

FOCUS

ALPD #

The journal of the Association for Lighting Production and Design
August/September 2021

In the backlight this issue:

- AGM updates
 - Postcard from Greece
 - ALPD working groups
 - Ghost lights and lighting ghosts
...and much, much more...
- Price to non-members £5.00

Eugene Onegin
Santa Fe Opera
Director: Alessandro Talevi
Conductor: Nicholas Carter
Designer: Gary McCann
Lighting designer: Rick Fisher
Movement director: Athol Farmer
Photographer: Curtis Brown

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From the chair...

Welcome to our very first ALPD Focus. It is with great pleasure that I can announce that at the ALD's special EGM/AGM on 17 July, our members voted to update the name of our association to the Association for Lighting Production and Design. In our 60th anniversary year it feels exactly the right change to be making to the association – to create a name that reflects our full membership and a name that will take us into the next phase of the association's life. We now fully represent all of our members working in the different sectors of our industry, all of whom work towards making light happen.

Focus magazine remains a major part of the ALPD's voice and is a place for sharing information and design between our members. With its well-known tag line, "More art, less tools", it's a magazine that celebrates everything we all do in

lighting. I am inviting all members to contribute and share their experiences, their tips and tricks, and their adventures. Lighting is what we love; it's our passion that helps make us work in this crazy and exciting industry. Let's hear all your stories.

I would also like to introduce you to our new general administrator, Amanda Laidler. Amanda has had a long career in backstage theatre as a company manager, a director and an administrator, and we very much look forward to seeing what she brings through all her past experience to the association. In the meantime, I hope you will all give her a warm welcome as she settles into her post.

I am going to keep this opening short as you have my chair's report from the AGM to read further in this issue. But I would just like to say, as we all return to work over the



Johanna Town
ALPD chair

autumn, please remember the many discussions that have been had over the past year about looking out for each other, valuing the work that you do, and the time it takes to do that work.

Let's all try to reset better and take care as we return to work.

Jo 🍁

Returning to work

David Ayton is back in a theatre, despite missing the train...



Without wishing to compete with a classic Mark Jonathan “planes, trains and automobiles”-style article (sorry, Marko!), I’m at Paddington, having just missed a train to Bath for my second show in a theatre, straight off the back of two weeks in the West End with Lucy Carter. The long days have been a shock to the system again, and my lower back hasn’t appreciated sitting on a board across some armrests, but despite these grumbles, it’s been great to be

in a theatre again, and it is definitely an improvement on being in a Sainsbury’s delivery van!

Lucy and I have been working on 2:22 *A Ghost Story* at the Noel Coward Theatre, a play sitting on top of the *Dear Evan Hansen* set until it reopens in October. I had presumed this would be a pretty straightforward play, until I started getting copied into emails about a clock. Last time I had to program a clock I was battling with an unreliable motor making the physical hands of a clock turn, so I was relieved to discover this was a digital clock display, triggered off an ImageCue server. I’m sure some of you will have come across ImageCue before – it’s a neat little box that outputs video and image files from a USB stick or external hard drive, triggered by DMX. With thanks to Tom Turner at Ammonite, I had a logical setup and one image for each minute of the 24-hour clock.

For some of the scenes in 2:22 the clock is cued to ensure the scene ends on a specific time (spoiler alert – it’s 02:22); however, for other scenes we let the clock run in real time, with it then racing ahead during the scene changes to the next scene’s start time. The only complication I ran into with a clock this time around wasn’t actually with the clock itself. I discovered that Eos only allows 99 steps per effect, which led to one effect per hour of time, and lots of follow-on cues out on a separate cue list. Thankfully this was the only fudge-type workaround that was required – everything else was fairly straightforward, and it was a great show to be my first one back. There was a nice collaborative environment in the room, and not having been available for a rehearsal room run of the show, I was constantly trying to work out who or what the ghost was as we



progressed through the tech. I didn't see the twist at the end coming at all – and it's one of those plays where bits of it all of a sudden make sense as you think about it the next day, knowing the outcome. I felt a bit overwhelmed during the preview that I watched from the circle – it was the first time I'd sat as part of a non-socially distanced audience in nearly a year and a half, and it really hit home with me that nothing beats the shared experience of live theatre, and just how much I had missed it.

been so foreign for nearly a year and a half. Despite making promises to myself at some point during lockdown that I would endeavour to bring all my own food on tech days, I still found myself wasting fifteen to twenty minutes of meal breaks aimlessly walking, unable to decide what or where to eat, and ending up in Pret, yet again. One of the nice things about being back in central London, however, was being able to schedule to meet people for lunch/dinner/drinks – I even met up with a

It was strange how familiar the rhythm of being in tech felt, despite it having

few people in person for the first time who I'd only ever met virtually before. One topic of conversation that came up nearly every time was the exciting news of our new name and, as much as saying "the ALPD" doesn't quite feel natural yet, I'm sure it won't be too long before it rolls off the tongue. It was nice to be able to break this news to people who hadn't heard yet – primarily technicians and production electricians who didn't think the ALD was for them – and I'm pleased to report that everyone I spoke to said they would now consider joining us. If we want an association as inclusive as possible, it starts with the name above the door, and I am pleased that the ALPD is already delivering on that.

I'm now arriving in Bath where I'll be working with lighting designer Christopher Nairne and production electrician/re-lighter Teresa Nagel to re-mount the Mischief Theatre show

Returning to work

David Ayton

Groan Ups, which we did at the Vaudeville in 2019 and is now embarking on a UK tour. I'm almost certain there's something I've forgotten to check when changing the fixture type of a channel in patch, as it's been so long since I've had to do it – so I'm sure I'm in for a moment of kicking myself when I've worked out what it is that I've missed! It's been so nice to hear about everyone getting back into the swing of things with their first few shows back – and if your first shows are still to come then don't worry; you haven't forgotten absolutely everything... just try not to miss the train! 🍷

All photos:
2:22 A Ghost Story
Noel Coward Theatre
Director: Matthew Dunster
Set designer: Anna Fleischle
Costume designer: Cindy Lin
Lighting designer: Lucy Carter
Sound designer: Ian Dickinson
Production electricians: Suzi Futers and Fraser Hall
Lighting programmer: David Ayton
Chief electrician: Mike Cordina
Deputy chief electrician: Simon Garcia
Chargehand electrician: Joseph Capes
Photographer: Helen Murray



Save the date

for the return of the annual Lighting Lunch!

An update from [Mark Jonathan](#) on his way to Oslo...

