

S U C C E S S

ALPD #

The journal of the Association for Lighting Production and Design
August/September 2022

In the spotlight this issue:

- Working with agents
- Lumière updates
- Scandlight report
- Tungsten warning
- ALPD history

...and much, much more...
Price to non-members £5.00

Identical the Musical
Two's Company Productions
Director: Trevor Nunn
Choreographer: Matt Cole
Set designer: Rob Jones
Costume designer: Jonathan Lipman
Lighting designer: Johanna Town
Video designer: Douglas O'Connell
Sound designer: Paul Gatehouse
Hair and wig designer: Richard Mawbey
Photographer: Pamela Raith

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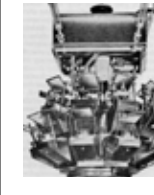
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From the chair...

Johanna Town
ALPD chair



Another day, another hotel... Since May, I have spent most of the year away from home lighting shows all around the country. I have been put up in people's homes, Airbnb city flats, and hotels.

I love travelling. I love visiting places around the country, especially if I have never been there before. Today I will be kayaking across Plymouth Hoe on my day off, before tech week starts. The sun is shining and this Plymouth kayaking trip will be a first for me.

But I digress! All this travelling can be hard even if you enjoy it, so it's very important to look after yourself physically and mentally. I have some home comforts I take everywhere with me – my Waitrose ginger biscuits, slippers, cutlery, a coffee plunger – and I don't travel anywhere without a puffer jacket for those freezing auditoriums and sometimes freezing flats! It can be tough and exciting all at the same time. I can't stress enough how we need to make producers understand that living away from home is hard. It's not a jolly

jaunt across the country for me – getting the right trains booked, having a hotel with an opening window and, of course, having one that's clean. We need to stand up and say if things aren't right, talk to the bookers about what we need and why, and say if we are unhappy, as unhappy staff can make for an unhappy, unproductive production. So don't be shy; be clear and be firm on what your requirements are.

We continue in this issue of *Focus* with our work around mental health with an update from Mig Burgess. We also have the conclusion of our series on the history of the ALD and an update on the EU regulations for tungsten and how UK changes will affect its use in the future – thanks to Rob Halliday for keeping on top of all of this for us. Our 2022 *Lumière* is halfway through their placement, and we hear what they have learned so far at Glyndebourne – I very much look forward to working with Ed later in the year. We also have a great article about this year's *Scandlight* from Nick Moran... which leads me to

mention next year's *Showlight* in May. Do look out for our sponsorship places to go to *Showlight 2023*, which will be advertised soon.

And last, Lucy Carter's piece on agents comes from a discussion with a member asking what the regulations are and what one should expect from an agent. I would like to thank Lucy for researching the question and responding through her article via *Focus*, so the whole membership is better informed. If you want help with a question, do get in touch, as sharing the answers with the whole membership may be beneficial to all.

Before I leave my hotel room to position the booms going in this morning, followed by a bit of paddling across the Hoe, I would like to remind members of the upcoming AGM on 8 October; see Amanda's parish notices on page 20 for more details. I would like to personally invite you all to attend in

From the chair...

person or remotely to join the debate on where you want the ALPD to go over the next few years. The world of theatre has changed since we have returned following lockdowns. There are many new issues to discuss, and this is an opportunity for you to do that and help guide the Executive Committee into where they should be going in the coming years. So make your voice heard: maybe you want more action, maybe you want more socials, come and let us know...

Jo 🍀



Right: Kayaking on Plymouth Hoe with Callum Macdonald (associate lighting designer on Fisherman's Friends) before technical rehearsals



A postcard from...

Megan Lucas, ALPD work placement

It's been an incredible experience so far during my work placements, first assisting Bruno Poet and Charlotte Burton on Alcina at Glyndebourne, then trading the South Downs for the South Bank to assist Lucy Carter on Much Ado about Nothing at the National Theatre. Working in the beautiful grounds of Glyndebourne was a welcome culture shock from the concrete jungles most theatres are found in, but in both venues I learned so much and had the privilege of working with so many wonderful and talented people.

It was also very rewarding to play a useful role in helping to bring the respective designs to life – particularly in the case of Alcina, as thanks to Covid I was parachuted in to programme the final tech session before the premiere. I've never been so nervous while sat at a desk, but happily the show went smoothly. Keeping track of the lift indicators for Much Ado was considerably less stressful by comparison!

The placements have been beneficial to me in countless ways, be it demystifying design and theatre at that high level, meeting other people within the industry, or gaining experience in the role of assistant. Above all, I now feel that my aspirations are actually achievable, and I'm so grateful to the ALPD for providing this springboard to my career. 🍀



All about agents

Lucy Carter with some top tips



We have been hearing worrying things about some designers having agents who aren't protecting and supporting them very well. I don't know the ins and outs of the problems, but I do want to explain how my relationship with my agent works and how it supports my career.

First, I want to mention the PMA – the Personal Managers Association, the association for agents. They are the leading professional body for talent agencies in the UK.

The information from its website says: "PMA membership comprises agencies which represent artists, dramatists and creatives. Our current membership stands at 200 agencies and an estimated 1,000 agents, who between them represent approximately 50,000 artists, writers, directors and creatives working in screen, theatre and radio.

Members are bound by a code of good agent practice, which outlines conscientious regard for the professional welfare of clients, and commitment to industry-wide values of equality, diversity and inclusion, and anti-harassment. The PMA network is run by its members, for its members – a structure that allows all voices to be heard and collective decisions to be made.

The PMA was established in 1950 for 'the protection and promotion of the interests of its members variously operating in the [cultural

industries] as personal managers ... and of maintaining good and friendly relations with one another', the spirit of which remains true to this day and extends to many kindred, industry organisations with which we work."

So, a first port of call, if you are interested in getting an agent, would be to visit their website and check to see if your agent, or someone you are potentially thinking of joining, is a member. The website is www.thepma.com, and it is a really clear website to visit and discover how agents should support you.

What's important is that they have a code of conduct their members have to adhere to, and they do have sanctions should their members fail to meet those practices. I noted as I looked though the information that one of their standards states that "the overriding consideration must be a conscientious regard for the

professional welfare of the client”. So your agent is supporting you, not pushing you into things and not withholding money, and should be actively supporting you to have a fulfilling and healthy career.

There are rules around money and that agents should pay you within ten working days of receiving the money. They have to have a separate client account where the payments come into, and they pay you from that account before they can take their commission and deposit it into their account.

It is worth checking out the website, and if you have any questions or issues, contact us and/or the PMA to discuss.

So how did I get an agent? I worked almost exclusively in contemporary dance at the start of my career and I didn't meet agents at first nights. I don't think many agents went to see contemporary dance!

The choreographer I worked with a lot got an agent and after about ten years of working I started to wonder if I should get one. I was mostly working with and for my friends, and companies I had met on the ground (as a technician at the Place Theatre). I was not good at asking for more money, and I rarely ever had a contract. I didn't really understand what an agent could help me with, but gradually as I did bigger shows for established or funded companies, I started getting contracts and I didn't really understand all the terms and conditions; I just signed and hoped for the best. Youthful optimism! Still, I had not met any agents by chance and so I approached a few to see if they would meet me to discuss representation. I think... although I don't remember... that I approached three, and they were agents that already represented friends and colleagues. One who I met at a posh

hotel in central London said, “So you want to give up the dance, do you?”, which couldn't have been further from the truth. One said I should get more experience (ten years seemed like quite a lot of experience), and one said their books were full, which was another way of saying no. Luckily, somehow, I finally wrote to another agent I was recommended who replied that she had actually seen a few of my shows and would love to meet me. We met when I was lighting an outside dance piece in the Abbey in Bury St Edmunds of all places and the rest is history. I miraculously had found an agent who not only went to see contemporary dance all the time but also enjoyed it and was a fan of my work. She didn't expect me to “give up the dance”! I am still with the same agency today sixteen years later, even though my original agent has now retired.

All about agents

Lucy Carter

What I discovered, once I had an agent, was that they started to ask for more money, better expenses deals and better working conditions. An agent has so much insider knowledge that we can never have, because they are negotiating and dealing with contracts for many clients and they know what the usual terms and conditions are, they know how to ask for things, when it's appropriate to demand things and when you should compromise or walk away from a bad deal. They have contacts everywhere and can work with you to make new connections and develop your career. You can develop strategies together to pursue certain career goals, and they can introduce you to other creatives within and outside of their agency.

