

ALD #

# FOCUS

The Journal of the Association of Lighting Designers

*"More art, less tools..."*

April/May 2016

- Lighting up this issue:
  - Lighting for concert touring
  - Colour, colour and more colour
  - Lumiere Scheme announcement
    - Professional fees update
    - New Tech Showcase
  - ... and much, much more...
- Price to non-members £5.00

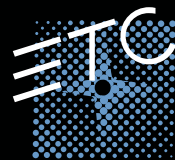
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# From the Chairman....



Well, like many of our freelance members I seem to have spent most of 2016 away from home so far. I'm currently in Leeds, a city I enjoy being in, fortunately. Ours can be a difficult and demanding business, sometimes hard on social and family life as the work takes us wherever opportunity leads. It's one of the reasons why at the ALD much of our work and communication is so dependent on the online world but also why the organisation at least offers a contact point to members who otherwise can be isolated in a range of ever changing situations. I'm so pleased that over this last year, despite our diligent executive often being spread out around the world, we have still been able to achieve a number of our objectives, not least the new upgraded and redesigned website, which offers more opportunities for sharing information and mutual contact between all areas of the membership. Many thanks to all those who supported the recent special general meeting to complete the process of incorporation, a significant achievement for us, which will again open up new possibilities for the ALD. I hope to see new input into our board of directors and executive as a result.

I am delighted to announce that we will be repeating last year's six-month Lumière Scheme in collaboration with Chichester Festival Theatre. This will begin in June at Chichester and continue to Christmas. The full details are published in this issue, and I would seriously encourage our young and emerging designers to apply. The Lumière Scheme is intended to offer a pathway into theatre work as a lighting designer and across the six months creates great opportunities to make valuable contacts as well as the huge learning experience of working closely with a number of our leading designers and theatres. So apply now!

We are still working on the expansion of the scheme but last year's pilot proved that it offers great opportunities and as an experience is pretty unique so I'm pleased that at least we are able to offer one place this year. Many thanks again to Chichester Festival Theatre for its support.

It's spring already and the year moves on apace – the time seems to whiz by. As the days grow brighter and longer I hope all of you have had a great start to yet another year of light. #

Peter

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# MARKO'S MUSINGS

## Mark Jonathan in Sweden and at Guildhall



Photo by Julie Craig

I find myself revisiting two operas in new productions that I have already lit previously. Returning to the works is interesting although I know the music and story they will both be so different that I will find myself in a process of “re-discovery”. First there is the *Rape of Lucretia* at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. I previously lit the opera in an extraordinarily epic design in Vienna designed by Ashley Martin-Davis and directed by Keith Warner. Curiously, the other production that I will be lighting is *Pelleás et Mélisande* at the Royal Swedish Opera in Stockholm. It's the same team that I worked with in Vienna and the design is again epic and very challenging for me.

The new *Rape of Lucretia* is everything that my previous, very successful foray in Vienna wasn't. Instead of epic it will be comparatively intimate, which will suit this chamber opera. Jamie Vartan's design places it in a thrust format, with the orchestra of thirteen players alongside one bank of the audience.

Joining rehearsals at Guildhall it's intriguing to watch the care that head of opera studies and conductor Dominic Wheeler and stage director Martin Lloyd-Evans take in preparing the young but brilliant singers for the journey ahead. I'm reminded that it takes longer to “graduate” as an opera soloist than a doctor takes to be allowed out on their own with a stethoscope. These singers already have taken a BA and an MA and various other courses before joining the two-year opera studies course; this all adds up to about eight years of training. The production also provides a vehicle for the technical students to hone their skills in all the technical and production aspects of putting on a production. While it's essential that this



*Pelleas et Mélisande*  
Royal Swedish Opera  
Directed by Keith Warner  
Designed by Ashley Martin-Davis  
Lighting by Mark Jonathan  
Photo by Micke Sandström

is a good “learning environment”, I enjoy pushing the students and giving them a “run for their money”. They all rise to the challenge with brilliance and alacrity – all credit to the assiduous training the students receive from the fine staff at the school. The lighting department, which is part of the technology stream, is led by

*The Rape of Lucretia*  
Guildhall School of Music and Drama  
Directed by Martin Lloyd-Evans  
Designed by Jamie Vartan  
Lighting by Mark Jonathan  
Photo by Clive Barda

Steve Huttly with Nick Peel and on this production they will be joined by the LD/programmer Richard Godden who is mentoring Jack and Christian, the second-year programmers.

I think a lot was learnt with some fun on the way but the outcome was formidable. The concentration and care taken in the rehearsal room, the workshops and in stage rehearsals produce an excellent result. I'm always amazed when I step back and watch a dress rehearsal that the only "professional" left is the conductor. Everything else is being done or made by students: the singing, orchestral playing, production and stage management, the set, props, costumes, wardrobe, flying, sound, video projection and lighting. The standard is universally high. It goes without saying that these students will be out there competing for jobs pretty soon, and I'm glad that they will be armed with skills and brilliance of such a high standard.

*April/May 2016*



As seems to be typical for me, I race from the final dress rehearsal in London to Stockholm, arriving on the Sunday. My instructions are to be at the Royal Opera House stage door before 6.30pm to collect my apartment keys. Good

thing that my plane is on time. I jump aboard the fantastic Arlanda express which travels at 200km an hour to the city centre. I think I may have remarked in a previous article that it's great value at about a fiver for a return.

# MARKO'S MUSINGS

Mark Jonathan

Of course, I now realise that I had my decimal point in the wrong place: it's actually nearly £50 for a return. As I am to discover, while the opera fee at Stockholm is higher than average, nearly everything is more expensive in Sweden – in fact, I would say close to double. Thanks to the express and a fast taxi I collect my keys from the stage door with 25 minutes to spare and head for the apartment. I don't recommend just turning up without an agent to show you in. What if anything was untoward?

I unlock the door and find the hall light switch. The next switch doesn't work so it takes me a while to find the remote light switch for the sitting room lights as it's in the dark kitchen! There is no loo paper – thanks, cleaners. I write a stern email to the opera company saying that if they had told me there wouldn't be any toilet paper I would have "gone" before I came or I might even have brought a roll with me. The sheet on the bed doesn't cover the bed and the duvet is an apology for a cover. The towels are rough and inadequate. Do I really have to specify in my contract that loo paper should be included and the sheet on the bed should be big enough? Not a good start. Now they have a grumpy LD. I find a nearby supermarket and get stocked up with provisions. I need a drink and I'm surprised that there is a very small

stock of wine on the shelves; as I get closer horror strikes deep into the alcoholic addiction that I developed while in Italy as I read the words "*Alcohol frei*". It transpires that Swedish supermarkets can only sell booze that's under 2.5% alcohol so I buy some "cooking" lager. I pass the "offie", noting that it is closed from 3pm on a Saturday until Monday.

The next day I'm up early as I have a progress meeting with Jan Ronström, the lighting supervisor. By 10am I'm on the opera house minibus to the very expansive workshops and rehearsal rooms, which are about 15 minutes away from the centre. I'm greeted warmly by Keith Warner, the opera director, and I jump straight in and start notating the blocking in rehearsals. The Royal Swedish Opera house is not dissimilar to the ROH in London: it supports an opera company and a ballet company and everything plays in rep. As I examine the schedule more closely it becomes apparent that we have been stitched up. There is very little time to light Ashley's epically big and challenging design. There is a large white, sloping ceiling with a big elliptical hole through which I may get some light. Mélisande will fly in at the beginning and fly out at the end through the ceiling. There is a large walkway forming an X over the entire space and under

this individual sets will roll in from the sides, from the back and up through the stage floor, which has a series of elevators, all of which we shall use. This production is going to take some rehearsing, and we don't have much time to do that.

What we do have is an extremely large lighting rig that has something for everyone, even if, in my case, most of it is obscured by the set. It transpires that a team of LDs – including our own Rick Fisher – were consulted a few years ago to create this rig. I have to say I think the team concerned did a very good job. Those of you who work in repertoire in opera and ballet houses will know how carefully you have to think when upgrading a rig as it still has to service pieces that were created decades ago. The *Swan Lake* in Stockholm is still going strong and that was created in 1967. I know the *Sleeping Beauty* I lit at the ROH is scheduled to be in the rep in London for 25 years. So rigs have to be past *and* future-proofed. In this case, I'm just grateful when a light can find its way through the hole, around the catwalks and onto the area I'm trying to illuminate. I welcome the help given by Jan as we focus lights and find the best ways of using the permanent rig. The very skilled programmers include Helena and Otto. Helena comes from the lighting box to say hello



*Pelleas et Mélisande*  
Royal Swedish Opera  
Directed by Keith Warner  
Designed by Ashley Martin-Davis  
Lighting by Mark Jonathan  
Photo by Micke Sandström

and ask me if I know what tracking is. I chuckle and with confidence say, "Oh yes, I do. Do you know what an intensity block is?" I ask in return. Despite assurances that they do it transpires that GrandMA doesn't have this very convenient button. I email a friend and the advice I receive, to write your own macro, is the same that the opera house programmers decide on. Am I really the only LD who uses intensity block?

*April/May 2016*

Why doesn't GrandMA have this feature? At least, at this house, Helena and her colleagues are very attentive and knowledgeable in their management and programming, which seems to be a rarity on this system.

