

ALD FOCUS

The Journal of the Association of Lighting Designers

"More art, less tools..."

Under the crazed standard lamp this issue:

Carmelites in Colour • Gongs all round • Ballet lighting reviewed by Mark Ronan

• Taking part... how you can help x 3 • Book reviews ... and much more...

Price to non-members £5.00

*Declan Randall lights Poulenc's
Dialogues des Carmélites at
the Guildhall School of Music
and Drama on page 11.*

50th Anniversary Year!

Have you seen the new Kid?



Small and simple like Congo jr, with the mind of an artist — yet ready to handle the latest lighting technology.

250 or 500 channels, 1024 DMX outputs, 40 Master Playback faders

What will you create today? To find out more go to www.etccconnect.com

See Congo Kid at
PLASA Focus 2011
Leeds • UK
19th & 20th April
Stand S – C6

Rick's Rap

There is always a lot of information in *Focus* and this issue is no exception. Having been abroad almost the entire time since the last issue was published I now rely on the magazine to keep up to date with what is going on in the UK lighting world.

I have been lucky enough to have missed February in London and been in Buenos Aires lighting a new production of *The Sound of Music*. Did you know that Buenos Aires has one of the largest concentrations of theatres outside of the West End and NYC? It was great to have a wonderful team on my lighting crew that I would have been proud to work with anywhere in the world. Even though resources were limited compared to elsewhere, I found the same care and skill present with the technical staff and we were able to produce great results. It is always good to find out the international community of lighting has

much more in common than any differences, and that is what has sustained the ALD throughout its 50 years.

Speaking of the 50th, there are some events already underway and more in the planning stages. One great event will just have a few more days to run is the **Society of British Theatre Designers** exhibition of work currently running in Cardiff. There is a lot of members' work on display and a special ALD exhibit (p20), that **Nick Moran** has put together, describing how lighting contributes to the stage. Thanks to him for curating this, which will become a centrepiece of future ALD stands at trade shows.

I am also delighted to announce that to celebrate our Golden Jubilee, we will be offering a **Special Bursary** this year alongside the Michael Northen, ETC, and Francis Reid Bursaries awarded annually at PLASA.

This is a special new award and it is not for students but for *Emerging Lighting Designers* who are in the

early stages of their career. The submission entry will be on the same lines as the MNB award which is being slightly refreshed and can be found in *Focus* on page 9 and on the website. I look forward to seeing plenty of applicants for the £550 prize. It will be a great addition to anyone's CV and we are hoping to be able to help the winner with some placement in the industry or with an established LD. The number of 550 is also significant because **Declan Randall** has just mixed a new colour for Lee, which will bear that number to celebrate the 50th Anniversary... all will be revealed soon!

We are actively looking for other ideas to mark our anniversary so please do not hesitate to contact the office or any member of the Executive committee. Speaking of the busy Executive I would like to thank **Mary Pope** and **Kevin Sleep** who are standing down due to the pressures of work. We all greatly appreciate their contribution and I extend our thanks to them.

But the 50th anniversary is merely a small number to **Francis Reid** who was in the ALD at the beginning. He is celebrating his 80th this year and the entire ALD surely joins with me to wish him all the best!

I also want to call your attention to another article in *Focus* about **By Design Day**. This is the chance to remember *Light Relief* and contribute in any way possible to our charity that helps out individuals in the industry who are going through tough times. All are welcome to support the day especially anyone receiving royalties from shows in the UK or abroad, we ask them to donate their day's royalties. We now celebrate this in conjunction with *Behind the Scenes* the US charity that helps people in all areas of production. *Light Relief* has had more requests and given more grants out in the last year than ever before so please remember April 23rd as **By Design Day!** 🍀

Best regards, Rick



Highlights

- 4 **Raped by a craded standard lamp in Vienna**
Yes, it can only happen to Mark Jonathan.
- 8 **Office Oracle**
Ian's production desk.
- 11 **Dialogues des Carmélites**
Lit by Declan Randall.
- 19 **By Design Day**
Taking part #1.
- 20 **Transformation and Revelation**
ALD exhibit revealed.
- 24 **PLASA Focus**
Come and visit ALD in Leeds.
- 26 **Gongs all round**
A roundup of recent awards.
- 28 **Lighting ballet**
Our guest reviewer this issue is Mark Ronan.
- 34 **Equity update**
Taking part #2.
- 36 **Bumper Bookshelf**
James Laws has 'a short-haul trot' with cultured minds.
- 38 **Letters**
Taking part #3.

Raped by a crazed standard lamp in Vienna...

...it could only happen to
Mark Jonathan

**“No!”
I hear you cry,
“We don’t want
to know about
your latest tragic
journey.”**

Ok! Suffice it to say, I’m at Geneva Airport – the flight’s delayed but being a very go-ahead, modern airport we are blessed with free internet. I *skyped* the *Focus* Editor who gently reminded me he was ‘holding a couple of pages for MJ’ before *Focus* was sent to the printers. I’ve not had my eye on lighting for the last month as it should be the powder ski season, but that’s been cut back nearly as much as the arts budgets. Apart from skiing, I’ve opened the opera *The Rape of Lucretia* in Vienna and I’m happy to report it was very well received indeed.

The opera was a success despite a ‘scary’ lighting moment on the 1st night. As it happened, neither the designer, Ashley Martin-Davis, nor I felt we could sit in our seats on the front row of the dress circle. We had a feeling... It was a complex show and it relied on all the technology working. The underlit floor, for example, started in the basement, came up at the end of the prologue and tracked

forwards and back 30 metres carrying various pieces of set and singers with it at different times in the opera. Let’s say there had been some teething problems through previous rehearsals. It just all needed to work and not get stuck. We were playing the 90 minute opera without an interval so, once it started, it just kept on going.

Everything was going fine until the Rape scene. The opera is commented on by a male and female chorus and in our concept, the man is an aging, alcoholic, university don and the woman is his young student. They occupied their world above; he in his book-lined study and she in her bedsit. The two rooms tracked across the stage, to various positions and met in the middle while the main story played below.

We’d made a decision that any ‘electrics’ in the rooms above would be managed by radio controlled dimming to avoid trailing cables. So, we powered a ‘flickering’ TV effect in her room and a desk lamp and standard



lamp in his study. That’s fine providing an eminent opera singer doesn’t put his big boot in, and disconnect the radio receiver from the dimmer. Do you know what happens when the dimmer loses its signal from the desk? Yes, it starts to go on and off, and ON and OFF and **ON in time to the music**. What this scene didn’t need was some crazed standard lamp to be joining in upstairs while 3 massive walls of light bulbs slowly built to full during the very dramatic rape of Lucretia by Tarquinius which was taking place below.

From the back of the dress circle I could see the director’s head flinch, surely thinking

we could stop it? What to do? The heavy fire- and sound-proof door to the lighting box was locked. I crept out of the auditorium. Down to the prompt corner. Everyone was transfixed by the Rape and hadn’t noticed the ruddy lamp flashing ON and OFF.

Luckily, Frank, from the lighting department was standing at the ready; ‘Shin up that ladder; I said in my best German, ‘and when the room tracks off into the wings, jump aboard and deal with it.’ Frank shinned up the pros boom ladder, wire cutters gripped in his teeth. He returned with a smile on his face and said “Kein Problem,” adding in German

"It'll never work again." Great, I thought, I was rather hoping it might work for the 2nd performance...

I'm not sure whether the director forgave me for allowing the possibility of the failure to exist. You know how annoying it is when you say: 'I actually told them that if the desk lost control of the radio controlled dimmers that would be the result.' I'd already watched that happen when they turned the desk off and went home a few nights before. At least I wasn't sitting in my seat on the front row of the dress circle.



April / May 2011

Vienna is a very beautiful city and I'd recommend it for a city break to see the galleries, museums and architecture that abounds providing you aren't, like me, in serious training, as avoiding the Torte and Strudels in the famous coffee houses is hard - especially for a confirmed 'cakaholic'.

While I was in Vienna I went to see what all the fuss was about with the film *Black Swan*. Why is it that whenever the film-world tries to portray our world of live performance it usually looks pretty naff? In this case, the naff portrayal of ballet, stage design and stage lighting was matched by dreadful dialogue too. What a pity that Stephen Daldry wasn't directing the film.

I'm travelling back to London for a play prior to my scheduled trip to the National Ballet of Japan in Tokyo. I see that all performances in March at the New National Theatre in Tokyo have been cancelled. I wait to see if performances will take place in April. I'm sure you all join me in sending our deepest



sympathy to our Japanese colleagues at this very sad time.

The latest Tsunami has reminded me that we have had a year of extreme weather and that I imagine some lighting designers may be examining 'the act of God' clauses in their international contracts rather more carefully.

Please could I urge you to read Johanna Town's article on Equity on page 34. Both Jo and I are stepping down from

the designers committee. It's essential that we keep a presence, so Equity members please - volunteer! I have decided to focus (so to speak) on my work and the ALD. On that front, I think we do need to get together for another professional designers' meeting. As Jo points out in her article now is probably not the time for us to see LD fees increasing much against the background of world recession. We certainly need to guard against any loss of

benefits and I can certainly see examples of that starting to happen. We'll be telling professional members when we can arrange a meeting date soon. Please come if you can as your input and contributions to discussions is vital.

