

ALD # FOCUS

The journal of the ALD
"More art, less tools..."

April/May 2021

- In the spotlight this issue:**
- ALD proposed name change
 - Lumière scheme updates
 - Working in TV and film
 - *The Litten Trees*
- ...and much, much more...
Price to non-members £5.00

Richard III
Guildford School of Acting
Director: Nicholas Scrivens
Set designer: Roger Ness
Costume designer: Emily Stuart
Lighting designer: John Rainsforth
Production electrician: Ciaran Lillis
Lighting programmer: Al Tombs
Photographer: Robert Workman

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From the chair...

Welcome to this edition of *Focus*. We have a packed edition: Matt Daw has written about the Litten Tree project – thanks to Fuel for all their engagement this year, from the creation of the Freelance Task Force to this beautiful project of lighting trees across the country. The Big Freelancers Report from FMTW is a must read and is available on our website. George Bach has written about moving to working in TV and film, and Charlotte Burton will be updating us on the Lumière scheme. We also hear from Molly Stammers, who has moved from studying law to lighting design during Covid!

As I write, I have my fingers crossed that the road map continues to forge ahead and we see a little light return to our industry. Jason Taylor has written about lighting remotely, which I am thankful I haven't had to do yet as I find design meetings on Zoom hard enough.

The full impact of the pandemic has taken its toll on our industry and its workforce. As an association I hope we have helped a little. We are continuing our monthly meetings, so keep an eye on the members' bulletins. The Wellbeing group has just had a successful baking evening and launched their book club; see page 20 for more details on all our meetings and activities.

As we return to work, there has never been a more important time to support each other. It has been a long year, and people will find it hard to race back into what can sometimes be a tough and crazy world of producing shows. So the ALD became involved with "Reset Better" headed up by the PMF and ABTT, we are working with AAPTLE to protect members from unfair Covid clauses in contracts, and we have been supporting FMTW and We Make Events in support activities to help protect our industry in the future.

I am pleased to announce that, as a result of action from the ALD, the process is underway for a new theatre freelancers branch within BECTU. Please support and join; see the statement from the ALD, ASD and CITEA on page 9. As you return to work please remember to use the ALD contract checklist and our producers' guide, all accessible on the website, and we will be sending out our guides on good practice to all producers as a reminder shortly.

I have mentioned many times before how important it is that our association has the whole industry at its heart and never has that seemed more important than over the past year. After much discussion with the directors and the Exec, I would like to propose a name change to the Association



Johanna Town
ALD chair

that truly reflects the industry and people it represents. The ALD was formed 60 years ago because lighting designers didn't have a voice within the entertainment industry. Now it feels important that everyone involved in live lighting is part of that voice and that the ALD visibly represents the whole lighting industry through its name.

I am inviting all members to please read the enclosed letters from Rick Fisher and me in this issue of *Focus*. I hope we can count on your support to a change in our name that will fully acknowledge the development in lighting design and technology that has occurred over the past six decades. The directors and Exec have unanimously voted to add the word "Production" to fully reflect the association today, and so we would be named the "Association for Lighting Production and Design", which I sincerely hope you will support.

Wishing you all the very best as we start to return. Stay safe and stay healthy.

Professional catch-up

Lucy Carter and David Ayton in conversation



David Ayton, the Professional production rep, and Lucy Carter, the Professional designers rep, have a conversation about what's been happening for them on the ALD Exec committee over the last year.

Lucy: Well, what a year we've had, David. You only joined the Exec around a year ago, and became co-chair on the Professionals working group, which was a move that was essential to establish parity for our production lighting members alongside our designer members. We have had a busy year, and we haven't even met face to face yet, have we?

David: No, I can't believe that we've not yet met in person.

Lucy: That's incredible. I feel like we speak every day! So what have been the big standout achievements for you over the pandemic pause?

David: Having a seat at the table and feeling that I can contribute to a discussion that does matter and to make a difference to the industry. The documents that we've created, the contract checklists etc., will make a difference to people's working lives. Hopefully, it might get people better terms and conditions, especially with IR35 coming in. I think that it's important right now that everyone starts using these to negotiate. If producers keep hearing freelancers asking for the same

terms in their deal memos, that is a form of pressure and can change how we all operate. So to have had an input into something like that I think is a good way to feel like I've contributed to the table and to be that player-participant rather than the one on the sidelines moaning about it and being critical.

Lucy: I think that's why the Exec has gone from strength to strength this year, with us all having the time to do some of the things that we really wanted to do. Whereas in the past, in some years, I've only just managed to read the minutes of the meetings rather than ever attend them, and so this year it's been full steam ahead, let's get things done, and we have also needed to be there for our members on so many levels. So what ALD work have you been doing most recently?

David: I have been working on our professional process documents. We have created a second draft of the programmer and production electrician versions. We've also been developing the production Lumière scheme and formulating some plans of masterclasses for that course – and the application pack needs a rewrite to be focused towards the production roles.

Then there's also the AAPTLE union stuff, which was a conversation that started between the ALD and BECTU last summer, with Nick Woolley and me, and it was decided that rather than just approaching it from the ALD perspective that we'd channel our work through AAPTLE and continue talking to BECTU. That has come to fruition in the past few weeks – an admission from BECTU that the freelancers working in the industry, genuine freelancers who charge a day rate or a fee for their services, are not best represented by the current union structures, and that if we get enough people trained up as reps, these new BECTU member reps could then form a new branch for the freelancers. So we now have a call out for people to come forward to be reps. How about you, Lucy?

Lucy: We've just started our professional process for designers documents. These process documents are another piece of work that we want to use to educate producers, to have more information available so that managements and producers really start to understand what we do, that we don't just turn up to technical rehearsals and make the show happen. I've also been working on forming a new working group in AAPTLE,

which will be working on changing the way we're paid. It is a massive minefield of a project, campaigning towards morally and ethically fair fees for designers and creative teams that are a true reflection of our time and our creative commitment.

David: I think that's certainly a big one because production electricians and programmers are paid on a day rate, and that is a day of my time. Show staff are paid a weekly wage; everyone else gets paid based on a time commitment. It is scandalous that you designers get a fixed fee for what could be a well-paid ten days or what could be a really poorly paid thirty days on a job.

Lucy: It's difficult because there needs to be a recognition of our creative and design contribution, and for the rights to perform our work night after night, as well as a fair reflection of the amount of days we spend on a production. A simple day rate doesn't really suffice. The fees just haven't changed in all the years that I've been working, or where they have changed it has only been minimal. For example, the Equity rates have only gone up in the category of MSRL2 by £108 since 2009! It's an entirely broken system where designers

or the creative teams in technicals are being paid less than the other members of our teams, who are paid on a day rate. So we have to challenge the institutions, the producers and the buildings to make them realise that they've got a moral obligation to pay us better. I hope it's eventually going to lead to a whole structural change. Then the other thing I've been working on, with some other Exec members, in support of what I mention above, is a kind of new social media idea/project that will demonstrate what we actually have to do to deliver a lighting design, currently called "What we are worth versus what we are paid", to achieve recognition that what we are currently being paid isn't sustainable. What are the big things that you feel we have achieved in our working group over the pandemic?

David: I think the biggest thing, which is still a work in progress, because it's not there yet, will be this new union branch. Of course, you know I was driving a Sainsbury's van when we started that conversation, and now I'm lucky to have had some teaching and training work so I'm no longer having to do that. But the big focus this year for me has been that new union branch and

Professional catch-up

Lucy Carter and David Ayton

then the production version of the Lumière scheme that I hope demonstrates that the ALD is punching its weight for production electricians, programmers, electricians, technicians, anyone that's working with lighting, who doesn't see themselves in the designer's chair. It is a fact that, to the community of technicians and production electricians and programmers, the ALD has seemed somewhat designer centric. I'm hoping that a lot of the work we have done this year, alongside the news of our name change, can hopefully open a lot of eyes to people seeing value in ALD membership and that we are here fighting for every member of the lighting community.

Lucy: I think one of the things that we've really achieved this year over the pandemic, which I've been super proud of, is pushing that parity within the ALD. When you joined and came into this working group and we decided that we were going to be joint chairs of the working group, we made the Professional design and the Professional production rep equals, and I therefore think that we've managed to infuse that into the rest of the ALD. It's something that's always been there – we've always, certainly for the last ten

years, represented and had members who are not all designers, but it feels that we've really ingrained it into the ALD now, and now we can move forward without question, that it's a place for everybody in the whole lighting team. So I'm really proud of that.

From the beginning of 2021, I took a break for a month because I had found that we've been working at such a pace and doing so much, not just with the ALD, but also with AAPTLE, that it was just overwhelming me because there's so much still to do. I guess that our job will never be done, and that's the burden: there's always a to-do list. So I took a break. However, since then I've been doing a lot of responding to and supporting our members. People have been getting in touch because of contracts that are seemingly not particularly ethical, and fees are lower than they were before the pandemic, so I've been nurturing that relationship with some of our members who have reached out. I think the biggest achievement for the ALD and for my colleagues over the pandemic that I've been most proud of was the Lumière scheme last year and the bootcamp.

And that wasn't anything to do with us on our working group. But I think it just reached out to so many people and made so many connections and new networks.

David: I think what's great about that is the combination of Team Lumière 2020 and all of Rory's great interviews, as well as all the stuff that Tim and Rob did for bootcamp, is now all under one umbrella on the Academy website.

