

FOCUS

The Journal of the Association of Lighting Designers

"More art, less tools..."

In the backlight this issue:
Rob Sinclair on a rock and roll • Mark Fisher reviews lighting at the Edinburgh Festival •
Knight of Illumination Awards • Michael Northen Bursary • AGM .. and much much more...

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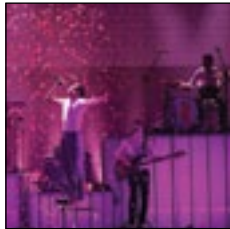
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IN YOUR **BUMPER** 48-PAGE ISSUE OF FOCUS...



10:
On a (Rock and) Roll
Rock lighting designer Rob Sinclair tells us what the rock 'n roll business is all about.



18:
Michael Northen Bursary
Winners are presented with their awards at PLASA 2012.



22:
ALD at PLASA
Nigel Lawson Dick says farewell to Earl's Court.



23:
ALD @ 50
Kelli Zezulka looks at how training for lighting designers has developed.



27:
Office Oracle
Latest news and comment from Ian's production desk.



30:
AGM
Reports from the 2012 ALD AGM held at White Light's Wimbledon HQ



33:
Knight of Illumination
The winners of the coveted annual lighting design awards



38:
Edinburgh Festival
Guest critic Mark Fisher reviews the lighting.



member benefits

44:
Member benefits
Resources and discounts available to ALD members.



46:
Book Review
James Laws reviews 'World Scenography 1975-90'

ALD #



I'M IN HEAVEN!

says **Mark Jonathan**

“Well, I’m in Glasgow actually. What was the chance, by total coincidence, of me having two consecutive jobs in the same country, same city?”

The last time this happened was quite a few years ago when I was lighting a musical at the Birmingham Rep and Birmingham Royal Ballet at the Hippodrome. I kept fit by running up and down the quite steep hill that separates the two theatres.

In this case, I find myself ecstatically running (or maybe taking the odd taxi) as I belt between production rehearsals of the Scottish Opera small scale tour of *La Traviata* with the gorgeous and brilliant creative team of director Annilese Miskimmon and designer Nicky Shaw and the early rehearsals of Scottish Opera’s main scale production of *The Magic Flute*, directed by the great British opera singer, Sir Tom Allen with extremely imaginative designs by Simon Higlett. In both cases, it’s the third time I have been cast in these ‘operatic’ teams so, there is a sense of feeling comfortable as we put on our well-worn slippers to work happily and creatively again.

I think about the different productions of *La Traviata* that I’ve seen; Jonathan Miller’s production at Kent Opera; then I worked on the Peter Hall production at Glyndebourne and on tour; I saw Richard Eyre’s at the ROH, the Zefferelli film and Zambello’s production on a pontoon in Sydney Harbour. I find it interesting that the effect this opera has modulates in parallel with

one’s own experience of love and death. This production will be the smallest and most intimate. It will provide opportunities for a number of singers who are at the start of their careers. I remember touring the Glyndebourne production and being asked to give the young tenor singing Alfredo a lift in my car from one city to the next. He was also at the start of his career too, spoke no English and was getting lost trying to find his way across the UK. That young tenor was the now world famous, Roberto Alagna.

I often wonder if there is a sort of tacit prejudice about doing small scale? We usually get paid less which doesn’t help but I like to call small scale productions ‘chamber work’ as there certainly isn’t a prejudice in terms of classical chamber music. We know that every instrument in a chamber orchestra will be vitally important and must be played by a virtuoso musician and although there may not be as many instruments, or ‘musical colours’, so I believe we should be able to make outstanding lighting, even with a *chamber orchestra of lights*.

I’m especially attracted to this idea when you take the predicament that Scottish Opera finds itself in; that a lot of the population is a long way from the urban centres where opera might traditionally be performed. This year, celebrating



its 50th anniversary, it lays down the gauntlet that no one in Scotland will be more than 30 minutes from an operatic performance in a year when it is presenting operas at fifty different venues in Scotland.

I've lit the musical *Babes in Arms* in which there is the line "Let's put the show on right HERE!"

"What, right here in the barn?"

Well, this is the Scottish version of that line:

"Let's put the show on – right here in the small, village hall in the highlands and Islands."

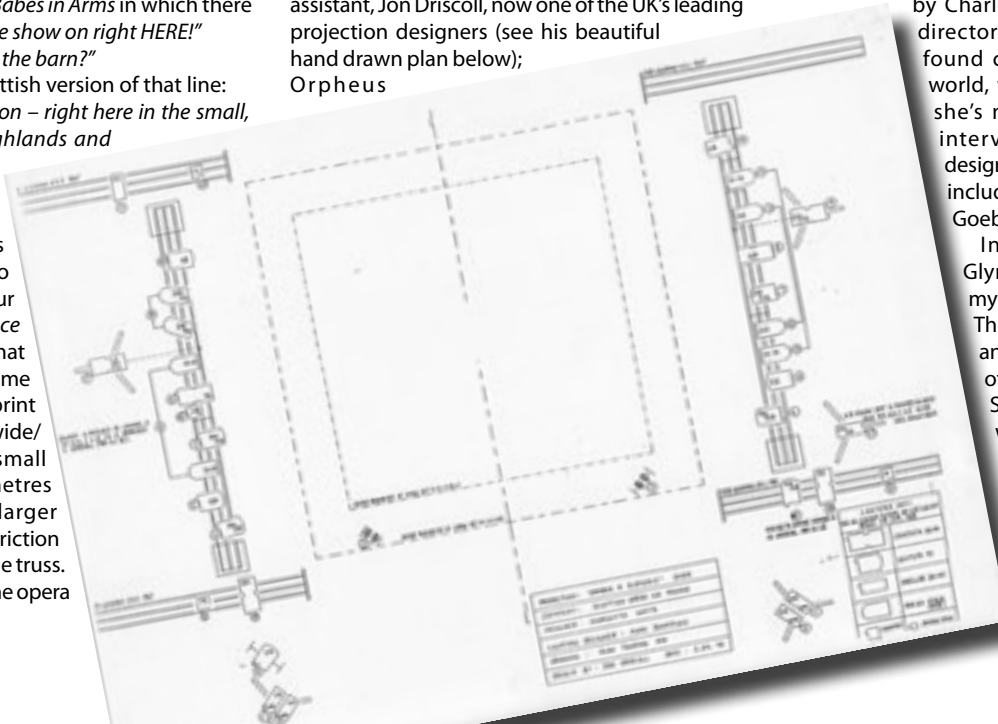
The theatre-man inside me is enchanted with this idea, as I was 19 years ago, when I came to light the small scale tour of *Orpheus ed Eurydice* for Scottish Opera. What hasn't changed over time is that the stage footprint has to fit a 6 metre wide/ deep footprint for small stages and and 8 metres wide/ deep for the larger places; the height restriction is 3.5m to the top of the truss. On the autumn tour the opera

will be sung by a cast of eight with piano and next spring, on a 2nd tour, it expands to mid-scale theatres that can house a chamber orchestra.

I wondered what will have changed over 19 years? In 1993 I was here with my young assistant, Jon Driscoll, now one of the UK's leading projection designers (see his beautiful hand drawn plan below); Orpheus

was directed by a young director Anthony Fabian, now a film producer/director and choreographed by Wayne McGregor, now resident choreographer at the Royal Ballet and artistic director of Ransom Dance, with stage and costume designs by Charlotte Watts. The musical director was Harry Bicket, now found conducting around the world, with Lisa Milne singing-she's now at the Met. In the intervening period lighting designers of the small scale tour include Bruno Poet, Wolfgang Goebbal and Johanna Town.

In 1993, I had just left Glyndebourne and I was in my first year at the National Theatre but while that was an amazing place to be, part of me was missing opera. So, my summer holiday was spent lighting opera. The kit list of 38 lamps that I used comprised 8 Parcans, 10 Cantata PCs, 6 Prelude profiles, 6 Cantata profiles, 4 Quartet Fresnels and 4 Birdies.





The technical staff on tour included a CSM, who drove a mini-bus with the singers, a DSM, a lighting ASM and a costume ASM. The sets, costumes, washing machine, ladders, trussing, lights and everything needed to build a theatre were driven by the LX ASM in a 35cwt Luton. The lighting ASM was assisted by the CSM, DSM and costume ASM who had to *multi-task* on the fit-up. I arrived to watch the first fit-up on the tour to find one major change had been implemented by the 'non' lighting tech staff. *"We're not having any of those random Patt numbers,"* they said. *"We're re-*

naming everything depending on its size." The lighting ASM was standing at the top of the ladder calling out what he needed to his happy helpers: *'I need a suitcase, 2 briefcases, a wallet, a purse,'* and with a tinge of embarrassment, *'a handbag'.* The rest of the team would cackle like the witches in *Dido and Aeneas* as they passed the electrician his purse and handbag! I've never seen a rig go up so quickly. Oh, and there was certainly one hall where the CSM had to feed



"local temptations"

the electricity meter during the performance. I also remember that for the epic journey made by Orpheus I used a followspot in the SL wing; a profile on a bench base which was slid around, as Orpheus crawled through the dark underworld in act 2. It was rigged on a stand in act 3 for the return journey and operated by the lighting-friendly, wardrobe ASM between costume quick changes.

Nineteen years on there is a bit more trussing to play with; bear in mind that on this tour we simply need a space with enough power and chairs. Everything else would travel. I think the staff and size of transportation has expanded a little. There is a touring manager with a company car, and professional drivers to drive the equipment and company. The tech crew: SM, DSM, ASM, Wardrobe and Prod LX have their own car which they drive, apart from going to the further flung places which they fly to. Of course, I thought Shetland would be a bit like the Isle of Wight, just off the mainland. Oh no! Shetland is 10 miles further from Glasgow than Glasgow is from London! This tour is going to travel more miles than any regular UK theatre tour.

