

ALD #

FOCUS

The Journal of the Association of Lighting Designers
"More art, less tools..."

December 2018/January 2019



Love and Information
Sheffield Theatres
Director: Caroline Steinbeis
Designer: Max Jones
Lighting designer: Johanna Town
Photographer: The Other Richard

In the spotlight this issue:

- Michael Northen bursary winners
 - Lumière scheme update
 - The importance of collaboration
 - Lighting for opera
- ...and much, much more...

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From the chair...

Welcome to another great issue of *Focus*. There are so many interesting articles to read, and if you have missed a few issues recently I would encourage you to catch up over some mulled wine and a mince pie. I would like to take this opportunity to wish Kelli, our editor, a huge thank you for producing such an excellent magazine year after year. It is no small task and when we all groan at being sent another reminder to write our small pieces, I have to remind myself that Kelli has been working away in the background between issues collating the forthcoming topics. So a big Christmas cheer to Kelli and thank you.

This issue contains more award winners, this time for our emerging designers who entered the Michael Northen Awards. We had a good number of entrants this year. I was lucky enough to be on the judging panel, and it was extremely hard to come up with a short list. Well done to everyone who made submissions, and congratulations to all the winners. See page 26.

With Christmas now well underway, we in the lighting world continue to work hard at bringing cheer to many around the world especially at this time of year. Whether you're involved in lighting a pantomime or two or you're working through the Christmas festivities behind the scenes, every one of us is creating a little magic. It would be great to see some of that magic in the next issue – with enough submissions we could do a Christmas special. For example, how many pantos did you work on this year? Do you have a story to tell? Designer, programmer or production electrician, what is your festive tale?

As my first year as chair comes to an end I would like to say a big thank you to everyone who has supported me and given me advice. I still have so much to learn about the role, but I feel encouraged by members' actions and the Executive's support. I would also like to take a moment to apologise to anyone I haven't written back to this year; I am a designer, not a writer, and now have the added workload of the "chair's" emails filling my inbox –



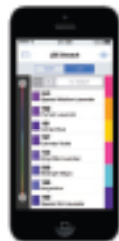
*Johanna Town
ALD chair*

some I know have been slipping down the email chain – so, please, please, do get in touch again if I have missed something. I believe together we can keep building the ALD to be a working, supportive resource for all our members in the years to come.

On that note I would just like to wish the whole of our membership a very merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Have a good one...

Jo ✨



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Spain to Finland

Mark Jonathan at the Liceu and Finnish National Opera House



My opera marathon came to an end a while ago now in October at the very beautiful and splendid Liceu opera house which is situated in the centre of the old quarter of Barcelona. The opera house was built in 1862. Nothing was done to the opera house until 1994 when, during some refurbishment work, sparks from someone soldering fell on 130 years of dust and dry wood and set the theatre alight at 10am. By 12.30 the entire roof had taken light and the house was destined to flame and smoke. I am transfixed by a picture of the ruins of the house in which a gala concert was then held under the stars. The opera house was painstakingly rebuilt and opened again in 1999 and very glorious it looks. All

the beauty of the auditorium restored with expanded foyers and modern back stage and offices surrounding it. The best of both worlds, I hope.

As I travel between opera houses in different countries I am always intrigued by the different ways of working there are and the level of competence therein. The biggest difference will be driven by whether a house plays in repertoire or not. Few work at the intensity that British houses work at whether like the ROH or Glyndebourne, playing in intense rep, or like a regional UK company, where the number of dark nights is kept to a minimum. I'm also interested to see how much one house has embraced new technology compared to another and with that whether the necessary level of competence has been achieved to manage the demands of the LD or the capability of new technology. Has the house taken advantage of available technology and adjusted working practices and skill levels to get the best out of the time? Generally, I fear not.

The Liceu doesn't play in rep but it fields two casts, allowing for a more intense schedule of performances. This puts pressure on the directors, as well as the

designers, who have to manage the whims of two casts. One singer doesn't like his Puritan ruff and hurls it off in the first costume run. "Does it matter if the singers in the two casts stand in different places?" I am asked. Of course it matters but I sense that saying so probably won't help the situation. I shall use soft followspots which I hope will deal with some of the wayward variation in blocking.

No sooner have I started lighting *I Puritani* than we have our first stage rehearsal with costume and light. This is the first time we see everything, and it's two weeks before the opening, but it is at this rehearsal that the press photographers will come. "Really?" I gasp with incredulity. "You can't be serious?" In this case the schedule is ruled by the marketing department, which has little concern for whether we have achieved a "finished look" or not. It turns out the next time the singers will wear costume will the penultimate rehearsal which is deemed to be too close to the opening for publishing deadlines. I snarl a bit. But this is just the beginning.

I Puritani is not the only opera plot with a rather quirky story. The brilliant director Anilese Miskimmon takes the cranky story

The Liceu theatre prior to refurbishment



and lifts the Catholic lover Arturo and the Protestant Elvira to Northern Ireland in the 1970s but as Elvira goes mad deftly morphs to the Puritan world some 300

The refurbished Liceu



years earlier. This coincides with Elvira losing her mind. By the final, third act we time travel back, and I open the act with a blue police light flashing outside the window to help the audience understand the time shift. The opera ends with Elvira embracing her wedding dress and in her mind she imagines the arrival of reprieve but she is unaware in her madness that her Catholic lover's throat has been slit by her fellow Protestants.

We have already done this production with great success at Welsh National Opera and then at Danish National Opera so I am rather surprised when the Spanish chorus appear in their Puritan costumes in act two and to aid the time travel I highlight them with big, dramatic and looming shadows. The chorus, much larger in quantity than we had in Wales or Denmark, stop singing and complain about the lighting. They are egged on by the chorus mistress, who has already managed to stand in the way of

Spain to Finland

Mark Jonathan

the lights and is clearly visible conducting from the side of the stage. The interfering chorus mistress has no appreciation or interest in the design aspect of the production. After I have turned off all the lights that she and the chorus don't like they are basically left standing in the dark. I let rehearsals continue in the torpid gloom until they exit when we restore the lighting, which doesn't seem to be a problem for the soloists, who are not being egged on by the Machiavellian chorus mistress. As well as my footlights being a problem, my low side FOH crosslight is deemed to be a problem. Of course, if you rig a TV monitor on the lighting boom it probably is going to exacerbate the situation as singers strain to see the flickering picture of the conductor with a light blasting in their eyes. After the rehearsal, we negotiate. I agree to use cross lights that are not next to the conductor monitors and the opera administrator says they will agree to a certain amount of my central foot lighting that creates the shadows. I feel the sharpness of the lighting has been muted and with that the vibrant atmosphere has been muted too.

At school the French mistress declared that I showed "no linguistic ability" and

I was stopped from studying a second foreign language. It was only when I left school and my other (ski) life took me to Europe for entire winters that I managed to discard the belief system instilled in me by the school teacher and I discovered the fun of speaking other languages. As a young man I embraced the challenge of learning French, German and Italian, which are staples for working in Europe, and so although it's not my first time working in Spain this time I am in the heart of the Catalan-speaking area. There are five lighting programmers, and I will have two at a time with all five working on a shift rota. The morning shift is fluent in French but the afternoon shift favours Catalan. "Fine," I say boldly. "You will teach me Catalan and I shall light in it." My poor brain is strained as I find the different numbers are sometime spelled like the French or Swiss French but pronounced differently or close to the Italian but not quite. We already have a basis for the lighting as we have imported a manipulated version of the previous production. Like many houses, the Liceu has its own word for stage right and left. Here we have *rambla* side (our SR) and

jardin (our SL), which is the opposite to the French *jardin* side. Like the best opera companies there is an experienced lighting manager, Robert, who directs the focus of the largely generic rig. The staff are accomplished and quick at focusing.

I enjoy walking from my spacious apartment through the old city to emerge on La Rambla near the Liceu and on days off there is the sandy, manmade beach waiting for me. The ancient, narrow streets protect the pedestrians from the strength of the sun and breeze blows down them. It's an extremely pleasant place to be. The days fly by and soon it is time for a public general. Sadly the invited audience is turned away as, despite having two tenors in the leading role, the one whose turn it is to sing is feeling off-colour. The second tenor is promoted to the press night and a replacement is sought from Vienna to sing at our "pre-premiere" performance, which is a new idea to develop a younger audience. The entire house has been sold for €15 a seat providing the spectator is under 35 years old. What a great idea. There is an extraordinary buzz in the completely sold-out house. DJs arrive for the post-performance disco. People glower at me

Cinderella
Finnish National Ballet
Choreographer: David Bintley
Designer: Emma Ryott
Lighting designer: Mark Jonathan
Photographer: Mirka Kleemola



Spain to Finland

Mark Jonathan

as I pass through the FOH to the control rooms where people over 35 are allowed! The opera is very well received.

The next night is the official premiere and there is a red carpet in the street and much glamour. The performance comes to a standstill after a number of arias and duets as the audience goes crazy for the leading singers, cheering and clapping for two and half minutes at a time. The curtain call is similar until the creative team come out for their call, where the response is rather different... Afterwards, we go to a glamorous party where we are

rather ignored, except for two journalists who come and tell the director that they got what we had done. I realise that the production staff and crew are not invited. It's sad when the people who work hard are then excluded.

I get out of Barcelona the next day and do my usual thing of going home and re-pack for a holiday and take off again the next day. Work-life balance is essential, and I'm very happy to get to Greece and catch the end of the summer, swimming, wind-surfing, mountain biking, circuit training, doing yoga and even sun-lounging. My designer eyes are

tantalised by sumptuous sunsets reflected in the calm sea. Of course, it's not long before I'm back at the airport commuting between the UK and Finland. I last lit in the very splendid opera house in Helsinki ten years ago and the substantial moving lighting rig has been enhanced with many of the latest lights. This time I am lighting the epic and magical ballet *Cinderella*. I arrive for few days of focusing. Along with the substantial moving light rig the house has some great dance booms, but it becomes apparent that the big scenic transformations need clear space in the wings and I am urged not to use the booms, so this will be my first ballet with no booms. Eek! We work hard for three days and I do a runner back to the UK, and then return, via a weekend in Scotland, flying from Edinburgh to Stockholm and then Stockholm to Helsinki.

