

ALD #

# FOCUS

The Journal of the Association of Lighting Designers

"More art, less tools..."

December 2015/January 2016

Measure for Measure

Young Vic Theatre

Directed by Joe Hill-Gibbons

Designed by Miriam Buether

Lighting designed by James Farncombe

Video designed by Chris Kondek

Photo by Keith Pattinson



Behind the curtain this issue:

- Critic Sam Marlowe on her favourite lighting
- Members' meetings in Glasgow and Southwark
- Postcards from Singapore and Finland
- PLASA Glasgow preview
- Equity update

... and much, much more...

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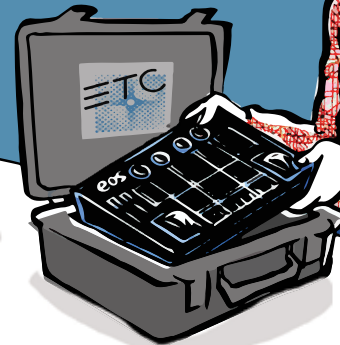
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# From the Chairman....



So ... a little story. Four – or was it five? – years ago I was honoured by winning a KOI sword for *Sucker Punch* at the Royal Court – terribly proud! The quite enormous sword arrived the following November and was duly hung in the bathroom of our then apartment. A year later we moved to the boat where we still reside. Also a year later I began work on the second part of the Ring cycle that I've been directing and designing for Opera North. The projection sequences that I was creating demanded a sword – and I had the perfect item. So I filmed some flickering lit sword sequences at home and then the following day was planning to take the sword into the studio to film more material.

This was a week when I had charge of our dog Ziggy (in fact short for Siegfried) so I left our floating home with the sword in a cardboard tube and plastic bag wrapped handle – it's not the kind of thing you can just walk down the street with! Well, I propped the sword up against a post on the pontoon and paused to shut the gate just as Z the dog yanked on his lead and aghast I watched the sword tip into the dock, pause momentarily and sink below the surface. I screamed a silent scream but no amount of marine magnets or grappling hooks could find the sword. True, I have immortalised it in the projection sequences for *Die Walküre*

but the sword itself was lost to the deep waiting for the Lady of the Dock to rise up with it in true Arthurian tradition one day.

Well, if you win one of these swords everybody asks you “Where do you keep it?” so I guess I've let this story slip out a few times but this is the first public confession.

Now Christmas has come early for me and the good people of the Knight of Illumination awards (thank you, Durham) have heard this tale and replaced my sword which is now hanging safely and securely once more. Thank you all so much for such a thoughtful gesture and I wanted to say this publicly. The KOI awards has become such an important event for lighting design and the furthering of its recognition as a central art form and part of the creative process so I'm delighted to be able to re-hang my sword.

It only remains for me to wish you all seasonal greetings and all the best for the many Christmas shows that will be abounding around the UK. Please come to the Lighting Lunch on 15 December, and also please try and attend our AGM which is immediately before that on the same day. We really do need the support of our members on these occasions and we try to make them as jolly as possible. 🍀

Peter

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# MARKO'S MUSINGS

## Mark Jonathan ends the year with a culinary theme



My appetite for opera has been sated for the year and I finish off with John Webster's 1614 tragedy *The Duchess of Malfi* at the Nottingham Playhouse. The staff of the Nottingham lighting, sound and video department number four talented technicians who have to be multi-skilled in the various technologies employed. They do well and bring great enthusiasm to their work under the leadership of Karl Bock and deputy Stephanie Bartle along with Will and Martin. The Playhouse is a gem; it still has a brilliant staff that covers all production areas. I think that one of the secrets of the success of the company is that there is a comfortable green room. Everyone goes in there to eat and drink and this seems

to encourage a family feeling of all being "in it together". Inevitably there seems to be a couple of birthdays a week when cake is served. On long technical days, afternoon tea with more cake and savouries are provided for everyone involved under the watchful eye of the "I can organise anything" production assistant Jill Robertshaw. This is a rare thing but raises morale and energy levels at a critical time. Those of you who know me will know that I've always thought that everyone performs better if they are fed well.

When I arrived at Glyndebourne in 1978 the general stage manager, Geoffrey Gilbertson, had recognised the same thing and on evenings when we had lighting sessions and there was no catering provided on site we would all go to Geoffrey's garden for a "lighting supper" and be served very large gins with a splash of tonic, soup, bread and cheese. We would all sit together in his garden – directors, designers, staff producers, production and stage managers and technical staff. The result would be a great will to succeed in the evening session. Of course, health and safety would not allow the gin nowadays! In October, I returned to Glyndebourne for meetings about Glyndebourne's first *Madama Butterfly*. I had lunch in the staff restaurant

with lighting manager Keith Benson and production manager Tom Harrison and very good it was too. Many years ago I sat on the Glyndebourne catering committee and I'm glad that the standards have stayed high in the staff restaurant as well as on stage. In fact, I recall when I was leaving Glyndebourne to go to the NT, Keith said, "I wonder if the NT catering department knows what's going to hit them?"

I should say that it's always nice to be given a staff discount in the FOH facilities at theatres where we're working. So, I'm afraid Nottingham lost house points for having cut the size of the discount since I was there last year. A few years ago I arrived at another "strapped for cash" rep, I bought a cup of tea and said, "I expect you'll remember me from last time and you will be able to give me the staff discount..." "The staff discount got cut this morning," said the grumpy caterer, "cutbacks". So, it seems my theme is you can maintain good staff morale if you feed them or give them a decent discount and that it's sad when the cutbacks (misguidedly in my view) force the hand of management.

Being away from home usually means that one has the choice of being alone in one's hotel or socialising and, in this case, the candle got burnt at both ends as this LD "networked" with his creative colleagues and the cast of eleven.



It was nice to be staying in the St James hotel, which recognised the need for its guests to have late night drinks and not to be zealously closing as the theatre bar does all too soon, despite the thirst of the cast and crew not being quenched after a long day of technical and dress rehearsals. We work hard and we play hard. The production is a big success, helped greatly by a brilliant cast who seemed to be happy to be in a room together and a synergy

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between the creative team of director, designer, composer and LD that was both appreciative, inspiring and exciting.

I also find myself celebrating at the atmospheric Guildhall in the city of London, twice in a few weeks, first, at the Theatre UK awards (formally the TMA awards) where I was invited as Scottish Opera's *Jenufa* was up for best opera production. Good to see some fellow designers and LDs there. Congratulations to

Glyndebourne, which won the opera category. A few weeks later I was back again to collect an honorary fellowship to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama that I was awarded in 2014, but as I was terminally away I collected it a year late. Imagine my delight when I found myself sitting next to this year's honorary fellow, Johanna Town. Thank you, Guildhall, for the great honour and for recognising what we LDs contribute.

Did you think I could go an issue of *Focus* and not fly somewhere? Of course not! I find myself nipping over to Stockholm to the Royal Swedish Opera. It's my first time in Sweden and although the visit was brief I admire everything. The Swedes seem to be

"on the case". There is a high-speed train from the airport to the city that travels at over 200km an hour and costs £4 for a return ticket – not over £30 like our (rip-off) Paddington Express. The theatre seems to work with similar intensity to the Royal Opera House in London with a ballet and opera company in rep. There is a big, high-tech rig and a visualisation suite where they were lighting a Sinatra tribute concert while lighting *La Bohème* on stage. It looks like they

# MARKO'S MUSINGS

Mark Jonathan



have harnessed technology. The proof will be “in the pudding” when I go back in March. In the meantime, I hope that you’re all putting your pantos “behind you” and that I will see many of you at the annual lighting lunch on 15 December. If not, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and here’s to a great 2016. I’ll be up a mountain if you need me as it’s time for some powder snow and vin chaud. *Cheers, skål, prost, à votre santé, saluti*, or as they say in Latin, *bono laetificabitur*. 🍷