Now, I'd better go and get my head round how to light this 'chamber piece' with its limited budget and low ceiling and *NO radio controlled dimmers*. 🌸

emerging

Calling all young Lighting Designers!

by **Will Evans**

Are you somewhere between college fading into a distant memory, and your first 'big' show? (whatever that may be?)

If so, join over half the professional membership! We're keen to start a new group and have a meeting concerning **Emerging LDs** – a difficult category to describe really, we sort of sit in a hinterland between 'graduates' and more 'established' LDs. Lighting is certainly our main source of income be it design, re-lights, assisting, programming and the odd bit of lx work but we haven't got to that hallowed level of being able to support ourselves on design alone yet.

It's a broad church and the word 'young' is probably

misleading but 'junior', or 'not quite there yet' or 'will somebody just give me more work!' lighting designers didn't seem to fit quite as well! So we've settled on 'emerging'.

Our aim is to set up a meeting later in the year where young professional and professional designer members can meet up, socialise and generally have a good natter about the industry. Share thoughts on getting an agent (if you need one at all?!), getting more work, getting 'better' work and just generally surviving as a lighting designer. We might even persuade a few more seasoned LDs to come along and share their thoughts and nuggets of wisdom.

So if you're a professional member (of either category) finding it tough in the big world of entertainment lighting and starting to think that 'Five Pound Fringe' more closely reflects your fee than the ticket price, this meeting is for you. Hopefully, this will lead to building an informal group with regular meetings.

To do that we need to know whether to book a table at a pub or the Albert Hall for this meeting. So if you're interested please let us know so we can get an idea of numbers and we'll announce a date and time later in the year.

Email the usual address – meetings@ald.org.uk – to express interest and to put forward any ideas you may have. #





Light to make you look.

To Whakarangatira: New Zealand Drama School, Dead Friend, directed by Andrew Foster, photo by Michael Parrott.

Inventing new solutions,
creating new technologies

Philips Entertainment has united the leading Strand, Selecon and Vari-Lite brands to bring light to life in theatres, schools, studios, museums and galleries around the world.

An unrivalled history of innovation in lighting technology means Philips Entertainment can deliver versatile, intuitive, energy efficient lighting solutions to projects everywhere. Lighting professionals and designers can respond creatively and effectively to every challenge with better designed, dimming, control and high performance LED and conventional luminaires from Philips Entertainment.

To learn more about how Philips Entertainment can help you create unique and engaging experiences for your audience or visitors:

www.seleconlight.com

www.strandlighting.com

PHILIPS
Entertainment



Office Oracle

News from Ian's production desk

Visiting Transformation & Revelation

The UK Stage Design Exhibition is now open and runs until the 16th April at the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama in Cardiff. As usual a selection of the exhibits shown will be chosen to represent the UK entry to the Prague Quadrennial this summer, and a reduced version of the show will tour the country, and then transfer into the Theatre Galleries at the V&A Museum later in the year.

As with previous incarnations of this exhibition, the theme is chosen to enable set, costume, lighting sound and video designers from all disciplines of the performing arts to explain to the wider public how we approach designing productions in the myriad of venues and performance spaces in which we work.

The preview viewing that I

attended showed once again the breadth of style and scale of shows undertaken during the last four years, and the three hours I had to look around was nowhere near enough time to take in all the exhibits as one might wish to. Model boxes are displayed next to costume designs and production photos showing exactly the difference between conception to performance. There was one exhibit that had the white card model next to the finished one for the same show, and another set designer presented four productions in the same venue by showing them split across two complete models.

About a dozen lighting designers have exhibited as individuals this year, as the Executive decided to support this approach rather than bundle up designers into a composite ALD entry as we have previously. This allows

each designer's entry to be viewed at leisure, and also gives a larger percentage of the floor area to the art of lighting design, hopefully increasing to an increase in awareness.

Mark Howland's display shows the different type of lighting sources that we use in our work and how their different attributes can effect the audience's reaction to the stage picture. Peter Mumford exhibits his work as Scenographer on Birmingham Royal Ballet's $E=mc^2$ by showing individual model boxes for each of the four acts and therefore their very different approaches both visually and through the music. David Howe shows us pictures of the set lit by both working light and stage lighting to show us how we change to space using focused light and creating particular images in which to draw the audience's eye

towards what we want them to see.

Do try to catch the exhibition while it is still in Cardiff as its size will only be reduced from here into other versions. It is an inspiring day out to see such work and approaches, if a little humbling that we are all part of this creative industry and annoying that once again I find myself wondering why I didn't get my act together to exhibit my work as I said I would four years ago in Nottingham.

The next show is in 2015, so start collecting your images now....

2011 AGM

It has been decided to hold the 2011 Annual General Meeting of the ALD at 2pm on **Sunday 11th September** during the first day of the PLASA Trade Show at Earl's Court. The main business of the Meeting is to vote on

the confirmation of the Chair Designate, Peter Mumford. Further details will follow...

Subscription Fees

2011-12 subscription fees are now due for payment. As laid out in the constitution the deadline for payment is 1st July 2011.

The ALD Office is close to completing its relocation, but we cannot currently confirm the new postal address in time for the subscription renewals as we had wished. However mail is being re-directed by the Royal Mail to our temporary base. For this reason, it may take longer to process payments made by cheque and we encourage members to pay by either electronic transfer or to use our on-line payment system on the ALD web site to ensure that your payment reaches us. The current rates are as follows:



Professional Designer/ Member £75, Associate £40, Student £25, Corporate £400, Non-Profit Organisation £25

We still have approximately £1200 outstanding for the current subscription year because members haven't updated their standing order to reflect the rise in 2009. If you are unsure if you owe any monies to the ALD, please contact the Office immediately. Your membership is at risk if you do not.

Chatter in the wings.....

A lot of the current discussions at executive meetings involve the 50th Anniversary and how we can mark the event with events and meetings across the year.

We are looking at trying to organise a larger party during the summer that members would be invited to, a seminar at PLASA, a competition to design a gobo and a few

others that are still in the mix in terms of finalising what they should involve. As Rick outlined in his introduction and explained in detail here later, there will also be an Emerging Designers' bursary to celebrate the anniversary. If you have any further ideas for possible events or meetings, please contact a member of the Executive.

Other topics discussed include arranging another Professional Members' Meeting.

2011 Michael Northen Bursary

The Michael Northen Bursary is awarded annually to a student who has demonstrated strong, imaginative and creative lighting design. It is open to students and recent graduates – that is graduates from 2010 and 2011 – and not just those from vocational theatre courses either.

This year sees a change in both the submission and the prize: so if you are now, or have recently been, a student lighting designer read on!



Submissions: This year, your submissions will take the form of a printed portfolio, with a one-page CV, and a one-page statement outlining your approach to lighting design. We believe this format will be useful to you in promoting your practice as well as in gaining the Bursary and other prizes. It should show high quality work from two to four productions, and should demonstrate your

imaginative and creative approach to lighting design.

You should also show a good understanding of how and why you achieved your end result, so you may wish to include your visual inspiration, mood-boards, story-boards, cue synopses and a lighting plan with any other paperwork relevant to the design. That said, your portfolio should be primarily visual, to give the judges a broad sense of each production and the process you went through to achieve it.

Prize: The main prize will be £500.00 **plus** either the opportunity to observe a high profile lighting designer or to experience working with a company or venue, both of which to be organised within a year of the award. There are also two runner-up prizes, which will each be £250.00 plus an opportunity to work with a company or venue.

ALD's Bursary for an Emerging LD

As part of the celebrations for the ALD's 50th Anniversary we are also running a Bursary competition for those who graduated in the last five years (graduates from Summer 2006 and later).

The submission should take the same portfolio format as that of the Michael Northen Bursary and feature work that has been performed since the applicant graduated. There will be one award of £550.00 plus an opportunity to observe a high profile lighting designer or an experience working with a company or venue as arranged between the winner and the ALD.

The deadline for both bursaries is the 31st of July 2011. Full details of the Michael Northen/ALD Emerging LD Bursaries will be released in April 2011. The winners of both bursaries will be announced at PLASA. 🍀

Diary Dates 2011

until 15 April

UK Design for Performance 2011, RWCMD, Cardiff. See [page 20](#).

1 April

Subscription Payments due

19/20 April

PLASA Focus 2011, Leeds*

See [page 24](#)

21 April (Thursday)

7pm Members' meeting: [Coach & Horses, Wellington Street, London](#)

23 May

Paule Constable is giving the Gordon Craig Lecture, 6-7pm, Central School of Speech & Drama, London

27 May (Friday)

7pm Members' meeting: [Coach & Horses, Wellington Street, London](#)

15/16 June

ABTT Theatre Show*

1 July

Deadline for subscription payments

11 September 2pm

ALD AGM

4th Knight of Illumination Awards*

11-14 September

PLASA 2011, Earl's Court*

*the ALD will have a presence at these events.