I have two days to light the ballet before the stage rehearsals with light begin in earnest. We have far more time than would be accorded in the UK, but we need the time as things take longer. I grind my teeth though at the time it takes to programme on the complicated desk that, in my view, suits live performance far more than it suits what I do. Why is it so hard to copy a cue? Why doesn't it have intensity block? And



The Finnish Opera House

how many button presses are required to do the simplest of instructions? I probably will refrain from making further comment, but let's say there is a training need and endless grinding of my poor old molars. As the week progresses the large orchestra joins and I am reminded how sensational the score by Prokofiev is under the baton of Paul Murphy, who I have worked with many times before.

The Finnish National Opera house shares its stage between the opera and the ballet company and most days we are swept off the stage to accommodate *The Phantom of the Opera* and *The Tales of Hoffman*, which are in rep with the ballet. Although Finland shares the euro with Spain and Greece where I have just been, everything seems eye-wateringly expensive, not least alcoholic refreshment. Meanwhile, I watch sterling slide downwards as we prepare to leave Europe, maybe with an agreement or maybe not. I wait to see how my British colleagues and I will be affected by not being "in Europe". I'm braced for more hassle at borders and wonder if we will have to pay an entry visa fee. Or will employing Brits just be too much hassle for European houses? Time to get an Irish passport, I think. 🚫

Marko's tips and tricks

It seems that the days of being brought tea or coffee in a china mug at the production desk have long since ended. Lest I should forget as a young production electrician at Glyndebourne bringing the famous designer John Bury his coffee and at midday a large scotch, also in coffee mug so no one knew it wasn't coffee. I would have to carry the mug very steadily to avoid making the ice cubes clink. Biscuits would also be provided. On one occasion John had remarked on our focusing being "sloppy". I was outraged. The next day, when I took him his morning coffee I had cut the chocolate biscuits to plain digestives. "Are there no chocolate biscuits?" asked John imperiously. "No, John," I replied. "No chocolate until the focusing stops being sloppy," and off I marched.

Where, I hear you ask, is this Tip 'n' Trick going?

Well, as having tea or coffee brought to the production desk seems to be a rarity, and there are usually no china mugs for visitors, for many years I have taken a thermal-type drinking flask with me. I'm grateful to Rory Beaton for recently introducing me to the Contigo range, which, unlike many others, has a completely sealable lid so that no leakages can occur in your bag and spillages on the production desk are limited. You save plenty of money carrying your tea or coffee with you and even if you get it refilled in a café you help the environment by not needing a paper cup. I add to this a water flask as well. I even take it in my hand baggage, ensuring it's empty to go through airport security as many airports now have a water station on the "air-side". So you can avoid the unbelievable price of bottled water at the airport like £2.60 for 500ml at Stansted. What a rip off! 🚫

Co-pros and transfers

Lucy Carter with one more reason why we need associates



I am spending what seems like a large proportion of my time on admin surrounding co-productions and restagings. It has become the norm, or certainly pretty common, for venues and producers to seek out co-productions in order to share the costs, due to funding cuts and increased costs for services and materials. I totally understand that and appreciate that sharing a production rather than making two or four or even more individual ones is much more eco-friendly and less of a drain on world resources. I am all for this cross-pollination between venues and for the economy of it.

It's pretty complicated from a creative team's perspective. To conceive and

design the shows we have to consider a number of venues and restrictions, much like a tour. However, often with a tour, you tour all the equipment and re-create with constants. With co-productions you are often tasked with designing for two very different equipment lists. I wonder if this is the same for set and costume designers. The set stays the same, using the same physical and textural form, the exact colours remain, and the set is most likely designed to fit in one configuration, into all the co-production venues. I think it's more complicated for set designers at the initial design phase to consider all venues and make a one-set-fits-all design. Costumes certainly don't change or need to change for each co-producing venue.

As a lighting designer, unless you are taking all the equipment from venue to venue, all your tools are changing. The rigging positions are different, the equipment is different, and even if there are the same type of lanterns, they will, as we all know, have slightly different colour temperatures – or if it's LED then you will need time to balance the colour mixing with subtly different LED batches. Our crew in each venue is different, the

programmer is often different from venue to venue, and the teams working with you from stage management to production management, technicians, etc. can be all different. So it's a whole new set of plans, considerations, compromises and preparation for each venue.

Once we get into each venue the workload is the same in each place. Focusing takes the same time, programming is possibly slightly speeded up by using the existing show file (if the desk is the same), except you need to change and make adjustments to each and every cue, to adjust to the venue and the way it takes light, to adjust to different equipment and anomalies of the lights, to find a way of working with your new programmer and to explain all the cue points and subtleties to the DSM that you had previously discovered with the first show caller. You are there for all the technical rehearsals and for all the previews and the opening night. If there is more than one co-producer then this is repeated numerous times, in each venue, needing the same amount of work.

So why am I being offered fees for these co-productions based on a fee and a half?



Lucy and associate lighting designer Sean Gleason

Why, when I know I am not available for the next venues, am I expected to pay for my associate myself? I need them there for the whole process so that they know the show inside and out and understand the conceptual ideas behind the design, so once they are making the changes in the next venues they can make informed decisions. If I am available, I am being paid half the amount to do the same number of weeks' attendance in the next venues. They are not getting half the lighting design...

I am in this situation currently, where the co-producer was brought on after

I signed the contract and designed the show. Prior to the technical period, I am negotiating with the co-producers to pay my associate not just for attendance at the venue but also for them to attend the technical period for the creation, and for preparation days for the plan to be drawn and the adaptations to be discussed. Where should this cost come from? Surely, the attendance of the associate should come out of the full co-producing budget as it is for the benefit of all the venues? Then rights and attendance at each venue would be paid for by the individual venues.

This situation is also reflected in transfers. Transfers obviously are not known about until after the first show is successful. Then the producers decide it could make money if they transfer it to the West End or send it on tour. Obviously, the lighting designer needs to be paid for their design to be used. Then you should also be paid for attending and redesigning the lighting for the new venue or venues. What if you can't do it? You need to teach the design to someone else and try to communicate all its intricacies to them. They also need to be paid for their time. It's even better if they were an associate

on the show, then they know those things already. But in some cases that associate was paid for by me in the first place, as the producers refused to pay. So I have already subsidised the show. Then, say, for instance, that the producers don't want to pay a proper day rate for the person who is going to relight? Guess what happens then? I have to give my associate some of my minimal rights fee in order for them to be able to afford to do the show and not take other better paid work elsewhere!

I don't understand why co-productions, transfers and restagings are costing me money? These are not just single occurrences; this situation happens frequently. The negotiations are really tricky and even though my agent has the actual conversations, he and I constantly have to discuss the offers and decide to push and push for something that is fair. I feel guilty that I am pushing too hard, I feel guilty that I keep having to ask people to work for less than the going rate, and I feel annoyed that I am not making a reasonable amount of money for a show that is proving successful.

The producers, of course, think we are unreasonable – and we think they are.

Co-pros and transfers

Lucy Carter

They say there isn't the money in the budget, and I say well, then, you didn't budget properly. However, I then have to make a decision to either pay someone myself, pull my designs or ask people to work for not enough money. Essentially, it's my choice and that choice involves a lot of admin and a lot of stress and agonising. Often, I end up asking my teams to do things for less than I believe they should be being paid.

I don't know how we instigate change surrounding these issues. We need more open conversations with producers before they budget. I really want venues to be more open with us and use us a resource when they are budgeting. What do we think will be needed? What staff would we need? Are we available for the other dates and, if not, how would we want to work moving forward? We are not being difficult, but we do have expert knowledge in our discipline and therefore we could help the producers with the feasibility of the budgeting and process. We, lighting designers and our agents, also have experience of how other producers in the industry do things, about good working practice and successful co-production

processes and management of transfers, and we would be happy to discuss these issues openly. Why aren't we being asked, and why are we treated like the enemy?

It's another example as to why we need associates. We need to work with producers and venues to find ways to get associates on more on shows so that they, the producers, gain the flexibility to transfer shows more freely, and so that the shows can have a better-quality look moving forwards.

I would love to hear about your thoughts on these issues and any suggestions about how we can move towards a system for co-pros and transfers that remunerates the lighting teams properly in these instances, so that the workload for lighting designers in these situations is understood and worked into the schedules and budgets. 🌸

Congrats!

Lucy Carter has been nominated for the first-ever award for Outstanding Creative Contribution in the annual National Dance Awards. The winners will be announced at a lunchtime ceremony to be held in London on Monday 18 February 2019. The National Dance Awards have been organised by the Dance section of the Critics' Circle to celebrate the vigour and variety of Britain's thriving dance culture. They are the only awards given by the body of professional dance critics in the UK.

In announcing the awards, the chairman of the Dance section, Graham Watts OBE, said: "This year, these short-listed nominees come from a long list of 396 dancers, choreographers, other creatives and companies nominated by professional dance critics, for work presented in the UK between 1 September 2017 and 31 August 2018. This year there is a new category – Outstanding Creative Contribution – which is to honour those who make creative contributions to dance, other than choreography, through, for example, music, design, dramaturgy or production." 🌸

Lumière update

Jason Addison on his first six months

The long journey back to Hull from Chichester in February suddenly seemed a lot easier after I received the phone call from the ALD saying that they would like to offer me the position as the next Lumière on the first-full year scheme. I hadn't long left Chichester after my interview so this news, along with my daughter getting her first tooth made me very happy and became a very good day.

