

FOR

**ALPD** #

For all the people  
in performance lighting

The Association for Lighting  
Production and Design  
[www.thealpd.org.uk](http://www.thealpd.org.uk)  
Oct - Nov 2024  
£5.00 / FREE to Members

**LIGHTING IN  
EDINBURGH**

Creative Lighting at the  
Edinburgh Festival and  
Fringe

**AN INSPECTOR  
CALLS. AGAIN.**

Lighting reunion at 35th  
birthday of landmark  
production

**LIFEWIRE  
GREEN ISSUES**

Theatre Green Book  
Second Edition and  
growing LED concerns

<b>3</b>	<b>WELCOME</b>	From Johanna Town, Chair of the ALPD	
<b>5</b>	<b>UPDATE</b>	ALPD office news and information	
<b>6</b>	<b>PEOPLE &amp; EVENTS</b>	Appointments, celebrations and remembrance	
<b>9</b>	<b>SHOWLIGHT 2025</b>	Call for Papers	
<b>10</b>	<b>EDINBURGH F&amp;F</b>	Creative Lighting at the Festival and Fringe	
<b>16</b>	<b>DESIGN TALK</b>	Wagner's Ring Cycle in the Cotswolds	
<b>20</b>	<b>PLASA LONDON</b>	New Toys, Talks and how to be a Judge	
<b>24</b>	<b>CORPORATE MEMBERS</b>	Thank you for your support	
<b>26</b>	<b>AN INSPECTOR CALLS 2024</b>	35 Years - LDs revisit the landmark show	
<b>34</b>	<b>LIFEWIRE</b>	Theatre Green Book, LED discussion	
<b>42</b>	<b>IT'S LIGHT, BUT ...</b>	Bridgwater Carnival - seeing is believing	
<b>43</b>	<b>CONTACTS</b>	Who is who at the ALPD	
<b>44</b>	<b>COMMERCIAL MEMBERS</b>	Thank you for your support	

Titlepage: 'Love Beyond' Lighting Designer Simon Wilkinson ALPD. Photo Ga-Ken Wan. See p10.

**This month's FOCUS Lifewire will be looking at projects and people trying to make our industry greener. From the new edition of the Theatre Green Book to the ever-diminishing supply of tungsten and its replacement.**

With the news that some tungsten Source 4 models have ceased production, the change is now well under way to a lighting world dominated by LED. Whether this is actually a sustainable solution in our industry is still debatable in my mind, but tungsten's demise and LED's growth has made our lighting designs feel fresh, new and exciting. There is a freedom that LED lighting can give to designs artistically that I really enjoy and have embraced. But an LED rig can also hinder a design due to its considerable costs and technical requirements.

I would love to hear a debate on the sustainability of an industry that has to cope with the ever-increasing costs of LED rigs, whether that be in subsidised theatre, or for touring and commercial companies. There are the initial equipment costs and infrastructure cost, but also the increasing cost of employing good programmers and production LX staff to deal with these rigs.

We are truly entering a new world for lighting, we have to move forward, so we now have to educate producers and

theatre companies about the demands and costs of an LED lighting rig, as it is becoming more and more clear that many producers have no idea how to budget for modern shows. We would love to know your thoughts on this topic, your experiences and ideas towards a solution. Would you like to be part of a debate or hold a master class for producers?

It is my pleasure to introduce to you David Howe, our new designer chair for the professional working group, co-chairing alongside David Ayton. David Howe is a working lighting designer and has been a member since 1992. He has been part of the team who run the Lumière scheme and I have enjoyed our collaborations in choosing Lumières over the years. David has a great range insight into what that role requires.

I am personally immensely grateful to Lucy Carter for all her hard work as co-chair for many years. During Covid, Lucy and David Ayton, with the rest of the team, worked tirelessly to create the amazing documentation we now have for our members. She has also been an inspiration and mentor to many young designers over the years. I know how hard it is to run a working group and be a chair whilst working as a busy designer. I would like to personally thank her for all that

**From the Chair of the Association for Lighting Production and Design  
Johanna Town**



hard work and dedication. We are all glad that she's remaining on the PWG.

I feel there has never been a more important time to have strong working groups and representatives that you can turn to. We are hearing of many young members being placed in positions for which they are not yet ready. Shows moving and contending with staffing shortages at all levels. I recently struggled with shows being pinched in different areas, whether that was a lack of staff resources, poor staffing or cuts being made last minute. There is a general murmur that it's feeling rough out there. I have just had three shows with one, or all, of the above involved, making it far more stressful than needed to be.

On a happier note The ALPD had a brilliant turn out at PLASA and Amanda met up with many designers and production staff on the stand. Thank you everyone who popped by to say hello. Members and non-members are sharing their thoughts about the industry, we are taking on board all your issues and ideas alongside a few praises. I was sorry that yet again I was in technical rehearsals and unable to attend the show and all its festivities. Hope to make it next year.

In closing I would like to wish you all a productive autumn without too much stress. Try not to be pushed too hard and have some time to enjoy this job we love so much.



## A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

### Professional

Matt Smees, Bournemouth  
Imogen Clarke, London

### Affiliate

Aisha Oyedepo, Paisley  
Benjamin Vetluzhskikh,  
Tunbridge Wells

### Student (Sponsored)

Isabel M Wolf, London  
Seb Andrews, Worcester  
Jared Norman, London  
Mila Mussatt, London  
Charlie Austin, Ashford  
Felix Weis, London  
Eli Hunt, Buckinghamshire  
Oliver L Stilwell, London

### Commercial:

jESE  
Production Lighting Ltd

### PLASA

Thank you to those of you who took the time to stop by our stand and say hello. It's always good to meet with members and to hear your ideas, suggestions and feedback. We have recruited some new members too.

### FOCUS SURVEY

The FOCUS survey will remain online for a few weeks yet. If you would like to have a say in the future of your magazine, do please fill it out. It will only take a few minutes: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/V3X2DCT> or point your phone's camera at the QR code. If you like to opt out of receiving the printed copy, please log in to the site, visit *Your Contact* details page, and tick the appropriate boxes. (While there, please check your other contact details are up-to-date!). But also: If you don't receive a printed copy (even if your details and opt-in are correct on the website), please do contact the office and we will follow this up. Current and past FOCUS magazines can be read online here:

[www.thealpd.org.uk/FOCUS](http://www.thealpd.org.uk/FOCUS)  
(You must be logged in!)



### ALPD AWARDS

The ALPD Awards 2024 will close on 31st October. If you wish to enter for the Michael Northen Award, or nominate someone for the Fred Foster or ALPD Award, do it now! If you've worked with a programmer or a production electrician whose work you feel is worthy of recognition, take a few minutes to nominate them. Entries close on 31st October. You can find more information here: [www.thealpd.org.uk/training/alpd-awards-2024](http://www.thealpd.org.uk/training/alpd-awards-2024). If you are a student or recent graduate you can apply for the Michael Northen Award. Again, details of this can also be found on our website. The ALPD Awards are given at the New Tech Showcase in January



### ABTT STEPHEN JOSEPH AWARD

The ABTT is delighted to welcome nominations for its annual Stephen Joseph Award, recognising innovative and inclusive theatre excellence.

Closes Monday 14th October 2024.  
<https://tinyurl.com/StephenJoseph24> or point your camera at the QR code.



### LIGHTING LUNCH

The popular afternoon of festivities will be back again on 16th December, returning to the Phoenix Arts Club, 1 Phoenix Street, London WC2H 8BU. Welcome drinks will start at 12:30, and a buffet lunch, speeches, drinks and entertainment commence until 18:00. Everyone is welcome, but ticket numbers are strictly limited to 140 this year. Ticket sales are now live via [www.lightinglunch.co.uk](http://www.lightinglunch.co.uk) at £70 plus a booking fee of £1.75. The ALPD will add to the pre-Christmas cheer by announcing Fellowships and Life Memberships at this event.

### ALPD: AGM

The AGM will take place on Saturday 11th January 2025 at RCSSD. Do put it in your diary and come along if you can. Or join online, we will offer a live stream. We may do some seminars on the day: Are there any topics you would like to be covered? There will be at least two vacancies for directors this coming year. Full details will be emailed to you.

### NEW TECHNOLOGY SHOWCASE

will be on Thursday 30th January 2025, again at RCSSD. The ALPD Awards are given at this event. #

News and information from the ALPD office by Amanda Laidler

### DATES 2024

ABTT Stephen Joseph Award closes on 14th October  
ALPD Awards close on 31st October  
Lighting Lunch at Phoenix Arts Club 16th December

### DATES 2025

ALPD: AGM 11th January 2025 at RCSSD  
New Technology Showcase at RCSSD 30th January  
Prolight + Sound Frankfurt 8 - 11 April  
Showlight Dijon 19 - 22 May

Contact Amanda directly at [office@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:office@thealpd.org.uk)



UPDATE

## DAVID HOWE NEW PROFESSIONAL REP AND CO-CHAIR

David Howe has agreed to become our Professional Members Rep, and co-Chair of the Professionals Working Group.

David describes himself as "a working lighting designer" and will be the point of contact for any professional or affiliate

members that are working as designers.

David comments: "I joined the Association in 1992 and like most of you read FOCUS and saw colleagues at tradeshow and gatherings, but mostly just kept plugging away with

teams they are paired with. I truly believe that real-life experience and observation is such a great opportunity coming into our world (as designers, programmers, electricians) and something I've tried to welcome for productions of my own."

David is also excited to Co-Chair the Professional Working Group alongside David Ayton. "The FOCUS of this group and its

## Spotlight on People

New appointments, celebrations and remembrance

work. For the last couple of years, I've been a part of the Lumière Working Group and interview panel, which is fascinating and rewarding, especially to see how our Lumière alumni have benefited from the insight and support they get from the designers and

fantastic team is to develop and publicise good working practices, proposals on fees and guides to educate others about roles within our industry. Both roles need your input to maximise their usefulness to the Association so I'm really looking forward to hearing from Members about the areas / ideas / concerns you'd like discussed or publicised."

