

February / March 2010

In the footlights this issue:

Declan Randall creates 'An African Sky in Cardiff & Edinburgh' • MJ at the Mariinsky •
Review of hardware at Central • Paperwork at The House... and much more...

South Africa's leading opera company, Cape Town Opera, brought their latest production of Gershwin's Porgy & Bess to the UK last year. Declan Randall describes his lighting design on page on page 16.

FOCUS

The Journal of the Association of Lighting Designers

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Rick's References

The new decade is here and the ALD is growing. We have welcomed some new volunteers to the Executive committee, Matt Clutterham, Declan Randall, Kevin Sleep, and we have also co-opted Paule Constable. As you will see elsewhere in *Focus* we have what may be a record number of new members! While there is some attrition as well and some members do get lapsed if subs are not paid, I think this is healthy vote of confidence in the usefulness of the ALD as the vibrant body representing and serving lighting designers and the lighting community.

At the last AGM we put in place a new structure for the professional category that now is ready to be implemented. Two categories will take over from what has previously been Professional, now you can be a **Professional Designer**

or a **Professional Member**. This was in response to some confusion as to what qualified for the old Professional category.

The new Professional Designer group will be for those working as LDs, doing relights, or as assistant and associate LDs.

There are increasingly more people working full time and professionally in lighting, that share many interests and concerns with the ALD but who would not define themselves as lighting designers, people who we all work alongside every day. These can include, but is by no means restricted to, programmers, production electricians, resident lighting staff, those working for lighting suppliers and even related designers such as projection designers and their programmers. They will make up the newly defined Professional Member category. Some of these people are of course currently members but many are not.

It is the hope that we can then set up more targeted

services to these members as they are needed and asked for. These could be specific email groups, databases about current rates for various jobs, etc. and of course include them in all the ALD activities and benefits.

I think the strength of the ALD in recent years has been because we count almost all of the working lighting designers as members. It has made the ALD's voice respected in dealings with Equity, agents, and the producers, and has helped us with the raising the profile of the profession that is the core goal of the ALD. These changes to membership categories reflect better our current working environment where the ALD is no longer the cosy lunch club of LDs who had designed a minimum of 5 West End shows, but an pro-active association to encourage and support us in our work.

The ALD needs you to consider which of the two equal professional categories best represents your field of work and let us know. Also

it is very likely that many of the Associate Members really belong in one of the two professional categories and the exec asks you to upgrade your membership accordingly.

Please also let your colleagues who might have thought the ALD was not open to them know of these developments and get them to join. This will help us to continue to expand services and support you in the future.

Speaking of expanding services, we are currently investigating a special ALD tailored package of services from PLASA that might be of real value, especially to those working freelance who might not feel that union membership is useful or appropriate. We are trying to refine this package that would be an optional add-on at a reasonable cost that would provide individuals with the back up and advice of PLASA without having to take out full individual membership, and we hope to present it to the AGM in May, and if accepted by the

members we will look to offering it on a trial basis soon.

regards, Rick#



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A Russian Thing Happened on the way to the Forum

Mark Jonathan is our Mariinsky virgin...

I'll start writing this in the unexpected gap that has occurred in the technical schedule of Moliere's *The Miser*; we've finished the technical a couple of sessions early with a dress rehearsal this afternoon.

I finished 2009 with a meeting with Mariinsky's Artistic Director, the hard working Valerie Gergiev. He was on tour, Tokyo Wednesday, New York Friday, London Saturday. So, the American director, and German set designer flew in and just for once, the meeting was in my home city. Having gone over the ideas we left the Maestro to conduct his concert.

The next day, we flew to Russia; my first visit to the famous Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg and my first real encounter with the Russians. I'll reserve judgement till we return to do the opera next summer. There is always something special

about being backstage of any historic theatre. The ghosts of spectacular productions consigned to the dust and grime. I gazed into an old mirror in the corridor beside the stage and my translator said 'Anna Pavlova looked into that mirror'.

'...and I imagine Nijinsky did too', I replied. From the ballet studios around the stage the strains of *The Nutcracker* reached us. A string quintet was rehearsing Strauss in one of the elegant foyers. The view from the production office was of an enormous building site. The new opera house was rising beside the old.

The current theatre is in constant use. I asked to see the production schedule. They hadn't got one yet. Instead they showed me the schedule for their recent production "*Die Frau ohne Schatten*". The British LD for that opera, Tim Mitchell, confirmed that it had been

a nightmare; where the LD was expected to work from about 9am until 5am every day, while the staff operate a 3-shift service.

When I said I thought the hours were unreasonable and that I should have been told this before I signed my contract the management said I was the first LD who had ever asked what the schedule would be at a first design meeting. Oh really? They would only decide how many dark nights to give the production when the final designs were presented. The decision would be based on how long it would take to erect the set and not on how much time lighting or projection might need. Do you ever get that feeling that you're damned if you do the production and damned if you don't?

On ALD matters it's great that we have had a surge of new members (58) and it's fantastic that Paule

Constable, Declan Randall, Kevin Sleep and Matthew Clutterham have joined the ALD Executive. This will certainly give us added capability. As we start the New Year and decade I think we should think and maybe dream a little... What do we want our professional association to do? What is it capable of?

We've held a very productive meeting with the PLASA management and are looking at the possible benefits that PLASA could offer our members. Certainly, PLASA is well positioned to service companies and small business needs. Meanwhile, I wonder what we should expect from our Union - Equity? It's curious, most of us are running some sort of business; I do wonder if the union has really kept pace with the needs of its members. As designers and actors we are largely freelance. Its curious too, that



I'm really inviting you to give us feedback on what you'd like from your association – if I were running the union I think I'd be asking the same questions.

Jo Town and I do sit on the Equity Designers committee so we do have a voice in that direction. It's really important that we get some ideas from the membership. What are your needs? What areas could the ALD help develop with the unity that having so many lighting professionals on board gives us?

I think we are in a period of transition. It's only a few years ago that some of our agents and certainly producers would say "Who is the ALD?" I think that's changed. I'm very proud that we had a TMA lighting award for the 2nd year and it's great that the ALD

sponsored the event. We get great publicity and billing. On the day, the theatre was full of producers, theatre managers and agents and they certainly will now know that **we** are the ALD.

I'm delighted too that CLAY PAKY is continuing its inspirational sponsorship of the *Knights of Illumination Awards*. The theatre, opera and dance sections are judged by a panel of theatre critics led by David Benedict.

Please don't forget to look out for information on how to enter the British theatre designers' exhibition which can lead to entry into the next Prague Quadrennial. The broad theme is *transformation*.

In conclusion, can we have your feedback and suggestions? Simply email feedback@ald.org.uk or use the forum so you can see what other members are saying too. The forum is at www.ald.org.uk/membersfeedback and remember that you need to be logged in first. Now, I'd better get back to that dress rehearsal... #

February / March 2010



"My first visit..."
























"The view from the production office was of an enormous building site. The new opera house was rising beside the old"



"...to the famous Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg"

Corporate Members

Thanks for supporting the ALD.