They don't find you work exactly, but my agents have suggested me frequently to their own clients, and many of those introductions

have led to work for me and new longstanding collaborations. They have recommended me to producers for work, and they have made some calls to find me work in new areas that I didn't have previous experience in.

Agents know each other and they talk a lot at press nights and in meetings and they recommend clients to each other. I am sure there is competition between agencies, but they do seem to remain civil and collaborative.

Something I find invaluable is that my agent helps and, when possible, applies on my behalf for double taxation forms, visas and travel documents. They manage my schedule and we block out any time I want to keep clear for family life, even if I just want a break without any questions or pressure. I have never been pressured into taking a job because it would be lucrative

for them, and we have a very open and honest dialogue. I value their opinion and take their advice, but the decisions are always mine to make and they respect that. Sometimes they have already done a lot of work on a certain offer and it never comes to fruition. So they don't get paid for that work and this has never become an issue between us; it's part of the job and that 10% they charge is well deserved. I hope that some jobs and contracts are much simpler and that it balances out across contracts.

Often, and especially more recently, I have asked my agent to collaborate and discuss terms, fees and conditions with other agents on the same productions so that the other members of the creative team on a project and I can ensure we are all being treated fairly and with parity. It has worked well and often we have managed to increase the terms of everyone's deals. If you can get



Lucy with her agent, Simon Ash of NR1 Creatives

your agent to talk with other agents, the power is in our hands – we can encourage producers to behave with a conscience.

Every agent manages things differently and not all agents do everything I have mentioned. If you do meet an agent with a view to getting representation, you should ask what they do and don't do and ask for examples of when they have managed to negotiate better terms for a client. You work together, not you for them. They are providing a service for which you pay them, and if you don't get a good service you

should discuss openly and honestly what it is that you need. When you meet it is not them interviewing you (although I know it sometimes feels like it), it's both of you finding out more about each other to see if you can work together. They do not manage or control you; you are in control of your decisions.

You must sign a contract with them, but as with any contract you can ask for things to be added or omitted, and you should check the contract against the information on the PMA website before you sign.

Finally, other than cold calling agents, how else could you meet them? You should talk with your fellow collaborators about their representation. You could ask them to introduce you to their agents at press nights, and then ask the agent if you could contact them to talk. When you meet other lighting designers ask them who represents

them and again ask if they would introduce you. Think clearly about what your ideal future career could look like so when they ask you what you would like to do you have a plan or an idea, but also ask them what your next steps could be. If you decide you like them and would like them to be your agent, but they decide not to take you onto their books, ask them why and ask them what other agents they suggest you approach – you could even ask them if they could introduce you.

I would also suggest you seek out agencies that are listed on the PMA website, as that offers you added assurances of their conduct.

Many agents may agree to do one-off deals for you. It gives you both an opportunity to work with each other and see if you enjoy the working relationship. If you don't like it, be honest! 🚫

Scandlight 2022

Nick Moran reports from Stockholm

Scandlight is the brainchild of Svenska Ljussättare Föreningen (SLF, the Swedish Lighting Professional's Association) and it is a truly beautiful thing – a small-scale international conference for lighting professionals, educators and students with a fabulously broad agenda and high impact, all hosted by the most genial and generous of people. It really does live up to its aim of inspiring every participant.

The format is presentations in the morning and hands-on workshops in the afternoon. Because the conference is small, there is plenty of opportunity to ask questions of presenters in coffee breaks and over lunch too, and maybe because we are all lighting types, there's plenty of evening socialising.

The range of subjects covered was truly amazing – too many for this article to do justice to – so this is a sample; apologies to everyone I miss

out. Presenters looked forward and reflected on both recent and less recent past.

Long words and lots of coding

Luther Frank is a founding partner of Sovereign Candle Collective, and as US East Coast lockdowns eased, he was commissioned to work on Moses Sumney's technochophenomena. It was an interactive space for one person developed in partnership with Microsoft and Pioneer Works, in Brooklyn.

Using Wii Connect sensors he designed a setup where the movement of the single audience member/performer manipulated around 70 moving lights. The fascinating presentation explained how a relatively small set of gestures capture by the Wii Connect sensors was read in real time, combined with timecode from the music track and assigned DMX values in streaming



Waiting for dinner, before going on to play boules.

All photos in this article by Nick Moran.

ACN. Luther used this ultra-complex and intricate project – which was not made any easier by some of the corporate and personal egos involved – to draw some more general conclusions about working with human interactivity:

- Start with a goal and an outcome, and visualise it.
- Research all the tech, even if it isn't yours.
- Assume the tech will fight you.
- Be humble and flexible.
- Acknowledge that, in some sense, it's "alive" and not entirely yours.

This last point was made clear for Luther when one punter recorded themselves on their phone and posted the results on YouTube. "His" rig was doing things he didn't think it could do!

It's worth looking for "technoecho phenomena" on YouTube. You can see there are times

when the system is overloaded and freezes, but other times when some "really weird shit happens". There's no other documentation of the outcome!

Digital scenography with minimal resources

In contrast to Luther's Microsoft-sponsored high tech, we heard from a recent graduate of our host institution, Stockholm University of the Arts (SKH). Alvin Lilliestierna described a project where students with very little prior knowledge of projection or digital image manipulation created a show that projected scenic images onto a set of movable boxes. They chose Mad Mapper and Syphon for the "shallow learning curve" and flexibility and, from the images Alvin showed, did a great job.

Though the learning curve for the software might have been

shallow, the small team had a very steep learning curve when it came to making the show in a four-metre-high studio, using three "classroom" projectors and a single Mac computer. They worked with professional actors (like most Scandinavian technical theatre students, it seems) and discovered that only through close collaboration, accurate blocking and lots of physical rehearsals would the project work. Not only did the boxes have to end up in exactly the right place after each move, but the actors also had to stick to their rehearsed blocking to keep out of the image and keep in the precisely focused crosslight.

It was a great insight into how theatre makers who are not skilled in video and projection, working with minimal kit, can make work at an impressive level – if they have time to play and get it right.

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Visualisation as a production tool

We heard from two of Scandinavia's larger theatre institutions on how they are using 3D digital visualisation to improve their production processes. Those of you who read James Simpson in LSi will be familiar with the general argument, but it was really interesting to hear how and why two relatively well funded institutions chose to allocate resources in these areas.

Emma Weil Zoomed in from the Royal Dramatic Theatre in Stockholm where she is head of development. The theatre has five stages, two of which regularly work in rep, with changeovers constrained by a 90-minute build window and 45 minutes for strike. Her team worked with gaming technology students from the local university to build accurate digital models of the venues, the sets, and the

lighting rigs, with the aim of making more time for rehearsals without asking staff to work over-long hours. She also wanted to reduce potential waste from altering or even rebuilding large set items that "don't work in the real world".

They started (as many have before them) with 3D Vectorworks drawings. The technology students then used these as a basis for a digital world built in Unity (a game engine). However, they now use Depence, which has become ubiquitous in the concert touring world, because it's "much quicker and offers more time to test ideas in AR". Depence software comes with lots of industry appropriate libraries, and it talks to their Stage Technologies automation systems and to video servers, and most entertainment networks. All five spaces have been accurately modelled in Depence.

They are also trialling the use of VR for the professionals involved in the production, not the public – yet. Emma reported that for lighting designers "focusing in a VR world makes it easier to do it for real – to pick up [on stage] where you left off [in the visualisation suite]". The process has already demonstrated efficiencies in many aspects of builds and changeovers.

For the Royal Dramatic Theatre this is a ten-year project. Emma is clear that key to its success so far has been the close collaboration with the university staff and students. When the theatre staff encounter a problem or think of a new implementation, "we give them assignments and they give us solutions". I guess that this low-cost, high-quality consultancy on their doorstep makes it easier to ask for expensive software and the hardware to run it.



The pre-visualisation suite at the Royal Opera House in Stockholm.

Lotta Schiefer was the operations manager at the Royal Opera House in Stockholm and took us on an extensive backstage tour. This included a visit to the lighting team as they were preparing for a live broadcast. They appeared completely unfazed by our presence. The Opera House is looking at a major refurbishment, as much as anything to bring the public areas in line with accessibility and ventilation codes. This has been delayed by (among other things) a change of government, Covid-19 and the fact that, due to the tightness of the site, the work would stand a good chance

of causing major disruption in the heart of the city.