Lucy: That and the fact that that resource is there now forever – I'm proud of my colleagues for pulling all of that off. I think the thing that I'm kind of quite proud of personally is the AAPTLE situation. The formation of the alliance came out of a few good conversations that some of us had been having with other colleagues, and the ALD and the Association of Sound Designers reached the point where we thought it was absolutely time to pull everybody together. So I think that's a brilliant thing. I think it's about creating change for the things that I've seen over my career, the things that consistently don't work, and the things that I've started to feel very bitter or cross about, and that's what I want to do: make changes in the industry for the better, on working

conditions and hours, our mental health and family time, time to do things in your life other than just work. That's tied up with everything – tied up with fees, tied up with day rates, tied up with schedules, tied up with being respected for what you do, tied up with being paid travel and accommodation – you know, all the sorts of things that are just about respect and wellbeing and health and lifestyle, being able to have a life. So that's what drives me: making a difference, not for myself but for other people.

David: Great. I certainly have a similar attitude to that. Certainly a lot of my motivation has been about making my voice heard within the ALD as someone who isn't a lighting designer.

Lucy: It's been great to have you on the Exec because sometimes we need somebody who completely sees it from the other point of view and who can challenge bad habits and norms. It's a step towards recognising a parity across all roles in the lighting team. So I wanted to ask you about our exciting proposal for a name change from the ALD to the ALPD. To include production lighting in our title alongside design is really important to us both.

Can you talk about why it is especially important to you and why you believe this name change needs to be voted in by our members?

David: I hope that with the name change we can once and for all put to rest the conversation that the ALD is all about the designers and that, alongside the contract checklists and process documents, this name change can demonstrate the ALPD will be here for every single person working in lighting, no matter their role. It's important to me that there is a plurality of voices from the production roles around the Exec table, so that voice becomes louder. A lot of people say, oh, but the industry means this, the industry means that, and that's their way of refusing to accept that we can make things better. But – the industry is us, the industry is the people. And by that very nature, we all have the ability to speak up and effect change that can improve our working lives. I also hope that by adding the P it becomes clear to producers and managements that the ALPD represents the whole lighting community, and with an increased production membership, our documents and campaigns can carry more weight, as

they will represent more and more of the lighting community.

Lucy: Absolutely. The way we light shows has changed so much and for me it's always about a collaboration with my whole lighting team. I do not create the lighting design alone – I can't. I need a highly expert team to help realise my vision, from the manufacturers, to the electricians, programmers, followspotters and production electricians, heads of lighting departments and administrative staff. So our name now needs to reflect the industry and processes we work within and ensure that we are all helping and working together for all our members as one community.

Read more about the name change on page 8 and about the new Bectu freelancers branch on page 9.

You can contact Lucy and David with any comments or questions on professionals@ald.org.uk. 📧

Vote for "P"

Rick Fisher on why you should support the ALPD

Let me give you a bit of background about the ALD and the opportunity we have to become a better and more inclusive association for the 21st century.

Sixty years ago lighting was just beginning to be noticed. The lighting was often done by the chief electrician under direction of the director or designer. Lighting designers often were not billed or even recognised as part of the creative team.

The ALD was founded to bring lighting designers together socially, but it soon became a force to ensure the role was properly respected and rewarded.

I think we can all agree that those initial challenges are no longer the case. While there is still room for many improvements, lighting design is now an essential part of any live performance. Billing is rarely an issue,

and while fees are still stuck in the last century for most of us, at least we know we are valued even if not paid as much as we deserve.

The ALD has been at the centre of this growth in appreciation for the art of lighting, but we have to acknowledge that it is a team that makes this happen.

I know that in my over forty years of lighting design, I have enjoyed the support, creativity and camaraderie of the entire lighting team. That has always been what has kept me going – through the pressure, lack of adequate budget, time constraints and the seeming invisibility of what we are trying to achieve.

I believe this change in the association's name will only strengthen and make clear our position in the industry and be inclusive and

representative of all people in lighting.

I know it will not diminish the ALD's purpose in promoting lighting design. In fact, I think it will enable the ALD to truly reflect the many skills needed to make lighting, making us a better, stronger association and enhancing the benefits of membership to all.

Please join me in voting for a "P".

Rick Fisher

For more information and details about the name change, see the enclosed letter from chair Johanna Town as well as Lucy and David's article starting on page 4. 🌸

Your industry needs you!

Step up and help form the new freelancers branch

When it comes to freelance working lives, whether it's stage, sound, costume, lighting, video, wigs, hair and make-up, props or automation, there's more that unites us than divides us. We all face similar issues when it comes to our contracts, terms and conditions, getting invoices paid and expenses reimbursed, but the one thing that brings us all together is that we charge a fee or a day rate for our services. We currently don't really fit anywhere within an existing trade union, and you only need to look at the superior terms enjoyed by freelance colleagues working in film and TV production to see what is possible with a set of union-enforced normal practices.

Many of us are already members of our professional associations. However, as active and vibrant as the various professional societies within live entertainment are, brought together under the AAPTLE umbrella, they legally cannot and should not perform the functions of a trade union. It is vital that going into this post-Covid workplace and beyond that we, as industry workers, have the best mechanisms in place for upholding our rights, and to continue the fight for

better pay, terms and conditions, through the vehicles of collective bargaining and solidarity that are available to us.

Historically, some theatre workers haven't had the best experience with BECTU. Show staff constantly moving between buildings haven't been best served by the union when between productions and don't have a home within the union. Theatre freelancers are routinely put into a film and TV branch – even if it's clear from the application form that we want to be in a theatre branch. However, through concerted efforts from AAPTLE, the union does seem willing and keen to engage with theatre freelancers and make changes for the better. Some steps have already been taken, for example in the creation of the new touring branch, which takes the important step of decoupling a union branch from geography. Further suggestions have led to the start of a conversation about a nationwide theatre freelancers branch, covering all theatre workers who work on a fixed fee or day-rate basis. This would begin to tackle many of the problems highlighted above, as well as bringing together similar workers from across the country into one, much more coherent, place from which to launch

collective demands, which is how unions operate and succeed best.

In a recent meeting with the AAPTLE unions working group, it was highlighted that the union is democratic and member led; if changes are required they need to be proposed and actioned by the membership, whose activity BECTU staff can facilitate. The first step in this is for the membership (us) to put ourselves forward for rep training and wrap our heads around the union's internal structures and mechanisms, and then begin changing what needs to be changed to move the union forward into the fighting force we need it to be in our sector.

We are encouraging people who want to be actively involved in these industry discussions to put themselves forward for BECTU rep training and join this ongoing conversation, with a view to being the founding committee of a new branch for theatre freelancers.

If this sounds like you, please get in touch: hello@theatre-freelancers.co.uk.

Thank you.

— ALD, ASD and CITEA (brought together under the AAPTLE banner) 🍀

The Litten Trees

Matt Daw on Fuel Theatre's lighting commissions this spring

Spring is here, the clocks have gone forward and lockdown is easing. But, just before all that happened, a unique project took place, lighting up different corners of the UK from Penzance to Glasgow and offering a glimmer of the better things to come both metaphorically and in the form of tangible employment for lighting designers.

The Litten Trees was the brainchild of Stuart Heyes, associate director of Fuel. At the end of 2020 Stuart identified that in the desolate theatre landscape of the preceding nine months there had been a few limited creative opportunities in the virtual space for some members of our freelance community including writers, directors and performers but next to nothing for lighting designers. Fuel came up with a project that gave the opportunity for eight lighting designers to flex their creative muscles while also complying with all of the social restrictions in place in late March.

The brief was a simple one: "Take a walk one evening and find, somewhere local to you, a tree of some sinuous tenacity. A tree that you would like to create a lighting design for."

Lizzie Powell's design was based around a cluster of Japanese cherry trees outside Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery in Glasgow. I asked her why she chose these trees: "They are a group of six trees that are about to blossom just now, and all the branches touch each other. They are a group and cannot be separated. They all look like they are supporting each other or connecting in some way. The way I feel my six sisters/girlfriends have supported me. It's their love and support that has inspired the design."

The simplicity of the brief produced varied responses. Discussing the inspiration for her design around an oak outside Westwood First School in Leek, Daniella Beattie said: "Electric Threads has been inspired by the textiles heritage in the town. The pattern is based on the woven buttons, made in Leek and surrounding areas as a cottage industry in the bygone days of the 18th century. They were made by families in their own homes, which seemed to have a connection to working from home akin to our own experiences during the pandemic."

The shape of the project was informed by the restrictions under which we were all living and working in national lockdown.

Stuart, along with Fuel's production managers, Richard Owen and Greg Howe, worked extremely hard to negotiate permission to mount the works in each of the locations despite preoccupied local authorities and institutions closed to the public. The site of Jason Addison's tree was pertinent, a willow in the grounds of Pickering and Ferens Sheltered Homes. Jason commented: "I wanted to provide a little entertainment and light for the residents of Pickering and Ferens homes as they may have been sheltering this past year and not been able to leave their homes. I hope they can get a bit of joy on their doorsteps."

Chuma Emembolu lit a Scots pine in Banbury. The design was inspired by the cycle of life though the four seasons. Asked what the project meant to him in the context of the last year, he said, "It's the chance to inspire joy, hope and fun while bringing a crucial aspect of theatre back to the public."

Over 1,500 members of the public saw the work over the three nights across the eight sites, equivalent to a sold-out performance at London's Adelphi Theatre, a staggering feat under the circumstances.

Katy Morison's tree was a giant redwood in Ystrad Mynach, Caerphilly. I asked her what she thought the audience might take from her piece. "I hope they all take away a sense of having seen something unique, a bit of art to make them think, or to talk about with friends. The sense that there is still light in the world, and fun and creativity." Two women who encountered Katy's tree while on a night walk told her it had really cheered them up after months of not going out.