In 1993, we had a small memory lighting desk with 24 dimmers but only 23 worked – so I had an interval re-plug. Now it's an *ETC ION* with 42 dimmers. The rig was brand new then but its been replaced. Nineteen years on I'm using 8 Source 4

Junior 25/50 profiles, 10 Parnels and 6 Showtec multi pars with scrollers; 4 Altman 30 lamp 3 circuit battens, 6 Showtec Sunstrips, 2 birdies and 6 floods. I've added a white/RGB LED footlight. On stage, there is a Patt 123, a light box and two practicals. I will also use a Cantata PC with no lens for some epic shadow effects. In fact, I would only use 16 of the available 26 par type lights.

What I was excited about where the Altman Strips. I conjured up the idea that I might have two rigged vertically on each side downstage, giving me a good cross light cover in 3 colours. One pair crossing downstage and one pair focused up stage. I also would rig five sunstrips as a light curtain of back light in Lee 201 with the 6th one rigged upstage of the doors in the set to back light through the doors.

When I came for the model showing in April, I had already been given a kit list and been told by the production manager: *"You have to light the show without using any FOH as we go to some places, like a cinema, that have no FOH positions"*. On *Orpheus*, in 1993 we had toured two stands with T-bars on which I placed two Minuette profiles a side with gobos; at the time, I thought this was a rather risqué FOH cover. 'Well', I thought, 'I just had a warm and a cold gobo cover last time – this time it will just have to be done with lights from within



the stage and my new LED foots!

As soon as I saw Nicky Shaw's white card model for *La Traviata* I could see the lighting possibilities and I was able to hand in a plan in April knowing that I would know no more until I saw a run through and that would be after the rig was scheduled to be rigged. So, there's no difference between small scale and large scale where we, lighting designers, have to guess and predict what we are going to need months before the director says in a lighting session, "*Have you got any green or red?*" I felt I could be more confident this time as the rig has six scrollers, along with my LED footlights so I was covered on anything random colour-wise that might come up nearer the time. I sensed a possible theme of red for love and blood.

The cream set comprises a box set. A section of the flatage could be removed to reduce depth and/or width. Cost meant that the original 'solid' design was made in canvas flats. We agreed the height of the set; it would sit just below the lights which would be rigged on the onstage cord of an up and downstage truss; a short black border would hang on the offstage cord. I was keen that the black lighting rig should be as discrete as possible. Upstage centre, there are a set of double doors; 60 cm further upstage there is a track with 3 small backcloths that are pulled across for the

two party scenes, a garden and a hospital corridor for the final act. The period would be late 1950s, Parisian. So the costumes would be fashionable and elegant. There would be a gathered, silk front cloth that would track across, a mere metre upstage of the setting line. There was much talk of action that would take place downstage but also the need for shadow play in the musical preludes to Act 1 and Act 3. The director and designer wanted a door on the frontcloth. There was a discussion about video projection or whether it might be painted. Everyone seemed to be looking at me. I had a feeling that we didn't need either and that a simpler solution would somehow present itself. I knew it was to do with the 'shadow' light that we thought would open the acts...

While I was in Glasgow for the model showing in April I asked the head of lighting, Bob Dickson, to get a 1.2k Cantata PC and take the lens out. We would need sharp shadows and I already knew that a light without a lens would do that much better than one with. I demonstrated the basic idea for the shadow play but the solution for the door was still to come.

We can fast forward to September; I'm in rehearsals watching the first run in the rehearsal room. The joy of small scale is that the cast are rehearsing on the set, the rig is up. We can

even focus and light before we arrive at the first date. I ask 'G' our talented lighting programmer/electrician/re-lighter to show me the shadow light. I place it as far upstage as possible. It just fits between the back cloths and the double doors in the set. At full flood it just covers the 8 metre surface of the front cloth. 1.2kW on small scale is like a 5kW in an opera house. It was perfect.

As I watched the rehearsal, the singers lining up on the downstage side of the front cloth as though in a street I understood how we would make the doorway in light. When the rehearsal ended, I jumped up, "*G, put on the shadow light.*" Again, small scale means you can just nip round and play without needing a lighting crew and a 3-hour call. I realised that by opening and closing the physical doors in the set that sat just in front of the shadow light (soon to be known affectionately by everyone as '*Bertha*') we could make 'rooms' and 'doors'. More than that we could 'zoom' our picture to reveal or hide aspects. Creative juices were flowing in the minds of director, designer and lighting designer.

The next morning I nip over to Edington Street to look at the *Magic Flute* set which has been built in the rehearsal room in readiness for rehearsals. Then I go to a *Flute* costume fitting. "*This is the first time a lighting designer has come to a costume*



fitting,” says John Liddell, the head of costume. The lithe Bob Dickson is on his knees, under the Queen of the Night’s skirts, discretely connecting the fibre optics that have been woven into her skirt and cloak to an LED light source. We need a dark room to see the effect and we all end up in a window-less loo. She’s going to look sensational.

Back to *Traviata* for a run followed on Saturday by a cueing meeting. I’m a bit of stickler for this – regardless of scale and regardless of whether it’s a play, opera, ballet or musical I always place cues in the prompt copy before we go into production. A couple of hours over lunch and the 90 cues were in the score and I was racing to the station to come back to London for the weekend. The train journey allowed time for me to type up my cue synopsis. I was ready.

“I’ll break off to mention that the next day I found myself at the Knight of Illumination awards. Many congratulations to all the nominees and winners and many thanks to all the sponsors and especially Clay Paky for an outstanding success. I was sitting next to Robert Bryan, the lighting designer who first inspired me and who lit so many of the operas I saw as a teenager; and on my other side, was the formidable LD, Andrew Bridge. Many of

my readers will know that there is a danger if you’re on a high that you might just relax and enjoy the excellent wine. . . I never sleep through alarm clocks, well hardly ever. I opened my eyes, the alarm had been ringing for some time. The suit trousers were lying on the floor where I had obviously discarded them in my stupor. I focused on the clock and realised it was a race against time to catch the train, this time, to the airport. Somehow, I made it complete with a hangover. The Solpadeine kicked in as I landed back in Glasgow. I had time in hand.”

I meet Simon Higlett and Bob Dickson and we look at the *Flute* set in the rehearsal room. Then back to *Traviata*; we would focus on Monday evening, light on Tuesday evening and I would light over the two session day rehearsals from Wednesday. We did a run on Thursday and although when we started there were a lot of ‘blank/copies’ of cues I pulled and stretched cues as the DSM gave them. Another joy of a small rig – fewer numbers to manipulate and G programming as fast as I could call the numbers; in the dark, I should add, as he touches all the keys without any light to see by – very impressive. By the end of the run we had the 90 cues. We ‘tidied’ up in the evening session, concentrating on the

quite complex sequences that we had created using the our opening and closing doors in the set for the shadow sequences along with the scene changes into the various acts. Friday brought with it our last ‘floor run’; the management arrived and we presented a full run in costume with lights still in the spacious rehearsal studio.

That was followed by lunch. The crew would strike and load out and have their last well-earned weekend off. We would meet again in Giffnock for the official production week culminating in the opening on Thursday with a 2nd performance on Saturday. Thereafter their schedule would be: travel on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays, with a fit-up/performance/get out on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturdays.

I hike over to the other Scottish Opera facility at Edington Street, exchanging Verdi for Mozart and remember how very lucky I am. After watching rehearsals of *The Magic Flute*, in its first week, I go for a serious briefing session (in the pub) with technical staff who all wanted to know how Trav was going, buoyed up by cold Pinot Grigio, my Monday hangover seemed a long time ago.

Monday comes all too quick and I meet Bob to check over and agree the fly plot and some additions to the *Flute* Lighting Rig. I arrive in Giffnock to find the Eastwood Park Theatre; a



ON A (ROCK AND) ROLL

“It’s great fun... with a steep learning curve,” explains Rob Sinclair, rock lighting designer and a 2009 ‘Knight of Illumination’

I’m fortunate enough to be able to keep my head above water and Florence, our rather recalcitrant dachshund, fed by lighting rock shows. I started coiling cables in the Vari-Lite warehouse in the early 90s and, though a series of lucky breaks and some bluffing, moved from being a technician to operating other people’s shows to designing my own.

The process of going from sketch to opening night is, in some ways very similar to theatre and in others completely different. The main one is that the person on stage is, at the same time, leading actor, director, producer and, often, production designer. I’m very lucky and have some fantastic, creative clients who understand the mechanics of building a show but interpreting their ideas and making them into practical reality can sometimes be mildly tricky.

In the last few years I’ve lit wonderful sets by Es Devlin for Pet Shop Boys and Mark Fisher for *The Queen Extravaganza* but very often I, usually by default as a creative team of one, design the whole show. At a very basic level it can be thinking of a riser configuration and backdrop but it can involve working on arena stage layouts, sight lines, costumes, video screen layouts and content ideas and complex set pieces.

I’m really not quite sure how I’ve ended up being what in my grander, ego led moments I call

a show designer but it’s great fun, although with a very steep learning curve. I always approach things from a lighting angle, try to make the show look unique and avoid having a group playing in front of a logo backdrop or a flat upstage video screen.

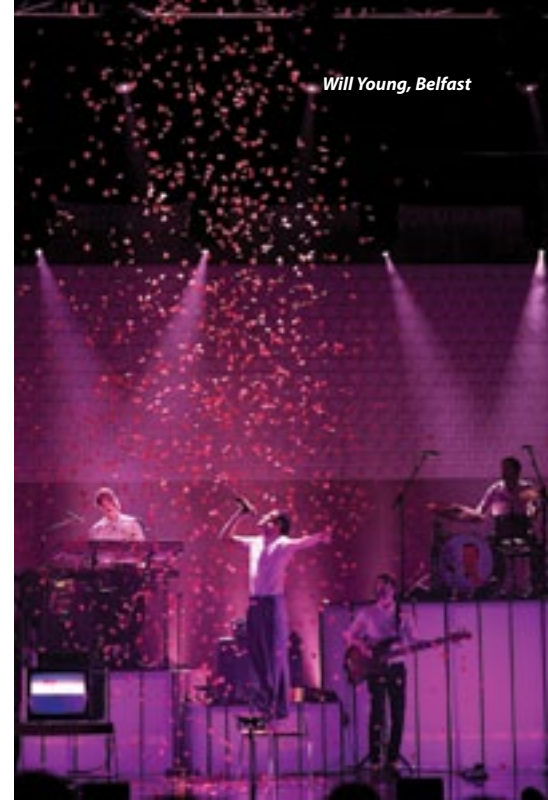
Research, research, prepare, prepare...