Contact us

The Association of Lighting Designers

PO Box 680, Oxford, OX1 9DG, UK Tel: 07817 060189
office@ald.org.uk www.ald.org.uk

The Executive

President: **Richard Pilbrow**

Chair: **Rick Fisher** rick.fisher@ald.org.uk

Chair designate: **Peter Mumford** peter.mumford@ald.org.uk

Deputy Chair: **Jason Larcombe** jason.larcombe@ald.org.uk

Administrator and Treasurer:

Ian Saunders ian.saunders@ald.org.uk

Professionals: **Mark Jonathan** mark.jonathan@ald.org.uk

Equity Rep: **Johanna Town** jo.town@ald.org.uk

Corporates: **Iain Quinn** iain.quinn@ald.org.uk

Student issues: **Jack Knowles** jack.knowles@ald.org.uk

Meetings: **Will Evans** meetings@ald.org.uk

Education: **Nick Moran** and **Scott Palmer** education@ald.org.uk

Committee members

Andy Collier andrew.collier@ald.org.uk

Paule Constable paule.constable@ald.org.uk

John Leventhall john.leventhall@ald.org.uk

Declan Randall declan.randall@ald.org.uk

Tom Dexter Scott dexter.scott@ald.org.uk

Focus Magazine ISSN: 1364-9299

Editor: **Andy Collier** editor@ald.org.uk

To submit ideas for articles, information, correspondence, corrections and any comments about *Focus*, please email editor@ald.org.uk.

Owing to space restrictions, we regret that we do not accept press releases for publication in *Focus*. However, Corporate members of the ALD may send press releases to the ALD office (office@ald.org.uk) so that they can be posted on the News section of the ALD website for immediate and wider coverage. Corporate members only may advertise in *Focus*, please contact the office for details. Editorial guidelines for authors are available on request from the editor.

The opinions published within Focus are not necessarily those of the ALD. E&OE.

New Members

welcome to...

Professional Designer

Simon Featherstone, Huddersfield

Richard A Godin London (rejoining)

Nigel Lewis, London (from Associate)

Andreas Papadopoulos, Cyprus

Professional Member

Richard Hillier, London

Chris Withers, London

Associate Member

Sebastian Edwards, Bromley

Malcolm Hunt, Rugby

Duncan Irwin, Totnes

Allan Faisal Cos jr, Saudi Arabia

Sponsored Student Scheme

Rose Bruford College:

Patrick Magee

Daniel Young

University of Glamorgan:

Owen Fallows, Davis Fennaz, Benjamin

Gummery, James Harrison, Samuel

Jones, Anders Lind, Marie Model,

Matthew Parker, Christopher Pateman,

James Siddle, Thomas Vallis

University of Leeds:

Theo Chadha

Corporate Member

Illuminate Design, Colchester

Dialogues with Light

Declan Randall
lights Poulenc's
Dialogues des
Carmélites at the
Guildhall School of
Music and Drama

April / May 2011



The opera is based on a true story – it's about the persecution of the Carmelite nuns during the French Revolution. It's not a happy story, as you can imagine, as so few true stories that become operas are.

The plot revolves around a central (fictional) character called Blanche who is born into the world in fear and seems to grow up to be someone who is

always afraid. It was this shattered psyche and the opening scene where her carriage is attacked and the windows smashed that gave set designer David Farley the starting point for his marvellous design. The show opens with a projected image of the shattering glass (one which we used again, both as a negative image and later, red with blood) which were designed by final



Declan Randall lights Poulenc's *Dialogues des Carmélites* at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama

year student Chris Jackson. Both director Stephen Barlow and David wanted the stage to feel closed in and almost threatening and offer the audience a sense of the danger and fear that ruled her life. This was achieved by two sets of sliders and headers, shaped like fragments of the shattered glass, which would move in and out to open up or close down the space and create the many different locations within the opera.

The main performance area was a raked wedge which revolved as required to further change the location settings. I fell in love with the set the first time I saw it and knew how important the light would be that helped to enhance the sense of fear and dread that Blanche felt and that the set created - and I just could not wait to get "stuck in".

Most of the scenes called

for a specific light source, and even if these were not actually seen, they were certainly alluded to. As with any good piece of theatrical writing, light is inherent to the telling of the story. It is written that it gets darker and more ominous which adds to her fear and flickering candlelight would cast shadows on the walls which would frighten her. Daylight and candlelight became the two main motivating light sources, but as she (Blanche) was living in a world that to her was full of fear, I did not want to use colours that were too realistic in suggesting the motivating light. For instance, I wanted daylight, but it needed to be an uncomfortable daylight - something that was just "off-normal" and unsettling. The same applied to the candlelight - it was warm and flickering - but it was not a

'happy' or a 'cosy' warm. The other dictating factor about the light that Blanche's world demanded was that it was fractured and broken. This again, ties in with the theme of the broken glass that is established early on in the opera. There were a number of cues that we created for Blanche that would slowly fade in a gobo wash as she entered the scene, so that it was almost as if her mere presence was causing the light to fracture and break. Depending on the tone of the scene, these were these adjusted in intensity to become more dominant as her fear grew and then would recede slightly as she was comforted, but never going away completely.

I love colour. It excites me and is what draws me to lighting design. Choosing the colour palette for Blanche's world was indeed





a challenge. My starting point was the broken glass. I thought about the colours that clear glass refracts when shattered – the greens, yellows and blues and took it from there. The trick was that Blanche, whilst being the central character, was not the only character, and so the colour choice had to also work and be believable in the worlds of the other characters too. I ended up choosing a range of colours that all tended to the greener side of the spectrum, as this was the dominant colour in my 'broken glass' approach. For this, I found that the steel greens, green tints as well as the sodiums and mustards were very

effective. Few of the colours were very saturated – the costumes were true to the period and nun's habits are shades of black brown, both of which need a fair amount of light to 'read' on stage.

Textured light was also a huge part of the lighting design and a big part of Blanche's world. Few of the gobos were ever in sharp focus though, unless they were depicting a window or other locational device. I opted for a "just-off-sharp" edge and often combined this with a split-colour gel to add to the sense of the 'shattered light'. Linear break-ups were heavily used which helped to create the







Declan Randall lights Poulenc's *Dialogues des Carmélites*

illusion of the light filtering through the broken timber or boarded up windows.

As is the case with any production, it simply cannot be done without the teamwork, effort and dedication of the crew. The team at Guildhall are fantastic – from the staff to the students. There is a huge amount of talent being nurtured there, from the singers to the orchestra and the stage team and technicians. Nothing was ever too much trouble and everything was carried out with the highest standards of professionalism and care.

The end of the opera is perhaps one of the most well-known with the fifteen nuns being executed one by one while they sing the *Salve Regina*, their voices dropping out one at a time as the blade falls. We decided that instead of going the obvious route of

taking lights out on each nun as they died, we decided to add light to each of them. A carefully focussed backlight and uplight was added in as each nun dies.

Blanche runs in to join her sisters in their sentence, and as the last blade falls we opened up the stage, pulling out all the headers and sliders and opening up the cyclorama which faded up to a bright white using 2 x 2.5kw HMI Fresnels to achieve this. This 'white-out' echoed the sense of the release that she felt from her world and fear of life.

The music ends.

Silence.

Blackout.

And then there were nun.



Sorry, but I could hardly write about the Carmelite nuns without at least one nun joke creeping in. I know, it's a bad habit...

April / May 2011





Declan Randall

With over 15 years of professional lighting design experience and more than 240 productions under his belt, Declan's work has been seen all over the world. He has lit for dance, drama, opera and musicals as well as for corporate events and film. Declan has also, under the banner of his South African company Congo Blue Design, designed the lighting for several architectural projects both in South Africa and internationally.

All photos (including front cover) by Declan Randall.

Corporate Members Thanks for supporting the ALD.

<p>AC Entertainment Technologies Ltd 01494 446000 www.ac-et.com</p> 	<p>ETC Electronic Theatre Controls Ltd 020 8896 1000 www.etcconnect.com</p> 	<p>your company could be here!</p>	<p>Roscolab Ltd 020 8659 2300 www.rosco.com</p> 
<p>ADB Lighting Technologies +32 2 709 3211 www.adblighting.com</p> 	<p>Goboland UK 020 7060 4626 www.goboland.co.uk</p> 	<p>Northern Light Stage & Technical Services Ltd. 0131 622 9100 www.northernlight.co.uk</p> 	<p>Schnick-Schnack-Systems GmbH 0844 800 4395 www.schnickschnacksystems.com</p> 
<p>Artistic Licence (UK) Ltd 020 8863 4515 www.artisticlicence.com</p> 	<p>Hawthorn Theatrical Ltd. 01664 821111 www.hawthorns.co.uk</p> 	<p>Philips Entertainment 07974 752646 www.seleconlight.com</p> 	<p>Stage Electrics 0117 938 4000 www.stage-electrics.co.uk</p> 
<p>Barco High End Systems Europe Ltd. 07919 007960 www.highend.com</p> 	<p>Illuminate Design Ltd 01223 969694 www.illuminedesign.co.uk</p> 	<p>Production Resource Group UK 0845 470 6400 www.prglighting.co.uk</p> 	<p>Storm Lighting Ltd 01483 757211 www.stormlighting.co.uk</p> 
<p>CCT Lighting (UK) Ltd 0115 985 8919 www.cctlighting.com</p> 	<p>Lee Filters 01264 366245 www.leefilters.com</p> 	<p>Projected Image UK Ltd 0191 265 9832 www.projectedimage.uk.com</p> 	<p>White Light 020 8254 4800 www.whitelight.ltd.uk</p> 
<p>Clay Paky S.p.A. +39 335 72 333 72 www.claypaky.it</p> 	<p>MA Lighting UK Ltd 020 7625 4371 www.malighting.com</p> 	<p>Pulsar Light of Cambridge Ltd 01223 403500 www.pulsarlight.com</p> 	<p>Wybron Inc. +1 719 548 9774 www.wybron.com</p> 
<p>Computers Unlimited 3-D Design 020 8358 9476 www.vectorworks.uk.com</p> 	<p>Martin Professional UK 01622 755442 www.martinpro.co.uk</p> 	<p>Robert Juliat +33 (0)3 44 26 51 89 www.robertjuliat.com</p> 	<p>Zero 88 01633 838088 www.zero88.com</p> 



**LIGHT
RELIEF**

Sign up here for **By Design Day 2011!**

By Design Day, the joint fundraising day for *Light Relief* in the UK and *Behind the Scenes* in the US, is now in its third year and once again the organisers are hoping for a bigger response than ever before.

