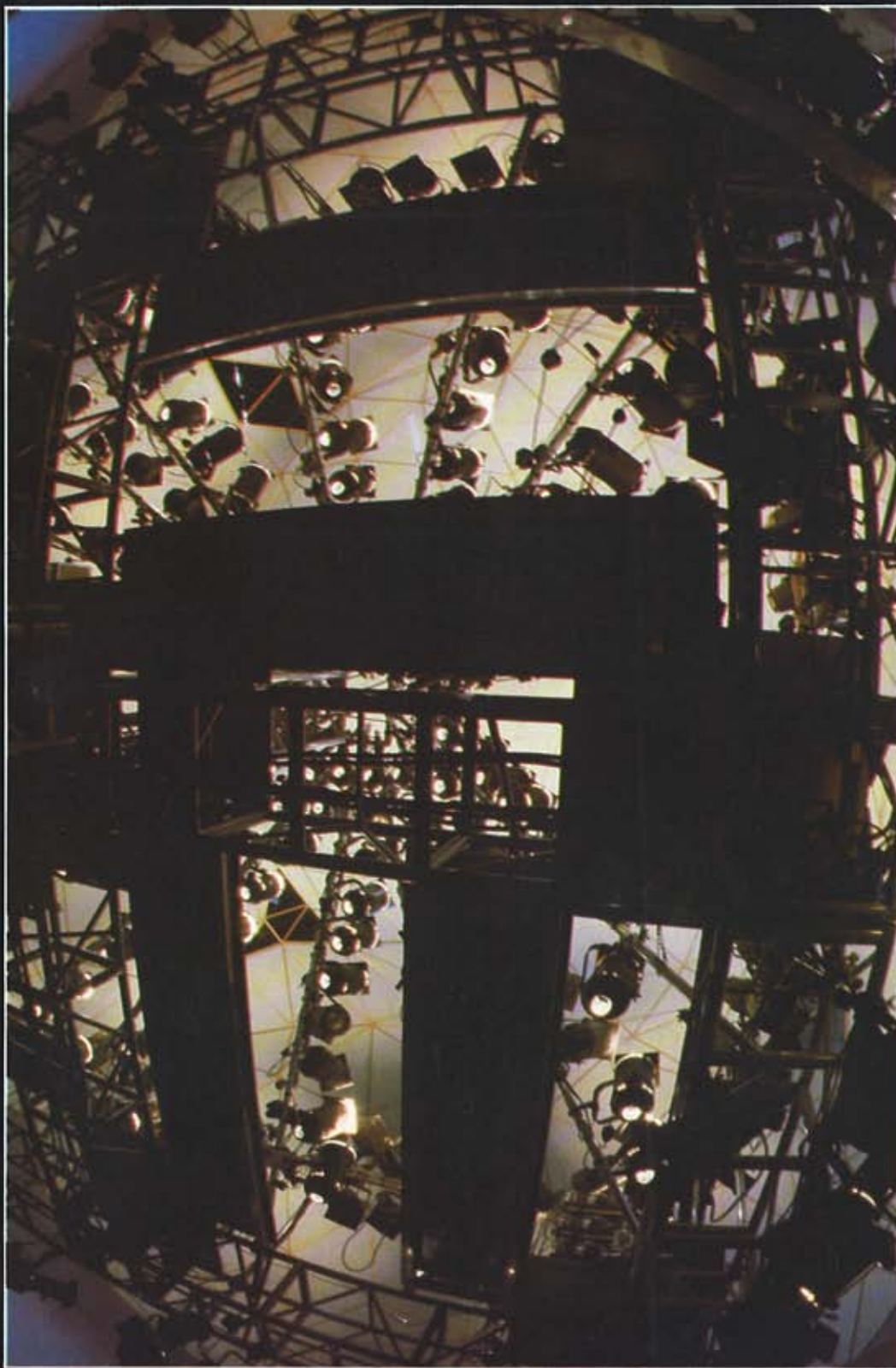


LIGHTING+SOUND *International*



A fish eye shot of lights and trussing at the recent 'Saudi Experience' exhibition at London's Olympia—see story in 'On Tour'.

PLASA

published in association with the Professional Lighting and Sound Association

August 1986
Volume 1 No.9

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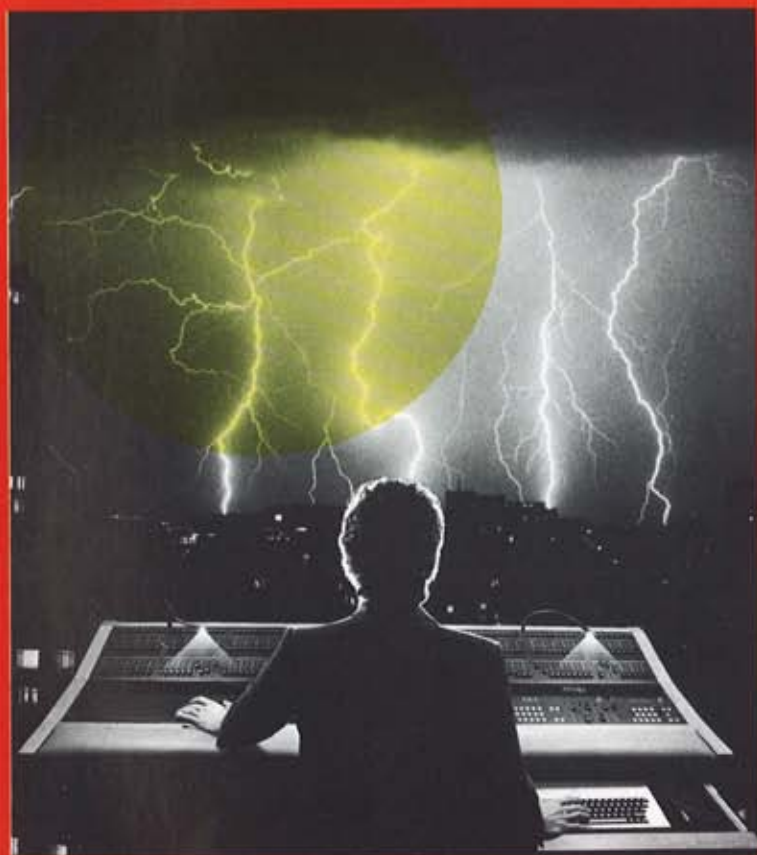
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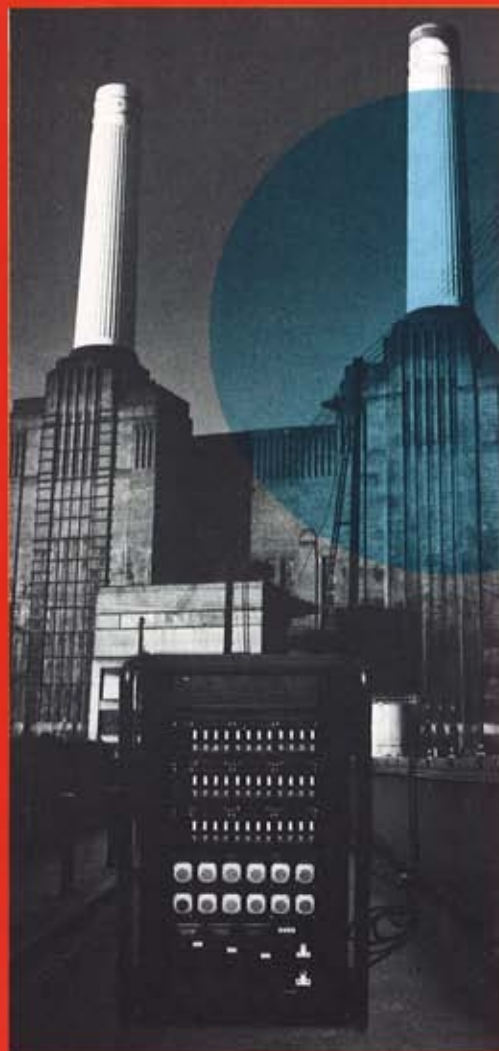
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# LIGHTING+SOUND *International*

## AUGUST 1986

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### The Light and Sound Show 86

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The **Official Catalogue** for the Show is provided free by 'Lighting + Sound International', and your copy is enclosed with this August issue of the magazine (UK only). A fully-detailed listing of every exhibitor is included, making the publication an essential guide to the Show, and a useful year-long reference point. Please bring your copy along with you!

Whatever type of venue you are involved with, or service you provide within the entertainment industry, the continually widening scope of the PLASA Light and Sound Show will have an increasing number of new products, new ideas, and a few surprises up its sleeve that will send you away with the challenge of applying new techniques and new equipment to your own particular operation.

And this issue of L+SI is a reflection of how innovative, creative and diverse the British entertainment industry can be, giving a glimpse of how numerous buildings of varying types now play host to different facets of the leisure industry. From the London Limelight in a converted chapel to the come-back of entertainment in bingo venues, from conversion of cinemas to night-clubs, and exhibition halls showing Arabian desert scenes, the variations are endless. And a major feature this month describes Europe's first purpose-built theatre-in-the-round at Stoke-on-Trent - the New Victoria Theatre - which used to be housed in a cheaply converted cinema.

L+SI looks forward to seeing you at the 1986 Light and Sound Show!

**LIGHTING+SOUND**  
*International*

**PLASA**

published in association with the  
Professional Lighting and Sound Association

PO Box 628, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN21 2PZ

Telephone: (0323) 642639

Editor and Publisher John Offord

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## Technical Projects Limited sold by Receiver

Technical Projects Limited, the Isle of Wight-based designers and manufacturers of intercoms and audio test equipment, appointed a receiver in mid-July, and the company was purchased by Canford Audio of Ryton, Tyne and Wear, with completion on August 14. Hugh Williams, financial director and co-owner of Canford, told **L+SI** that production would re-start on Monday August 17th, and that the majority of the existing workforce would be re-employed.

The company was purchased in association with Neutrik of Leichenstein, said Williams, who were interested in marketing the test equipment, and they are setting up a new company to do that. Canford Audio will produce and sell the intercom equipment. No difficulties or any interruption to supply of products was expected as most component stocks were high. We understand the Cowes Isle of Wight base will now be used for production only, with all sales and administration handled from Canford's head office in Ryton, and that Paul Smith, formerly buyer for Technical Projects, will become general manager of the Cowes unit.

## 'Lighting For Television'—a new guide from Strand

Strand Lighting have just published 'Lighting for Television', a comprehensive, illustrated, 28-page primer on the specialised subject of lighting for

and productions and wish to consolidate their knowledge. The book does not attempt to deal with the finer points of lighting, but the experienced professional lighting designer would find it a convenient re-statement of the state-of-the-art, and useful for making points when involved in discussions or explanations with non-technical people.

'Lighting for Television' was first published ten years ago, but has been completely updated by Strand Lighting to take account of the newest ideas and equipment. Copies are obtainable from Strand Lighting, PO Box 51, Great West Road, Brentford, Middlesex TW8 9HR.

## New from Carlsbro

Hot from the presses are Carlsbro's two new product catalogues—one covering music instrument amplifiers, the other P.A. systems. All new lines were on show at the British Music Fair, and are currently in production and available against planned orders during September. The new equipment departs from the traditional black, giving, say Carlsbro, "a more stylish and interesting appearance".

## New at Paul Farrah Sound

Bruno Wayte has joined Paul Farrah Sound Limited as sales manager. Previously head of sound for Entec Sound and Light, Bruno will be responsible for developing the company's concert sound operations, using the Nexo sound system for which Paul Farrah Sound are UK distributors.

In addition he will be involved in the expansion of the Paul Farrah Sound sales division which has been set up to complement the company's highly successful theatre and audio-visual hire service.



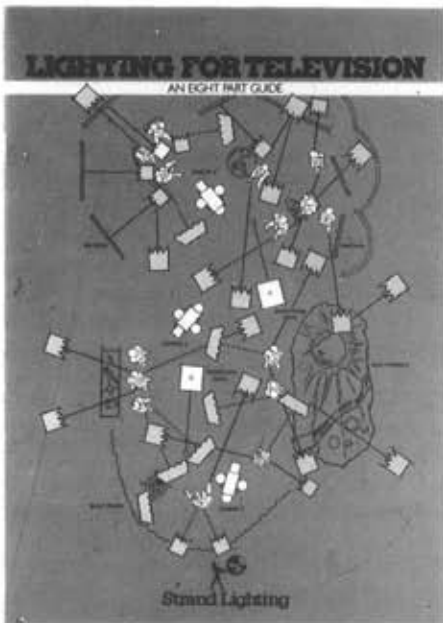
Zounie Fallil.

## Compounding the Error

Not only did your editor misspell the name of Zounie Fallil in our July issue (page 13), but to add insult to injury our printers made a mess of the half-tone. The very least we can do is give a little more publicity to TSL's new shop and display room in Drury Lane, and the lady who looks after the Clear-Com range of products in particular!