*This and previous pages:*

*The Duchess of Malfi*

*Nottingham Playhouse*

*Directed by Fiona Buffini*

*Designed by Neil Murray*

*Lighting designed by Mark Jonathan*

*Photos by Sheila Burnett*

## **MJ's gripe:**

Why is lighting on the production desk such an issue? What happened to those nice dimmable littlites? No, I don't want an LED, it's too bright, and no, I don't want one that turns red, and no, I don't want a 40 watt light bulb with a load of gel taped on that falls off during the dress rehearsal. 🍷

# A BIT OF EQUITY

## Richard Lambert on the latest discussions



At the start of the second meeting for this term of office it would appear that some within Equity had decided that the elected chair and vice-chair should be challenged and another ballot taken by the committee. My personal opinion is that in-fighting like this is counterproductive to spending our limited, crucial time on important matters such as:

- *Equity agreements negotiated that “have not been able to make any discernible increase in those minimum fees specifically set for lighting designers over the last decade” (I quote from the excellent letter Peter Mumford wrote to Equity).*
- *New York Times removing credit listings for creatives on its show reviews.*
- *A lack of response from Equity (another quote from Peter Mumford’s open letter) regarding: “Equity’s negotiators appear to not even be able to meet the demands of the union’s own campaigns” and “Equity has continually ignored the representations of our members where they have been integral contributors to a wide range of union committees over the last 15 years”.*

It appears to be very difficult to get Equity to acknowledge lighting designers. The fact that we are a small minority of its membership would appear to be an excuse to not negotiate successfully to maintain the minimum fees on its agreements. The membership statistics by category were again presented to the DDC.

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Hilary Hedley, Equity’s head of live performance, very kindly visited our committee meeting and explained the difficulties in negotiating agreements that cover our services.

I hope my paraphrasing of Hilary’s comments is sufficiently accurate:

- *Actors and stage managers are “workers” and therefore come under the national minimum wage structure. They form the majority of the union and are therefore easier to negotiate for. However, creatives are not considered “workers” within UK law and therefore contracts are much harder to enforce.*
- *This makes it incredibly difficult to obtain any agreement within our sector and there are Equity members who are paid the minimum fees within the agreements who would be paid less if it wasn’t for Equity.*
- *Equity is the only organisation with ANY agreement for creative contracts. Creatives benefit from the support by sheer force of numbers of the actors within the union.*
- *The newly formed SDUK (Stage Directors UK) may have more members who are directors than there are director members within Equity; however, the SDUK does not have any agreements with employers and is unlikely to obtain these without the support of the many thousands of actors within Equity.*
- *Only a union, and not an association, can negotiate and obtain agreements.*

- *A union and a professional association are very different organisational bodies. Both have a vital role to play; both have different agendas. Only a union has the power to negotiate and obtain agreements with employers.*
- *Equity’s agreements not only provide minimum fees, but they also cover terms and conditions of employment. Without these agreements, backed up by the union, backed up with UK legal representation and thousands of actors within the industry, we’d all be worse off.*

A few comments with a global perspective from the ALD side of the fence:

- *The ALD survey, admittedly unverified for accuracy, shows an average fee in similar sectors that is way above the Equity minimum fee agreement.*
- *Equity minimums undermine our negotiating positions when they’re so unrealistic.*
- *If Equity has fewer than 200 members who are lighting designers, then its agreements really don’t do anything to help our ALD members with fee structure.*
- *How and why has Equity allowed our minimum fees to fall so substantially as a percentage of designers who provide set and costume combined services?*

While waiting for Equity to respond to Peter Mumford’s letter, I’ll ponder the ballot on re-electing the chair of the committee – clearly something that’s most urgent! Or not! 🚩

# PROFESSIONAL MATTERS

## Johanna Town gets an honorary fellowship

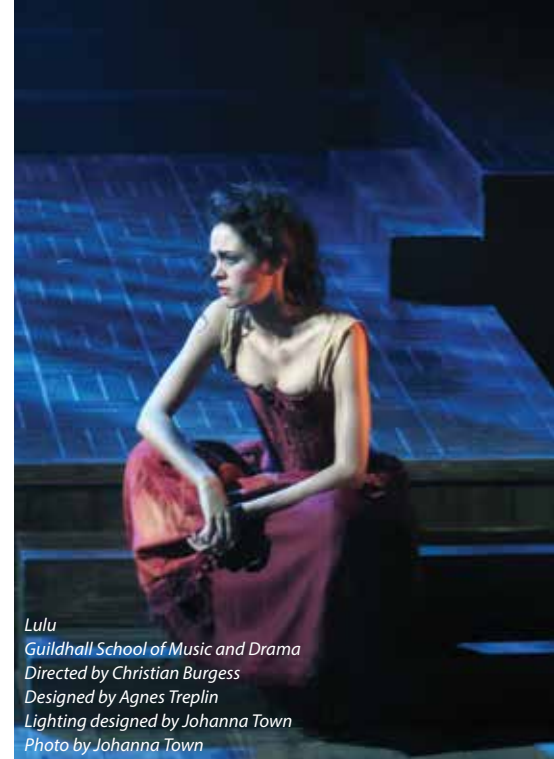


It's November and my annual visit to Guildhall School. I have mentioned it before but I really do enjoy this slot in my annual calendar. I have the privilege to work with some great students in a fantastically equipped venue. This is my second drama school design this year and it is a pleasure to work among such young talent and to watch them blossom in our industry as technicians and lighting designers. One only has to look at the design submissions from our Michael Northen entries - see last issue - to see the talent that is emerging from so many of our drama schools.

This year being at Guildhall was even more special because on 6 November the school honoured me, along with Mark Jonathan, with

an honorary fellowship for our services to the theatre lighting industry. I was chuffed to bits. I left school at 18 and went straight into work as an apprentice at the Royal Exchange in Manchester. I have never been an academic, but I do have a huge passion and lifelong commitment to the theatre industry and it was really nice to have this acknowledged.

I love my visits to drama schools and sharing with the students some of my dubious words of wisdom! I am also a very strong advocate of the apprenticeship schemes and have been overjoyed by their resurgence. I have always felt that theatre is a perfect environment for on-the-job training and I hope over the next few years we will see more and more training opportunities arising for young people. This year I have worked in a number of theatres that have an apprentice working and I would like to encourage them to join the ALD. As Stuart discusses in his article, all our different fields of lighting need to work together to help build a stronger industry for us all. Where better for these apprentices to start than with our new Affiliate membership? It has been created just for them, young professionals starting out. I would like to suggest that just as our student membership is sponsored by our Corporate members it would be great if theatre



Lulu

*Guildhall School of Music and Drama*

*Directed by Christian Burgess*

*Designed by Agnes Treplin*

*Lighting designed by Johanna Town*

*Photo by Johanna Town*

managements could sponsor their apprentices with Affiliate memberships. It would give them a great link to our industry and help them create links for their future careers, through bulletins and access to our website and lighting links in general. If you are reading this and work in a theatre with an apprentice why not help us to help them and talk to your managements – it would be such a good start.



*Tomcat*  
Southwark Playhouse Little Theatre  
Directed by Kate Hewitt  
Designed by Lily Arnold  
Lighting designed by Johanna Town  
Photo by Richard Davenport

bookends were interchangeable, meaning they had to have identical looks using identical kit: quite a challenge for me and my brilliant associate Matt Leventhall to achieve a clean symmetrical look in a venue with limited dimmers, equipment and rigging positions.

I had, however, for some time wanted to test out the new Rosco cubes. I had a demo of them on behalf of Pentabus Theatre Company as part of a bigger purchase package, but it doesn't matter how well you look at kit in a demo area you never really engage with it as a technician or as a designer until you use it and put it through its paces. Rosco, along with Stage Electrics and AC Lighting, very kindly helped this happen and I was able to light both ends of my set with identical LED kit (see the members' meeting report on page 34 and a review of the show on page 35 for more information). I have been a big advocate of LED lighting from its onset and I am pleased to say it's just getting better and better. I look forward to the day when all venues have a majority LED lighting rig. After all, why should it just be the big guns? It's shows and venues just like Southwark that need good, affordable LED kit.