ALPD Chair Jo Town adds: "We're immensely grateful to Lucy Carter for all her hard work in the role and are glad that she's remaining on the PWG." David can be contacted at [professionals@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:professionals@thealpd.org.uk) #



Photo by Mark Forrer

## STEPHEN ANDREWS 1979 - 2024

It is with great sadness that we have recently learned of the passing of Stephen Andrews.

Steve was a brilliant production electrician and collaborator on a huge range of shows and events, he touched the hearts of everyone he worked alongside. Jo Town, Chair of the ALPD, said "I was lucky enough to work with Steve at the Royal Court Theatre and have many fond memories of his enthusiasm, hard work and his general fun within the team. Steve leaves a wife and young family who have set up a tribute to Steve through the British Heart foundation (link below). [STEVE-ANDREWS-1979-2024.MUCHLOVED.COM](https://www.bhf.org.uk/what-we-do/our-research/heart-conditions/heart-failure/heart-failure-research-projects/steve-andrews-1979-2024)



Keith Benson, ALPD Fellow and former lighting manager at Glyndebourne organised a surprise 90th birthday lunch for the eminent Lighting designer, ALPD Fellow, Robert Bryan. It brought together many of his colleagues who first worked for Bob back in the 1970s at Glyndebourne at the start of what would be long and successful careers in lighting. #

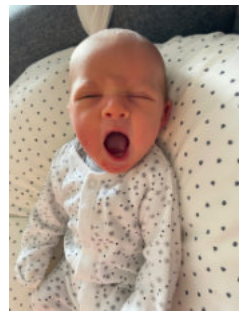
## Happy 90th Birthday Robert Bryan!

Front Row: L to R  
Keith Benson, Ann  
Bryan, Robert Bryan,  
Andrew Bridge.  
2nd Row:  
Sue Benson, Hugh  
Chinnick, Greg Ham-  
lin, Virginia Kam,  
Paul Pyant, Mark  
Jonathan, Howard  
Eaton, Gerry Amies,  
Val Kirkman



## INTRODUCING OTIS JUDE HELLICAR AYTON

Congratulations from all at the ALPD to David Ayton, Co-Chair of the Professional Working Group, and his family, to the new member, born 7th September at home,



8lbs 3oz or 3.7kg. David says: "Everyone doing well and Riley is very happy introducing his little brother to everyone. I've blocked out my paternity leave!" #

## FROM 30IN TO 3MM FOR CHARITY

ALPD Member Sherry Coenen's came by our PLASA stand to promote her *Save or Shave Campaign* for BackUp: for every £100 in the shave pot she would cut 1 inch and every £100 in the save pot will allow an inch to stay on her head. On Monday eve at the PLASA bar she made good on her challenge: Sherry raised so far over £5600 (!) for the charity as well as



donating the cut hair to *The Little Princess Trust* who make wigs for kids. It's not too late to donate: Although its a little late to vote for save! #

<https://tinyurl.com/saveorshave100>



## SHOWLIGHT 2025 - THE CALL FOR PAPERS IS HOTTING UP!

It was great to see so many people at PLASA Show London and witness the excitement caused by the news that Showlight returns next May. Some people even stopped by to say just how excited they were and were already looking to book hotels! There was a healthy contingent of students enquiring about



the subsidised student scheme and huge interest in the new introduction of afternoon workshops for 2025. The format of the workshops is shaping up nicely and we are encouraging manufacturers, designers and students to put forward their ideas for more workshops. If you have a proposal, contact the Papers Committee.

We have already received a great number of Papers proposals following our Call for Papers in June and are looking forward to more coming in.

Remember to submit your Papers ideas for consideration by the Papers Committee as soon as possible. The Programme of Papers is the heart and soul of Showlight and we want to be able to bring you the best and most entertaining topics. We want to hear from lighting designers working in all disciplines: film,



**Roger Simonsz (I) , Philip Norfolk speaking at Showlight 2017, Florence**

Oct - Nov 2024 p9

## SHOWLIGHT CONTACTS



**Papers:**  
[papers@showlight.org](mailto:papers@showlight.org)  
**Exhibitors:** [exhibit@showlight.org](mailto:exhibit@showlight.org)  
**Sponsors:**  
[sponsorship@showlight.org](mailto:sponsorship@showlight.org)  
[students@showlight.org](mailto:students@showlight.org)  
**Website:** [www.showlight.org](http://www.showlight.org)  
**Facebook:** [@showlightevent](https://www.facebook.com/showlightevent)  
**Twitter/X:** [showlight\\_event](https://twitter.com/showlight_event)  
**LinkedIn:** [@showlightevent](https://www.linkedin.com/company/showlightevent)

## JOSIE IRELAND NEW CHAIR OF THE STUDENTS WORKING GROUP

Josie Ireland is a Lighting Designer and Production Manager for theatre, opera, and immersive experiences, and has worked on *L'Olimpiade* for Vache Baroque and *Walk with Little Amal* at the Adelaide Festival. A recent graduate of Guildhall School of Music & Drama, she has a passion for accessibility, safe spaces, and equitable access to the arts. She has been a member of the Student Working Group since 2021. Contact: [students@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:students@thealpd.org.uk) #



television, architectural, art installation, theatre, opera, event and concert lighting – anything to do with the art of lighting design in all its multiple facets and applications!

So, don't forget to put the dates in your diary (19-22 May 2025) and if you want information on becoming a Showlight Exhibitor, Sponsor, Speaker, Student, or Delegate, just drop us an email. Contacts can be found above.

And keep your eyes open for when tickets go on sale - sign up to the Mailing List on the website [www.showlight.org](http://www.showlight.org) to be the first to hear! #

# Creative Lighting at the Edinburgh Festival and Fringe

By Mark Fisher



p10 FOCUS - The ALPD Magazine

**A Little Inquest Into What We Are All Doing Here**

Photo Alex Brenner

**It is some time after 10pm in Zoo Southside, an Edinburgh Fringe venue specialising in dance and physical theatre. Performer Josie Dale-Jones has just slithered onto the main stage like a larva, wrapped head to toe in a sleeping bag.**

She wriggles out and takes her place at a desk on the far stage right. She notices straight away something is wrong. Although the lamp above her is correctly positioned, the one on the downstage gantry is throwing a pool of light to her left. She is only half illuminated.

Breaking off from her script, she shouts up to the box and gamely suggests repositioning the table. It is quickly apparent that would create only more problems, so the stage manager comes on with a ladder. Apologising, he explains some new shows have just opened in the venue and someone must have knocked the lamp during the tech. He climbs up and puts it right.

It is a reminder of the conditions that prevail in the world's biggest arts festival where it is common for a single room to host half a dozen or more shows in a day – and they might not even be the same shows that were on last week.

Oct - Nov 2024 p11

That makes it all the more impressive that **James Mackenzie's** lighting design is so good. With nothing more on the 11m-wide stage than the desk and chair, plus a couple of microphones, the show, *A Little Inquest Into What We Are All Doing Here*, depends on Mackenzie to define the space and establish the atmosphere.

Dale-Jones, who is admirably unruffled by the setback, begins the performance in lecture mode. A couple of years ago, she tells us, her company, ThisEgg, was due to premiere *The Family Sex Show*, a piece aimed at the over-fives that aimed to deal with subjects such as consent, pleasure and gender identity. But it never happened. So intense was the tabloid furore, the social-media outrage and the anger of politicians that the tour was cancelled and funding withdrawn. All this without anyone having seen the show. It was censored because of what people imagined it to be.

Dale-Jones explains what happened, sometimes behind the desk, sometimes beside, sometimes on top of it, while recorded interviews play. On such a big stage, the simplicity of her approach is bold and potentially exposing, so the onus is on Mackenzie, who is also artistic director of Zoo Venues, to create the stage picture. This he does initially with side lighting, emphasising Dale-Jones's isolation at one side of this big, empty stage, gradually extending the sense of space with LEDs along the back wall.

After the lecture-style opening section, Dale-Jones breaks into an extravagant showbiz routine, looping around the stage with an abandon at odds with a

story about being shut down. This is the artistic liberation she hungers for and has been denied. She goes from gloom to glitz.

In one bold gesture, she turns the lighting into an active player. Racing stage left, she hauls in a mobile scaffolding bank of 20 Parcans nearly twice as high as she is. Sometimes she positions them to shine directly at the audience, leaving Dale-Jones in silhouette and us dazzled and on edge. Other times, she sets them at an angle to create high-contrast tension in her uneasy conversations with an imaginary boyfriend played by Ben Target. She makes her final statement – an exasperated sigh – in a darkness that is as eloquent as the light.

If lighting is crucial to *A Little Inquest Into What We Are All Doing Here*, it is even more so the case in *Love Beyond*, a collaboration between Glasgow company Vanishing Point and producers Raw Material. Written by Ramesh Meyyappan and performed in the Assembly Gordon Aikman lecture theatre as part of the Made in Scotland showcase, it treats a familiar topic – dementia – in an unfamiliar way. Meyyappan plays Old Harry, a man whose confusion about being moved to a care home and mourning for his wife is

compounded by being deaf in a world where few speak sign language.

Meyyappan is a beguiling performer, expressive and precise, as he captures Harry's anger, frustration and bewilderment, while Elicia Daly's nice but exasperated nurse tries to improve her fluency in BSL to help him. Matthew

Lenton's production is dreamlike and sad, with much of its meaning dependent upon **Simon Wilkinson's** lighting.

When Becky Minto's set swings into place, we see a wall of three tall mirrors across the width of the stage, reflecting our faces back at us, reminding us of the world we inhabit. By raising the lighting



p12 FOCUS - The ALPD Magazine



Left: *Love Beyond*  
Photo Ga-Ken Wan  
Right: *Batshit*  
Photo Pia Johnson

behind the mirrors, Wilkinson makes them translucent. A winner in the 2024 Profile Awards (and ALPD professional member), he lets us see Old Harry's memories, played out by Rinkoo Barpaga as his younger self and Amy Kennedy as his late wife, falling in love and growing old together in a film-noirish past. It only takes a fade out on the desk for those memories to slip away again, making moments of lucidity clash with Harry's current hallucinations and confusion. It is exquisitely done.