## Major BBC Order

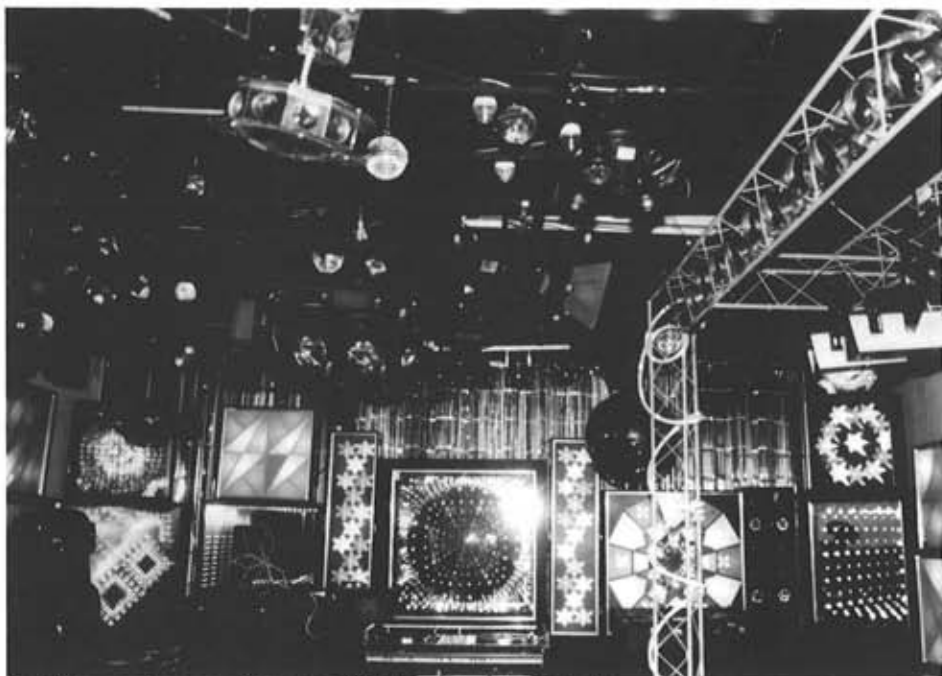
BBC Radio at Broadcasting House has just confirmed a major order for Klark Teknik's DN780 digital reverb/processors with the newly launched version 2.0 software. 19 units have been ordered, and will be distributed amongst the various departments of BBC Radio London for use in a variety of broadcast applications.



television, setting out in a straightforward way the principles and equipment applicable to the planning of successful television lighting.

The subject matter is thorough and includes terms and definitions of the industry, the theory and practice of general lighting, the different types of luminaires and their applications, and the use of dimmers and memory systems. There are also sections on general studio design with types of suspension available, and typical studio layouts for different situations and programmes. There is also useful detailed technical data.

The guide will be of special value in providing reliable basic information for trainees, and all others who become involved in television lighting



Fantasia's new showroom is a mass of light and sound equipment.

## The Sound and Light Fantasia

Fantasia Sound and Lighting of Steeple Claydon in Buckinghamshire have just opened their new

demonstration showroom. Proprietor Terry Porter hosted a party for clients and suppliers on the evening of August 6, and notables present included Paul Morrison of Satel, David Catterall of Zero 88, and Phil Brunner and Julie Garton (amongst others) from Optikinetics.

## Rosco Supergel Pocket Guide

In keeping with their reputation of being a company attuned to the needs of lighting designers, Rosco have produced a unique pocket book guide to the applications of their Supergel range of colour filters.

The booklet, called 'Supergel Guide', gives guides to the applications of every colour in the Supergel range, grouping them into categories of Warm and Cool accents. Although intended for use by professionals and amateurs in the theatre, it will also prove invaluable to lighting directors involved in television and video production.

The main publication is in the form of a handy pocket size book, but is also available as an A3 wall poster. Copies of both can be obtained free from Roscolab Limited, 69/71 Upper Ground, London SE1 9PQ, telephone 01-633 9220, or any Rosco distributor.

## New at Apple

As part of their continuing expansion programme, Apple Sound Services of North Wales has announced the appointment of Mark Goodman, who has joined the company to represent its sound hire activities and to promote the hire of equipment, services and facilities for use throughout the UK.

Mark, aged 25, who lives in Chester, is experienced in the operation of a variety of sound systems and he has a strong musical background. His computer programming experience will also help him utilise Apple's IBM PC's.

Apple Sound Services, now in its seventh year of operation, was established by brothers Phil and Tim Brown, and now has a full-time team of eight based at its modern factory premises at Pinfold Industrial Estate, Buckley, Clwyd. Contact number is (0244) 541466.



Klark Teknik's marketing director Gaston Goossens shows off the company's Queen's Award for Export Achievement in front of the company's work force outside their offices at Kidderminster.

## Queen's Award for Klark Teknik

Klark Teknik have won their first Queen's Award after three particular successful years of international trading by the company whose clients include Bruce Springsteen, Dire Straits, Sting, Mick Jagger and David Bowie.

Founded in 1971 by Philip and Terry Clarke, the Klark Teknik has become known throughout the world for its wide range of audio signal processing equipment, marketed internationally through an established distribution network. The company is now Europe's biggest manufacturer of graphic equalisers for the music and broadcast industries, and their equipment can be found in concert halls and theatres across the world.

One of the products to play a key role in boosting the export accounts was the DN780 Digital Reverb/Processor. Launched in 1985, the KT reverb quickly established itself among big name users in the music world, as well as scoring notable successes in the concert and theatre fields such as the Eurovision Song Contest.

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## Light Projects go Down River

Towards the end of his studies for a diploma in technical theatre at LAMDA, James Wadsworth spent a few weeks working with Tony Corbett of Light Limited to gain practical experience. He ended up by joining the company, then part of the former Theatre Projects Group, and assisting Corbett with the introduction of a range of light fittings based around the Par 36 lamp before he left to join the Light Workshop.

Before long he was back, but in the meantime Tony Corbett had left for new pastures in Hong Kong, and the company was now called Light Projects. Almost immediately came the split-up of the various elements of the old TP empire, and James approached chairman Richard Pilbrow, asking if he could buy the company. He ended up taking over the lot, with assistance from his father, and it was moved lock stock and barrel from Mercer Street in Covent Garden to 2000 square feet of workshop and office space a few yards down river from Tower Bridge in South East London.

The management trio running this compact little combine, which has the built-in facility of more space available as the operation expands, is James, his father Richard, and financial man Hugh Sinclair. Still called Light Projects, they produce a basic range of small spotlights and associated transformers that are used extensively in interior display work for shops, showrooms, in restaurants, museums and galleries. Installations where their fittings abound range from Harrods to the Science Museum, and from Lord John shops to Madame Tussauds.

About 16 basic designs are involved, but very few are stocked as regular lines, as the vast majority of units are usually part of an overall design scheme, and ordered in the finish required—a Light Projects speciality. "We specialise in finishing fittings to suit the environment," said James Wadsworth. "And also on mix-and-match - this on the end of that." Light Projects' spotlights can also be attached to any lighting track.

To meet deadlines, all part manufacture placed out is now done locally so that assembly and finishing can be co-ordinated as closely as possible to the delivery date, avoiding large stocks and related storage problems.

Currently at the final stage of development, and due for introduction in about 2 months time is an exterior remote multi-mirror fitting using a quartz halogen 12 volt multi-mirror lamp. "It will be ideal for unobtrusive lighting of planters and other architectural detail on buildings," said James.

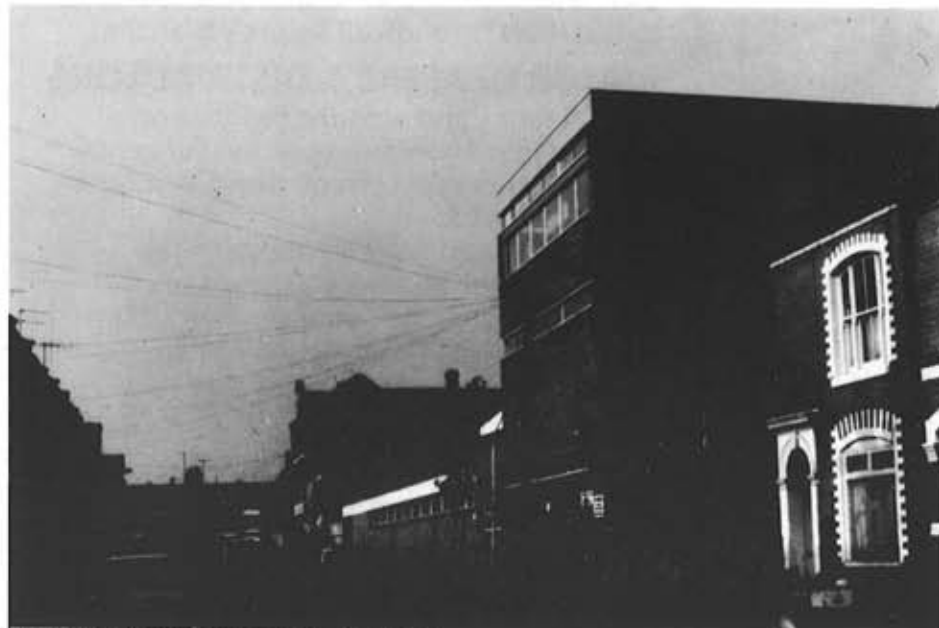
The company has just completed its first full year of trading under its new management. "We're very pleased we bought the company," said Richard Wadsworth.



James and Richard Wadsworth with two of Light Projects' mini-spotlight range.



A special job: assembly of transformers for Light Plan Consultants - part of a projects for a Dulux concession presentation for Texas Homecare at Dudley in the West Midlands.



SIS's new Northampton premises in Gray Street.

## SIS Make the Move

Long established in the discotheque industry, SIS Limited have now moved into much larger premises in Gray Street, Northampton. The whole premises covers 24,000 square feet, but the company are dividing the area into five units and letting off the other four.

They now occupy half of the available space, but the refurbishment has been done in such a way that expansion can be achieved without severe disruption. The new modern-styled offices contain a hint of old-style elegance, with the polished wooden floors, but still have all the modern day necessities such as double glazing and central heating.

The company now operates an active social side and has facilities of staff restaurant, social activities room, sauna and shower room. On the business side there is a new demonstration room where SIS customers can bring their clients to show them available product lines. The new store is designed for a speedy no fuss collection service, and the computer-based stock system gives staff easy access to information.

In the increased production area on-site paint facility has been installed, and when this is in full swing it will provide a very fast turn-round of special and standard finishes.



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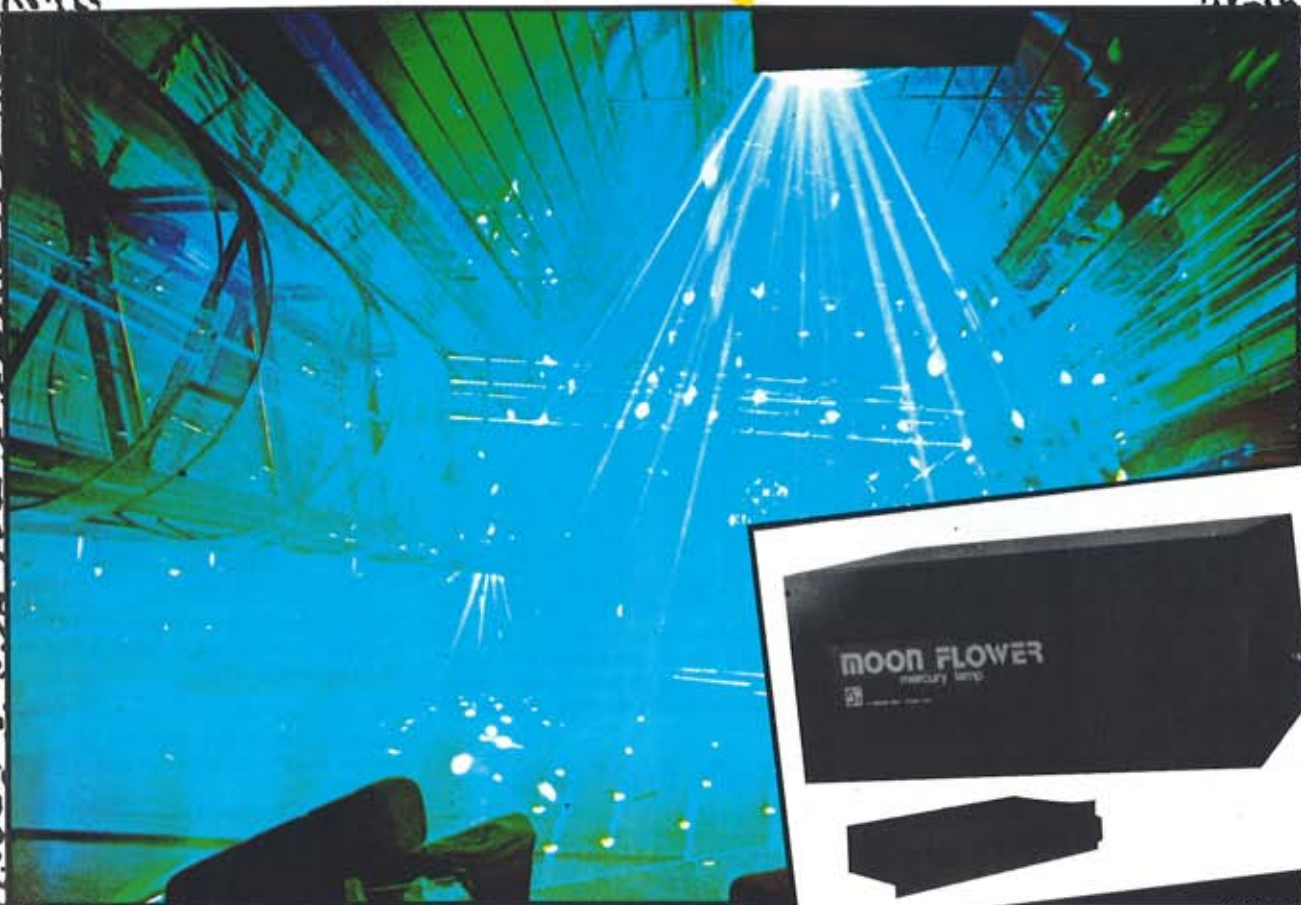
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## Audilec Launches Lightronix

Already a major force in the pro-sound market, Audilec Distribution Limited has announced the formation of Lightronix—a new division dealing exclusively in professional lighting and disco audio. Dedicated to the trade only, Lightronix will supply a vast range of effects and stage lighting, lighting control systems, accessories and disco-orientated audio products, all from leading manufacturers.