Last month I opened a production, *Tomcat*, at Southwark Playhouse's Little Theatre. The show had its challenges... it was a traverse production with a tight central platform bookended by two identical office/living room areas. The two

I can't stress enough to manufacturers how important on-site, in-production testing of equipment is; it really helps to formulate an opinion on the equipment and how it works in the right scale of venue and alongside more conventional kit.

Lastly, I can't sign off without congratulating everyone who has helped develop the new website. It looks absolutely fabulous. Please do sign in and update your details – the more you add, the more you will get out of it. Something I would like to see encouraged is the use of the super-smart, user-friendly forum! Forums! We probably all go on them at some time or other looking for snippets of advice, seeing what others are experiencing and what they recommend – or don't! These are some of the reasons our own ALD forum will be so helpful. It's our social hub where we can chat to each other without needing to find the time to send in a letter to this magazine. Instead, it's more immediate, user friendly and, some may argue, more relevant in the fast-paced world in which we find ourselves. We can use the forum to discuss issues from *Focus*, or to discuss things we'd like to see in *Focus*. Come along and chat; we'll all chat back, and we'll help and support each other. 🍀

# LIGHT THAT WILL LINGER IN THE MEMORY

Critic **Sam Marlowe** recalls some of her favourite lighting



Sam Marlowe  
reviews theatre for  
*The Times*, *Metro*,  
*The Chicago*  
*Tribune* and  
*theartsdesk.com*.

A noose swings gently in a shaft of light. It glides upwards, undulating, snake-like, eventually coiling out of sight – but the memory of it persists throughout Matthew Dunster's production of *Hangmen*. Martin McDonagh's excoriatingly funny and profoundly unsettling play at the Royal Court (transferring to Wyndham's Theatre from 1 December). That moment was crucial to establishing

the seriousness of intent that lies behind McDonagh's typically impish wit: we were never allowed to forget, even when our laughter was most ribald, that this is a play concerned with justice and with questions of life and death. Joshua Carr's lighting design was key: from that arresting beam, to the grim, cold, strip-lit interior of a prison cell, a steamy, Formica-decorated corner caff and the smoky interior

of an Oldham boozier – sets designed by Anna Fleischle. With chilly daylight or the glow of street lamps creeping in through rain-spattered windows and a scruffy, cosy atmosphere of low-lit, irascible camaraderie inside the pub, you could almost smell the beer-soaked bar mats and Benson & Hedges.

There are hangings, too, of course, in Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* – but it was in its evocation of the wildness of nature and the unknown, encroaching at the edges of what the Salem community liked to think of as civilisation, that the set, by Robert Innes Hopkins, and the lighting, by Richard Howell, excelled. Tom Morris's production at Bristol Old Vic unfolded in an adversarial setting: part of the audience watched from tiered seating onstage, like members of a jury, or courtroom rubbernecks. The action was framed by a dark tangle of trees – an untamed wilderness, primal and mysterious, a place where the Barbados servant Tituba would be coerced by Abigail and her cohorts into performing mystical rites, almost on the townsfolk's doorstep yet, to them, many miles away from their God-fearing hearts and hearths. Howell's lighting set those gnarled trunks and branches ablaze with sheets of white



*Hangmen*  
Royal Court Theatre  
Directed by Matthew Dunster  
Designed by Anna Fleischle  
Lighting designed by Joshua Carr  
Photo by Simon Annand



lightning or gashes of hellfire red. It was as if the moral storm that would come to engulf and tear apart Salem had found its expression in nature. The effect was thrilling. There was, too, the more gentle flicker of candlelight at intimate, anxiety-charged gatherings. And when Rona Morison's Abigail – pale, flame-haired, burning with intensity – declared herself in the grip of supernatural forces, Howell drenched her in a scorching light, transfiguring her into a kind of vengeful, demonic angel of death and destruction.

The lighting by Mimi Jordan Sherin, in Richard Jones' production of Eugene O'Neill's extraordinary expressionist drama *The Hairy Ape* at the Old Vic Theatre, was initially blinding – and, from those first seconds and throughout, blindingly brilliant. Before us, enclosed in a cage-like structure of bars and low ceiling (designed by Stewart Laing), were O'Neill's stokers, labouring in the bowels of a vast ocean liner. Filthy, loping, volatile, they were a human menagerie – and the scene had a grotesquerie, and a colour-saturated vividness, that was almost hallucinatory. The cage was yellow – the

*The Crucible*  
Bristol Old Vic  
Directed by Tom Morris  
Designed by Robert Innes Hopkins  
Lighting designed by Richard Howell  
Photo by Geraint Lewis

colour of urine, or sulphur – and the light was merciless, giving an overwhelming impression of the sweaty, debilitating, stifling heat of the men's working environment. "It takes a man to work in hell," one stoker remarked – but these were conditions fit only for animals.

Meanwhile, up on deck, all was airy, calm, splashed with the silvery or golden beams of moon or sun. An heiress, shrilly demanding to see "how the other half lives", descended to the stokerroom in a blaze of scarlet flame, cackling, her shadow dancing like a gleeful goblin. Then O'Neill and Jones whisked us, and the play's focal character, the abused, inarticulate Yank played by Bertie Carvel, from the ship to Jazz Age New York. Projected black-and-white animations showed romantic, Art Deco images. On the streets of Manhattan, Sherin's lighting was brassy, glaring, reflected off gleaming shop windows and aglitter with socialites' pearls and diamonds. There was the oily sparkle, as well, of the grimy Brooklyn waterfront. And the hapless Yank was often pinned, a helpless moth, in a pitiless beam.

There was disturbing use of imagery, too, in Joe Hill-Gibbins' *Measure for Measure* at the Young Vic. Designed by Miriam Buether, the production stuffed the city of Vienna with inflatable sex dolls. The tangle of rubbery limbs

# LIGHT THAT WILL LINGER IN THE MEMORY

**Sam Marlowe**

was a spectacle to make the flesh creep, and Chris Kondek's video imagery assaulted our eyes still further with close-ups of crotches and open mouths, arranged in kaleidoscopic, pornographic patterns. James Farncombe's lighting contrasted the harshness and rigidity of officialdom with the murky, sordid enticements of a strip club. Red and white fluorescent tubes screamed the sex industry's brazen invitation to punters; cold, bluer light introduced us to grim warehouses where dirty deals were done and illicit liaisons occurred. Here, the piled-up rubber bodies suddenly took on a more appalling and obscene aspect, offering a visual echo of the Holocaust. The hysterical passion of Romola Garai's novice nun Isabella, as she faced down Paul Ready's Angelo, was illuminated by rows of hot spots, hemming her in, creating a pressure-cooker tension. It was horribly gripping.

A much more traditional Shakespearean experience was offered by Kenneth Branagh and Rob Ashford's production of *The Winter's Tale*, the opening work

in the inaugural season of the new Kenneth Branagh Theatre Company at the Garrick Theatre. Not that the staging lacked anguish or potency; but visually, it was simply lovely. Christopher Oram's set made the Sicilian court sumptuous, elegant, and decidedly festive: all

crimson and gilt, with a twinkling Christmas tree, and fistfuls of snow flung from the dress circle. Lighting designer Neil Austin gave the scene a wonderful, warm radiance, firelight and candlelight rebounding off the gold and soaking into the red velvet.



*Measure for Measure*  
Young Vic Theatre  
Directed by Joe Hill-Gibbons  
Designed by Miriam Buether  
Lighting designed by James Farncombe  
Video designed by Chris Kondek  
Photo by Keith Pattinson



*The Hairy Ape*  
Old Vic Theatre  
Directed by Richard Jones  
Designed by Stewart Laing  
Lighting designed by Mimi Jordan Sherin  
Photo by Manuel Harlan

At the trial scene, the falsely accused Hermione (Miranda Raison) was imprisoned by criss-crossing shafts of light, and blanched a deathly pale, her eyes black hollows in her face. Later, haze and aqua tones created a salt-tangy impression of sea air and mist; and Judi Dench delivered Time's linking speech from inside a giant snowglobe-cum-hourglass, flakes eddying around her and the shimmering faces of Perdita and Florizel appearing like ghosts from the darkness. Bohemia was gorgeously sun-splashed. As for the final, heartbreaking reconciliation, Austin ramped up the emotional impact with a sheen of quicksilver light that highlighted how Branagh's Leontes had matured and become wiser while his hair and beard grew grizzled, but that also sprinkled the play's fairytale ending with a tingling magic. It was quite beautiful and, like all these stage visions, whether dreamlike or nightmarish, worked impeccably in the service of the production and will linger in the memory. 🍷



*The Winter's Tale*  
The Garrick Theatre  
Directed by Kenneth Branagh and Rob Ashford  
Designed by Christopher Oram  
Lighting designed by Neil Austin  
Photo by Johan Persson



# OFFICE ORACLE

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

### 2015 AGM

The 2015 Annual General Meeting will take place on Tuesday 15 December 2015 from 11.15am at the Victoria Park Plaza Hotel, Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 1EQ.

