

# FOCUS

The Journal of the Association of Lighting Designers

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

In the sharp edge beams this issue:  
Lighting the Queen's Jubilee concert  
Knight of Illumination  
Walking on water  
50 years and unions  
An Interactive Pilbrow  
.. and much more...  
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August / September 2012

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## Peter Mumford *in the chair...*

So, a lot of considerations and proposals are underway and under discussion within the ALD right now and it would be great to get some comments and reactions from all you members out there. As we come to the end of the Fiftieth Year of the organisation it seemed a good time to think about how the ALD might grow from here on. To this end we held a 'strategy' day-long meeting recently. One of the issues that was discussed was how we could incorporate new areas within the field of lighting and redefine professional membership.

There are many layers involved in producing a lighting design from technician, programmer, assistants and associates through to the actual LD. All of these roles are part of the creative process and now we have video designers and programmers who are intrinsically linked as well.

As things stand at the moment the ALD is open to all these areas via associate membership or as professionals who are not actually

defined as designers. In order to be clear and to expand our relevance as an organisation, the proposal is to slightly alter our name to Association of Lighting Design thereby keeping the iconic ALD but broadening the definition. This would mean that within the professional listing a number of new categories would appear beyond just that of lighting designer.

This may not seem like a huge event but I hope that, if approved at the AGM, will demonstrate that the ALD wants to be relevant to all the various layers involved in the process of creating lighting designs.

The ALD is not a union, but is increasingly able to exert influence within the industry and will continue to do so. Although we are more of a 'Guild-like' organisation and concerned with improving standards of work, fees, working conditions and education, just like a union we can only be effective if we have a united and participating membership. Therefore it's

important that we encourage our colleagues to belong. The ALD is currently the largest lighting design organisation anywhere in the world but if we want to expand our activity in all these areas, improve our information systems, set up apprentice schemes, influence managements and continue to create social links within a profession largely comprised of freelance individuals, we need your support.

We will be redesigning the website, issuing information and recommendations about which union you should belong to and why, issuing a paper on a proposed ALD apprentice scheme and expanding our administrative base.

I would encourage you to try to be at the forthcoming AGM and participate.

Lastly, congratulations to the nominees for the Knight of Illumination Awards 2012, an increasingly recognised and respected industry award. 🍀

*regards, Peter*



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**At the risk of sounding like a grumpy old winger I will mention that I'm **hacked off** with all the hire companies who weren't interested in hiring any moving lights because "**the computa says they're all on the Olympics**", and if I order 750 Watt Source Fours don't send me a random mixture of 750W and 575W! **Mark Jonathan was unimpressed.****

## A PROFESSIONAL LD'S VIEW

Continuing on my grumpy theme I knew the Government authorities were not being open and honest about what was going to happen regarding transportation. We knew there would be Olympic lanes but we weren't told that side roads on Olympic routes would be blocked by barriers stopping us from turning right, nor that the direction of traffic would be reversed on underpasses. Oh, give us a break.

Alright, I'll go on the train, except that in a secret email that I was sent it was proposed that if London Bridge got too crowded, trains that go to and from Charing Cross, would not stop at London Bridge. "*But that's how I get to the West End*," you hear me wail. Imagine I might get on a train at Charing Cross and instead of changing trains at London Bridge I could speed onto Orpington, Bromley or even Pratt's Bottom!

I've just spent the last couple of months commuting into London, and even before the Olympics the trains were overloaded. Boris Johnson and his mayoral cohorts haven't got a clue what it's like for Londoners trying to get to work. We are more squashed than the legal requirements for animals going to slaughter. I'm getting out of here: the Edinburgh Festival next week and then straight to the Alps without going home as I can't get any sense about whether I will be able to get home because of the Olympics.

I've also spent the last month of what was supposed to be 'summer' feeling sorry for myself and everyone else who had an outdoor event or one of those canopied / tented affairs. While I've been under the cover of canvas or its modern equivalent it's been cold and damp as we touched up our cues well past midnight. In the winter, when the summer opera job offers come in, I think, '*oh, it'll be nice to be working out of doors with some sunshine. Only the odd mosquito to fend off, it should be lovely*'. Crikey, what a summer, we've been wearing woolly hats, winter anoraks, thermals, wrapped in rugs and hot water bottles. Well, the job's done and now the sun has finally come out. Although I think more rain is forecast for the opening of the Olympics.

Somehow, last week twelve members of the ALD Exec and two ALD Designer Members managed to get together with a facilitator to look at our strategy for the future. It was very invigorating to stand back and look at where we have come from and what our current strengths and weaknesses are. Where should we be going? What are the opportunities and threats that we face? You will hear more about *what and where* the organisation *could and should* be going, in due course. Clearly, if we want more services and support then there is a price tag attached but certainly you can be assured that there were a

lot of ideas on how the ALD should perform in the forthcoming years. More information at the AGM – please try and attend if you can. It should be a fun and informative day.

Clearly, one of the issues for the ALD is *who should be a member?* I think we all agreed that this organisation is for people engaged in lighting 'live performance'. That covers those of you who may not be doing it in a theatre. As you already know our comparatively new *professional* category is for non-designers who work professionally in lighting. We do think we would be a stronger association with more production electricians and programmers joining. We do need existing members to spread the word at the same time the ALD needs to tune into what the issues are for professional members as well as its designer members. Certainly, the ALD acknowledges that our *raison d'être* is bigger than just theatre and it's about people working in performance lighting.

This is not the first time I've mentioned billing. (see my top tip for this issue): recently, I looked at a big ad in the Sunday paper for a musical. Why were so many people wedged between the set designer and the lighting designer's billing? You should be billed *immediately after* the set and costume designer.

Now I shall name and shame the intimate Finborough Theatre. I understand that visiting producers are advised by the management that LDs do not sell tickets so they should be left off the poster. Boo! You know if the management is together enough to have a creative team and bill

them, then maybe that might send a message to the public that they might expect a certain visual standard. Generally, it doesn't cost the management anything to bill the creative team and it's something they can give their poorly paid or non-paid designers. I thought it was rather nice as I looked at the programme proof for the show I'm doing at Edinburgh this summer that *everyone* working on the show had a short biography including all the assistants and the hard working ASM.

Anyway, I hope those of you who are working on the Olympics, especially all the follow spot ops, enjoy the opening and closing ceremonies; at least you get a good seat for free and that you manage to get through the traffic jams to get to work. I hope I'll catch some of you for a drink in Edinburgh if you are coming up.

In the next issue I'm tempted to compare and contrast lighting small scale opera in 1993 with my soon to happen experience 19 years later with the same company.... [yes please – Ed.] 🍷

### Stop Press!

Just as Focus was going to press I saw the Olympic opening ceremony on TV. Many congratulations to everyone doing the lighting and projection. Very impressive indeed. Maybe it will remind the Government that one of the things that the UK does really well is put on shows and that they should be more benevolent towards the arts. Meanwhile, I'm sure that if Danny Boyle and his team were in charge of the London travel system things would run a hell of a lot better there too! (see page 39)

## Lightin' Tips 'n Tricks:

### MJ's Top Tip

*You must agree your billing at the contractual stage – you should be billed whenever the designer is billed and immediately after the stage and costume designer in the same size font. Choreographers, magic consultants, musical directors, conductors, etc may go above the designers but I don't think they should go between different designers.*

### MJ's Top Trick

*If you're working on a dance piece or a musical it's well worth getting the rehearsal room run recorded onto DVD. Then you don't have to manically try and write everything down. It's great for cue meetings, for working out speeds of cues, for the DSM to 'dry tech' giving cues... for rehearsing scene changes to time. I gather from James Smith that recently he was videoing musical numbers in previews and using the recording to give cue notes to the DSM.*

*I remember when I first started using video recording as a notebook – I said to the young choreographer, who was coming to have a meeting with me, "make sure you get them to record the rehearsal so we can discuss it when we meet." He arrived and said "They wouldn't let me record the rehearsal because the pianist would have to paid £50, but don't worry". . he said, "I can dance the entire ballet for you." I was furious and then started to chuckle as I wondered if we should run the ballet in my kitchen or the sitting room or maybe go outside and stage it in the street I lived in; Then I could even invite the neighbours. I'm happy to say that the early glitch was sorted out and now I can have a video of a rehearsal.*



# CRITICS AWARDS FOR THEATRE IN SCOTLAND 2012

We congratulated LD **Philip Gladwell** and asked him, “what’s all this about an LD walking on water?”

*Further than the Furthest Thing* has been performed many times but as far as I know our production at Dundee Rep was the first time anyone has taken the water aspects of the play so seriously.

Director James Brinning was inspired by an exhibition at the DCA of Liz Ogilvie’s work, who is an artist working with light and water. We went to her studio and spent a couple of hours talking about the beauty and simplicity of light reflecting from water onto walls and people. She has a small tank and we played around with ideas there. James, set designer Neil Warmington and I then went away and figured out how we could integrate those thoughts into a design that would both support the play and be a thing of beauty in its own right.