"We believe there is a major gap in the market for a company providing a 'one-stop' distributor outlet supplying a truly comprehensive range of quality products to meet the needs of all retailers, installers and contractors within our industry" the division's manager Dave Nibbs told L+S. "All our customers will have the benefit of a first class service and design team, which has been built up so effectively by Audilec over the years."



David Nibbs, Lightronix division manager.

Companies for whom Lightronix is an authorised distributor include: Audio Technica, Beam, Citronic, Clay Paky, Coemar, Felstar, General Electric, Kreluz, L.A.D., Mode, Light Processor, Rossula, Satel, S.I.S., and Zero 88. The company is based at Unit 16, Laurence Industrial Estate, Eastwoodbury Lane, Southend On Sea, Essex, telephone (0702) 511661, and will be exhibiting at the PLASA Light and Sound Show at Novotel.

### Refresher Course?

I HAD almost forgotten musicals could be witty. Today too many of them are weighed down by hi-tec sets and an inflated sense of their own importance when they are really like very bad 19th century operas. But *Wonderful Town*, which sails into the Queen's from the Palace, Watford, is a spirit-lifting joy from 1953 that it about real people rather than a display of light engineering and that both vocally and musically is instinct with ironic humour. It is much the best musical in London.

Michael Billington in *The Guardian*.

### Changing the Digits

Strand Lighting have installed a new Plessey ISDX digital switchboard at their Great West Road Brentford headquarters, and a number change goes with it. It now reads 01-560 3171.



Robert Collins of Concert Sound and Pete Granger set up the PA for the recent Prince's Trust concert at Wembley Arena.

### Sound for the Prince

Martin Audio speakers formed the basis and a major part of the sound system for the recent Prince's Trust concert held at Wembley Arena, installed and engineered by Concert Sound.

Well recognised as a difficult acoustic challenge, particularly in the bass and low-mid ranges, no less than 60 Martin 115 1 x 15" bass bins, 30 Phillishave 2 x 12" mid-range units and 54 HF2m horns were employed to overcome the inherent problems with the venue. 16 bins were side flown, with the remainder sited forward and to the side at stage level.

Completing the speaker rig were 38 Concert Sound/JBL high-frequency drivers. Martin Audio also figured in the foldback system, with 3 RS1200's being used for side and drum fills, and 14 LE200 wedge-monitors out front. Three Midas mixing consoles were sited in the auditorium with monitors on-stage.



Kevin Eyres - moves to RDE Production Services.

### Moving Over

Kevin Eyres has left his position as sales and marketing manager at Avolites Production Company and is due to take up a new post at RDE Production Services in the near future. He will join Richard Dale and Nick Eve, making a production trio working mainly on presentation lighting and conferences. The company is also involved with lighting design for regular concert tours of major



Derek Halliday - takes over as sales manager at Avolites.

artists. For Kevin it will be something of a return visit, as he had previously worked with Richard Dale on concert lighting design nearly ten years ago.

Back at Avolites, Derek Halliday has been appointed sales manager and will share the work load with Michael Till who becomes marketing manager. Both are in-house appointments in a re-alignment of posts.

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Please reply to: 25 April 1986

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

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

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

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

Yours faithfully,

*Ian H. Rowse*

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# Limelight in London

John Offord looks at Peter Gatien's new London venue

Canadian Peter Gatien's London Limelight sits across the corner of Charing Cross Road and Shaftesbury Avenue in a former Welsh Presbyterian chapel. From the cleaned main facade of the building in Charing Cross Road you have no clues as to what sort of ceremony takes place inside, and from Shaftesbury Avenue, two simple drapes with the Limelight name-style indicate where to enter.

When you do, you are confronted with a mixture of often conflicting images that at first take leave you trying to bring your own thought-lines together in a co-ordinated way. The great difficulty in doing this, is that there is no way you can set this venue in any particular category, either by activity or artistically. It's there for you to take it as it comes. Or leave it, as some no doubt will.

There is no glitter; there are no thrusting effects. Colour washing, projection, and lighting of architectural features provide the scene changes, and a regular change of personality will be achieved in the Gatien way by an involvement with the London art scene, with varied exhibits, exhibitions, and full-concept "installations" of the type that he has made famous at his New York and Chicago clubs. And very little of the original building has been changed, providing a base for the club's uniqueness.

There are several distinct areas in the club. The ground floor, after passing through a foyer which features a wall mosaic portraying a map of the world, open out into the main dance area which, although it can capably hold over 300 people, remains intimate. The bar at its far end, painted in a marbled midnight shade of blue, has a

backpiece which includes parts of the original altar resembling miniature Roman temple frontages.

The old church's pews have been retained, and form the seating around the perimeter of the dance floor, and seating is also present in the newly constructed "choir loft" to one side. The room is topped by a superb domed ceiling which arches gracefully down to meet the restored sandy-coloured brick walls and balconies which overlook the dance area from each side. From every part

of the dance floor and galleries video and slide projections can be seen, ready to amuse and divert. The custom sound system in controlled form an enclosed console above the main balcony which has its own bar.

Downstairs, in what was the crypt, is a quieter lounge area. Its high ceiling is supported by pillars, all of differing shapes, which are decorated in tile mosaics in hues of blue, black, white and grey. Seating is at bar stools, and there are low tables in the



A different view from every angle.



The London Limelight, from Charing Cross Road.



Looking up to the dome, showing part of the circular lighting rig and the suspended 3-part ladder.



The entrance to London Limelight in Shaftesbury Avenue.



Ceramic tiling is a feature of the decor.

cloisters; food is also available in the lower lounge.

There are other tucked away areas at The Limelight, one such being the Library, a book-lined VIP room with sofas and low tables which will accommodate up to 50 people. It is situated on the mezzanine level at the front of the Club. A gallery reserved for "Librarians" has a view over the dance floor.

There is a great deal of mosaic tile-work throughout the building, and this was the handiwork of interior designer Michael Kostiff, whose current passion is ceramics. Patterned designs abound on columns and corners, in certain areas kept to neutral tones so that the contemporary art on show is helped and not hindered.

The Limelight is an "event" venue in all senses, and comes into its own when taken over for "specials". A recent day in its life saw a press show for Duracell Batteries during the day, and a visit from the Chicago Bears football team at night. Its avant garde rock style has a weird flexibility that enables flamboyant groups to do their own thing, and take charge of the venue's features in their own fashion.

The circular lighting rig is centered under the dome, with most of the lanterns directed into this confined area. An extension ladder hangs from the apex like some kind of artistic and unavailable escape route. The control room is situated on a third level, directly above the two bars, and a Celco Series 2 60 channel desk emphasises the need for equipment capable of handling any live performance demands thrown at it. Dimmers are also Celco, and the whole lighting installation was undertaken by London Lightman under the direction of the late Mike Cuppage.

Sound is something else. "The Limelight is not a disco in the simplest sense," said installers Shuttlesound, "and they did not want a disco sound system. What they required was a rock and roll system that would play disc and tapes. It was also important that the speakers made a bold statement visually—they didn't want hidden boxes. The sound has to be loud but intelligible and clean.

"Achieving this was not made easy by the fact that the dance floor is situated under the dome. The look was achieved by using four menacing looking towers of speakers which curve inwards over the dance floor, and at the same time acoustically counter the reverberance of the dome and achieve very tight vertical coverage.

"The VIP room downstairs can both take either a feed from the main area or have their own independent output with their own volume control. As with all Shuttlesound systems, it is all operated automatically, incorporating mains sequencing, mains protection and sealed racks. Disc jockeys are, on the whole, not qualified sound engineers so it is better that the PA systems are not tampered with once set up, which is why the Shuttlesound is put in sealed racks. The system has proved to be very successful, and as a result Shuttlesound have been asked to extend the sound to other areas of the building."

The video installation is in triple format so

that American venue tapes can be used, and monitors are sited above the bar overlooking the dance floor, in the VIP room, and in the downstairs area.

Situated where it is, in the heart of London's theatre-land, and at the junction of Covent Garden and the West End, it is Gatiens' hope that the Limelight will attract and become a focal point for those who work in theatre, and those who attend. Also for musicians and artists, and those who listen and look. A sort of cultural junction in the City's entertainment scene.

## Peter Gatiens

Peter Gatiens, the fascinating 33 year-old sole owner of the New York, Chicago and London Limelight Clubs, has single-handedly built one of the leading and best known entertainment empires of the 1980's.

Blending a unique aesthetic style with a keen business vision he's created a revolutionary club ethic—a new range in nightlife, which has been universally copied since his first endeavour ten years ago, and which has carried his extraordinary Limelight imprint through five cities and two continents.

Born in Cornwall, Ontario, the son of a retired postmaster, Gatiens was one of five sons. While his brothers studied for business, law and medicine, Peter sought a career in ice hockey, a pursuit which cost him his left eye and altered his creative destiny.

After studying business administration at Ottawa's Carleton University, Gatiens used his 17,000 dollar hockey injury award to open his first business, the Pant Loft in Cornwall. The early 70's denim craze launched him to swift success, and a second store in Smith Falls followed four years later.

His introduction to nightlife came with the purchase of 'The Aardvark', a disintegrating country and western hangout in Cornwall which he transformed into a successful nightclub, changing its musical format to rock 'n' roll and finally to disco.

Now 21, Gatiens had earned the distinction of being the youngest man in Ontario to hold a liquor license while still operating his two clothing stores; and in this year, encouraged by the phenomenal success of his three businesses, began investing heavily in local real estate. By the end of the year he had built and owned a dozen houses breaking ground for his future success and developing his interest in architecture . . . now his first love.

At 23, Gatiens' success with 'The Aardvark', had developed into a winning recipe for a good nightclub with a singularly distinctive flair: fun, style, comfort and variety the 'Gatiens Way'. With the funds, experience and youth to understand the market of the club scene in the United States, he struck across the border with an energy and spirit that was destined for success.

Trying his hand at the club scene in the States, he promptly bought and refurbished a bankrupt facility in Hollywood, Florida. This first Limelight became the sizzling favourite among locals and the vital tourist trade—initiating his now famous (and frequently imitated) theme parties and artistic "installations". One of the youngest club owners in the country, Gatiens was no also proprietor of one of its largest nightspots.

Three and a half years later, and a millionaire at 27, he sold the Florida Limelight to devote his energies to the renovation of a former dinner theatre in Atlanta, Georgia, which launched his second Limelight in January 1980 amidst a flurry of press attention.

The Atlanta Limelight became one of Dixie's celebrity havens, and Gatiens' reputation for at-



Peter Gatiens in his London Limelight.



The ground floor main bar.

tracting and catering to the special needs of the celebrity, socialite and industrial V.I.P. became his trademark. Culminating as the perfect prototype for Gatién's ambition of a New York club.

Long an aficionado of 19th Century architecture, Gatién sought and found a church building in New York City's Chelsea area, which had been deconsecrated a decade earlier, and sold the Atlanta Limelight to purchase Manhattan's former Episcopal Church of the Holy Communion, a historical landmark on 20th Street at Sixth Avenue.