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New Members

welcome to:

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Robert Juliat

Professional

Richard Neville, Australia

Associate

James Cross, Birmingham

Mark Galione, Dublin

Matthew Hayes, Surrey

Philip Henry, Dover

Stephanie Sherwin, Dublin

Pierangelo Vidotto, London

Students

Jessica Astley, *RB

Lucy Bird, *RB

George Bishop, *CSSD

Charles Blunt, *RB

Rachel Bottomley, *LIPA

Matthew Breen, *BSA

February / March 2010

Shane Burke, *RB

Joshua Carr, *RADA

Suzannah Casserley, *RB

Marie Clarke, *CSSD

Luke Collins, *RB

Fraser Connolly, *CSSD

Jordon Cooper, *RB

Milli Edmed, *RB

Nic Farman, *RB

Jessica Faulks, *RADA

James Flaum, *CSSD

Mark Gough, *CSSD

Andrew Grange, *RADA

Daniel Hoffman, *E15

Dominic Houlison, *CSSD

Sam Jeffs, *CSSD

Jonathan Jewett, *RB

Alex Johnston, *LIPA

Ken Johnson, *LIPA

Shaun Jones, *CSSD

Kine Elvellon Kvendseth, *RB

Alex Lang, *RB

Jan Van Lindt, *RB

Louis Ling, Cambridge

Jon Martin, *RB

Martin McLachlan, *RB

Megan Murphy, *CSSD

Abbey Ovens, *RB

Genevieve Peck, *CSSD

Rowan Pitts, *RB

Thomas Pritchard, *RB

Johnathan Rainsforth, *CSSD

Thomas Robinson, *LIPA

Jack Rule, *RB

Amy Schofield, *RADA

Jennifer Sharkey, *LIPA

Karl Oskar Sørdal, *RB

Zoe Spurr, *CSSD

Daniel Street, *GSSD

Catherine Webb, *RADA

Gareth Wide, *CSSD

Christopher Williams, *GSSD

Charlotte Worth, *RB

Muly Yechezkel, *RB

*Sponsored Students Scheme

BSA: Birmingham School of Acting

CSSD: Central School of Speech & Drama

E15: East 15 School:

GSSD: Guildhall School of Speech & Drama

LIPA: Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts

RADA: Royal Academy of Dramatic Art

RB: Rose Bruford

Welcome to our new Executive



Matthew Clutterham

matthew.clutterham@ald.org.uk

Lighting and technical production specialist Matthew Clutterham, began a love of lighting early on, watching shows in his highchair from the Strand MMS console at the Marlowe Repertory Theatre in Canterbury before lighting his first show; an amateur version of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* at the tender age of just twelve, moving on from this and after a stints working in some of the UK's best known regional and West-end venues, he launched his freelance career which began at just nineteen as Chief Electrician on the Joseph UK Tour. Many UK tours followed and moving up through the ranks he was soon heading lighting departments on numerous key international theatre productions and corporate presentations, including: *Saturday Night Fever*, *Fame the Musical*, *Witches of Eastwick*, product launches for General Motors and Bacardi and conferences for UK Government departments.

In 2006, Matthew launched, Matt-LX Limited (ALD Corporate Member) a premium, integrated design and production service specializing in bringing theatricality to events and business communication and a corporate grade service to theatre.

Matthew now leads the Matt-LX team he created, and remains hands-on with all company projects, ensuring that the company maintains and exceeds his vision of creative technical excellence." I am extremely pleased to be welcomed on to the Executive of the ALD where my main focus will be to both enhance the links between its members and the corporate companies that support it and to bridge the gaps that can exist between those working in theatre and those in other lighting disciplines' such as corporate presentation."



Declan Randall

declan.randall@ald.org.uk

With over 14 years of professional lighting design experience and more than 235 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. Originally from Johannesburg, Declan relocated to the UK in May last year. He joined the ALD executive with the portfolio of developing the international wing of the ALD.

"I welcome news and stories from all over the world – we have many international members and I want to encourage everyone to send us their news and let us know what is happening in the rest of the world. I want the ALD to be an association that we can all be proud of. I want to expand our international membership and help to give the ALD the international presence that it deserves. I look forward to hearing from you."

committee members...

Paule Constable paule.constable@ald.org.uk

Paule Constable is well known to ALD members. As a freelance opera and theatre designer working predominantly in the UK, she won the 2005, 2006, and 2009 Laurence Olivier Award for Best Lighting Design and was also a nominee for four further productions and for a 2007 Tony Award on Broadway. Paule read English and Drama at Goldsmiths' College London and she trained in lighting design while working in the music business.

Opera includes many designs for the Royal Opera, English National Opera, Glyndebourne, Opera North, Scottish Opera and Welsh National Opera. Abroad she has worked in Paris, Salzburg, Strasbourg, Berlin, Brussels, New Zealand, Dallas and Houston.

She is a technical associate at the National and an artistic associate at the Lyric Hammersmith. She is also founder, together with Sarah Rushton Read, of the Women in Lighting Group. Her work can be seen in the West End on *Oliver* and *Warhorse* and the new Andrew Lloyd Webber show, *Love Never Dies*; at Glyndebourne, at the Met and the Royal Opera house amongst others. She is hoping to raise the profile of women and parents in the mad world of lighting.



Kevin Sleep kevin.sleep@ald.org.uk

Currently head of lighting for English National Opera, Kevin has been heading the 30 strong team here, for almost a decade. Alongside this he also acts as revival lighting designer for a number of ENO productions, both at the Coliseum and in Europe and the US.

Prior to his move to ENO, Kevin spent time working in similar positions at the Royal Exchange Manchester - one of his favourite venues, and also at Clywd Theatr Cymru. Before moving into permanent staff positions, Kevin spent many years working as a freelance lighting designer, working across all genres – although, opera always having held a particular appeal for him and throughout the UK and Europe. He is perhaps most commonly known for his design for 'The Woman in Black' which is now in its 21st year in the West End.

Kevin is delighted to be joining the ALD executive; 'One of the great things about the ALD is the depth and diversity of its membership and I'm looking forward to helping to support the association's work for its members and in particular the new Professional Member category'.



The 3rd KNIGHT OF ILLUMINATION AWARDS

organized by CLAY PAKY, STLD and ALD, has started!

Following the second highly successful and popular *Knight of Illumination Awards* ceremony in London on 13th September 2009, we are delighted to announce that plans for the *KNIGHT OF ILLUMINATION AWARDS 2010* are now underway.

This year's Awards programme has been designed with improved criteria and rules:

It is open to UK-based LDs with a show performing in the UK between

September 2009 and May 2010 (for the theatre section, productions performed in the UK are eligible although they do not necessarily have to be designed by UK-based LDs).

Applications can be made not only directly by UK-based LDs, but also by UK rental companies and/or LD's sponsors entering any UK-based LD's work that they feel merits nomination for this year's awards.

In the TELEVISION categories, anyone can submit a show – they do not have to have worked on it.

The Awards for *The Knight of Illumination* will be nominated and judged by a panel of professional reviewers working in the specific categories, selected and coordinated by the STLD and the ALD:

ROCK

Stage events, arena events, Eco-friendly tours.

TELEVISION

Light Entertainment, drama, small studio, events.

THEATRE

Musicals, dance, opera, drama.

The newly designed *Knight of Illumination* portal web page allows designers and/or their sponsors to place their entries on a secure web page which can be updated by the nominees and reviewed by the judges (but not accessed by other nominees). The committee

will then forward details for a secure Content Manager web site to the applicant, where they must place as much of the requested information as possible for consideration by the judges. Registration for the contest closes on the 31st of May 2010.

The awards ceremony will take place on the first day of PLASA 2010 - Sunday 12th September.