Also beautifully presented is *Batshit*, written and performed by Australia's Leah Shelton at the Traverse under the direction of Ursula Martinez. The visual presentation is a collaboration between **Jason Glenwright**, the lighting designer, and Freddy Komp, whose credits run to production and stage manager, set co-design, live feed, projection and video systems design. When I asked if they had a technical name for the 15 short oblong strip lights used in the show, they came back with a bespoke answer: they call them "Komp boxes" in honour of the designer.

Arranged in five rows above the set of white tiles, the Komp boxes emphasise the play's institutional setting. It is about Shelton's grandmother, Gwen, who was

treated for mental illness at Heathcote hospital in Perth, Australia, in 1963. The lights flash to represent the electroconvulsive therapy administered without Gwen's consent, the rapid changes

horror movies; pallid yellow for psychiatric disturbance, deep red for fearful surrealism. As with *Love Beyond*, it is an example of lighting being an active ingredient in the play's meaning.

*Penthesilea* like a rock concert. In her production for Internationaal Theater Amsterdam at the Royal Lyceum, she presents the story of a warring Amazonian queen by spacing the cast around a

Picking up on the grungy gig atmosphere, lighting designer **Varja Kloss** uses aggressive lighting states to add to the high-intensity love-hate drama between Penthesilea and Achilles.

and subversive version of Shakespeare's play, also at the Lyceum. It makes sly comments on attitudes to disability while staying impressively true to the original. Lighting designer **Jesús Reyes** sets the various

Hamlets off to good advantage on a largely empty stage – empty, that is, until the audience piles in for a celebratory final dance.

Finally, some mesmerising work by lighting designer **Chantal Labonté** in *Nigamon/Tunai*, a collaboration between Émilie Monnet, of Canada's Anishinaabe people, and Waira Nina, of Colombia's Inga people. The slow and steady environmental piece, as much musical as dramatic, is performed in the round in the Festival Theatre's Studio where

Labonté shifts our attention to the various trees and pools of water arranged around the central playing area. Amid the hubbub of the festival, it is a welcome sanctuary. #

**MARK FISHER** is a freelance theatre critic and feature writer based in Edinburgh and has written about theatre since the late-1980s. He is a theatre critic for *The Guardian*, a former editor of *The List* magazine and a contributor to publications all over the world. He is the co-editor of the play anthology *Made in Scotland* (1995), and the author of *The Edinburgh Fringe Survival Guide* (2012) and *How to Write About Theatre* (2015) – all Bloomsbury Methuen Drama. (Photo Lotte Fisher)



Left to right: *Penthesilea* - Photo Ga-Ken Wan. *Hamlet* - Photo Jess Shurte. *Nigamon/Tunai* - Photo Andrew Perry.

tightly synchronised with Kenneth Lyons's sound design. They change colour to suggest the high-saturation tones of early-60s glamour or the shadows of period

Lots of good work, as you would expect, on the well-resourced Edinburgh International Festival, with three productions worth highlighting. Director Eline Arbo treats Heinrich von Kleist's

minimalist stage, stationing them at music consoles, sometimes picked out from the gloom in pools of light, other times silhouetted against powerful backlighting.

Where *Penthesilea* brings bloody conflict, *Hamlet* offers infectious joy. Director Chela De Ferrari and Peruvian company Teatro La Plaza fields a team of actors with Down's syndrome in a funny

**Das Ende! The words Wotan says during his Die Walküre monologue, the second of the four operas making up Wagner's epic Ring Cycle. Like Wotan, we're wrapping up our time in the Cotswolds.**

Wotan sees it coming fast - just eleven short hours of music later - but for the Longborough Festival Opera Ring Cycle team, who first all started to work on this journey in July 2018, it's been quite the ride.

I remember where I was when I got the email - it was April 30th, 2018, my flight had just landed in Glasgow, I turned my phone back on and had an email from Amy Lane - a director I knew by reputation, but not personally - asking whether I might be interested in having a chat about maybe working with her, staging Das Rheingold in 2019, Die Walküre in 2020, Siegfried in 2021 and Götterdämmerung in 2022, followed by a whole cycle of all four in 2023.

We scheduled a chat for seven days

Photos by Matthew Williams-Ellis

later, of which I had one day off, and in those 24 hours I crammed as much of the Ring - cobbled from YouTube recordings and bits of Radio 3 - as possible...all told, about three hours... Wikipedia filled in the basics of the story, and the bits of music I listened to gave me a flavour of what I might be asked to do.

Amy and I chatted - I was in a loud Starbucks in Glasgow's West End - and at the end of the phone call she offered me the job.

I remember almost-floating for the rest of the day. I headed into rehearsals for Street Scene on cloud nine. What

had I just signed up for? Was I prepared? At 29, I wasn't sure.

Still, the time came, we rehearsed, we tech'd, we orchestra'd, and in May 2019, we opened. Asides from a big ol' lighting glitch (which the papers thought was intentional and quite liked!), the opening night was plain sailing.

In 2019, 2021, 2022 and 2023 we've all

decamped to Longborough to put on an opera, leading up to the 2024 festival when we pop them all on together.

"Pop them all on" - it sounds so easy. It's the first time in my life I've revisited something I made five years previous. I was a different designer, a different person. It was a shock - but with some light wrangling, we got there.

I'm writing this, sitting in the central box, where the lighting desk is positioned for public rehearsals, waiting for the first General of the saga to begin. That weird time when you don't know what to do with yourself. The orchestra are tuning, the invited audience are pouring in, the lighting is in preset...and I'm just sitting. Waiting. I hate the time between my final notes and a dress rehearsal. I feel useless. Helpless. My lighting, my creation, a part of my personality is beginning to belong to others as well now - the audience.

I stopped writing after that paragraph as Rheingold started! And then, back to back, we had three more dress rehearsals. So I'm picking up between the opening nights of our brand new Die Walküre (the original planned production became a staged concert - a casualty of COVID) and a revival of Siegfried.

Let me tell you, I've never felt tired like

p16 FOCUS - The ALPD Magazine



Oct - Nov 2024 p17

this before. Four opening nights seven days. Most of which last at least 6 hours.

The past seven weeks have been deeply intense. We tech'd the first show then put it with an orchestra - immediately jumping into the second, straight into the third and then finally moved onto Gotterdammerung. It's incredible to rehearse four different shows on stage and not have the immediate payoff of an audience enjoying (or hating) the piece.

We've, all of us, been walking around Longborough village like zombies for the last 47 days - just three more to go.

This has been a marathon. And like the London Marathon, I'm finally running up the Mall towards the finish line.

I am so proud of our team - lead by the fearless Amy Lane (who's simultaneously running a company in Copenhagen!). I've never known anyone work as hard as she does.

It takes an army to put on a Ring, including two teams of stage management, many technicians to turn around the set and lighting FOCUS between each, a huge orchestra, a plethora of artists on the stage, the creative team, the artistic administrators and then my very own little team - Andy Bird and Michael Gooch heading up the



Oct - Nov 2024 p19

lighting team; Clancy Flynn, standing by me as the incredible associate on Walks; and my dearest friend, and lighting lifeblood, Paul Walmsley who diligently sat next to me and programmed expertly for just over fifteen hours of opera.

Clancy Flynn adds: "Before joining the team at Longborough, I'd already had the pleasure of working with Charlie, so I went in knowing the lighting design was in perfect hands. And of course it would have to be—the Ring Cycle takes the audience on a journey from the depths of the earth to the heights of Valhalla, via forest, mountain, water, and fire. To create that variety of spaces while retaining a distinct and cohesive visual voice—especially over the course of years—is one of the most exciting design challenges out there.

Paul Walmsley comments: "Having worked on the Ring since 2019 and with Charlie since 2013 it was great to finally realise the project as a whole! Small village life isn't exactly for this city boy, but we managed to have the most fun possible and not go completely insane during the seven weeks in Longborough!"

Two more to go this week. We can do it. Would I do another Ring Cycle? Ask me in five years. #

Photos: Matthew Williams-Ellis

## CREDITS

The Ring Cycle - Richard Wagner  
Longborough Festival Opera  
Director: Amy Lane, Set Designer:  
Rhiannon Newman-Brown, Costume  
Designer: Emma Ryott, Movement  
Director: Johannes Stepanek, Video  
Designer: Tim Baxter, Associate LD  
Clancy Flynn, Programmer Paul  
Walmsley, Production LX Andy Bird  
and Michael Gooch  
Lighting Designer Charlie Morgan  
Jones (pictured) hails originally from  
Wales, and his work includes *Derren  
Brown: Underground* (Olivier  
Nomination) and *Little Shop of  
Horrors* (WhatsOnStage and  
Broadway World Awards)



**After responding to a callout in the ALPD newsletter and hearing about the promise of a free lunch, I found myself this year serving as a judge for the PLASA Innovation Awards.**

The experience was both enlightening and rewarding, offering a deep dive into the meticulous process of spotlighting the most intriguing innovations hitting the market this year.

Before the event, each judge received a 100-word summary of the submissions, allowing us to scrub up ahead of the live pitches. At the show, the judging process was thorough. Guided by the experienced hand of our Chair, James Eade, our 12-member panel spent two days reviewing 44 pitches from representatives of new products, all vying for recognition. James played a key role in pre-screening entries, ensuring every submission brought something innovative to the table—whether it was new technology, enhanced safety, improved sustainability, or unique intellectual property.

Judges were split into two teams, each reviewing half the entries on a pre-planned route around the show floor. During breaks, we exchanged notes, directing

attention to particularly noteworthy products, ensuring each highlighted was then seen again by the others. Our focus was on key categories of innovation: fresh thinking, improved safety, technical improvement, sustainability, and disruptive technologies. Rather than seeking the "best" product, our goal was to reward those pushing the boundaries of possibility.

## You be the Judge

### Matt Leventhall takes the bench at PLASA's Innovation Awards



Our task was to select eight winners, with an optional ninth award for sustainability. There was also the possibility of a Gold Award for a game-changing innovation, though none reached that level this year.

One of the most rewarding aspects of judging was the exposure to my fellow judges' varied perspectives (James selects a diverse panel from across the industry).