So, there is no ten-year plan to use digital technology to improve the production process here. Instead, the light department has built the stage house and auditorium in Vectorworks and imported it into MA Visualiser. From there, in their small but comfortable visualisation suite, they can “control” (in the digital space) all the automated flying, the stage lifts, the Disguise media servers and, of course, the lighting. As well as offering lighting designers the opportunity to pre-focus and plot (and a place to train programmers)

this is what the production department uses to trial production idea and to plan changeovers.

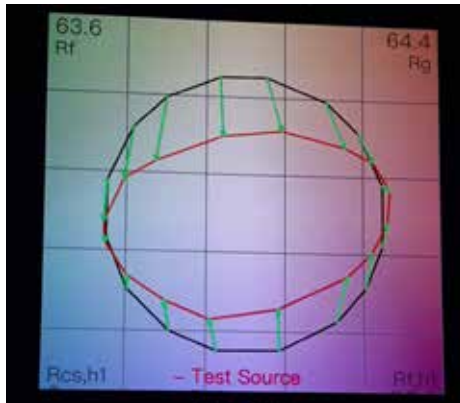
Of course, the two organisations start from different places, with different needs, internal skill sets, and external resources, but I think it is interesting to think about the appropriateness of the tools used for pre-vis, and what cost and savings different approaches have (not just in terms of the budget for individual shows, but in organisational overheads, staff wellbeing, job satisfaction and in the wider community of cities with large theatre institutions). As one of the speakers at the conference said: “Other things being equal, I would always choose to focus and plot in real life on the stage, but if visualisation gives us all more time to work together on stage, then I’ll take that every time.”

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Talking about colour...

Almost a third of the workshops and presentations were concerned with colour in some way. We heard about the research behind the ANSI TM-30-20, why it is much more useful than previous measurements of light quality and how to read the data. You might have seen these diagrams in technical product reviews in LSi and elsewhere.



The presentation was led by Dag Engström from the Swedish National Touring Theatre. A few years ago, they set up an experiment involving lighting two identical sets – one with tungsten and one with LED.



Off the back of the reaction to that he formed a group: “What is good white light?” This group asked questions and began to discover just how complex the notion of codifying the perceived quality of light is. They explored concepts such as fidelity (the average value of the magnitude of difference in rendering of a chosen set of samples) and gamut (the power distribution of the source against frequency). Colour temperature is a measure of the red/blue shift in the source, but some sources have a green/yellow or magenta shift. How does that get documented and communicated?

Dag was joined by Mattian Fransson and Nina Mylly, and they went on to show the results of a

Left: The outer black circle is from a reference source, and the red circle is the source under test. The green arrows show the magnitude of difference.

Right: Our spectrometer test station, which included a range of highly coloured, natural and manufactured items.

project the Swedish government sponsored to find high-quality energy efficient sources for theatres, museums and galleries. This produced a guide to procurement (which UK agencies have asked for copies of...).

The measurement standard ANSI TM-30 uses 99 colour samples taken from over 100,000 natural objects. It incorporates contemporary understandings of human vision and the latest brain science. If you are interested, the full details are downloadable from the ANSI website for free, though you do have to sign up to get it.

We broke up into small groups to play with a Spektrometer Lighting Passport spectrometer that feeds information into a phone app. We had some colourful samples, lit by a range of LED fixtures and a reference tungsten Source 4.

I became fascinated by the way small changes in the levels of some emitters could make a big difference, while other emitters required a big change to make any noticeable change, and how each of the five of us in my group had a different idea about what “good white light” looked like – one really not liking the tungsten reference source, for example.

ETC colour secrets

Another workshop for colour enthusiasts was run by ETC's Declan Randall. We looked at metamerism,



described by Declan as “the same colour made with a different recipe”. If you use the gel numbers on the colour picker in Eos, there are usually three recipes for each colour, the brightest, the spectrally fullest, and a hybrid. You get to choose which one is your default using a drop-down at the top right of the colour picker window. It is also worth

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noting that the colours are based on a comparison with a 120V HPL lamp in a Source 4, with a colour temperature of 3005K.

Declan also went through some of the subtler but really useful colour selection features of Eos, including defining a colour path – the colours a unit will go through as it changes from one colour to another in a cue – and tint controls – which don't directly access the emitters but instead give you the ability to "make it a bit redder".

Tivoli Gardens white

Have you visited the Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen? At different times of the year? Did you know that the colour of the "white" light changes through the year? And that this used to be a manual lamp-by-lamp job? We were back in the lecture theatre for this one, with Jesper Kongshaug,

who had what sounded like the unenviable task of taking the lighting installation into the LED world of the 2020s.

He told us about the first LED lamps they tried, which were either destroyed by sunlight, UV or heat, or failed due to condensation. He told us how customer "spend" increases with lower colour temperatures and more red in the "white" (look it up, especially if you are asked to light concession stands!). He told us too about psychological research into what lighting conditions make people feel safe, for example, you can have dark areas as long as your punters are looking out at brightly lit things.

After many trials, the park has opted for low CRI pea-light strings with a colour temperature of 2110K – defined as Tivoli Christmas White. This means that lots of "non-show" lighting also has to be changed during the Christmas season to

match the pea-light strings. Well, if you want a bit of seasonal employment in Denmark, you know where to go...

Impact of LED on teaching

Until quite recently, many lighting courses restricted their students' access to colour in the early stages of their training. With most of our performance spaces having at least some LED fixtures now, today that's not really practical. Adam Mendelson teaches at the University of Maryland and discussed how working in LED-equipped spaces has changed how he delivers the subject. It's not so easy as it was to just plug a light in and use it; now we have to "start with the technical and then add the creative". Adam also made the point that having LED does not save time picking colours. Students (and some professional lighting



"Retiring" Patt 23s, including some very early models that might well be older than the author!

designers) can all too easily lose valuable time in the theatre making colour choices they probably should have made before the fit-up.

We all agreed that it is better for a student LD to ask for the colour and then the intensity, and also that it's hard to get them, and their programmers, to do this.

William Kenyon leads the lighting course at Penn State, where they recently upgraded a large studio from tungsten to LED, mostly to "save power". He told us about having to convince the budget holders that just changing the units wasn't going to work and that the space needed a new power and data infrastructure too – and about the slightly scary discovery that on

any given performance day, almost one-third of the power

used by the lighting system was drawn by units that had no light coming out of them – so called power vampires!

Charlie Åström took over the lighting course at SKH just before Covid-19, and although Sweden did not lock down in the same way as the UK did, this must have made his first years more challenging. He talked about asking his students to keenly observe a space through the whole day and record how the light changes, and then to bring this experience back into the lighting lab and aim to reproduce it, with high-quality LED fixtures, and time.

There was a lot more, including a pre-conference visit to Per Simon Edström, pictured on the next page

in one of his theatres. He showed us candlelight, gas jets, and a limelight (which has no hint of green, but really lives as light). There was his not-quite-sinking theatre boat too, which was home to a radical theatre group in the '60s and '70s. The best record of their performances comes from the notes taken by secret police infiltrators, and now made public!

The redoubtable Chris van Goethem is, among many other things, the force behind the Canon Project, whose aim is "to increase awareness and understanding of the history of technical theatre in Europe: its practices and technologies". Who knew, for example, that to date many manufacturers' catalogues, you need to go to the trade journals and look for the first adverts for the new equipment in that catalogue? You can find out more about the Canon Project, and even contribute to the archives, at www.canon-timeline.eu.

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Per Simon Edström in his self-built theatre, which can be lit by candles or gas jets or "nasty tungsten if you must".

We also heard from JR Norman Luker, whose self-appointed summer job is accurately scanning theatre architecture to create digital time capsules and record the heritage of stagecraft throughout the world.

Then there was maverick TV lighting designer and inveterate tech-hacker Örjan Fjällström, who paints live video using photoshop and 3D Studio Max on an old MacBook, and who shared how he created an

installation in a church, combining simple artifacts and projected image, that "made people cry".

And there was the inspirational Psyche Chui, who appeared by Zoom from Hong Kong to introduce a beautiful workshop on combining ancient Chinese puppetry with contemporary technology. Her team, who were able to be with us, included William Wong, who uses sensor technology to manipulate

digital puppets projected beside traditional ones, and Puppetmaster Wong who delighted with astonishing skills.