Further information, entry form and assessment criteria are available on the website: www.knight-of-illumination.com

3RD KNIGHT OF ILLUMINATION AWARDS

12th September, 2010. Organized by:



Letters

From Nigel Godfrey, BlueBox Creative Management, regarding the ALD's recent newsletter to agents.

This is just a quick note to say that I think these newsletters are genuinely useful: it's good to try to bring agents on to the same page - so many producers just don't get the level of time commitment that lighting designers (and other creative team members) make, and it's really hard educating and negotiating at the same time!

And it's also good that there is an organisation which is genuinely interested in the terms of engagement of any type of theatre designers. The portfolio within Equity has gone through too many hands in the last couple of years.

From Janine Davies #813, regarding the ALD's meeting for the Critics' Forum.

It was fantastic to read the articles by Charles Spencer and Michael Billington. They had obviously had an 'enlightening' time! Great to see the contribution that lighting makes to a creative process being acknowledged and noticed. However, if I, as a lighting designer working mainly outside of London, got paid £3800 for a production, I would be delighted! More usual is £2000- £2500. I wish Mr. Billington was aware this is a more normal fee.

Money gripes aside, congratulations to all those who organised and took part in this seminar. Nice for us all to get some recognition.

From Jim Woodley #202, on the subject of the Agents' newsletter:

Ahh, what a nice thing to read it was too!

When I first got interesting in stage lighting (in the late 60's) it was still a bit of a 'dark art'.

There were no real books on the subject (save for Fred Bentham's tome) and so it was thanks to the articles of Francis Reid in the magazine *Tabs* that I got to grips with it all.

From Jonathan Dawson - Butterworth #456

Having received *Focus* a couple of days ago, I have actually had chance to read it straight away as I am at home.

The announcements look quite sensible and hopeful. I am most disappointed that

people are so poor at keeping up with payments, especially when you are so busy before you have to chase people up.

Much as I hate to say it, perhaps we should only do online renewals and then could save you some admin. and create an immediate non-full payment, no membership system.

I'd be very interested in moving to one of the levels of Professional membership. When the changes are instigated, please let me know how to upgrade - and don't worry I will change the standing order!

Could we save some expense by having an email version of *Focus*? I normally am more keen on paper than screen but, if it reduces the burden on you and saves some money, I'd be glad to, for example, receive a pdf version.

From Jack Knowles, Student Rep.

I have been contacted by Seb Egan, a disabled A-Level student who is currently applying to study Lighting Design (see email below). He is looking to get in contact with any disabled lighting designers who would be able to give him some advice. Can anyone recommend somebody for him to get in touch with or have any experience of disability in theatre that may be of interest to Seb? Let me know at jack.knowles@ald.org.uk

Dear Jack,

Just to give you some background knowledge of me. I am at Gordon's School in Woking. I have done my AS exams last summer, and I am currently studying for

Letters

continued...

my A2 exams. I hope to go to university to study lighting design and I am currently applying through UCAS to CSSD, Rose Bruford and the University of Glamorgan. I am currently gaining work experience through a company called Wizard Lighting.

I have a working diagnosis of Cerebral Palsy, as this explains the presenting symptoms; however the exact nature of my condition is unknown. My presenting symptoms are spasmic tremors in my right arm, movement restriction in my left wrist, poor eye-hand co-ordination and poor balance when moving.

I enjoy designing lighting sets and states, programming lighting desks, investigating both natural and artificial colours and I am becoming interested in

the environmental impacts of lighting. I do a lot of this work using a computer.

With Wizard Lighting, I have been involved with get-ins, tech rehearsals, running some aspects of the shows, strikes, installing equipment and PAT testing at local schools.

I am keen to find out whether there are any physically disabled lighting designers. I would like to know if there are any precedents in the area of lighting design or whether I could be trail-blazing by pursuing this career path. If there are any disabled lighting designers, I would like to view their work and perhaps talk to them about their experiences and any advice they may be able to offer me.

Regards, Seb

Members' meeting

ABTT NorthNet Members' visit to The Crucible Theatre, Norfolk Street, Sheffield S1 1DA.

Thursday 18th March 2010

Meet 11.00 am for 11.30 am in The Foyer.

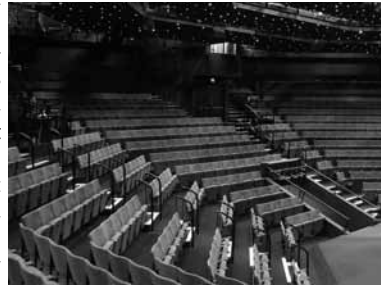
Contact the ABTT directly if you wish to attend.

Following a £15.3 million Redevelopment The Crucible reopened in February this year. Originally opened in 1971 to a design by Tanya Moiseiwitsch, the theatre has benefitted from a full refurbishment lasting several years and including wide-ranging improvements both backstage and, more obviously, front of house.

Under new Artistic Director Daniel Evans, Sheffield Theatres is well placed to start the new decade in fine style. The Main auditorium with its trademark Thrust stage is essentially the same, but with significant improvements to the understage construction to increase flexibility, whilst the flying facilities have

been upgraded to current technology, along with the whole raft of technical equipment backstage.

It has also been re-seated and an updated house lighting system installed,



whilst retaining the original characteristics.

The integral but separate Studio Theatre has also been given a make-over, and will form part of the tour, as will the workshops, etc.

Dressing rooms and audience circulation areas have also been significantly altered, whilst the whole frontage onto the former Tudor Square has been completely changed, along with a brand new metal roof cladding, originally planned for, but omitted on cost grounds from the original build.

Our guide for the visit will be Chief Electrician Gary Longfield, who has been resident at Sheffield Theatres for a number of years and is well qualified to answer members' queries on the building. Please note that the arrangements DO NOT include a visit to W.G.R. Sprague's magnificent Lyceum Theatre opposite, as this has formed the basis of several previous ABTT visits, but those with time to spare may be able to attend the Thursday Matinee performance there. You should contact the Box Office direct for this on 0114 249 6000.#

Office Oracle

Latest news from Ian's production desk



Membership Categories

There is still time to ensure that your membership reflects the correct category that you are relevant for ahead of the 2010/11 subscriptions being issued. The description of the categories as follows:

Professional Designer:

This category is open to lighting designers of all scale and type of project who are contracted and earn money from the discipline. This may include associate lighting designers or people who regularly undertake re-lighting duties on touring productions.

Professional Member:

This category is for those actively working in the theatre, live entertainment and associated industries professionally but not

specifically as lighting designers. This may include programmers, production electricians, those working for lighting companies, freelance or resident electricians theatre staff.

Associate Member:

Any individual who is interested in the design of lighting (for the theatre, live entertainment and associated industries) shall be qualified to be an associate of the Association.

All current professional members have now been moved to the new Professional Designer category. Current members who feel they should be in either the Professional Designer or Professional Member

categories are asked to apply in writing to the office with the supporting information as required for the relevant category prior to the 1st March 2010. Of course there might also be current professional members who wish to move to the Associate category if it better reflects their current status.

Subscription Fees

2010/11 subscription fees will be set according to the member category you are in on the 1st March 2010. These are as follows:

Professional Designer £75
Professional Member £75
Associate Member £40
Student Member £25
Corporate Member £400

Non-profit Organisation £25
We are still owed approximately £1500 pounds of the current subscription

year money by members who have not changed their standing order to reflect the rise in 2009. Those members who still owed money in December should have received a letter informing you of the error. There has certainly been a flurry of payments since then....