Part of me likes working in rep as I get to relax while they play another opera or ballet and part of me groans as the working lights go on promptly at the end of the rehearsal

as the crew need to start the changeover. On one day, after rehearsal, I resort to the very expedient visualisation room where the programmers deftly programme a moving effect to the video that I had fortuitously recorded in the stage rehearsal. The King Arkel drags a 40ft BP curtain across the stage and his grandson will create shadows in the resulting light. This facility does allow us to create some effects that we just wouldn't get done out on stage, but I'm competing for time with the *Swedish Chef of the Year* awards which are being programmed in there, along with the transfer of *Alice through the Looking Glass*,

the Christopher Weeldon ballet that premiered at the ROH in London. Sweden is making a copy, which they will share with Copenhagen. In fact, one day when I'm lighting like a demon at the production desk in the theatre, Jon Driscoll and Gemma Carrington are in the visualisation suite looking at *Alice*.

On a day off I visit the Vasa; this is a beautiful battleship that sank on its maiden voyage

# MARKO'S MUSINGS

## Mark Jonathan

1km out of the harbour in 1628. More than 300 people were on board and thirty lost their lives when a gust of wind blew the ship over and it took on water through its gun ports. While the bronze cannons were salvaged by 17th century divers and sold to Britain the ship lay underwater for over 333 years when it was brought up from the depths of the harbour and a museum was built around it. It's spectacular.

On a Sunday, I attend *Parsifal* and I can relax as I'm not responsible for anything. The hours fly by as I enjoy Wagner's music and Olaf Winter's lighting. I admire the opera house and how beautiful it is, enhanced by the highlighting of the architectural features, lit by Helena, the head programmer. Tickets to the opera seem to be the one thing that is cheaper than London. Clearly subsidy in Sweden has to be better than the UK but then we have so many more deserving producing theatres than most countries have.

The days fly by and we have now had the final dress rehearsal and we get another couple of days off. I watch some of Mats Eks' *Juliet and Romeo*. It's stunning, with enormous walls that belt around the stage apparently pushed by dancers. Strong visual images are created to a score that Eks garners from a collage of Tchaikovsky.

On my penultimate day in Stockholm I'm extremely excited that our producer, Tove, has arranged a private view of the baroque theatre at the Palace of Drottningholm. The first theatre on the site burnt down in 1762 during

a performance so the queen decided to have a new theatre built, which opened in 1766. The queen later gave the theatre to her son King Gustav III. He loved theatre and putting on shows but when he was assassinated in





# MARKO'S MUSINGS

Mark Jonathan



Photo by Julie Craig

1792 the theatre closed. It was then used as a furniture store until it was “re-discovered” in 1921. It had remained untouched for 130 years. The original scenery exists and has been copied so that the copies are now used in performances while the original flats are kept in a special store. All the stage machinery is

still intact and the most amazing changes can be done from under the stage where all the wing flats are connected to a central capstan; one set of portals will track off in perfect synchronisation while the next set tracks on. There is a similar arrangement for the borders. There are trapdoors and flying machines for gods to descend on. Imagine how lucky I was to be given a private tour by the technical director, Peter Astor Ögren, who took us to all the nooks and crannies, high and low, in the theatre.

It was completely amazing.

I'm hoping tonight's opening night, which relies upon very choreographed scene changes, can be as smooth as they were in the 18th century. It's one of those times when I feel we need one or two more rehearsals. I reach for the stomach-settling pills and wait. 🍷

## SGM REPORT

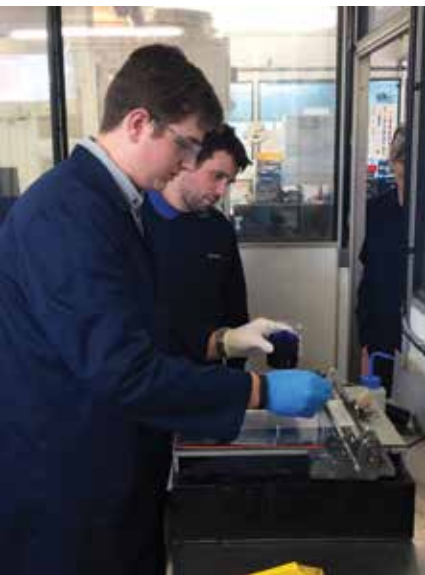
The ALD special general meeting was held on 20 February 2016, kindly hosted by Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

The reasons for the meeting were to approve the conversion of the ALD into a company limited by guarantee (becoming ALD Ltd) and to elect directors of the new company. As much discussed over the last three years, the advantages of incorporation considerably outweigh the disadvantages for members in terms of managing risk and liability, good financial management, employing people and extending business reach – particularly with things like the Lumière scheme. Mark White has been instrumental in composing the Association's memorandum and articles of association (both legal requirements for limited companies), and we started the meeting with Mark talking through all of the points in each document so that we all understood what we were voting for. The memorandum and articles were unanimously adopted and the date of incorporation was agreed as 1 April 2016.

The next order of business was to elect the eleven directors of the new board of the Association of Lighting Designers Ltd. These were Rick Fisher, Alistair Grant, Mark Jonathan, Richard Lambert, Nick Moran, Peter Mumford, Stuart Porter, Declan Randall, Johanna Town, Mark White and Kelli Zezulka, all of whom were elected unanimously. 🍷

# MEETINGS PREVIEW

## Full reports in the next issue of *Focus*



*Above and right: Student ALD members visit Lee Filters in Andover, Hampshire with lighting designer Lucy Carter*



*All photos by Ian Saunders*

*April/May 2016*



*Right and bottom right: ALD members at the newly renovated Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts in Sussex, hosted by Paul Davies*



# PROFESSIONAL MATTERS

## Rick Fisher and Johanna Town on fighting for fees



**D**ear colleagues and our representatives,  
***Buy one get one free lighting designs?***

I am writing to alert you to a situation that I am finding more common. The major companies are trying to save money by reducing our fees. This is nothing new but it is sneaking in via the route of co-productions or multi-productions.

I have just pulled out of a major piece of work after the fee for a ballet co-production for the 2016/2017 seasons. I was offered a smaller fee, which was less than they had paid for a similar co-production in the 2013/14 season. (I learned this through sharing information

with another ALD member.) When we brought this to their attention, the administrator tried to justify the reduction (though, interestingly, was not willing to put her reasons in writing), citing hard times, reduced grants and increased costs even though this company has deservedly received a 5% increase in Arts Council funding this year. To add to the multi-buy savings package, the co-producer in the US felt they could only offer a 50% fee claiming that the point of a co-production was to get more than they would afford otherwise and the design would not be new for their stage. I found this so dispiriting that I have just withdrawn from the whole project.

I am also reminded of another offer I refused from one of our great regional opera companies which has started doing “trilogies”. In this case the administration was forthright in saying that the only way the company could afford to do this three shows for more or less the price of one was by using the same creative team and basic set/costumes/lighting for all three productions – “and it really does work a treat...if everyone gets on board from the outset!” But in the case of the trilogy I was offered there were three directors and the set had substantial alterations proposed for each

opera and still the lighting fee offered was equivalent for one opera!

I really doubt the singers, dancers, orchestras and technical crew get less for their time and creativity if they have done the show before or to help the producers do another show to increase their repertory. Why are designers being asked to create more and work for less?

Co-productions are with us to stay and are often necessary for large-scale work, but they should not be subsidised even more by penny pinching on designer fees. Especially when, in the case of lighting, the work has to be recreated in a new way to fit different stages and rep plots.

Agents and designers have to stand firm on this or we will not see any improvement in the initial budgeting of these projects. 🚫

### ***In other news...***

***ETC CEO Fred Foster gives one-third of the company's stock to his employees:***  
<http://bit.ly/1RlyqZv>.

***More in the next issue of Focus.***

If you'd like to contribute to the ALD's fees database, the survey can be found at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/aldfeesdata](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/aldfeesdata)



Following on from Rick's letter, it is clear we are facing hard times indeed. The recession has been long and theatres are trying to cut corners on freelancers wherever possible. I totally understand the reasons behind revivals and co-productions but we are often the creative that does actually have to start from scratch and attend for the full re-production of a show.

This week I had a similar incident: I was offered a show and when the deal came through we questioned why it was so low. "Well, the run for this show will only be two weeks so we can't pay our usual fee." My response was: Am I only going to give you half a design? Are you doing fewer rehearsals?

Shall I attend half the production week? No, my agent made our points clear and won, but we do have a battle on our hands to make sure fees do not slowly erode.

With no strong union to represent us and working as standalone practitioners we have little voice and this is why it is so important for us to keep talking to each other and to keep sharing information.

The ALD may not be a union and therefore has no power over producers but we can let them know what our members think and feel, and we often put pressure on producers this way.

We can help ourselves by keeping information flowing between us all. The office keeps good records of many of the current fees, but remember the information we hold is only as good as the information you share so please help us keep these records up to date by filling in the fees survey documents found on the website. This information is totally confidential and you will not be named. As a professional member you also have access to this database, so do contact the office if you need clarification on a fee.

There is also Liteline, an email address you can use to ask advice on money or contracts. As I say we are not a union and have no authority over a situation, but the ALD office

and Exec will try to help and advise. We can write a letter on your behalf and I hope be generally supporting. The situations you face and share with us also allow the ALD to have a better understanding of the issues we are all facing and what our next battle needs to be. So thank you, Rick, for sharing your experiences with us all. It's so important to share what's happening. Don't forget, you can now use the new ALD forum as well ([www.ald.org.uk/forum](http://www.ald.org.uk/forum)).