Unlike previous years, this will be a short meeting to undertake the constitutional business of receiving officers' reports, and to elect the Associations' officers for the following year. Members can start arriving from 11.00am.

It will take place in a room next to the Beatrice Suite, which is down one floor from the main reception area. Tea and coffee will be provided. All current ALD members are entitled to attend the AGM, but only those with voting rights (see below) can take part in any decision making.

If any members wish to stand for the positions of Chair, Treasurer or Administrator of the ALD, please apply in writing to the ALD Office no later than seven days prior to the AGM.

As the date for this AGM was set between issues of *Focus*, all members who have elected to receive ALD news bulletins were informed by email on 23 November. The information has also been

posted on the diary section of the ALD website from the same date. If you do not currently receive email bulletins you can elect to do so on the new website or contact the ALD Office.

All Professional, Fellow and Life members are entitled to vote at the AGM, as long as they have FULLY paid their outstanding subscriptions. If you are in any doubt whether you owe any subscription monies, please contact the ALD Office as soon as possible.

Any voting members that cannot attend the AGM are eligible to appoint a proxy in their place. Please inform the Office no later than **24 HOURS** before the start of the meeting if you wish to appoint a proxy.

### ALD special general meeting

A special general meeting is being arranged to enable the membership to consider and discuss the issue of incorporating the Association of Lighting Designers into a company limited by guarantee.

It will take place on Saturday 20 February 2016. The location is still to be confirmed, but it will be in central London for those wishing to book their travel in advance, and it is likely to start no earlier than 1.00pm, although we shall confirm this at a later date.

Since the Executive was given the go-ahead to explore the process of incorporation, a new set of memorandum and articles of association has been developed to enable the ALD to move into its next phase of development. Unfortunately they are not ready for the 2015 AGM, and so a special general meeting has been scheduled to devote proper time and discussion to the issue before voting takes place.

The documents will be sent out to ALL members early in the new year to read in advance, but only those members with voting rights will be able to take part in the final decision. As with the AGM, non-voting members are welcome to attend and speak at the meeting. **If you would like to receive the documents by post rather than email, please contact the office as soon as possible.**

The SGM will be followed by our February social evening, and this will be sponsored by Electronic Theatre Controls. Full details of this part of the day will be confirmed at a later date.

If passed, the incorporation process will be undertaken ahead of the new subscription year in April 2016 and the AGM and board elections will take place under the new procedures later in the year.

Should you wish to change your membership to enable you to vote on this issue please visit <http://bit.ly/1lcOFMo> to see if you are eligible to make the switch.

### **Board members required**

The change in the structure of the ALD as part of the incorporation process means that we will need to have directors for the new company. This will necessitate having to run elections in advance of future AGMs, but for the present there needs to be an initial board of appointed directors. So we are asking for members interested in the running and future of the ALD to be members of the initial board. If you are interested please contact Development Officer John Leventhall: [john.leventhall@ald.org.uk](mailto:john.leventhall@ald.org.uk).

Directors have to be voting members of the ALD (Professional, Fellow or Life members) and have fully paid all subscriptions to date. If you are an Affiliate or Associate member and are interested, you would need to change your membership category to be considered.

You will then be invited to join the Executive Committee's discussions, as well as becoming a member of the founding board, if incorporation is approved at the special general meeting next February. Future elections will make an annual change of one-third of board members, who stand for a three year-term.

Being a director is not hard and requires no specialist knowledge of how to be one! In order to continue to be inclusive we need to attract capable and committed people to help the ALD flourish and grow.

*December 2015/January 2016*

### **ALD email bulletins**

With the new website now up and running, we are now working from the new database that is hosted from there. You should receive bulletins if you have opted in, but please check your settings on the website, as you can select whether to receive one, any or all of our email bulletin options.

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

### **ALD website**

Hopefully by now you will be aware that after a decade of sterling work, our old website has been retired and updated for a newer model. The site will be continued to be refined and worked on to solve problems, as well as expanding what we use it for. If you have any thoughts on things you would like to see in the future, please use the forum to bring these to the attention of the website team so we can investigate the feasibility of implementing them as we develop the site further.

We are also introducing a regular website tips section to *Focus* to give you a steer on how to use the site and highlight new features as they are introduced. The first one can be found in this issue on page 16.

We are also still looking for a couple of members who may be interested in helping us out and who can commit to a set number of hours a week for a couple of years to ensure there is some continuity on the site as it develops. The work can be done from home remotely, so all you need is an internet connection and an email address

If you are interested, please contact ALD Development Officer John Leventhall: [john.leventhall@ald.org.uk](mailto:john.leventhall@ald.org.uk).

### **New Technologies Showcase**

This now annual event takes place at Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in its Embassy Theatre on Thursday 21 January 2016. This year the event is sponsored by ALD Corporate members White Light and Ambersphere Solutions. It has been designed for lighting designers and technicians to explore and compare the latest lighting technologies on the market. All members are welcome to attend and it will run between 2.00pm and 5.30pm. Feel free to drop by as and when you can...

### **2016 annual pub quiz**

The next annual pub quiz (we can't remember if it's the sixth, seventh or eighth edition) takes place on the evening of 21 January straight after the New Technologies Showcase at 6.00pm. The venue is yet to be confirmed, so watch your email bulletins or the members-only Facebook group for updates nearer the time.

# OFFICE ORACLE

## PLASA Focus: Glasgow

We will be having a stand at the second PLASA Focus: Glasgow trade show which runs on 20 and 21 January and takes place at the SECC Exhibition Centre. More details about the show appear on page 27.

We are also organising a seminar, although the final details are not confirmed at the time of writing, other than it will take place at 1.00pm on Thursday 21 January, if you were considering attending the show. We look forward to seeing you there.

## Sponsored Student Scheme 2015

This is your last chance to renew your FREE membership of the ALD scheme funded by corporate for students studying on higher education courses with an element of lighting and/or video for live performance. The closing date for applications is Christmas 2015.

**Even if you are currently a member of the scheme you will need to apply again to continue your free membership beyond April 2016.**

If you do not re-register for the current academic year, your membership will revert to that of a normal student category and you will need to pay the annual subscription for a student (£30 p.a.).

All current student members have been emailed a link to the website where you can download the new form to fill in and return to the Office complete with a counter-signature from a tutor as proof of your student status.

If you do not wish to continue your membership beyond March 2016, please contact the ALD Office in advance so that we can stop the membership at the appropriate time.

## Members' monthly social evenings

The monthly socials at the Coach and Horses are slightly erratic at the start of 2016. The January event will be the 2016 pub quiz on Thursday 21 January (see above). February's will take place on Saturday 20 after the special general meeting (again, see above). Sponsors for the evening are Electronic Theatre Controls (ETC). The usual last Friday of the month date in March is also Good Friday, so we shall be moving the date for this one. This will be confirmed in the next issue of *Focus*.

We are already filling spaces with sponsors for 2016, so if any of our other Corporate or Commercial members wish to sponsor any of the available dates please contact your Executive Committee representative:  
[declan.randall@ald.org.uk](mailto:declan.randall@ald.org.uk). 🍷

# WEB TIPS

## John Leventhall

Fellow members, I hope you've used the new, "feature-rich" ALD website! I'd like to offer some pointers, in each *Focus*, to help everyone get lots of benefit and visit frequently.