Scheduled this year for Saturday April 23, *By Design Day* has the full backing of a host of award-winning designers: Neil Austin, Scott Pask, Ken Billington, Howard Harrison, Ken Posner, Paule Constable, Scott Lehrer, Jennifer Tipton, Jonathan Deans, Tony Meola and Hugh Vanstone, along with *Light Relief's* co-founder, Rick Fisher.

By Design Day is the chance for all of us in our profession to support two charities

dedicated solely to helping entertainment technology professionals in need. You can join your colleagues by making a donation in support of this special day. One way to support the day is by voluntarily giving a day's royalties to one or both of these charities. *Light Relief* assists those involved in the UK lighting industry while *Behind the Scenes* aids professionals based in the US and Canada working in any area of the entertainment technology industry.

Light Relief Day was founded in 2007 in the UK to honour the memory of founder Tony Gottelier and quickly gained support among designers with shows on the West End and

on tour, and 2009 was the first year that the U.S. and Canada joined the day to benefit *Behind the Scenes*. Now the day is supported internationally with donations from designers with productions on all over the world. To date *Light Relief* has awarded more than £30,000 in grants to help lighting professionals and their families, while *Behind the Scenes* has issued almost \$200,000 in grants to professionals working in all disciplines.

So – put Saturday 23 April 2011 in your diary – and visit www.lightrelief.org.uk or www.estafoundation.org/bts/events/btsday2011.htm for more information in due course! 🍀



**BY DESIGN DAY
APRIL 23, 2011**

...designers give back

Support your entertainment technology and design colleagues in need. Pledge your royalties for April 23rd or make a donation to Behind the Scenes in the US and Canada or Light Relief in the UK.

Wherever your show is – New York, London, or the road – help these charities that provide financial assistance to industry members who are seriously ill or injured.

www.estafoundation.org/bts.htm
or
www.lightrelief.org.uk



Transformation and Revelation

Nick Moran Previews

This grand survey of UK theatre design – sets, costumes, light sound and media - from that last four years sprawls through the exciting new theatre and atrium spaces of the Royal Welsh College in Cardiff until April 16th. It is free to enter – and even in the partly hung state I last saw it in was already impressive. Anyone interested in theatre design should try to get to it, or at least get hold of the excellent catalogue.

Cardiff is an open exhibition. Later this year a small selection from Cardiff will travel to Prague to

represent UK theatre design at PQ 2012. In the autumn, a larger selection from the Cardiff exhibition will tour the UK, ending up at the V&A in London for 2012. But only in Cardiff will you have a chance to see everything, including exhibits by most of the professional designers on the Exec – and the beautiful design for Birmingham Royal Ballet’s $E=mc^2$ by Peter Mumford, our chair in waiting. Go and let us know what you think!

The ALD’s group submission – shown in miniature on the following two pages – is four A1 panels,

one each for Drama, Dance Music Theatre and Student & Non-Professional work. They attempt to show something of the range of work our members produce: how light on stage can be perfectly unnoticed or emphatically present; can reveal the form of a dancer, a puppet horse, or a space; can evoke time and place, be visual metaphor or simply enable clear focused visibility on stage.

We hope you will enjoy seeing these panels on the ALD stand at future trade shows – but urge you to see the whole exhibition in Cardiff this month! 🍷



Drama

"What can light contribute to this production?"



Francis Ford Coppola, ALD Fellow, Author and Educator

Francis Ford suggests that every LO asks her or himself the question: "What can light do for this production? There are still plays where the lighting is largely un-noticable. For *God of Carthage*, Hugh Vanstone lit the stage to make it look "invisible" to everyone in a large auditorium. It's easy task. At the same time Hugh used lighting's subtle "secret language" to help tell the story.

But for some productions light can usefully make its contribution in a much more noticeable way. Ted plays from Christopher Twissel provides examples of how the "noticeable" effect of light can be used to add an additional layer to theatre story telling. Howard Harrison's work on *Macbeth* makes bold and dramatic use of strong back-light, shadow, silhouette and colour, while Malcolm Rippeith's work on *Six Characters...* appears to make a tank of water a source of bright, white, interrogative light.

Ned Austin uses noticeable light sources not only to illuminate the stage, but also to help create and sustain the spectacle of the bounding magnificence of *Empire Jones*.

Jon Clark and Jean Karmali use overcast shadows to great effect in *The Birthday Party* and *The Waste Land* respectively, while Natasha Chivers and David Kidd produce dramatic effects that would not be out of place in a partying by Rembrandt.



God of Carthage, lit by Hugh Vanstone. Photo: Robert Hill. Photo credit: Hugh Vanstone



In many studio and fringe spaces it's hard not to notice the sources of light. *Pressure Drop*, lit by Matt Howard, had its audience promenading between several small stages, and a lighting rig only just above their heads. Johannes Iwan overcame similar height issues at the Actors' old Studio 1 for *Small Craft Worries*. Both designers managed to give audience focus and locate place, time and atmosphere, with much of the lighting rig visible to the audience.



Dance

"Dancers live in light as fish live in water."



John Woodhouse, ALD Fellow, Lighting Designer

Lighting for dance is primarily concerned with bodies and space.

Larger scale work often involves a company of dancers, usually consisting of a 'chorus' and 'principal'. *E-MC2*, lit by Peter Mumford, *Peter and the Wall*, lit by David Kidd and *Hamlet*, lit by Tim Mitchell, are three quite different examples of work with dance companies on a large scale. *Corona*, lit by Lucy Carver, was performed with a similar set up, though without a chorus.

Light reveals the dancers' athletic bodies as their most three dimensional - picked out from the spaces they inhabit. The key to this is usually 'cross-light', that is light from the 'wings' at the sides of the stage. This light can be set to pass through the stage space unimpeded until it hits a body, revealing the three-dimensional shape.

A flat dance floor, wings and an illuminated backdrop provide the 'standard set-up' for much dance work, both contemporary and classical. The lighting designer works to evoke place, time, time and tension as appropriate, while ensuring the dancer's bodies communicate directly with the audience, some of whom may quite some distance from the stage.



E-MC2, lit by Peter Mumford. Photo credit: Peter Mumford



Peter and the Wall, lit by David Kidd. Photo credit: David Kidd



Hamlet, lit by Tim Mitchell. Photo credit: Tim Mitchell



Corona, lit by Lucy Carver. Photo credit: Lucy Carver

John Woodhouse suggests that it was this, rather than the fact that it was made for a much smaller space, with many of the performers visible, that was physical theatre rather than pure dance, and included spoken text, but the way light is used to enhance the modelling of the performers is clear.



Katharina Williams work on *I Am Falling* is rather different in that it was made for a much smaller space, with many of the performers visible. This was physical theatre rather than pure dance, and included spoken text, but the way light is used to enhance the modelling of the performers is clear.

There are two productions here from the long-term collaboration between dancer and choreographer Russell Malpas and lighting designer Michael Hulls, who has become integral to Malpas's work. Hulls work on *Push* is a beautifully crafted example of a relatively conventional approach to lighting dance - while *Emmagata* more or less throws away the rule book, and in doing so achieves a radically different look that has a fundamental impact on the way the audience experience the performance.



Push, lit by Michael Hulls. Photo credit: Michael Hulls

Emmagata, lit by Michael Hulls. Photo credit: Michael Hulls

Emmagata, lit by Michael Hulls. Photo credit: Michael Hulls

Emmagata, lit by Michael Hulls. Photo credit: Michael Hulls

Music Theatre

"The lighting is not spectacular without the scenery, and the scenery looks awful in the working light."

Andrew Briggs (top, Peter Hall)



For many theatre goers, the commercial musical is the most spectacular form of theatre, but music theatre encompasses smaller scale work, and opera too.

Two very different styles of spectacle represented here are from Paul Pyant on **Lord of the Rings** at Dury Lane, and Piers Constable on **War Horse** at the Chive Theatre. Both productions make full use of large stage spaces and technology, but are quite different in style. Pyant's painstaking work is key to the creation of the fantasy world of Tolkien's tale, told with breath taking spectacle on the West End's largest stage. Constable's work helps to create the gritty reality of war and supports the wonderful full-size puppet stars of **War Horse**. Both lighting designers work in perfect harmony with all the other elements of these technically complex productions.

Also here is an example of the restating of an older show. Andrew Briggs's work on **Phantom of the Opera** is part of the spectacle created on smaller stages than those mentioned above, though no less spectacular. Originally made with an entirely fixed 'conventional' rig almost thirty years ago, this design – like Pyant's and Constable's – is now realised using contemporary moving light technology.