We all declared conflicts of interest upfront, ensuring objectivity. Equally rewarding was having my attention drawn to areas I usually avoid—like sound! One of this year's awards went to Glen Sound's GTM Mobile for its E-Sports in-game communication innovation. I can now speak at least a few words about the nuances of in-game communication, something I couldn't have done before!

It's also heartening to know there's innovation going on in areas often overlooked, like technologies for accessibility. Ampetronic's advancement in assistive listening with their Auri system, the first to embrace Auracast, very deservedly won an award. It's worth learning more about it.

Some impressive products, including ones I plan to buy, didn't rise up our list because, even if the product was outstanding, it refined existing tech rather than breaking new ground. The awards celebrate risk-takers introducing something truly novel. The beauty of focusing on innovation, rather than a Crufts-esque 'Best In Show', is that it levels the playing field—whether a company is

large or small, established or emerging, the emphasis is on pushing boundaries. Innovation can be found at any echelon of the technological spectrum.

Reflecting on nearly two decades of attending PLASA (I've lost track if this is my 19th or 20th year), I've witnessed dramatic industry evolution. In the early 2000s, it was possible to know every moving light on the market, for example. Today, the sheer volume of products makes that impossible. This shift underscores the importance of the PLASA Innovation Awards, which highlight products that move the industry forward rather than rehashing familiar designs. I eagerly anticipate how this year's innovations will shape the future of our craft.

That all said, I am left asking; once we accept that there are too many products available to possibly know them all, is there a place for a professional review platform for lighting products on the UK market? There are plenty of examples of such mechanisms across world markets. Would it save us time in selecting the tools we need in our craft? Is it useful for UK lighting practitioners to vote for a Best-In-Show? **#**

**Little and Large:  
Possibly the smallest  
and the largest light  
(by lumens) presented  
to the Innovation  
Awards judges:  
Robe's iBolt skylight  
with its 500W  
incoherent Phosphor  
Laser source (which  
won), and Lamp &  
Pencil's realistic  
Flawless Flames  
Candle (which didn't)**  
[tinyurl.com/  
plasainnov2024](http://tinyurl.com/plasainnov2024)



## ALPD SEMINAR ADDRESSES VIDEO SHOW RECORDS FOR LIGHTING

At the ALPD sponsored seminar "Tools for Tech", Nick Moran, Andrew Ellis and Julius Hansen talked about their first-hand experience with video tools including Stamp, Cuepoint and VOR, and how they help to make lighting a fast-paced show much less stressful.

Andrew discussed a project in Mongolia: "VOR overlays information onto a video feed in real time and saves that as a simple video file, including Timecode, Lighting cues and Automation data." An iPhone serves as the camera if another video feed isn't available. ETC boards are automatically detected.

Andrew showed how previously hand-drawn notes are replaced. "Is the Cue in the right place? Is the person in the right place, or where you think they should be at any time?" This also helped to bridge language barriers. "Without that record I would have found the production with multiple translators very difficult." Julius adds: "You can go back to details when there's a lull in the rehearsals - and make use of all your time." Andrew: "Dance lighting designers never have the tech time to go cue to cue." Julius was able to get a feed from the in-house relay camera

with a capture card. This also provides a record for Associated LDs, or re-lighters.

The audience in the packed Theatre 3 at PLASA had questions, and concerns. There are safeguarding issues if a rehearsal gets recorded in an educational setting, or with minors involved. One audience member mentioned copyrights: "Check that the performance rights cover a permission to record video - which almost always forbids distribution." Nick Moran added a cau-

tionary tale of an amateur company who put a rehearsal video of their show of a well known musical on YouTube - and got promptly taken to court by the Corporation who owned the rights.

A repeated concern was that the recording should not replace proper tech and plotting time. "How does this fit into your workflow? Did you find yourself staring at the video at 3 AM in the hotel room?" #



**ALPD at PLASA seminar: 'Tools for Tech'. From left Julius Hansen, Nick Moran, Andrew Ellis. Photo A.Friess**



PLASA 2024 at Olympia in London proved busy as ever, but if visitors were looking for new lighting innovations - they were often hidden deep inside with software updates and power upgrades of very familiar instruments. "This is the iPhone effect," commented one vendor. "Once you've reached a successful formfactor, every other design follows." Clockwise from top left: Robe's always imaginative show putting their current range through its paces; The Vintage Lighting display celebrating Optikinetics Effect Projector's; Pepijn van der Sanden demonstrating ETC's Road Hog's ability to match colour across a range of sources; And if there was a first price for "Oddest instrument on show", it surely would go to this vendor's Mirrorball-LED-Eycandy-MirroSwivel-Thingy. #

**AMS Osram**  
+44 7932 159 535  
<https://ams-osram.com>



**Christie Lites**  
02476 017270  
[www.christielites.com](http://www.christielites.com)



**Elation Professional**  
+31 45 546 85 66  
[www.elationlighting.eu](http://www.elationlighting.eu)



**Marl International Limited**  
01229 582 430  
[www.leds.co.uk](http://www.leds.co.uk)



**Robert Juliat**  
+33 (0)3 44 26 51 89  
[www.robertjuliat.com](http://www.robertjuliat.com)



**SLX**  
03300 161 300  
[www.slx.co.uk](http://www.slx.co.uk)



**TSL UK**  
Lighting and Rigging Services  
020 8629 2025  
[www.tsllighting.com](http://www.tsllighting.com)



**4Wall**  
01254 698808  
[www.4wall.com](http://www.4wall.com)



**Ayrton Lighting**  
[www.ayrton.eu](http://www.ayrton.eu)



**Clear-Com**  
+44 1223 815000  
[www.clearcom.com](http://www.clearcom.com)



**Encore**  
01664 821111  
[www.encore-emea.com](http://www.encore-emea.com)



**Martin Professional UK**  
01707 668136  
[www.martinpro.co.uk](http://www.martinpro.co.uk)



**Roscolab Ltd**  
020 8659 2300  
[www.rosco.com](http://www.rosco.com)



**Sound Technology**  
01462 480000  
[www.soundtech.co.uk](http://www.soundtech.co.uk)



**Vectorworks UK Ltd**  
01635 580318  
[www.vectorworks.net/uk](http://www.vectorworks.net/uk)



**AC Entertainment Technologies**  
01494 446000  
[www.ac-et.com](http://www.ac-et.com)



**CAST Group of Companies**  
+1 (416) 597-2278  
[www.cast-soft.com](http://www.cast-soft.com)



**City Theatrical**  
020 8949 5051  
[www.citytheatrical.com](http://www.citytheatrical.com)



**ETC**  
020 8896 1000  
[www.etcconnect.com](http://www.etcconnect.com)



**PRG XL Video**  
0845 470 6400  
[www.prg.com/uk](http://www.prg.com/uk)



**Royal Opera House**  
020 7240 1200  
[www.roh.org.uk](http://www.roh.org.uk)



**Stage Electrics**  
03330 142 100  
[www.stage-electrics.co.uk](http://www.stage-electrics.co.uk)



**White Light**  
020 8254 4800  
[www.whitelight.ltd.uk](http://www.whitelight.ltd.uk)



**Ambersphere Solutions**  
020 8992 6369  
[www.ambersphere.com](http://www.ambersphere.com)



**Chauvet Professional**  
01773 511115  
[www.chauvetlighting.co.uk](http://www.chauvetlighting.co.uk)



**Claypaky**  
+39 335 72 333 72  
[www.claypaky.it](http://www.claypaky.it)



**German Light Products**  
+49 7248927190  
[www.glp.de](http://www.glp.de)



**Robe UK Ltd**  
01604 741000  
[www.robeuk.com](http://www.robeuk.com)



**SGM Light UK**  
01233 460 400  
[www.sgmlight.com](http://www.sgmlight.com)



**Tracer Power**  
0191 496 9988  
<https://tracerpower.com>



Thank you for your support!  
For Commercial members,  
please see the back page.

As FOCUS is the ALPD members magazine, let's assume a spoiler warning is redundant. But if you have never seen *An Inspector Calls*: In 1945, socialist minded author J.B.Priestley, railing against the hypocrisy of Edwardian society, wrote in just a week a drawing room drama of a middle class industrialists family being visited by a mysterious Inspector, investigating the suicide of a

young girl, a worker in the family's factory. Turns out, everyone in the room has been a source for the poor girl's misery. Who is that investigator who knows every dirty secret? The Inspector finally leaves the devastated family. They are relieved and then deny any guilt. The phone rings: There is an Inspector on his way to investigate the suicide of the young girl. Boom. Curtain.

So far, so Edwardian. Until in 1989 young and upcoming director Stephen Daldry, designer Ian MacNeil and LD Rick Fisher

turned the material inside out, with a bold concept exposing that cozy, capitalist bubble in an impoverished, cold and bombed-out world, and bringing it crashing down,

## An Inspector calls - again. And again.

**In its 35<sup>th</sup> year since conception, the landmark production, currently touring, is re-visited by (from top) Rick Fisher, Will Evans Ian Saunders**

quite literally.

In post-Thatcher Britain, it hit a nerve, and keeps resonating until today. This production of *An Inspector Calls* is the longest



running revival of a play in history, seen by over 5 million theatregoers worldwide. It's what the word 'multiaward-winning' was invented for, and it has entered the National Curriculum. A national tour is currently, again, under way.

FOCUS invited Lighting Designer Rick Fisher, and Associate LDs Ian Saunders and Will Evens to wander down a cobbled, frequently very rainy and misty memory lane.

**FOCUS:** First staged at York Theatre Royal, how much does the current tour resemble the 1989 production?

**Rick:** I do want to put in a credit straight away for this 'Bare Bones' version in York: same director, same designer, same lighting designer. I remember watching the news in the Green Room about an earthquake in San Francisco ...

**FOCUS:** Quite a coincidence when the climax of the show sees a whole house tipping over.

**Rick:** Spoiler alert! But usually marketing gives that away now.

p26 FOCUS - The ALPD Magazine

In fact, my memory is that the house did two things, it juttered from side to side, because it was all manual, and then it tipped. It's never juttered from side to side again. The idea was that we were watching a theatre in a theatre, so it had a little bit of theatrical lighting equipment littered around. It did have a telephone box. It did have a lamppost. It did have a painted sky cloth. It did have a dolls-house on stilts. All the familiar elements we still have today. It didn't have cobblestones, or rain, but had a floor cloth. And the lighting was quite different, you could say 'normal' theatre lighting, a mix of FOH, tops and back, nothing unusual.