After working my notice as a technician at Hull Truck Theatre it was time to pack up my car and head to Chichester for my first day in April. I met Sam Garner-Gibbons (technical director) at the train station and we headed up to London for the first

day of rehearsals for *The Chalk Garden* by Enid Bagnold starring Penelope Keith and directed by Alan Strachan.

Due to train delays we arrived a little late for the meet and greet. Sam introduced me to Natasha Chivers, who I would be working with. We sat down for the read through and Natasha asked me to make notes of anything that might be lighting related. Simon Higlett presented his beautiful set design, based on the house in Rottingdean where Enid Bagnold lived. It was great to hear Simon's reasons behind the design and to observe Natasha's conversations regarding the relationship between the set and lighting. It threw up a few problems to solve including a ceiling beam CS and a raked garden US.

The next day was my first day at the theatre. I was given a tour of the building and was made to feel very welcome by the lighting department and all the staff. A week later I was travelling back up to London for the first day of rehearsals for the next

show I would be working on, *The Country Wife* by William Wycherley and directed by Jonathan Munby. This is a Restoration comedy and would be in the Minerva Theatre, the smaller of the two spaces at CFT. I would be working with Richard Howell, lighting Soutra Gilmour's black and white costumes and revolving and pivoting set; the lighting would make the actors pop and stand out.

It was great to see the development of both shows throughout rehearsals and to have meetings with both Natasha and Richard. As soon as *The Chalk Garden* opened, *The Country Wife* was into tech. During the tech rehearsals, I was responsible for keeping the lighting plans up to date, taking notes and assisting with focusing and anything the lighting designers required.

This busy schedule continued throughout the season as I got to work with Paule Constable and Marc Williams who co-designed *The Meeting*, a new play by Charlotte Jones, and with Johanna Town on *The Watsons*, a new play by Laura Wade. It was really interesting to work on new writing. As the plays had never been staged before they were fully open to



Jason outside the CFT

Lumière update

Jason Addison

interpretation by the design team, and we engaged in a really collaborative process.

The set for *The Meeting* used the full depth of the Minerva Theatre and included a circular CS platform within a raked stage where most of the action would take place. Paule and Marc decided to use a circle truss around this area filled with par cans to give an even coverage of light all the way around. It also helped pull the focus into this area when we didn't want to light the rest of the stage.

On *The Watsons*, Ben Stone's all-white set with a ceiling meant we couldn't have any top or back light, so we had to use a lot of high side lighting and front light, due to the thrust of the stage. The play itself started in a traditional Austen style, which descended into the obscure, complete with a disco and a spaceship landing. This was achieved by a ring of ACL par cans hidden from view above the audience, and a strong beam of light was projected down through the ceiling rose (the only top lighting) to create the illusion of a spaceship.

Throughout my time at CFT I was able to observe other designers, including Joshua Pharo, Tim Mitchell, Mark Henderson and Guy Hoare, who all faced different challenges and all had different ways of working, which was useful for me to experience

vastly different productions in each theatre space. I was also fortunate to receive Vectorworks training from Fridthjofur Thorsteinsson (Fiffi), which has helped me considerably, in drawing and updating lighting plans. I was also trained on and gained experience of using Moving Light Assistant, to archive shows, including focus notes and photos.

I was able to put all of this valuable training into practice when I assisted Katharine Williams on *Women in Power* at Nuffield Southampton. I was really pleased to be asked to relight the show when it transferred to the Oxford Playhouse. I worked closely with Katharine to draw the plan, was involved in the design decisions and used MLA during the relight. It was really interesting for me to see how the lighting design transfers from one venue into another, and the challenges that are faced with adapting the design to fit another space.

A big highlight of my first seven months was being able to work at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane on *Time Flies*, a gala performance celebrating 100 years of the Royal Air Force. I was assistant to Matt Clutterham and was responsible for calling



The Watsons
Chichester Festival Theatre
Director: Samuel West
Designer: Ben Stones
Lighting designer: Johanna Town



Women in Power
Nuffield Southampton
Director: Blanche McIntyre
Designer: Jasmine Swan
Lighting designer: Katharine Williams

the four followspots during the show. It was a very full-on day, starting at 6am for the get-in followed by technical rehearsals throughout the day for various acts, right up until doors opened at 7pm and then into the show. It was fascinating how Matt used the existing rig for *42nd Street* with a groundrow of his own to create some stunning visuals. I was very impressed with the programming skills of Daniel Street, whose fingers never left the console.

The ALD has been really accommodating during the scheme, and I have been able to develop my skills further by working as

tour). I was also very privileged to attend the 2018 Knight of Illumination awards in September and to meet with and be inspired by other lighting designers.

I have enjoyed reading Lucy Carter's articles in *Focus* – in particular, last month's in which Lucy was talking about life outside of theatre and childcare while working as a lighting designer. I have a daughter who is 19 months old and my partner gave up work to move down south with me from Hull while I'm on the Lumière scheme so that I didn't miss too much of her growing up.

My partner recently took a part-time job at the theatre and we put our

a lighting designer on *Slime* (The Herd, Hull libraries tour), *Taming of the Shrew* (Petersfield Shakespeare Festival, Theatre Royal Winchester), *Dark Winter* (E52 at Hull Truck Theatre) and *The Boy Who Wanted to Fly* (Rhubarb Theatre, UK

daughter into nursery, which was great for her development and for her mum to have some adult interaction. However, the problem we have faced is the cost and availability of childcare to fill the time needed when we are both at work, particularly when I was in tech. As we know, tech weeks are often 9am to 10pm each day, six days a week, and this has been quite stressful to work childcare around. I agree with Lucy that something should be done about it. I think the work PIPA is doing is great, but I feel it will need a big shift of thought and practice within the industry.

Job shares work in certain roles as shown recently with stage managers and performers, but it's difficult as a lighting designer if you are not at a level to be able to have associates, etc. Maybe the way forward is shorter tech days but done over a longer period, but I don't think this would be cost effective for the theatres and producers. We are heading in the right direction, and I am happy to say that both Chichester and Katharine Williams (on *Women in Power*) have allowed me to be flexible at certain times throughout tech to nip off to collect my daughter from nursery or take over childcare responsibilities.

I am now looking forward to the next part of the scheme based with different designers in a variety of exciting venues. My next stop is *Beauty and the Beast* at the King's Theatre, Edinburgh. 🌸



Office Oracle

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

Website changes

Three years after we launched our current website, we're currently undergoing a few tweaks to help things be clearer or easier where we can, and so to hopefully maximise your use of the site as part of your membership package.

The most recent change is on the page that you land on when you sign into your web profile – see image to the right.

We've created some clearer icons for you to find pages such as the members' benefits and jobs board pages and also to be able to read the last twelve years of *Focus* magazine – which means that it's that long since we switched to our "new" A5 landscape format for the members' magazine!

All of your account settings are now located in a smaller box to the right-hand side of the page. This contains the links to your membership details, password and

contact details and preferences. You can now attach your CV to your biography page for visitors to read or download directly.

The link to add shows/projects or events to your profile appears in both places. By adding information here, you are populating the credits section of your web profile, and the opening dates are also included in the main diary page of the site.



We are in the process of converting the fees database to be stored through the website as well so entering and recalling details of these submissions will be easier.

This is, however, quite a large job in terms of data crunching and cross-referencing shows in the website database to ensure that we tie the right information together.

We will also be expanding the fees database to also reflect the show roles the website allows, so if you work as a programmer, production electrician, assistant LD, etc., you'll be able to add to the information we have, which in turn helps us to advise members of the actual going rate for work. If you have any specific criteria you feel should be recorded as part of these processes, please contact the office.

Only those members who contribute to the database will be allowed to draw information (other than your own) from the database in future.

Company director elections 2019

Following the incorporation of the ALD in 2016, we are now required to hold annual elections for Directors. ALD Directors are nominated from and elected by Professional, Fellow, Life and Honorary members – the voting membership.

An elected director serves for a three-year term, and they can then stand for a

second term. They must stand down for a minimum of one year after the second term before being able to stand again. Therefore, each year one third of the eleven director spaces are up for renewal, and we are now asking for interested parties to stand for nomination for the 2019 elections.

There is a total of four director positions available for election in 2019 as the following directors are up for election: Alistair Grant, Peter Mumford, Johanna Town and Kelli Zezulka. All directors who are up for re-election are eligible to stand for another term if they wish to.

The result of the ballot will be announced at the 2019 AGM. We should have a date for this set prior to the next issue of *Focus*.

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

New Technologies Showcase

The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama New Technologies Showcase 2019

takes place on 25 January at the Embassy Theatre in Swiss Cottage in conjunction with ALD Corporate member White Light.

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 between 2pm and 6pm. There will be a presentation of the equipment on display between 3pm and 4pm with hands on demos as required after this. Feel free to drop by as and when you can... You can register in advance at newtechshowcase19.eventbrite.co.uk.

Swiss Cottage social evening

Following on from the event above, there will be an ALD members' social in The Swiss Bar at the Swiss Cottage pub, which will be hosted by Corporate members White Light. We will be gathering from 6pm, so even if you haven't been able to get to the showcase, you can still stop by and catch up with friends and colleagues.

Did you graduate from your course this summer?

When you join the ALD as a student member, we ask you to inform us of your

proposed graduation date so we know when you are due to finish your course.

If that was listed as being the summer of 2018, we will have now changed your membership category to the Affiliate membership for early career professionals, and with that you will be able to start accessing the same benefits as the Professional members do, with the exception of voting on Association issues.

Your current membership subscription (whether paid or via the Sponsored Student Scheme) will continue to run until the end of March 2019. Prior to this point you will need to have informed us as to whether you wish to remain an Affiliate member, move to become an Associate member or stop your membership completely.