In Brighton, Kristina Hjelm's design centred around two elm trees in Saunders Park, telling a story of a journey through motherhood. She told me:

"My work in theatre is about creating experiences that can be shared with other people, both the audience and the other creatives. It is all about giving and about doing it here and now together." Commenting on audience feedback, Kristina said: "People really got excited when they realised that this chance meeting of a lit tree was also occurring in seven other locations around the country."

As it is unusual for us lighting designers to be the only creative working on a project, I asked Jackie Shemesh how he

found the experience, and he told me: "I found that the supporting production team became my collaborators, artistically and technically, which is very helpful."

The project was a success, artfully navigating complex social rules to deliver something unique, creative, beautiful and surprising to people all across the country. This is a real credit to all involved.

In addition to the live event *The Litten Trees* has been documented by filmmaker Hugo Glendinning and will be presented on Fuel's digital platform in May 2021.

More information about each of the trees and the project as well as full technical credits are available at www.fueltheatre.com/projects/the-litten-trees. 🌲

The Litten Trees:

Jason Addison – Hull in Yorkshire
Daniella Beattie – Leek in Staffordshire
Chuma Emembolu – Banbury in Oxfordshire
Kristina Hjelm – Brighton in Sussex
Katy Morison – Ystrad Mynach in Glamorgan
Joshua Pharo – St Just in Cornwall
Lizzie Powell – Kelvingrove in Glasgow
Jackie Shemesh – Muswell Hill in London

Supported by:

Graham Roberts, Marcus Heald, HPSS, Claire Champlin, Pickering and Ferens Homes, Andy Waddell, Richard Dodd, Chris Thompson, Tim Vickerstaff, Suzy Somerville, Pete Morgan, New Vic Theatre, Vicki Woollacott, Debbie Potts, Dan Foggo, Midnight Lights, Julia O'Shea, Olly Welsh, Max Calesini, Jedd Hamilton, Brighton and Hove City Council, Nick Mumford, Gavin Thomas, Blackwood Miners, Arts Council Wales, Father Steven Kirk, the Holy Trinity Anglican Church, T&M Technical Services, Lucy Gaskill, Vicky Abbott, Barnes Thomas, Wildworks, James Gardner, Jon Meggat, Brian Scott, Glasgow City Council, Amit Sherhan, Guy Colletta, Paul Claydon, Niall Black, Daniel Heggarty, Ambersphere Solutions Ltd, Chisato Ohno, Briony Berning-Pollard, Stone Nest and Alexandra Palace.

The Litten Trees



Chuma Emembolu (Banbury)



Jason Addison (Hull)

Focus – the magazine of the ALD – People in performance lighting



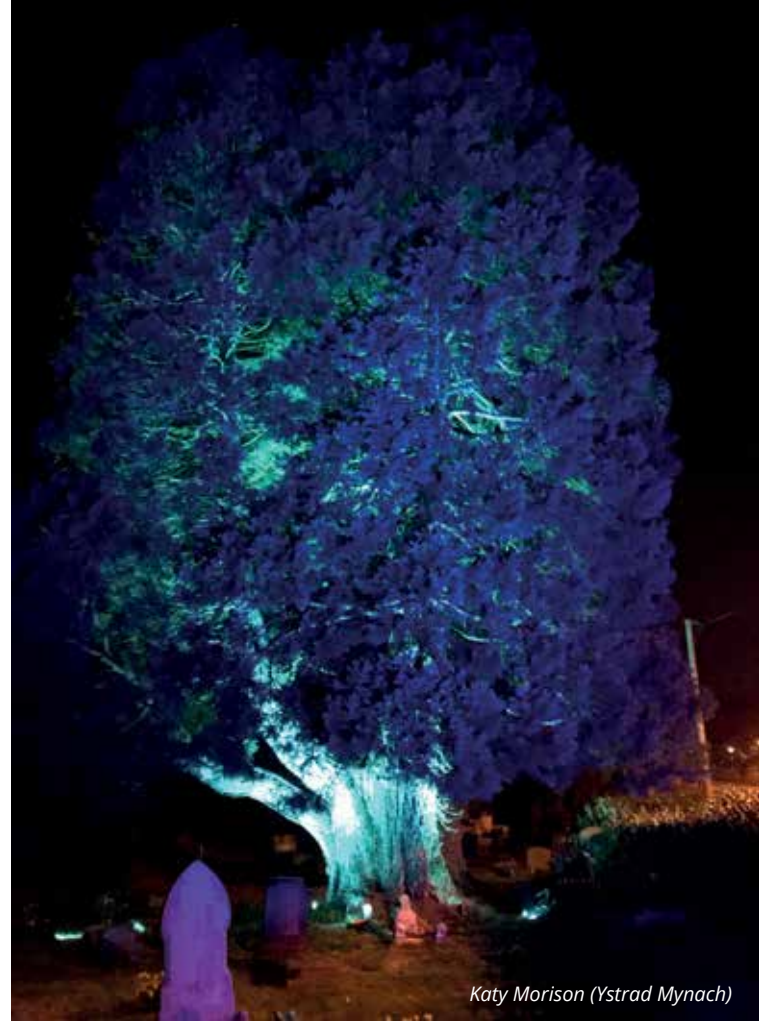
*Above: Joshua Pharo (Cornwall)
Top right: Daniella Beattie (Leek, Staffordshire)
Bottom right: Kristina Hjelm (Brighton)*

April/May 2021 - "More art, less tools..."

The Litten Trees



Jackie Shemesh (London)



Katy Morison (Ystrad Mynach)



Lizzie Powell (Glasgow)

From law to lighting

Student *Molly Stammers* on finding the light during Covid

While all of the other performers were doing their breathing exercises before going on stage, I was the child listening to the show being called and the watching the lights on the rig, completely mesmerised.

As a child, performing was my life. Musical theatre and dancing was everything. So – naturally – I applied for a law degree.

I'm not entirely sure how it came about when I was back at college, thinking about career choices. But I was definitely living in a cliché; no matter how much I loved performing arts, my parents were encouraging of a much more "stable" career, and, well, I loved watching Suits over the summer.

Nevertheless, my passion for musical theatre persisted, and living in London gave me this glorious gateway to the West End. I began working front of house for my local theatre during college and would jump at the chance to go back home and work on every shift I could get after I'd left for university.

And yet, while I loved what was happening onstage, I began to get this greater need for knowledge of what was happening everywhere else around it. I began hunting out MD cameras; I'd

really slow down on pre- and post-show checks to watch the crew do their own checks. I'd love working on a Saturday night because it meant getting to watch the start of the load-out. I think it's safe to say that I owed a lot to that job in fuelling my passion for lighting.

Unsurprisingly, the first thing I did at my university's Freshers Fair was seek out the Drama Society. I was excited to still have an injection of theatre during my time at university, and having a few hours a week to collaborate with people who loved theatre for many different reasons quickly became a necessity for me. I'm proud to say that, in September, I will be the president of Drama Society for my final year at university.

Things were only getting better for me as I realised that I wanted, needed, a way in to back of house. I began networking like crazy and really could not believe my luck when I was offered an ASM role for a festival. It was the confidence boost I needed to really make me believe I had a shot at getting in.

And then, an actual global pandemic turned up (thank goodness I do not wish to write scripts – how do you make that one up?).

I'm 20 and a law student, studying in London but from the southeast coast. I've grown up my whole life on stage, from dance recitals to playing Ariel in The Little Mermaid. Following my degree, I am looking to take the dive into professionalism in the theatre industry – not on stage, but lighting it. I'm so excited about this leap and cannot wait to see where it takes me.



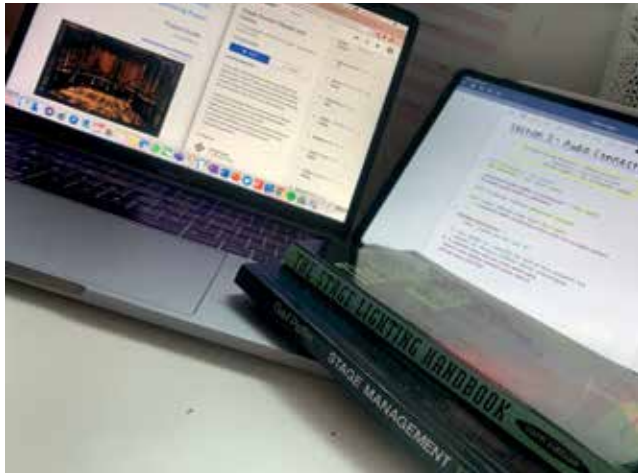
Shows cancelled, work experience dates called off, no ASM role.

Doing my end-of-first-year law exams at home, mostly from my bedroom, was something else. I've done two rounds of exam seasons now, and it really does still feel very strange. But spring 2020 began to arrive, and with summer around the corner I knew I needed a focus.

This is the point at which I have to give the biggest thank you to every single person who has worked to put content online. I saw my opportunity of not being busy for a while – and boy, did I take it. I applied to ALD to become a Sponsored Student.

I did every single one of ETC's Eos courses that they had to offer. I nearly killed my laptop with pre-vis programs. I watched so many seminars from the most incredible lighting designers, both in the UK and internationally. I bought the lighting theory books and I pored through them.

Many people talk about the effects of lockdown and the virus, but not much is said about the effect on desire and will. That first part of lockdown, when it was sunny and people were still very much



hopeful, it was easy to learn all of those things with some kind of goal in mind – “Oh, I can get back in a theatre soon,” I told myself. Not many people really talk about how, as the nights get colder and darker, the hope becomes less and the determination begins to disappear.