Professional members who have still not changed their standing order to £75 when we receive their next payment will be assumed to wish to change to Associate membership and their membership category will change to reflect this. So please ensure your payment instruction matches the rate for the membership category you wish to have.

2010 Whatsonstage Theatre Awards

The nominations for the tenth annual Whatsonstage.com

Awards, the "theatre goers' choice", have recently been announced. A number of ALD members have been nominated for the **Best Lighting Designer Award** which is sponsored by ALD Corporate Member **White Light**.

Nominations

(ALD members are shown in bold):

Johanna Town – *Speaking in Tongues* at the Duke of York's.

Kevin Adams – *Spring Awakening* at the Lyric Hammersmith & Novello

Mark Henderson – *Enron* at the Royal Court

Mike Robertson – *On the Waterfront* at the Theatre Royal Haymarket

Office Oracle

Natasha Katz – *Sister Act* at the London Palladium

Neil Austin – *Life Is a Dream* at the Donmar Warehouse & *Madame de Sade*, Donmar West End at Wyndham's

The Whatsonstage.com Awards are the only major theatre prize-giving decided by the public. The award ceremony is on 14th February 2010.

New Executive Members

Following our request for new members to step forward and offer their services to the executive, we have recruited four new members to augment those already onboard:

Matthew Clutterham

MD of corporate member MattLX

Paule Constable

Multi award winning lighting designer

Declan Randall

Lighting designer recently re-located to UK from South Africa

Kevin Sleep

Head of Lighting at ENO and lighting designer

ALD Website Forum

We are pleased to be now able to offer our members a forum on the ALD website. It can be accessed from the members' page once you have logged into the website. The forum is kindly hosted by The Blue Room and is restricted only to current ALD members.

We hope that this can be a useful resource for lighting designers to discuss professional lighting issues amongst themselves, as well as to talk about industry issues that may not want to be visible to the general population.

To access this forum, you

must first join the Blue Room site. When you register you must use the same email address as you use for the ALD website (the one that is listed on your details held on our database).

You then need to request access to the ALD Forum. To do this, go to your "My ALD" page (the first page you get to when you log in to this web site), and click on the "Edit Publishing Settings" link at the top left of the page. Make sure that the box next to Allow Access to the ALD Forum is ticked, and click Publish these Changes. You can now visit the ALD Forum.

A Sound Association

The ALD has been approached by some of the theatre sound designers that are trying to get a similar trade association as ourselves off the ground. Rick Fisher and I met them in late January for a meeting to discuss how the ALD was formed, how we currently

run and the general ideas and philosophy that is behind what they consider to be the perfect, successful template to adapt to their use. We hope that we have set them on their way and maybe even directed them away from some of the cul-de-sacs that might appear on their journey. We will certainly be keeping a watching brief over the next year or so, and wish them well.

Get well soon, David!

We have just heard that LD and occasional *Focus* contributor David Kidd has suffered a very badly broken leg. We all wish you a speedy recovery, David. #

STOP PRESS!!!

**Olivier
Nominations 2010**

BEST LIGHTING DESIGN

BURNT BY THE SUN designed by **Mark Henderson** at the National Theatre, Lyttelton

ENRON designed by **Mark Henderson** the Jerwood Theatre Downstairs at the Royal Court and now at the Noël Coward theatre

SPRING AWAKENING designed by **Kevin Adams** at the Novello theatre

THREE DAYS OF RAIN designed by **Jon Clark** at the Apollo theatre

Dates for your 2010 diaries

1st March

Membership category change deadline

27th March-2nd April

National Student Drama Festival, Scarborough

1st April

2010/2011 **ALD Subscription Fees due**

24th April

'By Design Day' (was Light Relief Day' - see page 26)

27-28th April

PLASA Focus 2009, Leeds *

31st May

Registration closes for Knight of Illumination Awards

13-15th June

Theatre Engineering and Architecture Conference,
London www.theatre-event.com

16-17th June

ABTT Theatre Show*

1st July

Deadline for subscription payments

12-15th September

PLASA 2010*

12th September

Knight of Illumination Awards ceremony

**the ALD will have a presence at these events.*

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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. #

“Porgy & Bess”

An African Sky in Cardiff and Edinburgh

South Africa’s leading opera company Cape Town Opera, in association with Askonas Holt and Wales Millennium Centre, brought their latest production of Gershwin’s *Porgy & Bess* to Wales and Scotland last year. Setting the opera in a township in South Africa was the vision of director Christine Crouse, Artistic Director for the company. Set and costume design was by Michael Mitchell and Declan Randall designed the lighting.

I was not appointed to the production initially. I happened to be in Cape Town lighting *“Dead Man Walking”* for Cape Town Opera when they approached me. Their original designer had taken ill, and a panicked general manager came to sit next to me during one of our techs for DMW and asked me what I was doing next week. Fortunately I was able to juggle a few meetings around and joined the tour.

I had three days to learn the show, get a design together and be at the airport ready to fly. I had no option but to take a very “broad strokes” approach to the production. I knew the console at both venues (Strand 500) so knew that I would be able to operate the show too and make changes as we went along. As is often the case on tour, time is tight and this was no exception. We had

4 days to get the show up and running in Cardiff which included the set build, load-in and placement of the cast, most of whom were on the set for the first time.

In my first meeting with the director we spoke about the overall concept for the show. *Porgy & Bess* falls in that grey area between opera and musical, and our starting point was to decide whether it was more “mopera” or “operasical”. We settled on “mopera” as our starting point and from there it was clear that we were looking for a sense of ‘heightened realism’. So when it was early morning, it was early morning with a twist, resulting in colour choices that were all a tint or two more saturated than would have been expected. The early morning sun would rise, hoisting itself up on a scaffold of amber tinted cloud fading into a sky that

was rich with the colours of the African coastline. The show was staged with scenes taking place at all times of the day, morning, afternoon, evening and night and capturing the quality of light that one finds in Africa is always challenging. There is a clarity to the light, but also a harshness to it. It is unrelenting as it strikes the landscape, yet at the same time it sculpts and shapes, creating strong shadows and beautiful contrasts of light and dark. At dawn and dusk it almost kisses the landscape with a coral lipstick before handing the night over to the gentle blue-white light of the moon. And then there is the African storm. Clouds so thick and grey and dark that one often needs to turn lights on in the middle of the day. A threatening grey-green light takes over moments before the heavens open.







As a lighting designer, I think re-creating Mother Nature's work is one of the most exciting challenges that we face. Let's face it, she is good! For *Porgy & Bess* it was a combination of angles and colour choices that I exploited the most to help set the location and mood. I think that the trick is not just to replicate the angles and intensities, but to take it one step further and then offset the colour against that to manipulate the emotional content of the scene. The bulk of the key light was top light – I wanted to minimize the shadows as the sun in "*Summertime*" is almost directly overhead. This gave me the harsh shadows that I wanted both on the cast and the set elements. I then filled from the sides according to the time of

day and a hint of FOH just to balance it all out. Choosing colour is always my favourite part. I opted for a combination of LEE 710 "Spir Special Blue" and LEE 715 "Cabana Blue" for my cooler tints as these can look quite 'dusty' at low intensities which helped to reinforce the township feeling. I offset these with LEE 764 "Sun Colour Straw" which when used with the 710 gave me a harsh and almost uncomfortable white light.