The sooner you do this the sooner we can ensure you are sent a reminder for the correct level of subscription for 2019/20, or if you have chosen to stop your membership, that we do not send you a reminder.

Under the Constitution of the ALD, memberships continue to run until such time that you inform us that you wish to leave. No contact will be assumed to mean that you are happy to continue as an Affiliate member and to pay the relevant subscription rate as of April 2019.

Office Oracle

Ian Saunders

The ALD and direct debits

It is now two and half years since we have been able to take payments by direct debit via the website GoCardless.com. More than 300 members have taken up the option to automate their payments to us on either an annual or quarterly basis.

The advantage of this system is that, in the event of an increase in fees, the amount due automatically updates from our end rather than you needing to change a standing order instruction. Also the admin fees are more manageable for an organisation of our size. For each £85 UK-based professional subscription paid through PayPal we currently only receive £83.64. For the same £85 transaction through GoCardless we are charged 85 pence, therefore receiving £84.15 and obviously putting more money into our account to use for the membership than paying fees of another company.

So please help us to save time (chasing payments) and money (lower fees) by switching to a direct debit payment well before your April 2019 payment is due. You can sign up to the payment plan for your membership category by visiting www.ald.org.uk/direct-debits and selecting the correct link.

If you currently pay by standing order and wish to switch to direct debit, please ensure that you cancel the existing instruction with your bank. We cannot do this on your behalf and you run the risk of paying twice next year if you do not do so.

Do we have your correct contact details?!

During this period of the year we often receive copies of *Focus* returned to us as “Unknown at this address” or “Addressee gone away”. These are often (but not exclusively) for our students and recent graduates as they change address at the end of the academic year.

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

The new website also requires each member to have an email address to be able to operate it to its full potential, so please ensure that your current or

preferred address is on our system. If you are reading this and you have never registered an email address with us but wish to access the members side of the website and/or receive our email bulletins, please contact us as soon as possible so we can update your details.

ALD communications

To receive email bulletins from us, you will have to opt in, and then specify which ones you want to receive: ALD News, Jobs Bulletins or Company News. Please check your personal settings on the website. These can be found on the Contact Details and Preferences page which is accessible from the My ALD page after you have logged into our site.

In addition to selecting which email bulletins you receive, you can also now select your postal communication preferences in a similar manner for the following items: ALD members' directory; ALD membership renewals; Company members mailings; *Focus* magazine; industry magazine subscriptions (L&SI, ET Now). 🌸

Diary dates 2019

3 January	ALD office reopens
25 January	New Technologies Showcase Central School of Speech and Drama 
25 January	Members' social evening The Swiss Bar, Swiss Cottage pub, NW3 5EL <i>Sponsored by White Light</i>
14–15 May	PLASA Focus, Royal Armouries, Leeds*
14 May	Northern members' social evening Location TBC
5–6 June	ABTT Theatre Show, Alexandra Palace, London*
6–16 July	Prague Quadrennial
15–17 September	PLASA Show, Olympia, London*
TBC 2021	World Stage Design, Calgary, Canada

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

* The ALD will have a presence at these events.















Write for an academic journal

Theatre and Performance Design (TPD) is an exciting new journal that puts scenography at the forefront of current debates around theatre and performance. It brings together practice and theory in innovative and exciting new ways, publishing articles by world-leading academics and practitioners.

TPD is an international peer-reviewed journal of scenography. The journal critically evaluates the effect of scenography on the aesthetics and politics of performance and facilitates dialogue among practitioners, scholars, and audiences. The editors welcome articles that address design for performance in the fields of theatre, opera, dance, music theatre, musicals, spatial design and architecture, site specific, immersive and virtual theatres. They are particularly interested in the impact of new materials techniques and technologies on the process and realisation the performance event.

Practitioners, in particular, are encouraged to submit to the "Influential Design" section of the journal. Past contributors have included designers Leslie Travers, George Tsy-pin, Michael Vale, Susan Hilferty and Tom Pye. This section invites designers to write about works that have inspired them and their practice. Submissions are accepted throughout the year – see www.tandfonline.com/toc/rdes20/current for more information and details on how to submit your article. 📌

Commercial members

<p>10 Out of 10 Productions 020 8659 2558 www.10outof10.co.uk</p> 	<p>Drafty www.drafty-app.com</p> 	<p>Northern Flash 07895133813 www.northernflash.co.uk</p> 
<p>ADB +39 035 654 311 www.adblighting.com</p> 	<p>The Fifth Estate 01273 660 784 www.thefifthestate.co.uk</p> 	<p>SLX 03300 161 300 www.slx.co.uk</p> 
<p>Artifice Industries Ltd www.artificers.co.uk</p> 	<p>Goboplus/ Cut Colour Plus 020 3603 1335 www.goboplus.com www.cutcolourplus.com</p>  	<p>TLSPixelite 01603 295 111 www.tlspixelite.co.uk</p> 
<p>CEG Hire & Productions 0203 603 0179 www.ceghirepro.uk</p> 	<p>Illuminate Design 01223 969694 www.illuminatedesign.co.uk</p> 	
<p>Chroma-Q 01494 446000 www.chroma-q.com</p> 	<p>Lamp & Pencil 01279 902819 www.lampandpencil.com</p> 	

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Focus Magazine

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Editorial team: James Laws, Rob Halliday and Sofia Alexiadou

To submit ideas for articles, correspondence, corrections and any comments about *Focus*, email editor@ald.org.uk. Owing to space restrictions, we do not accept press releases for publication in *Focus*.

However, company members may send press releases to the ALD office (office@ald.org.uk) to be posted on the News section of the ALD website. Company members only may advertise in *Focus*; please contact the office for details. Editorial guidelines for authors are available on request. *The opinions published within Focus are not necessarily those of the ALD. E&OE. Content deadline for the next issue: 15 January 2019*

Thank you for your support!

For Corporate members, see page 25

Focus – the magazine of the Association of Lighting Designers

New members

Welcome!

* Re-joining the association
† From Associate/Affiliate member

Professional members

Matt Clutterham, Staffordshire*
Brian Holt, Edinburgh
Ben Pitts, Merseyside*

Affiliate members

James Bubb, London*
Callum Excell, Essex
Gabriel Finn, Essex
Edward Saunders, Merseyside

Associate members

Mark Brome, Oxfordshire
Gareth Cooke, Sussex

Student members

Jessica Anastasi, Surrey
Matt Chandler, Bournemouth

Sponsored Student scheme

Nic Brown
Josie Ireland
Caitlin Park

Bath Spa University

Joe Samuels

Bristol Old Vic Theatre School

Danny Davies

Guildhall School of Speech and Drama

Anna-Maria Triea

Guildford School of Acting

Samuel Hill
Jade Rogers

Falmouth University

Vicki Ashton

LAMDA

Ola Przytula

LIPA

Ellen Butterworth-Evans
Chris Leavold
Christopher McCourt
Connor McPherson
Conar O'Brien
Benjamin Shahar

Rose Bruford College

Rosie Clarke
Ryan Cowley
Joshua Cumming-Webb
Jan Fredrik Dela Cruz Bua
Will Hamer
Amelia Hawkes
Nathan Mallalieu

Mark Matthews

Joe Pilling
Sander Johan Sædberg

Royal Central School of Speech and Drama

Ryan Day
Jack Fenton
Mattis Larsen
Harvey Nowak-Green
Ollie Partridge
Callum Perera
Alex Thomas

Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama

Rachel Astall
Evie Oliver
Nari Smith

University of Exeter

Thomas Dutton

University of South Wales

Chris Hogg
Cerys Jackson

University of Surrey

Scarlett Moody

University of York

Nathan Billis

Professional members' shows

opening in December and January

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






























December

1 Steven Benson Gospel London Adventist Chorale / **1 Matt Clutterham** (lighting designer) and **Jason Addison** (assistant lighting designer) *Beauty and the Beast* Kings Theatre Edinburgh / **1 Pete Watts** *Snow White* His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen / **1 Tom Mowat** *Beauty and the Beast* Nottingham Arts Theatre / **1 Matt Clutterham** *Jack and the Beanstalk* Grand Opera House Belfast / **3 Alex Lewer** *Striking 12* The Union Theatre / **3 Jack D Coleman** *Maid Marian and the Merry Men* Swan Theatre Worcester / **4 Jack Wills** *Robin Hood & The Arrow of Destiny* / **4 Robbie Butler** *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* Macron Stadium / **7 Jamie Platt** *Paradise* Hampstead Theatre, Downstairs / **7 Andy Webb** *Beauty & The Beast* Blackpool Grand Theatre / **7 Matt Clutterham** *Peter Pan* Northampton Derngate / **7 Matt Ladkin** *Sleeping Beauty* Beacon Arts Centre, Greenock / **7 Chris Withers** *The Pied Piper* Cornerstone Arts / **7 Matt Clutterham** *Cinderella* New Victoria Theatre, Woking / **8 Zoe Spurr** *Cat In The Hat* Curve Theatre Leicester / **8 Matt Clutterham** *Aladdin* Bradford Alhambra Theatre / **8 Mark Dymock** *Jack and the Beanstalk* Derby Arena / **8 Pete Watts** *Peter Pan* Richmond Theatre / **8 Will Evans** *Luna* Theatre Hullabaloo / **9 Jack Wills** *'Tis The Season* Wren Academy / **10 Callum Macdonald** *Sleeping Beauty* Camberley Theatre / **10 James D Stokes** *Dick Whittington* Hounslow Arts Centre / **11 Jack Wills** *The Boy Under The Christmas Tree* Kings Head Theatre / **11 Steven Benson** *Legally Blonde The Musical* Knutsford Academy / **11 Alex Musgrave** *Cinderella* Kings Theatre Portsmouth / **11 Jacob Gowler** *Beauty & The Beast* Sutton Coldfield Town Hall / **12 Robbie Butler** *Cinderella* Tower Theatre / **13 Stephen T Holroyd** *Snow White & the Seven Dwarfs* The Anvil Basingstoke / **13 Michael Fox** (lighting programmer) *Gandey's Thrill* Circus Hong Kong / **13 Jason Addison** *Humbug! The Hedgehog Who Couldn't Sleep* Nuffield Southampton Theatres / **14 Pete Watts** *Aladdin* Southend Theatre / **14 Malcolm Rippeth** *La Belle Hélène* Opéra national de Lorraine / **14 Matt Ladkin** (lighting programmer) *Peter Pan* DeMontfort Hall Leicester / **14 Katharine Williams** *Jack Frost* Civic Theatre, Barnsley / **15 Alex Lewer** *The Hatter in Winterland* Cheltenham Playhouse / **15 Matt Clutterham** *Dick Whittington* Mayflower Theatre, Southampton / **17 Charlie Flick** *ASA Christmas Spectacular* Abbey Theatre Nuneaton / **17 Jack Wills** *A Christmas Carol* Maltings Art Theatre / **30 Callum Macdonald** *A Christmas Carol* The Apex