Considered by many to be the hottest New York nitespot since its opening in 1983, Gatién turned his sites to the Mid-West in the winter of 1985 and opened the Chicago Limelight that summer in a Romanesque-style former museum designed by Henry Ives Cobb. Familiarly known as 'The Castle', this Limelight is one of the rare examples of 19th Century architecture in Chicago.

All Gatién's efforts are now focussed on the daily activities of his New York, Chicago, and London clubs.

### Lighting Equipment

Control:

Celco Series 2 60 channel desk

72 Par 56 Cans

12 CCT Silhouettes with 15° lens tubes

10 CCT Silhouettes with 30° lens tubes

20 Arc Line strobe tubes

Reggianni low voltage halogen pinspots for house lighting

Projection:

10 Optikinetics Solar 250's.

### Video Equipment

Sony 5630 U-matic

Panasonic 6200

8 Sony 27" monitors

7 JVC 22" monitors

AMark video switcher and amplifier

### Sound Equipment

Main System

DJ Contol Area:

1 x Revox B77 HS

2 x Technics SL1200 with Stanton 680 cartridges

1 x Electro-Voice DS35 microphone

1 x Urei 1620 mixer

2 x Electro-Voice Sentry 100EL powered monitors

Processing:

2 x Symmetrix 501 compressor/limiter

1 x SCV stereograph limiter

2 x Electro-Voice X-EQ2 active crossovers

2 x Electro-Voice X-EQ3 active crossovers

Amps:

12 x Rauch DVT2503

Speakers:

4 x Electro-Voice stacks comprising:

Sub-bass: 2 x TL4025/1 x Proline 15L

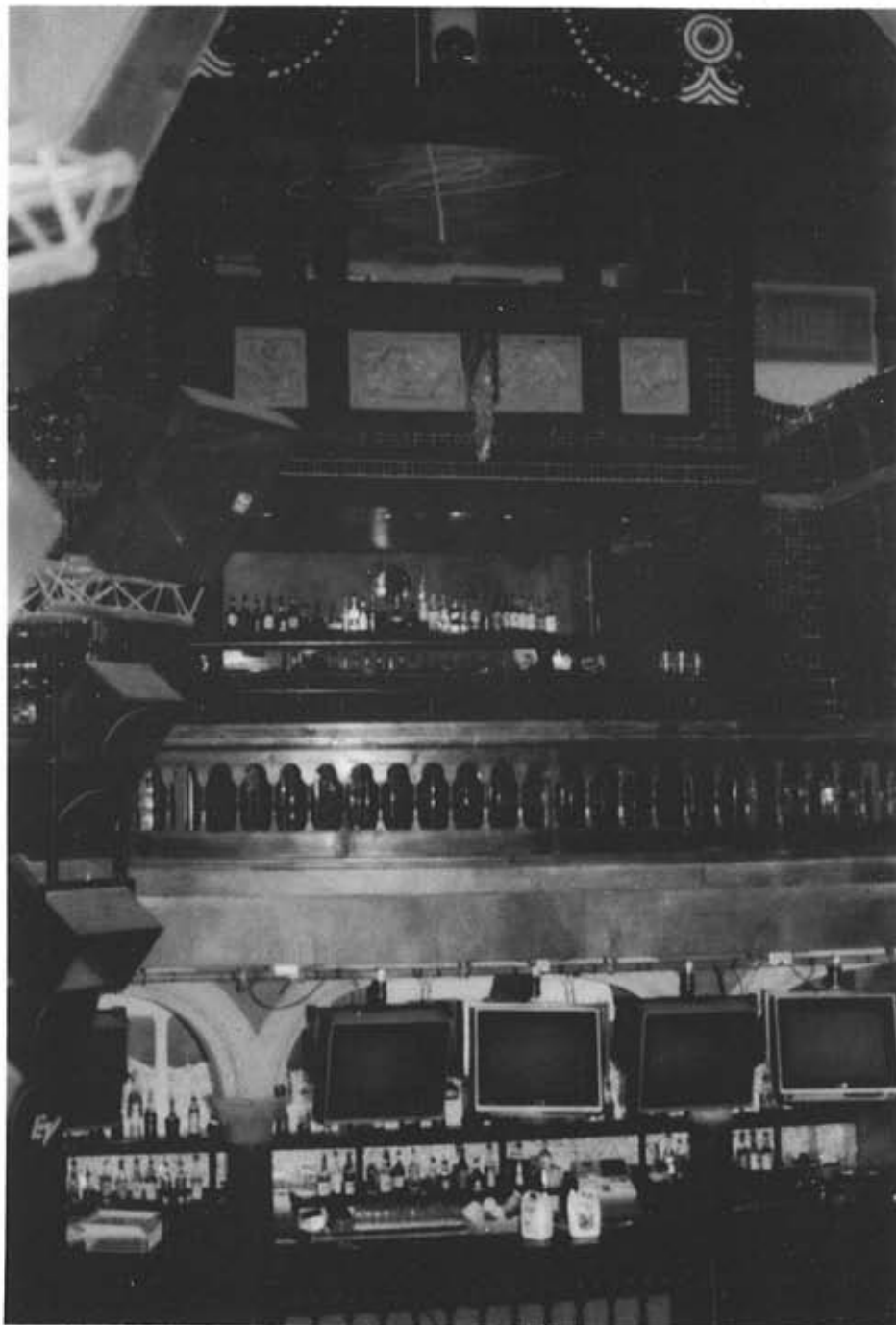
1 x LF118/1 x DL18X

Bass: 1 x TL1806Q/4 x DL12X

Mid: 1 x TL806D/2 x DL12X

HF: 1 x HP6040/DH1

UHF: 1 x HP940/DH2



Ground floor and first floor bars, with the control room above. Video monitors are suspended above the ground floor bar, and to the left one of the speaker stacks is just in the picture, supported on Trillite trussing.

### Ancillary Equipment

1 x EVT 5216 Mixing Desk

1 x Symmetrix 522 stereo compressor

1 x Rebis Distribution System

1 x EMO mains sequencer

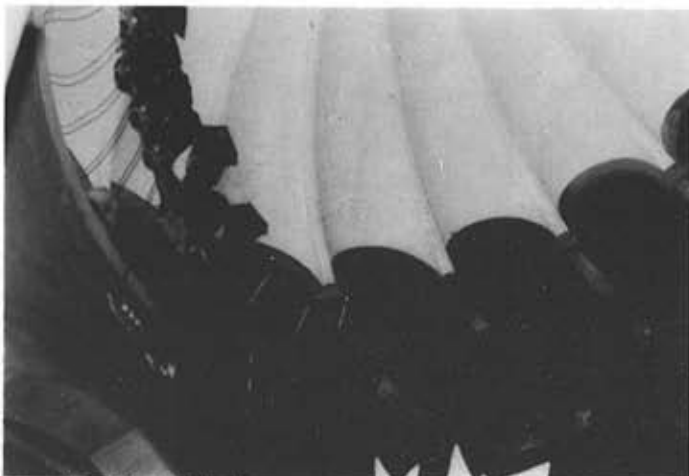
VIP Lounge

2 x Electro-Voice Sentry 100EL powered monitors

Basement Lounge

4 x Electro-Voice Sentry 100A monitors

(bass optional)



A section of the lighting rig.



Matt Kelly, the Limelight's technical manager.



# A Day in the Life of Theatre Projects

John Offord visited Theatre Projects' new North London base, camera in hand.

Theatre Projects Lighting, Theatre Projects Sound and Vision, and TFA make up Theatre Projects Services Limited, who since mid-May have been operating out of larger premises in North London, just off the Caledonian Road. Together with Zenith Lighting Limited and Samuelson Vari-Lite Europe Limited, who operate from Cricklewood, the five operations are all wholly-owned subsidiaries of Samuelson PLC, and account for about 75 per cent of the activity of the Presentation Division—Samuelson Communications.

At Blundell Street N7 Gary Brown is boss of the lighting side, Richard Rogers manages the Sound and Vision side, and Mike Lowe looks after TFA. Jimmy Barnett is managing director of both Cricklewood-based operating companies. Key people within the Lighting Division are Jenny Cane who supervises production and design, and Bryan Raven, office manager.

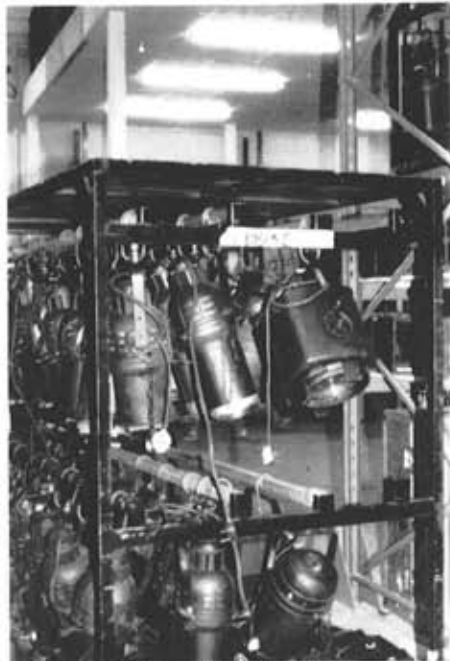
With the "lists" out of the way, and you feel for reasons of history and clarity you always have to try and get the record straight when dealing with anything that has the words

'Theatre Projects' up front, I can get down to talking about what goes on within the walls of the new complex on the Caledonian Road.

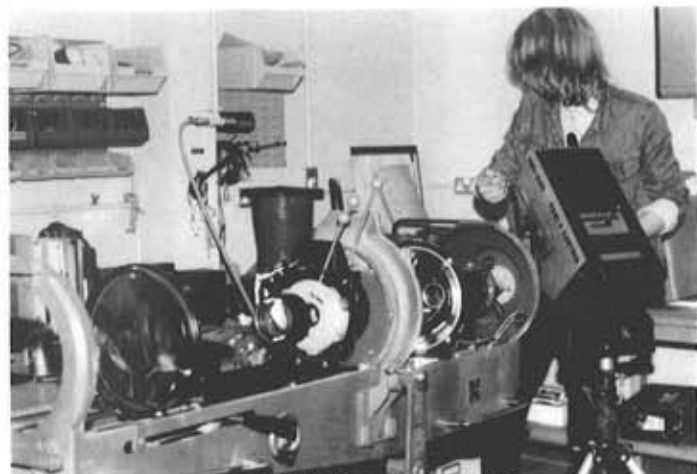
The building itself—with 40,000 square feet of space, is a former BICC main distribution depot for cables. It was designed to carry heavy loads, and to be easy for storage and movement, and is ideal for its new owners, who carry Europe's largest stock of lighting equipment. In fact, a total of around £4m is tied up on the stock lists of the three operations based here.

Over £250,000 has been spent on refitting the building, a fair proportion on special racking for storing equipment, so that items such as lanterns and cables can be stored on trolley-type cages, and fork-lifted to and from their usual resting place. "At any one time we've probably got three-quarters of our inventory out on jobs," Gary Brown told me. From where I stood, how they'd ever get it all in if the occasion ever arose left quite a lot to the imagination.

But the jobs aren't all major in terms of big names or venues. Equipment is hired out to a



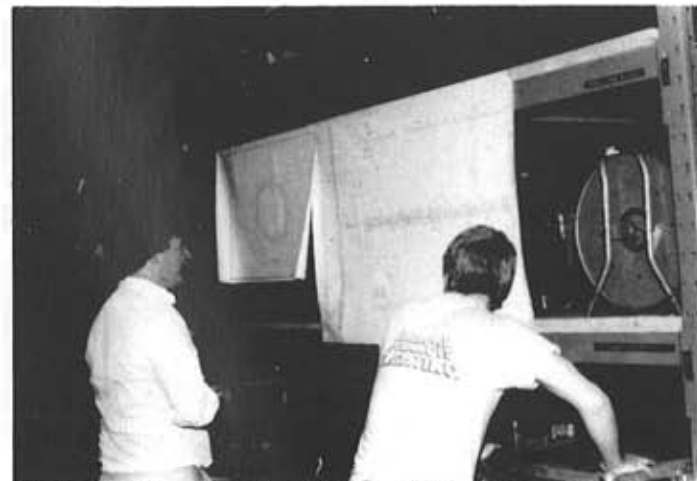
A trolley of lanterns for 'Cabaret'.



Work in progress on a spotlight in the specialist servicing area.



Theatre Projects' new base at Blundell Street, just off Caledonian Road in London N7.



Checking stock for the massive rig for the 1986 Royal Tournament—a huge hire project.



Gary Brown—head of Theatre Projects' lighting division.

huge range of events, from garden parties to product launches.

Gary Brown was a freelance production technician before he took over the challenge of managing Theatre Projects Lighting. "I can see that one has got to provide a better and better quality of service for equipment, and the schedules you keep. Equipment is getting more hi-tech—and we've got to get a better human base to deal with the problem. We've got to attract people with skills who can become 'generalists'—in other words taking on people who are up with the skills in technology, and teaching them the general skills of the business we're in. There is no room for 'boffins' any more, and we will have to keep a high level of motivation—developing live hire can help to keep the interest and improve skill levels."