As the first half of the play mainly takes place in two locations, the idea was that as the audience came in the preset was an expanse of water. Only the cyc was lit, meaning that the water responded like a mirror and even though two islands were submerged under about 3cm of water, the effect was of a deep pool. We made the odd drop of water fall, which created very beautiful concentric circles. A 70° Source Four from bridge one was just enough to bounce that image up on to the cyc without giving away our islands.

At Beginners we started to drain the tank, which

revealed the first (higher) island just in time for the actors to use it for scene two. Scene one took place at the back of the tank (shown left) allowing the time needed for the tank to drain sufficiently. Later the second (lower) island was revealed in the same method (shown below).

Because of the thrust nature of the Rep, and also as the tank was as far into the audience as possible (losing four rows of seats) the idea of using purely cross lighting was not possible as the spill would either blind some audience members or look very

unattractive on the auditorium walls. However it was very important to avoid any light hitting the water that was not deliberate.

I managed to put a couple of Source Fours with scrollers into the audience by asking for the usher seats to be given up as lighting positions – this allowed me a good low shot coming in at about 45° to the stage. I had Parcans on booms at about 5.5m up from the water, which came in steeply from each side and gave some texture and fullness to the islands.





## FURTHER THAN THE FURTHEST THING

### Philip Gladwell lights on water

There were a couple of times in the show when actors went into the tank. It was about 40cm deep and was pretty hard to move about in. Walking or running in the tank created such a lot of ripple action that any reflection onto the cyc became a real mess of unclear light.

We discovered back in Liz's studio that the smallest drop of water is far more pleasing than

a flurry of movement. So for the heightened moments in the water I cheated and used a pair of Rosco X24s which have a 200-watt Enhanced Metal Arc source, and a good selection of lens choices right up to 70°. They are very bright and very even, the dimmer shutters could be better but you can plot your way round that.

During the interval we drained the tank

and flew in a huge structure of pipe work and industrial mesh catwalks. All the water was absent for the second half of the show until the character Bill commits suicide by drowning himself in his work place: the boiler room of a jar factory. We then unleashed mains pressure water from a pipe above his head and started to fill the tank again so water had begun to cover the stage again for the final moments of the show.

*Further than The Furthest Thing* was a real pleasure to work on and interesting to approach a piece of theatre from the starting point of an artists current work. Praise should also go out to a brilliant achievement from the good folk of The Dundee Rep production department. 🍷

*All photos by Philip Gladwell*

[www.PhilipGladwell.co.uk](http://www.PhilipGladwell.co.uk)



*Philip Gladwell*

**BEST DESIGN - WINNERS:**

Neil Warmington (set), Philip Gladwell (lighting), Elizabeth Ogilvie (water), *Further than the Furthest Thing*, Dundee Rep Theatre

*"Neil Warmington filled his set with 29,000 litres of water to capture the ebb and flow of Zinnie Harris' island-set play. Philip Gladwell made it look even more beautiful with a ravishing lighting design."* - Guardian - 5 stars - Mark Fisher

# 5<sup>TH</sup> KNIGHT OF ILLUMINATION AWARDS

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

9<sup>th</sup> September 2012

Battersea Evolution, Chelsea Bridge Entrance  
Battersea Park, LONDON



## Nominations for KNIGHTS OF ILLUMINATION 2012: THEATRE AWARDS

### DANCE

*Carbon Life*, Royal Ballet: **Lucy Carter** – for an unforgettable opening scene in which each individual dancer seemed to be suspended in a soft, flesh-coloured bubble of light creating the effect of truly heavenly bodies.

*The Metamorphosis*, Linbury Studio: **Guy Hoare** – for creating an eerily vivid definition of psychological and physical space moving between multiple locations including the 'rooms' of an invisible 'house' in a black box studio.

*Sweet Violets*, Royal Ballet: **David Finn** – for his stealthily evoked sense of place capturing the visually and morally murky world of Walter Sickert paintings, from the darkly claustrophobic and blood-stained to the stark energy of music-hall

### DRAMA

*Richard II*, Donmar Warehouse: **David Plater** – for his use of steep angles to heighten the sense of drama and coating the entire production in an authentic glow of medieval majesty [photo right, by Johan Persson].



## Nominations for KNIGHTS OF ILLUMINATION 2012: THEATRE AWARDS

DRAMA - continued...

*The Duchess of Malfi*, The Old Vic: **James Farncombe** – for his dynamic control of flow, mood and tension and his creation of dramatically contrasting spaces on a standing set [photo right top, by Johan Persson ].

*Anna Christie*, Donmar Warehouse: **Howard Harrison** – for bathing and shrouding the actors with light and his use of light in perfect harmony with set and sound to whip up a storm of wind, rain and churning sea on the tiny Donmar stage. [photo right, by Johan Persson ].

## MUSICALS

*Company*, Sheffield Crucible: **Neil Austin** – for his arresting use of colour, with contrasting panels of light embedded into the set, its precise patterning driving key dramatic moments and defining transitions and mood changes.





## Nominations for KNIGHTS OF ILLUMINATION 2012: THEATRE AWARDS

### MUSICALS - continued...

*Sweeney Todd*, Chichester Festival Theatre: **Mark Henderson** – for his dynamic use of almost caustic side-light streaming in, sculpting the action and controlling transitions  
*[photo left, by Catherine Ashmore].*

*Coram Boy*, Colston Hall, Bristol: **Bruno Poet** – for over-riding the venue's spatial constraints, creating cathedral-like structures of colour, pinpointing action around the choir, and creating a quasi-religious quality of light that transfigured the musical experience.



### OPERA

*Eugene Onegin*, English National Opera: **Jean Kalman** – for his conjuring of startlingly suggestive and contrasting moods from the sharply etched chill of an early morning duel to the mist-cloaked glow of a St Petersburg colonnade  
*[photo right, by Neil Libbert].*

*Norma*, Opera North: **Adam Silverman** – for his use of monochromatic yet richly atmospheric tones to illuminate the clashing worlds of a production set in the age of industrial revolution.

*Suor Angelica*, Royal Opera House: **DM Wood** – for creating a gleaming, clinical world of a hospital ward run by nuns, defining and igniting the sufferings of Suor Angelica with fresh intensity and anguish. 📺



## Office Oracle: News from Ian's production desk

### 2012 AGM

The 2012 Annual General Meeting of the Association will take place on **Saturday 29th September** at White Light's base in Wimbledon, South west London.

We are hoping to put together a full day of events including some smaller meetings for differing categories of membership, and the chance for members to speak with representatives of the ALD's Corporate members.

Such an occasion also requires a good social aspect, and we will be providing refreshments through the day, and weather permitting will round it all off with a barbeque late afternoon.

The final timetable of events are still being finalised, but the meeting will follow the same pattern as the last couple of years whereby the official business part of the meeting will take place late morning, allowing out of London members to travel, so please keep an eye on your email bulletins in the next month or so.

So that we can ensure that we have organised enough catering, and to get an idea of numbers attending, please contact the office to register your interest either by phone or email.

For details on directions and travel options to White, please visit their website at: [www.whitelight.ltd.uk/contact-us](http://www.whitelight.ltd.uk/contact-us)

### Sponsored Student Scheme 2013

This corporate members' funded scheme for students studying on Higher Education courses with an element of lighting design will open again for applications at PLASA 2012. The closing date for applications is Christmas 2012.

All current student members will be contacted at the start of September with an application form to fill in and return to the office complete with proof of your student status in order to maintain their current membership beyond April 2013.

**Please note that even if you are currently a member of the scheme you will need to apply again to continue your free membership through to April 2014.** If you do not, your membership will revert to a normal student category and you will need to pay the annual subscription for a student.

We would also be pleased to hear from our corporate members with ideas for meetings or experiences tailored specifically to the sponsored students.

### Students - Do We Have Your Correct Contact Details?!

You have just finished your current academic year. Do you have your term time address on our database? Do we have the correct one? If you are

graduating this summer, are you moving away from your study area?

We frequently receive post returned to us as 'Unknown at this address' during the autumn. If you are moving over the summer, please ensure that you update your information on the website directory or contact the office. An incorrect address can result in you not receiving membership renewal notices, and places the continuation of your membership at risk.

### Subscription Fees

2012 / 13 subscription fees are now overdue for payment. As laid out in the constitution the deadline for payment was 1st July 2012. Therefore this is your last reminder to pay. If we have your correct postal address (see above) you should have by now received a reminder letter and email.

Many thanks to those who responded to these. Please note however that the this copy of *Focus* will be the last one you receive if no payment is forthcoming.

At the time of writing, we are still owed approximately £10,000 in current year subscriptions which is equivalent to almost a quarter of our annual income. If you are in any doubt as to whether you owe any subscriptions, especially if you graduated last summer, please contact the office as soon as possible: [office@ald.org.uk](mailto:office@ald.org.uk)

However you pay your subscriptions we do ask members to include their membership number as a payment reference to help speed up this process.

### Members' Monthly Social Evening

There will be no official Monthly Members' Social evening at the end of August. The next Social is on Friday 28th September and will be sponsored by the ALD as it comes the day before our 2012 AGM (see above).