Just in the Lufthansa lounge at Heathrow going back to work! It's been a while. I hope that I shall get through the various checks that non-EU citizens now have to go through at immigration. I'm armed with a vast raft of paperwork which I understand I now need – my Norwegian visa, my contract and various permissions. The visa took more than three months to come through. This is definitely not an oven-ready deal.

I'm delighted to tell you that, assuming we don't have another lockdown, the annual lighting Christmas lunch will be back on this year and is scheduled for Monday December 20. Please save this date if you can. More details will be sent out when we have them finalised.

Sending best wishes to everyone going back into production.

Marko 🍷



Mark Jonathan and Richard Pilbrow at the 2019 Lighting Lunch

Exec updates

Changes to the Executive membership

At the AGM in July, we welcomed some new members of the Executive team, as some of our longstanding members stepped down. We are delighted to be joined by new directors David Ayton and Lucy Carter (who also remain your professional reps), a new chair of the Education working group (Sofia Alexiadou), a new Bectu working group chair (Alex Fernandes), and several new co-opted committee members: Tom Boase, Tom Harrison, Tom Lightbody and Joseph Ed Thomas. Stepping down from their committee roles were Rory Beaton and Prema Mehta.

We are also very pleased to be welcoming Amanda Laidler as our new general administrator, taking over from Ian Saunders, who was executive director for fifteen years. You can read more about Amanda on page 16 and the Exec's thanks to Ian on page 24.

Sofia Alexiadou **Education working group chair**



Originally from Greece, I am a freelance lighting designer working in theatres across Europe and across different genres. I hold a BA in Italian literature and an MA in theatre studies and am currently a PhD candidate in the same field. Among my credits are collaborations with distinguished European artists such as Mariusz Trelinski, Thomas Moschopoulos and leading Greek singers Marinella and Haroula Alexiou, as well as designs in major opera houses and the prestigious ancient Greek theatres of Epidaurus. In 2014, I discovered the thrill of

teaching lighting and mentoring design and technical theatre students. Alongside my freelance work, I have, since then, been working at the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts as a lecturer in lighting.

I am passionate about teaching and think that a good university degree might not necessarily bring you the “shiniest” shows but will open new windows to the world and can be life changing.

I feel honoured to be taking over the ALPD's Education working group as chair from Nick Moran, who has tirelessly supported the group since its very beginning, and among my main goals is to form an active community of lighting educators in the UK.

Alex Fernandes
Bectu working group chair



I'm a lighting designer and technician based in London with a background in live art and dance. I was the recipient of the 2013 Michael Northen

bursary. I'm excited to get stuck into the conversations around pay and working conditions for lighting professionals as the Bectu rep for the ALPD. We've already taken an exciting step within the union with the creation of a new freelancers' branch, which you can read more about on page 30, and I look forward to what improvements we can make to the industry alongside freelancers in other disciplines.

Tom Boase
ALPD awards working group chair



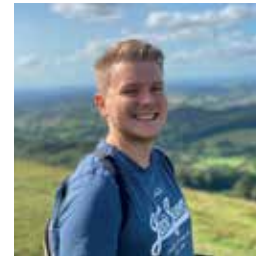
I'll be taking over the running of the ALPD student awards this year and doing my best to fill Mr Beaton's big shoes.

I started my career behind the sound desk before realising that the lighting folk had more buttons to push and soon became totally engrossed in the process of lighting design. After finishing my masters at Guildhall and graduating mid-pandemic, I attended the ALD Bootcamp and was a part of Team Lumière.

I look forward to receiving all of the entries to the ALPD awards this year. Receiving detailed feedback and

reviews from professionals on your process and designs will certainly help those who enter to progress and grow. Keep an eye out for updates and details in future editions of Focus and on the ALPD and ALPD Student social media accounts.

Tom Harrison
Wellbeing working group chair



I used to work in theatre but I now work in corporate events. One thing I would love to achieve working within

the ALPD is to ensure that everyone has a healthier and happier lifestyle, whether that be from having access to easier ways to get a healthy dinner or lunch or having access to mental health support with people

Exec updates

who understand the industry. Let me know how the wellbeing group can help you! My emails are always open!

Tom Lightbody **Sustainability working group co-chair**



I'm a freelance lighting designer and assistant, draftsperson, and technician, working primarily in theatre. I'm co-chair of the ALPD Sustainability

working group, alongside Paule Constable.

Since taking over as co-chair I'm finding that living and working sustainably is very much a journey. No one is perfect, and no one has all the answers. As a group, we are working to create a number

of lighting-specific resources to make that journey easier and more accessible for others, and to complement the Theatre Green Book, which was released earlier this year.

We hold regular monthly meetings to which anyone is welcome, regardless of their experience working or living sustainably. If you'd like to join us, or if you have any more general thoughts or questions, then please do email sustainability@thealpd.org.uk.

Joseph Ed Thomas **Social media**



I am a lighting designer, associate and assistant originally from the Lake District but now located near Epping. I initially trained in musical theatre at ArtsEd

before swapping to the dark side and received further training at RADA. I love designing musicals, plays and live music. I'm thrilled to have joined the Exec to look after the social media. Working with some of the most inspiring names in production and design is a joy.

Please do tag [@the_ALPD](https://twitter.com/the_ALPD) in your tweets and share your photos with us so we can shout about the fantastic work our members are doing. If you are interested in the ALPD sharing your production images on our Instagram feed, drop us a message on any social media or email social@thealpd.org.uk with a link to your show on the ALPD website, make sure you credit the full creative team and further LX production team if you can, then we can share far and wide. 📌

Your association's aims

Who we are as the ALPD

Among the many discussions that took place in the months leading up to the association's name change, the Executive Committee spent time discussing – in detail – what we stand for as an association, and how we can best represent our members.

The result of those discussions were these aims, which lay out our core principles. They are our statement to the industry: to our members, both current and prospective, and to our colleagues outside of lighting. They are the very reasons we exist. With these as our guiding aims we strive to do the very best we can for everyone involved in lighting.

If you feel inspired to be a part of what we are doing then we'd love to hear from you. Or if you're concerned – at any point – that we're falling short and letting you down then please let us know. Talk to us, engage with us; we are here for you: feedback@thealpd.org.uk. 🇬🇧

1. To raise the status of everyone involved in lighting.
2. To further the art, craft and production practice of lighting, through advocacy, collaboration and discussion.
3. To promote and support diversity and inclusion in all its forms.
4. To defend the cultural, professional and ethical diversity of ALPD members.
5. To support members to operate within the terms of their contracts, and the ALPD codes of practice, as far as is reasonably practicable.
6. To promote the proper recognition of all practitioners of light, and the defence of their copyright and intellectual property.
7. To promote and provide opportunities for training, education and professional development, and to act as an advisory body in these fields.
8. To aid manufacturers, suppliers and associated companies in working with designers, electricians, technicians and programmers to enhance the tools used by all practitioners of light.
9. To actively engage, in an advisory capacity, with unions and managements with regard to contracts and working conditions.
10. To establish relationships and collaborations with other professional associations in the UK and internationally.
11. To encourage and support sustainable practice.