January

9 James C McFetridge *Aladdin* Craic Theatre, Coalisland / **9 Malcolm Rippeth** *Songs for Nobodies* Ambassadors Theatre London / **10 Charlie Morgan Jones** *The Lady Vanishes* Theatre Royal Windsor / **11 Pete Watts** *Beauty & The Beast* Concordia Theatre Hinckley / **18 Ric Mountjoy** *Mr Popper's Penguins* Minneapolis Children's Theatre, Minneapolis, MN / **21 Charlie Morgan Jones** *Avenue Q* King's Theatre Southsea / **23 Jack Wills** (touring relighter) *The Capital* Birmingham Rep / **23 Max Blackman** (associate lighting designer) *ART* Chichester Festival Theatre / **24 Chris Withers** *Caroline's Kitchen* Derby Theatre / **25 Katharine Williams** *The Department of Distractions* Sheffield Crucible / **29 Charlie Morgan Jones** *The Shy Manifesto* Live Theatre, Newcastle / **30 Callum Macdonald** *Annie* The Mercury Theatre, Colchester

Corporate members

<p>AC Entertainment Technologies 01494 446000 www.ac-et.com</p> 	<p>Christie Lites 02476 017270 www.christielites.com</p> 	<p>Elation Professional +31 45 546 85 66 www.elationlighting.eu</p> 	<p>Lee Filters 01264 366245 www.leefilters.com</p> 	<p>Robe UK Ltd 01604 741000 www.robeuk.com</p> 	<p>Sound Technology 01462 480000 www.soundtech.co.uk</p> 
<p>Adam Hall Ltd 01702 613922 www.cameolight.com</p> 	<p>City Theatrical 020 8949 5051 www.citytheatrical.com</p> 	<p>ETC 020 8896 1000 www.etcconnect.com</p> 	<p>Martin Professional UK 01707 668136 www.martinpro.co.uk</p> 	<p>Robert Juliat +33 (0)3 44 26 51 89 www.robertjuliat.com</p> 	<p>Stage Electrics 03330 142 100 www.stage-electrics.co.uk</p> 
<p>AED Distribution Ltd 01494 370005 www.aeddistribution.co.uk</p> 	<p>Claypaky +39 335 72 333 72 www.claypaky.it</p> 	<p>German Light Products +49 7248927190 www.glp.de</p> 	<p>Music & Lights +39 0771 72190 www.musiclights.it</p> 	<p>Roscolab Ltd 020 8659 2300 www.rosco.com</p> 	<p>Vectorworks UK Ltd 01635 580318 www.vectorworks.net/uk</p> 
<p>Ambersphere Solutions 020 8992 6369 www.ambersphere.co.uk</p> 	<p>DTS Lighting +39 0541 611131 www.dts-lighting.it</p> 	<p>Hawthorn 01664 821111 www.hawthorn.biz</p> 	<p>Philips Entertainment +31 534500424 www.philips.com/entertainmentlighting</p> 	<p>Schnick-Schnack-Systems +49 221 99 20 19 18 schnickschnacksystems.com</p> 	<p>White Light 020 8254 4800 www.whitelight.ltd.uk</p> 
<p>Chauvet Professional 01773 511115 www.chauvetlighting.co.uk</p> 	<p>Eaton Lighting Systems – Zero 88 01633 838088 www.zero88.com</p> 	<p>HSL Group 01254 698808 www.hslgroup.com</p> 	<p>PRG XL Video 0845 470 6400 www.prg.com/uk</p> 	<p>SGM Light UK 01233 460 400 www.sgmlight.com</p> 	

Thank you for your support!

For Commercial members, see page 22

2018 Michael Northen bursary winners

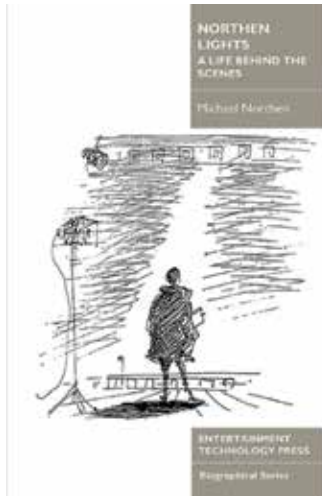
In 2018, there are four awards being presented as part of the “Michael Northen Award” scheme. The awards are named after Michael Northen, the first regularly credited professional lighting designer in the UK. These awards are presented to current students (not just those on vocational theatre courses), Affiliate members of the Association, and recent graduates (who graduated no earlier than 2017) even if they are not currently a member, and who have demonstrated strong, imaginative and creative lighting and/or video designs.

“What better accolade with which to enter the industry than with a lighting design award?” asks Johanna Town, chair of the ALD. “The Michael Northen Bursary (MNB) scheme is a great aid to developing a lighting designer’s abilities in communication. To be able to sell your ideas and passions for a design to other industry

leaders is as important a skill, maybe even more so, as the design itself. For this reason, this particular award entry is so important to a designer’s future.”

Jess Bernberg won last year’s Francis Reid Award, which is one award within the MNB scheme. She explains, “The MNB is a fantastic opportunity for recognition and exposure for a collection of work. Often,

once a show has closed, its legacy can be slightly lost, save a few production shots and reviews, so to have a panel of top lighting designers look into your process for its creation is highly valuable. The ability to create a portfolio is a vital skill so often overlooked or forgotten but hugely important to the way we make theatre.”



The awards are a celebration of imaginative and creative lighting and video design and represent a chance for young designers to showcase their talent, bringing their work to the attention of experienced lighting and video designers, as well to the wider reach of industry professionals. Awards are presented to those who demonstrate strong, imaginative and creative lighting or video designs.

The winners were announced at the annual Lighting Lunch in London on 17 December. They are:

Michael Northen Award
Sophie Bailey

ETC Award
Johanne Jensen

Francis Reid Award
Bethany Gupwell

Excellence in Video
Ruben Plaza Garcia

Congrats to the winners and to everyone who submitted a portfolio. 🌸

Michael Northen award

Michael's work on *The Mousetrap* can still be seen in the West End today. The winning lighting designer will be presented with a cheque for £500 and a copy of Michael's book, *Northen Lights*.

WINNER:

Sophie Bailey



"I am so grateful and overwhelmed to win this award. To have my work seen by some of the most prestigious lighting designers is a dream come true. To be recognised in

this way has given me the confidence to keep doing the thing that I love the most and will hopefully open new and exciting doors for me in the industry."



Macbeth
Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts
Director: Will Hammond
Lighting designer: Sophie Bailey
Photographer: Pete Blaxill

2018 MNB winners

ETC award

ETC is a specialist in lighting solutions and control equipment for theatre, film & TV studios, architectural spaces and entertainment industries. ETC sponsors a £350 award for excellence in lighting design.

WINNER:

Johanne Jensen

I'm a Phoenix, Bitch
Battersea Arts Centre
Directors: Kirsty Housley and Bryony Kimmings
Lighting designer: Johanne Jensen
Projection designer: Will Duke
Photographer: The Other Richard



Francis Reid award

Described as “a theatremaker who did lighting, rather than a lighting man who did theatre”, Francis Reid was a founding member of the ALD, playing a key role in establishing the practice of stage lighting design in the UK. The lighting designer who receives this prize will be presented with a cheque for £250.