This month I would like to encourage you to keep talking and keep sharing – that way we can become stronger. 🍀

### ***Contract concern? Fees frustration? Payment problems?***

***The ALD provides advice to members either on or off the record as required in answer to queries about companies, contracts, fees, disputes, etc.***

***Contact [liteline@ald.org.uk](mailto:liteline@ald.org.uk).***



# OFFICE ORACLE

## News and information from **Ian** and the ALD office

### ALD Special General Meeting

Many thanks to all those members who either attended or sent us a proxy vote for the Special General Meeting that took place on Saturday 20 February 2016.

A more complete write-up of events can be found on page 10 but the result of the voting was an uncontested decision to proceed with incorporating the Association of Lighting Designers into a company limited by guarantee.

Each member should have received the Memorandum and Articles of Association prior to the meeting, and these have been developed to enable the ALD to move into its next phase of development.

The legal part of the process is taking place at the time of writing, and therefore the 2016 subscriptions renewals process will be carried out in the same method as previously. Please note, however, that as part of setting up as a limited company, we will need to set up a new bank account and so ALL standing order instructions will need to be changed prior to April 2017 subscriptions becoming due.

We will decide upon a process as soon as we have the full banking details available.

### Subscription fees

2016/17 subscription charges for individual memberships were set according to your membership category on 1 March 2016.

Professional	£85
Affiliate	£50
Associate	£45
Student	£30
Retired	£30

Please note that due to the new corporate structure of the ALD as passed at the recent SGM (see above), we will have to set up a new bank account once the legal process is completed. For this reason, we are not currently accepting any new standing order instructions to our bank account.

As an alternative to the standing order instruction with your bank, you can now set up recurring subscription payments via PayPal so that your credit or debit card will automatically be charged the annual fee once a year. This can be set up on our website at [www.ald.org.uk/subscriptions](http://www.ald.org.uk/subscriptions). Please ensure you select the correct membership category

in the drop-down box. Its default setting is to Professional Membership as this is now the biggest membership category. There is also space to include your name and membership number so that we can reconcile the payment from our end once it is received.

### 2016 members' directory

Due to the change in the structure of the Association, it has been decided that the 2016 members' directory will not be produced until after we have confirmed the incorporation process is complete so that all the new information can be included in it.

We would therefore ask all members to check their details and if necessary update them on the new website, as soon as possible to ensure they are included. If you are having trouble accessing, updating or confirming your details, please contact [membership@ald.org.uk](mailto:membership@ald.org.uk) and we can update them on your behalf.

For those members using the range of electronic media, the online database now accepts Skype and Twitter handles to be listed alongside the standard phone, mobile, email and website contacts. We shall no longer be listing fax numbers as a result.

We've received a few enquiries from members about the worth of producing a printed catalogue every year in this electronic age. As the next one will not be printed until mid-2016, we do not expect another to be produced until 2018, and we are considering producing them in alternate years after this date.

We still have a percentage of members who are not using electronic communications or just like to have a printed copy on their shelf in the study to draw upon when they need it. We would be interested to hear your thoughts on the subject...

### **Members' monthly social evenings**

The monthly socials at the Coach and Horses are now back to their usual slots and location after an erratic start to 2016. The pub can be found on Wellington Street in central London, just 100 yards down from the front of the Royal Opera House and opposite the London Transport Museum.

The monthly socials provide a great opportunity to discuss ideas, catch up with colleagues and make new friends. You can meet and discuss ALD issues with some of the team who run the ALD and chat with fellow lighting designers and ALD members, in an

informal setting. Hopefully with some warmer weather on the way, the pavement will be busy with ALD members.

We also are very appreciative of the Corporate members who support these evenings, giving them the opportunity to meet and talk with members away from the working environment. The 29 April meeting will be the first "last Friday of the month at the Coach" event since November. We will be gathering from around 7.00pm, but if you are in town you are welcome to drop in any time for the few hours after that. To get things started the first round of drinks or so is kindly being sponsored by the lovely people at Stage Electrics.

The next London gathering is on Friday 27 May when the sponsors will be Ambersphere Solutions.

The only 2016 date we still have available to sponsor is 30 September, so if any of our other Corporate or Commercial members wish to discuss this date or any in 2017 (!! ) please contact your Executive Committee Representative, Declan Randall: [companies@ald.org.uk](mailto:companies@ald.org.uk).

### **ALD website**

We are now in the process of carrying out some stage two work on the website, which includes:

- re-working the online application process, which is not as smooth as it could be;
- the addition of non-lighting designer roles to be allocated to show credits so that associate LDs, assistant LDs, programmers, production electricians and projection designers can be acknowledged and build up their profile on the website search function;
- a reminder box of your membership number, next subscription due date and how much you currently owe (or have overpaid by) on the My ALD page after logging in;
- the ability to share members' pages, show credits and galleries via social media; and
- a number of back-end adjustments to the administration of the site to make its use easy.

Please bear with us while this work is incorporated into the existing site over the next few weeks, and if you have any problems accessing items or ideas on how to improve the website for members and the public alike, then please use the Forum to report them back to the web team.

# OFFICE ORACLE

Our overwhelming desire was to have a site that was at least the equivalent of the old one when we launched it, but with a more modern and flexible design. That was achieved, and now we are making some additions and changes that should open up the site for more members to use on a regular basis.

Our web developers could also offer individual members the ability to use the data on our site, but remove the links to other areas of the site, and so in effect, giving members the opportunity to have their own personal website meaning that you'd only need to update the information once. There would be an additional fee payable directly to the developers for this service, but if anyone is interested in this, please contact the ALD office.

## ALD email bulletins

With the new website now up and running, we are now working from the new database that is hosted from there. You should receive bulletins if you have opted in, but please check your settings on the website, as you can select whether to receive one, any or all of our email bulletin options. These can be found on the Contact details and preferences page which is accessible from the My ALD page after you have logged in to the site.

We are still using Mail Chimp to distribute the messages for us and we do receive occasional bounce notifications, so please check if your current contact details are correct. You should also check your spam filters and junk folders in case bulletins are redirected to there, and add [mailshots@ald.org.uk](mailto:mailshots@ald.org.uk) to your address book to ensure you are more likely to receive them.

## Meetings organisers required

The ALD's meetings team is still looking for a couple of new people who can help to generate ideas for, and also help organise and host, some of our various members' meetings across the year.

At least one should be based in the London area as this is where most events take place, and we do not always have anyone available to attend them to meet participants and ensure that everything goes smoothly on the day.

If you are interested, please contact Will Evans: [meetings@ald.org.uk](mailto:meetings@ald.org.uk).

## WhatsOnStage Theatre Awards

The winner of the 2016 Best Lighting Designer Award, sponsored by White Light, was Jane Cox for her work on *Hamlet* at the Barbican.

Other nominees in the category (ALD members in bold):

**Howard Hudson** – *In The Heights*

Tim Deiling – *American Idiot*

Kenneth Posner – *Kinky Boots*

**Mark Henderson** – *Gypsy*

Each year, the awards shortlists – covering the best of London theatre (and a bit beyond) – are drawn up with the help of thousands of theatregoers who log on to nominate their favourites across all 20+ awards categories.

A full list of all winners and nominees in all categories can be found at <http://bit.ly/1T1gk10>.

## The Off West End Awards

ALD member **Christopher Nairne** won the 2016 Best Lighting Designer Award for *Teddy* at Southwark Playhouse at the Offies.

The award is sponsored by White Light, and ALD members **Paule Constable** and **David Howe** are the category's Patron Saints who "keep an eye on nominations throughout the year and swoop in to take the winner under their wing for the following year".

The Offies help to raise the profile and status of independent theatres in London and celebrate the excellence, innovation and ingenuity and also to reward the new talent that they nurture and that is essential to the future of our theatre industry.

Other finalists for the award were (ALD members in bold):

**James Whiteside** – *The Royale* at the Bush Theatre

Sally Ferguson – *And Then Came The Nightjars* at Theatre503

A full list of all those nominated can be seen at <http://bit.ly/1RlwksF>.

### 2016 Olivier Award nominations

Now in its 40th year the Olivier Awards ceremony is the most glittering date in the theatrical calendar, attended by many of the West End's most respected and loved stars, powerhouse producers, screen and music idols, and London's most influential movers and shakers.

Once again, ALD members are nominated for the White Light Award for Best Lighting Design:

**James Farncombe** – *People, Places and Things* at National Theatre, Dorfman

**Mark Henderson** – *Gypsy* at Savoy Theatre

**Natasha Chivers** – *Oresteia* at Almeida Theatre

**Neil Austin** – *The Winter's Tale* at Garrick Theatre

The Olivier Awards take place on Sunday 3 April, as the illustrious event once again returns to the stunning surroundings of Covent

*April/May 2016*

Garden's iconic Royal Opera House for an incredible evening of celebration, award-giving and unbelievable live performances.