The lighting hire side takes over the main part of the ground floor, and includes the main store, a maintenance and 'specials' workshop, a specialist area for computerised products and hi-tech service and repair, and a preparation area for checking all equipment as it arrives back from hire, and before it leaves again on the next, often rigged according to order.

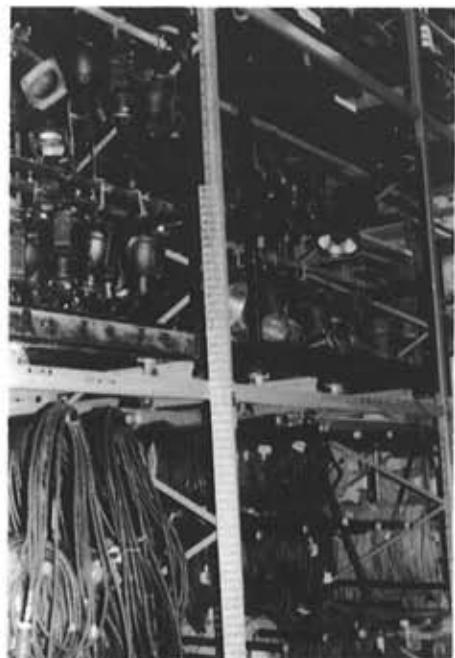
The Sound and Vision store is on the same floor, and in addition there are areas for projector testing and the division's own electronics workshop. A programming theatre is located elsewhere in the building. Down in the basement lurks TFA, which specialises in touring concert sound equipment—live hire only. Within the main office block is the Theatre Projects Lighting drawing office, a special facility that enables lighting designers to come in and plan their work from scratch.

Gary Brown sees his main task as two-fold—keeping his staff and stock "happy". In other words to have as good, and as happy a team as he can get, with equipment hired as to order, and in good order. "And we mustn't forget the small guy—we intend to remember that," he said. "Often that's where it all comes from.

"As the business gets bigger, I've realised what an inward looking industry we're in. We need to look out to other industries for skills and ideas, because they will give us new strengths. We're in a business which should and must learn to use things imaginatively."



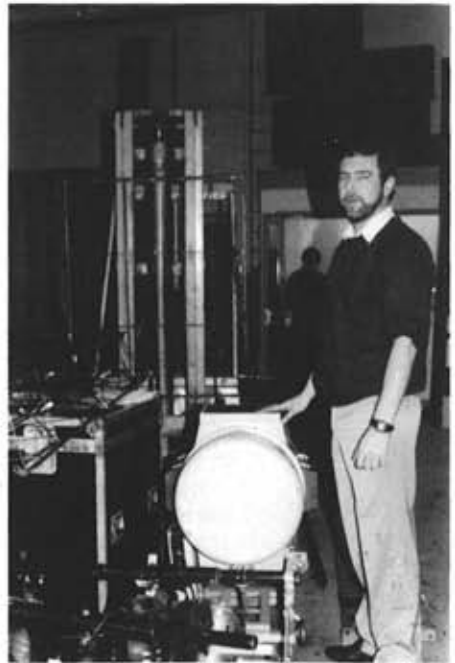
Jenny Cane looks after Theatre Projects' production and design projects.



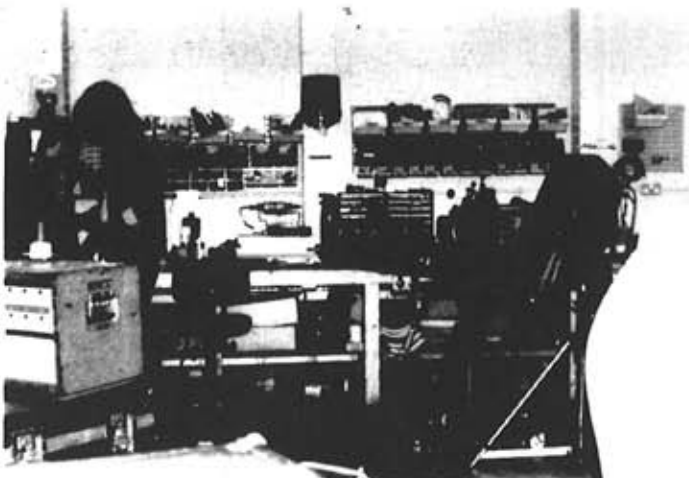
Equipment is stored on wheeled units, and then fork-lifted into its correct place in the store.



Another hire job gets careful consideration.



Alan Thompson checks out equipment ready for despatch.



A general view of part of the specialist workshop area.



A client checks equipment in the TFA equipment store.

# coemar



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# A Theatre Inspired

**The New Victoria Theatre, Europe's first purpose-built theatre-in-the-round opens in North Staffordshire**

Two of the very nicest (most pleasant, agreeable, satisfactory, O.E.D.) new theatres have just opened in England. The Royal Shakespeare Company's elegant Swan Theatre was featured in our June issue, and now it's the turn of Europe's first purpose-built theatre-in-the-round to come into the limelight.

Stoke, or more correctly North Staffordshire's New Victoria Theatre, situated on a garden site atop a wooded hill in Newcastle-under-Lyme, has been over 25 years in gestation from the historic day in 1960 when the town gave Stephen Joseph's touring company a permanent home in the Borough, and its long-awaited civic theatre was promised. The theatre was never built, and the former touring company was settled in the Victoria Theatre—a cheaply converted former cinema, originally built in 1914. That was in 1962.

In the intervening years, Stoke Victoria, theatre-in-the-round, and theatre director Peter Cheeseman have become a living legend—an unbreakable unit on the world theatre scene, and the living link to the early exploratory days of Stephen Joseph and his work in this theatre form.

Now working as frantically as ever to see the new theatre off to a momentous start, Peter Cheeseman takes up the story. "Between 1968 and 1978 we were offered about 50 sites for a brand new, purpose-built theatre. We suffered much delay through municipal indecision, as sites offered were withdrawn after we had chosen them, until the moment when I parted the hawthorn branches at the front of the site at Stoneyfields, and first stepped into the magic garden. Newcastle offered the site to us for 125 years at a peppercorn rent and have honoured their promise.

"The great advantage of the delay is that we have been able to learn so much, from our own working experiences at the Vic, and by studying the dozens of other new and converted theatres that have been built post-war in Britain. The Vic was one of the last regional theatres to start operating; the New Vic is one of the last two to be built this century.

"So we have been able to see and learn from others, thanks to the characteristic generosity of my professional colleagues, particularly Alan Ayckbourn, and to their architects. We saw the right floor-to-ceiling dimension for our foyers at the Octagon Theatre in Bolton; we were inspired by the lighting grid at Sheffield's Crucible Theatre. Alan Ayckbourn's dressing rooms at the Stephen Joseph Theatre in Scarborough are a model of how to make the regional actor's very long day and night less uncomfortable. Our former head of design, Alison Chitty, visited 50 theatre workshops and wardrobes with the help of an Arts Council Bursary, and



Europe's first purpose-built theatre-in-the-round—the New Victoria at Stoke-on-Trent.

combined that study with her long experience at the Vic to advise us on our own new ones. The delightful Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester has given us valuable opportunities to test dimensional ideas by looking at another theatre in the round.

"In this way, the New Victoria Theatre has been inspired by other people's successes and we hope guided by their misfortunes to avoid a number of pitfalls. The old Victoria Theatre's auditorium was exactly on the right scale—the human figure on the stage is seen

clearly, and placed in a context which allows him to command our attention and our respect, but keeps him at human scale. The basic shape for the new theatre was inspired by Piet Hein's superellipse—something Stephen Joseph and I discussed in the early sixties—but slightly modified for ease of setting out.

"We knew we needed an auditorium to seat substantially more than our original 400, but not to go much above 800. The room settled at 600, plus promenaders behind the



The New Victoria Theatre-in-a-garden.

seven steeply-raked rows, and including a two-row balcony. Architect John Sambrook has described how we have got 600 people into a room that looks the same size as our old auditorium. Theatre-in-the-round does the rest—when one back row seats 100 people, even a half-full house looks packed!

"However, the most exciting aspect of the New Vic for me is its beautiful site. It will give so much pleasure for theatregoers and staff that it will provide, in the words of our inspired landscape consultant Chris Baines, a "double bill" at every theatre visit. The Stoneyfields garden will be both a car park and a nature conservation area in one. It is a unique and delightful bonus, and a reward for our long years of working and waiting."

The structural back-bone of the theatre is a reinforced concrete drum containing the performance and seating areas, with the plan-shape of the drum walls being reflected in the seating and stage profiles. The 300mm thick walls forming the drum are founded on sandstone, and rise twelve metres above the ground, with the octagonal auditorium roof comprising a cart-wheel arrangement of steel trusses carrying concrete roof units, with each 'spoke' supported on the drum wall and providing a clear span of up to 26 metres across the auditorium.

Suspended immediately below the auditorium roof, by means of cables in 'Java Bridge' fashion, is the lighting gallery—a complex of walkways constructed in light steelwork and appearing to float above the central performance area.

Outside the auditorium a two-storey lean-to construction surround the central drum, providing foyer space, offices, dressing rooms, etc. A single-storey building linked to the main complex provides accommodation for workshops, the Stephen Joseph Room, and other ancillary areas.

Acoustic consultant for the project was Rupert Taylor, who had to find ways of dealing with the special needs of theatre-in-the-round in this particular building. A system of reflectors has been designed and installed above the lighting grid, below the roof support trusses. These reflectors rely on an unusual effect which is caused by surfaces of cylindrical cross section, and an array of such reflectors has the property of being capable of reflecting sound from a wide range of source positions to a much greater range of receiver positions, so that a nearly equal amount of sound reaches each receiver even if he is behind the back of a directional source. "With a suitable choice of over-head reflector size, radius and chord, it is possible to achieve useful early reflections for listeners seated behind a performer," he explained.

"A particular advantage of this system of reflectors is that for musical performances with more than a small number of players, the musicians at one side of the stage receive early reflections of the sound from those at the other, which provides an acoustical feedback for the performers so that they receive a better impression of what the audience is hearing. The second is the achievement of qualities which are less easily definable, but which colour the opinions of experienced critics.

The New Victoria Theatre, in being designed for both speech and music, has two somewhat conflicting requirements as far as



The early days at the old Victoria Theatre—Peter Cheeseman (left) and playwright Bill Morrison discuss the 1971 production of an adaptation of Hardy's 'Tess of the D'Urbervilles'. The intimacy of the original theatre continues in the new building, with a very similar acting area.



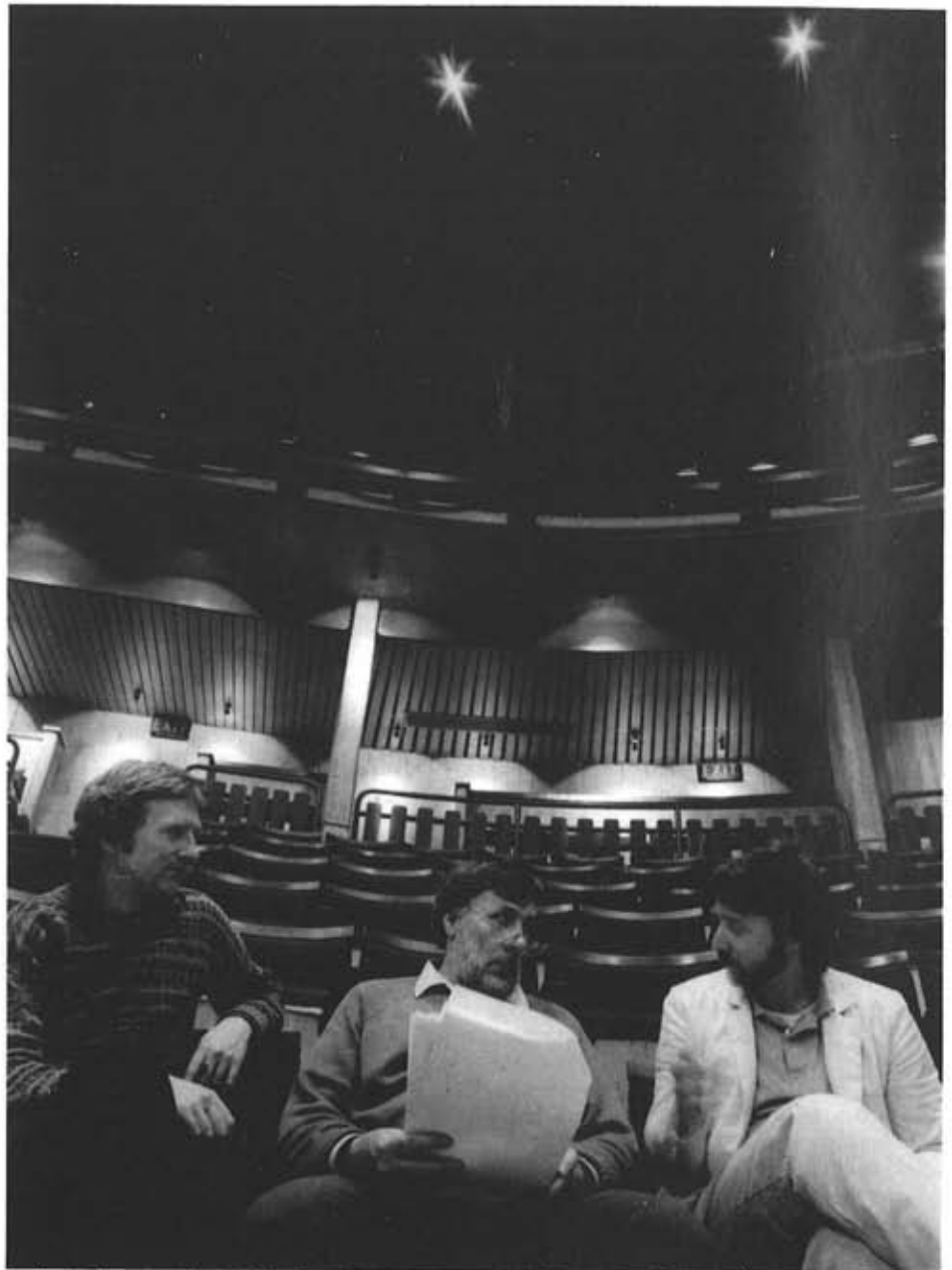
The lighting gallery—a complex of walkways suspended and 'floating' beneath the auditorium ceiling.

