is as follows: two UPAs and one USW on each side of the stage, plus two USWs and four UPAs on each side of the proscenium arch. Eight UPM-1s are integrated into the stage area to provide near-field coverage, whilst four UM-1s are positioned around the edge of the stage for on-stage monitoring. For mobile use, a further four UM-1s are used.

In addition, a total of six UPAs are positioned in five gondolas in the ceiling of the auditorium, with seven more UPAs installed in the lighting bridge. The full room image is completed by an additional 12 x UPA-1s and six USW-1s, configured in six groups with appropriate controllers and amps at the back of the auditorium. Two HD-1 monitors are located in the control room for mixing.

Reinhard Klose, of Jurgen Dudda Audio Service, was responsible for overseeing the



Europe's largest stage (2500m<sup>2</sup>) and last remaining chorus line review.



installation: "We had just three days to complete in order to fit in with work on a new stage floor. The positioning of the speakers required extremely careful handling, due to the architecture and certain design aspects of the production 'City Lights'. This used a movable lighting truss over the centre of the stage, preventing us from being able to fly any centre cluster speakers. Our other problem was how to get the sound image down to stage level, given that 80% of the speakers had to be positioned in the ceiling! We also had to avoid spilling too much direct sound onto the orchestra balcony.

"We developed special rigging-brackets to fit into the existing ceiling construction, and focused our main effort on positioning and angling the speakers very carefully, setting up the appropriate delay times and levels. By then analysing the whole system with the Meyer Sound SIM II, an extremely fast and powerful acoustic analysis system, we were able to find a very smooth frequency response for the majority of the seating areas. The results have been extremely satisfactory, with the Friedrichstadtpalast installation representing a good fundamental system. We will be working closely with Herr Zabel and his team to extend and develop the installation step by step over the coming months."

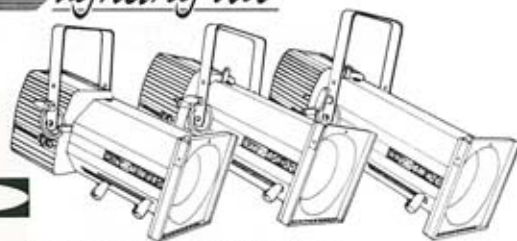
The Friedrichstadtpalast is an interesting example of a fast-disappearing genre. Since its foundation in 1867, the quality of its productions have attracted audiences from all over the world. In line with the Theatre's reputation for an excellent corps de ballet, spectacular sets and originality, there is a determination on the sound department's part to improve and further enhance the sound quality aspect of the productions. The new system has undoubtedly created a firm foundation on which Zabel and his team will build in future.

#### Equipment

- 37 UPA-1 UltraSeries loudspeaker
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- 12 USW-1 UltraSeries subwoofer
- 8 UPM-1 UltraSeries reinforcement loudspeaker
- 2 HD-1 High Definition monitor
- 8 CP-10 parametric equaliser
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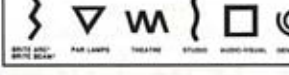
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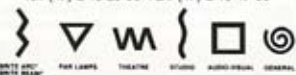
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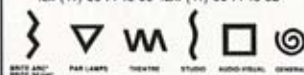
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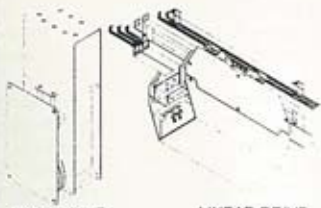




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# VIEWPOINT

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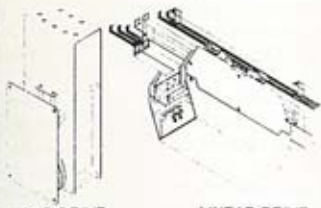
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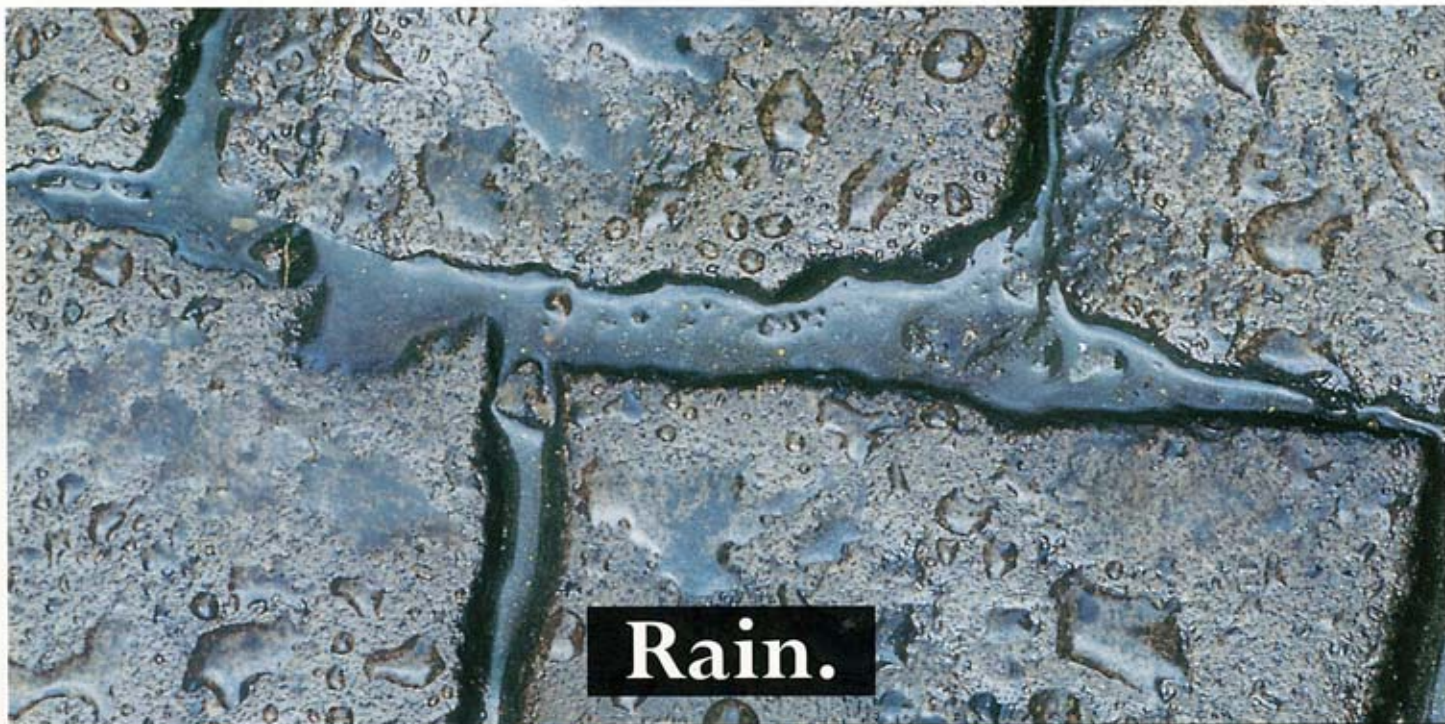
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