Lord of the Rings at Dury Lane, London. Paul Pyant lighting design. Photo: Peter Hall



War Horse at the Chive Theatre, London. Piers Constable lighting design. Photo: Peter Hall



Phantom of the Opera at the Theatre Royal, London. Andrew Briggs lighting design. Photo: Peter Hall



Vox Males at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, Edinburgh. Gavin Gierhart lighting design. Photo: Peter Hall

In contrast, the smaller scale work represented by Gavin Gierhart with **Vox Males**, both from the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, uses limited lighting resources to help create intimate and dynamic stage pictures.

Opera is represented at grand and intimate scales. Peter Mumford's work on **Exiles for Young Lovers** for ENO at The Young Vic uses the careful placement of light and shadow to help evoke a period world on a relative small stage with little other scenic detail, while Dedan Horsfall's work on **Porgy and Bess** uses big whites and bold colours on a large stage to transform a standing set to spectacular effect.



Exiles for Young Lovers at The Young Vic, London. Peter Mumford lighting design. Photo: Peter Hall



Porgy and Bess at the Young Vic, London. Dedan Horsfall lighting design. Photo: Peter Hall



Phantom of the Opera at the Theatre Royal, London. Andrew Briggs lighting design. Photo: Peter Hall

Student and other non-professional work

Featuring winners and runners-up for the Michael Northern Bursary



Michael Northern was the first to achieve a professional credit as 'Lighting Designer' in the UK. Shortly before his death in 2001 the Michael Northern Bursary was established, to acknowledge students who show exemplary talent in lighting design. It is administered by the ALD, and the judging panel includes established lighting designers. As well as the £500 Bursary, there are two runners up prizes of £200 each; one in honour of Francis Field and funded by the ALD, and one funded by ETC.

Georg Spentler won in 2007 with **Memory of Water**. The judges were particularly impressed by Georg's picture research and his ability to reproduce elements of this in the design.

Jack Kinnear won a runner up in 2008 with **A Guest for Dinner**, a devised physical theatre piece which had 'very strong visual clarity' complemented with the minimum of equipment'. (Paul Pyant, judge)

Tanya Stephenson won the Francis Field award in 2010, for **The Dream Play**, a devised immersive performance. This was praised for their 'evidence of a collaborative approach and an economy of design'.

Sean Gleeson was praised for taking the time to experiment to achieve the Edward Hopper-influenced look he wanted in **As It Is in Heaven** (2011).



Memory of Water at the Royal College of Art, London. Georg Spentler lighting design. Photo: Peter Hall



A Guest for Dinner at the Royal College of Art, London. Jack Kinnear lighting design. Photo: Peter Hall



The Dream Play at the Royal College of Art, London. Tanya Stephenson lighting design. Photo: Peter Hall



As It Is in Heaven at the Royal College of Art, London. Sean Gleeson lighting design. Photo: Peter Hall



Also shown here is work created by lighting tutors with their students, frequently as part of larger research projects. Scott Palmer and Dr Sara Popat at the University of Leeds worked with students and external partners to integrate projected digital 'sprites' into a contemporary staging of **A Midsummer Night's Dream**. Nick Moran worked with a student team at Central to produce a dynamic design that integrated live and recorded video, still images and lighting for the last piece devised musical, **It Must Be Madness**.

Throughout the membership of the ALD there is a drive to ensure that light makes a creative contribution to performance, whatever the constraints. For example, pictured here is the work of ALD Associate Member Paul Bondham on a local community theatre group production of **We Will Rock You**.

For more information about the bursary, or about joining the ALD, contact the ALD office (info@ald.org.uk)



We Will Rock You at the Royal College of Art, London. Paul Bondham lighting design. Photo: Peter Hall

Meetings

past present and future...

Will Evans needs help!

Or is it just sympathy? With Will about to become a Dad sadly it means that organising ALD meetings is going to shift down the priority scale a little so we're looking for someone to be meetings co-Rep with Will. The role would suit someone who likes making contacts and exploiting them!

Most meetings are run and organised by the lighting designers/theatres/companies involved in the show/event/whatever it is we're all going to look at, the role of the rep is to co-ordinate the often disparate parties, invite people along and attend to wrangle the members as well as often being 'the face' of the ALD to the organisation we're visiting. We aim to do about 5-6 meetings a year plus the monthly ALD social drinks at the Coach and Horses,

Wellington Street. So if you'd like to help out organising and coming up with some fantastic ideas for events please drop us an email meetings@ald.org.uk

2nd Annual ALD Pub Quiz

The ALD kicked off its social programme for 2011 in style with *The 2nd Annual Pub Quiz* on the last Friday of January with profits donated to *Light Relief*.

A big thank you to our very own quiz master, Nick Moran and Central School of Speech and Drama for hosting the event, White Light for once again making sure everyone was suitably refreshed, and Rosco for donating the prizes of 6 special glass gobos with our brand new 'ALD 50' logo which some will have seen displayed proudly at the New Technologies showcase beforehand.

The Winners were once

again 'Bastard Frost' with a stomping 502 points. Runners up were newcomers 'Norfolk and Chance' (Get it?) with 466. So now we have to wait until 2012 to see if anyone can knock 'Bastard Frost' off the top spot!

April Social Evening - change of date

Please note that due to the timing of Easter this year, and the additional Bank Holiday for the Royal Wedding at the end of April, we have decided to move our popular monthly members' social evening from the last Friday of the month. Therefore it will now take place on **Thursday 21st April** at the **Coach & Horses** pub on Wellington Street, London, opposite the Royal Opera House. This is the day before Good Friday and should be a good way to start the Easter weekend, and maybe for some of you

who are entitled to holiday, an elongated spring break just as the weather hopefully warms up!

Gordon Craig Lecture 2011

It seems to be a well-kept secret, but our mole says that this year's *Gordon Craig Lecture* is to be given by Paule Constable on **Monday 23 May, 6-7pm** at Central School of Speech and Drama. To book, email cett@cssd.ac.uk or call 020 7449 1571.



ABTT Theatre Show

We'll look forward to see you at the Royal Horticultural Halls on **15 & 16 June** at the ABTT 2011 Theatre Show – so make a date now! Visit www.abtttheatreshow.co.uk

- The dates of the next *Showlight* colloquium have just been announced: **May 18-21 2013**. The main sponsors are **Robe** and the conference will be held in the medieval town of Cesky Krumlov in the Czech Republic. Details to follow.



PLASA FOCUS: LEEDS 2010

Lighting's top names gather in the North

It's been three years since the first PLASA Focus event at the Royal Armouries Museum in Leeds, and the momentum of this two-day, two-hall event shows no signs of slowing. One of the most informal tradeshow on the industry calendar, it is uniquely timed, being the first UK show after the Pro Light+Sound expo in Frankfurt, and as such enjoys the honour of staging the first UK showcase for many of the products unveiled in Frankfurt. This year, organisers PLASA Events state that visitor pre-registrations are up 18% on 2010 while 21 first-time exhibitors have joined those returning from last year.

Thanks to the universal stand size format, PLASA Focus is as easy on the shoe leather as it is on the wallet. Despite packing in over 120 exhibitors from around the

globe, including a large cross-section of entertainment lighting companies large and small, one can walk from one end of the show to the other within a few minutes, assuming one can manage that without stopping to greet familiar faces every few metres. Admission to everything, including the seminar programme, is free – and it seems there *is* such a thing as a free lunch, as all visitors and exhibitors can partake of a free buffet lunch on both show days.

A glance at the exhibitor list and floor plan on www.plasafocus.com reveals a lengthy roll call of top lighting manufacturers and suppliers, as well as trade bodies like ABTT, ALD, BECTU and, of course, PLASA. Of the approximately 60 lighting, video, stage engineering, soft goods and effects brands at the show, Avolites, Chauvet,

Elation, Hall Stage, Hi-Lites, HSL, Le Maitre, Road Ready Cases, Robe, Rope Assemblies, Technical Performance & Presentation and TMB have all pre-announced new product launches in Leeds, and doubtless there will be many more once various press embargoes have been lifted.

The seminar programme, staged either in the Wellington Room or the adjacent Bury Theatre, has also grown again, and ALD members should find plenty of interest. Exhibitor sessions include presentations on new technologies by Clay Paky, Lanta, MA Lighting, RDM, Wireless Solution and Vectorworks.

The Case Study sessions in the Bury Theatre include the National Skills Academy's new technical training and rehearsal centre, the RSC's ambitious project

to transform the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Opera North on the refurbishment of the Leeds Grand Theatre, ABTT on the future of scenery construction, and the Theatres Trust on the 'DEC Pool'.

The show is undoubtedly an excellent chance to chat with major worldwide industry players including many ALD Corporate

members, meet the teams and see their latest products for shows, tours, installations and venues in a calm and social environment. Even better when you know you will be among the first in the UK to see many of them.

Don't forget to drop by the ALD stand (RA-B8) to say hello and pick up your ALD members' free swag! #



PLASA F•CUS

LEEDS 2011
TUE 19 & WED 20 APRIL

**Register now for the only
entertainment and
installation technology show
for the North of England.**

www.plasafocus.com/leeds

Enquiries: +44 (0)20 7370 8666

Email: info@plasafocus.com

Owned and Organised by PLASA Events Ltd





Gongs all round!

Congratulations to Neil and James and all other nominees.