### Overseas recognition

In addition to all those UK-centric awards, ALD Executive Member **Declan Randall** has been nominated for the Best Lighting Design award (and also Best Set Design and Best Projection Design!) in the Naledi Theatre Awards in South Africa for his work on *Sister Act* for Joburg Theatre. A full list of the nominees in all categories as well as some background about the awards can be found on its website: [www.naleditheatreawards.org.za/](http://www.naleditheatreawards.org.za/).

### ALD at PLASA Focus: Leeds

PLASA Focus takes place on 10 and 11 May at The Royal Armouries in Leeds. Our stand will again be close to the entrance and opposite the registration desk to the Royal Armouries Hall, where you will also find a number of the other associations. The bar is about ten feet away! Do come and say hello. We will also be able to take cash and cheque payments of your 2016/17 subscriptions if you do not pay by standing order. We hope to see you in Leeds at some point during the show.

### Encouraging Diversity in Design and Technical Theatre

ALD Seminar at PLASA Focus: Leeds  
Tuesday 10 May at 2.00pm in the Wellington Room, Royal Armouries Leeds

The PLASA Technician Survey in 2014 found that 93% of its members were male, with most considering lighting to be their specialism. A quick survey of the ALD membership suggests roughly the same gender split amongst its professional members. Although female representation in lighting has been increasing in recent years, ethnic diversity remains a problem. Anecdotal reports suggest very few BME candidates apply to training courses or entry-level theatre jobs, and technical theatre is all too often a white, middle-class preserve. What might be the underlying reasons for this, and what can be done to encourage more diversity in design and technical theatre – particularly in terms of gender, race and socioeconomic background? Panel members will be announced in the next couple of weeks.

For a complete list of all the seminars across the two days of the show please visit <http://leeds.plasafocus.com/seminars>.

# OFFICE ORACLE

## New benefit for members

Lights of Soho is London's leading light art gallery and members' club, operating as a cultural hub for Soho's creative community and the global home of creative neon and light art formats. Lights of Soho brings together established and next-generation artists, as well as a programme of film, fashion and music events for its members.

It aims to recapture the spirit of "old Soho" and offers members a chance to immerse themselves in the colourful heritage of Soho's past, bringing to life art from the heyday of Soho, as well as introducing new artists to the Soho art scene. The venue is open seven days a week, from 11am to midnight.

They are offering discounted membership of £100 per year to Professional and Affiliate Members as members of the performance lighting industry. You can apply for membership online at <http://lightsofsoho.com/membership/>. Add ALD as your proposer and state your ALD membership number in the "About You" section of the application form.

The ground floor has a bright and airy gallery feel about it with tables and workstations available for picking up emails or reading scripts ahead of meetings while enjoying a coffee. The



*Lights of Soho's Valentine's-themed, love-induced show entitled LOVE HZ (hertz), celebrating the seedy and passionate nature of Soho.*

basement space has a number of areas for small meetings to discuss projects or get down to some serious work away from the distractions of upstairs or your usual coffee shop stop.

During the day, the gallery is open to the public until 6pm, after which it is exclusive to its members during the evening. Interested Associate members are welcome to use the space during public hours.

In addition to this offer, we will be holding the presentation of the 2016 Lightmongers' Award at the venue on the evening of Thursday 19 May. More information about this will be sent out in our email bulletins when we have more details. We also hope to hold more events there in the future. #

# WEB TIPS

## More tips on using the ALD website from John Leventhall

### Follow the forums – post something today!

There is now a private, ALD members-only forum – your own space for professional discussion on the topics that affect, interest, delight and annoy your professional life.

There are always members who benefit from hearing about others' professional difficulties, great solutions, crappy times with a management or best times with a creative team. Networking between ALD members can help share knowledge, avoid pitfalls, be better practitioners and gain influence from that unity. The ALD Professional Members forum is only visible to logged-in Professional Members and there are even more private forums for other groups, e.g. Environment, Awards selection and Lumière Scheme, which are seen by only the participant members.

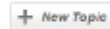
So DO join the forum – here's how to get talking:

- Log into the members' side of the website. You can find a reminder of how to do so here: [www.ald.org.uk/website-log-in-reminder](http://www.ald.org.uk/website-log-in-reminder).

- Click Forum on the main menu bar, and select the forum you wish to read/post to.
- Click the topic you want or start a new one.
- If you want to only see the new posts since you last logged in, click on the blue New & updated topics button at the top of the page:



- If you want to join in, scroll right down the page to add your comment – and attach files too!



- If you want be notified of new comments in a thread by email, go to My ALD > My forum subscriptions/notifications and investigate the settings. I "auto-subscribe" to new content so I can keep an ear on the buzz:

- You get lots of notification emails from that but you can subscribe to just a single topic page: go to the first post/comment in that topic and you'll find a grey Subscribe button – click that and you get notifications of activity on that topic or to the whole thread of discussion:

### Postscript on photo posting

Last issue I discussed uploading pictures. Members have occasionally experienced a photo rotated by 90° or 180°. The website cunningly detects picture orientation from Properties, embedded in the original file. Sorry everyone, if your Properties are wonky the only remedy is to "Photoshop" the original photo to the correct orientation, delete the wonky one from the website and upload the new one. 🚫



## Professional Members' shows opening in April and May

Listing taken from the "Diary" page of the ALD website. A full listing of all categories of members can be seen at [www.ald.org.uk/diary](http://www.ald.org.uk/diary). To be listed, you will need to enter show credits into your profile on the site. You will need to sign in to the Members' area to do so.

- 1 April 2016 Matt Ladkin** *The Ladyboys of Bangkok "Forever Yours"* The Sabai Pavilion Derby
- 5 April 2016 Johanna E Town** *King Lear* Royal Exchange Theatre  
**Andy Webb** *Prolight Robe Piazza* Messe Frankfurt
- 6 April 2016 Chris Withers** *Oliver!* The Wilde Theatre, South Hill Park Arts Centre  
**Charlie Morgan Jones** *Goosebumps Alive* The Vaults
- 7 April 2016 Elliot Griggs** *The Sugar-Coated Bullets of The Borgeoisie* Arcola Theatre  
**Peter Harrison** *In – Nocentes* Sadler's Wells  
**Mark Dymock** *The Lamellar Project*
- 8 April 2016 Jamie Platt** *Pattern Recognition* Platform Theatre, London
- 9 April 2016 Michael Grundner** *Into The Woods* Musiktheater Linz
- 12 April 2016 David A Hately** *Girls With Balls* Theatre by the Lake, Keswick
- 18 April 2016 James C McFetridge** *The History of the Peace... According to My Ma* Grand Opera House, Belfast  
**Johanna E Town** *My Mother Said* St James Theatre, London
- 21 April 2016 Charlie Morgan Jones** *James and the Giant Peach* Greenwich Theatre, then world tour
- 22 April 2016 Elliot Griggs** *The Box of Photographs* Polka Theatre
- 26 April 2016 Nic Farman** *The Toxic Avenger* Southwark Playhouse – Large
- 27 April 2016 James C McFetridge** *The Patriot Game* Lyric Theatre Belfast
- 28 April 2016 Malcolm Rippeth** *Pleasure* Howard Assembly Room
- 30 April 2016 Michael Grundner** *Don Camillo & Peppone* Theater Sankt Gallen  
**Malcolm Rippeth** *A Midsummer Night's Dream* Shakespeare's Globe
- 5 May 2016 Zoe J Spurr** *Handle With Care* Site Specific Storage facilities  
**Mark Jonathan** *The Mikado* Theatre Royal, Glasgow and touring
- 13 May 2016 Malcolm Rippeth** *In Parenthesis* Wales Millennium Centre, Royal Opera House
- 19 May 2016 Elliot Griggs** *The Night Watch* Royal Exchange Theatre
- 24 May 2016 Johanna E Town** *King Lear* Birmingham Repertory Theatre
- 27 May 2016 Malcolm Rippeth** *The Flying Lovers of Vitebsk* Bristol Old Vic
- 28 May 2016 Paul Lim** *The Magic Flute* ASB Theatre, Auckland

## Contact us

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

*Content deadline for the next issue: 15 May 2016*

# New members

**Welcome!**

## *Professional Member*

**Paul Fielder, London**

**Nick Havell, London**

**Liam Tully, Northumberland**

**Paul Walmsley, London**

## *Associate Member*

**Martin Moore, Emsworth\***

## *Student Member*

**Ben Glover, London**

**Sam Malcolm, Hampshire**

**Laura Mason, Aberdeenshire**

**Sandy McAlister, Derby**

\* Re-joining the association

# Diary dates 2016

- 11 April** Members' meeting at *Goosebumps Alive!*  
Waterloo Vaults, 5.00pm
- 29 April** Monthly members' social evening†  
Sponsored by Stage Electrics 
- 10–11 May** PLASA Focus: Leeds\*
- 10 May** ALD Seminar, PLASA Leeds  
Wellington Room, Royal Armouries, 2.00pm
- 10 May** Members' social evening, Leeds (location TBC)  
Sponsored by Hawthorn 
- 27 May** Monthly members' social evening†  
Sponsored by Ambersphere Solutions 
- 22–23 June** ABTT Theatre Show, London\*
- 24 June** Monthly members' social evening†  
Sponsored by Robert Juliat 
- 29 July** Monthly members' social evening†  
Sponsored by Lee Filters 
- 18–20 September** PLASA Show 2016, London\*
- 18 September** 2016 Knight of Illumination Awards, London

\* The ALD will have a presence at these events.