### Do four easy things – NOW!



**FIRST**, log in for a password. Choose either email address or user name with your password. If you haven't yet logged in, you have a default user name which is the Forename [space] Surname you use for your ALD membership, e.g. Joe Davis.

Click on "Request New Password" to get a secure email link to set your specific password (eight characters minimum). If that doesn't work, email the Office.

**SECOND**, get listed in the directory. You won't appear in members' or public listings or the search facility unless there is something in your biography. I spotted a few prominent members not listed due to uncompleted biographies!

Please get on the directory SOON! Click on "My ALD" (top right) and follow the drop-down links to "My Biography". Click the blue "Edit" button to update.

## Diary dates 2015–2016

- 15 December** 2015 Annual General Meeting  
23rd Annual Lighting Lunch
- 20–21 January** PLASA Focus: Glasgow\*
- 21 January** ALD seminar at PLASA Focus: Glasgow  
New Technologies Showcase, Central School of Speech and Drama  
ALD annual pub quiz
- 24 January** Closing date for Lightmongers award submissions: <https://www.ald.org.uk/resources/2016-lightmongers-award-submission-criteria>
- 20 February** ALD Special General Meeting (venue and time TBC)  
Monthly members' social evening†  
Sponsored by Electronic Theatre Controls 
- 23–25 February** BVE trade show, London\*
- March TBC** Monthly members' social evening†  
*Available to sponsor*  
[declan.randall@ald.org.uk](mailto:declan.randall@ald.org.uk)
- 29 April** Monthly members' social evening†  
Sponsored by Stage Electrics 
- 10–11 May** PLASA Focus: Leeds\*
- 22–23 June** ABTT Theatre Show, London\*
- 18–20 September** PLASA Show 2016, London\*

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

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

**THIRD**, get listed in the yearbook. The "In Yearbook" tick box authorises Yearbook information to be printed. This is IMPORTANT, as the Yearbook will be published very soon. Don't delay...tick today!

Click "My ALD">"My Contacts and Preferences">"Edit", then scroll down to "Contact Details". Then select the "In Yearbook" tick boxes to confirm existing details or enter new email addresses, phone numbers, etc. Everything is secure (we have an https: site nowadays).

**FOURTH**, upload a photo. Your image now fronts your profile picture montage. We'd like everybody's "mugshots" to identify them in future.

And ... use the forum. The new private ALD forum is there for everyone. Get talking online today!

All these details are at [www.ald.org.uk/ald-website-user-guide](http://www.ald.org.uk/ald-website-user-guide) and if you need help, please contact [office@ald.org.uk](mailto:office@ald.org.uk) or USE THE FORUM: [www.ald.org.uk/forum](http://www.ald.org.uk/forum). 📌

## Professional Members' shows opening in December and January

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

- 1 December 2015** **Charlie Morgan Jones** *Earthquakes In London* Studio Theatre  
**Malcolm Rippeth** *A Christmas Carol* Rose Theatre, Kingston  
**Kelli Zezulka** *Revenger's Tragedy* University of York
- 2 December 2015** **Sam McNab** *A Christmas Carol* The Loch Centre, Tranent
- 3 December 2015** **Jon Clark** *The Lorax* The Old Vic
- 4 December 2015** **Mark Dymock** *Dick* Whittington Watford Palace Theatre  
**Andy Webb** *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* Blackpool Grand Theatre
- 5 December 2015** **Alex Lewer** *The Night Before Christmas* Gary's Warehouse  
**Andy Grange** *Hansel and Gretel* Hertford Theatre
- 6 December 2015** **Steve Benson** *We Will Rock You the Musical* Knutsford
- 7 December 2015** **Chris Withers** *A Christmas Carol* The Castle, Wellingborough
- 8 December 2015** **Elliot Griggs** *Forget Me Not* Bush Theatre
- 9 December 2015** **Katy Morison** *Cinderella and the Glass Slipper* Bernie Grant Arts Centre  
**Nic Farman** *F\*cking Men* Kings Head Theatre, Islington
- 10 December 2015** **Tom Boucher** *Daisy Pulls It Off* Shelley Theatre  
**Richard C Lambert** *Black Iced Enchantment* Landor Theatre  
**Theo AD Farrington** *Oliver!* Trinity Theatre
- 12 December 2015** **Michael Grundner** *West Side Story* Theater Sankt Gallen (CH)
- 15 December 2015** **Johanna E Town** *Pines* Hampstead Downstairs
- 16 December 2015** **Katy Morison** *A State Affair* Bernie Grant Arts Centre
- 17 December 2015** **Alex Lewer** *Peter Pan and The Revenge of Captain Hook* Cheltenham Playhouse
- 18 December 2015** **James Whiteside** *A Christmas Carol* Chichester Festival Theatre  
**Steven Benson** *Jack and the Beanstalk* Clonter Opera Theatre  
**Edmund Sutton** *Davit Bek* Britten Theatre, RCM, London
- 22 December 2015** **Tom Boucher** *A Christmas Carol* Middle Temple Hall
- 29 December 2015** **Callum MacDonald** *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* The Apex
- 5 January 2016** **Jamie Platt** *P'yongyang* Finborough Theatre
- 19 January 2016** **Tom Boucher** *4000 Days* Park Theatre, Finsbury
- 22 January 2016** **Elliot Griggs** *Yen* Jerwood Theatre Upstairs, Royal Court
- 26 January 2016** **Michael Dobbs** *Ladies' Day* Robin Hood Theatre

## Contact us

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### Focus Magazine

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

To submit ideas for articles, information, correspondence, corrections and any comments about *Focus*, please email [editor@ald.org.uk](mailto:editor@ald.org.uk). Owing to space restrictions, we regret that we do not accept press releases for publication in *Focus*. However, Corporate members of the ALD may send press releases to the ALD office ([office@ald.org.uk](mailto:office@ald.org.uk)) so that they can be posted on the News section of the ALD website for immediate and wider coverage. Corporate members only may advertise in *Focus*; please contact the office for details. Editorial guidelines for authors are available on request from the editor.

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

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

# New members

**Welcome!**

## *Professional*

Andrew Bird, Watford  
Kay Haynes, Manchester  
Alex Lewer, London  
Andrew Nasrat, Croydon  
Nathan White, London  
Ade Wilkinson, Lancashire\*

## *Affiliate Member*

Matt Edwards, Tendring, Essex  
Zakk Hein, London  
Alex Musgrave, Portsmouth

## *Associate Member*

Keith Morrison, Shetland

## *Student Member*

Olivia-Jayne Bannock, Bexhill-on-Sea  
Jake Brightman, Rushden  
Laura Fontana, London  
Ollie Nye, Chichester

## *Sponsored Student Scheme*

*The Brit School*  
Matthew Davies

*Guildford School of Acting*  
Michael Fox

*Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts*  
Sophie Bailey  
Robert Davies  
Molly Jarrett  
George Leigh

*Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts*  
Jake Ayris  
Valentina Cutri  
Deanna-Marie Hart  
Mansoor Hussain  
Lucy Sykes

*Northbrook College*  
George Bundock  
Kieran Pollard

*Rose Bruford College*  
Natalya Fineron  
Harvey Fitzpatrick  
Matthew Kitchen  
Jake Taylor  
Abi Waller

*Royal Central School of Speech and Drama*  
Santiago Martinez  
Konstantinos Mousikos  
Iain Syme

*Royal Conservatoire Scotland*  
Gary Ashbridge  
Alex Kilgour

*University of South Wales*  
Michael Bowlos  
Samuel Clay  
Adam Davies  
David Howard  
Pedro Marce  
Luke Rolls  
Nils Voerste

# ALL CONTRIBUTIONS GRATEFULLY RECEIVED?

## When is a design your design? asks **Graham Walne**

Johanna Town's question about shared rigs in the August/September *Focus* echoed an experience I had some years ago. I was taken ill during plotting and my assistant had to finish the show for me. A disturbing experience, this. When we later discussed the tour he felt he should be credited for the lighting design. I felt that since I had designed the rig for the premiere, focused it and at least started the plot I should be credited also. He argued that he had made a few changes to the rig so he was the designer. In the end we amicably agreed to share the credit, but the question remains: what is the lighting design? It can't be just the rig, nor just the focus nor just the plot. Perhaps too, as a set designer from the Bolshoi said to me once, "design is ideal!"