Around Christmastime and as mid-second year really took its toll on me, I began to lose a lot of hope in my lighting future. I felt that I had finally learned all of this knowledge, had taught myself so much. Yet, I'd still never actually touched a lighting desk.

And, okay, true, I still have never touched a lighting desk. But I've remembered the passion, the drive and the little girl mesmerised by a moving head that led me to spending so much time learning.

I'm now coming to the end of my second year of my law degree and perhaps with no intention to do law, but a lot of (interesting!)

knowledge about the law and a brilliant plan for my presidency of Drama Society, starting in September.

After that? Well, hopefully switching tracks and beginning a career in lighting.

I have been terrified to actually put that into words because the constant phrase at the back of my mind is “but you have no experience”.

This whole pandemic has taught me that, actually, if you love something then that is enough to take you as far as you want to go. Yes, absolutely, it will be hard work and require a lot of determination. But there is a reason that the theatre industry and its people haven't faltered. Passion. Love. Respect. All of the online resources that have taught me the basics of lighting an actual show and how to use a desk, watching all of the live streams of performances, I'm not sure what I would have done without it all. So I may not have the experience, but I know I have the determination.

So, thank you.

And while I'm not sure where I will end up – it will be in a theatre, and this time with my hands actually on a desk. 🍷



Office Oracle

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

2021 AGM

We can now announce that the next AGM will take place on Saturday 17 July 2021.

With a supposed country-wide unlock happening around 21 June, we could attempt to have some kind of meeting in person, although we are currently only planning for it to be online once again as we are so far away from that unlock date which is only a few weeks before the meeting.

So, for now, assume it will be similar to last year's and we will let you know once we have more of a schedule and specific timings for the day.

Company director elections 2021

Following the incorporation of the ALD in 2016, we are now required to

hold annual elections for directors. ALD directors are nominated from and elected by Professional, Fellow, Life and Honorary members – the voting membership.

An elected director serves for a three-year term, when they can then stand for a second term. They must stand down for a minimum of one year after the second term before being able to stand again. Therefore, each year one-third of the eleven director spaces are up for renewal.

In 2020 there is a minimum of four director positions available for election, and all those at the end of their term are eligible to stand for another term if they wish to. Should we receive more than four nominations, a ballot will take place with the process being announced to the voting membership.

Election timeline:

Tuesday 18 May: Nomination period opens

Saturday 12 June: Nominations close

Saturday 19 June: Ballot papers sent out to voting members (if required)

Saturday 10 July: Deadline for ballot papers (if required)

Saturday 17 July: 2021 ALD Annual General Meeting – results announced

Full details about the directors' duties and how to submit a nomination can be found on the members' side of the ALD website at www.ald.org.uk/director-elections. It can also be sent by post upon request if we do not have a registered email address for you.

Nominations for election as a director shall be in writing signed by two voting members of the Association as proposer and seconder and containing the signed consent of the candidate to serve. To ease this process, you can complete the Survey Monkey form at www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/aldelection21 or request a nomination form and return it to election@ald.org.uk.

The result of the ballot shall be announced at the Annual General Meeting, and the terms of office of the members elected shall then commence.

2021/22 subscription fees

As advised in previous issues of *Focus*, email bulletins and the last AGM, the Executive Committee has decided that due to the Covid crisis the proposed increase of membership subscriptions in April 2021

will no longer take place and fees will remain at the 2020 level until such time as we feel the industry is back to some semblance of normality.

Therefore, current members should expect to renew at the following rates:

- | | |
|------------------------|------|
| • Professional | £102 |
| • Standard affiliate | £60 |
| • First-year affiliate | £48 |
| • Associate | £48 |
| • Student | £36 |
| • Retired | £36 |

Some categories of membership would have seen an automatic increase in fees as they move from either first-or fifth-year Affiliate to standard Affiliate or Professional member. For this reason, the Executive has decided that it will extend memberships of those in these categories for another year. We have written to you directly if this affects you, but the renewals have now been run, so you can log on to your web account to find your balance as of April 2021.

If anyone has any questions, do please contact the ALD Office to discuss them. We are happy to work with members to find a solution to spread payments over a longer

period (see the monthly direct debit option below) but can only do this if members contact us.

Direct debit payments

At the start of 2020 we started offering members the opportunity to pay by monthly direct debit to help spread the cost and manage cash flow. That was extremely fortunate timing given the events of the last year. Over 60 members now pay at the start of each month rather than paying in a single “upfront” lump sum each April.

It is not too late to pay your 2021/22 membership fees monthly, so please contact the ALD Office as soon as possible or visit www.ald.org.uk/direct-debits to sign up for a new direct debit mandate.

Combined liability insurance scheme

As we went to print, we emailed all those members currently opted into the combined liability insurance scheme as our brokers had been unable to obtain a final price for the range of covers that make up the scheme from insurance companies

who are understandably busy at the current time processing and discussing a number of claims and policies surrounding businesses during the pandemic.

As a result, we have been able to secure an extension for an additional month of the existing cover from 2020/21, by which time we hope to be able to confirm the price for the scheme in the next year. You therefore will remain covered for any work that you undertake in April 2021. An updated 2020/21 cover note is available to download from the membership details page of your ALD website profile for this extension in case you need to send it to clients.

As previously stated, we will not be able to subsidise the policy for members as we have previously (around £5 per member in 2020) due to the downturn in our income during the Covid crisis. Please remember that this cover is still extremely good value for members who are not part of another scheme and far cheaper than obtaining the same level of cover as an individual. When we have a final price confirmed during April (and hopefully before you read this!), we will contact those on the scheme again directly by renewing the product through the website.

Office Oracle

Ian Saunders

If you want to know more about this benefit of membership that is available to Professional and Affiliate members you can find full details and how to sign up on the members' side of the website: www.ald.org.uk/members-benefits.

Focus back issues

As you would expect we always have a few extra copies of *Focus* printed for each edition for future use. Usually these are sent to new members, who receive the last two issues in their welcome pack, as well as a selection that we hand out on visits to colleges and from our trade show stand at events across the year.

We have back issues for most editions since we converted to the landscape format which are taking up an increasing amount of space that we really need to free up. Therefore, if there are any editions since 2007 that you would like to have in paper rather than reading on the website – www.ald.org.uk/focus – then please contact us to see if we have any available outside of our own archived copies. We will need to charge £1 per issue to cover

postage costs but if multiple issues are requested, we could probably be flexible on the price.

ALD online meetings

The current situation has meant having to re-work our usual list of venue or show visits as members' meetings in the next couple of weeks, but we have created a hub page on the members' side of the website that contains the latest list of confirmed events: www.ald.org.uk/meetings.

With events being set up at short notice, as well as news of current issues and opportunities coming from all directions our email bulletins remain the best way to ensure you receive all the information you may need at the current time. Generally, though, the last Wednesday of every month will include professional talks in the morning, lighting discussions in the afternoon and a social in the evening. The new book club will be held every other month on the penultimate Monday of the month.

If you have anything you would like to introduce or know someone who would, please email meetings@ald.org.uk.

Do we have your correct contact details?!

Please ensure that you update your information on the website directly via the "Contact details and preferences" page or contact membership@ald.org.uk. An incorrect address can result in your not receiving membership renewal notices and places the continuation of your membership at risk.

The website also requires each member to have an email address to be able to operate it to its full potential, so please ensure that your current or preferred address is on our system. If you are reading this and you have never registered an email address with us but wish to access the members side of the website and/or receive our email bulletins, please contact us as soon as possible so we can update your details. 🌸

Lighting up 2021

Submit your light video to London Light

Bring a spark of light to 2021! Share a short video about your passion for light.

We are seeking submissions of a thirty- to sixty-second video clip to show a dimension of light that fascinates, intrigues or delights you. A streaming event will be held on **20 May 2021 at 4pm BST** with a panel of experts. A number of submissions will be selected by a panel of experts for a special screening. This will open a public debate about the shared language of light.

The panel will be hosted by Dr Shelley James. Panellists include:

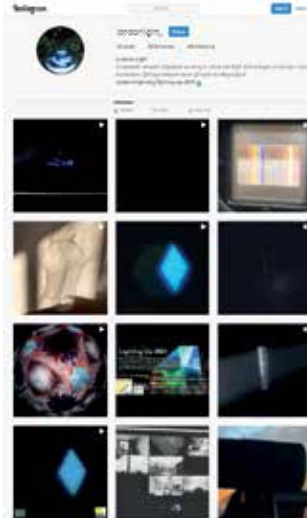
- Paule Constable (lighting designer)
- Mark Major (lighting designer)
- Kailas Elmer (publisher, Trebuchet Magazine)
- Dr James Millen (physicist, King's College London)
- Bob Mizon OBE (astronomer and co-ordinator of the Commission for Dark Skies)
- Marianne Shillingford (colour specialist and creative director at Dulux)

Submissions are now open. We will be showcasing the videos on our Instagram account over March and April.

Deadline for submission is **23 April 2021**.

For more information, please contact london-light@kcl.ac.uk. 📧

Need inspiration? Check out the London Light Instagram account ([LondonLight_](https://www.instagram.com/londonlight_)) for videos that have already been submitted:



London Light



Register to attend the panel event at lightingup2021.eventbrite.co.uk.

Submit your clip at london-light.org/lighting-up-2021.

London Light is the London Institute for Advanced Light Technologies. London Light's mission is to provide an interdisciplinary and collaborative environment to explore new opportunities for growing research and applications of light, a framework for interactions with the photonic industry, and training for PhD students. The research focus is on new and emerging areas of photonics, such as light for clean energy, light for biology and medicine, light for imaging metrology and sensors, and light for quantum technologies.