Olivier Award for Best Lighting Design

The winner of this year's Olivier award for best lighting design was **Neil Austin** for *The White Guard* at the National Theatre. This was Neil's third Laurence Olivier Award nomination. His work in *The White Guard* demanded the skill to dramatically alter the atmosphere as the play travelled from family home to treacherous war zone. Others nominated were Mark Henderson for *After the Dance* at the National Theatre, Hugh Vanstone (last year's winner) for *Deathtrap* at the Noël Coward Theatre and Paule Constable for *Love Never Dies* at the Adelphi theatre. Congratulations to Neil and all those nominated.

WhatsOnStage Awards WHITE LIGHT Best Lighting Designer

The winner was James Farncombe for *Ghost Stories* at the Lyric Hammersmith & Duke of York's.

Other nominations were Neil Austin for *The Prince of Homburg* at the Donmar Warehouse & *Women Beware Women* at the National, Olivier; Paul Keogan for *Novecento*, Donmar at Trafalgar

Studios 2; Paule Constable for *Blasted* at the Lyric Hammersmith, *Posh* at the Royal Court Downstairs & *Love Never Dies* at the Adelphi; Peter Mumford for *Sucker Punch* at the Royal Court Downstairs; Rick Fisher for *Tribes* at the Royal Court Downstairs. Again, may we congratulate James, and nominees.

Who gets your nomination for the most influential LD?

As part of the ALD's 50th anniversary celebrations, we are going to be asking all Professional members for to vote for the most influential LD of the last 50 years.



To start with, we want some nominations – up to three from each professional member, with a paragraph outlining the reason for each nomination.

Your nominations might include someone who most influences your own work, or a particular area of live performance, or lighting design in general. You might want to nominate an LD you have worked very closely with, or one who's work you have only seen in pictures or heard about, or one whose practice has helped to change the way we are now seen as important members of creative teams.

Please send your nominations to (could be me, the office, or could ask to post to a thread on the website...)

Later in the year, we will draw up one or more lists based on the nominations, and ask for your votes – with the aim that we could honour the winner(s) at a suitable event.

Nominations for the 2011 SMA Awards

The Stage Management Association is calling for nominations for the 2011 National Stage Management Awards.

Administrated by the SMA and sponsored by *The Stage*, the National Stage Management Awards are awarded annually to extraordinary stage managers – individuals, or teams.

Nominees do not have to be SMA members, and anyone can nominate who has worked with or witnessed the work of an outstanding stage manager – nominators in the past have included actors, producers, directors, production managers, fellow stage managers, designers, playwrights and audience members.

Stage managers, or teams, can be nominated for a single tour de force or a season's work or even for a consistent outstanding contribution over a period of time or with a particular company.

'This is a rare chance for stage managers to be acknowledged for the creative contribution they make to shows throughout the year, up and down the country, quietly from behind the scenes,' comments Barbara Eifler, Executive Director of the Stage Management Association. Last year Richard Pilbrow presented the Awards at a ceremony at the Royal Horticultural Halls during the ABTT Theatre Show.

The deadline for submissions for this year's awards is Friday 6th May.

Forms can be downloaded from www.stagegemanagementassociation.co.uk or requested from admin@stagegemanagementassociation.co.uk or tel. 020 7403 7999. #



2011 Olivier award for Best Lighting Design was won by Neil Austin for **THE WHITE GUARD** by Mikhail Bulgakov, in a new version by Andrew Upton. It opened in the Lyttelton Theatre on 23 March 2010. Directed by Howard Davies. Photograph by Catherine Ashmore



English National Ballet's *Swan Lake*, lighting by Howard Harrison.
Photo by Patrick Baldwin.

Lighting Design for Ballet

by Mark Ronan

At a recent meeting for Olivier Awards panellists, they told us that if we didn't notice the lighting, it was probably very good, and perhaps worth remarking on. The point is that, apart from some very elaborate and expensive designs in musicals, most people don't notice lighting unless there's something wrong with it. As an example, many years ago I saw a movie that was set in Paris, and one scene at sunset didn't look right. I wondered... then I realised this wasn't the light of evening, but very early morning, and the entire effect was spoiled. The difference between light at different times of day is profound, and my ex-wife is a painter who once lived in the Swiss Alps. As any lighting designer who has lived in such a place will know, the light changes hugely during the day.

If you're lighting the stage for theatre or opera, many in the audience will not notice, but I like to think ballet audiences are more sensitive because ballet is such a visual art. They need lighting that shows the dancers clearly, yet still provides the right atmosphere. It's not easy. As one ballet producer told me, "I need the characters lit so the audience can see their emotions — that's what I work on, rather than technique. Technique is all good these days".

Dancers can move fast, and scenes can change fast. The Royal Ballet's *Cinderella*, for instance, has nine scenes in Act I alone, each lit in its own way. And then there's the lighting of the theatre itself, using gobos in the upper front corners of the auditorium, showing a dappled effect moving across the audience. The children love it. And

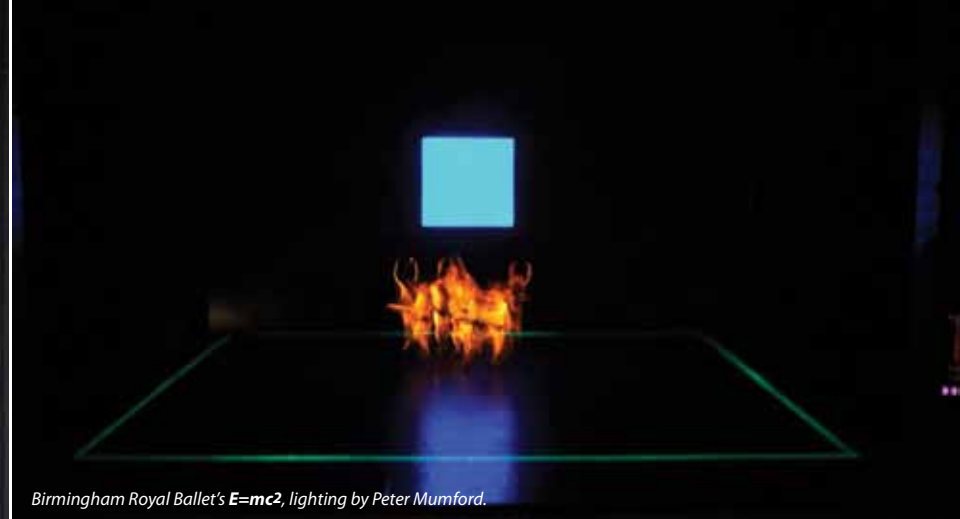
there's that remarkable moon, which moves across the backdrop, changes to a clock and reverts to the moon again. Sometimes you wonder whether it's worth it, particularly when one critic wrote, "Why does the moon move?" The scientific answer is because the earth turns on its axis, but only a city dweller who lives mostly indoors can ask such a question. To be able to light the stage you need to know what things look like outside as well as inside, because so many theatrical sets involve outside light.

A lovely recent example is the English National Ballet's *Swan Lake*, with its glorious designs by Peter Farmer, so beautifully lit by Howard Harrison. Acts 1 and 3 are set in the normal world, with peasants in the open air in Act 1, and courtiers in the palace in Act 3, but in both





The Royal Ballet *Rushes* – *Fragments of a Lost Story*, lighting by Jean Kalman.
Photo ROH, Bill Cooper



Birmingham Royal Ballet's *E=mc2*, lighting by Peter Mumford.

scenes there is a view of the outer world beyond, with its atmosphere of mystery that threatens the tranquillity and rhythm of the world we know. I don't know how the effect is achieved but it's suitably ominous.

A similar otherworldly atmosphere is important in *Giselle*, and David Finn's updated lighting for Act II of Peter Wright's Royal Ballet production is wonderfully atmospheric, conveying the ghostliness of the wilis and their world. *Giselle* herself

is a wraith in Act II, and the lighting reflects this very cleverly.

These full-length ballets offer terrific scope for lighting design, and the Birmingham Royal Ballet's *Sleeping Beauty* shows a wonderful moment in Act I when the wicked fairy Carabosse, who appeared as herself in the Prologue, reappears as a shrouded old woman. She's apparently willing to be arrested after giving Aurora the spindle, yet suddenly throws off her disguise and creates havoc.

Her disappearance in mid-air is very effective thanks to excellent lighting by Mark Jonathan, and the lighting was part of the glory of this production, giving a contrast between good and evil, particularly when both are on stage at the same time in the form of the Lilac Fairy and Carabosse.

Then there are the one-act ballets, where there is often no discernable story and the lighting plays a key role. As an example, *Rushes* — *Fragments of a Lost Story*,

Focus – The Journal of the Association of Lighting Designers – “More art, less tools...”

Lighting Design for Ballet by Mark Ronan

by Kim Brandstrup is a beautiful description of a relationship between a man and two women. The fragmentary nature of the narrative is reflected in Richard Hudson's designs, with a bead curtain splitting the stage into a front and back half, and the dark lighting by Jean Kalman gives a sense of mystery and uncertainty, sometimes shining through the beads, sometimes deflected by them. Here there was a set, but that is not always the case, and in David Bintley's very inventive choreography for his ballet *E = mc²*, there is no physical set. Changes of mood are signified by Peter Mumford's clever lighting, with sudden shafts of light streaking across the stage. One-act ballets cover the range from great drama to sensuous calm, and Alastair Marriott's *Sensorium*, captures the light and shade of music from Debussy's *Préludes*, assisted by Adam Wiltshire's

April / May 2011

simple designs, along with John B. Read's lighting showing subtle changes of intensity and colour. Sometimes the lighting is almost the essence of the ballet, as in Wayne McGregor's *Limen* where the backdrop was a continually changing LED display. Colourful costume tops were well set off by Lucy Carter's lighting, which at one point showed thick bright coloured stripes from one side of the stage to the other.