When I’m asked to meet a new client or if I’m fortunate enough for one of my existing ones to ask me back the first thing I do is listen to their music on repeat to really try and soak it into my brain and start to form some opinions on how it makes me feel. Album artwork, interviews, videos and press shots also help to try and work out where the bands’ head might be and a possible visual direction for the show.

I always try to arrive at a meeting armed with some kind of reference material as a way to start a conversation. Usually I will have had some sort of short brief, recent ones have included ‘the 50s’, ‘motel chic’, ‘trashy glamour’ and ‘the seaside’ but sometimes I have to go on instinct. More often than not whatever I bring will be abandoned but it’s a great way to start things off and encourage the band to think about ways of presenting on stage the music they have been locked away making, often for years, on stage.

Sometimes I’m asked to pitch for work by email,

Will Young, Belfast



usually at very short notice and with a minimal brief. I’m always very flattered to be asked and try and respond with some drawings but it’s very difficult to come up with something that a band will be like without some sort of dialogue.

It’s a temptation to keep a stockpile of rejected or old ideas and try and fit them to new projects



but it's a one that I really try and avoid. It's really important to have ideas based of the band, their music and their ideas rather than something that would simply look cool. I always sit and stare at drawings before I send them off and ask myself if they are in any way generic or similar to my previous work and quite often find myself rejecting them. Of course it's impossible not to self plagiarize or rely on experience but it's also important not to repeat oneself. Previously docile pop stars can turn very nasty if they see you using 'their' ideas with another act.

The client is King (or Queen...)

I think I once read that design is the process of helping your client realise what they want and then delivering it to them. I always try and remember that I'm designing a show to help my client be able to perform their songs in an environment that they think appropriate and not bolster my ego, although that's a very pleasant side effect.

Bands who know what they want and can articulate it are, thankfully, fairly common. It's such a pleasure to be able to take a great reference or

idea, add to it a little, turn it into reality and see the client happy. The stage often becomes a reflection of their personality and needs to be a place where they can comfortably sing songs that are often very personal both to the artist and audience.

Adele is a great example of this. She's funny, charming and very likable, meetings with her rarely lasted more than 20 minutes and was very immediately honest about what she did and didn't like. Starting from a reference of a set at the Oscars a few years ago we decided to turn the cliché of a big rock back wall of lights on its head and make a wall of 96 lampshades, all on individual dimmers (*left and cover*). With some simple gold drapes and risers the stage became a very warm, slightly surreal living room in which she felt at ease and gave a great setting for her music and unique, unscripted and often hilarious stage chatter. The shows at Hammersmith last year were two of the most amazing nights I've had.

Not everyone is so direct or sure of what they want. Meetings can veer off at, usually very amusing, tangents or slightly frustrating blind alleys. Getting things back on track can be difficult, as can explaining that some slightly outlandish ideas might not quite work. Probably the most outrageous but serious idea I've heard was to spend the entire production budget on a smoke machine and as many ecstasy pills as we

ON A (ROCK AND) ROLL

Rob Sinclair

could carry in our luggage which would be given out to the audience to 'create a good vibe'.

Although I do push back sometimes to either fight for or resist an idea one must always remember that the pop star is always right in the end. It's their money, their music and them on stage which all adds up to a convincing argument in their favour.

Even at the early stages of the process I, while trying not to stamp on anything, have to keep practical considerations in mind. With record sales in decline but concert business on the rise tickets now make up an important part of a bands' income which means that there is always a lot of pressure to deliver a spectacular show for as little money as possible. There is no point in my trying to sell a band on an idea they can't afford and I always try and find out before we start the number of trucks, busses and people that the tour manager wants to have on the road which gives a good idea of how big the show can be.

Production manager is key

Concerts have to be built very quickly, taken down quicker and be very flexible to adapt to a wide variety of venues. A good production manager is extremely important; they need to be receptive to silly ideas and be able to translate them into affordable systems that can be thrown in and out

of trucks every day. Unfortunately It's an easy trap to make the logistics the focus of the productions' efforts rather than the show itself. I've seen many shows that look like a load out waiting to happen rather than a big night out and often patrol in the afternoons to remove boxes stored on stage and call for more masking.

Drawing and planning

After the initial meeting I draw the show in 3D in

Vectorworks. This is essential to help work out how things fit in space, how much room there will be on stage and to look at sightlines. From this I make line drawings and renders to show the band and plots to send for bid. I don't really like renders as they aren't an honest depiction of a design and I generally introduce them as cartoons to show style rather than a photographic reality.

Once we have a vague plan I'll start to learn the songs. I used to make long notes of structure



Keane, Bexhill

eFocus: October / November 2012 – The Journal of the Association of Lighting Designers – “More art, less tools...”



Queen and Adam Lambert, Hammersmith

'verse-into-chorus-into-middle-eight' which were rather confusing and difficult to navigate. I had a Eureka moment in Es Devlin's fabulous studio when she showed me lyrics pinned to the wall as her libretto and inspiration for Lady Gaga's show. Since then I've kept and annotated folders of lyrics for every song to help me navigate the sections, mark cue points and keep brief notes.

The lyrics book exists in conjunction with a

spreadsheet showing songs, any notes from the band, the colours I feel appropriate for them, any video or staging ideas and any special gags we might try. It's here that I try and start to structure the show - how will we start? How will it build? Can we afford to hold anything back? Most importantly: are we being too clever for our own good and will the audience understand and appreciate what we're doing?

ON A (ROCK AND) ROLL

Rob Sinclair

Keep it simple

I'm a strong believer in simplicity and try never to use effect for its own sake. It's very easy to get caught up in what the equipment can do rather than what it should be doing. If a whole block of a show feels red then it needs to stay red rather than turning a red song green for variety's sake. We decided to light the Adele show entirely in shades of white which, although terrifying beforehand, was a wonderful education in using shifts in level and colour temperature.

A 'hands on' LD

Most rock LDs operate and program their own shows. I love operating; it's a real pleasure to be able to only concentrate on one thing for a couple of hours. Increasingly I hand my shows on to some very talented lighting directors to run on the road. It's really hard, especially for a dreadful control freak, to hand let the show go but it's great to revisit and see how things have progressed. The person on the ground needs to take responsibility for moving the show to different venues and continents and it's really important for them to understand both the idea behind it and to take some ownership. Bands tend to move the set around, change arrangements and add new material during the tour and the show needs to be able to adapt. I've been very lucky to work





Pulp, Hyde Park

with some fabulous people, most of whom are vastly talented designers, but I still struggle with quality control and making sure that the show still looks right without being overbearing and micro managing.

Production rehearsals...

... are always difficult but rewarding. Large shows rehearse for anything up to a few weeks, small ones only for a day or two, really small ones not at

all. I like to work late at night after everyone else has gone home. It's really hard to put a song on repeat and start to work through it during the day while there is noise and people asking questions. I used to dread the band coming out to look at progress but now encourage my clients to sit with me and look at every cue. It builds trust and confidence and means that they know what they are standing in front of.

ON A (ROCK AND) ROLL

Rob Sinclair

Festivals...

... are a great way for a band to make some ready money and every summer seems to bring more of them. While most acts take some specials with them, usually some floor lights or video screens, the bulk of the work needs to be done by a locally provided house system which means that programming a festival tour needs a wholly different mindset to a full production show. The show needs to adapt to a wide variety of instrument types and some fairly horrible house rigs and is no time for subtlety or small statements. Modern consoles which allow programming to be swapped between different types of fixtures have finally over the last few years allowed some consistency into festival shows.

“So, how do you get into rock lighting?”

I get slightly bemused when people ask how they can get into the business as I have no real idea how I managed it. The simple answer is that you need luck and once you've got lucky you need not to balls it up. The more complicated one is to work hard, know what the equipment is and how it works, know what you can reasonably ask the crew to do, listen to the music and give the band what they want. Most importantly: remember that it is a business relationship and to be friendly rather than friends with the band.

Touring is a tough life, but one that I love. I think the contrasts between the best and worst of times, often very close together, are what makes it such fun. Yesterday I had a 4am lobby call, after 2 hours sleep and a late show, for an early flight half way across Europe. On the same day, however, I had a long walk in the Swiss woods, ran a headline show and enjoyed a spectacular cheese board in catering. Over the years I've ridden motorcycles in the Andes and down the Great Ocean Road in Australia, been towed screaming behind a snowmobile in the alps, jet skied in the Mediterranean, met the president of Georgia, ridden the rush hour subway in Tokyo, catapulted off the deck of the USS Nimitz and made great friends all over the planet. Not bad for vaguely flashing the lights in time behind pop groups. 🍄

Rob Sinclair's recent credits include shows for Pet Shop Boys, Keane, Pulp, Adele, Queen + Adam Lambert, Will Young, Hurts, Goldfrapp, Bloc Party and sets for Mumford and Sons' Stopover festivals and Marina and the Diamonds. He's currently working on Peter Gabriel's 'Back to Front' show which opens in Quebec City in September.



Vampire Weekend, Brussels

MICHAEL NORTHEN BURSARY 2012



The winners

Michael Northen Bursary: Rachel Bottomley
presented by Durham Marenghi

Francis Reid Award: Alexander Ridgers
presented by Francis Reid

ETC Award: Zoe Spurr
presented by Mark White

L to R: Durham Marenghi, Max Spielbichler who collected the award on behalf of Zoe Spurr, Mark White, Rachel Bottomley, MC Nick Moran, Francis Reid, Alexander Ridgers.

The awards were organised by Jack Knowles on behalf of the ALD, with thanks to judges Johanna Town, James Farncombe, Kathy Sandys, David Howe and Jack Knowles. Our grateful thanks to the Young Vic which hosted the judging deliberations. Thanks also to Nick Moran who hosted the awards presentation at PLASA 2012.



The judges said:

This was a very impressive and excellently presented portfolio showing atmospheric, bold and dramatic states.