Review of the year

Chair **Johanna Town**'s report on 2020/2021

Good afternoon, everyone, and thank you for joining us. I am going to run through what has been quite a busy year, so bear with me. This will also include updates from some of our working groups.

At last year's AGM we were at what we now know was only the beginning of an unimaginable crisis for our industry. So much has changed over the past 18 months and many of our members have had to face challenging decisions about their futures.

I would like to first thank everyone on the Exec committee and our many working groups. They have worked above and beyond their voluntary commitment to the association over this past year. They have given so much of their time and energy in supporting fellow members and colleagues while dealing with their own concerns and futures. Thank you; it has been a pleasure to work

with you all and your support has been invaluable.

After the success of 2020 AGM and CPD sessions the Exec felt the year would be best spent focusing on membership support and working towards a better future for the performance lighting industry. There was a lot of campaigning to be done, but we were beginning to see some amazing collectives of people coming together, people who were vociferously campaigning and well placed in doing that work.

The **Freelance Task Force**, after its initial run, still has working groups doing some great work. It is now being supported by arts grants after its initial theatre support funding. We now have **Freelancers Make Theatre Work** and **We Make Events** with their amazing political and public voices.

The ALD has committee members in all these organisations and

has been supporting the work by promoting and shouting alongside them. The **Light it in Red** campaigns and **Scene Change's** wrapping up buildings brought together collaborations between buildings, managements and lighting and production staff. One can't underestimate how this has opened up our position with managements and in the industry.

The ALD felt we didn't need to reinvent the wheels of these campaigns but to give them support. It was these collaborations along with discussions with other associations that made the ASD and ALD bring all the associations together on a Zoom call in June, and this was the start of **AAPTLE**. The Alliance of Associations and Professionals in Theatre and Live Entertainment has met regularly each week over this past year,

collaborating on common issues such as Reset Better, Covid protocols and mental health awareness.

Being part of this bigger voice has made us grow and understand who we are and what our values for the future should be for all freelancers and employees. This collaboration has been a large part of our external work during the year, and I believe it has given the lighting industry a stronger voice among our peers.

But the ALD Exec also felt it was equally important to focus on its membership, the people, to concentrate our resources towards supporting members and prepare for a better future.

Soon after the AGM, Tim Deiling approached us with his weeklong bootcamp idea, which was a great way to test the water and see if the demand for CPD sessions and collective support was wanted. It was a huge commitment by Tim and Rob

Casey who prepared a week's learning for over 100 participants from all over the world. Thanks must also go to all the lighting professionals who gave talks and interviews and to Tim for his continued work on the ALD Academy website. The ALD is very proud of having helped support the bootcamp and hope to help develop it further over the coming years into a resource for everyone. Thank you, Tim and Rob.

This proved there was a need for collaborations between established and emerging designers. So, by the autumn we had developed Katharine Williams' and Charlotte Burton's brilliant idea on how to run a Lumière scheme in a pandemic. With some budgeted money for the Lumière scheme and a bequest left by Mick Hughes we were able to launch Lumière 2020.

The original idea was to put 20 lighting designers with 20 emerging designers over a ten-week period,

but the demand was more than we could have imagined. With the generosity of lighting designers' donations – thank you; you know who you are – we were able to place 38 mentees with 35 mentors on topics ranging from lighting a musical to budgeting. Having run out of lighting designers and not wanting to leave anyone out, we created Team Lumière, headed up brilliantly by Rory Beaton. Rory looked after 22 Lumières, presenting weekly interviews with industry professionals, as well as an open discussion each week on various topics. I would personally like to thank Katharine Williams for her vision, Charlotte Burton for some great administration and Rory Beaton for Team Lumière.

To find out more about the future of the Lumière scheme, you can read Charlotte Burton's update on page 20.

Review of the year

Johanna Town

Next came our annual ALD awards, with submissions from both live and online productions. As usual it was hard to choose the winners from so many great portfolios. I would like to formally congratulate the winners: Euan Davis for lighting design, Liam Strong for video design, Liam Sayer for production electrics, and Josie Ireland for best emerging designer. I do hope that this year we might be able to invite you all to the lighting lunch; fingers crossed. *(Editor's note: For an update from Marko, see page 7!)*

Unfortunately, due to the Covid situation, we have cancelled the 2021 awards, but you can apply in 2022 if you missed out. Rory Beaton has been looking after the awards for over five years and has shaped them into an inclusive set of awards that we can be proud of. This year he will be handing over the reins to Tom Boase. I would like to thank Rory for

all his hard work and welcome Tom to the team.

Throughout the year, meetings have remained strong and we have had some great corporate help with CPD sessions, talks and showcases – thank you. We also wanted to support our members' wellbeing during this year so meetings and wellbeing came together with some nice extras throughout the year. One of my favourites was having Ken Billington in New York alongside young associate members and students at Nick Peel's theatre pub quiz. Thanks to Zoom there have been connections we could never have imagined a few years ago and thanks to Nick for some incredibly hard questions.

You can read Briony Berning's update on meetings and wellbeing on page 22.

Emma Chapman has asked me to thank everyone who took part in the AAPTLE mental health and wellbeing survey. People identifying

as working in lighting were the highest contributors and that is because of support from the ALD in promoting the survey. Mig Burgess has said that due to the high number of lighting people involved, she will be pulling the lighting data for the ALD so we can see if there is anything particularly arising in our community. The results of the survey will be presented at PLASA in September.

On to our unions, Equity and Bectu... I can assure you the ALD has been on both unions' backs. There has been some strong correspondence and collective meetings with both unions about feeling abandoned over this past year. It became clear that the Bectu branch system did not work for our freelance members. After discussions and action through AAPTLE, Bectu has created a freelance branch. *(Editor's note: David Ayton has written more about this on page 30.)*

It is important that if you are a member of Bectu and are a freelancer that you request to move into this branch as it will be working directly with your needs in mind rather than the needs of building-based employees. To succeed as a branch it needs your help and support. If you would like to get involved do get in touch with Alex Fernandes, our Bectu rep.