And there were the social gatherings, conversations over coffee, lunch, dinner, drinks and pétanque (yes, really). All in all, it was a very refreshing and satisfying experience, thanks to Anders, Ulf, all the attendees, and the SLF. Can't wait to the next one, and I hope some of you can join us. 🍷



Puppetry with Psyche Chui and Puppetmaster William Wong



Örjan Fjällström's unique "video painting rack".



Scandlight attendees on the final day of the conference. See you again soon!

Scandlight welcomes lighting designers, lighting artists, engineers, educators, teachers and students, mainly from Scandinavia but also guests from other parts of the world who are interested in light as an art form.

To find out more about Scandlight, go to www.scandlight.nu.



Office Oracle

News and information from **Amanda** and the ALPD office

Professional process documents

During the early autumn we will be sending out our professional process documents to producers and theatre managers. We hope that these, coupled with our contract checklist and professional practice guides, will be read and retained by producers but also be useful to members when negotiating with producers. All of the documents can be found on the Resources tab on the public side of the website.

Sponsored Student Scheme

The ALPD is delighted to announce that the 2023 Sponsored Student

Scheme is now open for applications. The scheme is partly funded by Corporate members of the ALPD. Do you know any young people who would benefit from membership of the ALPD? Perhaps you could pass on the information to them.

The scheme offers students, who have not previously been members of the ALPD, the opportunity to enjoy free ALPD membership until the end of March 2024. To qualify for Sponsored Student membership, applicants will not have previously been a member of the ALPD and will be studying full time on a UK course or recognised industry apprenticeship scheme and have an interest in the process of live performance lighting and/or video and projection.

This scheme is only open to NEW STUDENT memberships of the ALPD. Only completed applications that include the name of your college/

university, course, graduation date and a course tutor as your proposer AND have proof of student status attached to it will be processed for the scheme.

The closing date for applications is Christmas 2022, but the earlier applications are submitted the longer the FREE membership will run for – do share this with anyone you teach, mentor or train.

AGM

You should by now have received notice by email or by post of our AGM taking place on Saturday 8 October at 12 noon. This an AGM of the ALD (not the new company). It will be followed in the afternoon by an open session on the future: how would you like to see the ALPD developing in the future? The day will include a seminar on agents: do

you need one, how to get one, what will they do for you? This will be led by an established agent. There will be a Zoom link for the AGM and the afternoon session. If by any chance you have not received notice of the AGM, you will find information at www.thealpd.org.uk/the-filing-cabinet/aggm-papers, or please contact office@thealpd.org.uk.

House of Lords inquiry

At the end of July we received an email from the House of Lords Communications and Digital Committee, which has launched an inquiry into the future of the UK's creative industries. We were invited to make a contribution to this. This inquiry will examine some of the most significant changes expected in the creative industries over the next five to ten years arising from the effects of new technologies and

explore what is needed from the skills and talent pipeline to ensure the sector can thrive in this fast-changing world. This topic was discussed at length at a meeting of the Executive Committee and our views and thoughts have been drawn together into a submission edited on our behalf by Rob Halliday (see page 34). We hope that we may also be invited to give oral evidence.

ALPD Awards for Excellence – closing date 31 October 2022

The closing date for applications for the ALPD Awards for Excellence scheme is on 31 October. We will be awarding in three categories – lighting design, production electrics and programming – with each of the fantastic prize bundles being tailored to the specific needs of that speciality.

These awards are presented to current students (not just those on vocational theatre courses), Affiliate members of the Association, and recent graduates (who graduated no earlier than 2020), even if they are not currently a member, who have demonstrated strong, imaginative and creative lighting designs, detailed production documents or thorough programming files. Full details can be found on our website under the Training tab: www.thealpd.org.uk/training/alpd-awards-2022.

Addresses

A callout particularly for students: If you have changed accommodation over the summer, do please make sure you update your postal address on your membership pages of the database. If you have any difficulty doing this, please send your new address to office@thealpd.org.uk. 📧

Corporate members

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Thank you for your support! For Commercial members, see the back cover.

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Professional members' shows

opening in August, September and October

August

2 Jodie Underwood (lighting designer) *Man of 100 Faces Gilded Balloon* / **2** Johanna Town (lighting designer) *Identical Nottingham and Salford* / **3** Rebecca Clough (lighting designer) *One of Two Summerhall* / **3** James C McFetridge (lighting designer) *In The Name of the Son Assembly Rooms* / **3** James C McFetridge (lighting designer) *Carson and the Lady Lyric Theatre Belfast* / **3** Kieron Johnson (lighting designer) *Happy Meal Traverse Theatre* / **3** Grahame Gardner (lighting designer) *A Ladder to the Stars Gilded Balloon* / **3** Daniel Carter-Brennan (lighting designer) *Leo Reich: Literally Who Cares Pleasance Baby Grand* / **3** Daniel Carter-Brennan (lighting designer) *Ballet Freedom EICC* / **3** Danny Vavrecka (lighting designer) *work.txt Summerhall* / **3** Danny Vavrecka (lighting designer) *Period Dramas Pleasance* / **3** Daniel Carter-Brennan (associate lighting designer) *Fascinating Aida Assembly George Square* / **3** Daniel Carter-Brennan (lighting designer) *Age Is A Feeling Summerhall* / **3** Daniel Carter-Brennan (lighting designer) *Les Dawson, Flying High Assembly George Square* / **4** Joe Price (lighting designer) *Dinosaurs and All That Rubbish Assembly Studio Two* / **7** Alex Forey (lighting designer) *Message in a Clay River Cockpit Theatre* / **9** Joe Price (lighting designer) *Carmen Arcola Theatre* / **11** Clare O'Donoghue (lighting designer) *Candide New Rotterdam Wharf, Glasgow* / **12** Palle Palme (lighting designer) *Kristina from Duvemala Dalhalla, Sweden* / **13** Danny Vavrecka (lighting designer) *Terra Nova Theatre Royal Winchester* / **13** Alan Mooney (lighting designer) *Anthem The Vault Belfast* / **16** Daniel Carter-Brennan (lighting designer) *One Woman Show Traverse Theatre* / **19** Charlie Morgan Jones (lighting consultant) *Copenhagen Opera Festival* / **23** John Rainsforth (lighting and video designer) *Brotherhood Alphabetti Theatre, Newcastle* / **24** Jamie Holden (video programmer) *Operation Julie Aberystwyth Arts Centre* / **24** Chuma Emembolu (lighting designer) *Sir John In Love Opera Holland Park* / **25** James C McFetridge (lighting designer) *The Producers The Mac, Belfast* / **25** Jo Underwood (associate lighting designer) *Ride Charing Cross Theatre* / **26** Charlie Morgan Jones (lighting designer) *Lisbon Floor Takkelloftet* / **26** Alan Mooney (assistant lighting designer) *How to be a Dancer in Seventy Two Thousand Easy Lessons The Gate Theatre Dublin* / **26** Luca Panetta (lighting and video designer) *La Rondine Belcombe Court* / **27** Luca Panetta (lighting and video designer) *Il segreto di Susanna Belcombe Court* / **27** Luca Panetta (lighting and video designer) *Rita Belcombe Court* / **28** Joseph Ed Thomas (lighting designer) *The Secret Garden the Musical London Palladium* / **30** Jo Underwood (lighting designer) *Horse-Play Studio 3, Riverside Studios* / **31** Johanna Town (lighting designer) *Fisherman's Friends Plymouth*

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.