The cyc was a bit more of a challenge as not only did it change from dawn to dusk, with everything in between, but also had to be a grey overcast sky as well as a dark and thunderous grey/brown. I find that the "twin white" screen from Rosco works best for this – it has a slightly yellowish tinge to it which seems



“Porgy & Bess”

An African Sky in Cardiff and Edinburgh

to help with the stormy and grey scenes and does not impact on the daytime blues. I used Rosco for the day- and nighttime blues (#68 and #83) and used LEE 161 “Slate Blue” and LEE 728 “Steel Green” for the stormy grey-browns. My favourite cue in the whole show was the 5½ minute crossfade from “morning to storming” as we called it. Slowly we shifted the sky to dark and grey, bleached the rest of the scene of its colour and replaced it with a grey-green tinge to suggest the on-coming wrath of Mother Nature. A few musically placed strokes of lightning and we were set. During the storm we used the practical sconces to help support the sense of the darkness of the storm which warmed up the interiors and helped to create a sense of safety and calm.

We opened at the Wales Millennium Centre and from

there transferred to the Festival Theatre in Edinburgh. I have to say a big thank you to the crews at both venues – they were fantastic and really went the extra mile to make sure that we were up and running as quickly as possible. I used the in-house equipment for the show which was a selection of 1kW and 2kW Fresnels, PARcans, and an assortment of profiles ranging from ETC Source 4’s to Strand Harmony and Cantatas. We had 5 VL1000 Arcs in Wales which we were thankfully able to take with us to Edinburgh. Our saving grace was the fact that both venues have the same desk which made for an easy transfer as I was able to load the disk, do a few clean-ups and be ready to go.

As lighting designers, we are heavily influenced by the light that we experience around us. We draw from

our natural environment and more often than not this creeps in to our lighting choices and styles. Porgy proudly sings in Act 1 “I got plenty of nuttin’, and nuttin’s plenty for me...” and fortunately that did not apply to me. I had a great production team, fantastic crews and had plenty of memories of Africa to see me through the show.

I can only hope that Mother Nature would be happy with my attempt – after all, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery!#



Declan Randall

With over 14 years of professional lighting design experience and more than 235 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. Originally from Johannesburg, Declan relocated to the UK in May last year.

All photos (including front cover) by Declan Randall.

How I learnt to love Pookie, Slinky and the Perimeter Soft Goods

James Laws curls up with *A Practical Guide to Stage Lighting*, by Steven Louis Shelley



OK, the first thing to say is that, as honorary reviewer to *Focus*, you joyfully take the books that are submitted and I do like a good read. However, about 10 pages into this 461 A4 page epic, I realised I was going way beyond my comfort zone. This book deals with the intricacies of high-end American best practice on pre-production paperwork and it reveals the organisation required and expected, to light a full scale musical on Broadway.

What it is to have friends! A number of you kindly gave of your holiday time to answer my questions and the consensus has guided my quill no end.

Steven Shelley has had over 35 years of lighting shows, in various capacities.

He is also a teacher and a very organised person, as is shown by his half-page table: *Shelley's Domestic Production Table Gear List*. Just to keep the loose paper in the right order he has a stapler, a staple remover and a 3 hole punch. Plus a waste paper basket.

Shelley's mission is to bring dependable method to the madness of lighting a major musical. He makes sense of the incredible amount of paperwork that is generated in the States and increasingly in the UK, when big shows are lit on big budgets. There are all sorts of reasons to justify this culture. It has developed into the accepted way to pre-light because of the perception that time spent being absolutely organised before the load in will pay great dividends when the real

pressure is on and everyone is clamouring for priority on stage. It has also become a self-affirming sub-culture which can supplant the L D's plan as the key document of authoritative information.

This has been a culture shock to some of my correspondents but the blow would have been softened by the realisation that, when they are faced with an American show to light, an assistant (or two) will be provided. Their assistant(s) main task will be to keep on top of the paperwork and, using it, to provide instant answers to the myriad of questions that will arise during the focus, lighting & technical sessions.

Given this potential maze, the author's chosen device is to guide his reader through

the genesis of an imaginary all-American *Musical Myth* called *Hokey*, at the *Hybrid Theater*. The one page of *Hokey* dialogue that we see is such fun that I want to read the rest of this Shelley oeuvre. Apparently it's in 3 acts of 3 scenes each, so maybe it will be his next book. He uses this fantasy to lighten up what would otherwise be a fairly solid grind of processing logic and translating it into lists. By page 49 we are into a chart with 26 Pre-Approval lists and their distribution to 13 eager folks in Electrics, Management, Creatives and Other Departments. That's a total of 126 copies of various lists to various people. Then there's another similar number for (Lighting) Document Distribution.

What of my bizarre title to

this review? *Pookie* is *Hokey's* love interest. *Slinky* is a very clever way of remembering how to overlap your area focuses. Think of the Slinky toy that is a very soft long spring coil that walks downstairs and translate that spring, uncoiled, to the stage plan to see a number of overlapping ovals. *Perimeter Soft Goods* are masking tabs to you and me. Shelley shows how to live with compromise in the real world when the *Hokey Soft Goods* are delivered somewhat haphazardly to his fantasy *Hybrid Theater*.

These apparently random title words, some chosen for their relevance as well as their charm, are indicators of the strengths and potential pitfalls of the Shelley approach, to a UK student. For it is ambitious students



and aspiring assistant LDs who should be reading this book from cover to cover. PEs and TMs will also become significant users of the detailed production planning that this book reveals.

The story of *Hokey* is conceived to have all the compromises and turns of event that colour a production period but, as it is fantasy dealing primarily with organisation, there are no photographic or production visuals. In fact the only photos in the whole book are 3 matchbox size black and white focus note shots. The only colour illustrations (inside the back cover) are the familiar primary additive & subtractive wheels.

Slinky is brilliant as a metaphor but it also reveals the American insistence

in nailing the precise fixed degree angle of profiles required for a wash. Zoom profiles are mentioned twice in the index and once in an "if all else fails" context. So the reader will have to work out how American practice differs in so many ways and allow for the expectations. On the other hand, for someone due to light their first US show, this is a perfect introduction to the culture.

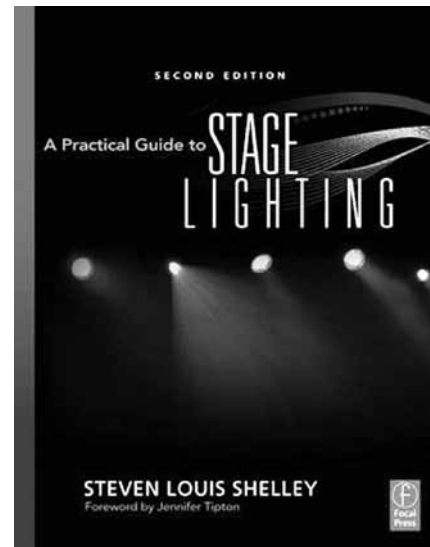
Perimeter Soft Goods of course come, like everything else in this book, in Feet and Inches. Currently, UK students are adept at thinking in both imperial & metric units but for how much longer?

I hope I have shown what this tremendously detailed book is about, who will enjoy it & benefit from it and what you have to be careful about.