I'm interested in the external influences on the idea and what role these influences have on the designer's ownership and realisation of that idea.

I once arrived at a regional venue on the usual cold Monday tour date to find there had been some miscommunication and the lighting had not been rigged. There was no time to catch up and I had to use the rig left



over from the previous day's show, basically strong colour washes. Our set was white and designed to change colour but the range was far stronger than ideal. Interestingly, however, it worked very well and I learned a lesson. But the result at that venue was not all my work.

On another occasion the director and the set designer had holidayed in the Mediterranean and had brought back photographs of the setting sun, handing them over with the strong request that these be reproduced. They were, perfectly. The result

was the London Times' review: "Graham Walne has perpetrated the most tasteless sunset we have ever seen."

If the rig is defined as a key part of the design then when the rig is predetermined by the venue and not the designer does that mean a different assessment is required of the ownership? The only show I ever lit at the Royal Opera House (pre-upgrade) had pre-focused and pre-coloured FOH; I had no choice but to use it but it wasn't quite what was needed. In the great days of variety at the London Palladium the standing rig (designed by the legendary Bill Platt) served visiting Sunday concert designers extremely well.

Every lighting designer has worries about his work when encountering such trials as rusty equipment, patchy schedules or cancelled flights. The anticipation of problems can be countered with reasonable risk management, but sometimes this goes too far. I once saw a programmer disappear into the lighting box with two bottles of tequila and was more than slightly disturbed. Curiously, he turned out to anticipate my instructions very accurately. Hmmm... maybe I should have been worried if he hadn't any supplies.

I can't really speak to the subject of shared rigs; across forty years I only recall two, one with Francis Reid and the other with Michael Northen. Both experiences were blissful but it does make me wonder if such sharing always involves a more senior partner and, if so, is sharing the correct word? Of course, I've shared rigs with myself when lighting shows in repertoire and I love the challenge of achieving a balance, of using resources efficiently and of not letting these factors dominate the aesthetic. For example when I lit thirteen ballets in repertoire for the Bolshoi's Albert Hall season the logistics (no refocusing and only two crew) took me over completely and once the rig was focused and working I caught myself relaxing with relief – then realising I hadn't actually plotted the show yet.

Our lighting designs, however defined, are, of course, put through a filter over which we have little control (voltage fluctuations, for example). On one of my shows the stage manager nervously whispered to the board op, "that's a snap blackout!"; came the reply, "I'm doing it, I'm doing it!" 🍷



*Graham Walne started out as a set designer in the days when designers lit their own sets. Eventually he realised that maybe he wasn't very good at sets and was seduced into lighting properly by Francis Reid at RADA – apart from making it accessible Francis also made it fun. Since then Graham has*

*followed the typical career path of his generation, adding writing and consultancy to his scope. He moved to Perth in Australia in 1999 but comes out of retirement to light the (local-based) international puppet company Spare Parts – "the puppets rarely work after 5pm!"*

# A POSTCARD FROM...

## Sofia Alexiadou, Finland



Pekka Kolehmainen and Elina Romppainen

Very lucky last month to have found myself in Finland where I've designed the lights for *Europium*, a new dance production of my favourite dance group, Rootlessroot. We travelled to the picturesque fjord town of Oulu, a lovely town up north with friendly people and amazing food. The theatre, Oulu City Theatre, is located on the island of Vänmanninsaari in the estuary of the Oulu River and benefits from its exquisite surroundings lying quietly next to calm waters. My LX team, Elina and Pekka, have to be the hardest-working, politest and funniest colleagues I've ever had, making the Finnish experience more than enjoyable. The theatre is well equipped, has three performing spaces and a lot of film lighting fixtures, which I had the pleasure to use for my design, bringing the magic of soft light to the stage... 🇫🇮



Photo by Mike Rafail



The view from the theatre canteen

# ZIRCON FILTERS

## A new concept in LED filter design

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

The four Warm Amber filters correct a range of different colour temperature white LEDs giving them a warmer feel. While the three Diffusion filters offer different strengths of diffusion specifically designed for LEDs.



**LONGER LIFE FILTERS FOR LED**

**LEE Filters**

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# ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

## Stuart Porter on the benefits of collaboration

Over a year ago I joined the Executive of the ALD as the Professional members representative. The purpose was to add a voice for the non-design professional members. Even though the membership categories have changed to amalgamate and clarify professional members, my remit has stayed the same. I have to confess, as a lighting programmer for over 20 years, I had not had any involvement with the ALD. I presumed that this is an organisation whose members are all designers and not the place for a technician like me. This is so not the case, and as a member of the Executive I can see all the good work that goes on by primarily giving lighting design a voice and increasing our presence in the entertainment industry. Designers are helped by the support of the team around them; this is only achieved through collaboration. As the entertainment industry progresses, so does the ALD. The problems being faced by lighting designers are a lot of the same issues facing the technicians, programmers, assistants, associates: issues such as wages, hours, insurance, health and safety. This is why it is as important for the ALD to hear from the non-designer members as it is to hear from the designer members.

The ALD has just launched its new website; this should become a platform for these

discussions – for example, anybody in need of a lighting member of staff for their team should be looking at the ALD website first. I am certain, with our ever-expanding membership, we can find someone in our database to cover most

lighting scenarios and, hopefully, as we expand our membership in other genres, we will be able to cover most bases. This is all down to you keeping your profile up to date and adding all the information you can to sell yourself



*The Billy Elliot team in Korea*



*Stuart at the production desk*

to potential employers. There is also space on the website for forums and subgroups to talk about the issues we face: maybe you are the head of lighting for a house and wonder how other venues deal with certain issues. These discussions can take place through the website. In the UK we do not have a closed shop, but I feel it is so important that we do have a place where we can get guidance and help. This is only going to be achieved by collaborating through the website and discussing the issues amongst the other technicians who are members; we maybe able to help each other out with advice and support and therefore become stronger when it comes to wages and employment terms.

I have been involved in lighting my whole career and have concentrated on being a programmer and technician. Recently, I have returned back to how I started: freelancing, doing fit-ups and load-outs on commercial tours. For the size of shows I have been doing, I am amazed at how much knowledge you

need to have. This is sometimes forgotten and can be seen as the less glamorous end of the lighting industry. My respect for the touring technicians and house teams has increased by actually joining them and being involved first-hand. These teams are now in charge of video, pyro, smoke effects and practicals to name a few aspects of the job. They also have to maintain the look of the show and do this whilst moving on a regular basis. Having to maintain all this touring kit is a full-time job, let alone finishing in one venue on Saturday night and having it up and running again for a Monday or Tuesday night performance the following week. The ALD needs to support these talented people and this is why the ALD is expanding its membership base to include video and rock and roll. The more collaboration we have, the stronger we become.

Another factor affecting our membership: it is becoming increasingly hard to find good touring staff and house technicians. This is something the ALD may need to look at, as there seems to be no shortage of courses in design and programming, but what we may be lacking is an opportunity for people to increase



*Tim Bray and Dan Street in Coventry on a show with Johanna Town*

their skill set away from being a designer and get themselves more involved in the complex world of being a technician. The incentive here is it is a great way to expand your lighting knowledge for when you do become a recognised designer and you may be able to make a comfortable living out of it whilst you wait for design opportunities to arise. This is all food for thought. It would be great to hear from our membership and see what your thoughts are on these matters. It is important we continue to be one of the best places in the world for lighting designers and those lighting designers require good technicians to support them. 📌

# plasa**focus**

GLASGOW | 20-21 JANUARY, 2016

The essential event for the live entertainment technology industry for Scotland & North England

See the latest technology and product demonstrations from lighting, audio, AV, staging and rigging sectors, learn from the experts at the free to attend seminar programme and network with the industry

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# PLASA FOCUS: GLASGOW

## PLASA returns to Scotland in January

plasa**focus**

GLASGOW | 20-21 JANUARY, 2016

**P**LASA Focus Glasgow returns for a second edition to the SECC from 20 to 21 January 2016. Over 50 brands in professional lighting and AV, as well as audio, staging and rigging, will be showcased under one roof at the regional show for Scotland and the north of England. Exhibitors announced so far include Robe, Elation, White Light, ETC, Avolites, Impact Products, Black Light, and many other leading lighting manufacturers and distributors.