September

1 Sandy McAlister (lighting designer) Little Shop of Horrors The Mac Belfast / **2** Edmund Sutton (lighting designer) Penelope: 7 Ways to Wait Arcola Studio 1 / **6** Daniel Carter-Brennan (lighting designer) Age Is A Feeling Soho Theatre / **6** James C McFetridge (lighting designer) The Gap Year Lyric Theatre Belfast / **7** Alex Lewer (lighting designer) Bright Half Life Kings Head Theatre / **10** Michael Grundner (lighting designer) Anastasia Musiktheater Linz / **11** Ben Jacobs (lighting designer) Dawn French is a Huge Twat Exeter Northcott / **18** Jack Wills (touring re-lighter) Much Ado About Nothing Crucible, Sheffield / **21** John Rainsforth (lighting designer) The Wasp The Customs House / **22** Joe Price (lighting designer) Revealed Tobacco Factory Theatres / **22** Malcolm Rippeth (lighting designer) The Gretchen Question Master Shipwrights House / **26** Gareth Hughes (supplier) Tylwyth Sherman Theatre, Cardiff / **26** Palle Palme (lighting designer) Come From Away Östgötateatern / **27** Tracey Gibbs (lighting designer) Candide Blackheath Halls / **27** Johanna Town (lighting designer) Famous 5 Theatr Clwyd / **29** Malcolm Rippeth (lighting designer) Rapunzel Northern Stage / **29** Palle Palme (lighting designer) Titanic – The Musical Wermland Opera / **30** Malcolm Rippeth (lighting designer) Rapunzel After Dark Northern Stage / **30** Neil Foulis (lighting programmer) James IV: Queen of the Fight Edinburgh Festival Theatre

October

2 Danny Vavrecka (lighting designer) work.txt Studiobühne U17, Staatstheater Mainz / **3** James C McFetridge (lighting designer) Teachers / **5** Daniel Carter-Brennan (lighting designer) Leo Reich: Literally Who Cares Soho Theatre / **12** Charlie Morgan Jones (lighting designer) Mix Tape Sadlers Wells / **13** Kieron Johnson (lighting designer) Dogs Liverpool Playhouse Studio / **15** Malcolm Rippeth (lighting designer) Hamlet Bristol Old Vic / **17** Malcolm Rippeth (lighting designer) Madama Butterfly Oper Graz / **19** James C McFetridge (lighting designer) Bridesmaids of Northern Ireland Grand Opera House, Belfast / **20** Ben Jacobs (lighting designer) King Hamlin Park Theatre, Park 90 / **21** Michael Grundner (lighting designer) Dracula Deutsches Theater München / **25** Kieron Johnson (lighting designer) Hotel Birmingham Hippodrome / **25** John Rainsforth (lighting designer) Meggie Magicia Civic Theatre, Gosforth / **26** Johanna Town (lighting designer) Famous 5 Theatr Clwyd / **27** Joseph Ed Thomas (lighting designer) Darknet Chroma Q Theatre / **27** James C McFetridge (lighting designer) Big Man Lyric Theatre Belfast

CAST joins the ALPD

Meet our newest Corporate member

If you are involved in the lighting industry in any way, there's a high chance that you have heard of wysiwyg lighting design software and BlackTrax real-time tracking. Established in 1994 CAST group of companies is recognized globally as an industry-leading software and hardware manufacturer. Our products – wysiwyg, the only all-in-one lighting design software; BlackTrax real-time tracking; and Vivien event planning software – are used by professionals and taught in educational settings internationally.



CAST is proud to become a Corporate member of the ALPD. This partnership between CAST and the ALPD solidifies the symbiotic relationship between exploring theatrical stages creatively and the

importance of having the right tools to accomplish this, feeling supported at every stage in your career.

What makes a tool the “right” one?

CAST's mission from the beginning has been to design products that are reliable, robust, practical and efficient, as well as adaptive to any production situation that might come your way. The right tool should be interconnectable with all significant entertainment hardware from various manufacturers. The right tools help you focus on the bigger picture, knowing the smaller details are taken care of.

There are few tools that can be “all-in-one” – taken from the previsualisation suite and used right through a show's finale, with the ability to make changes on the fly, while the show is happening.

CAST products open new doors and enable you to be creative in more profound ways.

 With wysiwyg you can plan, design and pre-programme your shows, relying on the most accurate 3D library of lighting equipment and accessories available. You can virtually test your choice of equipment before investing, or even run your entire show virtually, refining and preventing potential problems. Wysiwyg comes in different product levels that fit different users' needs and requirements. You can compare the different versions of wysiwyg at cast-soft.com/wysiwyg.

Wysiwyg's 3D files integrate with and feed BlackTrax's real-time tracking system with space and fixture profile information so you can accurately track performers, set pieces, or anything you tag with the tracking beacon. It also offers seamless integration with lighting

consoles, media servers, spatial audio systems and automated/robotic cameras.

BLACKTRAX

Any automated fixture in your rig can be used as a followspot and put in places otherwise not accessible by a followspot operator. With BlackTrax and wysiwyg, you can use your virtual environment to define spatial zones and assign triggers for lighting cues and special effects, creating spontaneous automation for your entire show.

When integrating with media servers or spatial audio systems, BlackTrax enables you to create media interactions and amazing visuals or spatial audio effects. It is so reliable that shows have run with BlackTrax as the backbone of the entire production's technical ecosystem. Tracking and automation



cut down rehearsal times, providing you with freedom and yet repeatability. The possibilities are endless. Learn more at www.blacktrax.ca.

There is always another level of production that can be reached, and we are here alongside the ALPD to help you reach that next level. 📱

*BlackTrax light tracking
Eric Church
Gather Again tour*

Diary dates 2022–2023

9–10 May 2023 PLASA Focus, Leeds*
20–23 May 2023 Showlight, Fontainebleau, France*

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.

New members

Welcome!

Student member
Jack Evans, Sidcup

Contact us

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Focus Magazine ISSN: 1364-9299

Editor: Kelli Zezulka editor@thealpd.org.uk

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To submit ideas for articles, correspondence, corrections and any comments
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25 September 2022.

Lumière scheme

Reflections from Lumière Ed Saunders

As I sit down to reflect on the Lumière scheme, taking shelter from the mid-July heat, it is the weekend before a likely record-breaking – havoc-wreaking – scorcher of a heatwave. I'm in London and thankful to be escaping to the countryside first thing in the morning, just before a Red Alert for extreme temperature kicks in and the train tracks begin to melt: I'll be in Sussex, forecast a comparatively comfortable 33 degrees, on an estate overlooking the South Downs that for best part of ninety years has played host to a uniquely distinguished summer festival of world-class opera. That this place, with its lake and croquet lawns, pheasants and A-list lighting designers, has so quickly grown to be something at once familiar and awe-inspiring is easily one of the most remarkable things that the Lumière scheme promises to offer.

I'm three months in to my first placement at Glyndebourne, and about to get stuck into three weeks of production for the piece that will see me through to the end of my time here. Time flies, and there's more to come: the Lumière scheme is a six-month development opportunity for early-career lighting practitioners, created and overseen by industry titan Peter Mumford. Now in its sixth year, there is both a Design Lumière and a Production Lumière, which set out to forge routes forwards in an industry where career paths are notoriously difficult to see without the benefit of hindsight. It's a two-pronged approach: equip aspiring young professionals with the tangible skills to assist on work that they admire, and introduce them to the workplaces and people that produce it. It's a training opportunity, but more than that, it's a demystification of what it takes to level up and what it's like when you get there.

Since starting in May, I've been posted as an assistant lighting designer across six markedly different productions. Glyndebourne is a repertory opera house, producing work in-house that can then go into its rep, out on tour, or sometimes packaged up for transfer to other companies, and so this season has been a combination of new and revived work each with a different process to get it on its feet. This is a way of working, as well as a scale and ambition, that is pretty much unique to opera and that, for me, has been a real initiation: aside from some casual shifts at the Royal Opera House and some small-scale cross-artsy design credits, I was a relative opera novice before starting here. It was not something that I grew up with nor something that my work had really led me to, and so my induction was a process of wrapping my head around the particularities of the art form and

Lumière scheme

Ed Saunders

the craft, and of the mechanics of producing this kind of work.

Crucially, it has also meant working with a staggering number of lighting designers in a pretty short period. My first week here was a revival of *The Marriage of Figaro*, lit by Paule Constable but resurrected in her absence by associate Ben Jacobs. It was, needless to say, gorgeous, with a design by Christopher Oram that set the 18th-century comedy in an exquisitely sun-soaked, 1970s baroque – flares and all – and serving up probably the grandest and most opera-y of initiations I could have hoped for. Watching Ben at work also made for a great introduction: as an associate and LD in his own right, he was further along a trajectory that I have my own sights set on, and which I'm hoping the Lumière scheme might be the springboard for. He talked me

through the specifics of his role as an associate on *Figaro*, all underpinned by the balancing act of handling the authority of the show archive with an intuitive sensitivity to the designer's eye.