I am really pleased to say we now have three amazing lighting designers sitting on the **Equity designers committee** (Zoe Spurr, Jason Addison and Jamie Platt), so do contact them if you need help or advice. Charlotte Bence is our new Equity official and is good; we hope she can action some change. The ALD had a long meeting with both Charlotte and Paul Fleming, who are in agreement with us that the current SOLT and UK Theatre minimum fees are unacceptable. We also discussed that the agreement itself is strong and no SOLT or UK Theatre can change those terms and conditions. It is important to advise Equity if this is the case. We still need more designer members to join to make our voice stronger within Equity.

As well as building strong relationships with Equity and Bectu the **ALD professional working group** has also continued with its development of documentation and resources for members. This is a continuation of the work presented last year and we hope now completes the resources our members require. Lucy Carter and David Ayton have been working hard on these and they will be available on the website soon.

So, it has been a busy year within the ALD Exec! We have all come together as lighting professionals, and we have had time to talk to each other and to help each other.

I am pleased that we have expanded our remit in many new areas and supported young professionals who want to see change in their industry. Here at the ALD we want to encourage new voices and support your passions.

I would like to finish by introducing you to some of our new and very active Exec members who have joined or moved into running working groups this year. In no particular order: Jason Addison and

Alex Fernandes – unions; Jai Morjaria – chair of Diversity working group; Tamykha Patterson and David Howe – Lumière scheme; Sofia Alexiadou – chair of Education working group; Tom Lightbody – co-chair of Sustainability working group; Briony Berning – chair of Meetings working group; Joseph Ed Thomas – social media; Tom Boase – ALD Awards.

It is great having you all on board the ALD Exec. As an industry we are still not out of the woods and there will be difficult times still to face. Let's hope that as individuals and as an association the lighting world can continue to support each other and our fellow coworkers, to make our industry better, safer and more inclusive for everyone.

On this 60th year I look forward to a strong future as the ALPD grows into an association that represents the whole lighting industry and hope that the ALPD has many more productive and exciting years ahead. 🌸



Office Oracle

News and information from Amanda and the ALPD office

Hello!

As I write this I am nearly four weeks into my post with ALPD – and what a whirlwind four weeks it's been, starting immediately after the AGM and with a major rebrand in progress. I am immensely grateful to those who have guided me through these weeks, and to Ian Saunders who has been (and still is) patiently answering my questions.

My love of theatre dates from visits to my local rep as a twelve-year-old. But my desire to work in theatre began when I sat at the top of a stepladder with a followspot, lighting a school production of

The Mikado. I immediately fell in love with the backstage world of theatre. I have never had ambitions to be on the stage – for me, the real buzz is in putting it all together. So my career moved from backstage crewing at the Oxford Playhouse, through some stage management, admin and marketing, and ultimately as a company manager. Some of you may have encountered me at Opera North, Wexford, Dublin or Longborough Festival Opera. As a hobby I direct plays and musicals for amateur groups – sometimes write them too.

I am not a lighting designer, but I have the utmost respect for all the many creatives and backstage workers who come together to put on shows. Being married to a theatre administrator who is now a keen amateur lighting designer, I have been well drilled in the importance of lighting! And I am passionate about

the importance of the arts in all our lives, whether it be as contributors or as audience. Oh, and I can still be persuaded to run a followspot when there's a need.

I look forward to maybe meeting you at PLASA – do call by our stand and say hi.

PLASA/ABTT show

We have a stand at the PLASA/ABTT show, which runs from 5 to 7 September. ABTT is running a theatre hub alongside PLASA and the ALPD can be found at ABTT17. Do come along and see us. The event is taking place this year at Olympia's Grand Hall. Visitors will be asked for Covid-secure status – proof of double vaccination, with the second at least 14 days prior to the event, OR a negative NHS lateral flow test, taken on the same day you are visiting the show, OR natural immunity based on

a positive PCR test within 180 days of the show. Evidence can be via the NHS app or a letter.

ALPD meetings

As we all get back to work, we are looking to resume in-person members' meetings where social distancing and Covid measures allow. We will be continuing to offer online meetings as well. Details of confirmed events will be posted on the members' side of the website at www.thealpd.org.uk/meetings.

With events being set up at short notice, our email bulletins are the best way to ensure that you receive all the information you need. If you do not receive email bulletins, you can opt in on your member profile on the website, or email office@thealpd.org.uk.

If you would like to offer a meeting to fellow ALPD members, please email meetings@thealpd.org.uk.

Combined liability insurance scheme

As the industry starts to open up once again after its enforced lay-off,

we have been able to finalise a price for the combined liability insurance scheme benefit that is open to Professional and Affiliate members to opt into for an additional fee.

The cost to be covered under the scheme through to the end of March 2022 is £53. For this you receive £10m of public liability cover and £1m of professional indemnity cover. Full details of the policies and exclusions can be found on the members' side of the ALPD website at www.thealpd.org.uk/members-benefits as well as link to the Survey Monkey form to opt in to be part of the scheme.

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, and we have a selection that we hand out on visits to colleges and at 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 person rather than read on the website – www.thealpd.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.

Do we have your correct contact details?

Please ensure that your contact details on the website are correct by visiting the “My contact details & preferences” page on the members' side of the website, or you can email membership@thealpd.org.uk to check. If you are going to university and would like to receive Focus at your term-time address, please update your address

Office Oracle

Amanda Laidler

on the system. An incorrect mailing address means you may not receive Focus and/or membership renewal notices, placing the continuation of your membership at risk.

To receive email bulletins from us, you will need to opt in, then specify which ones you want to receive: association news, jobs bulletins and/or company news. We do occasionally receive bounce notifications from our email bulletins, so please check whether your current contact details are correct if you haven't received one recently. You should also check your spam filters and junk folders, and add mailshots@thealpd.org.uk to your address book to ensure you are more likely to receive our email bulletins.

In addition to selecting which email bulletins you receive, you can also select your postal communication preferences in a similar manner: members' directory, membership renewals, Company

members mailings, Focus magazine, and industry magazine subscriptions (e.g. L&SI, ET Now).

Graduating students

When you joined the association as a student member, we asked you to inform us of your graduation date so we know when you are due to finish your course. If you graduated this summer, we will soon be moving you to our Affiliate membership for early-career professionals, and with that you will be able to access the same benefits as Professional members, with the exception of voting on association issues.

Under the Constitution of the association, memberships continue to run until such time that you inform us that you wish to leave (with the exception of the Sponsored Student scheme). If we don't hear from you, we will assume that you are happy to

continue as an Affiliate member and pay the relevant subscription rate.