† The monthly members' social evening is at The Coach & Horses, 42 Wellington St, London WC2E 7BD.

# PLASA FOCUS LEEDS

## 175 brands and expert advice

**P**LASA Focus Leeds returns to the Royal Armouries from 10 to 11 May with the launch of the new Pavilion, over 175 global brands and its popular seminar programme, offering a variety of expert advice from leading organisations in the live entertainment technology industry.

Demand has increased for technical solutions in the region, which boasts a growing theatre and live events scene, ensuring that PLASA Focus Leeds has become an industry-leading event, well known in the region and continuing to grow in importance and size. Launching for 2016, the new Pavilion will grow the show by an extra 24 stands, interlinking the Royal Armouries and New Dock Hall and providing further exhibitor opportunities. The extra space means that the show will now offer visitors the chance to see over 175 national and international brands demo the latest technology for use in live events, venue installations and theatre productions.

PLASA Focus Leeds also offers visitors the chance to hear expert advice including the ALD. The session moves away from practical matters and onto a topic that affects those in the industry: "Encouraging diversity in design and technical theatre". ALD Executive



Director Ian Saunders says: "As a membership organisation, the seminar programme at shows such as PLASA Focus Leeds is an important part of opening up discussion around particular topics that affect those working in our industry, whether that is concerned with current practice of lighting or video for live performance or issues that affect the future structure of who we are and what we do. Points raised feed back into how as an organisation we relate to both members and the public as we develop future schemes and initiatives."

Further industry advice comes from the media and entertainment union BECTU as it offers "Tax essentials for freelancers" from Tony Lennon. He will present top tips for freelancers, from understanding your employment status to the options for offsetting business expenses against income. Further sessions will be announced over the next coming weeks.

Find out more at  
[www.plasafocus.com/leeds](http://www.plasafocus.com/leeds). 📌

# plasa**focus**

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# A POSTCARD FROM...

**Jane Lalljee, Australia**

I have just spent nine fabulous days at Arts Centre Melbourne with a show called Boxy and Sticky with Theatr lolo from Cardiff. It's a pretty long way to go for such a short time, but we did ten shows to enraptured young audiences. I did the lighting design, but also production managed and stage managed the show. The arts centre was unable to get the desk I previously plotted the show on, so Theatr lolo let me buy an ETC Nomad dongle on a Macbook Pro. I replotted the show before I got out there and the whole thing fit into my hand luggage. I also bought an LX Keys keyboard which made plotting a lot easier. It is a great bit of kit and made my life very easy. All the staff at the arts centre are very friendly and helpful and really made our show a joy to get into the space. I also used some of their ETC Coloursource pars, which I have been wanting to get hold of for a while. They didn't disappoint and their colour mixing is great and dimmer curve pretty impressive for such a budget lantern. Now all I need to do is sweet talk Theatr lolo into buying some for me to try out in Wales! 🇨🇪



# ZIRCON FILTERS

## A new concept in LED filter design

Regular lighting filter can often quickly fade when used with LED lights – the Zircon range is different. With a lifespan of up to 200 times longer than standard filters and at more than double the thickness (180 microns), Zircon filters are not only slower to fade, they are durable and easy to use, too.

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# MUSIC AND LIGHT

## Critic Fiona Sturges shares her favourite concert lighting

The average gig-goer rarely gives a second thought to lighting – unless it's really bad or unusually good. In my youth, only a handful of rock acts knew how to provide the full visual experience, the standouts being Jean-Michel Jarre and Pink Floyd. Next to them, everyone else was just mucking around with light bulbs.

The prog bands of the Seventies – Yes, ELP, Genesis, et al – certainly knew a thing or two about melodrama. Their wardrobes may have creaked in their pomp but it was their light shows, combined with their music, that made a lasting impact.

These days many of the old-school lighting signposts endure: a blue-ish hue or single spotlight can denote a sober moment in an arena concert (or – heaven help us – the beginning of a ballad); for the mature act reliving past glories, floodlights, combined with heavy-duty pyrotechnics and/or the obligatory ticker tape, are a signal for a crowd to bathe in giddy nostalgia. Even in more intimate settings, the old rules can still apply. Where, after all, would folk music be without the ubiquitous standing lamp?



*Fiona Sturges has been writing about music and the arts for 18 years, and has contributed to The Independent, The Independent on Sunday, the 'i' paper, Uncut magazine, The Evening Standard, and theartsdesk.com. She lectures on Popular Music Journalism at Southampton Solent University.*

Even so, imagination and ingenuity are increasingly deployed and, certainly amongst the big hitters, more money spent. The economy of the industry has gone through major upheaval in recent years and now it's live shows, rather than album sales, that allow artists to make a living.

Happily, new technology has made it possible to turn a tour into a mobile spectacle capable of wowing new generations of gamers and tech nerds. Radiohead's *In Rainbows* tour of 2008 brought with it mesmerising audio-visual displays courtesy of their longstanding lighting and stage director Andi Watson. The show saw the band performing beneath a grid of suspended LED tube lights that turned different colours and produced 3D images. There were moments where it looked as if Thom Yorke and co. were trapped in a toxic green cage, or as if meteors were raining down on their heads.

Watson has been called the sixth member of Radiohead on account of his close involvement with every part of their stage show and the fact that the orchestration of the lighting is conducted from his very own booth. His work can take in stark minimalism or scary sci-fi, and has gone a long way in broadening the

*Radiohead's "In Rainbows" tour  
Lighting by Andi Watson  
Photo by Katie Friesema*





Taylor Swift's "1989" tour  
Lighting by Baz Halpin  
Photo courtesy of PixMob

possibilities of the arena rock show, moving it away from the fireworks-and-confetti bombast of yore and into the realms of installation art.

Indeed, in recent years chart-topping acts have begun to look to their lighting designers to give their shows an infusion of avant-garde style, in some cases compensating for the absence of experimentation in the music. Taylor Swift may have redefined the way pop stars do business, removing her back catalogue from Spotify and forcing Apple to dance to her tune, but she's a long way from being at pop's bleeding edge. The same applies to Coldplay, an unfeasibly popular band whose critics view them as a byword for middle-of-the-road indie-pop. Yet both Swift and Coldplay were early adopters of the LED wristband, a gizmo that allowed concertgoers to step out of the darkness and become a part

of the show. In 2012 Coldplay road-tested "xylobands" on their Mylo Xyloto tour, which lit up in different colours and pulsed in time with the music. The effect was nothing short of magical and, post-concert, provided fans with unusual souvenirs. For her 1989 tour, Taylor Swift pulled off the same trick courtesy of the design company PixMob, which used infrared transmitters to sync up the bracelets with the beats, the stage lighting and the movements of the wearer.

Among the more exciting advances of the last few years is a new 3D projection system called Epic 3.0, masterminded by the Bristol company Holo-Gauze. It has transformed shows by the Swedish producer and DJ Eric Prydz, creating giant holograms – startling three-dimensional objects apparently floating

in mid-air – which are given added va-va-voom by LED lights and lasers. Prydz's recent show in Madison Square Garden included a giant revolving helix, rain clouds and, most startling of all, a massive hologram of his head that bore down into the crowd that was perhaps intended as a hi-tech rebuttal to that oft-repeated criticism of "faceless DJs".

While smart lighting doesn't necessarily come cheap, it's no longer just the preserve of money-spinning arena acts. When the Heritage Orchestra, experts in the field of forward-thinking pop-classical fusion, and the long-serving conceptual artist and electronic musician Robin Rimbaud, aka Scanner, got together to pay tribute to Joy Division at the Brighton Festival, they went a little further than plodding slavishly through the band's landmark *Unknown Pleasures* album.

Instead the musicians positioned themselves inside a vast cube wrapped in translucent fabric and upon which moving images were projected courtesy of the video artist Matt Watkins. There were grimy tenement blocks, wide-angle and beautiful in black and white, and Peter Saville's white-on-black pulsar-inspired cover of "Unknown Pleasures", the latter coming to life and turning itself inside out. Near the finale, Joy Division singer Ian Curtis's scrawled handwritten lyrics to "Isolation" wrapped itself around the cube's four walls, complete with corrections, as if being written by an invisible hand. It was completely stunning.

For some artists, though, less can be more. In the late Eighties, The Pixies would often perform

# MUSIC AND LIGHT

## Fiona Sturges

lit from behind by a single blinding light so band members were rendered silhouettes. Orbital's torch-specs, along with their bogglingly brilliant lasers, became a hallmark of their shows in the Nineties that still continue today. Recently, Shearwater's Jonathan Meiburg has taken to the stage wearing gloves that shoot multi-coloured lasers, like some sort of psychedelic superhero.

Last year's Portishead set at Glastonbury had an image of David Cameron swathed in blue light and with evil red laser eyes. Sophisticated? Maybe not, but still pointed and effective. 2015's Glastonbury festival also brought a typically controversial performance from the rapper Kanye West in which he slunk about under a stark and scarily low-slung lighting rig that made the stage look like a scene from the movie *Independence Day*. Whatever you made of the music and the man, the drama and claustrophobia provided by the lights was undeniable.