WINNER:

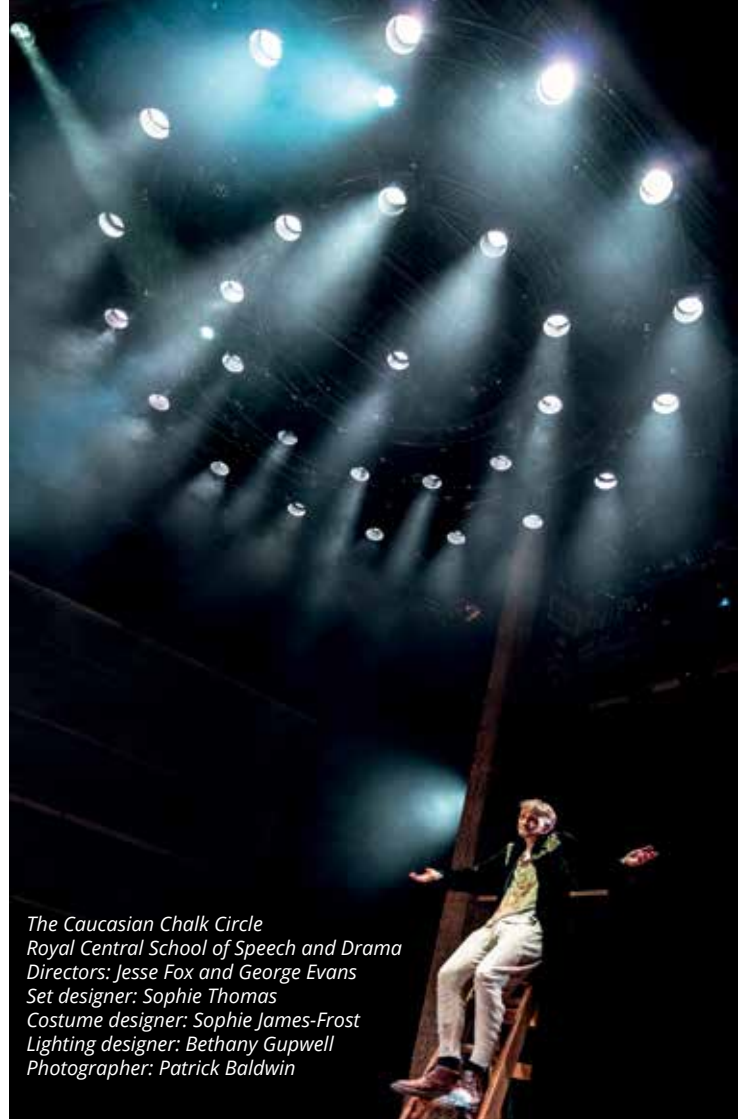
Bethany Gupwell



"I'm delighted and very flattered to have received the Francis Reid award. As a new graduate starting out in my career, it's encouraging to know that others, more experienced than me, appreciate my work and the direction it is taking. Putting my portfolio together has been a really valuable process and has

prompted me to reflect on the work I have enjoyed most, and found most challenging."

December 2018/January 2019 – “More art, less tools...”



The Caucasian Chalk Circle
Royal Central School of Speech and Drama
Directors: Jesse Fox and George Evans
Set designer: Sophie Thomas
Costume designer: Sophie James-Frost
Lighting designer: Bethany Gupwell
Photographer: Patrick Baldwin

2018 MNB winners



Flight
Royal Academy of Music
Director: Martin Duncan
Designer: Francis O'Connor
Lighting designer: Jake Wiltshire
Video designer: Ruben Plaza Garcia
Photographer: Robert Workman

Excellence in Video award

This award will be presented to a video designer working in live performance who will receive £250.

WINNER:

Ruben Plaza Garcia



"Winning the Michael Northen award for Excellence in Video Design is a big boost for my career as a designer. As a mature student, this award has a special value because it gives meaning to the

decision I made three years ago to study to change my professional career. It is an honour that my work is recognised in this way by some of the most established designers in the industry."

In other news...

WhatsOnStage award nominations

This will be the 19th year of the WhatsOnStage Awards, which are voted for entirely by theatregoers themselves. The shortlists in each category were announced on 5 December and once again ALD members (in bold below) are nominated in both lighting and video design. Voting is now open and will close on 31 January 2019. The awards ceremony will take place on 3 March 2019 at the Prince of Wales Theatre.

Best Lighting Design, sponsored by White Light

Ben Cracknell, *Heathers the Musical*
Howard Hudson, *Little Shop of Horrors*
Howell Binkley, *Hamilton*
Neil Austin, Company
Tim Deiling, *Six*



Best Video Design, sponsored by PRG XL Video

Daniel Denton, *Misty*
Dick Straker, *A Monster Calls*
Luke Halls, *The Lehman Trilogy*
Nina Dunn, The Assassination of Katie Hopkins
Terry Scruby, *Chess*



Sita McIntosh, WhatsOnStage's chief operating officer, said:
"The calibre of work populating not just the subsidised sector but also commercial houses across the UK shows a shift in audience appetite for new, challenging and diverse work, and it's thrilling to see."

Backup news

Thanks to the incredible generosity of Ambersphere, Clay Paky, DiGiCo, Lightpower Collection and PLASA, backup – The Technical Entertainment Charity – has received donations in excess of £25,500 during September alone.

"We're incredibly grateful to everyone involved in raising funds for backup," says John Simpson. "This year, the charity has granted over £32,000 in support of nine of our colleagues whose lives have been turned upside down because of serious illness or injury. We wouldn't have been able to do that without the incredible generosity of our supporters who give up their time so freely to help. The donations we've received during September mean we can continue supporting members of our industry family when they need it. A huge thank you to everyone involved."

Remember that you can support backup through smile.amazon.co.uk – just nominate backup as your chosen charity and it will receive a percentage of every order you make through Amazon. 📦

"Astonish me!"

Opera critic **Mark Valencia** recounts some astonishing lighting moments

The impresario Sergei Diaghilev's advice to a cocksure polymath resonated with the young Jean Cocteau throughout his life and was the fuel that stoked his creative engine. Perhaps that's why I love the old poet (as Cocteau invariably styled himself). As a consumer of opera nothing excites me more than to be astonished,

but the gut-punch, alas, happens all too rarely. Yet when it does there's usually a lighting designer in the mix, so here's my love letter to the keepers of the fire, flame and Fresnel.

In July 1991 I was dazzled on the road to Damascus – or, rather on the stage of the Théâtre de l'Archevêché in Aix-en-Provence

– by the power of lighting to astonish me. Long before that I'd gasped at the exploits of David Hersey on the likes of *Cats* and *Miss Saigon*, and the way he'd painted the grey décor of *Les Misérables* by lighting smoke had been a revelation, but the night I saw the vivid greens, dazzling whites and dark nocturnal blues of Robert Carsen's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, lit as though from heaven, my life changed. When the orchestra announced Tytania's entrance at "Come, now a roundel, and a fairy song" a vast wedge of light opened across the stage as though from a celestial bedroom door and I was lost.

Carsen's lighting was his own work, although the production's more recent revivals have co-credited Peter van Praet. The pan-European proliferation of this oft-recurring *Dream* included a triumphant incarnation by English National Opera as recently as March 2018 when, once, again the bedazzlement of set designer Michael Levine's ultra-king-size bed and oversized crescent moon were illuminated by a special kind of night-time magic.

Without making claims for Carsen as a game-changer, in the years since his *Dream* I've noticed a paradigm shift in stage



A Midsummer Night's Dream
English National Opera
Director: Robert Carsen
Associate director: Emmanuelle Bastet
Designer: Michael Levine

Lighting designer: Robert Carsen and Peter van Praet
Photographer: Robert Workman



Lucia di Lammermoor
 English National Opera
 Director: David Alden
 Set designer: Charles Edwards
 Costume designer: Brigitte Reiffenstuel
 Lighting designer: Adam Silverman
 Photographer: John Snelling

production, in which back projections by Alex Uragallo led us beyond the default setting of a claustrophobic house with telling imagery. Most of the action, though, occurred in grand rooms stripped of ornament: monochrome settings by Ashley Martin-Davies upon whose mirrors Mark Jonathan supplied tantalising hints of character motivation, mostly in the form of psychological insights glimpsed within those giant mirrors.

design away from cycloramas and towards an aesthetic of black rear voids. This has allowed Gordon Craig's radicalisation of lighting to reach its natural culmination as a kinetic player in its own right, defining location and serving as the primary agency of colour. The flexibility this affords is especially helpful in opera, where clunky scene changes have been supplanted by the freewheeling capabilities of new technology. Here's a quartet of favourites from the past few months.

- *Lucia di Lammermoor* (English National Opera): For this revival, Adam Silverman lit Charles Edwards's imposing, semi-putrefied monochrome set elements with

a requisite eeriness that represented the Ravenswood estate of Sir Walter Scott's source novel as an abstract capsule floating inside a jet-black nowhere. Even when the main stage was brightly lit there was never daylight beyond the windows, only shadowy figures who peered through them and eventually clambered indoors like a shoal of spectral accusers.

- *Vanessa* (Glyndebourne): Vast, heavy-framed mirrors loomed over the characters and revealed more than just their reflections – thanks to award-worthy lighting and projections. Forbidden hints of film noir and the opaque mysteries of Alain Resnais infused Keith Warner's

- *Pelléas et Mélisande* (Glyndebourne again): I didn't care for the production – it tarred and feathered one of the most fragile of operas – but no one could gainsay the extraordinary lighting. And since both aspects were the work of Stefan Herheim, who as well as directing the production was credited (alongside Tony Simpson) for illuminating it, the Norwegian iconoclast deserves at least a small bouquet. He and Simpson redeemed a frustrating evening by means of some resourceful technical tricks, not least one eye-popping effect where the dominant visual set piece, a massive pipe organ, appeared to dissolve into jelly. How'd they do that?

"Astonish me!"

Mark Valencia

• *War and Peace* (Welsh National Opera): Prokofiev's sprawling operatic treatment of Tolstoy's monumental novel is rarely staged in this country because of the demands it makes on a company's coffers. But in 2018 David Pountney, WNO's departing artistic director and a man not renowned for cheese-paring, added *War and Peace* to his portfolio of large-cast epics and engaged Malcolm Rippeth to light a multi-functional frame set by Robert Innes Hopkins. This he did with infinite resourcefulness. The constant scene-shifting never lost focus thanks to Rippeth's expertise in guiding the eye on a teeming stage. As a bonus, David Haneke created a superb illusion for the burning of Moscow.