Rachel showed an interesting and thoughtful approach to scripts and finding relevant reference material, visibly demonstrating how it was involved within her process through to seeing it implemented in the finished design.

She clearly has a good understanding of how to support a narrative using colour and composition, whilst understanding how to exercise caution and not over doing things, only using something when it was fully justified.

Rachel displayed advanced thinking regarding her approach to lighting and it's affect on an audience, and demonstrated clearly a very positive and creative process to her lighting, producing fantastic results.



Rachel Bottomley

Winner: Michael Northen Bursary
presented by Durham Marenghi



The judges said:

Alex's portfolio included lovely photos, which showed very strong stage images and composition.

His concept ideas were good and interesting, which were clearly seen with good overall outcomes for the designs included.

The lighting allowed plenty of the cast's faces to be seen, at the same time keeping the lighting interesting.

Alex demonstrated a very encouraging attitude with very positive work as a collective with the other members of the creative team.

We saw extremely clear and concise lighting plans which indicated what was used and how effects were achieved.



Alexander Ridgers

Winner: **Francis Reid Award**

presented by Francis Reid



The judges said:

This was a good demonstration of influences and source material, which directly informed decisions, made within her designs, as well as showing detailed and thorough discussions with the creative team.

Zoe's photos showed strong composition and atmospheric lighting states.

Demonstrated a good use of alternative light sources in an unconventional venue demonstrating an ability to adapt and improvise

Zoe included good descriptions of why and how the different designs were created, with photo references demonstrated in show photos.



Zoe Spurr

Winner: ELC Award

presented by Mark White



“Ahoy there!” Nigel Lawson Dick tests the water at PLASA

Some of us tried to escape for the Summer. Having sampled the delights of Iona, Staffa and a warm welcome on Coll it was soon time to head south to the Brittany coast and the Channel Islands. It's a magical place to sail. Potentially hazardous waters, there is huge satisfaction in piloting one's way through odd nooks and crannies and gaps between rocks – and with 30 foot tides to contend with the land and sea-scape can look very different within a six hour span.

Rather like the fit up at PLASA. On Saturday rocky outcrops of flight cases, an archipelago of crates of aluminium section and panels for stand and enclosure construction and the entire floor concealed with a mirror-like sea of plastic sheeting. By the following morning a transformation and – as the aged critics might say – “we have a show”.

Well we do. It seems to have dieted a bit from last year, maybe drawn in the waistline here and there, but all the ‘usual suspects’ are on parade and plenty of well-known faces.

The layout though did mystify us a bit, what with Sound and Stage management cheek by jowl with major lighting companies and our ALD stand set round the back next to a somewhat gloomy ‘seating area’. But we brightened things up, creating a warm and welcoming haven for weary members after they had tramped the aisles – or maybe providing a launch pad for them to do so.

Lots of well-known familiar faces round the stand with several score of our members dropping by. Add to that an excellent crop of Sponsored Student applications and, to our great satisfaction, a significant number of new Professional and Associate members with some more in the pipeline.

Once again we had the pleasure of seeing young and talented designers collecting their Michael Northen bursary awards – how exciting to see the fantastic quality of the work that this new generation is producing. Congratulations to all those who submitted their portfolios and especially the winners.

Wednesday brought an influx of new college students, many of whom had just started their course at the beginning of the week. Piled on to a coach and taken to PLASA many could be forgiven for looking a bit lost and bemused. “*Find out what's new*” is the challenge. For heaven's sake, some of us having been coming here for decades and still find that question hard enough to answer!

So after many years it is farewell to Earls Court as we head for Docklands and Excel in 2013. I suppose the expression might be ‘pastures new’ but perhaps ‘uncharted waters’ is nearer the mark. It's moved back to October; so see you there in a year – and a bit. 🍷



A HISTORY OF LIGHTING EDUCATION

Kelli Zezulka continues our series of retrospectives with a review of education and lighting design, from then... 'til now.



Before lighting design was recognised as a profession in its own right, training was informal and usually gained by way of an apprenticeship or work experience. No differentiation was made between the technical and the artistic – as there was no professional differentiation – and it is only in the last thirty years or so that formal training in lighting design as a specific and discrete discipline has been offered by educational institutions. Early training programmes such as those at the London Theatre Studio and the Old Vic Theatre School were important not only because they attempted to standardise the knowledge and skills required to work in the industry, but also because they founded the basis for contemporary training courses.

The first lighting courses

The London Theatre Studio (LTS) was founded by the director and actor George Devine (1910–1966) and the French director Michel Saint-Denis (1897–1971). In addition to acting classes, Devine also taught stage management and lighting. Lighting classes were taught to technical and acting students alike, the idea being that all students



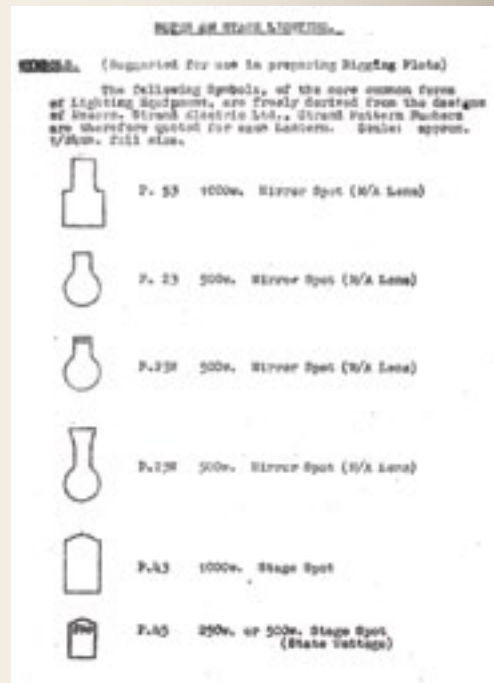
Croydon College light symbols,
1960, Robert Stanbury.

should understand the entire process of the production of a show. In his lighting lectures, Devine (right) focused equally on the artistic and the technical aspects of lighting. Students were taught about the capabilities of different lanterns and their corresponding effects on stage, the best way to light an actor's face, the use of gels, and the importance of having the lighting control at the rear of the auditorium. They conducted experiments concerning light output (foot candles) and beam angles from varying distances and were aware of the advantages and potential shortcomings of each type of lantern. This may seem elementary to us now, but the course and the level of instruction were revolutionary at the time. Devine was widely considered one of the best 'lighters' in the country at a time when directors (or producers, as they were then known) did their own lighting (usually in consultation with the theatre's chief electrician).



Devine and Saint-Denis began drafting their scheme for the Old Vic Theatre School (OVTS), which opened in 1947. In addition to courses in acting, there were two technical courses: Stage Design and Stagecraft (each lasting one year, with the option of an advanced second year course in production and design). Students had lectures and practical classes in scenery, ground plans, stage management, period research, scene painting, technical drawing, costume design, properties and lighting. The students of the Stage Design course were assessed on their ground plans, costume design and practical work, including mask making, scene painting, costume dyeing and painting, technical drawing and model making. On the technical production course, student success was determined based on their skills in technical drawing and model making, and practical skills in stage management, lighting, carpentry and production. The culmination of the training was a series of public performances, to which prospective employers would be invited. Technical students were responsible for all aspects of production, from stage management, the making of the props and building of the set, to the lighting and costume design, all with minimal intervention from the staff. Although revolutionary in its time, most conservatoire drama training now follows this model; in fact, according to a 1951 article in the Times, it

LTS was closed with the outbreak of World War II, but with colleague Glen Byam Shaw (1904–1986),



was upon Saint-Denis' principles and working methods that Michael MacOwan and Norman Ayrton were to build their training programme at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) in 1954.

The stage management and technical theatre course at LAMDA in its current incarnation started in 1965 (a similar stage management course had been running at the Royal Academy of Dramatic

A HISTORY OF LIGHTING EDUCATION

Kelli Zezulka



Art (RADA) for three years). Richard Pilbrow and Theatre Projects were both involved in starting the course and their involvement meant that specialists from Theatre Projects were often called upon for teaching duties. The course was extended from eighteen months to two years in 1980 and included (and still does include) classes in voice, movement and stage combat, as well as the innovative provision for work experience in the second year.

The stage management and technical theatre courses at both RADA and LAMDA are quite similar in terms of format: first-year students assist second-year students in the staffing of all productions, while gaining knowledge across all production disciplines, and second-year students take on head of department roles in stage and production management, lighting (including design), sound and construction. The RADA course now includes a third year BA option in a specialist technical subject area.

Specialist lighting design courses

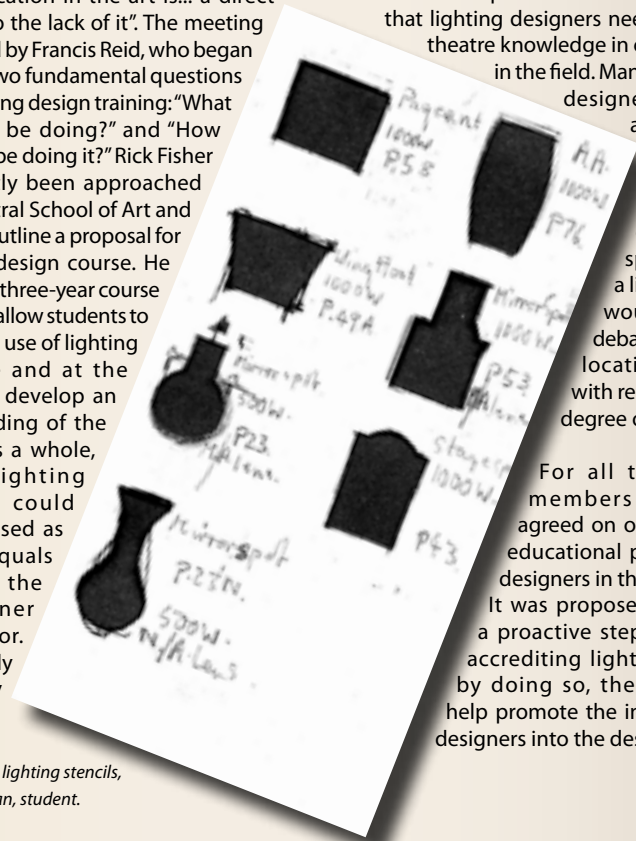
In 1989, the ALD held a panel discussion/seminar in Bristol entitled *Training the Lighting Designer*. By this time in the UK, there were still only a few courses for technical theatre, and even fewer where lighting design specifically was taught. The report of the meeting noted that “the high level

of interest and concern among lighting designers about education in the art is... a direct response to the lack of it”. The meeting was chaired by Francis Reid, who began by asking two fundamental questions about lighting design training: “What should we be doing?” and “How should we be doing it?” Rick Fisher had recently been approached by the Central School of Art and Design to outline a proposal for a lighting design course. He proposed a three-year course that would allow students to explore the use of lighting in theatre and at the same time develop an understanding of the industry as a whole, so that lighting designers could be recognised as creative equals alongside the set designer and director. It was widely agreed by the panel

members that any courses in lighting design should be practical rather than art-based, and that lighting designers needed a wide range of theatre knowledge in order to be successful in the field. Many, if not most, lighting designers were self-taught and had learned their

craft either by way of apprenticeship or “on-the-job” experimentation. The specifics of how such a lighting design course would run were widely debated in terms of format, location, cost (especially with regards to funding) and degree of formality.

For all the debate, panel members and participants agreed on one thing: the current educational provision for lighting designers in the UK was inadequate. It was proposed that the ALD take a proactive step in developing and accrediting lighting design courses; by doing so, the association would help promote the integration of lighting designers into the design team.



Croydon College lighting stencils, c.1960, Pat Cowan, student.



To aid in this aim, in 1990 the ALD began producing a series of publications entitled *Focus on Education for Lighting Designers*. The Arts and Entertainment Technical Training Initiative (AETTI) was founded in 1987, with its remit to “identify the minimum level of skill needed in order to undertake a specific task”, and was initially welcomed by the ALD. However, when AETTI began to set formal standards for designers in the form of NVQs, the ALD withdrew its involvement with AETTI. The editor of *Focus* at the time, Jonathan Howard, noted this was because, “until it is possible to produce accurate representations of the way in which a lighting designer contributes to a production and quantify its worth the question of training standards will probably remain rhetorical”.

What followed was a heated debate between members of the ALD and AETTI, extracts of which were published in the 1991 edition of *Focus on Education*, and included the brilliant provocation by Francis Reid that AETTI would, “promote enough hocus pocus and mumbo jumbo to provide multiple orgasms for the vast army of bureaucrats who are currently determined to stamp out creativity throughout the land”. Also included was an article by John A. Williams, head of the lighting course at the Academy for Performing Arts in Hong Kong and former head

of lighting at Bristol Old Vic Theatre. He, like others elsewhere, was adamant that lighting design courses should be industry-based; that is, those developing, running and teaching on such courses must not be removed from the practices and needs of the industry.

Lighting design training today

The last twenty years has seen a huge proliferation of specific courses in lighting design. As the industry and profession itself has grown and become more specialized, so has the formal education opportunities available to those who wish to pursue lighting design and related subjects as a profession. Broad foundation courses, such as those at LAMDA, RADA and Mountview, give students a working knowledge of all elements of technical theatre production; RADA also offers a four-term course in stage electrics and lighting design, incorporating both the technical and artistic aspects of the profession.

Guildhall’s BA Hons in technical theatre arts is complemented by its summer course in stage lighting skills. The Central School of Speech and Drama runs a BA Hons degree, in which thirteen specialisms are available, including theatre lighting design and production lighting, and also offers MA and PhD programmes. The courses at Rose Bruford College go even further:

students can opt for a BA Hons in lighting design or a BA Hons in creative lighting control, a three-year programme focusing on the role of the programmer in lighting and video design, as well as postgraduate degrees and PhD research study. Other formal courses in lighting and lighting design range from NVQs, short courses run by youth theatre companies (such as Chichester Youth Theatre) and HNDs to undergraduate and postgraduate degrees.

The question of the ALD’s involvement in lighting design training and education is still outstanding, however. How much should (and could) the ALD be involved and how much can we, as an organisation, influence the next generation of lighting designers through formal training? 🌟



Office Oracle:

News from Ian's production desk



2012 AGM

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

Many thanks to those who have logged in to watch the webcast whether that was live as the event took place or watching the recorded playback that is now available for all members to see. Also many thanks if you posted comments during the meeting. There were LDs at production desks with a (declared) geographical spread of Wexford in Ireland to Perth in Australia!!

If you missed the event and wonder what was discussed, the event is still available to watch back and can be accessed in the following two places:

1. On the ALD website on the embedded player at www.ald.org.uk/members/webcasts.
 - First of all sign in to the ALD website so that you are on your "My ALD" page.
 - Select "Members' Pages" from the left hand menu
 - Select "Meetings' Webcasts" at the bottom of the main menu on the page
 - You should then be able to view the player once the channel is "On Air"
2. Go to www.ustream.tv/channel/assoc-of-lighting-designers

It is possible that you may have to sign up for and verify a UStream account to be able to use this page.

This was obviously a new thing for us to attempt and the feedback we have received since the event has been positive. We have learned some lessons, and aim to improve next time we do something similar. For instance, the first five or so minutes of the meeting are missing on the playback version of the event as we forgot to start recording at the start of the meeting. Many apologies for that error.

I hope you enjoy using the opportunity to view the meeting and please feel free to send any comments on either the issues raised at the meeting, or the coverage itself to office@ald.org.uk so that they can be discussed by the Executive Committee.

We hope to be able to do something similar for other meetings we hold too. Either live coverage or to record them and have them available to play back at a later date.

We should like to record our thanks to all at White Light who helped organise, set up and staff the day's events, and also to those Corporate members who joined in with demonstrations and displays of their latest products and services. A summary of the AGM starts on page 30.

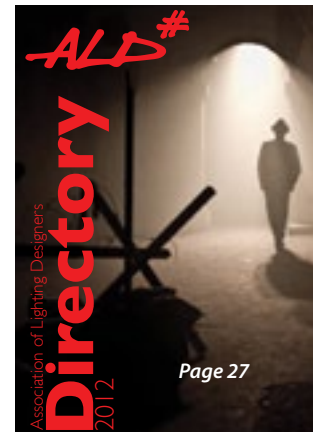
2013 ALD Members' Directory

It is that time of year to ensure that your updated contact details and directory entry is up to date. The 2013 directory will be sent to you with the February / March 2013 edition of *Focus*, but the information gathering starts now!!

If you wish or require to update your details for inclusion into the new edition, please use the website or contact the office as soon as possible to guarantee its inclusion. Please note that the 'Yearbook entry', the short descriptive paragraph under the contact details, should no longer contain show credit information. With the improved website, we now feel that it is not necessary to list show credits, and would instead prefer an outline of what you do or your past experience.

Due to the increased size of the membership, these will be limited to no more than 35 words please.

The cut-off deadline for any changes to be received by the office is strictly 10th December 2012.



Office Oracle:

News from Ian's production desk

*ALD monthly social inside and outside
The Coach and Horses, 28 September.
Photos taken in sharp focus by Richard
Lambert, who explained to the editor
that it was the members who were
slightly blurred.*

Sponsored Student Scheme 2013

This corporate members' funded scheme for students studying on Higher Education courses with an element of Lighting Design is once again open to applications. The closing date for applications is Christmas 2012.

All current student members should have by now received an email with an application form to fill in and return to the office complete with proof of your student status in order to maintain their current membership beyond April 2013.

Students - Do We Have Your Correct Contact Details?!

You have just started a new academic year. Do you have your term time address on our database? Do we have the correct one? If you are graduated this summer, have you moved away from your study area?

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

Member Benefits Changes

Over the last few months we have been gathering

information from our Corporate Members about additional benefits or discounts that they are able to offer our members. A number have responded, while some are still working out the details at their end. The current benefits offered at the time of going to press are on pages 44-45. We hope to send out an updated leaflet with these and more offers with a future edition of *Focus*.

Please be sure to log into the website to see the current list of benefits on the members' page: www.ald.org.uk/members where you'll also find other relevant information related to your membership, as well as a link to the ALD's own private area of the Blue Room Forum.

One of the Benefits that has been recently reviewed and that we have withdrawn from is the Charities Buying Group. Over the three years or so that we were signed up to it, very few of our members actually used the service for a variety of reasons, and so we have now written to the CBG and asked them to remove our members' details from their database and that of their clients too. If you continue to receive mailings from them, please contact the office and let me know.

And finally...

Congratulations to the other ALD member to win a Knight of Illumination award: Roger Simonsz for his lighting of the TV drama *Antigone* 34. 🍀



Diary Dates 2012-13

26th October

Monthly Members' Social Evening, Covent Garden, London †.  Sponsored by Philips Entertainment

30th November

Monthly Members' Social Evening, Covent Garden, London †. Sponsored by Martin Professional UK 

10th December

Deadline for Yearbook details changes

25th December

Closing date for Sponsored Student Scheme

2013

30th April – 1st May PLASA Focus: Leeds *

18th – 21st May

Showlight 2013, Cesky Krumlov, Czech Republic www.showlight.org *

12th – 13th June

ABTT 2013 Theatre Show, Old Truman Brewery, London E1 *

6th – 9th October

PLASA 2013 ExCel London*

† *The members' Social evening is at The Coach & Horses, 42, Wellington St, London, WC2E 7BD. All members are welcome.*

*the ALD will have a presence at these shows

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Focus Magazine

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Editor & production: **Andy Collier** editor@ald.org.uk

To submit ideas for articles, information, correspondence, corrections and any comments about *Focus*, please email 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) 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.

New Members

welcome!

Professional Designer

Sofia Alexiadou, Piraeus, Greece

Giuliano Bocca, Lydd, Kent

Lee Curran, London

Bernd Purkrabek†, Dusseldorf, Germany

Phil Supple, Bedford

Associate

Paul Nicholson, Middlesex

Malcolm Pugh, Sevenoaks

Jonathan Sheffield, London

Gary Stevenson, Sunbury-on-Thames

Colin Swinton, London

Corporate

Robe Lighting SRO

Non-Profit Organisation

East15 Acting School Technical Dept

† from Associate Member

THE 2012 ~~ALD~~[#] ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

held at White Light, London, on
Saturday 29th September 2012

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Peter Mumford, the ALD Chairman, started by announcing that the ALD Executive had recently held a strategy meeting day where a wide range of issues were discussed, and which produced a number of new and progressive ideas. Inclusiveness is key to developing the ALD, and we are welcoming Professional members who are not lighting designers as such, but who are crucial in the process of lighting design including programmers, video designers, projection designers. Peter said that we have discussed changing to the 'Association of Lighting Design', and we'd be interested in members' views.

He explained that the subject of lighting design has expanded in the last decades. There



were no lighting design courses when he was at college and he, like many others, came to lighting through a variety of routes. Now there are a considerable number of students studying the creative use of lighting including programming and projection. But unlike other professions – lawyers for example – we don't have a professional structure that allows graduates a route to follow into the business.

What we can do as an organisation is to create a formalised apprenticeship scheme, which is more than just the odd week of work experience. Many lighting designers are interested in offering placements, but there needs to be a structure to make this work.

Peter went on to say that he has discussed this with various members of educational establishments running lighting design courses and there is a general enthusiasm for this plan, but it needs planning. There is a need to train recent graduates to become assistants, and being part of the process is an important step.

When in the USA, lighting designers are asked who we'd like to be our assistant, not whether we'd like an assistant, as happens here. We don't have the culture of lighting assistants in the UK, but an apprentice scheme encouraged by the ALD could be influential in the process of change. Peter said that more discussion would be needed on this subject, and asked for the views of the members.

[This subject was continued during the discussion following Peter's presentation. Please refer to the webcast for more details.]*

Following from the strategy meeting, there were many things that the Exec wants to do. It is easy to think of new ideas but difficult to put them into practice. The ALD is run by volunteers who put a lot of work in, but we have little in the way of professional infrastructure or management. So one direction to come from the strategy meeting was how we expand the ALD to put new ideas into practice. In recent years some fantastic work has been done to put the ALD on the map and the raise the profile of lighting design. We are now at 'max' in terms of effort without a more formal infrastructure. To this end, Peter continued, we are considering changing the association into a limited company by guarantee to relieve some of the responsibility the Exec members have for the association.

We are also looking to enhance our image and PR, and we are all aware that the website needs updating, and for the need of increased social media involvement. We need to be more active in influencing managements, without becoming a union. There has been a lot of discussion about this and our role is to support the union structure by being a catalyst. Organisations such as Equity, BECTU and PLASA all serve members' interests

and the ALD can act as an advisory body. There have been criticisms of Equity's support for LDs, but their response is that not all LDs belong to Equity, and so we have to be active in building the community.

Peter said that there had been a lot of Exec discussion about facilities and resources that we can offer members. But what do members want? We want a greater flow of ideas, more involvement and interaction. One idea floated has been to offer office space as a facility for those working in London who live out of town. Is this a good idea? The ALD could make this happen.

Peter concluded by saying that everything in his report is linked together: to expand the membership to create a larger community and therefore to have a greater voice and more power. To create unity of ideas representing the profession – a united approach without becoming a union. We need clear policies and a means of promoting them. So what do you, the members think? What do you want? Can you participate? 🌟

The meeting then moved onto a general discussion which you can see on the webcast.*



TREASURER'S REPORT

The financial year of 2011 – 2012 has seen the Association achieve a surplus of just over £12,000. This was similar to the previous year as a result of slightly higher expenses being more or less matched by a small uplift in our income.

Once again membership numbers have stayed steady and this has allowed us to project with a bit more certainty potential future income as subscription income again exceeded expenditure.

I have reported in the last couple of years that we were becoming more reliant on non-subscription income to maintain a surplus. As you have already heard, we are now looking to start investing the surpluses from previous years to develop the Association further to the benefit of members, which was the idea behind raising subscription fees three years ago.

Meanwhile, our non-subscription income was bolstered by the appearance of charges for the Jennifer Tipton Master Classes and the RSC visit in conjunction with the STLD. These however only went to contributing to the costs we incurred for these events. The Focus advertising revenue dropped to less than 50% of the total of other income and so we remain extremely grateful to ETC and Clay Paky for their continued support in this respect.

Bank interest inevitably remains low and all the economic news suggests that this could stay



THE 2012 **ALD**[#] ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TREASURER'S REPORT continued

the same even beyond the current financial year. We are currently earning in one year what we used to receive in one quarter.

In terms of expenditure, production costs for Focus continue to be our single biggest outlay, and this year the cost has stayed the same as last year as a change of printers and printing method which allowed us to save money on the publication last year. Currently full colour and 40 pages, any further regular expansion to its size will have a large knock on effect into our postage costs as its weight would send envelopes into the next postage band. Postage of Focus alone costs us over £3,500 a year up by £1,000 this year. April 2012 also saw VAT added to a number of services from Royal Mail for the first time and this is making Focus as expensive to send to members as it is to print. Whilst we remain committed to the print version, the recent introduction of E-Focus points towards a future opportunity to make further cost reductions.

Expenditure on print items and publications such as the annual directory and trade show 'Joining the ALD' Focus special remains pretty much static. We are co two quotes from alternative suppliers that shows our current deal is still very competitive.

Once again secretarial costs were under budget for the year by 10%, as were office costs. Other sizeable outgoings were for our legal expenses such as accountants and insurance and the cost of representing the ALD at trade shows around the country also remain fairly static.

Of course another increase in running costs was added to by another rise in the VAT rate to 20% in January 2012. The full extent of this will filter through into the 2012/13 accounts with a full year of effect. I'm sure that all members can associate with how this particular increase can affect even everyday costs. I am glad to report that the increase in VAT threshold continues to rise quicker than our income,

meaning that we are not currently in danger of having to register for this although the executive remain aware of the issue and continue to monitor the situation and its implications.

Some money that was budgeted for but not spent was for the TMA Best Lighting Design Award which we had sponsored for the previous three years. The TMA has reverted to just a design Award for which LDs (and Sound designers) are eligible to be nominated. Unfortunately the TMA did not inform us of this change until the nominations were announced. A management moving the goal posts? Mmmmm.....

So in conclusion our 50th Anniversary year saw us once again show a strong consolidation of funds. I would hope that the last few years of surplus can underpin the future development of the ALD,

but we continue to investigate ways look to make us more cost efficient while working to expand and improve the activities and range of services for our members.

As ever, there is an overview of last year's finances available if anyone wishes to look at them.

For the last nine years, that last sentence has been the end of my annual report. However that is not the case this year.

I came to the role of Treasurer in June 2003 and now feel that with the proposed changes that have been discussed, that the Administration role will develop to the point that combining two roles as I have for six years will be detrimental to both.

So I hereby announce my intention to stand down as Treasurer at 2013's AGM. If anyone is interested in taking over, please feel free to contact me for a chat. 📧



Knights of Illumination Award 2012 Winner

David Finn: Dance



Simon Bennison accepts the award on behalf of David Finn

**David Finn for
Sweet Violets
Royal Ballet**

"For his stealthily evoked sense of place capturing the visually and morally murky world of Walter Sickert paintings, from the darkly claustrophobic and blood-stained to the stark energy of music-hall."

*Production photo:
© ROH / Bill Cooper*

Knight of Illumination Award 2012 Winner Howard Harrison: Drama



**Howard Harrison for
Anna Christie
Donmar Warehouse**

"For bathing and shrouding the actors with light and his use of light in perfect harmony with set and sound to whip up a storm of wind, rain and churning sea on the tiny Donmar stage."

Production photo: Johan Persson



Knight of Illumination Award 2012 Winner

Neil Austin: Musical



Gary Longfield accepts the award on behalf of Neil Austin

**Neil Austin for
Company
Sheffield Crucible**

"For his arresting use of colour, with contrasting panels of light embedded into the set, its precise patterning driving key dramatic moments and defining transitions and mood changes."

Production photo: Ellie Kurtz

Knight of Illumination Award 2012 Winner DM Wood: Opera



John-Paul Percox accepts the award
on behalf of DM Wood

DM Wood for *Suor Angelica* Royal Opera House

*"For creating a gleaming,
clinical world of a hospital
ward run by nuns, defining and
igniting the sufferings of Suor
Angelica with fresh intensity
and anguish."*

Production photo:
© ROH / Bill Cooper 2011



eFocus: October / November 2012 – The Journal of the Association of Lighting Designers – "More art, less tools..."



update

Light Relief received some major donations during this year's PLASA show in Earls Court in September.

The Trustees were delighted by the continuing support of ROSCO who donated the proceeds from the sale of R313 Light Relief Yellow, and this year's donation has brought the overall amount raised from this colour to over £18,000!

ETC has also put in place a very generous scheme that benefits Light Relief for the European sales of their essential app and this year an outstanding contribution was made of £16,855! It is also worth celebrating that our American sister charity Behind the Scenes benefits from the same scheme for sales of the app in the USA.

Light Relief benefited from the astonishing Olympic spirit as well. AED auctioned one of the Olympic torches at PLASA, engaging a professional auctioneer to make sure the maximum was raised and with all the proceeds going to Light Relief. This raised over £6000 pounds for the charity. We are very grateful to them and all of our corporate sponsors for this generosity.

Clay Paky's President and CEO Pasquale Quadri presented Light Relief with a substantial donation of £5000 at this year's glittering Knight of Illumination Awards in London. Clay Paky is already heavily involved with the lighting



Pasquale Quadri, CEO of Clay Paky, presents Rick Fisher with a donation to Light Relief at the Knight of Illuminations Awards dinner.

industry, not just as a manufacturer but also as a main sponsor and organiser of the KOI Awards and as corporate sponsor of Light Relief.

The Trustees also wish to thank the many lighting designers and ALD members who continue to support *Behind The Scenes Day*, which this year raised over £4000 from individuals making sure that Light Relief can always respond quickly and effectively to help our colleagues when they need it most.

We are always anxious to hear about members of our lighting community who might need some support from Light Relief and often friends and colleagues do this. However, if you know of any one who might need our help please contact me, or any of the trustees via our website www.lightrelief.org.uk. 🇬🇧





Edinburgh International Festival 2012

A welcome return for critic and journalist **Mark Fisher** who shares our enthusiasm for lighting...

Light was at the very heart of the 2012 Edinburgh International Festival. The first show to open – and just about the last to close – took place on the slopes of Arthur's Seat where the environmental art company NVA used the power of LED technology to turn an after-hours ramble into a mesmerising light-based adventure.

A response to the London Olympic Games, **Speed of Light** sought to celebrate the dedication of the endurance runner. For each evening's performance, NVA commandeered large numbers of volunteer runners (totalling 4000 over the three-week festival), who moved in choreographed formation over the hill. Setting off at staggered intervals after dark, the audience climbed to the peak, all the while watching the runners.

What made them visible was their specially designed suits of lights, powered by their own kinetic energy and operated remotely to add colour to the human patterns choreographed by Litza Bixler. The brief given to head designer James Johnson was to devise *"a lighting system that expresses the movement of running and walking [and] uses the minimum amount of power but gives the greatest possible effect"*. The company wanted both runners and audience to generate electrical power, with kit that could be worn by large numbers in a variety of weathers.

Working with the Edinburgh International

Science Festival, Johnson devised a webbing suit for the runners that incorporated colour LEDs, battery pack and radio control. Each audience member, meanwhile, was given a walking staff with a glowing acrylic rod in the base that illuminated the route and created streams of white light in the distance where each group walked. At the top of each staff was a removable polycarbonate tube that housed two LED lights that were powered by the upwards and downwards motion of the stick as it struck the ground.

Surprisingly, despite the exertions of the athletes, the idea of running was not particularly present in the performance, part of the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad. In the dark, it was hard to get a sense of the scale of the runners; they could have been galaxies millions of light years away or some illuminated giant much closer at hand. The distortion, however, was part of the pleasure. With their synchronised movements, the runners made abstract patterns, defining the contours of the landscape and making you look anew at the backdrop of stars and city lights.

From different vantage points during the two-and-a-half hour trek, you looked down to see silver starbursts, pulsing red blood cells and ice blue butterflies. One minute, they seemed to form a Miro line, the next, a Jackson Pollock splatter.

Eventually, as we neared a glowing cairn on the hilltop, those images were accompanied by alien harmonies emanating from our walking sticks, adding to the otherworldly loss of perspective. There are plans to restage the show in other cities, including Glasgow in 2014, the year of the Commonwealth Games.

In that production, light was at the centre of the theatrical event. Several other festival shows, meanwhile, used light to put the audience at their heart. It's a simple technique to keep the house lights up for the opening moments of a play, but it was used to good effect a number of times during the month.



Above, and facing: *Speed of Light*.

Photos: Sally Jubb



Edinburgh International Festival 2012 Mark Fisher

Barry McGovern in Samuel Beckett's *Watt*
with lighting by James McConnell.
Photo: Jeff Clarke.

Tom Creed's staging of Samuel Beckett's *Watt*, for example, was one of those productions where the theatrical space was defined entirely by light. At the start, lighting designer James McConnell took the lights down on the audience almost imperceptibly slowly, drawing us unknowingly towards the stage where actor Barry McGovern appeared out of the blackness of the Royal Lyceum stage in a column of grey light. It was a technique that worked for this production not only because Beckett's novel is a comic study of nothingness and we were being ushered towards the gloom, but also because McGovern is a master of the art of storytelling and it was crucial our focus was exclusively on him, the precision of his delivery and every perfectly chosen word.

In the same space a week or so later, Vince Herbert kept the house lights up for similar reasons as singer Camille O'Sullivan and pianist Feargal Murray launched into their superb cabaret-infused interpretation of Shakespeare's *The Rape*



Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece*.
Lighting by Vince Herbert.
Photo: RSC/Ellie Kurtz.

of Lucrece. Best known as a chanteuse specialising in Nick Cave, Radiohead and Bob Dylan, O'Sullivan proved herself an expert storyteller. The deeper she took us into Shakespeare's tragic poem, the more Herbert narrowed the focus until, by the rape itself, she was held in a sharp, relentless spotlight. He also did a gorgeous job at picking out the autumnal colours of Lily Arnold's set and

responding to the changing moods of the poem, be it by bathing the stage in bright morning light or casting gothic shadows against the wall at a moment of hysterical fear.

It gave tremendous visual support to O'Sullivan, in Elizabeth Freestone's production for the RSC, as she drew out the heart-wrenching tragedy of the poem.



A Midsummer Night's Dream, lighting by Ivan Vinogradov.
Photo: Natalia Cheban.

With a similar emphasis on the audience's shared experience, but to quite different effect, Ivan Vinogradov kept the house lights up for long passages of Dmitry Krymov's exuberant production of **A Midsummer Night's Dream**. This was a version of Shakespeare's play that dispensed with everything but the Mechanicals and their telling of the story of Pyramus and Thisbe (two enormous puppets), performed to an irreverent audience which, for as long as the house lights were up, seemed to include us.

The show began in the stalls in a frenzy of noise, as the actors carried a huge tree trunk through the auditorium with a nervous dog tottering on top. That same dog – the star of the show – was later left alone on stage, sitting in a sad and beautiful silhouette. Before long, the house lights were up again, implicating all of us in the ramshackle action.



Les Naufragés du Fol Espoir (Aurores).
Lighting by Elsa Revol.
Photo: Michèle Lauvent.

Three shows at the Royal Highland Centre on the edge of town were given purpose-built stages to match the conditions of the original productions. In the case of one of these, the four-hour **Les Naufragés du Fol Espoir (Aurores)**, it meant replicating the ample dimensions of Ariane Mnouchkine's stage at the Cartoucherie, a former army munitions warehouse in Paris. This included creating the illusion of natural light through the sloping ceiling, as well as having performers operating follow spots and hand-held lights to maintain the sense of communal creation that is Mnouchkine's calling card. It was a superb show, underpinned by consummate technical skills.



2008: *Macbeth* with lighting by Jacqueline Sobiszewski. Photo: Pavel Antonov.

In a neighbouring space, the audience for **2008: *Macbeth***, a 21st-century reworking of Shakespeare's tragedy by Poland's TR Warszawa, was confronted by an enormous wall divided into four playing areas. Lighting designer Jacqueline Sobiszewski had to capture the brilliant Middle Eastern daylight in one playing space, while coping with live video projection in another. Sometimes the focus would be on one corner, while a band of soldiers were visible in a shadowy half-light elsewhere. You can only guess at the technical discussions that took place about the phenomenal fireball that set one space ablaze and sent a blast of heat at least half way up the auditorium.
































Above and below: *Wonderland*. Lighting, set and projection by Kai Fischer. Photos: Tommy Ga-Ken Wan.

Being responsible for set, lighting and projection design, Kai Fischer gave himself similar technical challenges in ***Wonderland***, a morose journey into the darker corners of internet pornography by Glasgow's Vanishing Point. He created two playing spaces on either side of a transparent screen. Downstage, you'd see filming taking place, with video images projected live onto an undulating curtain. Upstage, on the other side of the screen, you'd see an everyday living room where the actors silently mouthed their conversation, as if being spied upon from afar, or else there was David Lynch-influenced nightmare imagery of sadistic chat-rooms and snuff movies. As a show it was bleak, but it was never less than technically accomplished. 📺



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We are currently undertaking a review of the benefits outside of those that come as part of the standard ALD membership items such as *Focus*, free entry to the PLASA and ABTT shows and invites to ALD events.

This leaflet outlines these additional benefits and will expand as and when we reach new agreements with companies and organisations that will benefit our members and enhance their membership of the ALD. For the latest news of Member benefits, please visit the member section of the ALD website.

We are happy to hear from ALD corporate members if they have discounts or benefits that ALD members may be able to access.

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information on industry standards and a fortnightly copy of PLASA's Standards News email newsletter.

- **Free initial advice** on copyright, patents, trademarks and counterfeiting.
- Debt management advice, plus a commission based debt collection service which operates on a no success, no fee basis.
- **Insight** into a client's ability to pay through a credit check service on UK businesses, providing a credit rating, the latest set of accounts and information on company directors.
- **Special rate insurance** packages from a company that specialises in the entertainment, event, TV and media industries including comprehensive cover, travel insurance and claims for loss of income, production and technical equipment.
- **Special rates on PLASA events**, including business seminars, workshops and conferences.

The price of this specially negotiated package is £60 per year. Full details and an application form for the benefits are available via the ALD website, or you can request a form from the ALD Office, fill it in, and email to aldoffer@plasa.org.

Once signed up, you'll get an introductory email outlining the services in more detail, together

with the helpline numbers and any other special access codes. If you would like to know more about any of these services, just call Norah Phillips at PLASA on +44 (0)1323 524125.



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BOOK REVIEW: WILL YOU, WON'T YOU, WILL YOU, WON'T YOU, WILL YOU JOIN THE DANCE?

asks **James Laws**

This monumental survey of 15 years of World Scenography is but the first volume of three which the authors plan and which they hope will then be continued by others. They are starting from the point that René Hainaux's four volumes of *Stage Design Throughout the World, 1935-1975* left off.

Note the change of title in this new series; Stage Design is now Scenography. This term is one that OISTAT has embraced from its earliest days. It means different things to different people; google Definition of Scenography and you get lots about perspective technique in scenery, leading back to the Greeks. The Americans look on it as a European production idea, which is perhaps one factor that leads to perceived European over-representation in the volume presently under review. Pamela Howard's *What is Scenography?* (published by Routledge, 29 West 35th St., NY, NY 10001 and

Routledge, 11 New Fetter Lane, London, EC4P, 4EE - ISBN 0-415-10085-2 (pbk) ISBN 0-415-10084-4 (hbk), explains the concept very well:

"The Scenographer visually liberates the text and the story behind it, by creating a world in which the eyes see what the ears do not hear."