**FOCUS:** The stark, shadowy look of the present Inspector has been praised, and is down to the lighting. How did you come up with the changes presented at the Lyttleton 1992?

**Rick:** Well the addition of the cobblestones had something to do with that! Stephen Daldry's career took off and he was asked to do a show at the National. Luckily for us, he chose to re-visit *An Inspector Calls*. The National committed to tour to the regions, so the whole staging had to be planned for this after only 30 shows at the Lyttleton. Touring the way the National Theatre used to tour, which is like no other sensible organization would ever

Oct - Nov 2024 p27



**Fit up at Ally Pally. Photos: Will Evans Plans: View larger online**

tour, where they bring everything with them, from angle-poise lamp to the last screw in the set, and of course, all the lighting. Everything planned to be taken apart, transported, stored, including the cobblestones, vac-forms on mostly 8x4 ply. We did not like the way the floor looked with front or top light on it, as it exposed the seams. where as sidelight largely focussed off the floor worked much better.

**FOCUS:** And a fake proscenium toured to every venue, even if it already had one.

**Rick:** Ian wanted to create an unsettling perspective, so the show proscenium was at an angle to the front of the stage, already eliminating LX 1. Slowly but surely, I took away the overhead rig at the National, and I can remember very clearly the flymen as we, gridded LX2, then LX3, and the flymen said, what the fxxk are you lighting this show with? And it turns out we were lighting it with the ladders, we were lighting it with lights that were rigged on the back of the Prosc Arch and we were lighting it with the good slots you have in the Lyttleton. Those lights made it look great and gave you very flattering angles that were coming still side lit, but far enough out front. It created a very flattering light on someone's face and the waist light went off stage so you didn't notice it too much. And that's how the look of the show

evolved. When I realized what I was doing, I tried to do it more consciously, sometimes a little bit too slavishly, perhaps, but now with old age, I'm a little bit more relaxed about it.

And so we always knew it was going to tour. But that didn't stop us fully exploiting the extraordinary width of the Littleton side stage, with the sky and floor disappearing into the wings. And that was meant to be the end of the show. That was it.

**FOCUS:** But the tour met with extraordinary success.

**Rick:** - and so went back into Rep at the National, the West End and consecutive tours, national and international, with a succession of Associate Lighting Designers.

**Ian:** I took over in spring of 2003 from Paul Franklin (now working for theatre consultants Charcoalblue. Ed) who had been relighting the tours after he took over from

Tony Simpson (who went on to recreate the concert lighting for the Queen biopic *Bohemian Rhapsody. Ed*). My first get - in was Bromley and I first saw it at Theatre Royal Brighton - I hadn't ever seen the show before, so it was all brand new to me. My first one solo was in the wilds of



Aberdeen, fortunately, as none of the management was likely to be turning up! That tour I was alternating weeks with Paul because he was starting something else. I did a couple of tours by myself and then I needed to break it up. That's when Will

came on board -

**Will:** I started depping for you 2012, but my paperwork goes back to 2009, it all overlapped a bit before I took it on fully in 2015.

**Rick:** The logistics have been different

where we've struggled to fit in, and I think eventually have decided that there are certain restrictions we no longer need to go to. We no longer choose to go to because we can't really do the show as intended. But the reality also, of touring in this country, is that you have to deal with some

case with Alexandra Palace.

**FOCUS:** Where an extra support truss had to be put into place as well. Has any of the other set elements been updated? Is the house still the original house?

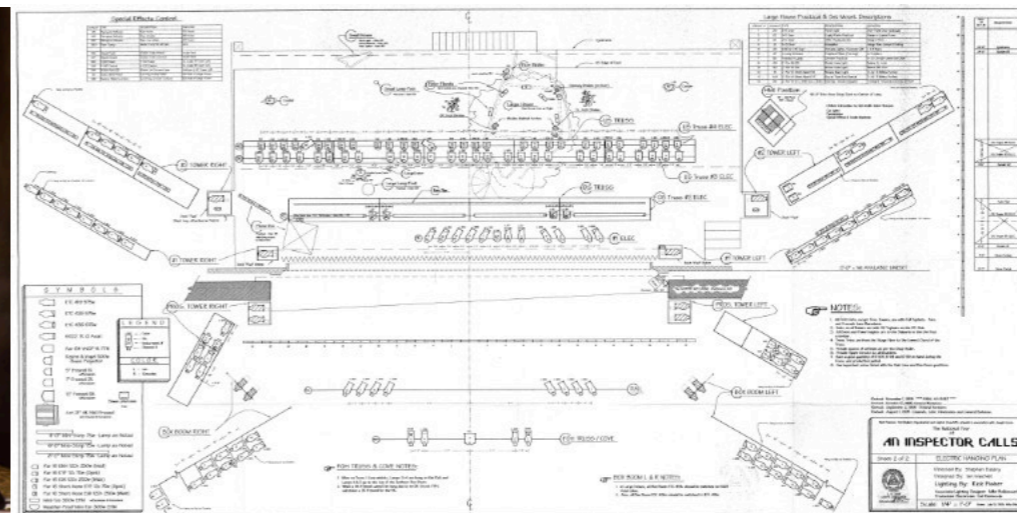
**Rick:** I think it's the original house like Cher is the original Cher.

**Ian:** It definitely has had work done. I suspect that the last tour I did was 2015 and the house had a hefty refurb down in Cardiff. If we'd known we might have been able to adapt some of the electrics to make them slightly easier to plug in on the house.

**Will:** It's now down to 11 channels on the house due to some creative electronics. But yes, it's still two socas worth run up the back. We have improved slightly the system. It's it's a bit more plug -and -play now..

**Ian:** It's been a continual process that we get a bit of money at the start of each tour and something else gets upgraded. I've not seen it for the last couple of tours, but I'm assuming all the hydraulic stuff is still the same.

**Will:** It had a big refurb, not this time round, but before the 22 - 23 tour, and they replaced a lot of the panels and we had some new holes drilled, which was nice. And the roof is a little bit more stable



due to the different buildings that we've been in and what's possible. Some theatres have no stage left, some theatres have no stage right.

**Ian:** And some have neither of either!

**Rick:** There are a couple of venues

of the management who more or less insist that you visit certain venues to help them fill up their season. So Will and Ian and many others have squeezed the show into certain venues. If we had time to adapt to a specific venue we do as is the the

now - not much, a little bit. As you say, it's incremental. Beginning of every tour, I say, can we get the house up somewhere and just have three days with it and noises are made and then it never happens.

**FOCUS:** As time moves on for all of us, not just Cher, which upgrades and changes has the lighting inventory seen?

**Rick:** Well, I think from my point, of course, the show started out with a completely conventional rig, before moving lights were commonly used in a play or in a rep house like the National. Our biggest unusual thing we included was an HMI. While not unheard of in the world of opera, was a bit rare in theatrical play presentation. We used it because it was in stock at the National Theater and because of its very unique, different quality of light, which nothing else did at the time. The rig was based on the rep rig of the National Theater, there are still a couple of remnants of that design, and this remained for a very long time. One of the things that has almost always changed is how we light the rain. We've got a rain pipe which is now downstage. We've gone up to three rain pipes at one time to make the rain a little bit more dense, but we're now reduced to just one rain pipe across, just behind the curtain. We have lit it with Source 4s, we've lit it with parcans, we've lit it with

par-battens, we've lit it with everything under the sun that we could do to it. We are now lighting it with X4 bars, which I think changed maybe three tours ago.

**Ian:** It was when you went into the West End after the '15 tour, and back at the end of the '12 tour we did that first test at Wimbledon.

**Rick:** Our loyal supplier White Light (WL) have been reminded not to throw certain things away because Inspector might still use them.

**Will:** Well, this is a good example where necessity forced our hands. I remember it very clearly. It was at Newcastle Theatre Royal and these batons, they were homemade either by the National or WL. Once they were rigged, you could never get up to them. So we always tested them before we rigged them.

**Ian:** They side-lit the rain, so there's a boom just upstage of the first, false proscenium and they light across. That was always an exciting part of the fit up because you had to work out where those had to go based on where the rain bar was going to be on a tour and hope that you could actually see the rain once it started falling.

**Will:** On that test, they just blew up. Ripped off the breaker as well. We used all the spares, and a call to WL revealed: The

supplier had stopped making them two years ago. We scraped together spares from the backs of cup-boards nationwide. A new solution had to be found, and we all went to WL to audition.