the optimum value of the reverberation time is concerned. While, as a  $5000\text{m}^3$  concert hall, a reverberation time of between 1.5 and 2.0 seconds would be desirable, this would cause problems of clarity in theatre-in-the-round because direct sound is weak unless the source is facing the listener. This is true not only of speech, but also, to a lesser extent, of music when an instrument is shielded by the body of the player. The optimum time for speech in a conventional auditorium of  $5000\text{m}^3$  volume is about 0.9 seconds.

"Given the special features of theatre-in-the-round, the New Victoria Theatre has been designed to be free from acoustical faults, to achieve clarity and intimacy of speech, and to be warm and responsive when used for music. The ultimate judgement will rest with the listener."

No sound reinforcement is employed for theatrical performance, and equipment consists of a new stage management console from MAC of Manchester, who looked after the sound equipment installation, and a DDA "D" Series mixing console, 12 into 8 into 2 with an  $8 \times 8$  matrix. Four input channels are stereo inputs. Speakers are four Martin CX2's driven by an HH M900 amplifier with three Quad 303 amps from the old theatre for supplementary sound. There are six Revox tapes from the old theatre, and a new Revox record deck B795. Sound consultant was Peter Barham.

Stage lighting consultant for the theatre was Geoffrey Joyce of Manchester's Palace Theatre and Opera House, whose earliest experiences in the profession including working in a small drama studio based in the Manchester University Department of Drama, now called the Stephen Joseph Studio. "The control room housed one tape recorder, sound mixer, and a "Junior Eight"—a wire wound dimmer, each slide dimmer capable of taking  $2 \times 500$  watt lanterns. The students who had come to follow an academic career in the history of the theatre, were learning, through this space, how to practice a great traditional art.



Assistant director Alec Bell (left), theatre director Peter Cheeseman, and chief electrician and lighting designer Paul Jones get down to work in new surroundings.



Paul Jones, the New Vic's chief electrician and lighting designer.



Sound engineer David 'Baz' Easterbrook, started his career at the Sherman Theatre in Cardiff and Theatre Royal Bristol after completing an ABTT technical course. He then joined the Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester as a sound supervisor, and stayed there for six years before going freelance for four years working on all kinds of entertainment and presentation.

In the picture above he is at work recording sound effects for the theatre's opening production, 'St. George of Scotia Road'.

"The job I had taken over was part of the fellowship which Stephen Joseph was doing until his fatal illness. It was this huge inspiring influence that flowered not only in Manchester, but in Scarborough and Stoke, and Stephen Joseph showed both me and students of the time how to improvise with light and sound, and how by so doing, to keep things simple.

"Whilst things have inevitably changed since 1968, I can still look back knowing that the Junior Eight used at that time came from Stephen Joseph's original touring company, which later settled in Stoke at the Victoria Theatre. It became their first switchboard.

"Following in this pedigree, it was very much our intention to return the spirit of that Junior Eight to its rightful place in the New Victoria Theatre—but it would have modern electronics, a comfortable catwalk, and a disc drive. I somehow think Stephen Joseph will quietly approve of what we've done."

Every way you look, every one you talk to, all refer back to the roots of the old theatre that saw stars like Robert Powell and Ben Kingsley begin their careers, and they emphasise the importance of maintaining the tradition of theatre-in-the-round, and its formative years. Over £3 million has been spent on the opportunity to do just that.

"We hope that above all, the New Vic will do its job efficiently and economically, as well as with inspiration," said Peter Cheeseman. "It will after all be that new theatre-in-the-round which Stephen Joseph worked for for so long, and which sadly never lived to see. It is a great responsibility to see that we get it right—and I believe we stand a good chance of doing so."

## Lighting the New Vic

Chief electrician and lighting designer at the New Victoria Theatre is Paul Jones, formerly deputy chief electrician and lighting designer at Manchester's Royal Exchange Theatre. Paul trained at LAMDA before freelancing in South Wales for six years, where he worked on many touring fringe theatre shows, most particularly at Cardiff's Chapter Arts Centre. He spent a year at Bath Theatre Royal before going to Manchester.

At the New Vic a basic lighting rig is designed for a season, with any special requirements added on top, as with the majority of producing theatres. "In the plans they had originally allowed for new equipment, but we had to cut down because of budget problems," he told me. "It was decided to have a lot of existing equipment refurbished, and this was undertaken by White Light. We only purchased around 40 new lanterns to add to the Patt.23 and 123's from the old theatre. It's obviously not an ideal situation, but we'll manage, of course. As we are able to purchase new equipment, the old items will go into the Stephen Joseph Room. The Gemini control is obviously new, and the old AMC board from the old Vic will again be passed over to the Stephen Joseph Room. It will take about five years to get to the level I would ideally like," he explained.

There are many attractions in joining a new theatre, but the main one in Paul Jones' case was the overall concept. "This is not a typical theatre—it's like coming to a new environment, and it makes a lot of difference," he said. "Peter Cheeseman is the driving force—it's a personality thing—and he's got 25 years' experience of working in the round. And then there's the direct link with Stephen Joseph, who was also one of the founders of the Association of British Theatre Technicians. If you read the old numbers of 'Tabs' you feel the direct historical link back. There is a



The MAC custom-built stage management console in the background, with the Strand Gemini lighting control nearest camera.

great feeling of getting involved with all that."

"Our chance here is to get rid of some of the old restrictions, but not to lose any of the existing format. There will be no unnecessary changes. I hope I can bring experience from a very technical theatre in helping to make it work."

### Lighting:

|              |                              |
|--------------|------------------------------|
| Control:     | Strand Gemini, 180 channels  |
| Lanterns:    | 20 Prelude 16/30 650 watt    |
|              | 40 Patt 23 500 watt          |
|              | consisting 23 MKI (23)       |
|              | 23S (5)                      |
|              | 23 MkII (12)                 |
|              | N. Tubes (5)                 |
|              | Wide lenses (9)              |
|              | 13 Patt 264 1000 watt        |
|              | 15 Harmony fresnel 1000 watt |
|              | 4 ADB fresnel 1000 watt      |
|              | 25 Patt 123 500 watt         |
|              | 2 Patt 743 1000 watt         |
|              | 4 Patt 60 Floods 500 watt    |
|              | 3 Par Cans                   |
| Accessories: | 4 Colour wheels              |
|              | 10 Patt 23 Iris              |
|              | 4 Prelude 16/30 Iris         |
|              | 2 Patt 264 Iris              |



Site layout of the New Victoria Theatre.

L+SI report by John Offord

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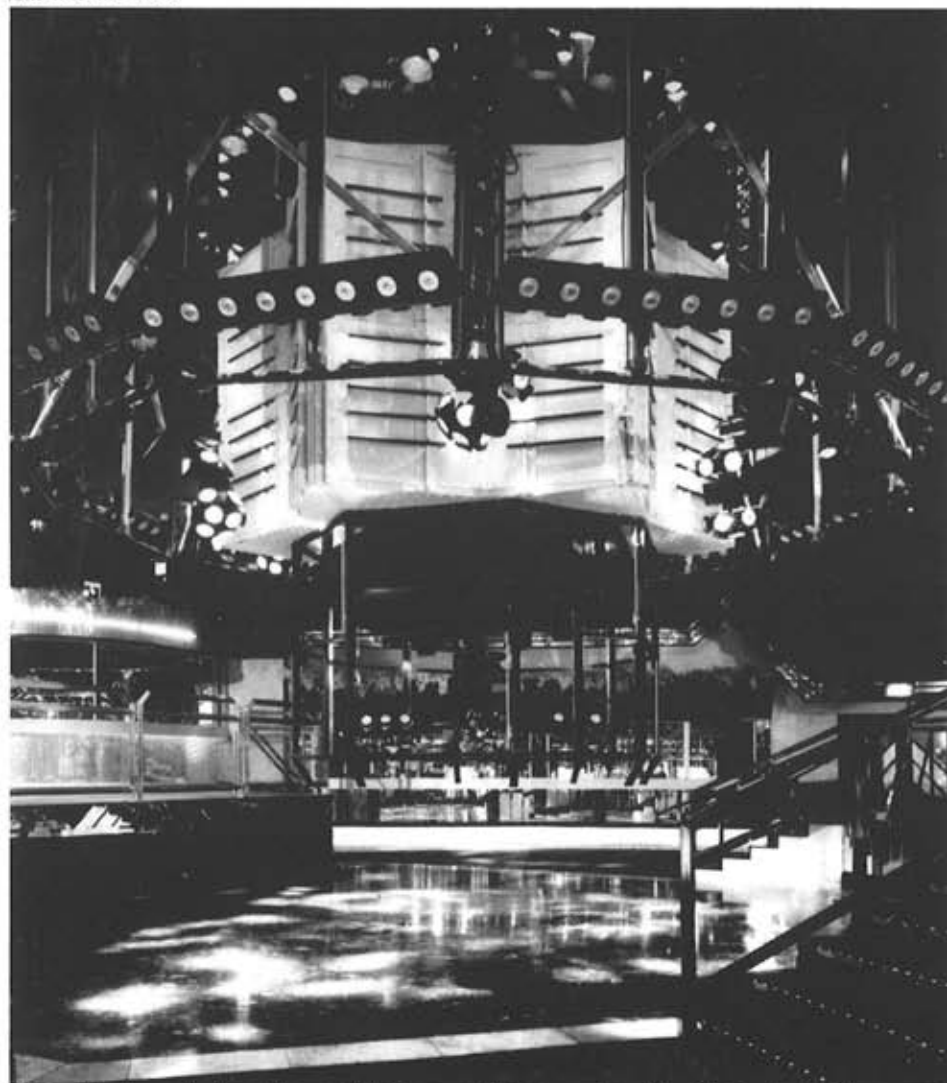
Southern Office:  
57 Filmer Road, London SW6  
Tel: 01-731 3291

# From Pictures to Palaces

Cinemas provide a major source for new discotheque and club venues



The entrance to Mr. Smith's at Warrington—the glazed double doors to the right of the telephone boxes lead into the Club.



Mr. Smith's—the main dance floor, with lift (space ship) in lowered position. Contractors for the venue included Astralloy (rigging), Dagar (lifting), Abacus (sound), and Satel (lighting). Designer was Graham Barron, and installation by Action Light.

It hardly seems credible that little more than half a century has passed since audiences world-wide sat in front of silver screens and were enthralled by the heroic or comic antics of two-dimensional actors—whose performances now look as wooden as the Indian standing outside a Western store.

For the first time in history, cinema made it possible for a performer to earn a fortune, attracting audiences without the need to turn up for the performance. And people did, and by the millions. Cinemas would be open seven days per week with two and sometimes three 'houses' per day. It is no wonder that with such a willing and regular clientele cinema companies prospered. With so little competition for leisure time, and a virtually car-less population, the cinema developers had a more or less captive audience when they set up in the villages and suburbs of our major towns and cities.

The strength of the industry can be gauged by the fact that during the 1940's two companies alone operated more than 2,000 major cinemas, a feat altogether unmatched in the discotheque industry. It is also worth noting that for every major site there were at least ten minor ones. The demand for film was amazing, even during the War years when materials were scarce, over one and a half million feet of film was required weekly for news reels alone.