### PLASA Show 2012

As ever, the ALD will be exhibiting at the 2012 PLASA show at Earls Court between the 9th & 12th September. Please turn to pages 32-33 for more details. As part of your membership, you can receive a complimentary ticket to the exhibition. To register for your free ticket please go to [www.plasashow.com/ALD](http://www.plasashow.com/ALD).

### New Graduates

The first students of the new Edinburgh School of Lighting and Sound received their diplomas from Francis Reid at a Graduation Ceremony at the Royal Lyceum Theatre. The course, founded and directed by lighting designer George Tarbuck is focused on skills acquisition with an emphasis on placements with theatres, events producers, hire companies etc. Black Light are the lead supporter and the course is based in their premises.

Placements during the first year have included Brunton Theatre, Lyceum Theatre, Traverse Theatre, Tron Theatre Glasgow, Edinburgh International Conference Centre, Finix Events, Sound & Vision, Warehouse Sound Services, Northern Light, Carnival Chaos, Autograph Sound London. Next year's placements will also include the Festival and Kings Theatres.

The course is structured to allow tailoring to the needs of each of the students and the number is small – five this year – and will continue to be limited to no more than about ten to ensure the availability of quality placements. All the graduates are going straight into jobs.



*Edinburgh School of Lighting and Sound graduates Nicola Ahern, Graham Dempster, Shane Kavanagh, Tomas MacCionnach, Andrew McCall, with Francis Reid and George Tarbuck.*

When the idea was first mooted five years ago, Francis was so convinced that this could be an important development in production lighting training that he happily accepted George's invitation to add his name as patron. His confidence in the project has been fully justified.

[www.edinburghlightingandsoundschool.co.uk](http://www.edinburghlightingandsoundschool.co.uk)

### News from the Association of Italian Lighting Designers

*Lightinside* was created by AILD members as a contribution to a conference on theatre design and architecture held in Rome in 2010. It was presented at Show Way, Bergamo in 2010 and recently sent to Scandlight 2012.



In this brief video each designer has tried to describe the essence or relevance of lighting with a personal statement expressed as a videogram. The only criteria for the entries was that there was no criteria – each designer was free to choose the material that best described his/her attitude or philosophy.

There is a wide variety of responses from simple statements to complicated verbal backgrounds underlying the fact that lighting is a creative process and each designer has a different way of expressing this creativity.

[www.aild.it](http://www.aild.it)

[www.youtube.com/user/AILDTVCHANNEL](http://www.youtube.com/user/AILDTVCHANNEL)





### Emerging LD meeting

On Thursday 14th June we held our latest 'Emerging Lighting Designers' meeting at the ABTT 2012 Theatre Show. This time round we had a small 'panel' of James Farncombe, Mark Dymock and Andy Pollard from PL Accountants, who specialise in the entertainment industry.

We kicked off with the two LDs talking about subjects like how to 'make it', agents, fees and photography rights. Both Mark and James agreed that its mostly luck that brings you that show that transfers or suddenly strikes gold and becomes a huge success. Although of course you have to be good at your job and have the right contacts, its mostly a question of doing a good job for a good director and/or designer who may

take you with them up the ladder. Both spoke of shows that unexpectedly did very well or won awards that lead them to get more recognition as professional LDs.

We then spoke at length about agents, agent's fees (usually 10% + VAT) and how to get them. Both agreed that an agent relieves the stress of negotiating contracts and removes the lighting designer from the financial aspect of our business and free to concentrate on lighting the show. The downside of this as Mark pointed out is that often fees are set and there's little room for manoeuvre so you end up being paid less than if you'd just signed the contract yourself! Both mentioned how they were introduced to their agents through colleagues and friends. Again both pointed out

## MEETINGS

Will Evans and Kelli Zezulka

that no one should be in a rush to find an agent as until you get to more serious contracts, there's often little point in losing 10% of not a lot!

A very interested question that came from the audience was that of rights to production photos. One emerging LD had been told flatly by the production photographer that she could not take her own photos of the dress and would have to buy his! This brought two points (and quite a lot of consternation!), firstly it is the LDs right to take his or her own photos of their work and secondly it should always be included in your contract that you have free access to a selection of production photos for personal portfolio use (i.e not for profit). This alone could have been a seminar in itself.

Andy Pollard from PL Accountants was next up and he covered the basics of being self employed, how much an accountant should charge you (roughly £300-£400 sole trader and more if you're a Limited co), also he told some cautionary tales of what you can and can't claim for. Basically the rule

of thumb was to be sensible and make sure you can justify it reasonably as a business expense (so no, that latte on the way to the train doesn't count, nor does the pint of beer after the tech!) He also emphasised how important it is to keep good records (for minimum of 5 years) and that even if you do have an accountant, you are still personally responsible for your tax affairs so always check what your accountant is claiming for you and is filing your return correctly and on time.

All in all it was a very successful meeting and all agreed that we could have gone on a lot longer. A big thank you to Andy, James and Mark for being our panel and to all the members who attended and asked some very good questions.

### Accountancy advice from Andy Pollard

Here's a brief outline of what Andy covered.

#### How to trade

If you are considering being self employed there are several possible options on how to trade. These are: **Sole trader:** This is the simplest way of starting a business.

**Partnership:** This is similar to a sole trader except that two or more people run the business. **Limited company:** This gives the business a completely separate identity from the people who run the business. But there are potential tax savings to be had depending on your circumstances and level of income.

#### Book-keeping and accounting

Regardless of how you decide to trade it is extremely important that accurate and

detailed records of the business are kept. HMRC are clamping down hard on people who keep poor records; if you keep them in your pockets, or in the foot well of your car – then you need to adopt a good approach to record keeping.

#### Income tax

As a self-employed individual, you will be responsible for paying income tax on your earnings. There are special tax reliefs and allowances which self-employed people can claim. Visit our article on what you can and can't claim: [www.pl-accountants.co.uk/self-employed-expenses-claiming-expenses-as-a-sole-trader](http://www.pl-accountants.co.uk/self-employed-expenses-claiming-expenses-as-a-sole-trader)

Income tax is charged on your NET income, which is your takings/turnover less all your allowable expenses giving you a bottom line NET income and this charged at 20% up to total income of £34,370 and then 40% on income above this up to £150k per year then 50% thereon. Different rules apply to if you are a limited company. Please visit our website for the pro's and cons of becoming a Limited company: [www.pl-accountants.co.uk/going-limited-and-its-advantages](http://www.pl-accountants.co.uk/going-limited-and-its-advantages)

#### National insurance contributions

As a self-employed person you may have to pay national insurance contributions. Whether you have to pay contributions for yourself, and if so what type, depends on how much you earn. There are several types of national insurance contributions to

consider but in the main as a self employed individual there are two types that we need consider. Class 2 NIC is a fixed amount payable of £2.50 per week and class 4 is an amount charged to your net profit, currently at 9%.

#### VAT

Some clients tend to overlook VAT for a number of reasons. But VAT is vitally important and needs to be kept in mind. VAT can be either voluntary or if turn over is more than £77k then registration is compulsory. But there are a number of different VAT schemes that maybe beneficial, depending on your circumstances and were the majority of your work comes from.

### Meetings update

The next meeting for emerging lighting designers will be held on 9th September, the first day of PLASA at Earls Court. This meeting will focus on relighting, the role of the relighter and their relationship with the lighting designer. Paule Constable will be at this meeting to share her experiences and we'll have a couple of other guests.

Other proposed meetings include a 60th anniversary look at *The Mousetrap*, lit by ALD founder member Michael Northen, the Olympics and Paralympics and the upcoming UK tour of *The Lion King*. We will keep you posted via *Focus* and email bulletins once details are confirmed.

Thanks to James Laws for photos taken at the ABTT 2012 Theatre Show on the page opposite, and page 30.

# Diary Dates 2012-13

## 9th – 12th September

PLASA 2012, Earls Court\*

## 9th September

Emerging Designers' Meeting, PLASA 2012, Earls Court London

Knights of the Illumination – London\*

## 10th September

Sponsored Student Scheme 2013 opens

## 28th September

Monthly Members' Social Evening:  
*sponsored by ALD*

## 29th September

### ALD Annual General Meeting

11:00 at White Light, Wimbledon

## 26th October

Monthly Members' Social Evening, Covent Garden, London

## 30th November

Monthly Members' Social Evening

## 25th December

Closing date for Sponsored Student Scheme

## 2013

### 30th April – 1st May

PLASA Focus: Leeds \*

### 18th – 21st May

Showlight 2013, Cesky Krumlov, Czech Republic \*

*\*the ALD will have a presence at these shows*

# Contact us

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## Focus Magazine

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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).

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

# New Members

welcome!

## Professional Designer

**Mark Doubleday\***, Liverpool

**Liam Feeney**, Co. Galway

**Jack Knowles†**, St Albans

**Steven McDermott**, Orpington

**Rob Sinclair†**, London

**James Smith**, Poole

## Professional Member

**Robin Barton**, London

## Students

**Ed Locke**, London

**Jon Wing**, London

## Non-Profit Organisation

**University of West London**

*\* re-joining the association*

*† from Associate Member*

# THE STATE OF WHAT UNION?

**James Laws** on a subject that is as discussed as much today as it was 50 years ago – the ALD and union representation.