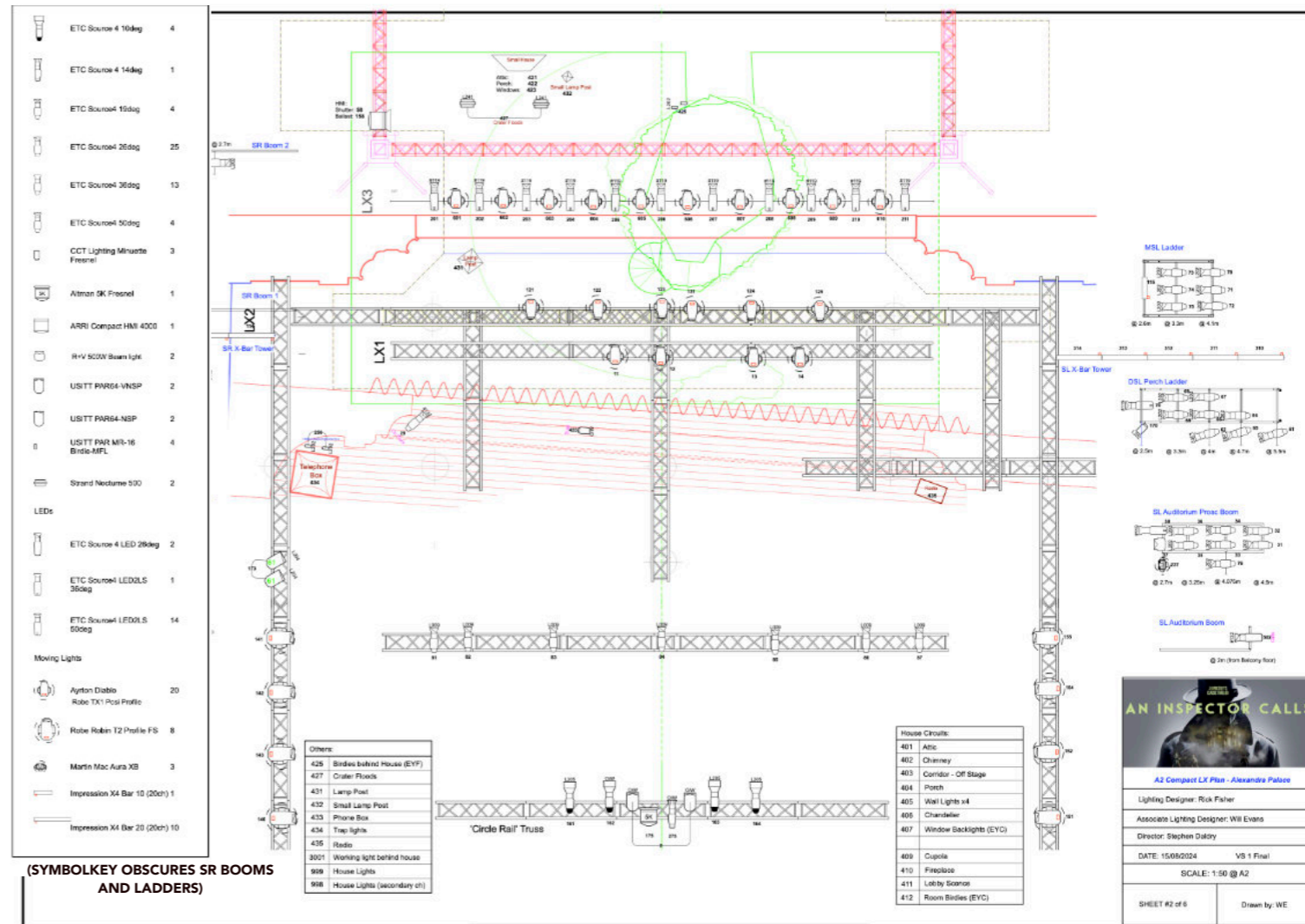
**Rick:** The idea is the rain should sparkle super brightly as much as it can, that takes a lot of light, but it must not light the stage, and the rain must appear separately from the smoke. Cue the appearance of lots of GLP X4 20 bars making that really narrow, very bright slice.

**FOCUS:** But they are much heavier than what you had before.

**Will:** Weight is a problem with all changes to LED. The old battons could be just picked up with one hand, and just side-clamped onto a perch - when we tried that with the X4s things got very wobbly! Our programmer Michael Fox designed freestanding towers for them. It's a lot of custom metal work, but it makes touring them very easy: the towers break in half, the X4 bars travel on them.

**Rick:** And now we have them, we add a few cells here and there when Mrs Birling manages to hide in a darker corner. I do sympathise - the show is so heavily side-lit, when I stand on stage I find it very uncomfortable.

**Ian:** I suppose the biggest change when



I was with the show was the lighting of the cyc. I seem to remember taking some 2.5 K Fresnels, the cyc was lit by a four colours wash -

**Rick:** - because from the beginning we wanted sharp edges, which ruled out traditional cyc floods on this cinemascope cloth.

**Ian:** - it's like literally IWBs of one bank of four lights that do that colour and then four lights do that, probably like six or eight of them -

**Will:** I think it was six in narrow mode, eight in wide mode. It was a lot.

**Ian:** - pretty damn heavy, that started to become a problem. We dropped them down to two Ks, and then I think one and a half Ks or 1.2 Ks, but still always struggling, certainly at the ends where you've got three sets of black. To do that with a Fresnel and barn doors was particularly a problem.

**Will:** We did an experiment in the 2015 West End run at the Playhouse, using Lustre 2s. But now, new for this year, they're Ayrton Diablos, ten of them.

**Ian:** You don't even have to go up the scope now to focus - that was the other problem when it was all conventionals, you had to focus the two overhead bars before the house was in position.

**Rick:** I think it's safe to say we've now moved to a totally automated overstage rig, even the back lights. We have automated moving lights that don't move, just do one focus, but they allow us to do this



remotely. And we cheekily moved one or two of them and used a bit of the functionality, it makes sense to do. We hope it's going to knock 45 minutes off the get in.

Before that, you couldn't put the house down until everything was focussed.

**Ian:** Exactly - that was always a good story!

**FOCUS:** Are the changes mainly about logistics and age of equipment or did you think after years - actually I want to light this differently?

**Rick:** I think the aim is for the show always to look good. My aim is for the people always to be brightly lit, even when it's a dark and stormy night, and to be lit wherever they choose to wander and not try and restrict them. Every tour, there's always a slightly different move that someone feels they wanna do. I've come to realize from having done this show off and on for 30 years, is that the style and the look of the show is strong enough to withstand a little bit of cheating. I think I've had infused in both Ian and Will a little bit dogmatism: This is the way Inspector looks. As soon as you get out of the house, you're in sidelight, sidelight, and only sidelight. With a little bit more age and wisdom, and perhaps slightly older eyesight, I have tried to encourage people to say, okay, the look of the show is still strong, but if you need to fill in a little bit because they all bunched together or you think it's more dramatically exciting, I'm ok with that.

**FOCUS:** If you could speak to 1992 Rick, with the knowledge that you would revisit the show so many times, what advice would you give him?

**Rick:** Add more booms! Well, two, probably.

**Ian:** Maybe you would have lit it from the side initially, rather than getting the

note to take all the lights off the floor.?

**FOCUS:** Ian and Will, was there any point where you wanted to go back to Rick and say, look, this is not working on tour - something we could change?

**Will:** Not really because the rig works, it really suits the show.

**Ian:** I don't think so. I mean, Will mentioned wider and narrow versions of the show - in narrow version the stage is 12 foot less wide because a four foot wide panel of floor goes on one side and an eight foot panel goes on the other side. It took me a tour and a half to just get my head around that difference because the booms are obviously closer in narrow mode than they are in wide modes. It's always easier to focus in wide modes because you've got literally more angle. That was the most difficult thing I found was to get my head around the narrow focus and especially in some of the smaller venues like Windsor or Cambridge -

**Rick:** ... we don't speak about Cambridge anymore!

**Will:** or Cheltenham ...

**Ian:** - where everything was so tight that you had to try and find some space from somewhere, but as Will said it works and I think possibly because the way we've been taught to re-light it. You're always con-

scious of each lamp's purpose - we need to make sure that that hits that angle when it's off the steps for this reason ...

**Will:** What it taught me was how sidelight really works. And this is why the show is still recorded very traditionally. It's hand-drawn sketches made by Tony Simpson, because there's no way to record digitally the focus, as I was explaining training up the relighter for this tour. It's not about where the light hits, but about what the light passes through on the stage, and that changes at each venue. #

## CREDITS TOUR '24/25

Director: Stephen Daldry

Designer: Ian MacNeil

Lighting Designer: Rick Fisher

Associate LD: Will Evans

Production LX and 24/25 re-lighter:

Alex Hannah

Programmer (and designer of the

custom built ladders/towers we

now use): Michael Fox

Tour LX: Joe Sanderson

**June 3rd was the launch day of the Theatre Green Book Version 2. From its initial launch in 2021 interest has been growing in its sustainability message.**

It provides a range of tools aimed at supporting the UK theatre sector to reach net zero by 2030, "Theatre's core strengths are innovation, courage and creative thinking. They've all fed into this second edition of the Theatre Green Book. With their help, we can make the journey to net zero. We can make theatre today, without compromising the dreams of future theatre-makers." Lisa Burger and Paddy Dillon from renew culture, a huge part of TGB organisational team.

Some of you may already be aware of the book's format, but for those that don't, it has 3 parts: Productions, Operations and Buildings. TGB2 breaks down each area to help you assess your sustainability. The biggest improvement in the new version is the pictorial user friendliness. This makes it much more accessible, not only for those

starting the process but for those dropping in for reference.

Each section has specifics related to the relevant area, but all have the 3 main levels of journey status along the ladder, basic, Intermediate and advanced. With an added initial step, preliminary that prompts theatre companies to commit to transition and organise themselves for the journey.

Most of the FOCUS readership will be involved in the productions section but the others are well worth a look at to see the extent of the TGB2. Other new features are carbon calculation resources, production calculators, case studies, and the tool kits. All designed to help you be a part of the sustainability conversation.

As member of the creative team we have a big part to play in making theatre and events sustainable. With our own choices and the ones we make collectively. TGB2 is for everyone with an updated web site which includes a new registration feature giving access to community forums, supporters' pages, upcoming events and the opportunity to become more involved.

Theatre Green Book Edition 2 is now available without charge online at [theatregreenbook.com](http://theatregreenbook.com)

*Daniella Beatty* #

**Getting up to get my youngest on the bus for 7, in the unseasonable downpour left over from last week's storm, is an ever-present reminder of global climate change.**

Eco-guilt is something I feel keenly, so when asked would I like to take on the position of



co-chair in the ALPD Sustainability Working Group the answer was "Yes!".

Although this is an enormous issue, I am a great believer that huge problems are best solved by breaking them into smaller portions. Little choices, in our day to day, can have large effects within the industry.

The Sustainability Group gets together to discuss and inform on working practices. These ideas are passed on to the

membership in hopes of changing the working culture. As with most industries we are not very sustainable and we could be better. By asking questions about products we buy or hire: Where has it come from? How was it manufactured? Where will it go on disposal? Helps us to make better informed and more sustainable decisions.

So this is where the Green Book comes into play, now in its second revision, this fantastic initiative gives guidance on how to improve the sustainability of buildings, companies and individuals.