Nothing stands still, and as rising affluence brought television and the car to most households, the demise of the local, and to some extent the major city centre cinemas, was assured. For many cinema owners the game of bingo saved the day, and some of those original bingo clubs still operate. Others joined the failed cinemas as they in turn were eclipsed by the plush city centre bingo clubs with high value prizes and giant jackpots.

However, prime sites never stay empty for long, and entrepreneurs were quick to see their club/discotheque potential and the conversions started. The number which have now become discotheques is quite staggering, and the conversions usually belie their origins.

At one new cinema conversion in Leeds, The News, the owners of the Bulldog-designed club have not attempted to hide the premises' former use, and have introduced the cinema's original projectors into the theme. The foyer houses one as a centrepiece, and the second is sited near the main bar in the club area. The latter has a strobe light fitted in the lamp housing to duplicate the flickering gate of a running projector.

The original sound equipment at The News was replaced completely (no one ever seems to retain those massive bass horns) by Carlsbro, who also supplied and installed the lighting. Both light and sound equipment is



concentrated on the dance floor—which would be a problem were it not for the unique lighting rig. Because The News has its stage over the bar, the lighting effects are in the sightlines of many patrons when looking at the stage—so the lights move, not up, but to the side. The lighting gantries which reach out across the room swing back to the side wall above the D.J., to provide a clear view for everyone including patrons in the V.I.P. bar at the opposite end of the room.

It is impossible to say which was the first cinema to become a disco club but Casanovas could well lay claim to being the first of the new-style conversions. Under the former ownership of Tony Paul and Michael Craig, the club was created in Wakefield's Westgate. It bears no resemblance to the building it originally was yet it contains in its layout the features typical of any cinemas, the falling floor level, double doors and balcony—all of which were created again after stripping out the originals. The strength of Casanovas' reputation was its lighting—mostly from McCormacks—who were back again, along with Lightning, to produce the spectacular rigs for The Rooftop Gardens which was built at the rear of Casanovas.

Restoration rather than replacement has been one of the features of the Videotech in Huddersfield, which despite a layout more akin to a theatre, was in fact a cinema created in a former warehouse of almost cubic proportions. The restoration is a fine example of an alternative approach to discotheque design, and although it may not fit in with many people's idea on how a place should look to appeal to today's audiences, it does prove that owners do not have to be sheep to be successful.

The original ceiling and balcony have not only stayed in place but have been restored to their former splendour with the contemporary club hardware, the tubular steel work, stairways and tubelight nosings etc. skilfully integrated. Lightning also did the lighting rig work on this conversion and coped well with the problem of installing lighting into the open space of the ceiling area. They produced a rig which is unobtrusive at rest, but very effective in operation. Abacus of Castleford did the sound system which has to cope with live performance, video presentation on the giant screen, and of course a disco, the Videotech being a multi-media venue. The main stage-mounted loudspeakers are by Electrovoice and the remainder around the building are McCormack. The D.J. and lighting operator are situated in one of the 'Royal' boxes which gives them a clear view of the whole place.

Mr. Smith's Mr. Smiths in Warrington is probably the biggest and brightest of the recent conversions. Over £1m is reported to have been spent on the conversion which was co-ordinated by Steve English for Action Light in Warrington. Satel U.K.'s Graham Barron was responsible for the lighting design on the rig, the moving parts of which are educated by pneumatic rams. There is also a moveable man-carrying spaceship incorporated into the rig. Once again Abacus did the sound installation and used Electrovoice loudspeakers with the usual turntable and mixer combination.

Neon is used extensively both inside and out at Mr. Smiths, and it is the neon of the sign which draws attention to the corner entrance of Jimmy's in Station Road at



The Videotech at Huddersfield—looking down into the DJ's 'Royal' box.



Central Park at Wakefield—the number one discotheque in Great Britain 1983/84. Casanova's adjacent bar in the cinema building at first floor level.

Castleford. Jimmy's was to be the first of a series of clubs owned by the Walker Bingo organisation. The company has many clubs throughout the North and are in an ideal position to start a new chain of discotheques—so it is a shame that their first venture had to contend with the miners' strike which closed many businesses. Jimmy's is often said to be a smaller Casanovas, but there is no real similarity apart from mirrors, balcony and balcony bar, and the fact that it too was a cinema.

As the name Jimmy's has no obvious connection with the former operators, but many new venues make no attempt to hide their heritage, such as The News, Scene 2 (Rochdale), and the Silver Screen in Eccles. The Silver Screen was formerly The Regent, because of its Regent Street location, and it also spent some time under the Raffles Winebar banner. Taken over two years ago, and fitted with £85,000 of sound and light equipment by Ray Ashton and partner, the venue has since prospered.

These are just a few of hundreds of conversions nationwide, and it is probably fair to say that the cinema must be the most common building source for venues, probably

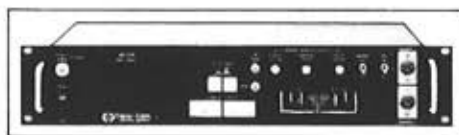
coming second only to modern office/shop units as adaptations to discotheques. The conversions continue. One major club has just opened, and three more are underway in Middleton, South Kirby and Leeds. All three are secret at the moment, and one may well ruffle a few feathers when details are announced.

It is interesting to witness the entertainment wheel going full circle as most discotheques are giving visual entertainment priority, and installing screens of various sizes. Once again they are turning to America as an entertainment source, but this time the images are coming as radio waves via the satellites, and not on film arriving by ship or airline.

In some areas the continuing unemployment situation is re-creating the circumstances of former times, and an easy-access escapist-type entertainment has a ready and eager audience. The discotheque with all the modern features, but situated just down the road, looks like having a rosy future if circumstances continue as they are or even worsen. So sack the projectionist and book a D.J.!

**Andrew Brooker**

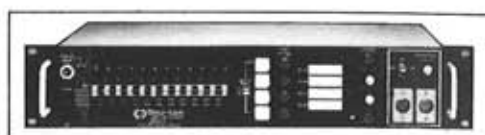
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# Strand's Day-Out at the Swan Theatre



The RSC's new Swan Theatre

Strand Lighting's 200th Galaxy memory lighting system was installed in the new Swan Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon earlier in the summer when the RSC's new venue opened for the first time. To mark the occasion, a ceremony took place at the main RSC Theatre on August 4th at which the managing director of the company, Michael Lowe, presented an optional facilities panel for the Galaxy to John Bradley, technical administrator for the Royal Shakespeare Company. A regal touch was added with a set of

special gold keys for the system.

Strand obviously think of their connections with the Stratford venues as important in both commercial and prestige terms. The 288 channel Galaxy 2 Arena in the Swan, together with Permuss dimmers, is complemented by a mix of Prelude, Harmony

and Cadenza profile, fresnel and prism convex spotlights plus Parblazer beamlights.

It is the third Galaxy chosen by the RSC. The main Royal Shakespeare Theatre at Stratford, and the Barbican Theatre, the RSC's London base, are also equipped with the same control systems.



Strand Lighting's managing director Michael Lowe (left) presents the Optional Facilities Panel and special gold keys to the RSC's technical administrator, John Bradley.



Ivan Myles, Strand Lighting field sales manager, with James Sargant, London administrator for the RSC, and consultant Bob Anderson.



John Bradley with Eric Baker of Strand in the Swan Theatre control room.



Strand's marketing manager David Brooks (left) with Richard Harris, editor of the new Strandlight publication, and Frederick Bentham, former Rank Strand technical director and editor of 'Tabs'.



Wayne Dowdeswell, chief electrician and lighting designer for the Swan Theatre.

# ON TOUR

Keith Dale

After two months' absence from the pages of **L+SI**, and life in general, it came as quite a shock to discover what civilisation (and my garden) had been up to while I was away on tour myself with Joe Jackson.

Normally, for manufacturers and rental companies alike, the summer months are much quieter, as people in Europe disappear on holiday, and the UK touring scene goes into hibernation. That's what I used to think, but this summer's not slackened off one little bit.

One surprise was to learn of the the Saudi Experience Exhibition at Olympia, complete with a collection of Celco lighting boards, camels, and several tons of imported sand. This I just had to see for myself, and the editor of **L+SI** insisted I covered for 'On Tour' this month, despite the existence of so much equipment from my own company!

As far as my own exploits 'on tour' are concerned, I'm not going to bore you, but I would like to say thank you to Denise and Judy of 'Eat to a Beat'

for giving me double portions of food and, as agreed, the chance to get a mention in the pages of **L+SI** (next issue, Ed.). Who says I'm easily bribed?!

A special thanks to my crew from Meteorolites, namely Paul Divine, Roger Grybowicz and Simon Peck for putting up with 'operator error' - and to my own company for letting me off the leash. No thanks at all to the Russians for sending large clouds of radioactivity to greet us upon arrival in Sweden in late April.

## A Day Out at Riyadh

Friday August 8th was the day I was going to Riyadh—and what a nice day it was! As I drive up the M20 towards London the sun was shining brightly in a brilliant blue sky, and traffic was not at all bad as I left the motorway and headed towards Catford. What a relief! The day seemed to start better than usual as I pulled into Celco's car park and left the car—I wasn't going to attempt driving all the way to Olympia at that time in the morning. I'd have two chances of getting there on time!

So off to the station at Bellingham I went. Were British Rail really getting there? I must admit that I find travelling by rail and tube much more difficult than flying. At least with airports there are lots of displays and announcements for your flight. You can't go wrong there.

Anyway, I managed to find a train that went to Blackfriars and from there I took the tube to Olympia. It wasn't as difficult as I imagined. In fact, I was quite impressed.

At Olympia the queues were already forming, and obviously this was an exhibition not to be missed. I walked in and headed towards the control booth where I had arranged to meet Michael Eveleigh of A.V.E. and the men from Keylight.

I weaved through the crowds towards the far end of Olympia, past deserts and camels and an old city wall, until I came across the Dome. This huge geodesic structure was to temporarily rival St. Pauls according to the press releases. And a mighty fine piece of work it was too. Beneath the Dome, in the centre, was the control room. Smoked black glass covered the sides and a multitude of lights and projectors sprouted from the top. It was a work of art in itself.

Gathered around one side where the people who put this all together. Michael Eveleigh looked justly proud of his accomplishments, for the entire exhibition was put together in one month. That included submitting designs, getting planning permission (from the very helpful Hammersmith Local Council I'm reliably informed), creating the sets, and "prepping" all the equipment. The whole show was built in three days, a tremendous achievement especially when one considers the size of some of the exhibits and the consequent need for large scale lighting.

A.V.E. brought in Amos Manasseh as lighting designer and Keylight Limited were

contracted to supply all the lighting equipment. A combination, I was told, that had worked extremely well.

The design brief could be loosely translated as being to recreate the lighting found in both a Saudi desert and in an old walled city, as well as to enhance the impressive structure of the Dome. The Dome was the first difficulty to overcome, as to light it from the outside, which would have been a natural choice, would prove difficult to carry out as the weight of the units required would be colossal. This, combined with the necessary placement of the lanterns, would also make servicing difficult. Amos settled for lights situated on top of the control booth, and this also provided positions for the numerous A.V. projectors that displayed various scenes of Saudi life on the walls beneath the Dome. The end result was, I feel, in keeping with the overall look of the the Dome, which attempted to put across the hi-tech image of present-day Saudi Arabia as opposed to the 'Laurence of



Michael Eveleigh, managing director of A.V.E. and Abdullah Alghazi, audio visual consultant to the Saudi Experience exhibition.



Keith Dale, centre, talks to lighting designer Amos Manasseh (right) who was brought in by AVE to mastermind the lighting design.



The Saudi Experience exhibition at London's Olympia captures the flavour of Riyadh, in itself a microcosm of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.



Underneath the dome at the Saudi Experience exhibition. It represented the biggest challenge in AV staging, involving nine multi-screen shows, 100 projectors, over 20 video screens, nine tons of theatrical lighting equipment, and many sophisticated control systems. Over 25 technicians had just a few days and nights in which to rig and rehearse this massive show.



A view of the Saudi Experience as you enter—the desert scene. The overhead rig was run from 1 90 channel and 3 x 30 channel Celco Series 2 boards.



Inside the central control room, where the audio, projection system and lighting controls are located. Several audio visual shows were running around the perimeter of the dome.



Luke Manning (left) and Robbie Sworder from Keylight pictured backstage in the hall depicting the desert scene.

Arabia' image so many of us have of this part of the world.

The desert scene too provided a challenge to light, as here Amos had to compete with a lot of natural light. The desert scene, conceived by Dr. Jamjoom, consumes some fifty metres of Olympia and is accurate to the last detail, even to the extent of including real camels (looking quite at home) and authentic Saudi sand. At first, when I heard about the imported sand, I wondered why regular builder's sand or a bit of Bournemouth beach would not suffice. However, I have to admit that the sand used looks completely different from the stuff I used to make sand castles from. Such was the extent of the shows' realism, that the desert scene encompassed the hot day-time sun at one end, with the cooler shade of the trees at the other, and a tent that really looked like as if it might offer welcome relief from a blisteringly hot day!