*Last time, we left the pre-history of the ALD at the point where all designers had joined together to create the Society of Theatre Designers, in July 1975. This decision was proposed and implemented within about nine weeks.*

*The process was accelerated by the prevalent unionisation in all walks of life and the feeling that, together, all designers would have a voice that would be taken seriously by all parties when fees and conditions were being negotiated.*

*There were wider considerations than I, as a very junior SBTLD member, could appreciate, as the following piece by Richard Pilbrow, specially written for this chapter, indicates.*

## The ALD and Equity

“ I was always a strong supporter of unionization for lighting designers.

I must of course admit I am a very left wing person. During my childhood, my Dad was a trade union official in his war-designated work.

By the 1970's I'd begun to work as a LD on Broadway, and had been welcomed to join the United Scenic Artists Union. In London as a producer I had joined the Society of West End Theatre (SWET) and been elected to the Executive Committee. These had been polarizing experiences.

On Broadway, unionization was strong. Stage calls began on time and stopped on time. But the quality of the crew and colleagues was quite superb. Joining the USA was a privilege. The rates of pay and conditions for lighting designers were light years better than in the West End. Why, there was even a pension fund (that now, forty years later, I really appreciate.)

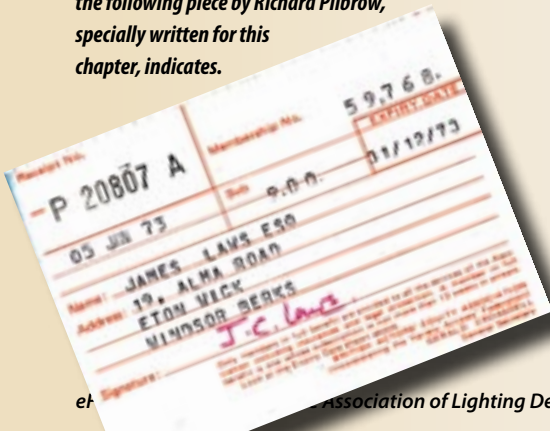
As to SWET in London... frankly I found it disturbing. At Theatre Projects, the company that I had begun, and as a producer, I found myself an employer. I felt that that imposed on me many obligations. It was my job to raise funds to allow the operation to prosper, but also it was my job to optimize the conditions of work. As a producer, we introduced our version of 'civilized' auditions; we

actually allowed every artist to complete a song . . . this caused some surprise among my American, very experienced, and professional partners. What's more, we adopted the practice of personally writing to every performer who auditioned, thanking them for their contribution. We introduced holidays for the casts of long running shows. We tried to be caring employers.

This was not the atmosphere within the Society of West End Managers. To my surprise I found that there the employees were oft considered the enemy. Designers, actors, crew; weren't they there to waste 'our' money? There were endless meetings about how to block another few pennies an hour to the firemen or stage door keeper. Of course there were exceptions... a very few producers under the age of fifty... but the feeling to me was of a Neanderthal age. I couldn't stand it, and soon resigned from the 'central' committee.

Lighting design in the mid 1970's had become established, but was still paid at an almost derisory level. I feared that by having so passionately pressed to establish the profession, I had led the way by accepting minimal fees. Now, 20 years later, lighting design was accepted, but few producers were willing to pay more than a minimum amount.

How to change the situation? How to achieve a position of strength... eventually perhaps parallel to the American precedent. I was convinced of two





things: first that only the power of a union would change the scene, and second it would be a long and slow process.

Opinion in the SBTLD was divided. Some wanted to preserve their role as putative artists... unionization smacked of rather vulgar labour. Others saw the potential in a union, but were inclined toward association with NATKE, who already were claiming the right to represent lighting design.

I had the advantage of talking with several of my American peers. While they all had reservations about the effectiveness of the United Scenic Artists for lighting designers, all knew it was better than no organization at all. In particular America's leading designer Jo Mielziner counseled me to associate with fellow artists (actors and directors) and not with technicians (scene painters) as had the US group.

I had had many good relations with Equity. As a producer they recognized my original contribution. While I knew design would only be a tiny part of Equity, I felt this was the way to go. But lighting designers on their own would be of no interest to the larger organization. If we merged with our scene and costume design colleagues we might represent a sufficiently large body of people to be of interest.

I spoke with my friend designer John Bury. Designers had attempted to organize for many years but without success. We reasoned that if the SBTLD opened its doors, it might provide the spur to galvanize a larger membership.

It worked. Scene and lighting designers flooded our small organization that became the Society of British Theatre Designers. We did join the ranks of Equity. To retain our own lighting forum we later began the ALD.

Change was indeed slow. Even our expanded group was only a tiny part of the whole. Despite the heroic efforts of many of our Equity representatives over many years, the present remains frustrating.

In these harsh economic times it's hard to believe that the rules of a lighting designer's engagement are going to radically change. A very, very few of our members have been richly rewarded with royalty shares on successful hits. But even the royalty bonanza has been heavily curtailed in recent years by changes in the financial structure of hit shows.

In 1975 Jo Mielziner wrote "Fifty-three years ago, we designers here in New York had the chance to start our own Society. Because no one had the gumption to do something about it, we were finally coerced and literally forced to join what is literally a labor union. We still suffer from being a small

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minority in a large group who neither read plays, attend the theatre nor give a damn about anything but shorter hours and longer pay."

We did have the gumption to start our own Society. We did join the arts, and not the craft union. Thirty-seven years later, I remain convinced that only industrial power will effect real change. But equally, so far we have been disappointed. Only steady industrial pressure... after all, we designers, of light, scenery, costume, props, projection and sound do make a major contribution... will slowly improve the lot of the lighting designer — alongside his or her friends and colleagues. ”

Richard Pilbrow, June 2012

**The new SBTD engaged Laurence Blackmore to act as Organiser, a union term denoting a co-ordinator of membership to give a collective voice. Laurence's remit was increase membership dramatically, to set the unionization options before this larger membership and to carry the debate to a decision which, as we have just read, the new Executive hoped would be pro-Equity. This is Laurence Blackmore's account of his work, written in 2006. It starts with an insight into the previous attempts of scenic designers to organize and it continues with the story from when he was engaged as Organiser, by which time (September 1975) the amalgamated SBTD was in being (so I question the first of the "three major decisions") but still with a very small membership :**

“ By the early 1970's the SBTLD was accustomed to meeting regularly to exchange information and ideas and one of its earliest members, John Bury, being both a lighting and scenic designer, expressed the view that scenic designers could use an organisation like the SBTLD for its profession. Attempts had been made since the 1950's to gather designers together, but only now, with a number of other leading scenic designers, principally Ralph Koltai, Timothy O'Brien and Patrick Robertson, Bury started to expand this idea.

The scenic designers group established a number of objectives but, being permanently busy, little actual initial progress was made. It was not until 1975 that the project really got underway. On 30th September 1975 Viki Brinton was instrumental in arranging a meeting at Theatre Projects offices at,

Long Acre at which the scenic designers group and the lighting designers group met to try to find a way forward. There were three major decisions taken. The first was for the SBTLD to become the core and first membership of The Society of British Theatre Designers, the second was to engage an organiser to raise membership. The third was to attempt to get British Actors Equity to represent designers.

As Organiser I was engaged to write to every known theatre designer in the country, lay out the aims of the organisation, induce them to join the Society and also to pay a membership subscription. There was a very positive initial response and early in November a most remarkable event took place. More than one hundred and fifty British theatre designers crammed into the small Strand Electric demonstration theatre in King Street, Covent Garden, to hear what the Society was hoping to achieve. It was the largest gathering of theatre design talent in the history of the theatre at that time and probably should have gone into the Guinness Book of Records.

What this meant, however, was that the original SBTLD became somewhat swamped. The original group of lighting designers, while still supporting the scenic designers, decided their own specialist needs still had to be catered for and (6 years later in 1981) formed the Association of Theatre Lighting Designers as it exists today.

Over the next two and a half years the SBTD gradually moved towards its goal. Equity was initially reluctant to consider the proposal that it should represent scenic designers as the technicians union NATTKE claimed to do so. However, the scenic designers themselves firmly rejected this claim



and as NATTKE was unable to produce any such members from their ranks Equity began to accept the idea. With over two hundred and fifty fee paying members and associates the SBTD was moving steadily forward and after a number of meetings with Secretary General Peter Plouviez it was finally agreed in May 1978 that Equity would accept and represent Theatre Designers as its members.

As Organiser, my work was now at an end. I initially took the job for a number of reasons. The first was that it was an interesting challenge. The second was that the individuals driving the project forward, John Bury, Ralph Koltai, Tim O'Brien, Pat Robertson, Richard Pilbrow, Stuart M Stanley of Leatherhead and others, were people who had all achieved both security and reputation in their profession and themselves needed no protection whatsoever. It isn't often that the opportunity to work on a genuinely altruistic project comes along and this was one of those.

Designers in all areas of the theatre take union representation and protection for granted. It was very different thirty years ago and would not have changed without the efforts of a small number of gifted and visionary individuals. ”

Lawrence Blackmore 2006



**Lawrence Blackmore's account belies the amount of debate and questioning that the prospect of union membership raised. Here are the relevant extracts from the document of April 1976 that presented the options to the membership:**

THE CHOICES.