Get involved

We are always looking for new members to join the Executive and our various working groups. You can find out more about the current working groups at www.thealpd.org.uk/about/alpd-working-groups – feel free to email the current working group chair if you are interested in joining or contributing. We welcome proposals for new working groups; you can email office@thealpd.org.uk if you have an idea, which will be considered by the Executive. We are actively recruiting for new Executive members as well; if you have any questions about the Executive's role or would like to speak to someone about the responsibilities involved, see www.thealpd.org.uk/about/executive-committee for a full list of current members. 🌸

A postcard from...

Sofia Alexiadou, Greece

Greetings from the beautiful Greek island of Mitilini. In response to the initiative of the Ministry of Culture and Sports to make use of the archaeological sites across the country during this difficult summer, the theatre company Patari project participated in the institution All of Greece, One culture with their new devised work Aegean, based on myths and stories from the Aegean Sea. We opened our show in the breathtaking archaeological site of the Sanctuary of Messon in Agia Paraskevi, an almost mystical experience for the audiences that watched the performances, reminding everyone the cathartic power of outdoor performances. 📺



My fantastic lighting team, Yorgos Psychramis and Kostas Karatzas

Aegean
Director: Sofia Paschou
Set designer: Evaggelia Therianou
Costume designer: Claire Bracewell
Lighting designer: Sofia Alexiadou
Music: Nikos Gallenianos
Production manager: Aris Laskos
Cast: Giannis Giannoulis, Theodosia Konstas, Katerina Mavrogeorgi, Erifili Stefanidou, Apostolis Psychramis

Working group updates

From **Charlotte Burton**, **Zoe Spurr** and **Briony Berning**

Charlotte Burton (Lumière scheme):

From 20 to 24 September we are taking part in "A Light Walk" from the RSC to the National to raise funds for the Lumière Scheme and Backup.

Yes, it's a really long way – 101 miles, in fact! We are doing this for Backup, whose work continues to support so many in our industry, and for the Lumière scheme as we look to the future of building on the success of the design scheme and launching the production scheme. We want to continue to provide a pathway into the industry for those who wouldn't have had the opportunity otherwise.

About seven of us from the Lumière Working Group and Executive will be doing the walk either completing the whole distance alongside Sam Bowden from Chauvet, joining for specific days or completing the same distance remotely throughout September.

If you are able to sponsor us or promote the walk on social media, the link to our GoFundMe page is www.gofundme.com/f/a-light-walk, and any support you are able to give us would be hugely appreciated. Thank you!

Following on from the design Lumière scheme, we are pleased to announce we are launching a production Lumière scheme.

Taking the best bits from Lumière 20:20 and Team Lumière, we will run an online pilot scheme this autumn, as we acknowledge the ongoing uncertainty of placing extra people into teams working within Covid cohorts and testing regimes as the theatre industry reopens.

Five emerging lighting practitioners will be chosen from applications and will then be paired with five professional mentors, representing a wide spectrum of work. It is an exciting opportunity to give Lumières

direct access to a production electrician or programmer and to inspire conversations about the craft, the life and the role. There will be a series of group discussions and masterclasses alongside the one-to-one mentor sessions.

The scheme will begin in mid-September – so watch out for announcements in the coming days.

Zoe Spurr (Equity):

Introducing your newly elected Equity Directors and Designers Committee 2021!

There are four designer seats available on the committee, and lighting designers have taken three of those places! Thanks to everyone who voted in the ballot and who has celebrated this achievement with us. Now is an even better time to join Equity and make our voices as creative practitioners resonate within

the industry to fight for better pay and working conditions.

I joined the committee in July 2019 after feeling constant frustration that fees and rates of pay can be so low, and how often we find ourselves breaking down fees to find we are working for less than the living wage. My current aim is to gain more acknowledgement for assistants and associates; we want contracts, fairer pay, and more opportunities for people in the industry. I firmly believe that theatres need to collaborate with their creative and production teams to organise and offer more assistant/deputy/associate opportunities, as this will invite a wider range of people into the industry, and people can learn and perfect their craft while actually being afforded money to live! In the meantime, please consider reaching out to your producers; see if they can offer a placement or assistant role on the show. If it's a no, ask for them to budget for one next time – Arts Council funds have generously helped buildings survive this pandemic, but it's the freelancers

and the people that make theatre happen, so they must pay back and invest in the future workers in our industry.

I've invited Jason Addison and Jamie Platt to share why they joined the committee, and what they plan to achieve during their time on the committee.

Jason:

I joined Equity at the start of 2020 and was co-opted onto the Directors and Designers Committee in November 2020.

I wanted to join the committee to help Equity achieve a wider understanding of the role of assistants and associates, create a structure for fees around this area and fight for better fees across the board, more in line with the work done by creatives.

I want to be a voice for parents, those working on smaller or mid-scale projects and assisting/associating on a larger scale. I would like to try to encourage younger members working at a smaller scale to join the union so together we can fight for a

better industry and conditions at all levels, not just for those working at a higher level.

Please get in touch with any thoughts or issues you may have as I would like to take these into the committee meetings.

Jamie:

After receiving yet another dreadfully low fee offer in this time of supposedly “building back better”, I decided to channel my frustration into something productive and put myself forward for the Equity committee.

While on the committee I want to try and help Equity highlight to producers and venues just how much of our work isn't always visible. I think there are too many producers who view minimum rates as targets, and hopefully by emphasising how many hours of work go into creating a production we can raise fees across the board.

Alongside this I want to make sure that producers understand that there are roles that they should be hiring and budgeting for, such as production electricians,

Working group updates

Charlotte Burton, Zoe Spurr and Briony Berning

programmers, assistants and associates. When asking a lighting designer to assume some or all of these responsibilities, it puts an even greater workload on the designer, and puts other skilled theatre workers out of a job.

I would like to encourage lighting designers to join the union, as we have far more bargaining power with a stronger membership, and to also ask that if anyone has any concerns, thoughts or suggestions about what Equity can do for members of the ALPD, do please email us at equity@thealpd.org.uk.

Raising the minimum fees

Some people within the ALPD have decades of experience, some have degrees and qualifications, and we all have bills to pay and a life to lead. These low minimum fees, barely touched by SOLT/UK

Theatre for years, are damaging our industry beyond lighting design. They bring down our market value and further cheapen the work that we all do. The ALPD and Equity are working together to engage with SOLT/UK Theatre and producers everywhere to educate and rally to expose how dire the situation is for directors and designers. Progress is slow – we know. We have had Covid to deal with, and behind the scenes both Equity and the ALPD have been talking more than ever to raise concerns and not let the flame go out on the progress we were making pre-pandemic.