Taking you step by step on a path to sustainability from basic to advanced, giving you a way to score your progress and enabling discussions across

the entire production process. With documentation, toolbox ideas and forums for open discussion. In the new revision you will also find the Green Book has grown, becoming international, sharing ideas across borders and languages. This is not an overnight or individual quick fix, similar to the planet's current climate issues,

but it is better to start small than not at all. Changing to a reusable cable tie, or Velcro rather than pvc tape may seem tiny and insignificant, but I do remember a time before Health & Safety regulations when people used to walk on stage without hard hats. Through knowledge and education we can change the industry's choices on sustainability.

If you are interested in any of these issues please get in contact with me or any other member of the ALPD Sustainability Working Group.

[sustainability@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:sustainability@thealpd.org.uk) #



**This edition, we are looking at green issues in theatre lighting, with contributions by Daniella Beattie, Rob Halliday and Talie Smith. We'd love to hear from you if you can contribute or have an idea what you'd like to read about - contacts page 43.**

## "Making better informed decisions"

**By Daniella Beattie, co-chair in the ALPD Sustainability Working Group**

Think differently



Graphic: Theatre Green Book 2024

**Is it possible we've entered the 'Post Green' phase of LED lighting? The phase where we concede that perhaps LEDs in themselves are not as green as had been suggested?**

We've been talking about this for a while now, but quite broadly in terms of the impact of making and shipping new LED fixtures to replace tungsten fixtures that might have been

working quite happily for decades, with potentially decades more life in them (subject to the availability of light bulbs). And

then at the other end, in terms of the expected working life of what are quite complicated devices full of electronics rather than effectively a metal container with a reflector and an easily replaceable light bulb (again, subject to availability) – in other words, how much more often will you have to replace that fancy new LED light against that old tungsten light?

The counter-argument has always been that the energy savings would win over the

fixture's life time. In some cases the numbers seem to make this obvious: 750W of tungsten Source Four vs 167W of Lustr2, and actually as soon as you get that Lustr into any kind of colour it'll be using even less power. There are quirks to that argument, particularly around standby power

## The Post Green Phase of LED lighting?

**Rob Halliday comments on ever-increasing power needs of LED instruments**

(how much power the fixture is using when not emitting light, which is surprisingly high in some cases, and a figure not all manufacturers publish) and how that adds up when a rig is powered up all day, but we've done enough studies now that show that overall, you will save power. Probably not enough to cover the far higher cost of that new fixtures compared to your tungsten lights over their lifetime, but we're not

in this just to save money, are we...?

But there has been a trend that's become particularly noticeable over the last couple of years: the power of LED lighting fixtures, particularly moving lights, has been creeping up. Not singling out manufacturers, but to look at three recent high-output moving spotlights, one is 850W, one is 1150W, one is 1200W and this all seems to be headed higher still. For comparison the familiar Mac Viper with its arc lamp is about 1200W.

Now there's no argument, particularly in theatre-style applications where the fixture is generally at zero or at a relatively low level, that the LED fixtures win the energy argument. Arc sources in this kind of ap-

plication are terrible wasters of power because whenever the lamp is struck they're drawing a lot of power (the full power with the output at any level, in current-generation fixtures usually a bit less when the output is at zero), and arc fixtures have high running costs as you have to replace the lamp at regular intervals.

But the numbers for LED are definitely increasing. And it's not always arc fixtures that you're making the comparison with.

Which is why I found myself doing some quick mental maths in a demonstration of Robe's new LED Svoboda batten at PLASA (Photo right), as the light sources it contained were described. From memory it was seven 40W LED sources in each

'lamp', so 280W, across 9 'lamps' so 2520W, plus whatever the little strobes add. But wait a minute, that's surely more than the tungsten Svoboda, which is nominally 250W x 9 = 2250W.....

I asked. They said, actually the output is limited so it tops out at 2400W (-presumably using throttling of LEDs to limit maximum power output, which is a whole new challenge for anyone mixing colour on additive colour



mixing LED fixtures; if you've found yourself making different versions of a colour for the fixture set to different levels it's probably because of this throttling that the fixture is doing internally that you have no control over). And of course it would use less power when mixed into colours. But still. It becomes harder to play the 'more efficient' card in this case.

Just to be clear: I'm not knocking Robe for this. It's a fun looking light, and as they also said: 'and it does more,' which is of course correct. And brings us perhaps to the discussion about why we've all started using LED fixtures, particularly over the last decade or so since they really started getting good enough for our applications.

**Photo: Tungsten Requiem by Michael Hulls, part of his 2016 installation *LightSpace* at Sadler's Wells. Michael was instrumental (with Jim Laws and the late Focus editor Andy Collier) in establishing the *Save Tungsten Campaign*, alerting the Theatre World about European legislation to abolish Tungsten light sources. With Paule Constable, Rob Halliday, Robbie Butler and Neil Austin this evolved later to the *Save Stagelighting Campaign*.**

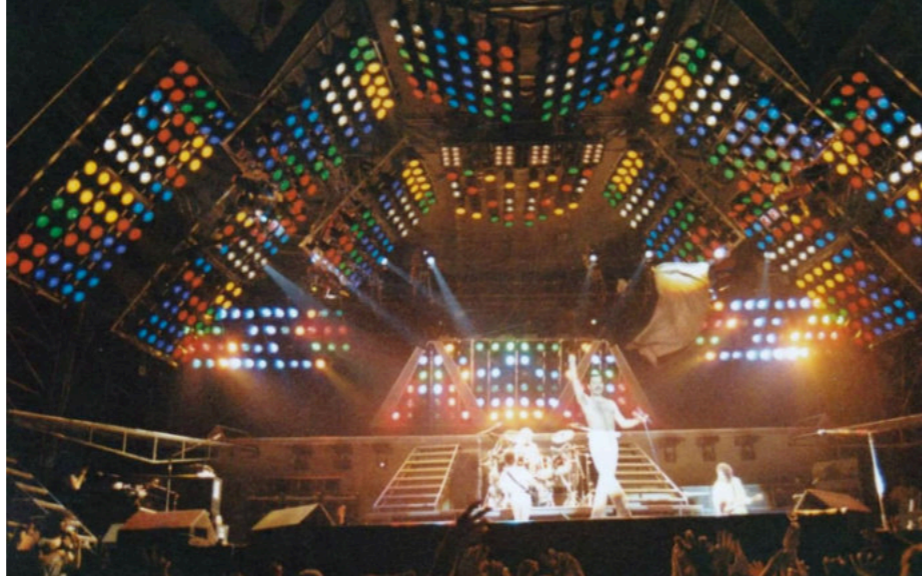


Have we ever really been trying to be greener? Or have we just found a more versatile tool, one that lets us push decisions further down the line (no need to pick gel!), or to react instantly in tech when everyone changes their mind (director: "I know we've talked for weeks about this scene being red, but can we try purple?"). My sense just at looking at lots of production shots over the last few years is that shows have started using slightly more extreme colours, perhaps because what would have been the risk of making that choice with gel is gone. Too much? Just dial it down. Has the 'green' angle just been the thing we've been able to throw out to justify the extra cost...?

If this arms race of ever-escalating LED fixture power continues, we're going to have to find a new justification (not that we of course really need one, given that politics is forcing us into this LED route and older light sources are becoming hard or expensive to get). Or, perhaps, we need to figure out what the ultimate brightness we actually need is, and persuade manufacturers that it's worth them making fixtures that deliver that as efficiently as possible, rather than getting caught up in the trade show arms race that every fixture needs to be brighter than the ones that came before. #

**How do you measure progress in sustainability terms?**

**Top: Queen Magic Tour 1986. Based on an earlier rig called 'Pizza Oven', Queens stadium rig had 800 1k Par Cans, designed by LeRoy Bennett. Bottom: Eurovision 2021: Over 1600 effect lights and 160 key lights employed by LD Henk-Jan van Beek .**



**Theatre Sustainability Consultant Talie Smith advises companies, productions and individuals in the creative industries on best working practice.**

**FOCUS:** Talie, you work part-time for Nottingham Playhouse (NP) as their Sustainability Officer, a role which is still quite unique in regional theatre.

**Talie:** But this should change! I should add I'm speaking today in my freelance consultant role, not for the NP. But they have been really progressive and supportive.

**FOCUS:** While most people working in performance lighting are fully behind energy saving measures, many express concerns that the century old tool of tungsten lighting, the base of many acclaimed designs and staple of legacy projects, is being forced out for an often unsuitable technology, LED.

**Talie:** Yes, it's a complex question set within a very complex issue anyway, isn't it? The whole climate change debate is complicated and constantly evolving and is proving a challenge for everybody

across all businesses. But we all need to understand that change is necessary, and that we have to start now, and in our own circle of influence.

**FOCUS:** How do you approach people about sustainability? I suspect there is often a bit of resistance?

**Talie:** I've come from a health care background, working for 12 years within the NHS. I was a Speech and

## “Looking at the whole picture”

**FOCUS in conversation with Theatre Sustainability Consultant Talie Smith**

Language Therapist, so communication, behaviour change, psychology is kind of a good basis for working with people. After working with the Sustainable Healthcare Trust, COVID allowed me to upskill, and a lifelong interest into performing arts led to the next step. I'm now working across the whole scope of the Theatre Green Book (TGB), looking at productions, operations



and at the building side of things.

**FOCUS:** So performance lighting is only a part of this.

**Talie:** We need to look at the whole picture, really, of what it means environmentally to put this work on, not just the production side. Without a show, people wouldn't travel to the theatre, the heating and aircon in the auditorium wouldn't run - these are also environmental aspects of a production. I think what's been good about the Theatre Green Book version two, you can't just say the production's team need to do X. There's a whole operation going on, you need to think about everything and start with the big impacts and then gradually work your way

through. Some impacts are on people's minds, or they're easier to change, or they feel like something that somebody behaviourally wants to do, whereas other things they just don't want to do, even though they might have a big impact.

**FOCUS:** How do you witness this in your own sphere of work?

**Talie:** Within Nottingham, our council has a net zero target of carbon neutral by

2028, which is very ambitious. So all the people that I've tended to work with have been trying to progress within that short timeframe. That's a challenge.

**FOCUS:** Is there more urgency now since it becomes more tangible for people? I'm just looking at, for example, local floodings here where we are.