Opera-making is an enterprise that fires on all cylinders, and my first week at Glyndebourne was not just production time for *Figaro* but also for Ethel Smythe's *The Wreckers*, lit by Malcolm Rippeth. Every day, the turnaround would clear the stage of the gilded Sevillian villa to make way for the skeletal coastal landscape of Smythe's Cornish tempest. It's a 20th-century piece, hotly anticipated not only for its rarity – most of its performances have been heavily abridged or in alternative translations – but for its urgent relevance: it's a tale of defiance, freedom, and mob rule. The threat of storm and of the destruction it brings is central to the work, and Malcolm's lighting painted

a brooding and thunderous landscape that took us from rain-slashed harbour town to misty causeway to abandoned sea cave. The production was already on its feet when I joined, so I had the pleasure of watching Malcolm in the throes of bringing this to life with Glyndebourne programmer Amy Clarke, which was a real masterclass in designer-programmer flow states. The two have worked together before, and it shows: there is an implicit understanding of each other's workflow in the way that ideas are articulated and plotted in, with a diligent organisation and streamlining of the building blocks of groups and presets, which mean that, along with systems of notating cue points and score-marking, they keep their plotting sessions entirely self-sufficient and can set their own pace.

In fact, a word must go out to the whole of the lighting team at Glyndebourne who are, individually

and collectively, exceptional at what they do. It goes without saying that a space of this reputation and ambition demands technical excellence, but it is the deep care for the work being made that has really made an impression on me during my time here. Whether it's set electrics, followspotting, show running, opping, or anything in between, there is a strong spirit of agility and camaraderie that is nurtured by the supervisors and is carried across the whole team, and it makes for an environment that feels supportive as well as high functioning. It's a welcoming place to walk into, so much so that the lighting department is a bit of a revolving door of the great and the good: they're calling in mostly



to catch up with head of lighting and legend Vic Pyne, who I have to thank for countless introductions and for initiating so many fascinating conversations. It is a remarkable thing that the Lumière scheme makes this not only possible, but

comfortable; the badge helps to ease that imposter feeling and gives the permission you sometimes need to throw yourself in.

La Bohème was the next production to come in and the first that I would see through from first

Lumière scheme

Ed Saunders

lighting session to opening night. I was working alongside LD Alex Brok, who painted a delicately steely, film noir version of Puccini's Parisian tragedy. Stationed between Alex and Glyndebourne programmer Tom Warren, I saw the two find a workflow – another masterclass – as they sketched in the main images for each act: Alex's approach, he had said from the outset, was first to make the pictures, as bold as possible and as rough as necessary, before going in and fleshing out the detail. Opera rehearsals are structured differently to theatre or dance, where instead of a generic format of tech/rehearsals/dress, there are dedicated lighting sessions scheduled around piano dress rehearsals and stage orchestra rehearsals; they bring together different combinations of the performers, orchestra, and costume and give priority to different parts,

whether stage direction, musical direction, or technical production. On *La Bohème*, and later with other productions too, the strategy was to use early lighting sessions to build a skeleton show file that could then be expanded during the other rehearsals. This is where the assistant role comes into its own: these rehearsals can sometimes be stop-and-start, and at other times incredible pacey – it inevitably seems to be that the moments that are dense for lighting are raced past in stage and orchestra rehearsals – so keeping track of ideas, things that worked, things that didn't, and notes half-completed, is essential to making good use of later lighting sessions.

Paying this kind of close attention to Alex's process meant that I was able to get a good idea of his intentions for the design and of his priorities when it came to working with the rest of his

team. There was one session where I deputised for Alex in his absence; this meant fielding the notes from the director as we rattled through a rehearsal, which made for a test of both nerve and intuition, gauging in real time which notes to act on in the moment and which to defer to Alex later on.

Similarly, I was there to help adapt the lighting for the filming of the production, which happens across two performances once the show is up and running and when the LD is often no longer there. Although not for live broadcast, the film is intended to bring the production to a wider spectatorship online with all of the same spirit of a live Glyndebourne show; the filming is done with a live audience, and so the trick is in the balance between keeping the work looking as good for those in the room as it does on

screen. I had the pleasure of meeting Bernie Davis, who by all accounts is the industry go-to for precisely this kind of challenge. He is a TV lighting director who works on translating large-scale live events for the screen – think the Proms, royal weddings, early Robot Wars – and he is extremely generous with his knowledge, taking the time to explain to me how the live capture process works, the margins for what can and can't be picked up by his cameras, how he selects and frames his shots, and crucially, how he approaches potential difficulties. A combination of adjusting levels in the desk, choosing shots carefully, and prepping his camera operators for in-camera tweaks, is what gives Bernie the flexibility to capture the production with authenticity to designers' intentions and with minimal visible changes.

Needless to say, adapting and reworking lighting design in this way is a real art. It has been fascinating not only to see how this delicate feat is pulled off to such a high standard for the film relights, but also, in an assistant role, to reflect on everything that I had absorbed along the design process and to make judgement calls informed by this. The lighting team have asked me to join them for the tour relight in September, when the production will be scaled for a number of regional venues, so I'll have the chance to put my knowledge of the show and the design to the test and to get stuck into the mechanisms of a relight at this scale.

With just a few weeks left at Glyndebourne, and just one more production to see through, the Lumière scheme is racing on towards its second half. The next three

months will be a varied programme of different placements and designers: I'll be finding out what I'll be up to soon, and feeling a mix of trepidation and excitement for the whirlwind it's likely to be. There's a sense of growing into the role, learning how to find your place within each project and how to develop a language with each designer, a balance of knowing what you can bring to a team and taking their lead. This is where I am feeling the full propulsive force of the Lumière scheme, putting me further out of my comfort zone than any job I could land at this stage but doing so with the full support and backing to run up that learning curve. 🚧

The demise of tungsten

A warning from [Rob Halliday](#)

This is by no means the first time I've said this, but it's worth saying again: it doesn't matter if you persuade government to change the rules to let you continue to buy tungsten light bulbs, if no one is actually making those light bulbs.

That warning has taken on a new relevance recently with the demise of one of the few manufacturers still making the specialist tungsten light bulbs we use – Tungsram, in Hungary. The company filed for bankruptcy protection in May. It's unclear whether it will recover from that. It is pretty clear that even if it does, it will no longer make tungsten bulbs.

What does that mean? It means that the end of tungsten is probably now approaching quite rapidly. In more practical terms: there will be no more 240v Par lamps from Tungsram, and Signify/Philips, the only company still making them, has indicated that its next production

run will be the last. Though count yourselves lucky to be using 240v lamps: the 110v equivalent is effectively gone already.

If you have any fixtures with P28 “twist” bases – classics like the Patt 23 – Tungsram were the last making those, so they're now gone unless you can find old stock hidden away somewhere.

If you're after M16 lamps, for birdies or battens or houselights, good luck with that; they are not allowed under Ecodesign regulations. You can find them to buy, but you're likely to pay a premium for them.

Beyond that there are really just two manufacturers left. Osram, which still offers certain T- and CP-class lamps (except Pars) and the Source Four's HPL, and Ushio, who also make the HPL and a lamp for the tungsten VL1000s.

The question is, how long will they keep making them? No one wants

to definitively answer that question, though Ushio, in particular, regularly states its commitment to the HPL as long as people are asking for them. ETC says its still selling lots of new tungsten Source Fours, so there is ongoing demand. Those using Source Fours and Source Four Pars are likely to be the ones who can keep using tungsten longest.

But you should absolutely not take the ongoing supply of tungsten lamps for granted. And you should start using this time to plan your transition to something else rather than waiting until the end comes.

As we've noted here before, the transition from tungsten to LED is not a particularly easy one: for the most part you can't just take an old tungsten bulb out of a fixture and pop in a new LED replacement. Making the change properly is likely to involve new infrastructure (power, data, control) as well as new fixtures,

and of course this all comes at a price. Big theatres like the National have done it, but it has taken time and money – though usefully, along the way, showing that the best LED fixtures can now generally give us the quality of light we seek, and that it is possible to design systems that still support tungsten when nothing else will do.