The old city wall looked very much the part, and again, this was lit in such a way to give a strong impression of sun-baked stone. All that was need to complete the illusion was an increase in temperature—perhaps the only non-authentic experience of the whole event!

The Celco Series 2 control boards in the desert were programmed and left static. However, those used in the Dome were operating from a tape using their unique Real Time Tape feature. This offered Amos the freedom of recording every subtle nuance of the board's operation, and consequently the changes in the Dome's lighting, onto a tape along with music and speech. Once recorded, the show can operate continuously, without the need for constant attention apart from the changing of tapes and tape machines.

The high standard of equipment and technical support offered by Keylight was an important part of a successful operation according to Amos, who couldn't praise them highly enough. It certainly looked like a winning combination.

The Riyadh exhibition contained much more than I could possibly describe in these short paragraphs. I didn't even have time to see the laser display, but looking at some photographs afterwards it was apparent that it too was quite stunning. In all, it was obviously a success, allowing members of the public, including myself, an introduction to Saudi life.

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Lighting Design: Amos Manasseh.

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13 Strand 243.

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16 CCT Minuette fresnels.

4 Verti Majors.

Desk (Control Board):

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2 Celco Series 2 Sixty's.

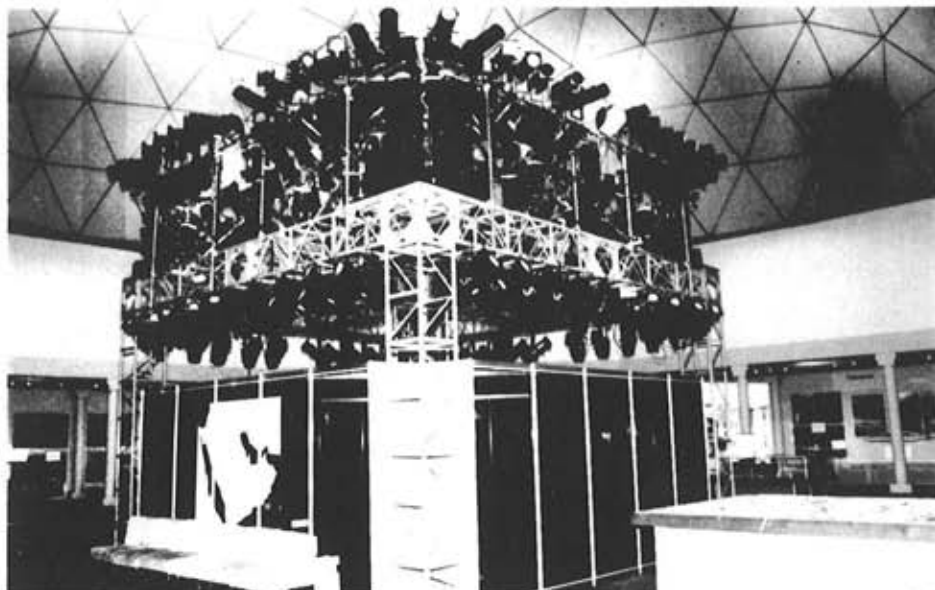
1 Celco Series 2 Ninety's.

Dimmers:

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8 OB 5's. 1 25 x 4kW Berkeys.

2 30 x 2kW Berkeys. 2 12 x 2kW Rackmasters.



The main internal dome and central control room from which the interior of the dome is lit using a multi-vision Kodak Carousel system and theatrical lighting.

## Saudi Experience— Logistics and Audio Visual

The Saudi Experience exhibition was remarkable on two counts. Firstly, it involved massive logistical support. Hercules aircraft were used to fly authentic building facades from the city of Riyadh, and many tonnes of desert sand into London to fully create the atmosphere of modern Saudi Arabia. The past was represented with a 50 metre desert scene and real camels. The largest internal structure ever seen at Olympia was erected in the form of a large dome. Audio Visual

projection equipment by AVE (UK) Limited of Kingston was used in nine separate theatres as the 'Saudi Experience' unfolded in front of the public.

The whole exhibition was built and rehearsed inside seven days, and the AV systems were only installed after completion of all the building work. To achieve this, a hand-picked team of 20 of London's best audio visual and lighting technicians were recruited to install the equipment.

One-hundred projectors, 25 video screens, 700 theatre lanterns and many tons of associated ancillary equipment helped to create the atmosphere—changing day into night, deserts into city vistas, and many other special effects to make the exhibition a memorable event.

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# Live at the Granada

## Bingo turns to Live Entertainment

The opening in July of the 'Granada at the Hippodrome' in Coventry as one of the most luxurious Bingo Social Clubs in the Granada Theatres Group, serves to highlight an area where live entertainment is being used progressively and more extensively to keep the customers happy.

Around £1,250,000 has been spent on upgrading and fitting out the venue, which was formerly the Hippodrome, and in recent years the Apollo Theatre. And it brings to 52 the total number of Granada clubs around the country, many of which are now turning to regular live entertainment sessions as part of their ongoing programme to maintain and increase audiences.

Bingo has long been hailed as the saviour of many fine theatre buildings, and Granada have an excellent record of retaining the character of the venues in their possession. At Coventry, bingo is played on the massive stage, which also boasts the new feature of a staircase leading to the circle. Cinema-style seating is retained in the circle areas.

The provision of cabaret-style entertainment in the Granada clubs has quietly seen the growth of one of Britain's largest touring circuits, a fact that is probably missed by many promoters and theatrical agents.



Granada luxury bingo at the Hippodrome, Coventry.

"There's been a tremendous growth over the last five years in the number of acts presented," said Brian Edwards, who couples the job of booking the entertainment with his position as area manager for operations in the Midlands. "The process started in a

small way, with small groups that were brought in to add to the occasion. It worked well, but we have to remember that bingo is our business, and entertainment is a part of the social package that we offer.

"The acts we use have to fit in with that



Carefully toned luxury of the Granada at Tooting—a venue regularly used for live entertainment presentation.



context—that is major club acts that will appeal to the age group 18-90. We have to have artistes who can work to audience who came not to see them in particular. In fact, they turn out to be a very good and responsive audience."

Presenting the shows is the job of the Group's stage manager, Ian Sopp. "Ian knows all the venues," said Brian Edwards, "and I book the acts to fit. It's a two-hand operation that works well. Things like sound checks are difficult to fit in with the bingo programme, but we always manage to do it, and we make sure it's done right."

Ian Sopp explained that they have to pick venues where there is little or no competition with other live entertainment in the local area, where they will be non-competitive. "Aside from that, we have to remember we are there to promote bingo business."

Ian started in the business working on Ice Shows in his home town Bournemouth in 1967—he was a stage hand for the famous Ice Follies. He followed that with a period as a member of the stage crew on various legit theatrical tours before joining the club scene back in Bournemouth at the Mason Royale where he looked after all technical and production work.

He joined Granada in 1978 as a trainee manager. "I saw that improvements were needed in the presentation of the shows," he explained, "and after persuasion of the powers that be, was told to get on with it. Now it's mine, and very much part of the scene—and it's going to grow. Many artistes are a little wary at first, but once they've been to one of our venues, and we've looked after them, they are more than happy to come back."

Granada now present nearly 450 shows annually, and at peak times there may be four or five on any one night. On these rush-hour occasions, Ian Sopp hire in extra equipment and crews, but he is usually able to cover the majority of events himself. He has a basic rig which he tours round the venues in his lorry, and this has been accumulated over the past few years. No venues have their own equipment, apart from a very few lanterns left



Live entertainment on the re-opening night at Coventry's Granada at the Hippodrome—with Val Doonican leading the proceedings.



Interior of the Coventry Hippodrome after the £1,250,000 refurbishment by Granada Theatres.



Interior of the 'Magnificent Granada Woolwich'—a striking comparison in styles, but still attracting audiences.



The Woolwich Granada, a splendidly maintained building.



Granada Theatres' stage manager Ian Sopp pictured at the controls in 1983. The sound control in the foreground is System 8, and the lighting control in the background an extended Pulsar outfit that was a mixture of rock desks, matrix extenders and modulators, etc. This was later replaced by a Celco Series 2 30 way board.

over from theatre days, so Ian has to know the venues well, and be prepared for fast fit-ups. Genie towers and Powerdrive stand feature amongst his stock in trade. He uses Trilite for major events, and will hire effects such as Arcline if the occasion demands it. Control is by Celco Series 2 30 way board.

Sound equipment is always hired in for the event, and he uses Technical Sound of Poole for most gigs. "If it's a major tour, somebody joins me on the road," he explained. And the shows will always go on.

Val Doonican led the celebrations at the opening of the new Coventry Granada at the Hippodrome, and amongst the major acts booked to appear on the circuit in the near future are The Platters and The Stylistics.

The seemingly endless circle of change in many British venues carries on apace—cinema to theatre to discotheque to cabaret club or bingo—in almost any permutation and direction.

What a venue actually does at any particular point in time is to a degree unimportant. The major point is that they are surviving—and surviving with live entertainment.

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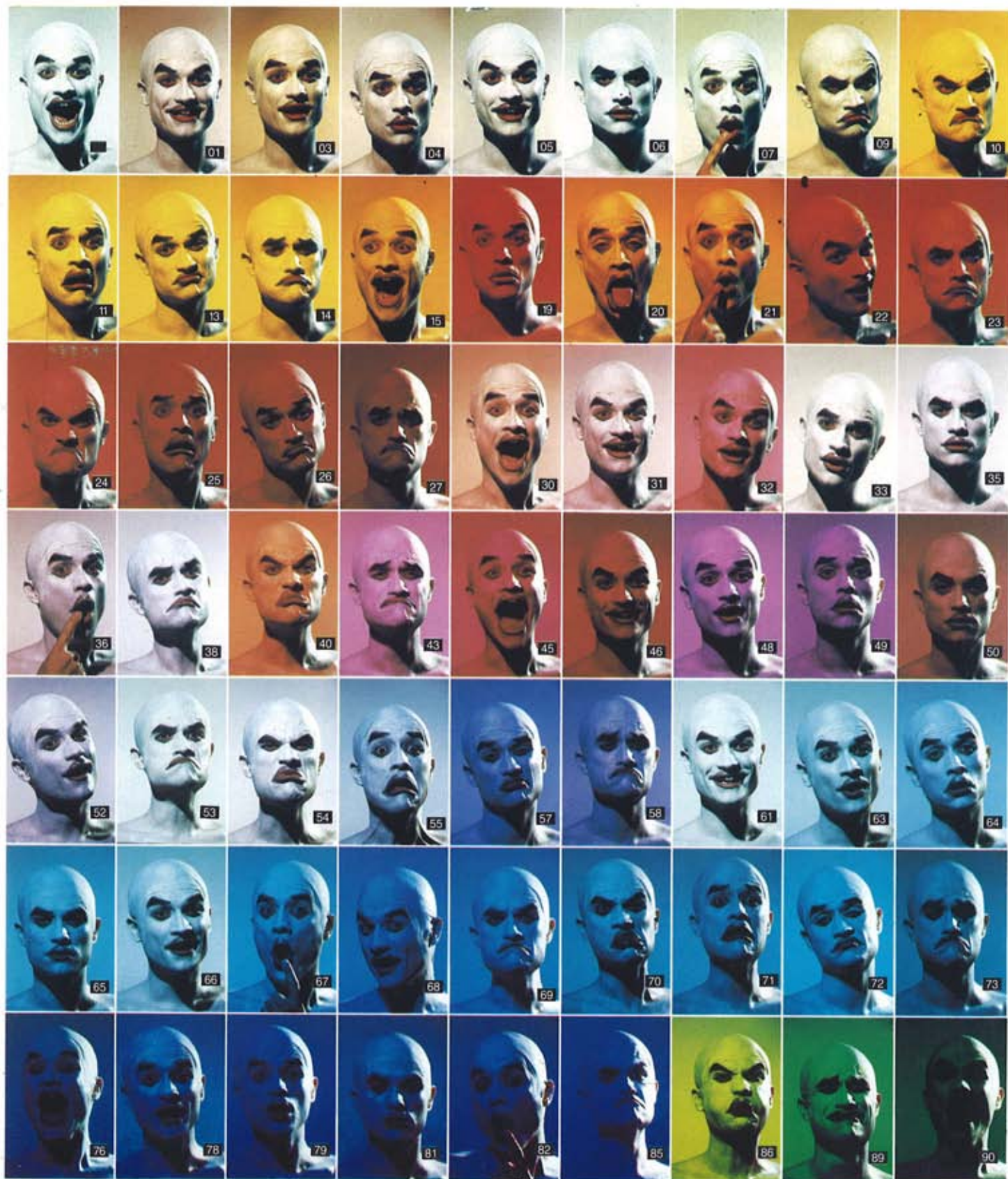
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