One difficulty of lighting the ballet, particularly for a company like the Royal Ballet that shares its home with the opera company, is that everything has to be changed all the time to accommodate different productions from one day to the next. And there's never enough time, even for full-length ballets. As Mark Jonathan is reported as saying, "On my tombstone I want the inscription: 'He did what he could, *in the time*'".



Leanne Benjamin, Thomas Whitehead in *Sensorium*, lighting by John B. Read. Photo ROH, Johan Persson



Lighting Design for Ballet by Mark Ronan

*The Royal Ballet **Rushes –
Fragments of a Lost Story**,
lighting by Jean Kalman.
Photo ROH, Bill Cooper*

But I cannot end without one last ballet, a one-acter. In 1946, after the Second World War, the Sadler's Wells Ballet was given a permanent home at the Royal Opera House, and their resident choreographer, Frederick Ashton marked the move with a new ballet to César Franck's *Symphonic Variations* for piano and orchestra. Filling the new larger stage and holding the audience was a challenge

for everyone, and as Margot Fonteyn remembers,

'The Covent Garden stage, so much bigger than those we had worked on all our lives, still made us all uneasy. Fred had never encountered the problem of filling a large area.'

Ashton worked 'ardently' (his word) on the new work with his dearest friend Sophie Fedorovitch. Originally he

had planned a fairly elaborate scenario with a corps de ballet, though he gradually reduced it, coming down eventually to six dancers, three male, three female. But what of the set?

Sophie Fedorovitch had a country cottage at Brancaster in Norfolk, and she and Ashton were bicycling near there in the spring when inspiration suddenly came to him. The trees were just

coming into bud, and as they reached the top of a hill and looked down into the valley below, at the beautiful lime greens and fresh yellow, he knew that this was what he wanted for *Symphonic Variations*.

The set is a canvas backdrop with those colours, and wonderful curving black lines. This is a ballet that has to be danced to perfection and every move must be clearly lit. The problem is that the canvas should be independent of the dancers, so no shadows should appear on it, and it was only this century when John B. Read overcame the problem by installing booster lights on the side of the stage.

Lighting has surely come a long way since the advent of electricity, and

the lighting designers do a vitally important job for us in the audience, even if they themselves work rather in the shadows, often insufficiently appreciated. I applaud them all. 🌸

Mark Ronan lives in London where he is a professor of mathematics at University College London. In addition to his mathematics work, Mark takes a great interest in music and stage performance. He has acted in over a dozen operas at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and has danced in the Nutcracker.

He publishes an on-line blog at markronan.wordpress.com with reviews of opera, ballet and theatre performances. For further details, and for information on Mark's other interests, including the mathematics of symmetry, and ancient languages, go to Mark's homepage at www.math.uic.edu/~ronan/



*The Royal Ballet's **Symphonic Variations**, lighting by John B. Read. Photo ROH, Dee Conway.*

Any Equity members out there?

Then this opportunity is for you, says **Joanna Town**

It's that time again – calling all Equity members or budding members...

The Equity Committee elections are due this coming Spring and unfortunately both Mark Jonathan and I are wishing to move onto pastures new.

Changing times

The ALD has had representatives sitting on the *Theatre Designers Committee* for the past ten years and quite a lot has changed over this time within the committee. When we first arrived it was comprised exclusively of set designers, many of whom no longer worked in the industry. Tony Simpson hung in there and made the position of the lighting designer very prominent by holding the post of Chair.

Over the years the composition of the

committee has changed – I have to say partly through our influence – and they are almost all younger, busy designers who are not content with Equity's perceived ideas of who and what makes a modern designer in theatre. This younger and very committed group has a lot to say on matters that effect us in our everyday lives, especially as nearly all the designers are now freelance practitioners.

And it is not just the Designers' Committee that has changed. In the last Council elections the demographic of Equity changed to create a much younger and more vibrant Council, with more women and younger actors and stage management than ever before. I think this is a really exciting time; things are changing and Equity is changing too... well, it had to.

Minimums

More recently it has felt possible to make change happen within the walls of Equity for the first time. We all know that the minimums are not worth the paper they are written on and there has been plenty of debate about what we should or shouldn't do regarding them. Ideas include scrapping them altogether or making them a nominal £1 have been valid comments received from our membership, but by doing this we destroy the main principles of union negotiations. What we must do is to ensure the managements keep talking to us; without the minimums the management may just stop talking altogether. So I don't think we will ever see increased minimums, but we keep trying.

In recent years it has become clear that other

parts of the membership (mainly actors and stage management) do a lot better at negotiating pay than us, and this is because their membership numbers represent a formidable body. So recently we have started looking at how we can develop along similar lines. We have made it clear to the Union that even if all us LDs joined, we could never compete, so recently

we suggested a new idea of amalgamating all the creatives together. This won't happen overnight, but when it is achieved, I feel it will allow us to be a much stronger force to be reckoned with.

So what have we achieved?

We have achieved recognition within the Union and we hope that when you call Equity reception these



days they actually know they represent us. We have improved our insurance status and we have the best cover of all the unions, as well as setting up Professional Indemnity insurance which will soon be available to individuals on request. We have implemented the idea of a rider to go alongside your Equity contracts, and we are in the middle of revising contracts to make them clearer and easier to use. A member of the Designers' Committee now sits on the Health & Safety Committee and although Equity has been responsive in this area, nearly all regulations have been set for actors' working conditions and never relate to designers, but this is now changing.

The theatre Designers' Committee has been at the forefront of making Equity move into the 21st century. We

now use Skype in meetings to allow members who are unable to come to London to join in discussions and vote.

The future

Only this month Council has passed an amendment to allow decision making and voting via an internet group forum such Yahoo, implemented initially by the designers. With committees only meeting four to five times a year and now having busy working members sitting on them, this will make an enormous difference to the flow of ideas and debates. It should allow the work of our officers to really move forward faster and more efficiently.

A committee member should now be able to see their ideas come to fruition within their term of office! Whilst in the past I felt that we discussed the same issues

again and again and nothing happened, for the first time ever it feels as if change is possible.

We must also remember what Equity is good for; it is still a great Union. If you have an accident, it is there to support you. If you fall foul of an inscrutable management they have a very good legal department to work on your behalf. Everything with Equity has to be within the letter of the law so if you are being asked to work long hours, outside the working time directive, or under the minimum wage then they are there to help you. But they can't do it without us telling them what is happening in the world of theatre. They need to be told about the hours we work, the conditions we work in; we need to make sure they know who we are and what our needs are. By sitting on the committee



Equity

you can bring our needs to the table, so we are giving Equity the tools they need to support us.

Interested?

So we are looking for one, two, or three people to take over the roles Marko and I have taken for the past few years in order to help Equity move us into the next decade, which I personally think will see some real challenges. Equity will need to be fighting our fight more now than ever before. It is not a losing battle and, if anything, it will be the most exciting time to be on the committee.

I personally will be sorry to leave at this time when I can see a much stronger and more progressive future ahead, but there are other areas in my life that I would like to now have more time to explore, such as local sustainability at home and within my work, so I am moving on. 🍀

If you are interested in representing lighting designers on the Equity Designers' Committee and would like more details, please contact Jo: jo.town@ald.org.uk or Marko: mark.jonathan@ald.org.uk



A short-haul trot with a cultured mind*

Carry on Fading, Five Years in Retirement, Francis Reid

Entertainment Technology Press, 2010
ISBN 978 904031 64 2

When the prologue starts with *"This is a record of five of the best years of my life"*, given the knowledge that it is also a record of a busy retirement of an eminent lighting designer, we must wonder how much of this book is about lighting.

The answer is "Not very much", followed immediately with the comment that it doesn't matter and that isn't the point. Lighting people will get quite a bit out of it but I think the following special interest groups would also benefit from reading it.

Baroque Opera Groups, with particular reference to George Frederick Handel. Hopefully you will have heard of this 18th century composer through his most popular work, the oratorio *The Messiah*. Halleluiah Chorus? That's the chap. He also wrote a lot of operas. Francis Reid's idea of heaven

is to find a German festival with a Handelian theme, plot a week's opera & concert going, book the flights and wallow in the sound of live Handel in a benign acoustic.



*Radamisto by candlelight at
Badische Staatstheater, Karlsruhe*

You will learn how the ticketing and transport is integrated in Germany (Handel's country of origin), how staggeringly easy and

cheap it is and you realise that he is on to a very good thing. They grow opera houses out there like we grow arts centres, except that they look after them, enable them to produce great work and encourage a culture of opera going.

You will also gain insight into the diversity of staging techniques employed. The shouts of rapture at the baroque immersion are balanced by some pithy and objective reviews.

"It cannot be easy to play a bassoon with a curb barring its teeth within inches of your embouchure".

In fact I would say that anyone planning to be involved in early opera should read this book; behind the wisdom of the reporting lie 50 years of high-end opera working and visiting.

Saga Holidays and other agencies for senior globetrotters. Whilst lamenting his fall from frequent flyer platinum status, Francis's preferred airline is still KLM, who fly from Norwich to the continent. He no longer drives, but the Norwich International Airport Taxi Drivers Association thanked him one Christmas Eve with *"A very large tin of sweets"*, after a year during which he had "only" flown from Norwich 14 times.