It's not all about gargantuanism, though, and for my money you can't beat a small show done well. When the tiny space above a pub is transformed into a parched desert or rolling moorland it's the lighting magician who takes us there. I treasure the two-year-old memory of watching *Benighted*, the original old dark house play, at Islington's Old Red Lion Theatre where an unprepossessing little set was dragged to spectacular hell by Zia Bergin-Holly's ingenious illuminations. And during the long, hot summer of 2018 it was a thrill to observe the panache with which Matt Leventhall lit one of London's most intractable spaces, the Arcola Studio One in Dalston, for Jonathan Moore's new production of Mark-Anthony Turnage's Steven Berkoff opera, *Greek*. He transported us effortlessly from run-down neighbourhoods to a gleaming dance floor and

Vanessa
Glyndebourne
Director: Keith Warner
Designer: Ashley Martin-Davis
Lighting designer: Mark Jonathan
Projection designer: Alex Uragalo
Photographer: Tristram Kenton
©Glyndebourne Productions Ltd





Hansel and Gretel
 Opera North
 Director: Edward Dick
 Designer: Giles Cadle
 Lighting designer: Matthew Haskins
 Video designer: Ian William Galloway
 Photographer: Robert Workman



Das Rheingold
 Opera North
 Concert staging and design concept: Peter Mumford
 Lighting and projection designer Peter Mumford
 Photographer: Clive Barda

brilliantly enhanced the chaos of Baška Wesołowska’s dynamic sets. I’ll add a quick word about video, since new technology has quickly taken firm root in the world of opera. Its success rate hitherto has been patchy, to be frank; however, I am still recovering from Opera North’s *Hansel and Gretel* (2017), a production where I was reduced to tears at the end of each act. Ian William Galloway saturated the stage with videographic virtuosity, segued live onstage camerawork into pre-filmed segments and used hi-tech sleight of hand to wrong-foot the audience. It was exhilaratingly well done.

To conclude, and staying with Opera North, I couldn’t celebrate lighting in opera without marking one prodigious feat ahead of all the rest. Peter Mumford conceived and directed a semi-staging of Wagner’s *Ring* cycle over the course of four years and brought it all together for a 2016 tour. His design concept was supremely innovative: a triptych of vast screens not only offered surtitles and story outlines, it embedded them within 15 hours of animated projections. These ranged from elemental landscapes and impressionistic fuzz to key images of swords and sorcery while, downstage, a crack team of solo singers

brought the various gods and monsters to life. It was, by a mile, the most convincing representation of this crazy operatic leviathan that I’ve seen, and the bulk of its triumph came from light. Astonished? You bet. 🍷



Mark Valencia moved into arts journalism after a long career in drama education. Following eleven years at WhatsOnStage, he now freelances for various publications, including Bachtrack, Musical America and Opera.

The importance of collaboration

Elliot Griggs reflects on recent collaborations

Back in September, I took part in the BALD's panel on "Collaboration In Theatre." Well, I was in the wrong place at the wrong (right?) time and ended up taking a place on the panel five minutes before it started. I'd already had a beer (courtesy of White Light) and had no time to prepare anything. This was two months and three shows ago, so I'm going to give up attempting to recount what was said on the panel, and instead I'll speak from my direct experience.

Everybody loves to say that they work collaboratively, or that they create a collaborative working environment. It's become a buzz word amongst creative teams, and even more sickeningly when used at a corporate level, but are we always truly collaborative?


As performances become increasingly technical, with tighter integration between lights, music, sound, video, movement and set, the need for collaboration between creative teams is becoming far more

necessary than before. Early design meetings, which typically would've involved just the director and set designer, are becoming meetings with the entire creative team. Only a few weeks ago at a pre-white

card meeting, a sound designer with a faux tear in their eye said it was the first time they'd been to a design meeting so early in the process. But, as a result, the stage is being constructed 25mm higher in order to accommodate some front-fill speakers. We also solved issues with masking and lighting booms and even began discussing some key sequences. Building in technical elements into the set produces, in my opinion, such a richer, more cohesive design, but it can only be made through careful collaboration. (Although I do feel sorry for the assistants having to model a hundred par cans for a recent project.)

These initial meetings are so useful for aligning the creative team early on in the process. In isolation, it's very easy to create your own ideas around a project from the script and perhaps an early chat with the director. It's even easier to grow attached to these ideas, find them hard to let go, and be playing catch up to form new ideas when you realise everyone else on the project is going in a different direction.

Going into the rehearsal room can often be a bit of a daunting process. You can feel like you're walking on eggshells, especially with a director you've not



Disco Pigs
Trafalgar 2 and Irish Rep, New York
Director: John Haidar
Designer: Richard Kent
Lighting designer: Elliot Griggs
Sound designer: Giles Thomas
Movement: Naomi Said
Photographer: Alex Brenner

worked with before. Some directors actively encourage the entire team to take part in warmups and games and often call on the team during the rehearsals. This really helps break down any barriers you build from your own anxieties, so you feel comfortable pitching in to the rehearsal process. This really helps the whole team who, together, are working on, often, very tough or distressing subject matter. Having a more collaborative environment also encourages everyone to speak about how they feel. I've worked on some really quite traumatising projects, where had the room not been so open I would have personally struggled getting through it. I have slightly digressed, but I do honestly think that a more collaborative environment has a very strong positive effect on the whole group's mental health.

Visiting the rehearsal room regularly is really important. While other commitments (and fees - I'm not going down that rabbit hole right now) can make attendance a juggling act, it really helps. I've caught big dramatic entrances being blocked in the rehearsal room into a vom that backs straight on to a wall with no lighting positions. Trying to re-block in the final week of rehearsals is often problematic, let alone if you then realise in tech. But catching it early makes it a simple change, rather than when all the actors have tracks and prop settings.

I still get shocked looks from sound designers when I ask if they have a speaker plot. Not because they don't have one, it's more the shock that I care. I don't want the sound to be compromised because of something I have or haven't done. Certain speakers do need to go in certain positions, and both parties have a degree of flexibility. But this flexibility is far easier worked out in advance on paper than when the production electrician and production sound are at each other necks fighting over a rigging position, or the sound designer being unhappy because there's a moving light directly in front of their centre cluster masking the second half of the stalls. Collaboration doesn't even have to be direct; you could just make the conscious choice to ensure the lighting rig is silent. I don't believe a sound designer has ever thanked a lighting designer for fan noise, or that scroller move.

When it comes to tech, I try to make myself open to other members of the team coming past the desk to offer suggestions. On some of the more complex shows I've worked on, the only way we've solved big sequences

An Octoroon
NT Dorfman and Orange Tree Theatre
Director: Ned Bennett
Designer: Georgia Lowe
Lighting designer: Elliot Griggs
Sound designer: George Dennis
Movement: Ivan Blackstock
Composer: Theo Vigden
Photographer: Helen Murray



The importance of collaboration

Elliot Griggs

is with the whole team gathering together and all voicing our ideas. More and more in tech I find myself working closest with the sound designer and composer. Whether it's synchronising lighting cues perfectly with music or even asking the sound designer for more of a button to help with the lighting change that needs to take place on stage, having the two working harmoniously together really helps keep all the production elements as one.

A particularly successful collaborative space I have experienced was working with director Ned Bennett. He will regularly

call on the creative team for opinions, taking part in rehearsal room Q&As, and generally creating an environment where you feel comfortable speaking your mind. When working on complex sequences, he will use the entire team in the room, to the extent that even the composer is scribbling out a new score to try out. What we create together is by no means a perfect thing, but it helps inform further decisions and ultimately allows the entire team to be creative, try new things, possibly fail, but eventually make something really special.

By the end, I wouldn't say it was my lighting design anymore. Not because I couldn't recognise it, but because of all the input from the rest of the team, it would be unfair to call it mine. That is a true collaborative process. 🍷

Both images below:

Pinter At The Pinter

Pinter Theatre

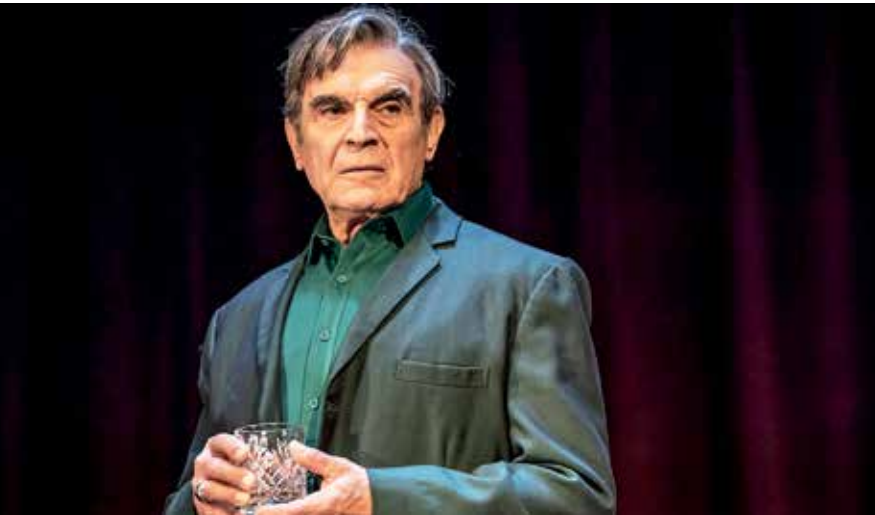
Director: Jamie Lloyd

Designer: Soutra Gilmour

Lighting designer: Elliot Griggs

Sound designer: George Dennis

Photographer: Marc Brenner



Performance Lighting Design

James Laws reviews the second edition

Having reviewed the first edition of this impressive work, when published in 2007, it is of particular interest to see how the book has progressed to keep up with technology and lighting practice. You can read my original review in *Focus* February/March 2008.

So, what has changed? The book is the same format and many of the chapter headings are the same. Perhaps the largest physical change is in the typeface, which I find harder to read than the first edition. It is larger but less black. The 270 pages in the new book probably give as much text as the 240 pages in the old one.

The illustrations and particularly the graphics have been refreshed. For instance, with the recent awareness in colour rendering options wavelength output graphs for various colour temperatures have been added and explained in one of the green boxes that make this book so easy to pick up information.