It is a perfect introduction to the power behind the screen based interactive programs that are so much in use and which Mr Shelley acknowledges but does not expound on. I gather that some Master Electricians (ME) now refuse plans that do not include Lightwrite attachments, so those who are going stateside for their first design would do very well to check in advance just what is expected of them by their ME.

Did I tell you that one of *Hokey's* song titles is *It's All About Me*?

If I've got through this technical minefield, then my patient guides must take quiet credit. My thanks go to them.#



A Practical Guide to Stage Lighting, second edition, Steven Louis Shelley
Focal Press 2009, £29.99 ISBN: 978-0-240-81141-3 www.elsevierdirect.com

Focal Press has kindly offered ALD members a special discount. Simply quote the code ALD30 on focalpress.com and it will give you a 30% discount until December 31, 2010.

Paperwork in the Royal Opera House; documenting the repertoire.

Prompted by Mr. Laws' book review, Simon Bennison explains what paperwork means to him...

Paperwork underpins everything we do at the ROH for documenting a show in a repertoire system. It has also changed and developed a lot since I've been here. When I began each lighting area was responsible for their own setting plot, in pencil for constant updating and only the Chargehand would alter it. Then the focussing HOD (Head of Department) had his own version which was a personal check sheet for the task and also a record for the show.

Fastforwarding some years to the arrival of computers, delivered CAD plots slowly became the norm as they could then be updated. In conjunction, Microsoft Word has been used from the beginning of this era to create a "Setting Plot". Whereas individual areas previously

tracked their information. A difference now is that the HOD is solely responsible for creating and maintaining this document, which is then relied on heavily by the crew, to whom it is distributed and is the point of reference for future revivals.

The ROH setting plot gives the basic information needed for gathering all lighting knowledge of the show in a "list and area" format. The categories are: Channel, Dimmer, Lantern, Power, Colour and Focus. Because it is in "Word", other information and notes, such as gobos or rigging details, can be easily added. We are constantly looking to improve our documentation system but when dealing with the large machine we are, at the moment we're staying with a format which (in the main) works.

The US is the land of paperwork! They use it, and trust it, and all possible relevant information needs to be included within it. The Lightwrite program was developed as a tool for the Master Electrician to keep track of hook-ups and patches and channels. For the American system it not only works brilliantly, but is also greatly relied upon. I remember when rigging in the States being given a "cardboard", this was the dye-lined lx plot pasted to a piece of cardboard, and then cut into areas. I'd be given an area e.g. Box Boom Left and sent off to rig. I'd wager that nowadays, whilst this still may occur, it will more than likely have been replaced by the relevant sheet from the Lightwrite print-out.

The American method of paperwork and show

documenting has probably been adopted fairly heavily by the ROH. Our Word document is essentially a customised and more verbose version of Lightwrite. Over the years, as American LDs such as Ronald Bates and Jennifer Tipton have worked here, then their styles of logging information have been adopted. These two LDs are significant also because they specialise in dance, and it is the ballet that uses the larger rig, and needs to have a full record of 19s, or 26s. Opera can survive with smaller and neater sets of lists, but the ballet needs organisation.

There is a great difference for us when it comes to paperwork and where an LD is from. With one prominent French LD the plot was literally the one conversation I had; paper was never going

to arrive. With another distinguished German LD the plot arrived as digitally photographed close-ups from lighting notes in a hotel! In general a homegrown LD will deliver a perfectly decent homegrown plot, as we'd expect. On the other hand, a USLD will deliver either a plot with a lot of information on it, or a plot and then a series of lists. Their plots are more likely to be very specific with detail, because that is the way paperwork in their industry demands them to be.

The big question we are facing within the ROH is how to effectively document moving head focus changes. This is time consuming, and in a piece where a head takes multiple positions it can be difficult. My experience from other Opera Houses is that this work usually becomes some form of simplified

beam landing document. What I find unsatisfactory is that the result uses reams of paper and it's difficult to convey the real "look", of a moving light i.e. A profile, cut to a door with L202 and R132 is absolute, but a VL on a door with L202 mix in it and softened, while in theory should be the same will vary with the individual colour wheels and optics.

We solve this area by using 3D visualisation software, where we are able to render the set/scene for a show, and "virtually," play a cue or channel back. This gives direct focus information and then a screen-shot can be taken and a record made as a fairly faithful representation of the real look. Accurate colour information is still an issue though.

As organisation evolves, I think the US way and

Lightwrite makes a fair tilt at being the best general option out there. The only reason we don't use it in the UK more is that it isn't yet part of our lighting culture. We light and approach light differently, so there could be a question mark over whether collectively we are able to embrace their methods of paperwork and organisation into our system.

An area where it may creep up on us lies within the rise of Macintosh and then Vectorworks. Lightwrite syncs with Vectorworks and imports into ETC EOS, and we live in an age of syncing. I think that if younger generations coming through embrace the programs and possibilities more, then eventually there shall be enough of us using the program for it to take. It's still a "big ask" though, across our

vast range of performance spaces, to achieve a system in the same way as America is doing now.

A possible larger issue for the future of paperwork is a board like the EOS. This is a new generation board, which creates formats with information that has shifted in content, to include the moving light. It has decided to only produce formats as uneditable PDFs. The move towards not even having paper may have begun: a world where all data is accessed from a screen of some form, whether sat in front of you, or held in your hand on a portable device. I think the more the industry pushes towards this trend, the more likely that the word paperwork will be overtaken by another, "Database:"#



Simon Bennisson

*A Lighting Manager for the Royal Opera House working with designers on new works and relighting repertoire works. Trained in music, lighting, design, and architecture. As a lighting designer he's designed for dance, ballet, theatre and opera – recent pieces being **Comedians** for Hammersmith Lyric, and **Swanhunter** for Opera North.*



Letter to ALD members - "By Design Day"

Light Relief and Behind the Scenes are fundraising on April 24th

Dear Colleagues,

We are delighted to announce that after the great success of last year's joint fundraising day for **Light Relief** in the UK and **Behind the Scenes** in the US we are doing it again. Wherever you have a show, be it New York or London, at a regional theatre or out on the road, please join us in supporting these two charities that provide financial assistance to industry members who are seriously ill or injured, or to their surviving family.

April 24th will now be called "**By Design Day**" on both sides of the Atlantic. It is the chance for all of us in our profession to support these two charities dedicated solely to helping entertainment

technology professionals in need, by voluntarily giving a day's royalties to one or both of these charities. Not in a royalty situation? You can join your colleagues by making a donation in support of this special day. Light Relief assists those involved in the UK Lighting Industry while Behind the Scenes aids professionals based in the U.S. and Canada working in any area of the entertainment technology industry.

Light Relief Day was founded in 2007 in the UK to honor 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*.

Many of us have been fortunate to do very well from our chosen profession. Because of the campaigning efforts of earlier designers we have a continuing income stream from royalties for the commercial runs and tours of our shows. This day allows us to remember that with our good fortune we can still look out for each other and for those who bring our designs to life.

Both organizations are registered charities. Contributions to *Light Relief* can be easily gift aided by UK taxpayers, which makes them worth even more, and donors are also eligible for tax relief if you have been lucky enough to slip into the top tax bracket. Contributions to *Behind the Scenes* are tax deductible in the U.S. The

exact amounts of all personal contributions will be kept confidential.