PLASA returns to Glasgow with another distinguished seminar programme that will deliver two days of presentations, technical demonstrations and panel discussions all designed to help visitors build their industry knowledge and improve their skill set.

Recently confirmed presentations include Grant Anderson, Scottish lighting designer, who, in collaboration with lighting, AV and sound specialists Black Light, designed Botanic

Nights – 2015, a unique night-time experience, themed around the elements and the changing of the seasons.

ETC, recent winner of the PLASA Gold Award for its Eos Version 2.3, will present a session titled “Have we moved on from DMX?”. Another confirmed session is “Vectorworks 2016 and vision for the future”, presented by Adrian Slatter,

who will discuss Vectorworks’ latest release of its flagship product for entertainment design, Vectorworks Spotlight.

Enjoying global attention in recent years, Glasgow, a UNESCO City of Culture, has hosted world-renowned sporting events with spectacular opening ceremonies as well as live music and theatre productions, placing Scotland’s entertainment lighting designers and technology professionals on the world’s stage.

As the only show for the live entertainment industry in Scotland, this is your chance to meet the region’s top lighting designers as well as sound engineers, rigging specialists, and other industry professionals at an event renowned for its networking opportunities and showcasing a wealth of new products and a free seminar programme.

Follow PLASA Focus EU on Facebook or @plasashow/#Plasgow on Twitter for all the updates in the coming weeks! 📌



# STAGE LIGHTING: THE TECHNICIAN'S GUIDE

**James Laws** reviews the second edition of this lighting handbook



This neat book arrived out of the blue and I'm very glad it did. First impressions matter with books and this one got me intrigued from the start. An attention-grabbing cover, robust binding (probably mug-of-tea proof). When you open it you know it's not going to fall apart and the paper's not going to tear. These things are important in a book that is probably going to live on a table in a theatre crew room and be referenced by a random number of people.

It's fair to say that the core audience is going to be starting out in lighting as technicians or wanting to explore the simple end of modern practice. Maybe the old man in the village lighting team has retired at last and his young assistant wants to celebrate promotion with creativity and to get some ideas. Or the basics need to be understood for BTEC. This book will do more than that but the clever layout enables varying levels of information to be readily accessed: A quick start, More info and Extras! are indexed by colour coding in the vertical margin. Every page is in colour. The illustrations and diagrams are straightforward and relate well to the text. However, I would have classed Electrical safety as a greater priority than Extras!

The three parts of the book are also colour referenced across the top margin: *Lighting*

*Technician, Lighting Designer* and the very informative *Lighting Resources*, with its massive generic lantern database, electrical information, useful websites and *Key notes!*, which are checklists to help with the reader's CV for college applications and job seeking.

The information access extends to online video links. I tried a few of these and found they relate well to the text. They are another enjoyable way of learning, via recorded demonstrations.

The text is occasionally peppered with *Did you know that* – bite-size nuggets of history, most of which are accurate; they give welcome context to modern practice. But I couldn't let one piece go, sourced from the presently dormant [theatrecraft.com](http://theatrecraft.com), which relates that PAR lamps are known as "bird's eyes", after the alleged inventor, Clarence Birdseye. They may well be known, as large curved Fresnel lenses are, as *bug-eyes* but I can't find any link between sealed beam tungsten halogen lighting and the inventor of flash frozen fish fingers, who died in 1956.

Other people could be as picky on small details as I have just been but this is a genuinely useful reference book. It will be invaluable for those starting out in lighting (and student



scenic designers would learn a thing or two). In a few years it will form a snapshot of what lighting was like in 2015, when we were using tungsten lighting with remote dimmers and were preparing to go over to LEDs.

*James Laws is a Fellow of the Association. He started lighting theatre in 1968. He now specialises in lighting church interiors and other challenging architectural spaces. He teaches lighting history and candlelight.*

*I lent this book to Matt Maller, a Creative Lighting Control student at Rose Bruford College. Some of his notes add details that I missed:*

*Stage Lighting* provides an intuitive overall insight for the targeted audience, or the more advanced users could easily dip in to find particular nuggets of relevant information, especially from the helpful glossaries throughout that thoughtfully list technical terms in reference to terminology current in the UK and in other parts of the world.

Importantly, safety codes are listed where appropriate, giving a very useful reference to keep going back to in order to make sure standards are being kept.

The book, however, fails to mention the world of video projection or media servers. There is a school of thought that lighting may become redundant, thanks to video projection. Ways of communication between lighting consoles and fixture networks are rapidly developing on all scales of concert, touring and theatre lighting. Various streaming protocols (ArtNet etc.) are being used, as data streams proliferate. These trends are not explained. 📌

*December 2015/January 2016*

## An example of LED lighting

This is good example of how LED automated and static fixtures can be used to provide an additional layer of light to the generic lanterns to create bright, dramatic, colorful lighting and to produce the special effects and the magical, surreal elements that make a pantomime.



*The under water scene from Dick Whittington, Wycombe Swan, Qdos Entertainment – Lighting Design Andy Webb, Photographer Louise Strickland*

*An excerpt from the book*

*Currently studying Creative Lighting Control at Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance, I have a great interest in the aesthetics of light in all environments and its capabilities*



*of transformation. I also look forward to the future of lighting, new control surfaces and ways of sculpting with them. I am glad to be part of a generation that looks to the future but appreciates the current – particularly a love of a tungsten source!*

*Stage Lighting: The Technicians' Guide*  
*An on-the-job reference tool with online video resources*  
*2nd edition (November 2015)*  
*by Skip Mort*  
*Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, £24.99*  
*ISBN PB: 078-1-4742-1270-0*  
*ePDF: 078-1-4742-1272-4*  
*epub: 078-14742-1271-7*

# A POSTCARD FROM...

## Manuel Garrido, Singapore

Sending big hugs to you all from Singapore. I have just finished a high school drama production of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* in the round! Being my first design ever with this stage configuration, I went through an extensive process of research trying to re-think different methods to light the space. A wonderful book from Neil Fraser, *The Handbook of Stage Lighting*, helped me to get through the storm.





















Liam Holohan and Daniel Prout, who are G12 drama students, worked tirelessly in the analysis process of the script, creating the lighting cue synopsis. This production has been a huge milestone in our drama department. Even though, staging *The Crucible* in the round was a big challenge; the biggest achievement has been to work with Daniel and Liam, letting them feel the magic that lies in the design process of a production. I am looking forward to seeing how their lives unfold in the coming years... 🍀



Daniel Prout



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# DRAGON: THE MEETING

## Grahame Gardner reports from Glasgow

The afternoon of Thursday 8 October saw a small group of ALD members and students from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland gather at the Citizen's Theatre to have a look at the lighting for National Theatre of Scotland and VoxMotus's hugely successful show, Dragon.

LD Simon Wilkinson, ably assisted by programmer James Gardner, gave a very entertaining and detailed talk about his design for the show which, although comparatively small in size, is immensely complicated technically, requiring a company of 17 to tour, and more time to reset the show than it takes to perform it.

The show relies heavily on a "black cabinet" look to conceal the magic of the various dragon puppets and other performer-driven effects, and consequently relies heavily on the lighting to define the space and create atmosphere. There is a small silhouetted Glasgow skyline upstage, with a very large LED-lit full moon disc behind plus a number of large fluffy white clouds overhead, but otherwise the set comprises a series of flat black circular arched portals that decrease in size from downstage to upstage and look like something out of a "Looney Tunes" cartoon. The sense of perspective that this creates is quite dramatic, making the set look much larger than it actually is.