1. Remain as we are - a professional discussion and pressure group. Providing an advisory service but realising we can never be in a position to establish a legally accepted salary structure in our profession.
2. Push out the profession's negotiation in pursuit of negotiating strength, better fees and conditions. (It is generally considered very difficult, if not impossible, in view of our limited numbers and resources.) Also we certainly would not be allowed to form our own union and if we were drafted by law into another union, our own professional society would be no safeguard.
3. Join a larger professional association such as The Society of Industrial Technicians and Technicians. The latter association seems to us, on investigation, to be negligible. It puts us in no position of strength vis-a-vis theatre managements, and again it would not exempt us from a demand to join a union, should such a union claim the legal right to represent us.
4. Join a non-theatrical union. It seems to us there is nothing to gain by seeking to affiliate with such a union as the Association of Cinematograph Television and Allied Technicians, which has no recognised right to negotiate on our behalf in the theatre.

5. Join NATKE.

Advantages:

- a) Standing - they are a recognised theatre union.
- b) Ease of Access They claim the right to represent us, a claim purported to be recognised by TMA, ADP and EDRT, although they have never implemented such recognition.
- c) Reasonable cost - it is likely that our dues would be comparable to our present subscription and would be related to earnings.
- d) Quite a lot of our members may have to be NATKE members in relation to other staff functions which they undertake. NATKE membership for designers would solve the problem of dual membership which might apply in other alternatives.

Disadvantages:

- a) Our minority position - we would be but a few amongst many members with completely different aims and attitudes.
- b) The Union structure - NATKE is run by branch and delegate structure. Representation is geographical. The voice of one elected delegate represents the interests of each branch. This would tend to make the point of view of the isolated designer negligible.
- c) In larger theatres the lack of any real interest in our position by the union. Whilst happy to recruit us for the sake of numbers, NATKE has never shown the slightest sign of making membership attractive to designers.

D. In smaller theatres and on the fringe NATKE have little or no presence. Since a primary object of our Society is to seek improvement for designers in this area NATKE appears to have nothing to offer.

6. Join Equity:

Advantages:

- a) Standing: they are a recognised theatre union.
- b) Sympathy: designers feel naturally at one with directors and actors in the theatre, and would naturally make common cause with them on many issues. Grouped with natural allies, we would expect them to fight on our side.
- c) Preserved identity: Inside Equity designers, as with directors, choreographers and stage-managers, could remain a clearly recognised and eloquent minority not submerged completely in the general will.
- d) Relative ease of access: Equity have shown themselves ready to work for recognition as the union legally entitled to represent us, if we approach them as a truly representative body to ask them to do so.
- e) Support for younger designers in smaller theatres and on the fringe. Here actors are being secured a minimum wage by their union. Their help would be there for the designer.
- f) A direct voice in policy: general meetings are open to all members.
- g) Reasonable costs: it is likely that our dues could be comparable to our present subscription.

Disadvantages:

- a) The need to fight for the right to belong. At present NATKE claims to represent us and we would need to contest that claim until it was broken.
- b) A problem of dual membership might arise for those members who also work in recognised NATKE grades.

CONCLUSION:

Your acting executive has discussed these matters and then written these notes as a result of these sincere convictions:

1. The times invite us to unite to act in our own interests.
2. We should seek the protection of a union, strong and naturally careful of these interests; and, once in, we should work to maintain our identity as The Society of British Theatre Designers.
3. The final decision should be made by all our members.

**Actually, there was another colossal advantage to joining Equity; their contracts rated you as 'Schedule D' for tax! This meant that you were treated as Actors were, so no PAYE was deducted and you could claim professional expenses against tax. When faced with the option of an Equity or a NATKE contact as Chief Electrician/Lighting Designer at Farnham in 1974 I had no hesitation in saying "Equity, please!"** 🌟



# The Equity Theatre Designers' Committee

Richard Lambert and Edmund Sutton

When things go spectacularly wrong on a show, and you later need to assess the strength of your agreement with the Producer, time and again there are warning signs along the way.

Equity often hears stories such as *"well the producer said that because we were behind schedule I should go 'buy the material/lights/rent the equipment/buy my plane ticket/book the crew' and add it to my invoice"*.

In an attempt to be helpful, and because we're all passionate about the show and want to help it succeed, we tend to do things which in hindsight aren't sensible and could even be seen as financially reckless.

Advice here is, simply, don't do this! This will not be a formal agreement and you've become a co-investor in the production without any of the additional benefits should the show do well! You've lent your own money to someone else to bolster their costs of doing business.

Typically this should be a warning sign that all is not well, and it's likely to be more than your contracted fee you're risking!

Any legitimate producer should pay the bills directly as this eliminates your liability for that product or service. If impossible, for whatever reason, then the Producer should advance you the money. There's no excuse for not advancing money the same day either online, using PingIt, or by paying cash into a bank account.

## One of Equity's Successes this month

A successful East London fringe production company has a contentious process for paying their invoices: after the production has closed the production manager first approves the invoices, which can be well into the run of their following production (maybe 7 or 8 weeks later), then they're passed to the accounts department who


always seem to be on holiday or out of the office. Emails are ignored without acknowledgement or reply, phone calls become left messages with no return on call. Equity's advice was sought by one of our ALD members who had an outstanding invoice of over three months. This production company received an email from Equity – they responded with surprise to get an Equity email and paid the invoices the same day! General rule here is that Invoices should be paid within 30 days from issue and are subject to legal enforcement with interest if left unpaid. All Equity members have legal advice included in their membership and Equity will act to support their members in case of dispute.

## Another recent success

When Equity brings its pressure to bear in this sort of case, the knowledge that it has the legal and financial resources to fight

court-cases, is very often enough to get producers to honour their obligations. Often your case is combined with those of other members', so the cost of chasing your debt is reduced. Whereas it is very difficult for a designer to keep sustained pressure on recalcitrant producers, when abroad, say, the Equity staff write letters, make telephone calls, and when required turn up in person at the producer's offices, regardless.

Some of the victories are large. Recently, Equity won a £3/4 million compensation award for an injured performer, plus substantial legal costs.

Ask yourself, could you do this sort of thing on your own if it happened to you? We are stronger together, but we need to join together. To join, visit [www.equity.org.uk](http://www.equity.org.uk) and click 'Join'. 



*Photo by Jennie Marengi courtesy of Robbie Williams Productions*



# THE DIAMOND JUBILEE CONCERT

“...a triumph of Illumination!”

*The Times*, 5th of June 2012

In July 2011 **Durham Marengi** received a call from **Robbie Williams** (*Productions that is, not the singer!*) inviting him to design the lighting for the Diamond Jubilee Concert on June the 4th this year.

Unlike his previous design for the Golden Jubilee where Durham was responsible for the light and fire show on the façade of Buckingham Palace this time the concert, rather than being in the Palace garden, it would be staged in front of the Palace around the Queen Victoria Memorial...



# THE DIAMOND JUBILEE CONCERT

## Durham Marenghi

Architect Mark Fisher designed the roof structure which had to be as transparent as physically possible to create minimal obstruction of the Palace for our live and television audiences, so we set about integrating lighting into the structure to lessen the impact of lighting fixtures on the design.



Rendering by StuFish courtesy of Robbie Williams Productions

### The kit

I approached i-Pix to discuss what fixtures might be suitable to inset into the roof beams and decided that we would integrate 80 BB4 units into the beams with a further 30 Linear 2 foot battens in triple boxes at the beam ends for 'blindners'. The new linear range has a new green LED which is very vibrant and a white element as well, just what I needed for a compact bright TV-friendly source.

We decided to have one run of truss around the LED screen as a backlight and effects source, and had to compare the use of mini beam trussing with motors located above against standard trussing with motors inside the truss, which we went for as it allowed us to get the rig higher into the roof and away from the LED screen background.

I needed a compact bright spot and wash for this position and chose 36 Clay Paky Alpha Wash 700s which are the same physical size as the 300 but with the light output of a 1200, plus 36 Alpha Spot QWO 800 (Quiet Wide Optics) because of their amazing output and zoom range and the unique ability to keep gobos in sharp focus not only on performers nearby but also in the air and on the audience hundreds of feet away.

On top of the roof beams we needed a weatherproof colour changing fixture that we would not be able to reach once the roof membranes were pulled into place and I used 12 CK Coloreach Powercore for this. These lit the Queen Victoria Memorial in all its newly cleaned glory and the gold angel inevitably became a lighting focal point for various cues during the concert (see photo on previous page).

A further run of truss around the monument itself sported 60 Clay Paky Sharpys pointing up as a collar of light for the monument (one for

each year of Her Majesty's reign!) and we placed another 60 Alpha Beam 1500s in a complete circle around the whole stage to create aerial effects and to frame the performance stage in light for the helicopter shots.