For smaller venues the question of course remains, where does the money come from? In the response the ALPD has just submitted to the House of Lords Communications and Digital Committee for its inquiry into the future of the UK's creative industries over the next five to ten years, we have made the suggestion that venues will need financial support to make this transition. There is some precedent for this, in the funding that was supplied to those owning radio microphones to purchase newer systems to

free up spectrum for 5G data. The trouble is, that was funded from the income received from selling off the 5G spectrum; there is no outside industry with motivation to supply a similar pot of money for lighting. But we'll see if our suggestion does provoke any response.

Otherwise, I'm afraid, it's probably time to stockpile the tungsten lamps you need, or start saving, or both... 🌲

Mental health

Mig Burgess

A quick update for this issue... Backup is offering free mental health first aid training to freelancers. More info on it here: www.backuptech.uk/how-we-help/wellbeing-support/training-courses-workshops.

On the same page, Music Support is offering some free places on addiction recovery courses – not aimed to help with recovery but to teach people to be more aware of the signs and symptoms and signposting on this topic.

The ABTT is still offering mental health first aid training courses for people in the workplace, aimed at venues and businesses that want to adopt this strategy in their workplaces: www.abtt.org.uk/courses/abtt-mental-health-first-aid-training-2-day-course. 🌲

Stage lighting between the wars

Reflections from 1975...

Courtesy of Richard Pilbrow, the following is from a tape recording of a meeting of the Society of British Theatre Lighting Designers (which became the ALD), discussing the growth of stage lighting in Britain. The meeting took place in the spring of 1975. Part one appeared in the April/May issue and part two in the June/July issue.

The meeting was chaired by Richard Pilbrow, and speakers included Strand Electric veterans B. Bear, Frederick Bentham, Lew Burroughs, Bill Lorraine and Jack Madre, lighting designer Joe Davis, and directors Basil Dean, Norman Marshall, and Herbert Marshall.

Richard Pilbrow: Let's talk about people. We've talked of equipment. We've seen that the light went into the auditorium which produced eventually the mirror spot and maybe there was a demand for a

higher key of light which produced the Pageant, and the Bentham downlight... Now, who was making demands on how light was used?

B. Bear: The two people that Jack [Madre] and Joe [Davis], as engineers, know about are Cochrane and Wylie. They were artists inasmuch as they lived on the artistic side and they encouraged lighting.

Joe Davis: I would add another name: [Theodore] Komisarjevsky.

Fred Bentham: I have never thought it out this way round – equipment and demand. In other words, you produced equipment and somebody would use it. I'm not conscious that in my career the equipment I produced was ever asked of me. Nobody asked me to produce a Pageant; nobody asked me to do an Acting Area; nobody asked me to do a Patt 73. One sensed that people were haunted by the need to frame in. It was a period when I think it is

a strange thing – as to which came first it is terribly difficult to tell if the equipment came first or the demand for it. There was a scene of someone at the phone or something, and you just framed the man. And one sensed that there was this need, I suppose from the climate, but I never remember anyone coming to me to say would I do this, but I do remember having done it, and you then had to show it to people to get them to adopt it. The Pageant, for instance, nobody would wear it at any price. I had to put a diffuser glass on it to make it a very soft edge. This is in the '30s. And, speaking from my own experience, nothing I produced would've happened if I hadn't wanted to use it for myself for my own for "perverted" uses. Everything I designed was for my own "perversion". And including the oldest switchboard of them all – the Light Console – they were not done for the theatre; they were done for

my own peculiar tastes, and then the theatre adopted them and used them. Whether other inventors around had the same idea I would love to know. What started the Schwabe system, for instance? Did Reinhardt say, "I must have clouds", or did Schwabe say...

Norman Marshall: I can answer that. Reinhardt demanded – he said, "I must have this." Schwabe wasn't a theatre man at all, but he had invented this form of glass and that is a typical example. Reinhardt demanded things. I knew Reinhardt and he asked: "Give me this."

Basil Dean: I can supplement that to a certain extent. I first talked to Reinhardt in 1911 and at that time he had developed this idea of a plaster dome – which was eventually discarded in favour of a more mobile form of background. In the centre of the plaster dome was a sort of lighthouse consisting of a hexagonal body with automatic arc light all

coming from a centre point, and the Schwabe engineer owed his inspiration entirely to Reinhardt, who was nagging him all the time. They built up a tremendous firm. There were two Schwabes – one looked after the [Deutsche] marks and the other looked after Reinhardt's wishes. Without Reinhardt there would've been no Schwabe firm at all. There was no independent development. From that, they developed what became known as the Schwabe-Hasait system. Hasait was at the theatre in Munich and he invented a form of background, and actually he came over to this country and built one for me at the St Martin's Theatre. It was a brilliant idea because before that the cycloramas hung in folds, which gave the whole game away. He had a special material and treatment, but the important point was the cyclorama was cut on the bias, which was worked out on

the drawing board, and these were fixed to an endless line and fixed to a motor in the flies; it could be set up or struck in fifteen seconds. They hung without fault because the precise seaming of the canvas was drawn to mathematical accuracy. It was then treated with a certain composition, in which glycerine took a great part to avoid cracking, and you got a perfect surface. But on this question of the development of the Schwabe-Hasait system, it owed its inspiration to Max Reinhardt, who made the demand, then they did their best to carry them out.

Richard Pilbrow: What were the demands being made by Cochrane and Wylie?

Jack Madre: None.

Norman Marshall: It was your director who lit the show. You could not have any life in the theatre as a director in those days if you could not light the show. In America,

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at the same time, there was the reverse of that: the designer would light the show, which was not very satisfactory, because the designer would light the set beautifully, but the actors were very often underlit.

Jack Madre: Going back to Fred's remarks about the Pageant, I'm sure that when Fred designed that he had one show in mind at that time and that was the Tower of London pageant in 1932.

Fred Benthams: That's perfectly true. It was designed to try to get the light over a long distance. But the adding of the spill rings to it made it useful for theatre, and this was the way of getting sunrays through windows and the like; then the name stuck. There were very much two schools of thought in the '20s and '30s and that was anything other than the cyclorama stage with absolute minimum of borders was old-fashioned. Even little school stages had to have their

cycloramas and the minimum borders, and we had a plaster one here [29 King Street] when this opened in 1938. It was the thing, but there were still a lot of shows done without them. What is so extraordinary, whereas in those days you wanted a lot of plain surfaces, now there has been a complete reversal and the cyclorama is regarded as old fashioned.

Richard Pilbrow: Two names come to mind from having read books – Ridge and Aldred. What of them?

Fred Benthams: Aldred was an electrical engineer. Ridge designed the lighting for the Cambridge Festival Theatre.

Bill Lorraine: He designed the spots for Venreco.

Jack Madre: He designed the Stelmar.

Norman Marshall: He designed the lighting for the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre. It was entirely designed without a cyclorama. At the last moment the governors said, "Why

don't we have a cyclorama?" so a great cyclorama was shoved into the theatre, which wasn't built for it, and was eventually broken up and this practically broke Ridge's heart.

Richard Pilbrow: Any questions? How did mechanical monsters start at Covent Garden in the early days?

Fred Benthams: The installation that went in in 1934 – the main key lighting there was a 14-way spot bar under the bridge and three Stelmars (not followspots) either side of the stage on perch platforms and practically everything was lit by those. They faded them out then brought them up on a dimmer, having pre-focused them, and there were some out on the dome.

Bill Bundy: When I went to Covent Garden in 1951 I asked for a 500-watt flood. I was told you didn't want that, you want a box flood, and to this day I think 500-watt are called box floods at the Garden. How did

that name ever happen? In 1951, we still had the Stelmar spots on the perches, and we had three a side – they had been taken out of the dome – and Stelmar followspots put there, and the only FOH in 1951 were ten Pattern 43s on the grand tier, and you could put them on...

Richard Pilbrow: I can remember my favourite lantern was the Pattern 44 which, if you set the reflector crooked, you've got two lovely spots out of one lantern.