Transferable skills

George Bach on lighting for different media

With theatres shut and a subsequent nine months of work in retail, it was through a conversation with my partner's uncle, a television gaffer, that I began to ponder my next move.

I had a brief telephone call with him where he outlined the types of positions that he employs: "floor sparks" and "desk operators", the latter being a role that he

was currently struggling to fill. From various family get-togethers and conversations over the years he roughly knew my skillset and suggested that I join them in Devon on a location shoot they were doing for Apple TV+. He had a core team with him but often needed additional people.

Over the next five months, I worked with the team on an ad-hoc basis as a floor

spark, on the rigging team and as a desk op, both on location and on studio shoots. From the outset I was told by many people in the TV industry that the skills I had were not necessarily that transferable; however, I have found this largely to be untrue. A lighting fixture is a lighting fixture, and although the equipment may often be different, I expect most theatre lighting professionals would be able to plug in a TV fixture and turn it on!

I was aware that I would encounter a very different world; however, some of the differences between working in theatre and TV were eye-opening. It is perhaps worth noting that my experiences are limited and confined to a core group of people on one specific television show and, I am sure, not representative of all work in TV and film.

Fundamentally, I found that the working method was very different. As a programmer in theatre, I was used to being continuously busy over the course of the day, but in TV once we were set up for a particular shot or scene, there were sometimes vast stretches of time with nothing to do. You can decide for yourself how much of a hardship that is, but I would



*Shooting at OMA Studios, Enfield
Photo by George Bach*



*Rigging at OMA Studios, Enfield
Photo by George Bach*

generally prefer to be busy at work than "bored" at work!

As a desk op I was responsible for providing my own control and networking equipment, which I could later bill back to the production. As a theatre programmer I opted to hire an ETC system, although Chamsys and GrandMA systems are far more prevalent. The gaffer initially expressed doubts over whether an ETC console would stand up to a busy TV environment; however, I did not find this to be the case. In TV there is little time for manoeuvre, and although I am familiar with other platforms I knew it would be important to use a control system that I understood.

The working method here was also very different. Rather than being positioned behind the console, I was very rarely near it, instead operating wirelessly on my iPad so that I could be on set with the director of photography

and gaffer. The level of programming was generally less advanced than working with a large moving light rig in theatre, instead consisting mainly of intensity and colour changes. The challenge was being the only person in the room who knew how my equipment worked and how to address new fixtures and pair them over wireless DMX, and I found myself being pulled in multiple directions at once. I realised that I had previously underestimated the value of a crew of multiskilled technicians. Although highly skilled at their jobs, the sparks in my team rarely used any method of lighting control and had little understanding of it.

The most surprising differences that I discovered surround the pay and working conditions. Most people on the production were on fixed day rates, negotiated by BECTU and PACT, which differed per role and were set according to the budget band of the TV show and the expected number of working hours per day. In tech on a theatre show we are used to doing twelve- to thirteen-hour days or longer, often on a contracted day rate or a buy-out. In TV, the hours for the shooting day are pre-determined on the call sheet sent out the night before. The working hours that everyone is paid for are "shooting" hours, which means that any hours outside of this, either for pre-calls to set up in the morning, or if shooting runs over at the end of the day, are paid as overtime.

The working conditions too were generally better than I have experienced working in theatre. For one, the production provided catering all day every day for everyone on site, no matter if we were working on location or in a studio. This welcome change meant that I didn't have to spend my day's earnings on a Pret sandwich! Per diems, travel allowances

Transferable skills

George Bach

and accommodation on location were standard, and it was refreshing to not have to haggle over these conditions in advance.

Much has been written over the past few years and many people are currently working hard to enact changes in pay and working conditions for theatre freelancers. In TV, as the rates are widely circulated and adhered to, it makes it difficult for individuals to undercut each other, something that I fear happens all too often in our industry. It takes a great deal of courage to turn down a job over an improper fee, especially now, but we must continue to do so in the hope that together we can bring about these improvements.

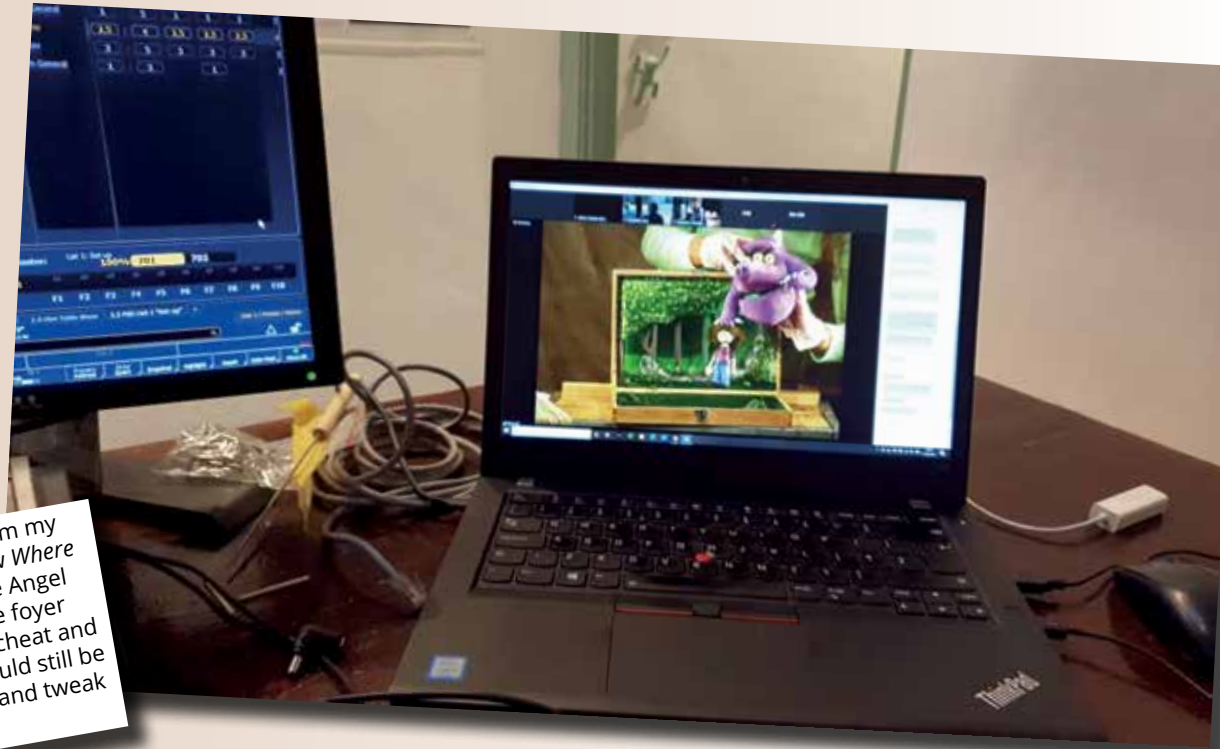
It has been exciting to discover new ways of working, meet new people and transfer my skills; however, for me, nothing compares to the rush of excitement when the houselights go down and the show starts! 🎬



*Shooting at Kensington Town Hall
Photo by George Bach*







A postcard from...

Sherry Coenen, London













Just a quick postcard from my time on live Zoom show *Where the Bugaboo Lives* at Little Angel Theatre. I'm set up in the foyer to make sure I couldn't cheat and look at the stage but could still be near enough to pop in and tweak a focus if needed! 🍷

Corporate members

<p>4Wall 01254 698808 www.4wall.com</p> 	<p>Chauvet Professional 01773 511115 www.chauvetlighting.co.uk</p> 	<p>Elation Professional +31 45 546 85 66 www.elationlighting.eu</p> 	<p>Lee Filters 01264 366245 www.leefilters.com</p> 
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Thank you for your support! For Commercial members, see the back cover.

<p>Robert Juliat +33 (0)3 44 26 51 89 www.robertjuliat.com</p> 	<p>Sound Technology 01462 480000 www.soundtech.co.uk</p> 	<p>White Light 020 8254 4800 www.whitelight.ltd.uk</p> 
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<p>SLX 03300 161 300 www.slx.co.uk</p> 	<p>Vectorworks UK Ltd 01635 580318 www.vectorworks.net/uk</p> 	

Diary dates 2021

10–14 May	PLASA Online*
18 May	Director election nominations open
25 May	Virtual Showlight 2021, 3.00–11.00pm BST
25–27 May	Production Futures online
12 June	Director nominations close
19 June	Director election ballot papers sent out
10 July	Deadline for ballot papers
17 July	ALD Annual General Meeting
5–15 August	World Stage Design, Calgary, Canada
5–7 September	PLASA/ABTT show, Olympia, London*

Keep up to date with ALD events via the online diary: www.ald.org.uk/diary.

Keep up to date with members' meetings information at www.ald.org.uk/meetings.

* The ALD will have a presence at these events.

Contact us

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Editorial team: **James Laws, Rob Halliday and Sofia Alexiadou**

To submit ideas for articles, correspondence, corrections and any comments about *Focus*, email editor@ald.org.uk. Owing to space restrictions, we do not accept press releases for publication in *Focus*. However, company members may send press releases to the ALD office (office@ald.org.uk) to be posted on the ALD website. Company members only may advertise in *Focus*; please contact the office for details. Editorial guidelines for authors are available on request.