*The stage became rather crowded when it was decided to each act's equipment onto the stage and then remove it after each artist had performed, rather than trying to change sets during the concert. This was no small feat considering the world-class musicians involved who demand perfection in their instruments and equipment – push a Steinway too far and, like most of us, it will go out of tune.*

I did manage to squeeze in 10 more QWO 800s as floor lights along with some chrome par kickers and six Union Jacketed Sharpys donated to the concert by Clay Paky which became the talking point of various technical forums!

The stage roof could not support much in the way of equipment other than what we had integrated into the roof beams so all our key light had to come from technical towers some distance away. The four FOH towers housed 32 Alpha Beam 700 and 4 Alpha Beam 1500 as the stage FOH wash with 20 Syncrolite SXL7/3 as large wash

lights for audience lighting and effects.

Eight Gladiator followspots completed our key lighting and TV lighting director Steve Nolan did a great job in keeping faces effectively lit throughout daylight, dusk and darkness from these less than ideal throws and angles.

The Royal box was illuminated with 32 CK Intelliwhite Blasts which allowed us to vary the colour temperature of the white lighting of our VIP guests and Her Majesty as the evening progressed. I kept a careful eye on this level as Her Majesty had explained that she had missed some of the Golden Jubilee due to her key lights being a little bright... oops!

### Lighting design

Tim Routledge was my lead programmer on a GrandMA2, with with Alex Passmore handling key lighting for Steve Nolan.

There were two aspects of the event lighting which I had some experience of from the Golden Jubilee; the lighting of the Mall which was achieved with 170 Chrome Par cans affixed to special brackets on the flag poles along the Mall, thanks to Robbie Williams who went from pillar to post with my photo of the Mall 10 years ago to obtain permission from the flag pole guardians to use their poles once more.

The other aspect was of course the lighting of the Palace façade and the inclusion of 3D mapping for effective video projection once the sun had finally set. I felt more like a Royal Astrologer than a lighting designer as I prepared a detail running order with precise daylight levels throughout the evening to demonstrate exactly



*Photo by Durham Marengi courtesy of Robbie Williams Productions*

which artist would have a dark enough canvas for the BBC's video mapping aspirations. These sequences involved a delicate balance between stage lighting and video image and it was gratifying to see the amazing work of the visual artists receive so much praise and interest after the event on a system that we had so carefully designed.

Of course, for the other three hours of the show (and at points where pyro and fire were too bright to allow the projections to be effective), I had to have the ability to floodlight the façade. In 2002 I used multiple Mac 2k washes, which were a great work horse solution but had to be protected by black bin liners every night due to our summer weather (nothing changed there then!). However,

it made the forecourt of the palace look a bit of a mess to say the least, and that was the view from the windows of Her Majesty and her guests.... oops!

Having discovered a new fixture to achieve massive coloured floodlighting, and first using it on the New Year's Eve event at the London Eye earlier this year, I turned again to Syncrolite Arena Colors, and thirty of them provided the main wash with 32 Alpha Wash 1500 to pick out the pillars. The Arena Color is basically a scroller and douser that fits on the front of a Philips Arena Vision fixture but with a few innovative and unique features and in two groups of 15, to cross fade the scrollers, each group of fifteen sources could throw 2000 lux onto the façade!



*"... a mask for the Dragonfly 3 that effectively blacked out each window..." Photo by Durham Marengi courtesy of Robbie Williams Productions*

The Palace compound and the cameo performances by Madness and a duet by Alfie Boe and Renée Fleming on the balcony was controlled separately on a GrandMA1 operated by Dave Hill. The challenge of lighting Madness on the roof (a band with whom I first toured with as a rigger back in 1983) was overcome by footlights and par uplights. Four more QWO 800s provided backlight and gobo effects and ten of the new Thomas Smartline 4 battens placed along the back of the stage provided our background with which Dave created a dynamic display of patriotic colours.

The projection sequence during Madness really caught everyone's imagination and rightly became the WOW! factor of the whole evening. Good projection is an exercise in darkness control and as light and darkness designer I was able to assist in rather a unique way.

Owing to the fact that there were many important guests from around the globe staying in the Palace, we were instructed not to shine any light onto the façade after 23:30. Now, as it got dark around 22:00 this represented a very serious problem and there was much discussion about of boarding up windows in the state guest rooms and other intrusive black out scenarios when I hit upon a rather elegant and inexpensive solution (much favoured by accountants!). As we had the building mapped so accurately we were able to create a mask for the Dragonfly 3 that effectively blacked out each window allowing the projection team to work all night without affecting the denizens of our 'screen'.

At the request of BBC Executive Editor Ben Weston and Event Producer Guy Freeman we also deployed a further mask to disguise the images

during preparation to prevent the public, press and other broadcasters from obtaining pictures in advance of the concert. For our lighting programming and for similar reasons we also made extensive use of WYSIWYG to keep our real lighting under a bushel.

I imported the various stage and architectural elements into WYSIWYG and Tim Routledge was able to programme most of the musical performances at the LH2 rehearsal studio in Acton. I was able to show Geoff Posner, the television director, all of his (over 30) camera views, and any sightline issues such as LED screen heights and large screen video truck positions were ironed out in the virtual world.



*Rendering by Durham Marengi courtesy of Robbie Williams Productions*

# THE DIAMOND JUBILEE CONCERT

## Durham Marengi

The lighting rental was put out to tender and the company that responded with the most accurate interpretation of my design with the least amount of equipment substitutions and the best price was Neg Earth. I believe that any lighting design can only be as good as the crew that realise it, and *The Times* headline '...a triumph of illumination!' is a tribute to all those involved.

It is also worth considering that the entire concert had to be struck by dawn the following day to allow foreign broadcasters a clear view as they prepared for the day's 'Pomp and Circumstance' with not one hairy arsed rigger in sight, an amazing feat of production.

One of the fascinating aspects of our work on large events is that we become responsible for every visible image whether it be for the live audience, the 17 million TV viewers, the national and worldwide press or for every other media from YouTube to T-Shirts and mugs. Attention to detail is fundamental to a successful event even though it often goes unnoticed. Camera 33 for example had a few stray branches in shot for the balcony sequence... so a quick word to our well humoured production team and the branches were 'disappeared' by morning. According to the Royal Park arborists anything under an inch in diameter is first year growth and fair game for the chop... you learn something new every day! 🌲



Photo by Jennie Marengi courtesy of Robbie Williams Productions



## ABTT Theatre Show

Well now, off to Brick Lane. Definitely exploring new territory and not quite as accessible as in the past. Still, the natives were friendly and on the whole access straightforward and one and all rejoiced that we had at long last been released from our incarceration in a basement at the Horticultural Halls! Mind you we did manage to create some road blocks in our cul-de-sac location so I am afraid that the stands further on had short commons from time to time. But all very companionable.

Trade was pretty steady over both days with plenty of known faces dropping by to pass the time of day. So their satnavs and handheld GPS systems must have been working overtime to navigate them to the right place.

As ever quite a number of student enquiries but in most cases it is a question of 'come and see me in September at Plasa' when the Sponsored Student scheme is running. Quite a few names noted so it will be interesting to see whether they reappear. But how come they have escaped so far without having a form put in front of them at their drama college? I know there are some where that is item 1a) on the syllabus! Maybe we have some internal marketing to do.

Vehicle access to the new location is a bit tricky. The get in was fine late on the Tuesday evening – most stands already set up and the traffic cleared away. Get out a bit more

interesting with the street outside grid-locked and some police intervention required in order to unblock the congestion. It all looked rather chaotic but the ALD contingent managed to work their way through and clear fairly quickly.

There was some pressure since there was a need for the car to be emptied once home and then loaded to the gunwhales with four people and a week's worth of baggage for five (work that one out) as we set off for Scotland on Friday morning.


Because this year's tale has a postscript. Member # 1 was round and about at the show and in conversation it transpired that he and Molly were heading for their Coll hideaway in the next couple of days. Now that's interesting, said I, because I am picking up a yacht in Craobh Haven (a bit of Gaelic for you) on Saturday and aiming to visit Colonsay and Iona and Staffa and maybe Coll during the week – can we visit?


And so we spent a night mid-week anchored in a Tíree bay watching the sun set at 10.30pm complete with some pretty fancy lighting effects. The next day we sailed to the adjacent island, Coll, dropping anchor in a small sandy bay. A trip ashore in the dinghy for a couple of us, walk up the beach past the wrecked remains of the Harmony (which was stranded there in a storm in the late 1800's, I believe), round the corner and there we are – somewhat unbelievably greeted as the first 'waterborn' visitors that Richard has had in 50 years. But what a warm welcome from them both. And photos to prove it!

See you in September at PLASA! 🍷

Nigel Lawson Dick

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 Stand # for those exhibiting at PLASA 2012. Drop by and say hello!

# PLASA 2012 Takes it to the Next Level

PLASA 2012, the largest international event for entertainment and installation technology in the UK, is taking place on 9 – 12 September 2012 at Earls Court in London. At the centre of the entertainment lighting for 35 years, this year's show is set to take it to the next level. With a host of new features up its sleeve and a series of once-in-a-lifetime sessions up for grabs, the 2012 edition is the only place to be this September.