Fred Bentham: It's quite extraordinary in Covent Garden in 1934 was the only remote control, and a very peculiar one, in Britain. Covent Garden in 1934 was a great disappointment to me because everything had to be a Light Console in those days, except it hadn't been made by then, and the one installation that was going to have a remote control had this awful contraption of two-way switches

and Rolls Royce petrol gauges and it had to be because no one knew in England how to make 120 dimmers on the Grand Master board. Applebee, a man we must mention in this context, he ran the stage theatre lighting department at Strand Electric, was very powerful for many years (I disagreed with him almost the whole time but we were great friends in the end), but in that instance he couldn't get one of his beloved Grand Masters in. They couldn't make it that size; they had to have 120 ways. I remember there was one problem because Hasait came over and the settings for *The Ring* were designed by Gabriel Bolkov and we had three colours lighting on the cyc – red, blue and green. Of course what would happen was Hasait and the producer, Dr Erhardt, were out front. They would call for a colour – they were used to seven colours – and I would produce the colour, and they would

come up onstage and Hasait would look up and say he didn't want any red or green – “Take out the red and green” via the interpreter – and the cyc could go dark. You just couldn't get it into their heads that we got our colours from red, blue and green. I know it was related that Hasait and Erhardt had a battle on the switchboard perch and a man called Charlie Story, who is a charming man who worked on the switchboard, quietly separated the contestants while *The Ring* was going on below. That was great magic, mixing the primary colours in those days in the theatre. In the cinema any projectionist knew how to mix them up because they were always doing it.

Bill Lorraine: We mustn't forget the other nightmare though: Gillespie Williams.

Fred Bentham: Ah! We mustn't!

Bill Lorraine: We used to have that enormous round ring with the

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handle that you pushed around and whatever colour you asked for, you push the handle round, pushed it into a hole and the four colours mixed themselves up into the colour that was wanted. Delicolor – it was used at the Coliseum. Eventually was under the stage at Covent Garden during the war.

Joe Davis: No one has talked about projection. Going back to a man I worked with on *Anthony and Cleopatra* at the New Theatre (now the Albery), he had eight 40-amp arcs on the floor behind the cyc with men just sitting there – one scene would be rain, the next scene would be very spectacular – but the man who designed all those for effects was Frank Burston. Between the war period there was no development of projection.

Norman Marshall: We used it a great deal at the Festival Theatre but non-realistic patterns, not realistic, which was immensely difficult.

Fred Bentham: We must not forget the Westminster Theatre. It was a funny little shallow stage with a full-size cyclorama, and Molly MacArthur was the designer and Anmer Hall ran it and they did projection there, and they used the Linnebach projector in *Tobias and the Angel*.

Norman Marshall: That was a direct offshoot because Tyrone Guthrie worked at the Festival.

Basil Dean: The trouble with English theatres was they were not deep enough. I remember after the last war going to see Hans Schwabe. I managed to get into Berlin, and he showed me photographs of light projection which were marvellous. I remember one production of *Macbeth* in Germany, they had much higher powered arcs than we had in those days, and they managed to keep them cool with the system of water filters and then add the depth and then use of a kind of gauze

between the projection. The result was quite extraordinary.

Fred Bentham: They had the depth, and the other extraordinary thing was the Germans were so advanced at that time both in their regulators and then this particular form with the bridges and the cyclorama, and yet circumstances later overtook them and one could go into a German theatre in quite recent years and you'll be looking at an installation used in much the same way as it would've been in the '20s and '30s.

Richard Pilbrow: You could do that today!

Questions from the audience

Howard Eldridge: When was gelatine first used in England?

Jack Madre: After the First World War. Seventeen colours.

Bill Lorraine: It was very brittle.

Jack Madre: Yes. In those days they would give you a free replacement at 17 shillings and sixpence. A dozen sheets, 24" x 21", for seven shillings and sixpence. You could hire a Patt 49 or its equivalent and they would change up to six colours per week – so don't ask me how they made money! I shall never know.

Joe Davis: It was always some poor chap's job to go under the stage with the open battens and dip them, and there was quite an art in that.

Ian Albery: What type of touring equipment went out with shows in the early '30s?

Jack Madre: Principally a twelve-way spot bar and a board that was a first teak [slider dimmer] board. Sometimes a flood bar, if they could afford it, and a couple of odd floods for the stage, and always a door length, because you never found them in the provinces. And plenty of cable.

Norman Marshall: And a touring electrician?

Jack Madre: Yes, at £4 per week with his wife doing the wardrobe!

Basil Dean: One thing I would like to say: this is the Society of Lighting Designers, and I would appeal to them all not to worry too much about equipment, but try to develop the imaginative use of that equipment so as to justify the word design, so that you can progress from being highly competitive engineers into what I would call the aesthetic side of lighting, so that all sorts of interesting developments can come from the use of the imagination with that wonderful equipment. Not to worry too much about this piece of equipment, but the use you put it to, so you can justify the claim to link light with the aesthetics of the theatre.

Richard Pilbrow: I think that's a sentiment that lives very close to the heart of the vast majority of

everyone in this room, and it's a very difficult thing to say anything after that because I think that's what our lives stand for.

Fred Bentham: It's very easy to say something after it! Well, I do agree about this equipment, and I do think we mustn't leave a notion that it was clowning [in those days]. Beware that term "they were no stupider". There was some very fine lighting done, extraordinary lighting done, but I think the exact reproduction from night to night was always a struggle, and things like memory systems now at least ensure that when you've got it in the can, that it comes back. No, I'm not sure whether that's a good idea or not. I'm not at all certain there isn't another side of lighting, and that's the "doing" of the lighting. Another one of the things in those days with that equipment was that you had to do the lighting and do it every

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night. Nowadays, it could well be that some of these jobs like working the switchboard are reduced to a level of bloody monotony. Then you get the state of affairs that money is the primary interest and this is something we cannot think about too much. People are being sent away from the theatre without the scenery, without particular facilities, simply because the money was right. This is the complete opposite of "the show must go on" and the struggles that people went through for very, very poor pay. This side, the actual working of the lighting, not just the creation of the lighting, and then the canning of it, should be fun.

Norman Marshall: Would somebody give me a logical reason for exposing the equipment? Now the Royal Court is essentially doing realistic plays, and in *The Changing Room* you had the most superb realistic play I have ever seen,

directed by Lindsey Anderson, but it was destroyed by the perpetual insistence of seeing a circle of lights into the audience's eyes. Now in *The Caretaker*, when someone came on, very rightly there was one single little light that came on, and forty lights went up in the auditorium ... you got a little giggle from the audience. In the *Norman Conquests* the prosc is at least more decorated than all that equipment. Why are the tormentors not brought in? I first saw it in 1924 where I was a student when Meyerhold came from Berlin and exposed everything – the back of the theatre, the lighting, etc. He called that "The Theatre Machine".

Eric Baker: I can tell you a bit of history – we were doing a play at the Royal Court and we had a low header. I had the proscenium border dropped in to mask the spot bar. George Devine came into the theatre, smoking his pipe and said, "What have you done

to my theatre?" I said, "We've dropped the prosc border down." "Take it out; let's have a look" – and we took it out and he said, "I don't mind seeing it" – and in doing that he created a tradition for that theatre.

Robert Ornbo: If you look at drawings of the old Italian theatre, candles were all on view.

Basil Dean: Of course, a lot of this indecent exposure came from the Berliner Ensemble.

Ian Albery: As a manager, one does feel that this is a conscious thing done by lighting designers to establish they are lighting a production. Since the late '50s and '60s, after shows like *Oliver!*, if you go down to any West End theatre I bet there is hardly a show in London when the lighting equipment isn't on show. It is slovenly, and in most cases it is not justified, and it is a conscious statement almost like saying how clever I am, how much

equipment I've got up there. It's the production manager's fault, and the designer's fault.

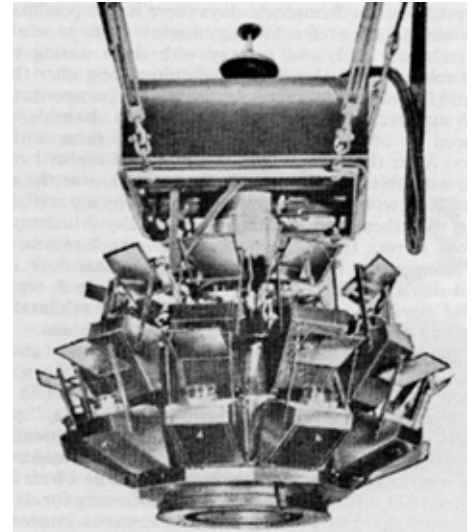
All photos courtesy of Richard Pilbrow.

Many thanks to Jim Laws for his careful editing on this instalment. 🍷

Joe Davis













GLP scene projection: 1930s Germany



Schwabe cloud machine

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