**Talie:** Definitely. A production manager I worked with recently said prior to the last year, he wouldn't really have thought about not having his coffee in a takeout cup. All those little things, you can use that as an excuse and feel powerless and say, actually, it's not going to make any difference, which bin I put this in or whether I buy this or this. But if you think of your collective power as an industry, if you all work together, then actually you can have quite big impacts. And as your group, I think it's better to decide on the direction you want things to go in an informed way rather than having things sort of put upon you and say, by legislation made by people that don't necessarily understand where you're working. So I think upskilling yourself, so you can say we do understand there is a climate crisis, we know about the science, that's all kind of old hat. Whether local flooding or changing to LED: Ownership of it is what people need to do and move on from that

place of powerlessness or saying that being climate aware is having radical views.

**Focus:** How would you initiate this?

**Talie:** You can integrate it into people's appraisals, that they have one sustainability focused goal. If you work in front of house and you're going to start purchasing from local businesses, good on many levels. I think there's lots of things that people can do, but it does require somebody to have time to coordinate and to be aware of those things. Maybe you have a production manager with that special interest. Maybe they work in finance, because there's quite a lot of work around procurement and thinking about the environmental and social impacts of what you're buying, ~~and~~ who you're buying it from, and where it's coming from.

**Focus:** For example?

**Talie:** I'm lucky to have a role where I do have specific designated time. And that's because the NP sees that as valuable for them. There's lots of positives in terms of saving time, saving money, although that's

not always that easy to evidence, supporting staff in terms of their learning. So we do carbon literacy training, which came from a course created by Bristol Old Vic that we provide free to every member of our theatre and all the freelancers who work with us. We're trying to upskill the workforce in terms of understanding of climate change terminology and ownership for your own bits. An example: when we're hiring items, we tend to use a courier, or the hire company delivers with whatever they are using - we are trying to look into electrical vehicles for the delivery, which may reduce the impact.

**Focus:** And for lighting designers, programmers and technicians?

**Talie:** Within lighting, be able to understand what your impacts are, understand sustainability terminology, be able to make comparisons in terms of your energy or in terms

of where your materials are coming from. From a lighting perspective, know the materials your kit is made from, the source of it, how it was transported, and what will happen to it at the end of its life. Rethink, often the early creative decisions really dictate the end environmental impact so think about sustainability right at the start. Refuse, check on your supplier, do they

work responsibly? If not, ask them to change or use a better supplier, reduce the amount of kit bought via reuse, repurpose what a venue has in.

**FOCUS:** Money is tight. What if a theatre can't afford a consultant like yourself?

**Talie:** I think in general, businesses are moving towards being able to upskill a member of staff. Production management is a good one. The finance team, again, there are lots of schemes like **juliesbicycle.com** (QR code). If you have a board of trustees, you can have an environmental champion on the board. You can get a staff team together and they could meet for an hour a month, share ideas and then put them into actions.



**FOCUS:** As sustainability is such a complex field, as you described, I know of many people who would love to improve their carbon footprint in theatre but don't know where to start.

**Talie:** So it's not something where you can quantify it across the board. You can look at a particular production in a particular building and you could use something like Rob Halliday's power-track to look at your kilowatt hours and then you could convert your power usage into your

carbon impact.

You can compare this impact with something else in your control. So you could look at all the front of house lighting or you can pick another area to compare it to if you want to start deciding which is more important.

You want to go for something which you are actually able to impact on in terms of cost and in terms of just physically being able to do that. There might be something that would have a big impact - but if you know people just aren't going to do it, you'd go for something else.

**FOCUS:** And how do you respond when organisations feel they are too small, can't afford changes, or that any change would not make any impact due to their size?

**Talie:** I think that's a bit like when people say, well, what about China? There's an element of deflection, not wanting to engage with it and finding it hard to change your behaviour. What I would say is you need to think about what's in your control. With climate change, things feel out of your control, don't they? So think about what is in your control and what you can actually do and how you can upskill yourself.

**FOCUS:** Will the audience see these changes?

**Talie:** There's the recent **indigo-ltd.com** survey called *Act Green* (QR code): audiences are concerned about climate change, they want theatres to be showing that they're doing something about it. The survey looks at audiences' attitudes and what audiences are asking theatres and cultural institutions to do, and it tells us that they are starting to vote with their feet.



**FOCUS:** As we are working in the entertainment industry, do we have a special responsibility?

**Talie:** I have a friend working in Oncology and she asks herself sometimes: I spend all this time getting people better, but why am I getting them better? And the answer is: to enjoy life, and be able to participate. That's what theatre and culture offers people. It's that: enjoying life. So we have to be a positive force. On the climate front, theatre can be an educational tool as well. It can reflect back current social attitudes. It has a big role to play in terms of saving the world, because people don't learn best through reading, statistics and graphs. But if they can have an immersive experience where they can see it in a very multi-sensory way, they will really understand. So there's scope and responsibility within culture to do that. #

# The Bridgwater Guy Fawkes Carnival

"Seeing is Believing 2024"

From its early, anarchic 18<sup>th</sup> century beginnings with stories of dangerous homemade fireworks, the event in a small Somerset town has developed into "the UK's oldest carnival and one of the largest illuminated carnival processions in Europe", drawing thousands to line the streets and be dazzled by the seemingly no-holds-barred display of floats, loaded to the hilt with anything that shines and moves. Conceived and assembled entirely by volunteer clubs, electric lighting was introduced in 1903 and has grown since into phantasmagorical vehicles, possibly outshining anything a Disney imagineer can dream of. All stands are sold out for this year's procession on Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>, but the 50 floats, carts and walking displays can be watched from the streets or streamed at [www.bridgwatcarnival.org.uk](http://www.bridgwatcarnival.org.uk) #

In our series 'It's Light, Jim, but not as we know it' we are looking at ideas and exploration of colour, texture, luminence - whatever makes lighting people tick, away from performance spaces and instruments. We'd love to show your inspirational photos. Please email to [editor@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:editor@thealpd.org.uk)



**ALPD** #

**PROMOTION!**  
Discount to members  
for recruiting  
newcomers:  
**£10 off next year's  
membership for  
Professional/Affiliate  
members and £5 for  
Associate. The new  
member applicant  
MUST cite them  
when applying.**

## FOCUS Appeal!

FOCUS is your magazine from members for members of the ALPD. We really like to publish your show pictures, interview you, hear your thoughts on new tech or old niggles (production desks!). Please get in touch!  
[editor@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:editor@thealpd.org.uk)

The Association of lighting designers, trading as  
**The Association for Lighting Production and Design**  
Redoubt House, Edward Road, Eastbourne BN23 8AS  
For correspondence: PO Box 801, Banbury OX16 6RS  
[www.thealpd.org.uk](http://www.thealpd.org.uk) - [office@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:office@thealpd.org.uk)  
Company registered in England & Wales no. 10079797  
"For all the people in performance lighting"

President: Richard Pilbrow †

### The ALPD Board

Vice President: Rick Fisher [rick.fisher@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:rick.fisher@thealpd.org.uk)  
Chair: Johanna Town [chair@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:chair@thealpd.org.uk)  
Vice Chair: Mark Jonathan [mark.jonathan@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:mark.jonathan@thealpd.org.uk)  
Treasurer: Nick Moran [treasurer@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@thealpd.org.uk)  
Board members: Sofia Alexiadou, David Ayton, Briony Berning, Charlotte Burton, Lucy Carter, Mark Jonathan, Iain Quinn, Stuart Porter, Joe Price, Johanna Town, Mark White

### Ex officio officers

General Administrator: Amanda Laidler  
[office@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:office@thealpd.org.uk)  
Company Secretary: John Leventhall [office@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:office@thealpd.org.uk)  
Member representatives  
Professionals: David Ayton, David Howe  
[professionals@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:professionals@thealpd.org.uk)  
Companies: Stuart Porter [companies@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:companies@thealpd.org.uk)  
Students: Josie Ireland (chair) [students@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:students@thealpd.org.uk)  
Meetings: Briony Berning (chair) [meetings@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:meetings@thealpd.org.uk)  
Education: Sofia Alexiadou [education@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:education@thealpd.org.uk)  
Equity: Zoe Spurr [equity@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:equity@thealpd.org.uk)  
Bectu: Alex Fernandes [bectu@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:bectu@thealpd.org.uk)  
Diversity: Simisola Majekodunmi [diversity@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:diversity@thealpd.org.uk)  
Co-opted committee members  
Jason Addison, Peter Small

**FOCUS Magazine** ISSN: 1364-9299

Editor & graphic layout: Arnim Friess [editor@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:editor@thealpd.org.uk)  
Assisted by Amanda Laidler, Sam Waddington, Amélie Friess.

To submit ideas for articles, correspondence, corrections and any comments about FOCUS, email [editor@thealpd.org.uk](mailto:editor@thealpd.org.uk). Press releases are not accepted, Company members may forward press releases to the office for online publication. To advertise in FOCUS (Company members only) please contact the office. Editorial guidelines are available on request. The ALPD is not responsible for the content of external weblinks. The opinions published within FOCUS are not necessarily those of the ALPD. E&OE. #

**10 Out of 10 Productions**  
020 8659 2558  
www.10outof10.co.uk



**Blue-i Theatre Technology**  
0113 289 1030  
www.blue-i.tv



**Drafty**  
www.drafty-app.com



**Entedi**  
020 3598 3131  
www.entedi.com



**Follow Me Tracking Solutions**  
0203 743 2691  
www.follow-me.nu



**Goboplus/Cut Colour Plus**  
020 3603 1335  
www.goboplus.com  
www.cutcolourplus.com



**Illuminate Design**  
01223 969694  
www.illuminedesign.co.uk

illuminate*design*ltd

**JESE Ltd**  
01647 441166  
www.jese.co.uk



**Lamp & Pencil**  
01279 902819  
www.lampandpencil.com



**LX1 Production Services**  
03330 118 512  
www.lx1.uk



**Panalux**  
020 233 7000  
www.panalux.biz



**Production Lighting Ltd**  
www.productionlx.co.uk



**The Fifth Estate**  
01273 660 784  
www.thefifthestate.co.uk



Thank you for your support!  
For Corporate members,  
Please see centre pages.