Although your contribution doesn't have to be made until April 24, 2010, or until you receive your royalties, we encourage you to contact the charity, or charities, of your choice as soon as possible. In addition to generating income this will give the charities a great ongoing press story by listing the shows and designers (if desired) contributing to the cause.

If you know of people who might benefit from assistance from either charity please do let them know these organizations exist. More information may be found at www.lightrelief.org.uk and www.estafoundation.org/bts.htm.

We thank you for your consideration and your support.

your,

*Ken Billington
Paule Constable
Jonathan Deans
David Gallo
Rick Fisher
Derek McLane
Tony Meola
Ken Posner
Hugh Vanstone
Tony Walton*



Lighting on the net

A film about lighting up London by the PLDA's Sharon Stammers

'We Light London' is a project designed to show the status quo of architectural lighting in London and was made by Sharon Stammers, head of the PLDA UK office, in conjunction with two other lighting designers: Sam Neuman and Debbie Wythe.

The objective of the film was to show both contemporary and older exemplar schemes within the city and to demonstrate the breadth of both architectural application and the design skills involved.

"We also interviewed designers involved in the projects which enabled us to reveal the expertise used in creating urban lighting", Sharon says. "The end result is a comprehensive document of how we use the medium of light within our cities, how we feel about

this particular city and by fusing the two, how we light London."

The origins of the film came from a discussion after the launch of an initiative called *Light London*. It is a group set up to create an agenda for improving light in London and consists of various influential architectural and design bodies working in the city. "We felt that in order for them to achieve this, a survey of light in London should be undertaken and decided to do that ourselves", Sharon tells.

"Myself and two other designers – all PLDA professional members – set out to create a short documentary on the subject. We originally meant to reveal how badly the city was lit and how much work was needed to improve it but



as we spent many nights examining the lighting within London, our film became one which celebrated what we do and how we do it and showed schemes we thought were exemplar (although we left many out). It was a great opportunity to take time out from our work and really study the lit urban landscape in detail. As schemes are often not well maintained

we also included stills of the projects".

The film will mainly be shown on the Internet but has already had one public showing at an event in London for architects on 8th October 2009 called Lovelight. Sharon says "If this was something that other cities wanted to replicate (and Singapore has already expressed an interest) it

would be an excellent way of looking at the impact architectural lighting has had on our urban centres." The team are currently looking for sponsorship for their next film project...#

To see 'We Light London', visit: <http://vimeo.com/8003198>

For further information: ssammers@pld-a.org



White Light/ALD/CSSD New Technologies Showcase

Will Evans reports with Nick Moran...

The lighting students of Central School of Speech and Drama once again excelled themselves in delivering an excellent and informative shoot out... sorry, *New Technologies Showcase*, on Thursday 21st January at the school's Embassy Theatre.

Generously supported by White Light, Barco-High End, ETC and Grand MA, the Showcase demonstrated the latest developments in lighting, all ably rigged, focused and controlled by the lighting students at Central.

Now I'm going to do something very controversial here which I know may jeopardise my ALD membership... I'm going to talk about the kit! Yes I know our adopted motto is '*More art less tools*' and no one subscribes to that premise

more than me. However like it or not we're in a technology-based industry and as end users, us LDs, production ix, programmers etc. need to know about these things.

So look away now if you don't like new and exciting technology! Having said that I can assure you there is not one shred of photometric data or lumen output in the next few pages!

There was a plethora of new products available and being developed in 2009 in our industry, far too many to mention and certainly far too many to squeeze into the Embassy theatre, so I like to think that what we saw was a selection of those that may interest us the most. Out of these a few caught my eye and two definitely made me think, "now this is interesting"

and "that's going to have an affect on the way we do things around here!"

Lightlock

The first is not actually a lighting instrument at all but it could change how we use moving lights. The 'Lightlock' from the RSC – yes you read right, the Royal Shakespeare Company! – is an amazing device.

About the size of the base of your average moving light, it sits on the end of a trapeze and you can put a moving light on the base of it. Now as I'm sure many of you know, put a moving light on a trapeze and, well, its going to swing around, a lot, but not with 'Lightlock'. Developed by RSC's Head

of Lighting, Vince Herbert, it basically counteracts the swing generated by a moving light, I'm told, through using



movement except that which the moving light is meant to be doing; it has to be seen to be believed! So now you

can rig moving lights literally wherever you like. No need for a truss or a ladder securely anchored off to the flyrail and the floor if you want movers in the wings. Just rig up a trapeze! Brilliant! A few of us also wondered whether it would work on a wobbly

gyros and other clever things but I'm convinced it was the Dark Arts at work! I was truly amazed by how this clever box of tricks does its job so well, the light can swing round at full speed and you get nothing, no swing, no rocking and no other

truss or a flying bar. We've all had that problem I'm sure and either had to use extra scaff to stabilise a truss or bail off a flying bar to stabilise it from 'mover wobble'. We surmised you'd have to use two, one at each end, but would it work? Something to think about!

White Light/ALD/CSSD New Technologies Showcase

Robert Juliat's LED profile

The next thing that caught my eye and definitely made me think 'now here's something that's going to change lighting', was the LED profile from Robert Juliat. It's still a prototype and it does need refining but Robert Juliat seem to have tamed the LED and made it into something very useable. Like it or not (and generally I don't!) LEDs are here to stay, it's not a passing fad, they use less energy and have a ridiculously long lamp life and therefore it gets the all important (for extra funding) green 'tick'. I, like probably most of you out there, have viewed LEDs with some distrust; as a lighting tool for lighting real people and real sets on a real stage, they're not very good when

compared to tungsten – certainly in controllability, dimming, brightness and colour temperature. Robert Juliat have certainly nailed the first problem and are well on the way to sorting out two of the other three.

Controllability: Somehow, and again I don't understand the physics at all, they have tamed the light from the LED and got it focused enough to work for a profile. It does everything you'd expect from a high quality zoom profile, small to big, hard to soft, gobos and a perfectly even field. That's mainly because it is just a larger lamp base fitting that occupies the space where the lamp housing goes on a standard, normal, un-modified Robert Juliat Profile. Fabulous! And of course it really is cool as a

cucumber so plastic gobos are in and so is putting gel in the gate (if you really wanted to but we couldn't think of a reason except to cut down on gel sizes!)

Dimming: For probably 90% of fades you would do in an 'average' show the dimmer curve is very reasonable and certainly no worse than a mechanical dimmer on a moving light. However we did devise an 'acid test' 10% to 0% in 10 seconds, here you could see the LEDs 'stepping' down to black, however I am told this is only the prototype and it is being worked on.

Brightness: Not bad I'd say for a first crack at this. According to Robert Juliat it's equivalent to a 'normal' 1kW profile. A lot of us were a little sceptical of this and I would personally say

maybe a 650W profile or dusty Cantata would be a nearer comparison. However, for small applications i.e. studio spaces, that's all the brightness you need and I'm sure future developments will see brightness match other available tungsten lamps.

Colour Temperature: This is where it does fall down but only if you're expecting to match a tungsten colour temperature. It is a cold light, probably something around Lee 202. Of course this could be corrected with CTO but you would lose some brightness. *[Note: the unit on display was a prototype with a colour temperature around 6000K – Robert Juliat have a 3400K unit in development, which should be much more compatible with conventional tungsten units].*

All in all, this is a development for LEDs that has brought them a big step closer to the theatre world and proven that perhaps, just perhaps, they could one day replace tungsten halogen lamps. Maybe in the not too distant future we will see replacement LED lamp houses for all profiles. Only time will tell, but Robert Juliat have at least shown what is possible and I'm sure it's not going to stop there!