"Scenography - the creation of a stage space - does not exist as a self-contained art work. ... Scenography is always incomplete until the performer steps into the playing space and engages the audience. Moreover, Scenography is the joint statement of the director and the visual artist of their view of the play, opera or dance that is being presented to the audience as a united piece of work."

So, Scenography is an over-

arching concept of a fully integrated designer or (in some productions) design team, who carries an interpretive responsibility, shared with the director and the performers.

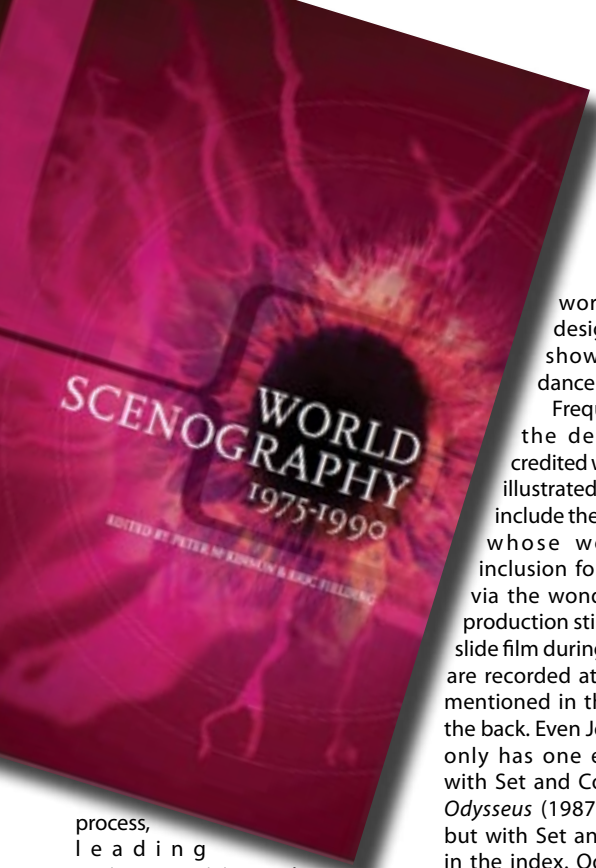
The authors assume that their readers understand this concept. They use their introduction to show the method of production selection for the book, via Associate Editors and Contributing Researchers, each with geographical responsibilities which, between them, do fully cover the globe. Somehow they have achieved the unenviable task of whittling down the thousands of productions and events that cover a design revolution, so that over 400 productions are covered at the average of about an American Quarto page each.

The criteria applied and the overall achievement are admirable. The editors have sought the groundbreaking productions, introducing the era with, (from the UK), the *Rocky Horror Show* and Hockney's

Glyndebourne *Rakes Progress*. They progress through *Cats* to *Metropolis*, to the Commonwealth Games Auckland 1990 Opening Ceremony Cultural Display, which pointed the way for these events to become major production numbers. The visual assembly and display are superb.

There are design minutiae which we would never otherwise see, such as exquisite costume sketches from Mexico, Japan, you name it. The introduction mentions the on-going convergence of design styles, worldwide and it looks forward to the next volume, covering 1990-2005, when East & West Germany are united and computer-aided design becomes commonplace.

However, the Editors do not mention an overall and world-wide trend for 1975-1990; a trend that it amply illustrates but (literally) under-acknowledges. That is the way lighting design has become a lynchpin partner in the scenographic



process,
leading
to its practitioners'
emergence from the anonymous
ranks of back-stage toilers. This is
surprising, given that one of the
editors, Professor Peter McKinnon,

worked as a lighting designer on some 450 shows, principally for dance and opera.

Frequently in this book, the designers who are credited with the production illustrated in the text do not include the lighting designers, whose work often wins inclusion for the productions, via the wonderful and vibrant production stills, mostly taken on slide film during this era. If the LDs are recorded at all, most are only mentioned in the index credits in the back. Even Josef Svoboda (who only has one entry) is credited with Set and Costume Design for *Odysseus* (1987) in the main text but with Set and Lighting Design in the index. Oddly enough, New Zealand seems to value its lighting people more than most. In the period 1975 to 1990, lighting design found a worldwide vocabulary and it enabled scenic design to move to

a level of freedom unseen before.

We have reached the 1980s in our series of ALD50 history celebration pieces and it is clear that we had a coherent and organised lighting community in the UK, with a voice to represent practitioners. Where are Richard Pilbrow, Robert Ornbø, David Hersey, Andrew Bridge? They were all producing world-class cutting-edge scenographic lighting internationally in the years 1975-1990 and they are not given a single text design credit between them, despite some of their key productions featuring with good illustrations.

Sometimes, even more exasperatingly, the lighting designer is praised in a review within the text and is still not given a formal heading credit for lighting. This is the fate of David Murray, LD for *The Fall of the House of Usher*, Australia 1990.

The 1990-2005 volume will cover what is to us very recent history.

It will be instructive to see how lighting is handled. The contributors and editors have no lack of creative imagination, so here's a suggestion for them when next they convene:

Imagine looking at these groundbreaking designs under working lights.

I don't want to be negative about a very important pictorial and descriptive record that gets many things right, is laden with detail and which continues a major series on design history. But it should be read in the knowledge that the contribution of lighting designers is not fully embraced... so far. Perhaps it will all work out as the story unfolds in the next volume, from 1990 onwards. Will we join the dance?



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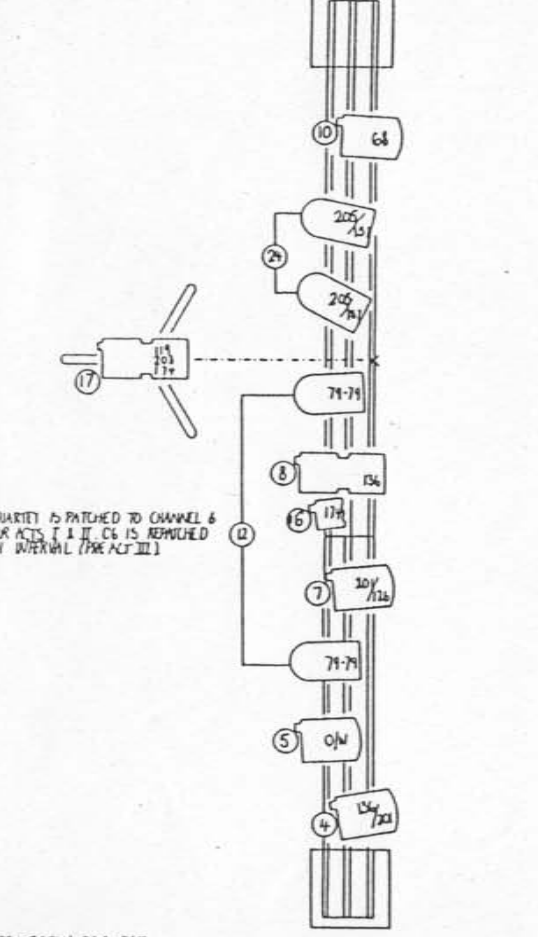
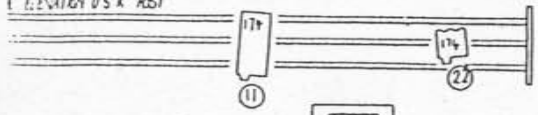
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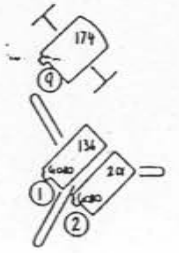
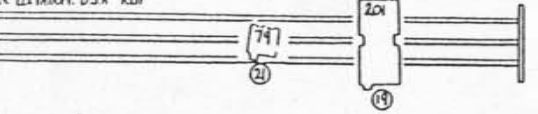
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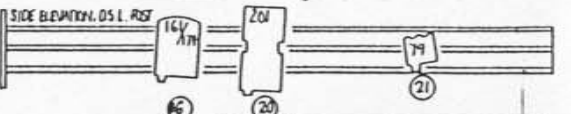
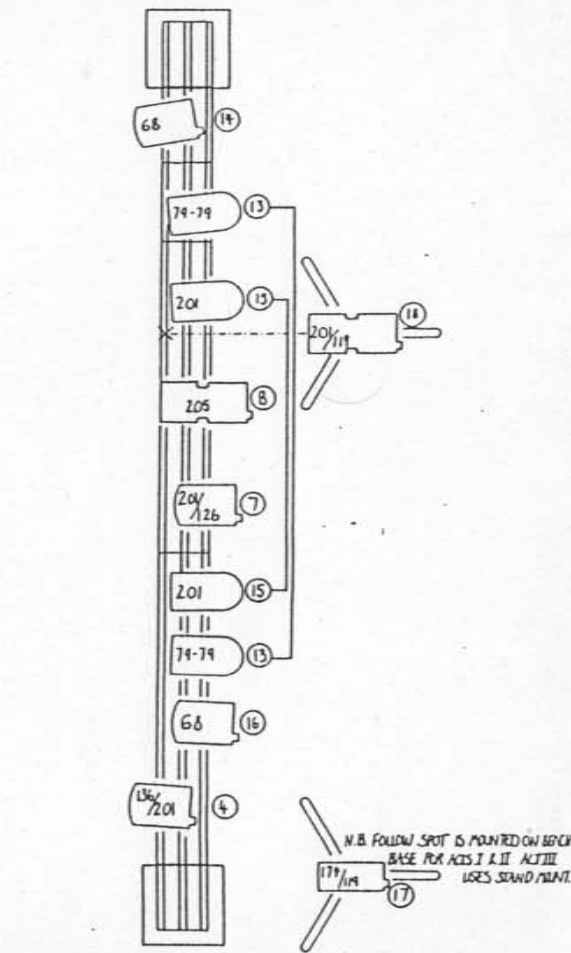
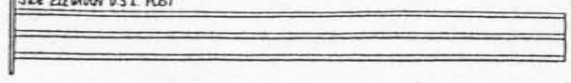
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 COMPANY: SCOTTISH OPERA GO ROUND
 DESIGNER: CHARLOTTE WATTS
 LIGHTING DESIGNER: MARK JONATHAN
 DRAWING: PLAN TOURING RIG
 DRAWN BY: JON DRISCOLL DATE: 3.09.95

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