Colour Rendering Index (CRI) features more in the later text and this of course is one consequence of the major development of the last ten years: LED lighting. Once dismissed except for some cyc lighting that didn't "smell right" (Paule

Constable) and left multiple shadows, LED is now given proper consideration as the coming light source, integrated into the design pages. With a view to the future problems that we are spawning now, the author gives an appraisal of the environmental problems of disposal which, given the recent publicity on the eclipse of tungsten lamps, is quite salutary and gives balance to the arguments.

Computer-aided design (CAD) has been given full consideration and is contrasted with traditional plan drawing, so this isn't a book exclusively for those with the latest kit. One of the strengths is that the author has had many years of teaching lighting design and practice, so, in a world where new tech and systems clamour for attention, he knows what works in practice and what is useful.

The chapters split the design and production process very easily. Working in the performance space brings the student into contact with the other departments. Even here, subtle updates chronicle the times we live it. Did you know that the head flyman is now the head of flying? The author goes carefully through all the minutiae of production and design,

through to opening night and beyond, with more big green boxes for HSE and other detailed asides. The updated pictures in the later sections are very useful.

I sense that Nick Moran has updated his book at just the right time; we are entering an era when working with hot tungsten will become rarer. *Performance Lighting Design* is now ready to equip its readers with the knowledge to face the LED and moving light era. 🌟



Performance Lighting Design
Second edition
By Nick Moran
Methuen Drama £25.99
ISBN 978-1-350-01708-5 (paperback)

ALD members can take advantage of a 35% discount by using code ALD35, which is valid until 31 December, at www.bloomsbury.com/uk/performance-lighting-design-9781350017085.

Wearable LED

Joe Price lights up a planetarium

Imagine it is a fairly universal opinion within our industry that the creative process is the most productive and enjoyable when we are involved as early as possible. So, it was a fantastic, if slightly rare, delight to be asked to join a research and development period in summer 2017 for a project that would rehearse and open in autumn 2018. The show was titled *You Are Here!* and would be a collaboration between The Occasion theatre company and Winchester Science Centre. The idea was to create a family show that perfectly combined live theatre with an immersive

Photo by Ray Bird



360° full dome planetarium experience, which would tour to planetariums around the country. It sounded unique and fascinating, and I was itching to get started.

I only attended a couple of the R&D sessions, but that was sufficient in order to get initial ideas flowing and to develop a taste for the piece and the challenges it would provide. I had worked with The Occasion before, so it was lovely to see some familiar faces and reassuring to be in good company as we sought to explore this collective new experience. The company had recruited award-

winning children's playwright Andy Cannon, who had been a childhood astronomy fanatic, and much of the early sessions were predominantly spent listening to his amazing facts and stories!

The biggest consideration from a lighting point of view was what exact

Joe has recently returned from a long travelling adventure and is now finding his feet in Bristol by lapping up all the great theatre, music, art and delicious craft beer!



tools and equipment we were going to use. Planetariums generally do not have much in the way of lighting, and they certainly do not have a rig or even stands to hang stuff on. The standard set-up is usually some kind of LED batten or strip to uplight the dome in various colours, plus very occasionally some other fixtures to wash a bit of light over the performance area. Of course, for a regular planetarium show, this is perfectly suitable as the audience focus is completely on the dome once the film has started, so it does not matter if the narrator is in darkness. For our purposes, however, we always wanted the performers to be present and therefore visible, though this needed to be achieved without casting any light on to the dome and washing out the film. Additionally, we wished to have a few neat theatrical tricks up our sleeves to further wow the audience.

I decided to take some EL-Wire along with me to the R&D and gave a quick demonstration with the room lights turned out. This got a great response and the effect suited the spacey world we were seeking to create. This also prompted us to more thoroughly explore



Photo by Ray Bird



Photo by Joe Price

the concept of wearable light sources that the actors could control, as opposed to trying to install our own fixtures and control systems. I should add at this point that we would have no more than around ten minutes to set up before our performances, and the space would need to be struck back to the standard set-up after each show, making the installation of any kind of intricate rig near impossible.

By the time the rehearsal period ahead of the autumn tour was approaching, I had researched a number of other portable and wearable lighting options that could be trialled further in rehearsals. These included some elements that did not make it in to the final version, such as LED finger lights (that I thought we could give out to the audience to use as stars, but soon realised this could be a nightmare with a crowd of mostly under-10s!) and touch-sensitive lights that I imagined being

placed inside or on set items, but were ultimately not needed. Elements that made the final cut included some smart dinner jackets lined with EL-Wire round the seams of the neck, lapels and sleeves, as well as sun visors with warm white LED tape on the underside of the peak to throw light down on to the face. Additionally, both performers had umbrellas with cold white fairy lights entwined in them to represent the stars, and multi-coloured zoom torches, which were predominantly used to help them see their way in the dark, as well draw audience attention to certain things.

As environmentally friendly practice grows ever more crucial, I was also anxious to ensure we were not ploughing through batteries for all of the kit we were using, so we invested in various rechargeable batteries to serve all the different switch packs. We used just one mains-powered item, which was a light-up globe that Andy had

suggested. We ran this through a remote-controlled plug socket so that it could easily be triggered from the control position.

I have always been a keen advocate for work that embraces the technical features of the show, and my practice has often involved performers interacting with light: turning units on and off or changing gels. So, you can imagine how this production was incredibly satisfying personally! I do not often work on children's theatre pieces either, so it was a fresh, energetic experience and, after Will Evans' fantastic article on lighting for babies in the last issue, I felt it was a nice opportunity to share a similarly joyous creative process. 🌸

All images:

You Are Here!

The Occasion and Winchester Science Centre

Director: Peter Clerke

Designer: Ali Maclaurin

Lighting designer: Joe Price

Theatrical Scenic Art

John Leventhall reviews this book by Emma Troubridge

Theatrical Scenic Art

By Emma Troubridge

Crowood Press, £20

ISBN 9781785004339 (paperback)

On the occasions I have visited a paint shop, my mind has boggled at pots, powders, brushes, spray guns, cloths, tools, sculptures and chaotic paraphernalia of the scenic artist. I also marvel at the magic with which scenic artists transform mere wood and canvas into “the stuff that dreams are made on”. The technique of scaling a designer’s A3 picture to a 20-metre backcloth or to plan, draft and equip the realisation of a tiny balsa model into a huge scenic piece is impressive. So, I opened my copy in anticipation of increasing my scant knowledge and understand more of the scenic artist’s world. Which I did ... to different degrees.

Emma Troubridge is a formidable practitioner, head scenic artist at the ROH and former head of scenic art at RSC and RADA. She draws on her substantial career to offer others, particularly students, inspiration, encouragement and guidance, in which the book excels. Wow! It is a comprehensive whirlwind tour through seemingly every aspect of scenic art. You are conducted at a sprint through realisation of designs, creation of drawings, paint shop set-up, tools, scenery types, surface preparation, scaling

artwork, applying paint and texture, cloths, sculpture, trompe-l’oeil, signwriting and more... ending with a chapter on creating a career in scenic art. The pace makes it a readable book, like a whodunnit, unfolding the “plot” of the subject in manageable chunks. But because it deals with enormous breadth it is not really a “how to” guide. In the foreword, designer Alison Chitty describes the book as a “comprehensive introduction”. I agree with that! This book is a massive checklist encouraging you to find out more and research further. The author rightly claims it is a stimulus to students and current practitioners or simply a help to benchmark others’ practice with what a doyenne of the subject does.

The sheer breadth of topics needed to encapsulate scenic art means that many are described at a superficial level. Some sections merely note that something happens or exists. For instance, “Preparation of Soft Materials” (p.105) starts with “All cloths will require priming” but then doesn’t really mention what primer is or its application yet gives a detailed list of types of cloth. We learn that not everything needs fireproofing

but not what to do, other than note that “there are many flame-retarding solutions available...”. Some topics are amusingly truncated. A “Brief History of Spray Techniques” (p.203) notes that spray technology has been around for nearly 150 years. And that’s it for history! Brevity indeed. Yet areas such as “Faux Finishes” (chapter 15) blossom into very detailed guidance. The book is a bit inconsistent in approach to each area – a potpourri of facts and lists but with variable emphasis. The history sections could have been simply an onward reference.

I would praise particularly the early sections on the mutual collaboration between designer and scenic artist to realise a design to a finished set. The content of the meetings and personal contact involved are made more accessible for the student or outsider. I longed to read about the training needed to acquire the artistic expertise to create a 30-metre circle of leaf-strewn forest floor or an ancient Babylonian bas relief from polystyrene or a breathtaking castle on a 200-m² backcloth. But there isn’t really anything on how to acquire that and, despite frequent references, it is rather “taken as read”.

Theatrical Scenic Art

CROWOOD
THEATRE
LITERATURE



Emma Troubridge

All photos from *Theatrical Scenic Art*
(ISBN 9781785004339), with permission
from The Crowood Press: www.crowood.com



I need to mention the illustrations. What a lot! Around 400 pictures abound in a gorgeously tousled farrago and motley melange of instructive close-ups, luscious onstage panoramas and aerial shots of cloths at the ROH scenery shop floors at Thurrock. Occasionally the selection or placement of pictures is sometimes a bit confusing, but this visual subject could not adequately exist without profuse illustration – relevantly commencing with a pair of scene-painters' boots spattered with colour!

This book is both a serious textbook and an attractive volume which, dare I say, might also grace a few coffee tables! What

makes you keep reading it is its profusion of sections and topics covered, appealing to both specialist and general reader. It's a fun, messy romp and not a cool, clinical textbook. The writing resembles the clutter of the paint shop and, like the art itself, composed with a spatter here and a splodge there, a drafted line here and a delicate brushstroke there, it all gels, inexplicably, into an impressive and useful book.

I enjoyed the book. It's worth £25 (or £20 if you order from www.crowood.com) to get Emma Troubridge's comprehensive view of how scenery gets decorated if you're in that world or want to get into it. 🍷

December 2018/January 2019 – “More art, less tools...”



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