For some performers, however, experimenting with light can mean rejecting it altogether. Last year the Canadian electronic musician Tim Hecker played in pitch-blackness,

which made for a unusual and unsettling and sometimes downright scary show. It was a powerful experience, though, if I'm honest, it's not one I'd care to repeat. #

*Heritage Orchestra and Scanner  
Brighton Festival*



# BY DESIGN DAY: 23 APRIL

## Rick Fisher explains

This is a special day for everyone to give back to our community – to make sure our colleagues and those who bring our designs to life are cared for when tragedy strikes. Behind the Scenes charity provides financial support to design and technology professionals when they are seriously ill or injured. Grants are provided which can be used for basic living, medical or funeral expenses. Behind the Scenes has issued over half a million dollars in grants in North America and is now issuing grants in the UK.

To those of you who have generously supported Light Relief in the past, do know that the lighting community will still be just as well supported with this new charity, and now so many more people will be able to be helped!

Do please note that the charity will benefit even more if you fill in the Gift Aid form that is on the website linked below. We will need new Gift Aid forms even if you have done one for Light Relief in the past.

Also, and just as important, if you hear of anyone who might be in need of some support please do get in touch with us via the website: [www.behindthescenescharity.org/bts\\_uk/give\\_uk\\_bydesignday.htm](http://www.behindthescenescharity.org/bts_uk/give_uk_bydesignday.htm). #



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# THE COLOUR EFFECT

## Adam Murdoch on the importance and use of colour

Colour is arguably the most important aspect to design. Colour is what makes us feel something; it gives us a pre-disposed idea on what something is going to be like, or what we want it to be like. It gives us context and makes our brains “read” the environment we are in. When approaching a design, the first thing I think about is colour, as to me it can make a

design look good or bad, and it can fully involve the audience within the “world” of the piece too. When I took on the job of designing Orphans I knew I wanted to encapsulate the audience within our studio-sized venue – I wanted to bring them into the “picture” rather than to push them away and take an outside view on the piece. The spill of lighting from the fixtures

also helped this by not having a clearly defined edge of the acting area, making the audience feel part of the brothers’ lives.

We took a fairly naturalistic view of Lyle Kessler’s text, re-creating with light what I imagined the “old dilapidated row house” to feel like inside, dingy and used, yet with openings to the outside world represented with cold backlight through the windows and on fixtures overhead. The play is about two brothers, both orphans: one who isn’t allowed to leave the house due to being “allergic” to fresh air (Phillip) and his older brother (Treat) who looks after and cares for him by being a petty criminal, pick-pocketing from the rich to feed themselves.

The set had a mixture of pigments within it, which responded well to the L162 I used for direct front light, giving the sofa a really muddy colour. The colour temperature of the lamps enabled me to get a much lower colour temperature when using this gel too which worked really well. The audience configuration was in a thrust two-sided layout; I had to bear in mind audience members wouldn’t just watch from the front but also from the side, meaning I had to ensure the lighting looked three-dimensional from any angle, so positioning my fixtures was crucial. I only had two 3m straight



*Adam is a recent graduate from LIPA and won the 2015 Michael Northen Bursary. He is currently working on a UK tour and his next project is SHOUT! at the Liverpool Royal Court Theatre.*





lighting positions available overhead, and I had to ensure I used angles to their full potential and fixtures rigged on the bar above the windows matched in colour output to the fixture placed behind them. I used L501 in my backlight pars and in the window profile. Following an anti-clockwise direction, the next pair of fixtures had my most favourite gel, Roscolux 302, to wash the stage in a slightly subtler warm colour from the side, creating an accent with L162 in the centre front fixtures. This worked really well to create depth with a low trim height and from different audience seating.

Further within the piece, they meet Harold, a rich banker (who Treat kidnapped); Harold ends up changing the brothers' lives. He gives them both confidence, a real job and constantly buys them both gifts and surprises – he acts as a father figure, something Treat has never had before. This

change happens over the course of the interval; the set is “refurbished” and so are their costumes. I used the LEDs I had in my rig to mix with the tungsten sources to create a blend of textures, highlighting aspects of the set and costumes, giving more vibrancy to the whole of the scene – using colour to reflect wealth into their lives.

As well as naturalism, we had moments of surrealism during scene changes and once within the play itself. I used colour directly to reflect this: using the windows that were part of the set, the LEDs were set to a harsh blue and a special used to bring us out of reality. The moment during the play when we drift into surrealism is on the “Broad Street bus”, and for this I used an LED fixture cleverly hidden into a chair on the front row to give the effect of a totally different world – I also used this to replicate a television set. I wanted the “image” to

be totally different from reality, so I used a pale jade green colour to represent this and used backlight to highlight Treat's distress upstage. With such a small rig I used colour to maximise my rig to its fullest potential and to create a variety of scenes. 🍀

More photos of this production can be found on Adam's website: [www.adammurdoch.co.uk](http://www.adammurdoch.co.uk).

*All images:  
Orphans  
Play with Fire Productions  
Hope Mill Theatre, Manchester  
Directed by Alyx Tole  
Designed by Irene Jade  
Lighting by Adam Murdoch  
Photos by George Hill*

# CREATING PINK MIST

## More about colour from Peter Harrison

Last year I was lucky enough to be asked to light *Pink Mist* for Bristol Old Vic. Having just re-lit the show for its second run at Bristol via a trip to the Bush, I thought I'd tell you about it.

*Pink Mist* is best described as a modern war poem, written by Owen Sheers. Originally commissioned by Radio 4, it is a powerful verse drama about three young lads who leave Bristol to go to Afghanistan.

The piece was to be presented in a physical style, with gesture and movement creating recurring images to aid the storytelling. I was given liberty to create something abstract, but we also wanted to keep the lighting in a firm reality so as not to take away from the real interviewees whose experiences made up the text. The directors' views were that we must "see" every word and not hide anything, and references in the text to colour were also extremely key – "white heat", "code red", "blue on blue", and of course "the pink mist".

Pink mist is the rather disturbing image of all that is left of a person after a direct hit of an IED or mortar for example, where a person is essentially vaporised and all that is left is a fine spray of pink. Something quite gruesome, and not something I would have immediately picked up on for a lighting moment, but the challenge was set.

The end of the set design journey concluded with a 5x5m square white floor built out over the auditorium of the Old Vic (representing the "here", or present-day Bristol), with a BP cyc mirroring the dimensions of that hanging just upstage of the iron (representing "there", or history and Afghanistan). Performing off the front of the usual stage obviously provided more limitations, but the front of house lighting positions were favourable. The set also provided a completely blank canvas to work on. An exciting opportunity? Well, yes, once you have found your starting point.

The usual script work ensued and research into images of Camp Bastion and desert sunshine, looking for something real that I could pin a concept on. I need to find some grounding or something literal as my starting point to believe in the lighting I'm creating, even if the final result was far abstracted from that reality, and it was proving elusive. It was on one of the eight-hour round trips to rehearsals though that I found this photograph (right) via Google.

*Peter has been making pictures with lights professionally for around 17 years. He also runs [Set-Exchange.co.uk](http://Set-Exchange.co.uk), a Freecycle-style website for theatre, helping to promote sustainability and sharing of resources within the industry.*



I had been playing with the idea of clouds in my head for a while as a way to create some depth and texture on the cyc, using linear gobos to suggest a big wide expanse of a grey Bristol sky. The idea then developed towards sunsets as a way to find the colour that we were seeking, and this image clinched it. It suggested the drama of battle and fire, it provided a grounding in reality of something beautiful to juxtapose the horror of war, and it created an epic sky to match the power of the text. Even





more usefully, it was a visual reference for the directors to give them some sense of what I hoped we might be able to achieve. Although we were never going to use a sunset it was the starting point that I needed to create the show.

And so to the practicalities. The overall concept became to present Bristol as a neutral space, using plenty of Lee 603 and 708 to provide a very clean (but not too cold) light. Changes in intensity and focus moved these scenes from place to place and heightened the mood as required. The Afghan sequences were then filled with bold saturated colours from 5k fresnels as single sources, giving an overly heightened quality to the scenes and the vivid memories of the characters. The colour palette of the reference image tied it all together with

Lee 550 (ALD Gold), providing a very effective hot Afghan sun, and Lee 512, an intense orange for the more abstract movement sequences. The kit was entirely generic and tungsten, meaning transitions between the world of Bristol and Afghanistan melted beautifully into each other, and the rig was completely silent to give the text the reverence it deserved.

Jon Nicholls provided a fantastic soundscape and score of gun shots, explosions, Bristol dub step and many other descriptive sounds to react to. It almost became like lighting an opera with a musical score providing the cue points, and we worked together using MIDI to punctuate key moments with snap lighting changes and explosions.

And so to the “pink mist”. This moment in the script was a nighttime friendly fire (or blue on blue) incident. The script describes how an Apache helicopter descends, firing off everything it's got with a soundtrack of explosions to suit. Conscious not to turn the moment into a disco, I chose to run against the sound here. I created a single slow motion explosion based on the sunset reference. With the first bang it began with two fresnels overlaid on the bottom centre of the cyc, one spotted right down in Rosco 15, the other focused slightly larger in Rosco 21. From this, a sequence of cloud gobos slowly grew and decayed, mixing colours and textures as they faded, starting with a mushroom cloud above the fresnels and expanding out from that.

# PINK MIST

**Peter Harrison**

I do enjoy working with saturated colours, having a clean bold statement of the yellow sun for example, but mixing these colours can be immensely satisfying too. Here, as the orange of the fire and battle reduced and the blue of the night heightened, so the orange flames changed colour. The last lingering image before the interval blackout was a suspended pink in the night sky, a recurring image through the show as clouds, but now abstracting itself as pink mist.