Politicians and conservationists. This is from an unpublished letter to *The Times*, sent in March 2007: *In the current climate-change debate, there seems to be remarkably little reference to the carbon emissions resulting from war. How many light bulbs do we have to change to compensate for Iraq?*

Hospital managers. Francis is full of praise for the care he received during his recent illness. This is a celebration of an episode where they got it wonderfully right.

I have had the pleasure of reviewing many of Francis Reid's books. There was one stage where he was running through slightly revised editions of familiar titles. At that point I resorted to a critique in verse. However and refreshingly, this is an entirely new and very individual work, which invites us into his world.

First I should explain the author's title; this book is a sequel to *Fading Light - a Year in Retirement*, also published by ETP. **Carry on Fading** covers the next, most recent 5 years, which finish just before his 80th birthday.

When reading the opera commentaries, it certainly helps if you have some grasp of musical terms, baroque orchestration and operatic conventions, but there is a very good index of subjects and people. The text is in diary form with frequent chapter headings, so it is easy to find a piece again.

There is not a lot of illustration; with some textual pruning maybe the next edition of this book could be squarely aimed at baroque opera students, with more pictures of the opera houses, churches and productions. As it stands it is a very readable account of five years of cultural rapture, enjoyed with Jo, Mrs Reid these 54 years. Francis dedicates this, his latest book, *To my Happy Family*, the true source of his contentment. 🍷

*My review title is inspired by *A Short Trot with a Cultured Mind*, a 1950 title by the Irish humorist, Patrick Campbell.



This is a very timely book. Hall & Harper have written it whilst many of the first gobo users are still around and before digital lights (containing the complete Rosco gobo library) monopolise large scale projection. Michael Hall is famous for his work combining science and a love of theatre with creating Rosco Europe. Julie Harper's 12 years "selling holes" with DHA clearly taught her a lot, whilst she was at the hub of the gobo industry during pivotal years. Quite rightly, the authors have peppered their pages with comments

Gobos for Image Projection

Michael Hall & Julie Harper

Entertainment Technology Press, 2010

ISBN 978 1 904031 62 8

& personal takes on gobos by eminent lighting people, several of whom started using them in the days when you had to cut them yourself.

With no manufacturers, you had to use a metal pie dish, a printer's lithoplate (my favourite medium) or sheet aluminium. You thought long and hard about the implications of designing gobos into your rig and you had to design your own gobos too. This era is well documented, both by the authors, who site the history through magic lanterns to the early availability of Patterns from Colortran and by the practitioners, one of whom, David Hersey, established a thriving business from making them. In doing so he and DHA set the standard sizes that we use and created much of the comprehensive library that is now available through Rosco.

The theory of predistortion and the science of colour gobos is fascinating. Did you know that Disney holds an important patent on colour gobos? The reader is guided through the academic and commercial side in a very accessible way. Various side alleys are briefly explored, such as the under-rated Linnebach projector, which can project wide-angle coloured images and strong silhouettes very easily and cheaply.

The logic of gobos within moving lights clearly has a philosophy all its own and the world of animated effects discs is still a very creative one. The authors give suggestions of animation and gobo that, combined, are greater than the sum of their parts. The pick of the current libraries of the leading manufactures is combined into the familiar categories (breakup, clouds,

Book
reviews

by
James
Laws



abstract etc). In this area of the book you are certain to find new inspiration.

That such an industry has grown up inside 30 years is testament to the power of the simple gobo to make our lighting distinctive. The wiser LDs in this book counsel discrimination; Paule Constable sums it up well: Gobos, whilst fantastic and a useful tool, can make us lazy in our ideas. Use them when they are the right thing to use but always think about them, in fact any light in a show, with good rigorous thinking.

Hall and Harper have certainly applied rigorous thinking to this definitive reference book, on a subject that all of us will have to look at objectively from time to time. They have given us an opportunity to take a step back and to consider what we want to say with our gobos. 🍷

Letters

Dear Andy,

I have recently retired and in starting to sort out and downsize have been reminded I have a number of lighting magazines going back to 1963 when I first got the lighting bug whilst still at school. Rather than see these dumped in the local recycling I wondered if there is good home these could go to, I am not looking to sell but would suggest that a donation to *Light Relief* would perhaps be appropriate. Specifically I have a drawer full of:

Tabs from 1963 onwards until it ceased to be published

Strand publications about lighting, various.

Sightline from about 1975 to the 90s

Cue

ALD magazines, some early ones

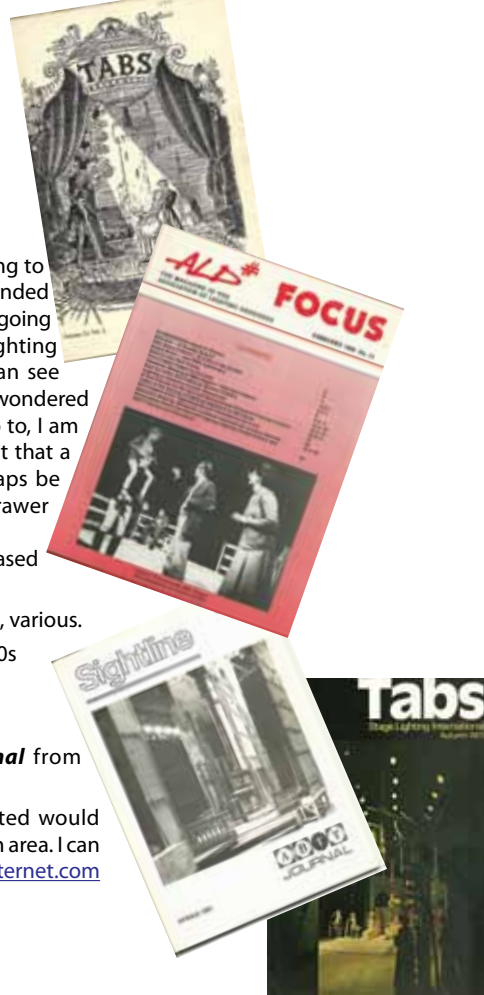
Lighting and Sound International from the 80's

Due to the bulk anybody interested would need to collect from the Bournemouth area. I can be contacted on Alastair.griffith@btinternet.com

Regards,

Alastair Griffith

#38 Associate



Dear sir/madam,

I was wondering if you could help us, we are looking for more information about Michael Northen, Lighting Designer.

I have recently discovered that Michael attended Canford School in the 1930s and later became a leader in lighting design for theatre and a co-founder of ALD.

Theatre, drama and technical activities have become a huge part of the school since the building of a new theatre in 1998. I would very much like to create a display celebrating the ex pupil in the theatre. Therefore i'm looking for any material, images design drawings etc that we could use.

I have heard he wrote an autobiography called *Northen Lights* is this still available? I would appreciate any help with this.

Kind regards,

Kevin Wilkins

Technical Manager

Layard Theatre

Canford School

Wimborne, Dorset

BH21 3AD

Tel. 01202 847543

www.canford.com

[Editor's note: I contacted Kevin to explain that 'Northen Lights' is sadly out of print, although we are actively trying to republish it. But if anyone has other memories or material that would help, please contact him directly.]

Dear Andy,

I also have been reading the latest *Focus* (I know, bit late in opening it!!) and there's one very tiny mistake in Jo's article. I only lit one show at the Soho main house (*Tales of the Harrow Road*); the lovely Katharine Williams lit the other one (*Ivan and The Dogs*) although between us both, yes we did steal Jo's kit but really she should label things she wants!! ;-)

Not your fault, probably the result of two tipsy lighting designers getting wires crossed at our press night. Up to you if you want to print anything correcting it, I haven't had Katharine banging at my door yet demanding a retraction!

Regards, **Will Evans**.



Tales of the Harrow Road at the Soho Theatre, lit with Jo Town's kit by Will Evans. Photo Simon Kane.

Dear Andy,

Hello from the production desk at Leicester Curve.

I was visiting the V&A museum a couple of weeks ago to see the Gordon Craig exhibition. Aside from once again being disappointed by the very small scale of the theatre section in the museum I was surprised to see no creative team credits associated with the production photos on show. I also used one of the computer terminals in the exhibition to access the V&As online collection of show photographs, and once again the only credits that were given were of the performers.

No credit was given to director, set, costume or lighting. This I found extremely frustrating – from a practical point of view I was very keen to know who's work I was looking at, but more importantly in an exhibition of theatre work, to not give suitable reference to the creators of that work seems totally wrong. I have mentioned this to several set designers who I am working with, who were equally surprised and annoyed.

Is this something that the ALD feels we should be trying to rectify, and holding some discussion with the V&A to try and get them to appreciate the importance of these credits?

Regards, **Mark Howland**

Mark Howland Lighting Design

Andy,

Went to a show at the Barbican on Saturday and spotted this... It deserves a caption.

"Barbican reduces carbon emissions 25%"

best...

Simon Corder - London



4TH KNIGHT OF ILLUMINATION AWARDS

"...THE ONLY AWARDS EXCLUSIVELY DEDICATED TO PROFESSIONAL LIGHTING DESIGNERS..."

LONDON, 11TH SEPTEMBER 2011

Organized by:



Official sponsor:



Proudly supported by:



Lighting & Sound
America

Lighting & Sound



Sponsors:

