

ALD #

FOCUS

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

October/November 2018

Salome
English National Opera
Director: Adena Jacobs
Designer: Marg Horwell
Lighting designer: Lucy Carter
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In the spotlight this issue:

- Knight of Illumination winners
- Edinburgh lighting roundup
- Lighting for babies

...and much, much more...

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From the chair...

What a year 2018 has turned out to be! The ALD has put its name on the map of the theatre and live performance world, not only at home but also abroad.

Our #SSL campaign, run by a truly amazing group of people, showed that if you want to effect change, you can. The Save Stage Lighting team rallied support across Europe and made representations to the EU DG Energy Department, leading to the drafting of the agreement to an exception by the regulator for most of our performance lighting lamps and equipment. Both the performance industry and manufacturing will, by this brave action, gain a considerable extension so that new technology can catch up to the required standards without destroying theatre in the UK and the continent.

This huge effort over a short time has shown that we can and will make change to our industry and that we don't need to be a passive association. Let's hope it doesn't always have to be as so full on as #SSL had to be, but let's continue to push the boundaries and be an association that helps make better working conditions and greater sustainability for the whole industry.

Ways we can effect change

1. With Brexit nearly upon us we are going to need to forge relationships abroad to make sure we are being kept in the loop of legislation at home and abroad.
2. As the world leaders of entertainment production we can also work with our unions to encourage labour movement within our industry.
3. I also hope we can continue to build relationships with our corporate members and share industry changes; enabling the manufacturers and suppliers working with our members to improve the lives of freelancers and employees through collaboration and teamwork.

Looking back at 2018

You might remember the ALD started 2018 with a fantastic away weekend with the Executive spending two days planning the future of the association. It was great to have so many younger members in the group, who are the next generation of lighting practitioners. They believe in their chosen careers and want to see the lighting and entertainment



*Johanna Town
ALD chair*

industry be a sustainable and creative place to work. It was inspiring to listen to everyone's views on the future. It resolved my personal ambition to continue to help make the ALD be a player and a voice that is heard.

Just a little reminder of what we are all working towards:

The Big Six:

1. To create a better and more relevant resource for our members.
2. To promote the work of the ALD more actively within the industry.
3. To create a more outward and campaigning association.
4. To provide more opportunities for our members to develop and grow.
5. To reach out to people from all backgrounds and socioeconomic groups through education and outreach.
6. To create more resources and partnerships to help the association expand.

Administrator position available

To help develop our goals the ALD will soon be appointing a new administrator to work alongside Ian's amazing leadership as Executive Director. This appointment allows Ian more time to look after our projects, as well as expand the ALD presence around the world through collaboration with other leading lighting bodies. If you are interested in this job or know someone who might be, please do get in touch with Ian for more details or look out for the forthcoming adverts for the post.

Press and tweets

This year has also seen some great press coverage for the ALD whenever we responded to outside events and issues. We're now included in debates from education to diversity, and I hope this will continue to grow over the coming year. It's great to see so many members speaking out and giving their opinions too. All the chat on forums such as Facebook and Twitter is good for the association, and it shows the industry we do care and that we want change.

Articles creating conversations

In the last issue we read another of Lucy Carter's brilliant Professional articles, and these articles are generating a response within the membership, which is exactly what we want to happen. Thank you to Charlotte Burton for her response on Twitter: *"Just wanted to say thank you to*

@LucyCarterlight for your article in the latest @the_ALD Focus magazine. This is exactly the kind of conversation that I am interested in, only today a young working father also expressed how relevant it had been to him. I'm glad it's happening and I am looking forward to reading more."

I agree these are the very articles and conversations we need to be writing. I would love to see more coming from you, our members. Let's really start covering discussions on how we work and what we want to see changed. The website now includes a blog page; why not contribute? Please send in an article either for Focus, the blog or both.

Fundraising

Many of you will know that the SSL campaign came at a personal cost to the people involved. Campaigning was happening from early morning to late at night over five months, high-level meetings were being squeezed in between tech sessions, reports and drafts were written and re-written long into the night. Much precious family time was missed to enable this campaign to happen and be a success. I dread to think what the future of theatre lighting would have looked like if this group of dedicated individuals hadn't been so proactive and unrelenting.

The ALD wants to say thank you to the SSL team members by raising some funds to compensate them for the costs over months of their lives. Paid work was turned down

and much personal time sacrificed. And we mustn't forget they continue to donate their time as this work continues today, albeit on a smaller scale. The bill for the campaign is estimated at £35,000, covering personal expenditure by the team for travel, hotels, fares to Brussels, office expenditure and, of course, the very successful gobo campaign. If we collect enough, we hope to add a small additional sum to partially compensate a very dedicated group of people for lost work.

Therefore, I am asking personally for your help to raise this relatively small amount. If you are a manufacturer who is now more aware of the EU's plans than you were before, if you are a reseller or hire company whose stock has been spared due to this intervention, if you are a producer or theatre owner that could not possibly afford the implied refurbishment – then please contribute to this campaign. And, of course, we would welcome individual contributions from our members or non-members. Details on how to contribute are at www.ald.org.uk/ssl-fundraising.

We are very happy to furnish details of the budget for the sum being raised to enquiries – please mail office@ald.org.uk and please put SSL Costs Campaign (or SSLCC) in the subject line.

Any remaining funds after distribution will be re-donated to one of the theatre charities.

Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Life outside the theatre

Lucy Carter on work-life balance



So it's back to school today and, as every parent will know, whether you are a stay-at-home parent or a working parent, it is such a relief to get the kids back to school and back into a routine. It makes the juggle a little more achievable, as your dual duties of parent are suspended for six hours of the day while they are at school and you can concentrate on work!

For me the summer holiday has been a daily sense of failure – well, certainly on the days when we have had nothing planned. I alternate between days where I try to work and end the day feeling like a terrible parent as the kids have spent the whole day on the Xbox or YouTube and making their own lunches, and by the time

it gets to 6pm I drag myself from my office and realise I have no food in for tea, that I have neglected my parenting duties and that the kids are wired from all-day screen time with no breaks.

Then, the next day, I try to concentrate on the children, coax them off gadgets and get them outside. I say coax, but it is essentially a massive row that lasts all day and only succeeds when I threaten no Wi-Fi, no pocket money and no new clothes for holiday! I try to answer emails and develop some thoughts on a new design, but by the end of the day I feel like I have failed on all counts: I have got no work done, and I have not had any quality time with the children – unless you count the trip to Pizza Express to get them out and bribe them off their screens.

So it was with a small amount of trepidation we set off on holiday together for two weeks in Crete. How lucky I felt to manage this financially and to afford the time off work as well! Anyway, I say trepidation, but my thoughts were about two weeks with the two children and my partner and no one else to talk to. I was intending to completely switch off email and messages, social media, etc., so I was

slightly concerned about getting bored, and I was wondering if I really did want to read books for two weeks and switch off entirely.

The two weeks were great and relaxing. We all read four books each, and we had to start reading each other's books. Believe me, that was the point where I started to think about work, when I had to resort to reading teenage girl literature! I got bored, which was a very good sign that I had relaxed and had nothing to do. Then my brain just started being creative of its own accord: new ideas for my own installation work, for new creative ventures, for current designs I am working on. I couldn't stop them coming and it didn't feel like work, but I did want to jump online and research them further and communicate my thoughts to other members of the creative teams. So I felt like the complete switch-off had worked and had been good for me on all levels; even having enforced time with my family felt like a good and positive thing. Who knew!

Getting back to work after the holiday has been hell. After a much-needed detox of the brain and body, I found it hard to reattach myself to work and to the



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had our first stage and piano, which, for those of you who don't know – because I didn't when I first started – is a rehearsal with the performers on stage with piano accompaniment. A kind of technical rehearsal, although it isn't, because it is more about blocking and scenic cueing than getting the whole look right before you move on. It's the first time I get to try lighting with performers, set and sometimes costumes. It's the first time I get to TRY my ideas and there are 100 people in the auditorium watching! Everyone there is part of the company, the show or the various departments in the building; they need to be there, but I know everyone is watching and judging. On good days I can filter out my paranoia and ignore them and work very fast to try other ideas, make it better, respond in the moment, to change what clearly isn't working. Other days, especially if none of it is working and it's clear we need to try a new conceptual idea, I feel like I have some kind of post-traumatic stress by the end of the day. My head races with all the comments I should have filtered out, with all the clever things I should have said to people when they said something within my earshot about the

constant rush. I wanted to take my time over coffee, wake up slowly and sit and talk after dinner. I wanted to stare into space and think.

Then I got to wondering if holidays were healthy at all – if switching off entirely and getting off the treadmill essentially meant it was harder to get back on it. I begrudged the fact that it was all over. It reminded me of how I would like my life to be, with time for myself and for the family, for me to be in a mentally more relaxed pace.

Was stopping for a bit any good or did it just give my brain something else to stress about and miss?

What's the best balance of work and relaxation, work and life? How can we find

space in our life to have fun, exercise, relax and keep well within our normal working week, rather than wait for two weeks a year when we crash and then our minds and bodies can't jump back to it? I was asked about this, by a younger female lighting designer after my last article, about balancing health, life and mental wellbeing. It's hard to talk about, isn't it! I don't want to sound ungrateful that I have work – and lots of it is interesting work and it pays the bills. But in the last five years I have definitely wanted to run away from it all.

Here's an example of why I find it hard to take care of my mental health. I am lighting an opera at the moment. So after one single three-hour lighting session we

Life outside the theatre

Lucy Carter

lighting. Don't they realise that this session is my equivalent of a white-card model? I would love to be the kind of person to not let it bother me, but I am not. I don't want people to think I don't know what I am doing, that I am searching for the look. Really, what we do as a creative team at this point, is see the first ideas on stage and then, because we have been talking about our concepts and what we want to portray to the audience for a long time, over a process that has seen us change our tack many times, we can assess what

we see and call upon our bank of research, ideas and conversations to try another idea. The buzzing head from thirteen hours of having eight voices in your head, four of them your own voices, is exhausting. Then, of course, you sleep badly because you can't stop thinking about it, and then you go back the next day to do it all again. "Eat, sleep, plot, repeat!"

If you have this kind of process every month or every other month, it's massively hard to stop your mind from being overwhelmed and, worst of all, it's really

difficult to feel or be creative when there is so much noise about the process going on in your head.

Here's an example of why I find it hard to take care of my physical health: starting work at 9am and finishing at 10pm every day for two weeks, except Sundays, when I get the first train home to see the family, and the early train back for Monday morning. In the morning before 9am I have to eat, make myself self relatively presentable and do the journey into work. In the evening at 10pm I have to talk with the creative team, reassess and make a plan for the next day, and get back to where I am staying. Then I need to process my own thoughts and those of the director and come up with a response for the next day. So the potential non-work time is often about six or seven hours. How can I do a food shop, prepare healthy food for the next day, exercise, speak to friends and family, and nurture/nourish myself and sleep in that time?

Over the years I have tried to go for walks at lunch breaks, food shop in the dinner break, make food for the next day before bed. I have started exercise routines, vitamin regimes, meditation,

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practising mindfulness, yoga, walking out of the door at 10pm and not staying to talk things through. It just makes for more stress trying to fit those things in and keep them up and a lot less sleep. There's no time to sleep if I am trying to stay healthy.

It feels like I am saying the same thing every time I write my bit for *Focus*: family blah blah, work blah blah, it's hard, it's not good for me, schedules are crap, respect for what we do is crap, life-work balance is impossible.

So the questions I continue to ask myself are: Are long shut-off holidays good for you? How can I balance a job in lighting design with life outside of work and maintain a healthy lifestyle and mental wellbeing? Is it by trying to tell producers, companies and venues what the reality is like? Or is it to do it for 25 years and then stop doing it because you feel broken and hate it now?

So that's it. That's what I have written this time around. I have been flat out for three weeks with only Sundays off to dash home. I am tired, and I have been trying to write this article throughout. It is what it is and has been hard to write with clarity. Time to send it into the editor.

To end on a positive note, I have just had another great collaboration with a creative team. No shouting or egos during technicals, or the whole process actually. Clear communication without power plays and demands. It's amazing that I find it unusual, but I become clearer and clearer about how I want to be treated at work, and I hope I will become better at calling it out when the negative behaviour happens in the future. I know that it will help with my mental health and help me keep a creative mind during the process, as opposed to becoming creatively blocked because I am processing the badly managed working processes.

It was also apparently the first all-female creative team for an ENO production, a fact that has been publicised and mentioned at every opportunity. I am very proud of that. But let's hope that this soon becomes so normal that we are just called "a great creative team", as opposed to an all-female creative team in the after-show speeches! How often do we applaud an all-male creative team for being all male? 🚩



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Opera marathon, part 3

Mark Jonathan lights another three operas



The morning after the opera *Vanessa* opens at Glyndebourne I drive back to London, throw a few bags around and go to London City Airport for the last flight to Geneva. I need to breathe some mountain air before operas seven, eight and nine go into production. I have already had model meetings for operas seven and eight and handed a plan in. And on a spare day in June, I've nipped over to Barcelona to agree things for opera nine.

I'd better give these operas names. Opera seven is *The Enchanted Island* by Jeremy Sams, set to music by Handel and some Baroque colleagues. It was commissioned by the Met in New York and our production will mark the

European première. It has elements of *The Tempest* along with the four lovers from *A Midsummer's Night Dream*, who on their honeymoons are shipwrecked on this very enchanted island. The production calls for magical enchantment, storms and glorious sunshine as well as a darker side of the island, scenes at sea and the shipwreck. It provides plenty of solo opportunities for the singers, including two counter-tenor roles. I'm reunited with the designer, Nicky Shaw, who has designed a wooden, raked, semi-circular stage with a green, wooden semi-circle wall that splits to provide multiple passageways for light and characters to enter the space.

Opera eight is Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*. I know this opera well as I worked on the famous Glyndebourne production designed by David Hockney, making the relights on tour to Robert Bryan's original. I also stepped into two roles in the opera one season back in 1992 when Glyndebourne was short of short actors. I rather enjoyed racing between setting lights in the fast scene changes, to slipping into my costume, wig and makeup for my appearance in the street scene in the last scene in act one followed

by an appearance in the famous auction scene in act two. I think it's a good idea for LDs to have experience in all areas and knowing what it feels like to be on stage can be useful. So, *The Rake* is an old friend while *The Enchanted Island* will be a new discovery. This production of *The Rake's Progress* is designed by the brilliant designer James Cotterill, who sets the production amidst a painting in the style of Howard Hodgkin, taking the 1950s period of the opera's first performance as the basis for the costume designs.

The company I am working with for the first time is British Youth Opera. The schedule is packed. As usual we will have to work fast. BYO provides some very unique and impressive opportunities not only for young opera singers but also for graduating and postgraduate students in direction, stage management, production management, and stage, costume and lighting design. The students involved get a chance to work directly with their professional counterparts and fill in some gaps in their experience. I am paired with Jacob Gowler from RADA who is keen to experience his first operas. I am glad to hear that the students get a grant towards

The Enchanted Island
British Youth Opera
Director: Stuart Barker
Designer: Nicky Shaw
Lighting designer: Mark Jonathan
Photographer: Robert Workman



their accommodation and travel costs. All production areas are supervised by professionals, and I am joined by James Smith, who ensures all the production lighting is organised with the very brilliant programmer Michael Fox.

The budget limits the rig but I opt for as many movers as I can get my hands on with the intention that nothing will need to be touched overhead with just a few refocusses on the booms. I haven't quite allowed for my pipe-end generics being knocked, nor the above-average failures

on some of the older moving lights, but the LX crew patiently change out fixtures, and I wonder if I could have done the productions with more expensive rental equipment but fewer fixtures. I think not.

Rehearsals are conveniently situated at the South Bank University. At last, a job where I can live at home. The productions will be staged at the 1,000-seat Peacock in the West End. I have lit ballet there many times but I'm interested to see how the space fares as an opera house. In term time the theatre is also used as a lecture

theatre by the LSE. How sad it is that they have installed such charmless house lighting, which I'm sure serves the students well in lectures, but it gives the theatre a classroom feel – and of course the house light fade is shameful. Never mind; I hope we will stun the audience once we get past the grey-white houselights!

My rep rig works well and in order that the young voices of the singers are not over strained we often find that we have a long morning rehearsal of one opera followed by an afternoon changeover and then a long evening rehearsal of the other opera. Lunch is late and supper is early and it's a tough day for all technical departments. Somehow, we make it and I'm glad I haven't tried to do much refocusing between the two operas. Using followspots could have been a great failsafe but we can't afford the operators. This means singers will need to hit their marks and my "moving specials" will have to work hard. This company boxes well above its weight and the operas are well received; the morning after *The Rake* opens I find myself getting some more Alpine air.

The week of hiking goes quickly and its PLASA time. James Eade has persuaded me

Opera marathon, part 3

Mark Jonathan

to join his team of sixteen judges who will judge 46 different products ranging from lighting, audio, rigging and electronic gizmos that have been entered into the Innovation Awards. The products have to have something new on offer and fulfil various criteria. I admit that I've never really liked trade shows and think the manufacturers

will have to work hard to impress me. We are asked to be on parade before 9am on the Sunday opening for a breakfast briefing. My fellow judges cover all the areas from theatre production, through events to theatre, from audio specialists, heads of lighting and concert production managers. Between us there is a lot of knowledge in

the room. Being "forced" to go around the show and pay careful attention focuses me and the time flies by. Apologies to people who I gave a cursory wave to while pointing to my VIP judge badge hoping they would understand why I couldn't stop for a chat. Judges from the theatre lighting world include Vic Pyne, lighting manager at Glyndebourne, and Matt Drury, lighting manager at the NT.

We don't have much time at the end of the day to slip into more formal attire for the splendid KOI (Knight of Illumination) awards. Appreciation must be expressed to the founders of the KOI – Durham and Jenny Marengi with Pio Nahum from Clay Paky – who had the vision to make these much needed awards a reality. Along with all the sponsors and the incredible work done by Sarah Rushton-Read and The Fifth Estate we owe much gratitude. This year, I have been given the honour of presenting the last sword of the evening. It's the Enrico Caironi Award for Lifetime Recognition. I'm sitting next to the recipient who knows that he's going to get the award but he doesn't know that I am charged with presenting it. Everyone else on the table knows, which is rather amusing. On my other side is



Robert Bryan and his wife Anne. Bob was my inspiration, as he was to so many aspiring LDs, including the recipient. The recipient, of course, is my dear friend Keith Benson who I first worked with 40 years ago at Glyndebourne. You will all know that he retired last year after 44 years of continuous service at Glyndebourne. Presenting the last award means I have to be restrained in consuming alcohol so that I don't slur my words, or as I like to call it, "wear my slurds". I manage to avoid wearing my slurds but neck a couple of white wines at the post-show party... That's OK, but I have to put my judge's hat back on promptly the following morning. Years of arduous training means that I'm back, bright as a new LED spotlight, the next day.

I have a day at home packing – and guess what? I'm back on a plane from where I'm writing this, on my way to Barcelona for *I Puritani* – opera number nine in my opera marathon. I have lit this opera already at WNO and in Denmark but it's been a while and so deciphering everything has been quite hard work. Translating what was in the WNO standard rig to units that the elegant Liceu opera house has taken a bit of time. The next morning, I meet director Annilese Miskimmon, assistant director Deborah Cohen, and movement director Kally Lloyd-Jones for coffee and a catch-up. (Designer Leslie Travers still has to jet in.) I'm sad to hear that Debs has been encountering some sexism from

male Italian opera singers. I wonder if sexism could die out and I can stop feeling embarrassed by male behaviour. We discuss whether I can help change things. I'm asked to be watchful to confirm certain suspicions. I go into the splendid opera house, and I am met by the production manager Guillermo Fabra and lighting manager Robert Pinnies. They show me around the set and the LX rig. Everything has been done with impeccable care and attention. After 45 minutes they say, "Go and enjoy Barcelona and be back here on Sunday to focus at 8am." I joke that I have come from the UK and that I have jet-lag and hope that I will have adjusted in time for the early start on Sunday!

As I walk around Barcelona before returning to watch the first stage rehearsal I wonder how the UK can be so misguided to think it's a good idea for us to part company from Europe. I so enjoy getting the chance to make theatre or opera in different countries, but I think that the message that the Europeans are hearing is that we don't want to part of them, which might explain why in this year's MJ opera marathon only one opera is outside of England. Before the Brexit referendum I hardly worked with English opera companies. I arrive back into rehearsal, and I am stunned by the beautiful voices from the multinational cast from more than ten different nations. The rehearsal ends and it's time for a glass of Spanish vino. 🍷



*Marko and Keith Benson, winner of the 2018 Enrico Caironi Lifetime Recognition award
Photo: The Fifth Estate Ltd*

Looking for Marko's tips and tricks? Turn to page 17...



Office Oracle

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

ALD Sponsored Student Scheme

The ALD is delighted to announce that the 2019 Sponsored Student Scheme is now open for applications. The scheme is funded by Corporate members of the ALD.

This scheme allows for students who have not been members of the ALD to enjoy FREE membership until the end of March 2020. It is hoped that both Student and Corporate members will benefit from the increased opportunity to network with each other, creating contacts with the next generation of lighting designers and technicians.

To qualify for Sponsored Student membership, we require the applicant to be studying on a full-time course in the UK, have an interest in the process of live performance lighting and/or video and projection, and have not previously been a member of the ALD.

You can apply to join from the ALD's website homepage by clicking the "Join The ALD" button in the top right-hand corner.

Please note that this scheme is only open to NEW STUDENT memberships of the ALD. Only completed applications that include the name of your college, course, graduation date and a course tutor as your proposer AND have proof of your student status attached to it will be processed for the scheme.

The closing date for applications is Christmas 2018, but the earlier you submit your application, the longer your FREE membership will run for. All memberships run until the end of March 2020 by which point you will need to have informed us if you wish to continue your membership in the normal student category (currently £30 per year).

If you joined as a student member since April 2019, please contact membership@ald.org.uk as you may be eligible to be transferred onto the scheme, with a balance of any fees paid when you joined being held over until the end of your free period.

Those members currently on the scheme and who joined in the autumn of 2017:

your membership will run through until the end of March 2019. We will contact you in the new year to outline your options further. If you have any concerns please contact the ALD Office.

The ALD and direct debits

We are in that downtime point of the membership year where current members have paid their fees that are due, and we have stopped chasing those who hadn't paid by stopping their memberships. Therefore, thoughts start to turn towards the next membership year...

Our direct debit scheme, offered via the website GoCardless.com, now has around 300 members actively using 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 administration fees are more manageable for an organisation of our size to incorporate into the subscription fees themselves and so we can offer it to

members without adding an extra fee as we do with PayPal.

As of January 2018, we are no longer legally allowed to add an administration fee to card payments. For each £85 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 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 and Preferences" page or by contacting 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).

Members' insurance scheme benefit

This scheme gives Professional and Affiliate members up to £10million of public liability and products insurance cover if you work as a freelancer, as well as £1million of professional indemnity cover. It is organised by the same company that run the BECTU and Equity policies, but is

Office Oracle

Ian Saunders

much closer to the policy the Association of Sound Designers has been running for its members for the last couple of years.

You will need to opt into the scheme as an addition to your membership, which you can do at www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/aldcombins.

TheatreCraft 2018

TheatreCraft is the largest free careers event for young people seeking an off-stage career in theatre. This year it is taking place from 9.30am to 4.30pm on Monday 19 November at the Waldorf Hilton Hotel.

From direction to stage management, producing to marketing, lighting to designing, TheatreCraft is the only place to be for a unique glimpse into careers "behind the scenes" in theatre.

TheatreCraft is free and open to anyone aged 16-30 and offers you the chance to take part in workshops led by theatre professionals; explore the vibrant Marketplace packed with leading theatres and education providers; get tips and advice on building your career in the Stage Your Career zone; and meet high profile, influential people in the industry.

You can register to attend and find out more information at www.theatrecraft.org/theatrecraft-2018.

Performance Lighting Design

The second edition of Nick Moran's *Performance Lighting Design* has just been published by Methuen Drama. James Laws will be reviewing it for the December/January issue of *Focus*, but if you can't wait till then, you can order it from the publisher at www.bloomsbury.com/uk/performance-lighting-design-9781350017085. ALD members can take advantage of a 35% discount by using code ALD35, which is valid until 31 December.

Backup news

This year, Backup 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.

This year's KartFest raised an incredible £23,500, the biggest total for any Backup event yet! The Really Useful Group and its team Phantom Racers 2 took first place, in second place was Production Park, and third place went to team DiGiCo.

Backup has recently launched a line of merchandise to spread the word about the help it provides. Items include laundry bags, caps and mugs and are available at www.backuptech.uk/shop. The revenue from merchandise sales goes towards making it possible for Backup to help people get back on their feet.

You can continue to support Backup through AmazonSmile by visiting smile.amazon.co.uk and typing "Backup" in the "Pick your own charitable organisation" window. Every time you buy something through Amazon, you'll be helping Backup to help your industry friends who need it.

KOI-USA nominations

Three ALD members have been nominated in the first-ever KOI awards in the US: **Neil Austin** for Harry Potter and the Cursed Child, **Rob Sinclair** for David Byrne's American Utopia Tour and **Andi Watson** for Radiohead's WASTE Tour 2018. The awards ceremony is on 20 October at the Foundry in the SLS Hotel, Las Vegas. Best of luck! 🍀

Diary dates 2018–19

- 25 October** Vari-Lite Day, Royal Opera House
RSVP to Iain Quinn: iain.quinn@signify.com
- 26 October** ALD members' social
Sponsored by Strand Vari-Lite+
- 19 November** TheatreCraft, Waldorf Hilton Hotel, London
- 30 November** ALD members' social
Sponsored by Sound Technology+ 
- 17 December** 2018 Lighting Lunch
- 14–15 May 2019** PLASA Focus, Royal Armouries, Leeds
- 5–6 June 2019** ABTT Theatre Show, Alexandra Palace, London
- 6–16 July 2019** 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.

+ Members' socials are held at Coach and Horses, Wellington Street, London WC2E 7BD

Marko's tips and tricks













I'm grateful to Jess Bernberg who wrote to me recently about working in rep, which has inspired me to write a tip 'n' trick. Jess asked me: Is it best to try to make the rig do as much as possible for both shows, or should I think of it like two separate rigs? Jess tells me that she has a hire budget that will allow for some rental of moving lights and LED profiles.

Try to overlay both set designs and design your rig to work for both shows. So don't put a valuable moving light in a place where only one show can use it unless you really have to because of the stage design or the particular needs of one show. Try to identify the individual needs of both shows and ensure you cover that in your rig. By all means use generics for predictable needs but try to plan not to refocus difficult-to-access lights. Put the movers in the places that are difficult to access and the LED profiles in places where you can reach them if you are able to or need to refocus.

Using some moving lights and LED profiles would be perfect in that they will allow you to have an unlimited amount of colour hues and focus positions, so you can make the different acts and shows look as different as you like.

So good luck to Jess, who is lighting the NYT rep season. 🍀

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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 November 2018*

Thank you for your support!
For Corporate members, see page 21

Focus – the magazine of the Association of Lighting Designers

New members

Welcome!

Professional members

David Abra*

Max Blackman, London

Joshua Carr, Brighton*

Ben Cowens, North Yorkshire

Sean Hawkins, London

Ali Hunter†

Ben van Grutten, Kent

Mark Waites, Bedfordshire

Affiliate members

Bethany Gupwell, Bedfordshire

Charlie Flick, Warwickshire

Charley Hardwick, Surrey

Timothy Kelly, London

Kinphen Leung, Hong Kong

Kyle O'Hara, Bedfordshire

Catrin Powell, Hampshire

Lee Stoddart, Hampshire

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Heidi Connor, London

Stephanie Erb, London

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Simon Turner

University of York

James Bithell

Guildhall School S&D

Rin Akiyama

Finlay Anderson

Sami Barqawi

Joshua Collins

Thomas Dixon

Tyler Edwards-Tagg

Fergus Kerr

Sam Levy

Aled Roberts

Maisie Roberts

Addison O Neel

Mathew Shraga

Jack Stevens

Commercial member

10 Out of 10 Productions

* Re-joining the association

† From Associate/Affiliate member

Professional members' shows

opening in October and November

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.






