How can you help us? We need to collate examples and evidence of job offers made to you – we are looking at the years 2015–2021. All information will be anonymously gathered via a Google Docs survey, and anything you can contribute

will be invaluable to our plight. The more we have, the starker the facts will be, and the harder it will be to ignore. Anyone can contribute – the work Equity and ALPD are doing will benefit all designers, even outside SOLT/UK Theatre/ITC contracts. If we bring the minimum rates up to an acceptable base level, and designers refuse to work for less than these minimums, all rates will start to grow. The reflection of the rates growing is long overdue; our work is complex and skilled, and we deserve the payment and reward for it.

Briony Berning (Meetings and Wellbeing):

The Wellbeing group was formed just under a year ago. We put together a survey which was put out in September and again few months later. We had about 100 results. We asked a small number of very simple questions:

What are your main concerns at the moment? The single most given answer was "finances and money".

What has helped? People mostly answered "connecting with family and friends".

How do you normally maintain wellbeing? The majority of people answered "socialising".

We allowed these responses to guide our group and set a direction for us. As a result, here are some of the things we did:

We had a finance meeting with two accountants who specialise in working with freelancers in the entertainment industry on hand to answer questions about tax and pensions.

We held a number of baking sessions – one of them specifically aimed at families with children.

We then hosted a second session featuring an ALPD bake-off where we watched people compete and make cookies.

And we launched a book club. We have had two meetings so far, and the third book is going to be *Mr. Wilder and Me* by Jonathan Coe

– do come along to the next meeting at the end of October.

We have some future meetings planned as well – please keep an eye on email bulletins for more details. These are also listed on the "Diary dates" page in Focus when confirmed.

In the last week of September, there will be an evening social in London as well as one outside London – details TBC. We'll also be hosting a coffee morning (one in London and one outside) in the week of 11 October. And our third book club meeting will be on Zoom on 25 October – all welcome!

If you have any ideas for further meetings or wellbeing events, please feel free to email us on meetings@thealpd.org.uk. Hope to see you soon! 🍷

Working groups membership

The current working groups and their membership can be found on the ALPD website at www.thealpd.org.uk/about/alpd-working-groups. Current groups include:

- ALPD awards (chair: Tom Boase)
- Diversity (Representation and Inclusion) (chair: Jai Morjaria)
- Education (chair: Sofia Alexiadou)
- Lumière scheme (chair: Charlotte Burton)
- Meetings, events and professional development (chair: Briony Berning)
- PR and external communications (chair: Kelli Zezulka)
- Professional members (chairs: Lucy Carter and David Ayton)
- Students (chair: Jack Wills)
- Sustainability (chairs: Paule Constable and Tom Lightbody)
- Unions (chairs: Alex Fernandes and Zoe Spurr)
- Wellbeing (chairs: Tom Harrison and Briony Berning)

Thank you, Ian

Thanks and appreciation from the ALPD Exec

As you'll be aware by now, Ian Saunders left the ALD after a staggering fifteen years as our executive director. We couldn't let him go without saying thank you properly! 🍷

Thank you, Ian, for all your hard work and terrific knowledge of the organisation. I always knew I could rely on you to know the answer to any question or sort out any problem. You also did that in a considered and professional way. You will be sorely missed. —Steve Huttly

Thank you, Ian, for all your support and knowledge over the years! I hope you enjoy your new role. All the best!
—Charlotte Burton

After 15 years you have developed the ALD into an association we can all be extremely proud of. Your dedication to lighting and your knowledge of the industry have helped the association grow to where it is today. You have worked alongside three chairs, and I for one personally cannot thank you enough for running with and supporting all my mad ideas since becoming chair. Your patience and guidance over my last four years has been invaluable. Thank you for always being on the end of the phone and tutoring me before all the big events and, most of all, for your patience. I will miss you a lot. —Jo Town

As a colleague, Ian is great. He's always there with the right bit of info or the next step in the plan... when you're not! He ploughs through the choppy waters of competing tasks and admin mostly unruffled by the many competing demands on his time. And, Ian, as one of your longer-standing associates, I've enjoyed that collegueship and benefited from it many times... and, I hope, added a bit to it myself! Wishing you good luck and good times for your future. —John Leventhall

Thank you for your amazing sense of humour and the immense support! I've always enjoyed your calm and measured replies to all sorts of wacky questions from my end! You were the soul of the ALD and always made it look easy! —Sofia Alexiadou

Thank you for the tutorship you have provided me with since I joined the association and the opportunities you have helped to build. You will be sorely missed, but this new chapter in your career is extremely exciting and I'm sure I'll see you around, perhaps for a nice bike ride some time! —Joe Price

Ian, thanks for remembering me when I rejoined the association after many years in the wilderness, and for giving me back my old membership number. Wishing you the very best in your new chapter – don't let Tom work you too hard! All the best. —Tom Lightbody (member #1709)

Thanks, Ian, for friendship and support throughout your tenure at the ALD. Hope we will still have opportunities for a chat and a catch-up in your new role. Best wishes. —Nick Moran

Ian, you've been such a fantastic colleague, and it's been such a pleasure to work together. You always had the answers to any ALD questions I had (and still do, in fact!) – thanks so much for everything over the years! —Kelli Zezulka












Ian and the rest of the ALD Exec at the 2019 strategy day in London

Corporate members

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Diary dates 2021

5–7 September	PLASA/ABTT show, Olympia, London*
20–24 September	A Light Walk – sponsored walk for Backup and ALPD Lumière scheme
25 October	ALPD Book Club meeting
22 November	TheatreCraft, Royal Opera House, London

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

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

* The ALPD will have a presence at these events.