Simon explained that the main constraint on the design was the amount of flying space taken up by the clouds and glitter drop machines (used for rainfall effects), with most of the remaining flying bars used to hang the portals. The overhead lighting rig consisted of three VL 3500 spots, chosen more for their 60 degree beam angle than anything else, given the low drift height of 4.5m; although their shutters are certainly used very creatively. Simon bemoaned that most moving lights are geared towards rock concert use where narrow beam angles are de rigueur. It is becoming difficult to find suitable wide-beam movers for theatrical use.

In order to keep the rig as consistent as possible between venues on tour, Simon used very little front-of-house lighting. The bulk of the lighting comes from the



*Dragon*  
Citizens Theatre/Vox Motus/ National Theatre of  
Scotland/Tianjin Children's Arts Theatre  
Directed by Jamie Harrison and Candice Edmunds  
Designed by Jamie Harrison  
Lighting by Simon Wilkinson  
Photo by Drew Farrell

side, and here Simon has made good use of the NTS Source 4 Lustr+ LED profiles, together with tungsten VL 1000s atop the side booms. Although these may seem a little excessive as side lights, they do reduce the need for other units on the boom and their shutters enable them to get close in to the action whilst keeping off the set (or any wayward dragons).

Photo by Christoph Wagner



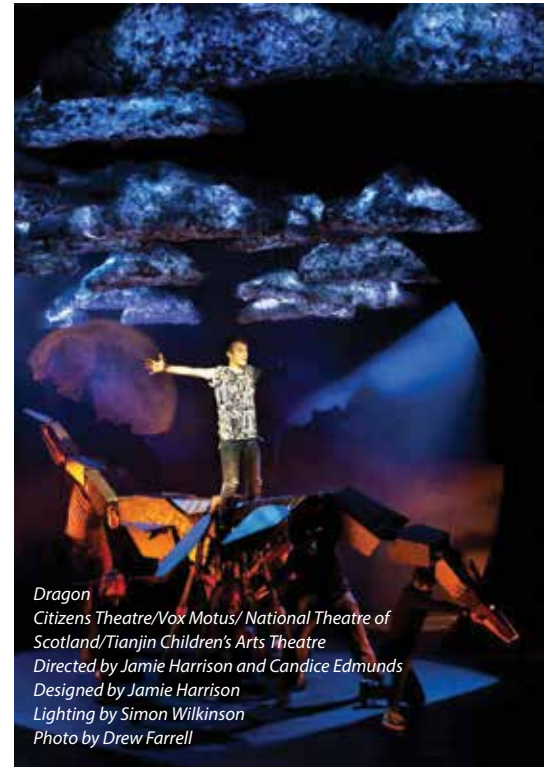
Boom positions are critical here, as although the VLs don't actually move very much, they need room to fully manoeuvre on startup and reset.

The main star of the rig has to be the "ceiling" of fluffy clouds, each individually wired (and addressed) with RGB LED strips and egg strobes. These can very quickly define the colour palette for a scene, and although used quite subtly throughout, they do create a spectacular storm sequence with complex chase sequences, lightning flashes from the strobes, and the

"glitter drop" rain machines – all controlled from the desk, of course. In fact, there are so many cues in the show that it became impossible to call them all from the prompt desk, so it became necessary to MIDI-link the lighting desk with the soundtrack and run the show that way – much to the relief of the stage manager!

Many thanks to Simon and Christoph Wagner from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland for organising this visit. Dragon is certainly a show full of magic and well worth seeing. 🍀

December 2015/January 2016



*Dragon  
Citizens Theatre/Vox Motus/ National Theatre of  
Scotland/Tianjin Children's Arts Theatre  
Directed by Jamie Harrison and Candice Edmunds  
Designed by Jamie Harrison  
Lighting by Simon Wilkinson  
Photo by Drew Farrell*

# CUBES OF LIGHT

## Kelli Zezulka at the members' meeting in Southwark

As someone who works primarily in small-scale theatre, where time, money, resources and space are all in short supply, I was very interested to see the Rosco Miro and Braq cubes in action in Johanna Town's lighting design for *Tomcat* at the Southwark Playhouse Little Theatre.

*Tomcat* is a new play about genetic screening. There are 25 scenes, and the set is in traverse, with the main stage in the centre and the two outside areas being duplicated, so that they can be used interchangeably (i.e. either the left or right area could be used, or both at the same time in the same scene). As such, there were not enough dimmers available for the rig to be fully tungsten, so LED options were then explored.

Johanna was also in the process of specifying a touring rig for Pentabus Theatre, so *Tomcat* was a great opportunity for her to use the Rosco cubes in situ, on an actual show, before deciding whether or not to buy them for Pentabus. On *Tomcat*, three Braq RGBW cubes, four Miro 4C RGBW cubes and four Miro WNC cubes were used. The WNC cubes have a range from warm to cool white (from 2800K to 6500K) and are therefore able to produce every option of our usual colour correction choices from L206 to L201 with the shift of a fade.

We looked at a few of the lighting states from the show – evening, daylight, dawn breaking – then the cubes on their own. The fade quality was excellent and matched the tungsten rig; there was absolutely no snap out at the bottom of the fade. A couple of people had a go on the desk, trying out the colour mixing of the cubes, which seemed to be very smooth and even.

Danny from Rosco and Paul and Joanne from Stage Electrics were there to answer any questions we had, and they had also brought some of the cubes along with them for us to have a closer look at. The Miro is the smaller of the two at only 100 x 100 square. The cubes are light, small and seemed fairly robust and well made – all huge advantages for small touring companies. They were all tucked away discreetly in the rig (see the production images). They can additionally be fitted to a track for architectural use (apparently they are quite popular with churches and museums), or you could bolt three three-circuit tracks together to make a batten if you liked. The cubes are available with changeable lenses at 20, 40 and 60 degrees that are simple and easy to change, even at height. Johanna used two beam angles on *Tomcat*: 40 degrees over the main stage area, and 20 degrees over each of the side areas.



Unfortunately, the Braq and Miro cubes are currently only available for purchase, although Stage Electrics is looking at getting some in its hire stock. If you'd like to find out more about the Rosco cubes, data sheets are available online with all the technical info. Thanks to Rosco, Stage Electrics, Southwark Playhouse and Johanna for giving up their time and letting us have a play for a couple hours! 🍷

**ALD member Mig Burgess, lighting tutor at Guildford School of Acting and a freelance lighting technician, stayed to watch the show in the evening. Here's what she thought...**

I decided to go and watch the show after attending the demo on the Rosco cubes held at the Southwark Playhouse. Johanna was using the show to demo this product to us, and even though I knew nothing about the show, the lighting and set alone were enough to get me curious.

The show is a great example of a beautifully composed piece of theatre, with all the theatrical disciplines working together to create a compelling show. Everything from the soundscape, which included simple computer sound effects, to the clean lines of the set, the blocking and pace kept the piece going for its 90-minute straight-through run, and the actors were brilliant.

The lighting worked incredibly well for the piece. The colour palette was kept within only a few hues, which added to the feel of the design of the piece. The LED look of the rig enhanced the futurist look of the set, and integrated LED strip in the set for the cell made a striking visual impact.

The lighting could be perceived to be simple but at a closer look you can tell Johanna was meticulous at getting the focus right on this play (set in thrust). The cell dominated the room and the character in the cell was on stage for the whole play. A lot of blocking happened all around the space and I spent a great deal



of time wondering how Johanna managed to light certain areas without bleeding into the cell area! It was a technically brilliant rig of carefully focused lights.

The show was so compelling that I eventually stopped looking up and referencing the rig, looking at how it was lit, and I just sat back and became engrossed in the world that had been created for me: the story and plot – something that is unheard of for me as a lampie. This was a great example of how we can transform a small studio space and make a thought-provoking piece of theatre. 🍷

*Tomcat  
Southwark Playhouse Little Theatre  
Directed by Kate Hewitt  
Designed by Lily Arnold  
Lighting designed by Johanna Town  
Photos by Richard Davenport*

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