It might be a bit old school and a bit low tech, but it worked beautifully! 🍷

*All images in this article:*

*Pink Mist*

*Bristol Old Vic Theatre*

*Directed by John Retallack and George Mann*

*Designed by Emma Cains*

*Lighting by Peter Harrison*

*Photos by Mark Douet*



# EQUITY UPDATE

## Richard Lambert with the latest news

The Equity Directors and Designers Committee has made a decision that the elected chair, Fran Rifkin, shall be chair for the first year of the committee term and then Lisa Blair should be chair for the second year of the committee.

The Directors and Designers Committee has been in discussions with SOLT and SDUK to determine the re-introduction of clauses for assistant directors within contracts.

Equity has now opened an online branch. Meet fellow members online, have discussions about the issues that matter to you and debate motions about what Equity should be doing.

The online branch has been in development for some years and is, as far as Equity knows, the first fully online trade union branch anywhere in the world.

There is a chat room for general discussions. At any time a member of the branch can propose a motion, which will be debated by the same rules as for a geographical branch, and motions carried will have the same power as for any other branch.

The online branch is live 24 hours a day 52 weeks of the year and may be particularly useful for members who cannot attend their geographical branch meetings.

All you have to do to join is log in to the members' area of the Equity website

([www.equity.org.uk/members-area](http://www.equity.org.uk/members-area)) and click the banner at the foot of the page.

The February meeting of the Equity Council received a full report on the campaign by members in the ENO chorus against management proposals to cut four jobs and reduce their basic rate of pay by 25%. Changes in other benefits could result in cuts in earnings being as high as 40%.

Equity members at ENO voted unanimously to take industrial action to defend their conditions and the future of the ENO chorus.

The ENO has been troubled for some time. While it continues to receive high praise for its artistic output, its management has been criticised by both the press and Arts Council England. Members of the chorus have now voted to take industrial action.

### **Launch of the FEU alternative white paper on the future of the BBC**

As part of Equity's ongoing work on the BBC Love it or Lose it campaign, the Federation of Entertainment Unions, which includes Equity, launched its alternative white paper on the future of the BBC on 15 March at 3pm in Committee Room 10 in the Houses of Parliament. The launch provided Equity



members with an opportunity to put forward their views about the future of the BBC to parliamentarians.

There is an Equity Directors and Designers Committee page on Facebook, which is the place to see the latest campaigns run by Equity for our sector within the industry:

[www.facebook.com/Equity-Directors-and-Designers-Committee-704190652934991](https://www.facebook.com/Equity-Directors-and-Designers-Committee-704190652934991). 🌟

### ***Technical/design reviewers needed!***

***Richard is still looking for reviewers for his new website, [theatrereviews.design](#), particularly from outside London. Get in touch via the website.***

# NEW TECHNOLOGY SHOWCASE

## Highlights by **Nick Moran**

**L**ED as a light source is here to stay, and the best of the products on show at this year's New Tech Showcase were raising appreciative eyebrows among the audience, which included quite a few award-winning LDs, leading production electricians and chiefs.

The idea of the showcase is that it's an opportunity for the ALD's professional members to see new kit side by side with other new kit, and with the old kit too. Tungsten sat beside LED, and both were used to try to make my pale Celtic skin tone look a bit more lifelike, and then faded out – from 20% to zero in 30 seconds – many times.

No doubt the second-year lighting students on the Grand MA (kindly supplied and supported by one of the day's main supporters, Ambersphere) dropped a few beads of sweat as they responded to the demands of the likes of Neil Austin and Rick Fisher. They all got their reward though when Richard Pilbrow joined them later for the other event of the day – the seventh annual ALD pub quiz!

This year's pub quiz questions were set by Nick Peel, who lectures at Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and Bryan Raven, managing director of main sponsors White Light. I'm delighted to report that the winning team was led by our president Richard Pilbrow (with

help from ALD quiz veteran Nick Richings). The winners and runners up received some impressive and intricate "gobo-based" mementos from GoboPlus.

A table collection raised £230 for the Backstage Alliance charity, whose aim is to help those in our industry who have fallen on hard times.

I'd like to congratulate all the second-year lighting students who helped to host the Showcase, even if most of them didn't do that well in the quiz! All their hard work made possible two successful events, for White Light, for Royal Central, and most of all for the ALD. 🍀



Photo by Zak Macro

Quiz winners: Sana Yamaguchi, Zoe Burnham, Johanne Jensen and Ben Jacobs, with Richard Pilbrow and Nick Richings  
Inset: The prize!



# THE ALD LUMIÈRE SCHEME

## Our second pilot scheme will start this year

In conjunction with Chichester Festival Theatre (CFT), the ALD is running a second Lumière scheme pilot. This six-month placement involves three months based at CFT where you will work as part of the lighting department with special responsibility for acting as a conduit between the visiting lighting designers and the department for shows in both the main house and the smaller Minerva Theatre. This will then be followed by three months working with at least one established lighting designer as their assistant on whichever shows they are undertaking at the time.

At CFT, the participant will assist the lighting designers coming into the theatre during their placement. They will be under the management of Sam Garner-Gibbons, head of lighting. This will also involve some work as part of the lighting department, learning about the systems, operations and policies of such an organisation. They will attend all meetings of the relevant shows and attend all events the lighting designer attends and act as their assistant. They will undertake the lighting-related drawing management, keeping drawings up to date and relevant, including show archiving and photographing, and collating focus plots, show plots and followspot bibles (where appropriate). They will assist with

decision-making relevant to the production in the absence of the lighting designer. They will attend meetings and work on other productions and other building meetings to gain a relevant experience of working within a theatre organisation.

The participant will then continue their development by assisting lighting designers at other venues, establishing what skills are

***"Working on the scheme has given me the opportunity to work with a variety of designers, programmers and lighting teams in a variety of theatres. It has been an opportunity I will always be thankful for and will never forget."***  
— Charlotte Burton

required and strengthening these skills. They will receive tutoring from the lighting designer in line with the guidelines set out by the ALD. The participant will spend all their time working alongside the lighting designer in each theatre they attend.

We are looking for applicants with sufficient paid experience EITHER as a freelance lighting designer/assistant OR as a lighting operator/engineer in the field of live performance; a strong commitment to developing a career as a lighting designer as demonstrated by work experience, previous design work and/or

training; experience of designing lighting for at least one show (which can include projects undertaken whilst in training or unpaid work; candidates should be prepared to give details of any previous design work in application and if invited to interview); and an interest in building new collaborative relationships with creative peers. Experience of using CAD software and knowledge of the UK theatre industry would be desirable.

Dates (application deadlines and placement dates) are still being confirmed, though the placement is likely to be June to December. These will be announced via email bulletin and on the ALD website when they are available. Please ensure your contact details are up to date and you have registered on the new website to avoid missing out. You must be available for the dates of the placement, as any delay or withdrawal will place the pilot scheme in doubt. It is your responsibility to ensure that any work commitments are satisfactorily dealt with and do not impede your participation in the scheme.

You can read more about what the scheme entails in the August/September 2015 and February/March 2016 issues of *Focus* in articles written by Charlotte Burton, the ALD's first Lumière scheme participant. 🌸

# MY SON'S HUSBAND

Adapted, directed and lit by **Raffaele Cericola**

I have recently opened *My Son's Husband* at Theatro Technis in London. The story is about two gay men, George and Michael, who are planning to get married in Madrid. But before they do, they have one thing they both need to do: come out to their parents. But they, too, have more than just skeletons in their closets. According to a review, "George and Michael are fairly straightforward and well observed characters that hold the entire show together through the turmoil of ironically sending up

stereotypical manifestations of homophobia. Moments in *My Son's Husband* also go deeper than you'd expect, with the usual positive message of gay relationships including some examination of the prejudices gay men can sometimes hold themselves. Elsewhere, what lifts *My Son's Husband* from usual farcical fare are unexpected turns and twist that keep you on your toes and take you by chortling surprise."

The whole play is set between the apartment the guys recently bought together and the

coffee shop around the corner where Michael's ex-girlfriend from college now works. The set is minimalist: a sofa, two chairs, and a couple of stools only, but it worked well. The set is so close to the audience that it really felt as if they were sitting in the characters' very apartment, going through all the events of the play with them.

We chose also to have two mannequins painted, inside the frame of the set, symbolising the need for open-mindedness, to think "outside the box" and not be prejudiced. Colour is light and light is colour, understood as the freedom to be – or as Gloria Gaynor sings at the start of the show: "I am what I am."

It was difficult to adapt a show written for Italian theatre to a UK fringe theatre, including the use of the space, which is wide and narrow, to tell the form of a movie, sitcom and theatre at the same time. We used only thirty lights, maximising their use to allow different types of scenes in this confined space. LED bars were used, as well as tungsten spotlights, to make everything very dynamic and realistic, all controlled by an ETC Nomad, which allowed us to have only one operator to run both lights and sound at the same time, by integrating it with QLAB. There were 140 cues, which might sound like a number you'd expect in a musical, but the metatheatrical theme of the show as well as





All photos in this article:  
*My Son's Husband*  
Directed and lighting by Raffaele Cericola  
Assistant lighting designer Jonas Praver  
Photos by Luigi Caruso

brightest point on stage, and it is surprising how a small increase in light aids to shift the focus to the desired area without the viewer being aware of it.