Contact us

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The opinions published within Focus are not necessarily those of the ALPD.
E&OE. Content deadline for the next issue: 15 September 2021

Professional members' shows

opening in August and September

August

2 **Abi Turner** *Essentially Black The Water Rats* / **4** **Jack Wills** (lighting programmer) *Medicine Traverse Edinburgh* / **4** **Johanna Town** (lighting designer) and **Joseph Ed Thomas** (lighting programmer) *Baskerville Mercury Colchester* / **4** **John Rainsforth** *The Legend Of Sleepy Hollow Bellairs Theatre* / **3** **Gianni Bertoli** *Wintereisse Palazzo Ducale – Martina Franca* / **5** **Joseph Ed Thomas** *Tommy On Top Above The Stag Theatre, Main House* / **9** **Colin Grenfell** *Still Traverse Theatre* / **11** **Jack Wills** *Episode 8, The Theatre Channel Filmed for Streaming* / **11** **Andrew Bridge** *Phantom of the Opera Her Majesty's London* / **13** **John Rainsforth** *We Will Rock You The Customs House* / **13** **Jonathan Chan** *Fester Cockpit Theatre* / **14** **Simon Wilkinson** (lighting designer) and **Tom Mulliner** (lighting programmer) *Bedknobs and Broomsticks UK tour* / **16** **Jonathan Chan** *The Life of Olu Theatre Peckham* / **17** **James C McFetridge** *Matilda Jr Crawfordsburn Country Park* / **21** **Charlie Morgan Jones** (light consultant) *Copenhagen Opera Festival Festival Stage* / **24** **Sam Waddington** (assistant lighting designer) *Beauty and the Beast Bristol Hippodrome* / **25** **Emma Jones** *Lament for Sheku Bayoh Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh* / **28** **Charlie Morgan Jones** *Derren Brown: Showman Theatre Royal, Plymouth* / **30** **Jonathan Chan** *Don't Send Flowers White Bear Theatre*

September

1 **Justin A Cook** (production electrician) *Chicago The Musical David Ian Productions* / **3** **Joseph Ed Thomas** *Well Behaved Women Cadogan Hall* / **3** **Chuma Emembolu** *Invisible Me New Wimbledon Studio Theatre* / **3** **James C McFetridge** *Carson and the Lady Antrim Castle* / **8** **Joseph Ed Thomas** *39 and Counting The Park Theatre, 200* / **8** **John Rainsforth** *Our Laygate The Customs House* / **9** **Johanna Town** *The Memory of Water Hampstead Theatre* / **12** **Jack Wills** *The Pleasure Gardens Above The Stag Theatre* / **14** **Jason Addison** *Turn & Face The Strange – The Story of Mick Ronson Hull Truck Theatre* / **15** **Claire Childs** *As One The Warehouse Waterloo* / **16** **Zeynep Kepekli** *The Meaning of Zong Bristol Old Vic* / **17** **Claire Childs** *The Little Mermaid Guildhall Theatre Grantham* / **17** **Jamie Platt** *The Last Five Years Garrick Theatre* / **17** **Johanna Town** *September in the Rain Wiltshire Creatives* / **18** **Mark Jonathan** *Dead Man Walking Norwegian National Opera, Oslo* / **18** **Malcolm Rippeth** *Breaking the Waves Theater St. Gallen* / **22** **Chuma Emembolu** *Love, Genius and a Walk Teatro Technis, Camden* / **22** **Chuma Emembolu** *Illusions of Liberty Kings Head Theatre, Angel* / **23** **Zeynep Kepekli** *Common Groun(s) Teatros del Canal, Madrid, Spain* / **30** **Jason Addison** *The Legend Of Sleepy Hollow Churchill Theatre Bromley*

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

Bectu freelancers branch

A short update from **David Ayton**

We have a branch! I must admit I am astonished at how quickly this has happened – last summer, Nick Woolley and I were having conversations about the plight of freelancer representation within Bectu as ALD representatives. We funnelled those discussions through AAPTLE, and as Alex Fernandes came on board as Bectu rep for the ALD this gained traction. Now, a year later, we have the beginnings of a proper branch for those of us who are freelance.

As I've said before, any trade union (and the ALPD for that matter) is not a service; it exists as a structure to enable members to do things for one another. Now is the ideal time to get involved and be a part of the discussion about the priorities for this new branch.

Our opening pitch is below – please get in touch if you'd like to find out more.

Are you paid by fee or daily rate? Are you in automation, costume, lighting, production management, props, set, sound, video, or wigs/hair/makeup? Are you a designer, artist, operator, programmer, associate, engineer, technician, supervisor, buyer or manager? Whatever you do, if you're a self-employed theatre freelancer, we want you!

Whether or not you've been able to work over the last year and half, you can't have missed the passion among theatre freelancers to get together and talk about changing the way we all work. Freelancers want the same things as permanent staff: fair pay; reasonable hours; good work/life balance; respect for physical and mental health; and an inclusive and sustainable employment ecosystem.

You may not have considered joining a union before, but unions are the only effective way to apply pressure to employers to get things

changed. And one union is already working to improve terms and conditions for theatre freelancers, and that's Bectu.

Join the Theatre Freelancers branch for a tenner a month, and help us find strength from the things we have in common. Just go to the Bectu website (www.bectu.org.uk) and sign up. If you're already a Bectu member, you can transfer to this branch by emailing membership@bectu.org.uk.

If you want to know more, your reps are Paul Arditti, David Ayton, George Bach, Leigh Davies, Nikki Edmonds, Alex Fernandes, Fran Horler, Catherine Kodicek, Ned Lay and Sam Vincent. You can contact us at theatrefreelancers@gmail.com.

We are also looking for more reps and have training on 17 September and other dates later in the year. If you are interested, please contact Negotiations Officer Kevin Carson on kcarson@bectu.org.uk. 🍷

New members

Welcome!

Professional members

Danny Cunningham, London

Hamilton Guillén, Brooklyn

Mark Strange, Barnet

Emma Woolf, London

Thomas Wortley, London

Affiliate members

Megan Lucas, Northampton

Dominic Patel, Bolton

Owen Price, Maidstone

Student member

Carey Chomsoonthorn, London

Luca Panetta, London

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@thealpd.org.uk before 22 September for the October/November issue. 📧

In search of the ghost light

Jane Lalljee takes on a lockdown project

During lockdown last year, I started the seeds of an idea. All theatres were dark. But they always left a ghost light on to keep watch. What did that ghost light see when the rest of the theatre slept?

When I was on a socially distanced dog walk with a director friend of mine, I mentioned my idea to her.

I wanted it to be a tour of the theatre led by the ghost light. I wanted the audience to see parts of the theatre they wouldn't normally see, and I wanted it to be a safe way to open a theatre back up to audiences once all this was over. This was the day Sanctuary (working title) was born.

Julia and I put together a pitch that I then sent to some theatres that I had worked at and theatres with lots of kit and flying facilities. I had some very positive responses, but, at the time, everything was still very uncertain and no one could really commit. This was in July last year. A few months later, The Ffrwnes Theatre in Llanelli asked for a meeting. The producer, Sharon, really liked the sound of the idea and thought it would be a great and safe way to open up their building again.