Varilite VLX

Another interesting and much awaited piece of kit was also on display; the VLX is the new moving light from Varilite. It's an LED wash light with zoom and all the other functions you'd expect from a wash light. Concerns over colour mixing were put to rest





White Light/ALD/CSSD New Technologies Showcase

with the students managing to mix very subtle colours and even a reasonable impression of tungsten open white.

Brightness was good too with it easily matching the Mac TW1 when put head to head. The dimming was very 'steppy' at the bottom 10% when we ran the same 'acid test' as on the LED profile but I was assured Varilite are working on it.

The main concern raised was the amount of flare that you seemed to get, I'm sure a top hat is in the planning!

Also on show...

...was some existing technology for comparisons including the EvenLED cyc lighting system, Mac TW1 and VL1000 Tungsten. These were very useful for comparing the LED fixtures particularly

when looking at brightness, colour mixing and colour temperature. Few other instruments caught my eye for the right reasons, seemingly only tweaking existing technology or finding new flashy things to do with LEDs.

The only other thing I will mention was the two absolutely enormous High End Shoguns that dominated LX1 in the theatre. They apparently weigh in at a hefty 64kg (140lbs in old money) each and use a 2.5kW lamp... probably not one for the studio shows then!

Final thoughts

With the kit thoroughly tried and tested I sat down with John Leventhall to review the afternoon when we got to discussing how far and fast technology has advanced



in the last 10 years. I started my training at Central just over 10 years ago so it was bizarre to be sitting in the same theatre (well almost, re-furb an' all!) 10 years on and realising that none of this technology we were now looking at even faintly existed or only perhaps in designer's and technician's dreams. To go back further (but not THAT much further

really!) John then told me some of his tales from when he was starting out learning to operate on an old Grand Master lighting system in the 70s. This all made us wonder where we would be at in ten years time; what new technologies would the next decade bring? Who knows, that fantastic *thingimebob* or *whatsitfangle* you've been dreaming about creating/

designing/building in your shed might be on display at 2020's New Technology Showcase!!

With those philosophic thoughts we then headed up to the canteen to start the 'First Annual ALD pub Quiz'... let the (good natured) arguing begin!#

First Annual ALD Pub Quiz

(even though it isn't annual yet until next year's quiz and it wasn't in a pub)

A simple idea for a social event really, they happen in pubs every week up and down the country so why not give it a go?! So we did, and with Quiz Masters John Leventhall and Nick Moran at the helm, it was a roaring success and all that was missing were the gold spangly jackets! A big thank you to our generous hosts, Nick Moran and Central School of Speech and Drama for providing the space, and to White Light for providing plenty of beer, wine and nibbles to feed the brain. A predicted turnout of maybe twenty or so turned into at least fifty ALD members, comprising a pleasing mix from students to some more senior members of the lighting establishment. The team names tickled me the most, from the winner's witty 'Bastard Frost' (soon to appear in the swatch book maybe!?) and the 'Linnebach Ensemble' to 'Quiz Team Aguilera' (say it out loud - get it!?) and 'Four Lads and a Lardy Lampie'!

Five rounds then ensued including general theatre knowledge, techie time and of course, a picture round of 'Name that Theatre'. The winning team were 'Bastard Frost' with a stonking 68/75 who all received commemorative glass gobos generously donated by Rosco. The evening's events raised £60.00 for Light Relief and provided a great opportunity for members from all categories to mix and mingle and have a lot of fun. Once again a big thank you to John and Nick, CSSD, White Light and Rosco for supporting this event and making it happen. #

Sample questions: Theatre section

1. Which musical does the song *Big Spender* come from?
2. *Kiss Me Kate* is a musical version of which Shakespeare play?
3. Which 1950 Billy Wilder film became an Andrew Lloyd Webber musical?
4. In which Japanese city is *Madame Butterfly* set?
5. The ex-wife of which Rolling Stone recently bared all on the West End stage with an East Enders 'grande dame'?
6. The play '*The Matchmaker*' by Thornton Wilder formed the basis for which musical?
7. Which witty British playwright wrote *Hay Fever*?
8. In the musical *Oliver*, who was Bill Sykes' Mistress?
9. Who was the 18th Century Drury Lane theatre manager who started a famous club?
10. Which Victor Hugo novel is one of London's longest running musicals?
11. In which town or city is Royal Shakespeare Company based?
12. What phrase is used in theatre to describe lines improvised by an actor?
13. What is the title of the musical set amidst the Bollywood film industry, which played for a long run at the Apollo Victoria before *Wicked*?
14. Which musical had to cancel

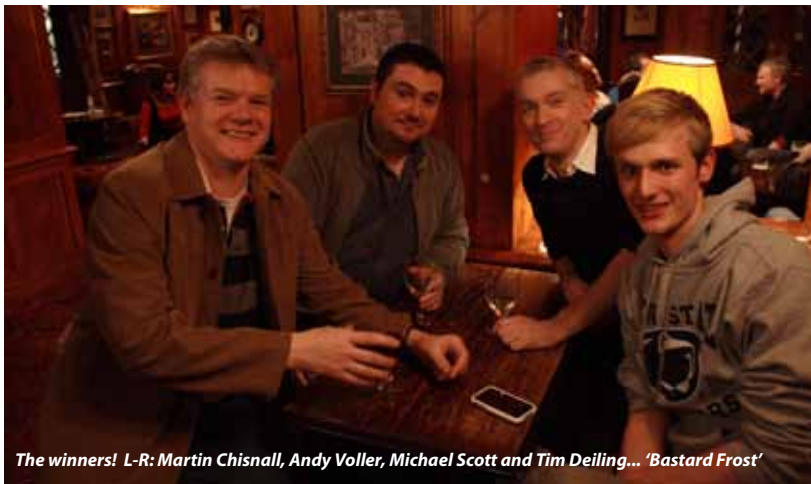
performances during its first week due to a broken down car?

15. Which graduate of *The History Boys* by Alan Bennett has also won awards for writing a TV series?

Sample questions: History & Techy Stuff section

1. What is the term for the direct illumination on a surface which is everywhere 1 meter from a uniform point of brightness of 1 international candle?
2. To the nearest metre what is the diameter of a beam thrown 30 metres from a 30 degree profile?
3. What year was the Pattern 23 Baby Spot first sold commercially, and its price in 1967?
4. What is the diameter of a standard steel scaffolding bar?
5. What is watts divided by Volts?
6. When was cinemoid first available in the UK?
7. Who won the 2009 Olivier award for Lighting?
8. When was Shakespeare's Globe theatre built?
9. VL500 washlight - what voltage and wattage is the lamp?
10. Halogens are: Fluorine, Chlorine, Bromine, Iodine, Astatine. In a tungsten halogen lamp what is the halogen?

Answers in the next issue!



The winners! L-R: Martin Chisnall, Andy Voller, Michael Scott and Tim Deiling... 'Bastard Frost'



The runners up!

February / March 2010



and finally...

From Arnim Friess, Member 547

I read with interest the reviews about PLASA re: beautiful stands vs. ugly stands and I just want to add that without the much lamented LED Palmtree / fireworks the Asian Games displays here in Hong Kong wouldn't be the same ...

Greetings,
Arnim Friess
pixelbox ltd

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