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

Content deadline for the next issue: 15 May 2021

Professional members' shows

opening in April and May

April

7 April John Rainsforth (lighting designer) *Richard III* Guildford School of Acting

9 April Wally Eastland (lighting designer) *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* Harton Theatre,
Southern Arkansas University Department of Theatre

9 April Kelli Zezulka (lighting designer) *Me, Myself and Misha* Leeds Playhouse Bramall Rock Void

18 April Chuma Emembolu (lighting designer) *L'enfant Prodigue* Greenwich Theatre

19 April Peter Mumford (lighting designer) *Peter Grimes* Teatro Real, Madrid

TBC Prema Mehta (lighting designer) *The Winter's Tale* Royal Shakespeare Company (BBC Four)

May

17 May Jai Morjaria (lighting designer) *Cruise* Duchess Theatre

17 May Zoe Spurr (lighting designer) *Animal Farm* Royal and Derngate Northampton

21 May Harvey Nowak-Green (lighting designer) *Spring Awakening* Embassy Theatre

22 May Mark Jonathan (lighting designer) *Gone Too Far* Guildhall School

25 May Leigh Mulpeter (lighting designer) *Here Come the Boys* London Palladium

25 May Zoe Spurr (lighting designer) *Othello* Royal and Derngate Northampton

29 May Matt Ladkin (associate lighting designer) *Dr Who: Time Fracture* Immersive Ldn

30 May Joseph Ed Thomas (lighting designer) *Lucie Jones and David Hunter Live* Cadogan Hall

From the "Diary" page of the ALD website. A full listing of all members' shows can be seen at www.ald.org.uk/diary.
To be listed, enter show credits into your profile after signing in to the members' area.

A postcard from...

Jane Lalljee, Rochdale

I'm here in Rochdale with M6 Theatre Company in their base that has a lovely studio theatre. We are filming their show *The Storm*, which they can no longer tour because of Covid.

I have a completely LED rig, which is using all their recently bought kit. It feels good to be behind a desk again and realising that I haven't forgotten how to do the job! Every evening spent alone in the Premiere Inn isn't glamorous but necessary.

I couldn't have asked for a more welcoming and appreciative company to ease me back into lighting design! 🍷



All photographs by Lewis Wileman



New members

Welcome!

Professional members

Briony Berning, London

Kevin Carson, Oxfordshire

Emma Jones, Dundee

Paul Milford, Hampshire

Hannah Walker, Hampshire

Affiliate member

Liam Strong, California, USA

Student members

Megan L Ashbrook, Macclesfield

Jack Dartford, Wakefield

Ed Frearson, Cambridge

Hermione Gould, Liverpool

Caelan Oram, London

Sascha Logan Stevenson, Kingston

For the next issue...

We want your contributions! Designers, technicians, programmers, in-house, freelance, amateur – all welcome!

- *Send us a **postcard** from anywhere in the world! 100 words maximum, plus 2–3 images.*
- *Tell us about your **favourite production**. It can be something you worked on or something you saw. 150 words maximum, plus 1–2 images.*
- *If you are working on an interesting production, in an interesting place, or with an interesting premise, **write an article** about it! Anything up to 1,000 words, plus 3–4 images.*
- *Keep updating your **show listings**. We want to know what you are working on and where.*
- *Any other ideas? Email the editor and we can chat!*

Send all contributions to editor@ald.org.uk before 15 May for the June/July issue. 🍷

Lumière 20:20 review

Lumière scheme participants reflect on their experiences

After ten weeks, Lumière 20:20 and Team Lumière finished in November last year. The schemes were on a much bigger scale than what we had done before, and we really appreciate the support of all those who contributed to the brilliant experience and community it became. We had a great start the new year with a social in January, well organised by Rick Fisher and Tamykha Patterson.

We are very proud to have offered this opportunity to 60 emerging lighting designers across the two schemes and have asked the Lumières themselves to tell us more about 2020's unique courses:

LUMIERE 20:20

Tom Lightbody (Colchester, Essex)

I had a great time on Lumière 20:20, getting to know my mentor and his approach as well as hearing from other designers talk about their work in the regular group sessions. I learned so much from Rick over the course of the ten weeks, and we have kept in touch subsequently. He's even agreed to have me on board for a show once the clouds have lifted. Getting to know some of my peers has been lovely

as well – there's been a wonderful sense of camaraderie, and shared insight and experience. 10/10; would recommend.

Catja Hamilton (London)

Being one of the Lumière 20:20 mentees was an invaluable experience. Declan was very knowledgeable and incredibly generous with his time. I learned so much over the course of the scheme, from the design process in unfamiliar genres to negotiating contracts and hire equipment. At a time when it had been months since I'd last seen the inside of a theatre, having an hour a week dedicated to discussing lighting was a source of great joy. I'm very grateful to everyone at the ALD who made it possible!

Kieron Johnson (Leeds)

Over the period of the pandemic, Lumière has provided a much-needed dose of inspiration and shown that there is light at the end of the tunnel. Being granted the opportunity to have one-on-one time with Adam Silverman has offered a unique view into the current state of the theatre industry, and I couldn't be more grateful for his time and expertise! Huge

thank you to everyone who helped create such an incredible platform, particularly at a time when morale was so low. Cheers to the Lumière class of 2020!

Jane Lalljee (Cardiff)

Being part of Lumière 20:20 was one of the best experiences of lockdown. I was paired with Lucy Carter, whose work I greatly admire. Her experience and outlook is very different to mine, and I learned a lot about large-scale work and her design approach, both of which were invaluable and insightful. My biggest take away was to focus on the core ideas through the process, rather than allowing the resources available to limit my creativity.

I have since completed a design with these principles in mind, which worked out extremely well. Thanks, Lucy and the ALD!

Gianni Bertoli (Milan, Italy)

When I applied for Lumière 20:20 I was looking for a different point of view about our world. I wanted to understand and discover why if we are part of the same world, yours is a million miles away. I had the pleasure to discuss and listen with Mark Jonathan, and I couldn't ask

for better. Marko became a mentor and also a friend. Our morning calls were definitely better than a teacher-student conversation and I can't thank him and the ALD enough for the huge opportunity they gave me.

Hannah Walker (Guildford)

I applied for the scheme to gain more knowledge and to learn from experienced professionals already working in the industry. I really enjoyed the informative group sessions and in particular my one-to-one sessions with my mentor, Zoe Spurr, who was very approachable and helpful. I put into practice some of the ideas gained from these sessions during the Yvonne Arnaud's Christmas production of *Snow Queen*, which I designed and programmed. I thoroughly enjoyed Lumière 20:20 and would recommend it to any upcoming lighting designers; the only downside was that due to the pandemic we couldn't meet in person!

Adam Archer (Nottinghamshire)

During lockdown I wanted to keep up my lighting design skills as well as use the time to attend as many courses and

talks by the ALD as possible. Following the Bootcamp, I realised that there is so much more to the assistant/associate role than I thought. I was very fortunate to be teamed up with Mike Robertson who took me under his wing, and we followed the topics as well as dedicating time to looking at a different artist each week, analysing their work, whether that be the techniques used or even what the painting was trying to tell through the use of suggested key light angles. Further to this, Mike asked me what I would be interested in learning more about, and we would look at these points in a little more detail. Mike and I hit it off from the start, there was a good vibe in all the chats and we had a great way of communicating and working together. I was then offered the role of associate lighting designer on A Christmas Carol at the Dominion Theatre, London. It was a privilege to be a part of Lumière 20:20.

Jess Addinall (Hull)

In what can only be described as a horrendous year, Lumière has given me a new-found drive to push forward and continue to pursue lighting design.

Howard was a fantastic mentor and having an hour each week to get insight into the larger world of lighting was invaluable. I've learnt so much about the ways I think and approach design as well as wonderful ways to improve it. The scheme has opened doors to parts of the industry I previously thought were out of reach, and I look forward to putting the things I've learnt into practice.

Will Monks (London)

"Affirmation" is the best word I can use to describe my experience on the Lumière Scheme. One of the many moments that sticks out is at one of our first chats: Lizzie reassured me that I don't have to second-guess myself by toning down my excitement to appear professional. I've not been afraid to bring all of myself to projects since. It was emboldening to have that encouragement from someone I could see myself being in years to come. Our conversations slipped seamlessly between rehearsals, tech, politics, family and devices for baking potatoes, and I've treasured every moment.

Lumière 20:20 review

Lucía Sánchez Roldán (London)

The scheme was such a wonderful opportunity. In the past year, I have had few opportunities to be in a theatre, and having this weekly space to talk about the process and reflect on how we work felt miraculous. I really enjoyed discussing and talking about lighting and discovering how intrinsically different designers' processes are. What was even more incredible is that not only we were able to have these conversations with our individual mentors, we also had access to the invaluable interviews that Rory was conducting, which allowed us to listen to a multitude of designers candidly answering all the questions we had and being honest about work and the industry.

Adam Foley (Hull)

The Lumière video chats were a weekly treat that kept me connected to my craft through a time when it was very easy to think it was just going to be admin work and Covid risk assessments forevermore. My mentor, David Howe, was brilliant, informative and generous; he has given me loads to think on about my designs and a good deal of wisdom for

a designer's career. My current job will all but disappear in April, giving me a sink-or-swim moment for my design career that would be terrifying if it weren't for the Lumière scheme, as it happens I couldn't be more excited.

Chris Gantner (Warsaw, Poland)

I am very grateful for being part of Lumière 20:20. It let me meet some amazing designers, who were very open and eager to share their knowledge and experience with young, aspiring designers. Weekly conversations with Bruno Poet, whose works I've been admiring for years, were a true privilege and really boosted my confidence. Through the Lumière scheme I confirmed to myself that lighting design is a truly fascinating profession, full of fantastic people, and a community I really want to be a part of.