We decided to do a week of R&D in November – actually in person at the theatre with a mini showing at the end of the week. Meanwhile, I recruited an amazing composer, Tic Ashfield, who totally understood my concept and where I was going with it. I also took on Andy Evans as sound designer, Carl Davies as designer, Tracy Jenkins as writer and Julia remained with me as an outside eye and dramaturg.

I must admit that I felt quite out of my depth. I am a lighting designer and, suddenly, I was leading a whole creative team and transforming a building into my vision from my lighting design. Would any of my ideas work? Would anyone understand the concept?

The R&D week went very well. The technicians at the theatre really pulled together to make my vision work. We started in the studio theatre with a bulb installation





around the ghost light theme. We then moved around the building past a function room that had memories of the building's past life as a nightclub, through a deserted office corridor and then into some dressing rooms. We then finished on the main stage with the fly bars in as you walked in. It felt very exciting

to be in and among the lighting and sound and looking out at the empty auditorium. It was a joy to be back in a theatre after so long.

As we entered another lockdown in December, things kept being pushed on with a timeline for creating the actual show. As an added complication, the theatre became

a vaccination centre. Once we finally had confirmation that we could still use the main stage and the other half of the building along with the NHS, we had to rethink the route. We had lost half of the building. We finally decided to do a two-week setup in April, but still didn't know exactly when we would be opening. The theatre would keep everything in place until we could open.

I had the idea to use the main auditorium as the ghost light bulb installation. This has worked very well. The route then goes up the side of the stage to a backstage corridor with a laundry and dressing room. We also use the theatre dock as another lighting and sound installation and then end up on stage as we did previously with my idea of the forest of lights. This is where haze plays an integral part in the whole experience! Some of the effects I use really would not work

In search of the ghost light

Jane Lalljee

without haze! The tour ends up in an empty foyer but filled with a full and buzzing audience sound. Audiences will be back!

We also decided to call the show *Ghost Light*. The theatre felt that lots of people would not know what a ghost light was and we could use the publicity material to explain what is as well as using it as the image.

I was absolute in my belief that the ghost light should be the main publicity image.

After setting up all the spaces, we really needed a way to tie it all together. I very much wanted it to be a self-guided tour without ushers or anyone telling the audience where to go. We decided that the audience would come in groups of

six maximum. Julia and Tracy came up with the idea of a guide voice. This became the trickier part to get right. What was the tone? How did we move the audience to the next section? We also had to integrate

Welsh into the script and think about access for the visually impaired and deaf audience. This is where I was thankful I had a wonderfully creative and supportive team around me.

I had to be director, technical manager and production manager. I was making decisions about everything. Now I know how a director feels! It's not an easy job, but working on this show has pushed me well out of my comfort zone in so many ways. I wasn't just the lighting designer – everything that happened was my decision. I have learnt a great deal about myself and working with other creatives. I am so grateful to the theatre and my creative team for believing in my vision and working so hard with me to make it happen. I really hope that people enjoy what we have created. 🍷

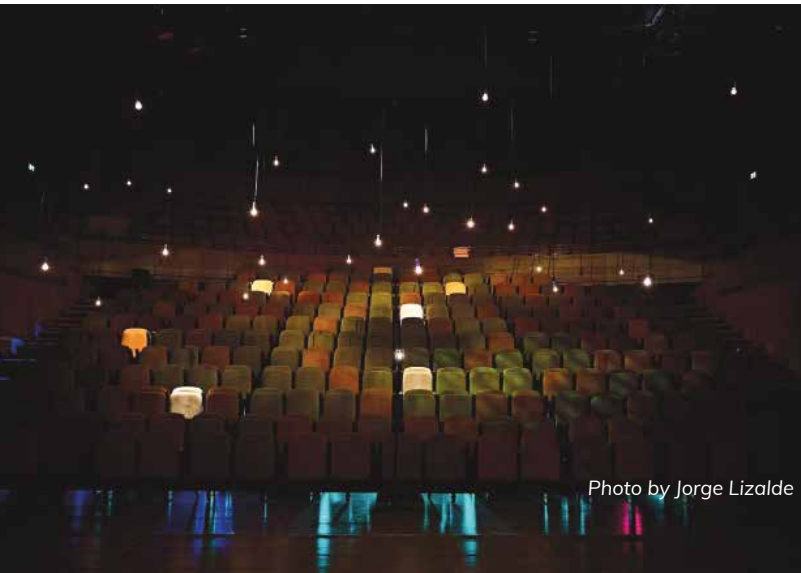


Photo by Jorge Lizalde

Taff retires

Kelli Zezulka on LAMDA lighting tutor Paul Rowland

After thirty years of teaching lighting, Paul Rowland – known to most of us as Taff – has left the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art. I wanted to mark the occasion in *Focus*, because I know what a huge effect Taff has had on the trajectory of my career in lighting and, by extension, what impact he must have had on countless others.

I moved to London in 2002 for what I thought at the time would be 18 months in the UK. When I started at LAMDA, I was absolutely certain I wanted to go into stage management. I'd dabbled in lighting previously, but stage management was where I was definitely headed... until I had to prop a show, that is! In my work in the States, this had always been done by the props department, or the set construction team, and I had very little desire to traipse around zone 5 – as I found myself doing one rainy afternoon –

















picking up a selection of broken pool cues and bringing them back via the Tube to our workshop, where I would sand them down, paint them and turn them into Restoration-era walking sticks. (I have, however, since gone back to stage and production management – in addition to my lighting design work – and I still absolutely love calling shows... I will find any excuse to put together a good prompt copy!)

At some point during my first year at LAMDA, I was assigned to a rotation in the lighting department. At the end of just six weeks of maintenance, rigging, focusing, programming and followspotting, I knew lighting was where I would end up – and a large part of that was down to the support, knowledge and enthusiasm of Taff and Matt Drury, who at the time was the second lighting tutor (and is now, of course, head of lighting

at the National). As graduation approached, Taff encouraged me to apply for the lighting programmer post at the Royal Court (even though I already had a job offer from Actors Theatre of Louisville in Kentucky and fully intended on returning to the US...), and I returned to LAMDA after graduation on his recommendation as a visiting tutor for several years, sparking my interest in teaching, and no doubt influencing where I am today.

I did try to find some suitable photographs from my time at LAMDA to include with this article, but I seem to have lost them somewhere along the way – and Taff's Facebook page was of no help either! Instead, you'll just have to trust me when I say that Taff was a big part of my development as a lighting practitioner, and I certainly wouldn't be where I am today without him! Thanks for everything. 🍷

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