## Professional Development

In this important year for London and the creative industries, PLASA 2012 sees the launch of the PLASA Professional Development Programme; a brand new four-day programme of educational sessions, which are free-to-attend for all visitors. Designed to provide unparalleled access to the most creatively ambitious and technically challenging projects out there, the Pro Development Programme is split into 9 distinct categories, with 80 sessions taking place in four brand new purpose built theatres on the show floor.

## Olympics Behind The Scenes

As the first show to take place after the London Olympic and Paralympic Games, organisers, PLASA Events, have promised a celebration of our industry's contribution to this summer's events. *The Olympics Uncovered* is a series of fascinating sessions looking at this monumental

occasion; *Behind the Scenes at the London 2012 Ceremonies* will be presented by six key members of the technical team; Piers Shepperd (Technical Director), Jeremy Lloyd (Technical Manager for Technical Design and Staging), James Lee (Technical Manager for Aerial and Closing Ceremonies), Nick Jones (Technical Manager for Lighting, AV and Power), Scott Buchanan (Technical Manager for Services and Special Projects) and Chris Ekers (Senior Production Manager for Audio and Communication). This session is a once in a lifetime opportunity to find out how the team turned Danny Boyle's vision for the Opening Ceremony into a reality.

## Wide-ranging Programme of Events

Other categories in the programme include; *International Projects, Breaking New Ground, Future Trends, Emerging Technologies, Business Issues, Back to Basics, Sustainability and Safety Issues*. World renowned lighting designer Durham Marengi and associate LD Tim Routledge will explain their role in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Concert, produced by the BBC, in *A Triumph of Illumination - The Diamond Jubilee Concert*. D3 Technologies will be presenting *Buckingham Palace - the Diamond Jubilee Projection Mapping Event*, which will explain how the in-house technical solutions team assisted with the production of this massive event. James Simpson, Lighting Visualiser at the Royal Operate House, will be discussing the emerging

new technology in the lighting industry in *The Future of Lighting Technology*. Other seminars of particular interest to ALD members are; *LEDs and Lies - Why the Answer Is and Isn't Always LEDs* (Mike Wood), *Wireless Lighting Control with DMX, RDM and Ethernet* (Wireless Solution), *Architecture and the Art of Theatre Design* (Richard Pilbrow) and *Empowerment through Heath and Safety* (BECTU).

## Product Launches

As always, the show will be the international launch pad for an exciting range of new products, and visitors can expect to see over 300 exhibitors including A.C. Entertainment Technologies, Avolites, Chauvet, Clay Paky, ETC, Hawthorn, Philips Lighting, Robe, Tait Technologies and Wireless Solution.

## Don't forget to drop by!

You'll also see the ALD at our stand in the PLASA Fringe, an area on the show floor which comprises a number of industry associations. ALD members are invited to register for a free ticket which covers entry to the main exhibition and the Professional Development Programme across the entire four days of the show.

To register for your free ticket please go to [www.plashow.com/ALD](http://www.plashow.com/ALD).

## Bigger picture | Brighter ideas

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Alison Chetwynd and Tom Kelf from LEE's R&D Lab compare colours on LED and Tungsten sources.

Eureka moments can occur just about anywhere: in the bath, on the bus to work, at the top of a mountain... For Alison Chetwynd, head of research and development at lighting filter manufacturer LEE Filters, more often than not it's the middle of the night. "It happens all the time!" she laughs. "I often wake up thinking, 'Now, what would happen if I added that colour?' My mind ticks away far too much!"

In the 25 or so years she's been working for LEE Filters, that adds up to a lot of lost hours of sleep. Having completed a degree in engineering, she joined the manufacturer in 1987, starting in the R&D department, moving into quality control,

where she managed the coating of polyester camera filters, and then returning to the R&D lab, where she now heads up a team of five.

#### Problem solving

Alison's role essentially requires her to solve problems – be they, as was the case in the past, associated with the development of enlarger filters or, much more recently, overseeing the Designers Series. "Developing new products is extremely satisfying," Alison says, going as far as to suggest it's often something of a revelation. "It is possible to design a filter purely technically, but when you understand why a designer might

## Colour

Ever wondered why regular colour filters don't look the same with white LED spotlights? We asked Lee Filters to explain...

*need a certain colour – be it for a particular skin tone or mood – you start to build a whole new level of knowledge about what you're doing. Suddenly it's not just a pretty colour, it becomes an almost physical thing."*

#### Filters for LED sources

The latest product to put Alison's problem-solving skills to the test is the [new filter range](#) designed specifically for use with LED lighting fixtures. Launched with the aim of providing a solution before it becomes an actual problem, the range tackles the notorious 'blue spike' that makes LED lighting tricky to work with and, on occasion, uncomfortable for on-stage performers. "White LED lights have been around for a while," explains Alison, "but at first they were mainly used for general lighting. Then it became apparent that theatrical-style fixtures with more focused beams were being brought out, so we knew they'd be turning up in theatres before long. That's when we started to do some serious research into the spectrum of light produced by the white LEDs. We realised that our existing filters would look very different on LED – but we also knew that we could re-design the filters to solve this problem."

Designing a range of filters that would provide the subtlety and range that designers require was no mean feat. While, of course, there are coloured LEDs available, they tend not to produce the variety and depth demanded by the lighting professional working in the theatre. "We had to go back to basics," Alison reveals. "Historically, everything has been designed around tungsten, and we understand how the dyes we use work with it. For the LED range, we had to invest in new equipment that allowed us to make a scan of the filter on the actual lamp – not just a scan of the filter alone. This enabled us to research a number of the different fixtures that are out there and get a picture of what's being used, because unfortunately not all LEDs are the same."

#### How it's done

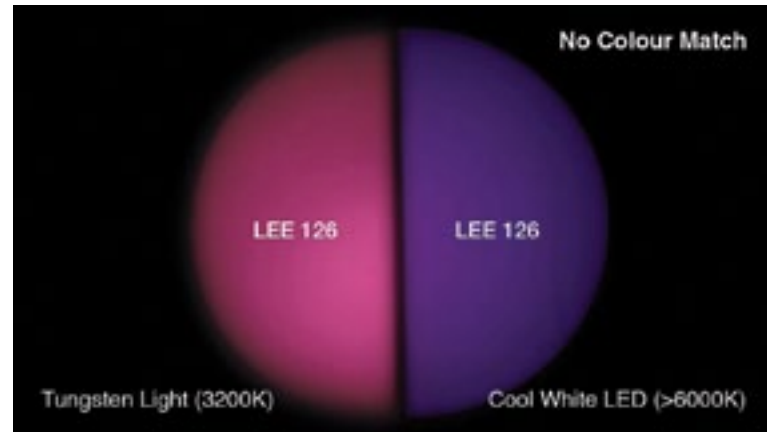
The filter most requested for in connection with white LEDs is the Colour Temperature Orange (CTO), which warms up the coldness that characterises this light. What the range of LED CTOs launched by LEE does, is give the LED light more of a tungsten-like quality, while also reducing the intensity of the blue spike.

Alison explains the design process involved, among other things, "spending a lot of time in a dark room, doing a lot of head-scratching; projecting the new and old colours; taking photographs to check colour rendering; and having numerous debates among the team as to what we were actually seeing."

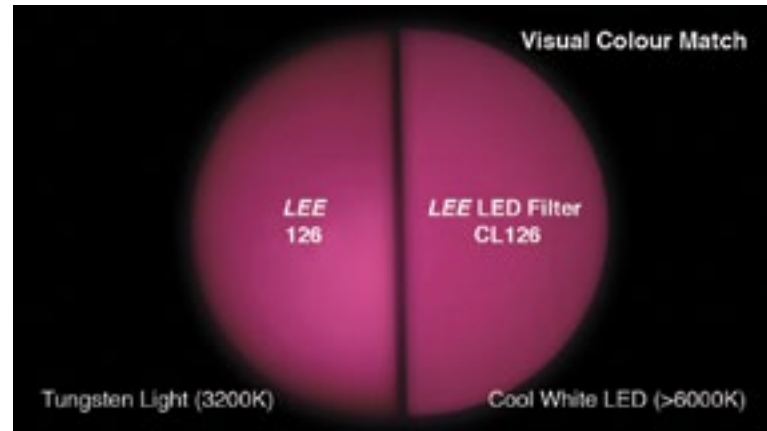
Surprisingly, matching the blue colours turned out to be the most challenging aspect of this range. "The blue the LED generates is very 'royal,'" explains Alison, "but in many cases we wanted a more greeny-blue hue, and there wasn't much of the spectrum to play with."

The initial launch included ten of LEE's most popular colours. This was closely followed by a further nine, plus four CTOs. The coding is the same as the existing range, but simply prefixed with CL (which stands for Cool LED). The CTOs, however, are colours in their own right, and are numbered 622, 624, 626 and 628.

"We wanted to get ahead of the game and resolve it before it became a problem," Alison concludes. "So, when lighting designers come to us with an idea of what they want to create on stage, we already have something for them to work with. It saves them time and hassle." 🍷



**Above:** LEE 126 on Tungsten (left hand side) and Cool White LED (right hand side). The colour is completely different on the LED source. **Below:** LEE 126 on Tungsten (left hand side) and new LEE LED Filter CL126 on Cool White LED (right hand side). There is now a good visual colour match.