Sherry Coenen (London)

When Lumière 20:20 was announced I wasn't sure I quite fit the bill. I'm not really young or new enough to class as "emerging" but I am still working at a fringe level so thought I could at least apply and be turned down... but if I

didn't apply I'd never have a shot. I am so glad I took the leap as the programme was wonderful. I learned so much from both my mentor and my mentee as we all approach both the design and the business sides of the industry in different ways, and it was great to hear about the other possibilities of workflow/creative process. There is still a gap in my week where those sessions used to go, and I have very much enjoyed staying in touch with the rest of the mentees through the WhatsApp group, be it for work questions or just to share snaps of great lighting in nature.

Adam Murdoch (North West)

Lumière 20:20 was an excellent opportunity for me. It was great to be able to hear from a vast selection of designers, gaining insight to their history with tips and tricks within the industry. My mentor, Rob Sinclair, was brilliant – we spoke about everything from coffee to budgets and transport. It was such a great way to gain insight about large arena shows and being a visual designer on a production, responsible for the whole creative design of a show and not just lighting. I was

lucky enough to get the opportunity to be involved in a Kylie Minogue live-streamed concert, which was incredible!

Lumière 20:20 were: *Sophie Bailey, Gianni Bertolli, Adam Archet, Michael Brenkley, Adam Murdoch, Fee Dalglish, Holly Ellis, Hazuki Mogan, Cara Hood, Catja Hamilton, Charlotte McAdam, Sam Osbourne, Euan Davis, Fadzil Hanafi, Alan Mooney, Hannah Walker, Max Colbran, Callum Macdonald, Jane Lalljee, Nina Field, Jen Roxburgh, Jess Addinall, Will Monks, Krzysztof Gantner, Alex Fernandes, Adam Foley, Lucia Sánchez Roldán, Ruth Green, Eleni Thomaidou, Jev Laverick, Seb Blaber, Sherry Coenen, Aiden Bromley, Tamykha Patterson, Tom Lightbody, Kieron Johnson, William Hayman and Simi Majekodunmi.*

Thank you to our mentors: Richard Howell, Mark Jonathan, Mike Robertson, Daniella Beattie, Rob Sinclair, Lee Curran, Aideen Malone, Jessica Hung Han Yun, Matt Haskins, Declan Randall, Charlie Morgan Jones, Sherry Coenen, Malcolm Rippeth, Paul Lim, Charles Balfour, Zoe Spurr, Jason Addison, Mark Jonathan, Lucy Carter, Kathy Perkins, Mike Le Fevre, Howard Hudson, Lizzie

Powell, Bruno Poet, Natasha Chivers, David Howe, Nic Farman, Elanor Higgins, Simon Wilkinson, Ric Mountjoy, Jon Clark, Nick Schlieper, Ken Billington, Rick Fisher, Adam Silverman and Ben Cracknell.

TEAM LUMIÈRE

Ellen Butterworth-Evans (Stafford)

I feel so lucky to have been chosen to join Team Lumière, learning so much from the ten weeks of case studies, interviews and group discussions. I particularly valued that, despite our varied backgrounds and experience, there was a great group dynamic. I felt I could ask questions freely and discuss anything without judgement because of this. From this experience I have gained a deeper understanding of the theatre industry and the interwoven jobs within the lighting department, which I feel will help me in my career moving forward.

Fred Rayment (Bedfordshire)

I very much enjoyed being part of Team Lumière. It was extremely interesting hearing from the lighting practitioners, and they gave great insights into the work and processes of a professional lighting

designer. I've been a professional theatre and lighting technician most of my adult life, with lighting design being more of a hobby with occasional paid work. Team Lumière has reminded me what fascinated me about lighting and why I chose this as a job. It has inspired me to once again pursue lighting design as a career. In these difficult times it was also great to be part of a team again. Thanks to Rory, Charlotte, Katherine and all the practitioners who took part.

Sam Ohlsson (London)

Team Lumière was very beneficial for me. The interaction with designers and other professionals, along with the sharing of real experiences and knowledge was so valuable. The weekly themes proved to be a really effective method of delivery. Every professional was happy to discuss and answer questions, from designers reviewing design choices through to enquiries about a work-life balance. Rory was an amazing host for the team and each session was interesting, engaging and informative. I gained valuable knowledge, contacts and information. The ALD created an outstanding and useful opportunity during a time of uncertainty.

Lumière 20:20 review

Team Lumière were: *Bethany Gupwell, Dan Heesem, Iain Young, Joseph Ed Thomas, Lauren Flynn, Lewis Hannaby, Lucy Adams, Matt Whale, Nathan Storm, Noah Jones, Ellen Butterworth-Evans, Gabriel Finn, Zoe Beeny, Matthew Lofting, Amy Cadwallader, Jack Wills, Jon Stacey, Tom Boase, Sam Ohlsson, Layla Bradbeer, Ethan Kent and Fred Rayment.*

Thank you to Rory Beaton and our guest speakers: Simon Wilkinson, Lucy Carter, Jessica Hung Han Yun, Bruno Poet, Johanna Town, Prema Mehta, Declan Randall, Tim Mitchell, Malcolm Rippeth, Lee Curran, Mark Jonathan, James Farncombe, Howard Hudson, Tom Mulliner, Dale Driscoll, Rob Sinclair, Patrick Woodroffe, Nic Farman, Kate Bonney, Simon Hayes, Pete Lambert, Martin Chisnall, Neil Austin, Lizzie Powell, Aideen Malone, Ben Ormerod, Anthony Arblaster, Victoria Brennan, Ben Cracknell, Charlotte Burton, Sarah Brown, Max Narula, Kathy Perkins, Joshua Pharo and Paule Constable.

COMING SOON – Lumière: Production
www.ald.org.uk/lumiere

We are very excited to announce that we will be launching the Lumière: Production scheme in 2021!

This scheme will focus on the production electrician and programmer roles, providing a pathway into the industry of live performance lighting.

There is going to be a virtual pilot scheme this year. Please check our website and social media for further details in the coming months.

Our aim for 2022 is to run both the Lumière: Production and Lumière: Design six-month schemes in person as a paid position providing the opportunity to work on a range of productions.

A Light Walk
20–24 September 2021

From Stratford-upon-Avon to the Southbank: a Lumière scheme and Backup sponsored walk!

To raise funds for the Lumière Design and Production schemes to run in 2022 and to support the much-needed work of Backup we will be doing a sponsored walk from the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-Upon-Avon to the National Theatre in London.

Do you want to join us and take on this challenge?

You can join us for one, some, or the whole five days. You can also take part remotely by completing the same distance in your local area during the month of September.

Further details and sponsorship information will be released soon.

If you would like to register your interest, email us: lumiere@ald.org.uk. 🍀

Lighting a musical from home

Jason Taylor is virtually in Copenhagen

Last year I was offered the lighting design for a new version of *Waitress* for production this February at the fabulous New Theatre in Copenhagen. Of course, with the travel restrictions continuing into this year it became clear that I wouldn't be able to attend in person.

The Danish producer Niels-Bo Valbro and chief executive Kasper Beknes were very keen for me to still be involved, so the technical team and I began to explore the options that would allow me to light the show from my home office.

My first request was for a Danish associate as I felt it would be essential to have some trusted eyes in the room. We approached the excellent Malte Haugaard, with whom I had previously worked on their productions of *Billy Elliot* and *Anything Goes*. Thankfully, Malte was available and so the dialogue between us could commence.

The great lighting team at the theatre, led by John PG Johnson, began to test live feed options. Facebook Live was tried and dismissed along with Zoom, Discord and Skype as neither gave us the results we were looking for in regard to both audio and picture quality.

Kasper and John then sourced BirdDog Studio NDI to encode video and audio; this

would stream via a Vmix call with Vmix. This system was previously developed for video and audio streaming with very low latency and hosted from a private server in Copenhagen.

A camera with a fixed view was rigged in the dress circle, and the picture quality was remarkably good on my monitor. I had previously spoken to Peter Mumford who had done a similar project last year, and he advised that the fixed wide shot was the most useful.

However, I felt that there would be times where a more detailed view might be needed so a second dome camera was rigged and connected though an app called iVMS-4500. This gave me the ability to zoom, pan and tilt that camera as required.

I also needed a link to the MA console, so I installed Team

Viewer Remote Control and was then able to display cue list and channel information at my end.

The last piece of the puzzle was real-time communication between me, the team and my fellow creatives. The director, Lisa Kent, was in the theatre, but the set designer, Terry Parsons, was also trapped in the UK. The solution was Agent-IC from Clearcom. This gave me a direct link via my phone to



My office setup for rehearsals

Lighting a musical from home

Jason Taylor



the theatre's comms system, with separate channels for lighting, followspots and, crucially, Lisa and Terry.

So with the fixed camera displayed on my monitor, Team Viewer on the laptop, the controllable camera on the iPad and AirPods in my ears, we set off to try and focus and light a show from scratch.

The focus worked really smoothly, with Malte following my notes and simple sketches and making his own adjustments as required. The team then worked on any notes/troubleshooting as I switched video channels to watch rehearsals.

The theatre had given us plenty of time for plotting and dry teching, so we had a relatively relaxed few days, getting in the basics and a cue stack while set automation was programmed. My programmer, Joshua Kroon, has recently relocated to Denmark from the UK, so we had a fabulous Danish/British collaboration.

Left: The New Theatre Copenhagen lighting team



I felt all this would be invaluable as we progressed, and it proved to be so when we got to the tech. It was far easier for me to react to the different states in a tech and, crucially, it meant Malte had a good starting point.

It became apparent fairly quickly that I was struggling to make detailed decisions on levels and colour on the curved cyc that backed each scene. It was also tricky to judge light levels in scenes accurately, so the team sent me regular photos on our group WhatsApp, and these gave me a truer representation of what it actually looked like.