In film or on television the director uses the camera to select the parts of reality that he or she wants the public to see and can also decide the width: from an overview on the entire landscape to a detail of an actor's face. In the theatre the audience sees everything "in long

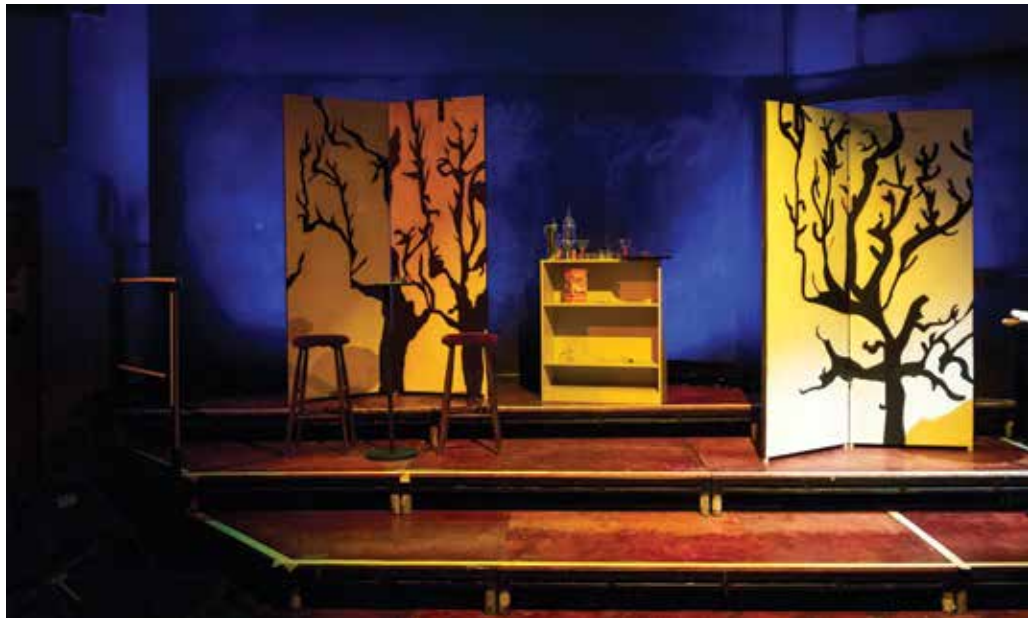
shot"; that is, it always has all the action area in view. In this show, the text, direction and lighting made the show not only theatrical but also cinematographic – and many reviews mentioned the similarity in style to film director Pedro Almodovar. 🍷

*Special thanks to ETC.*

its pace and comedy made it feel much like a musical. In a show like this where the audience felt involved in all scenes, how you can play the lighting to reflect this?

We used the lighting to balance the changes and guide the attention of the audience to areas or actors that were most important. One of the tasks of lighting is to guide the attention towards the stage area or the biggest player at any given time. The eye is always drawn to the

*April/May 2016*



# ALL THAT SHINES

## Peter Teigen's LED and tungsten experiments

This article takes a look at the current trend of replacing tungsten with LED in the theatre and takes a critical look at some of our reasoning for doing so.

The word "replacement" is open for interpretation. When LED replaces tungsten for practical reasons, such as heat, power consumption and accessibility, efforts are made to develop accurate LED replacement colours and manipulate dimming curves in order for the LED to appear like tungsten. What I want to explore in this article is whether the introduction of LED to the theatre should focus on making LED as similar to tungsten as possible or whether LED might as well be valued in its own right – two recent examples will be used for this evaluation: an ETC cyc-flood shoot-out and my recent work on *The Two Pigeons* at The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

The Royal Ballet's production of *The Two Pigeons* had not seen the light of the stage for some thirty years and it was whilst working on this production that I had the pleasure to work with adding the Source Four Lustr on top of a tungsten/arc design for the first time.

At Covent Garden, their ten Lustr 2s shoot in from a fairly flat-on balcony tier side-position, and since I had decided in advance to possibly use these instruments, colours "equivalent" to existing tungsten filters had been skilfully mixed by the Royal Opera House lighting

department in advance. What I found when I started adding the Lustrs into the existing plot was perhaps something that most of us experience under similar situations: that the equivalent colours appeared quite similar to their tungsten counterparts but with a different

*The Two Pigeons*  
Royal Ballet  
Choreography by Frederick Ashton  
Designed by Jacques Dupont  
Lighting by Peter Teigen  
Photo by Bill Cooper



feel; it turned out that the added sprinkling of LED became the icing on the cake rather than simply puffing up the cake itself.

But how do I know that the LED actually responded so differently to the eye? Surely someone could come along and claim that the technology of the Lustr 2 is so far advanced that I could only know there was a difference if I already knew that I was using a different instrument. This is a fair claim to make since an equivalent clinical trial would incorporate blind-experiments and placebo testing in order to demonstrate participant bias (that we are more likely to evaluate something as having a different effect if we already know that it is different). And whilst such a claim could begin to argue that LED is not different or not so different from a traditional tungsten source, the end of the argument is that the lighting designer is ultimately always working with what she or he thinks they are looking at.

A few weeks after my experience of the Lustr being different and yet complimentary from their tungsten counterparts, I took part in a shoot-out of Lustr 2 equipment with the Birmingham Royal Ballet (BRB) at the Hippodrome Theatre, Birmingham, where Jeremy Roberts from ETC had generously provided all the combinations of Lustr gear I

could think of. As BRB's lighting consultant I was interested in the Lustr as a replacement for tungsten units in the rig, such as the 100kw worth of tungsten cyc-flood equipment located top and bottom behind the cyc plastic. As a cyc flood the Lustr initially appeared stunning with all its beautiful colours and crossfades, and the Lustr unit's ability to be placed significantly closer to the back of the plastic was a bonus. However, the experiment took a different turn when the Lustrs were compared with the existing open-white tungsten flood gear. We found that more than 100 Lustr units would be required to replace their tungsten counterparts behind the plastic. We concluded that when a non or lightly filtered tungsten result is required, the current ability of LED to appear as tungsten is inferior; thus LED is particularly exciting when it plays to its strengths and not so useful when the colour of tungsten is to be produced.

Looking further afield for other options of cyc flood improvements in a world which has reduced BRB's 1.25kw cells with a maximum of 1kw, I came across a recent article on the BBC website\*, which I hope a few of the readers have already come across. In this article, it is claimed that a new tungsten technology is under way which supposedly traps the current

heat loss, "making them three times more efficient than the best LED". Ironic to think that LED, hailed for its energy efficiency, is about to become energy inefficient and for some applications possibly banned one day, and it will be a tremendous support for the quality of tungsten lighting if such a technology can lead to the return of brighter tungsten lamps.

Hopefully, at least within the performing arts, LED is here to stay for some time, not as a tungsten replacement but as a standalone quality of light that inspires lighting designers to make choices similar to the existing choice as to whether to spec a moving light with an arc or a tungsten head; if it is treated as a unique quality of light, I see exciting times for mixing LED with tungsten ahead. 🍷

\* McGrath, M. 2016, *New development could lead to more effective light bulbs*, BBC Science & Environment [online]. Available at [www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-35284112](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-35284112) [accessed 25 February 2016].

# THE MICHAEL NORTHEN BURSARY

## Award and application details, by Student Rep **Sean Gleason**

The ALD is excited to announce the launch of the Michael Northen Bursary for 2016. This year's competition is being brought forward in the year, with the awards presentation taking place at the ABBT 2016 Theatre Show in London on 22 June.

The Michael Northen Bursary is awarded annually to a student or recent graduate who has demonstrated strong, imaginative and creative lighting design, and also, through our newest bursary, recognises excellence within the world of video design. We are now accepting submissions for this year's competition. The award is made by the ALD in conjunction with the Mousetrap Foundation, Electronic Theatre Controls and Stage Jobs Pro.

The Michael Northen Bursary competition is open to all students (not just those on vocational theatre courses, or who are already ALD members) and to those who have recently graduated in 2014 or 2015. Taking part in the Michael Northen Bursary competition will bring you and your work directly to the attention of the experienced lighting designers, fellow creatives and other industry professionals on the judging panel.

Winning the Michael Northen Bursary also provides a great public showcase for your work. Your work will be seen by a wide range



*Last year's winners and judging panel*

of industry professionals including members of the ALD and those attending ABTT, and bursary winners will also be featured in *Focus*.





















Recognition through this award will give you real help as you start your professional career!

The judging will take place in early June, and the names of the winners will be announced at the ABTT Theatre Show, with their work on display. ALD members receive free entry to this event which is attended by all of the major lighting manufacturers and many designers.






Submissions must be received by Monday 1 June 2016 and the full submission criteria, further details on how to submit, and further details on our more recent video category can be accessed at [www.ald.org.uk/michael-northen-bursary](http://www.ald.org.uk/michael-northen-bursary).

If you have any questions, thoughts or comments, then please do not hesitate to contact us on [mnbs@ald.org.uk](mailto:mnbs@ald.org.uk) or via the new ALD Students page on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/ALDStudents](https://www.facebook.com/ALDStudents). #

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# SCENIUS

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