# An interactive Theatre Project

We asked lighting designer and techno-wiz **Fridthjofur Thorsteinsson** to play with Richard Pilbrow's new toy...

I am not sure which is most remarkable: Richard Pilbrow's life and work, how much of it he recalls or how he has managed to fit it all on barely 500 pages in his recently published autobiographical story *A Theatre Project*. He has lived a remarkable life indeed and is obviously the type of person that loves telling stories, even - or especially - if he himself takes centre stage! Don't we all? This is apparent in his love for creating theatre – and even more so in

his passion for creating theatres; not only telling the story itself – but shaping the medium used to make it possible to tell the story.

Driven by his passion to constantly improve and innovate he can proudly take credit for many inventions that modern theatre-makers take for granted, both simple and complex. Then, even after slowing down his career (I hesitate to say retire), he not only writes and publishes his book but shortly after, driven to improve the audience's experience, publishes it again in an electronic format; an enhanced medium.

*A Theatre Project*, is now available as in an 'e-edition' – either as flash/html for your pc/mac/android/kindle fire or an app for your iDevice. Comparing the different experiences I have read it on a Mac, an iPad, an iPhone – and a printed copy in a set of various different circumstances: On a rainy Sunday afternoon, on a train or a plane, in the lunch break, before bed and so on. It does not require constant internet connectivity for reading as it can be downloaded onto the app.

The main feature of the e-edition is its connectivity to the Internet; something the book obviously cannot offer (and requires connection). Most pages have links to websites, YouTube videos or podcasts, which provide more information on various topics, without taking space from the book or deriving from the author's story. The



reader never has to exit the book's website or app when following a link, as they either open in a new browser window or inside the app. Some videos are even embedded into the book's pages – such as the author's introduction, which makes for a nicely unprecedented personal welcome. These are all colour-coded, depending on what medium they link to. The links do however not always layer on top of the correct text or object they should link from, which is a slight nuisance, but in most cases you realise the misalignment.



Linking like this is not innovative in itself; this is what websites have been doing from day one. But the way it has been brought onto the pages of a book makes the book feel more alive; making more content more easily available to the reader than just from the author. From wikipedia articles on musicals of the past (produced long before my time) to demonstrating incredibly efficient changeovers at various venue the links allow the reader to dig deeper into Pilbrow's and his accomplice's work, the people he meets, the places he visits (and makes a mark on) and so on.

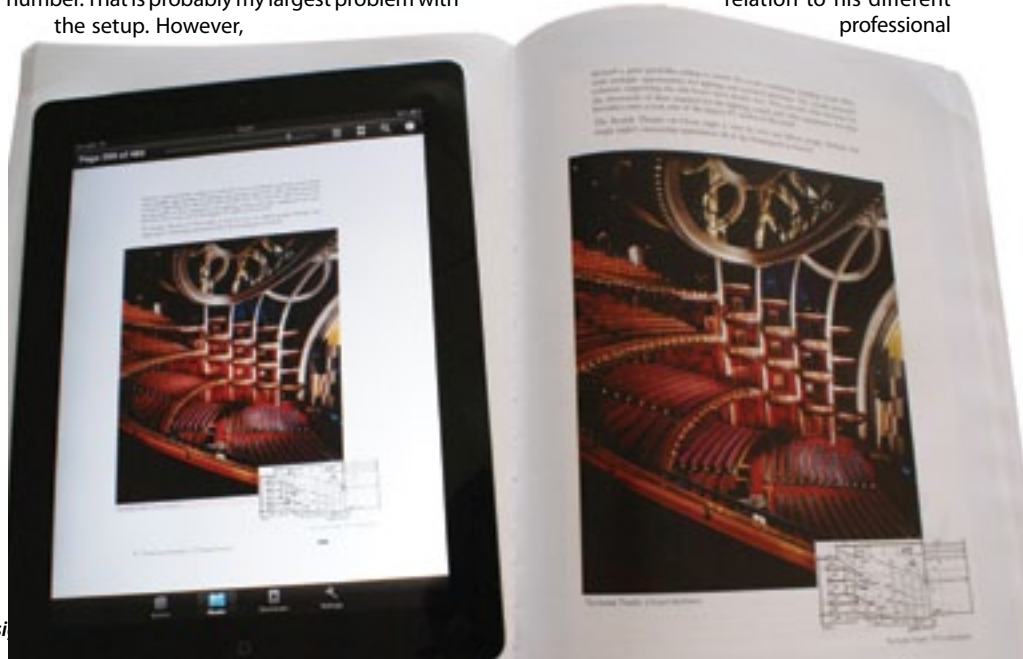
While the most convenient feature is perhaps how all versions have the same page layout there is a difference in numbering of about 15 pages. This is because of how the printed version does not begin its numbering until the actual content begins, skipping pages like the title page, index and other practical bits while in the e-version (for the sake of indexing) they simply have to be numbered. Not a major problem though.

Apart from that, the electronic version is laid out exactly the same as the printed copy. I was, however, not sold on the idea to begin with and felt as this was an electronic copy anyway, it could just as well be laid out like a website, or more 'app-like' – more specific to the medium. It does make it un-organic to navigate the content: You cannot really read the text without zooming into

the page, but that is easy – you simply double click or pinch. Once zoomed in, however, you cannot turn a page without zooming out again. Occasionally, most often when rotating the iPad (when standing up or moving) it would happen that the content went straight to the front cover (or back) with no easy way to return to the place you left from, other than remembering the page number. That is probably my largest problem with the setup. However,

this layout makes sense when mixing mediums, when talking about the book with friends and colleagues or when citing it.

Finally, it has to be said that Richard's story is a long and, sometimes, complicated, which often is a difficult read. Due to Richards many different professions in life, which often have run parallel to each other, he has chosen to write the story in relation to his different professional

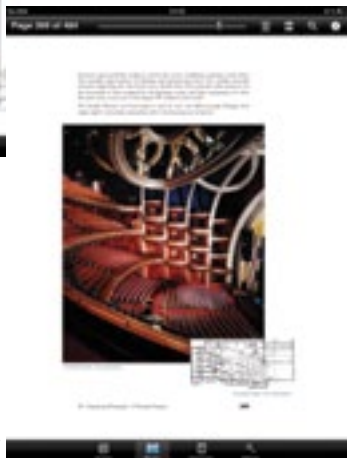




roles. So when jumping between them the reader is sometimes taken backwards and forwards through a few decades that all have been packed with events, which make it difficult for the reader to keep track and with many event overlapping. I did feel a major significance reading it on the iPad. It felt considerably easier to read, probably because of how much easier it was to manage and how far in it was possible to zoom.

The on-line (html/flash) version did not appeal to me. I did not feel comfortable reading the book in front of a computer, as when sat there I am usually working on something. That said, I imagine it is handy when citing it – and is also used for Android and Kindle Fire.

But even with all the aforementioned in mind, I can say without a shred of doubt it felt much easier - and in fact much nicer - to read Richard's terrific story on the iPad. When weighing up



the options – literally, I would not hesitate to discourage people from pursuing the heavier one, with a difference of around 1.5 kg between the book and an iPad! Also, while the iPad does not change size, the already large book obviously double in size when opening it to read and is actually really troublesome to manage on trains, planes, tubes and so on. This is especially relevant if you would like to carry it around to have a look at, should you find yourself with some



unexpected spare time. On the other hand, with an iPhone weighing even less than an iPad I would not recommend it as a main source to read from, unless you simply cannot put the book away until the end.

Richard's story is inspiring and eye opening, worth every second of reading. I did not only feel I was observing the story; I almost felt I was taking part in it, and I could very easily sympathise with many of Richard's thoughts and beliefs. It is inspiring for a young professional to read, and hopefully enlightening (pardon the pun) for every reader. For further information on *A Theatre Project's* e-edition, and for purchasing, please visit [www.atheatreproject.com](http://www.atheatreproject.com). 📖

# and finally...

## a few inspirations from the lighting world

### "Less art, more concrete..."

On 3rd July, during the expansion of London's Victoria station, underneath the Victoria Palace Theatre, there was an eruption of concrete into Billy Elliot's dimmer room. Philip Marleet told us, "The guys worked great all day to get everything working again... We ran with a full rig, can you believe it!"



### "Wow" - mixing lighting and video

'Wow' is a celebration of the work of Kate Bush produced by Spike Beecham of The Music Consortium, shown here (and front cover) in Liverpool Philharmonic Hall. Richard Lambert did the lighting, video design, programming and operating (and took photos in his spare time). Original lighting and video design by James Scott.



### Rekorderlig Cider Truck Lighting

Richard Lambert was asked to light a truck to display the company's corporate colours. Working with Outside Line he used Martin evenLED panels and LED strips from LEDFlex as the light sources, and a laptop running PhantomZeroS software.

### Olympics Opening Ceremony

Great lighting, boys and girls! We look forward to the 'Focus' article! Congratulations to Patrick Woodroffe and his design team: Adam Bassett, Miriam Evans, Tim Routledge, Andy Voller, Pryderi Baskerville, Terry Cook, Al Gurdon.



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