We successfully teched over five days and also completed three dress rehearsals with the director and producer extremely happy.

Unfortunately, the Danish restrictions were not eased in time for their premiere so the show is currently parked until a resumption of performances is announced. I am hoping that may tie in with our travel bans being lifted. It will be great to get out there in person to see the show and to take the LX team for a few well-deserved drinks. 🍷

*Above and left:
Waitress
New Theatre Copenhagen
Director: Lisa Kent
Designer: Terry Parsons
Lighting designer: Jason Taylor
Associate lighting designer: Malte Haugaard
Lighting programmer: Joshua Kroon
Photographer: Kasper Beknes*

The Lighting Supervisor's Toolkit

Nick Moran reviews the latest in the toolkit series

Don't be put off by the title – this is a really useful book for anyone aspiring to a career in what we in the UK mostly call “theatre LX” or “production lighting”. It has a lot to teach those already working too, especially if you have just taken on a leadership role such as chief LX, lighting manager, or head of lighting. This is an excellent guide on to how to run a lighting department, from day to day and from show to show, and on to strategic decision-making and staff development.

Jason starts with structures and rightly emphasises the need for collaboration and respect in the relationship between the team leader of the technical side of the lighting department and the lighting designer. Throughout the book he frequently returns to the broader context of working with other departments, with the production manager, and artistic director or producer.

His approach is rigorous and humane too. I really like his Three Hat Philosophy for everyone in the lighting department:

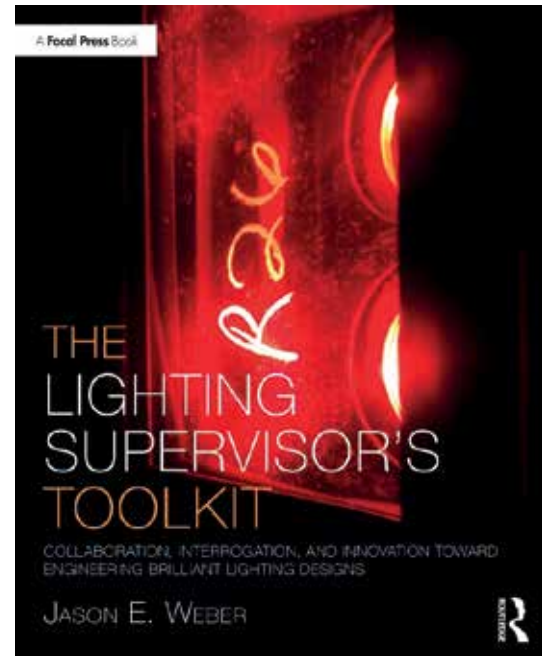
Team hat: the one you wear when you are working as part of the team, on prep or through the install

Show hat: the one you wear once the show is up and your job becomes keeping it looking at is best

Department hat: sharing the “dull stuff” like stock-taking and repairs, and participating in longer-term decisions

Jason writes about how this helps to bond a team as well as providing development opportunities across the department. This kind of understanding is often missing when the chief has risen through the ranks without a good role model to follow and with no “management training” provided by the management.

For me, as a former production electrician, lighting supervisor and lighting designer, the real strength of the book is the emphasis on the need for attention to detail that marks out a great electricians team, right down to details like how to cable a bar and the best ways to lose excess cable. He covers the whole process of turning a lighting plan (plot – sorry) into a lighting rig in great detail, with tips and tricks taken from real-world experience along the way. He covers practical stuff like producing accurate equipment lists



and patch documents, as well as areas that test a chief's “soft skills”: negotiations with suppliers, the lighting designer and the production manager, schedules, and crew allocation.

I'm sure some will criticise the book for its focus on US practice, and I wish that the US would move on from using job titles such as master electrician.

*The Lighting Supervisor's Toolkit:
Collaboration, Interrogation, and
Innovation toward Engineering
Brilliant Lighting Designs*
By Jason E. Weber
Published 2021 by Routledge

But I think anyone with a bit of UK production experience will see lots that is useful here for their practice. (Just remember, US voltage is lower, so they have more current to deal with for the same wattage, and thinner cables.)

I hope the book will be read beyond the lighting department too, because it helps to explain to anyone who is willing to read it just what goes into realising a contemporary lighting design. The planning and negotiation. The range of engineering and management skill required. The fact that to do it well, the team needs to be led by a really experienced practitioner – who deserves every cent or penny they earn, and probably more. This book should be read by every aspiring chief LX and head of lighting, and every student studying lighting and theatre production generally. Just as important, though, it should help to raise the status of everyone who does the difficult job of leading a production lighting team, as a freelancer or in a staff position. Well done, Jason! 🍀

The Lighting Supervisor's Toolkit guides readers through the lighting supervisor's production process with an emphasis on the importance of the collaborative nature of the role.

Lifting the veil on a process regularly learned on the job, this book offers a deeper understanding of the role of lighting supervisor and how to take lighting designs from dreams to reality. Readers will learn to communicate with designers, analyze drawings, plan installations, document decisions, supervise crews, and innovate out-of-the-box solutions.

Providing guidance for technically focused individuals seeking deeper understanding of the profession, The Lighting Supervisor's Toolkit is ideal for students and professional technicians looking to take on important leadership roles in theatrical and entertainment lighting.

About the author:

Jason E. Weber is in his sixth season as lighting supervisor at Actors Theatre of Louisville. During his 13-year career, he has been the master electrician on over 90 professional productions. Prior to Actors Theatre, Jason served as lighting and sound supervisor for seven seasons with the Merrimack Repertory Theatre and master electrician for four seasons with the Adirondack Theatre Festival. Jason has an MA in Theater Education from Emerson College and a BFA in Theater from Marietta College.

BOOK REVIEWS

Is there a new lighting book that you'd like to review for *Focus*? Email editor@ald.org.uk to discuss and we'll arrange for a copy of the book to be sent to you. Reviews are typically 500–600 words long.

We are currently looking for people to review the following books:

Lighting Dance by Flaviana Xavier Antunes Sampaio

Living the Lighting Life by Brad Schiller

Dance and Light: The Partnership between Choreography and Lighting Design by Kevin Dreyer

Namedropping in the Wings by David Collison

Adding colour depth

The latest colour advances from Vari-Lite and Strand

As LED technology has evolved, the entertainment lighting industry has moved to additive colour mixing and multicolour LED engines, but these new systems introduce their own complications. SmartColor Control from Vari-Lite and Strand makes it easier to control these systems while still getting maximum output from the luminaire. To understand the challenge and how SmartColor Control helps, we need to review how additive colour mixing works.



Unlike traditional subtractive (CMY) colour mixing, which reduces output as frequencies are subtracted from the beam, with additive colour mixing, each coloured LED adds to the overall output of the fixture. This often results in a colour-mixed light beam that is higher in output than a colour-mixed light beam from a comparable traditional lamp using subtractive mixing.

With three coloured LEDs (red, green and blue), a fairly broad range of colours is possible.

The challenge is producing a quality white light for general illumination with mixing with just three colours due to the lack of wavelengths in the middle range of frequencies.

So, many LED manufacturers offer RGBW LED modules that contain a white LED as well. A white LED creates white



light by using a blue LED with a phosphor coating that converts the blue light to white, and this approach produces a good quality white light at one particular colour temperature (typically a cool white).

Even with an RGBW mixing system, it becomes challenging when you want to reproduce other colour temperatures of white light using the same luminaire. The human eye can see great levels of detail in shades of greens, yellows and oranges, and fewer details in shades of reds, blues and violets, so when using coloured LEDs to render white light, the greens contribute more to the perceived brightness than the blue and red at the same output. To recreate a warm 3000k white light, the output brightness drops to below 50% of the maximum output possible due to the colour we are trying to meet. Since we are reproducing a colour temperature that requires more red than green, we must turn down the other LEDs to mix the overall colour, and thus turn down the overall brightness. The colour



produced by the fixture matches the colour representation required. However, it doesn't have much depth and has a lower CRI, because it relies on red, green and blue LEDs to produce much of the colour.

As LED lighting has evolved, we now have more LED colours to use and can fill in these gaps with more LED colour options. With these new options, we can produce many more colours and deeper representations of the complex cool and warm whites. New fixtures such as the Vari-Lite VL5LED WASH and Strand

Leko® LED Profile employ more LED colours to help fill in these gaps on the colours, adding in cyan, lime and amber LED colours to the red, green and blue. While the additional colours are a welcome addition to the lighting fixture, each colour brings in an additional channel for control and an additional layer of complex math (or a lot of trial and error). For a six colour RGBALC colour system, it involves over six variables that depend on each other, so things can get complicated quickly.

















Rather than determining by trial and error the exact combination of six LEDs that is required to achieve a particular colour, Vari-Lite and Strand offers SmartColor Control, which allows programmers to set the colour mix and temperature they need, just as they would select the colour filters and lamp type in a traditional lighting application. Programmers set the colour temperature (CTO) channel by dialling up or down the colour temperature, which ranges from 1,800K to 10,000K on the fixture. This then becomes the basis for the way all the LEDs react throughout the colour range.

Programmers use the subtractive-style CMY colour mixing control to adjust the

colour mix, with the lighting fixture automatically decreasing the appropriate levels for the different LEDs to meet the colour it is trying to mix. As the cyan channel increases, the fixture will lower the appropriate LED colours to produce the right cyan colour at that colour temperature. If we need to adjust the tone of the cyan from the fixture to something slightly different, programmers can raise and lower the colour temperature to produce slightly different variation of the cyan. This provides the user with tremendous control of the colour without having to remember what the LED colours are in the fixture and how to set them. 🌸

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