October

1 Joe Price *Exit Number 8* Kings Head Theatre / **1 Phil Buckley** *Rent Party* Darren Pritchard Dance / **1 Joe Price** *Mrs Dalloway* Arcola Theatre / **1 Jamie Platt** *Mythic* Charing Cross Theatre / **2 Peter T Mumford** *The Ferryman* Jacobs Theater, NYC / **3 James C McFetridge** *The Kings of the Kilburn* High Road Square Box, Dungannon / **3 Chris Withers** *My Name is Rachel Corrie* Masra Al-Madina / **7 Jason Addison** (assistant lighting designer) *Time Flies* – RAF 100 Royal Gala Theatre Royal Drury Lane / **8 Malcolm Rippeth** *Wise Children* Old Vic Theatre / **9 Tom Mowat** *Welcome?* Neville Studio, Nottingham Playhouse / **10 Zoe Spurr** *Silence* Mercury Colchester / **11 Johanna Town** *Her Naked Skin* Salisbury Playhouse / **13 Peter Vincent** *10 x 10 The Sixth Biennial New Writing Festival* Chesil Theatre, Winchester / **13 Mark Dymock** *Alice in Wonderland* Guildford Shakespeare Company / **15 Elliot Griggs** *The Wild Duck* Almeida Theatre / **16 Ric Mountjoy** *The Play That Goes Wrong* Straz Center, Tampa FL / **16 Joseph Roberts** *The Pride Hope* Mill Theatre / **16 Katharine Williams** *Gagarin Way* Dundee Rep Theatre / **16 Tom Mowat** *Welcome?* Bridewell Theatre / **17 Jacob Gowler** *Don Juan Comes Back From The War* George Bernard Shaw Theatre (RADA) / **19 Jamie Platt** *Rupert Street Lonely Hearts Club* Above The Stag Theatre / **20 Peter T Mumford** *King Kong* Broadway Theater NYC / **20 Charlie Morgan Jones** *Gobsmecked!* Hangzhou Grand Theater / **23 Chris Withers** *Murder for Two* The Watermill Theatre & The Other Palace / **23 Tom Mowat** *Seussical the Musical* the space, Nottingham / **24 James C McFetridge** *Rat in the Skull* St George's Hall, Liverpool / **24 Jack Wills** *The Capital* Birmingham Rep / **24 Joe Price** *You Are Here!* Winchester Planetarium / **28 Jamie Platt** *Richard O'Brien: 45 Years of Absolute Pleasure* Duke of York's Theatre / **28 Michael Grundner** *Ghost The Musical* Stage Operettenhaus Hamburg / **29 Edmund Sutton** *Renew Ya Hallelujah* Teatro Technis, Camden / **29 Nigel A Lewis** *Yerma* Cervantes Theatre / **30 Tom Mowat** *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* Nottingham Theatre Royal / **31 Nigel A Lewis** *Ruddigore* Hampton Hill Theatre

November

1 Jamie Platt *Once on this Island* Arts Educational School / **1 Mark Dymock** *Haunting Julia* Queens Theatre Hornchurch / **2 James C McFetridge** *Sleepy Hollow* Theatre at the Mill, Newtownabbey / **3 Johanna Town** (lighting designer) **Jason Addison** (assistant lighting designer) *The Watsons* Minerva Theatre Chichester / **6 Ric Mountjoy** *The Play That Goes Wrong* Sejong M Theater, Seoul / **6 Jason Addison** *Dark Winter* Hull Truck Theatre / **7 Malcolm Rippeth** *After Dark* Northern Stage / **8 Palle Palme** *Something Rotten* Wermlands Opera / **14 Michael D Harpur** *Bullet Tongue* The Big House Theatre / **14 Mark Dymock** *Aladdin* Chipping Norton Theatre / **19 Charlie Morgan Jones** *Batboy* Royal Conservatoire of Scotland / **21 Zoe Spurr** *The Maids* HOME Manchester / **22 Ben Jacobs** *Seussical the Musical* Southwark Playhouse – Large / **23 Max Blackman** *Robinson Crusoe* Greenwich Theatre / **24 Palle Palme** *Beauty and the Beast* Vanemuine Theatre, Estonia / **24 Mark Dymock** *Jack and the Beanstalk* Mercury Theatre, Colchester / **25 Michael Grundner** *An American In Paris* Musiktheater Linz / **27 Jamie Platt** *Mother Goose Cracks One Out!* Above The Stag Theatre / **28 Katharine Williams** *Hole* Royal Court Theatre / **29 Johanna Town** *Saturday Night Sunday Morning* Guildhall School of Music and Drama / **30 Palle Palme** *Annie* Nöjesteatre, Malmö / **30 James C McFetridge** *Beauty and the Beast* Belfast Waterfront Hall Studio

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For Commercial members, see page 18

Edinburgh lighting

Critic **Mark Fisher** on this summer's best of the festival

Christopher Haydon didn't budget for a set design. The director imagined he would present his Edinburgh Fringe show, *On the Exhale*, in a stripped-back setting that would focus on the raw power of Martin Zimmerman's words. But when the project got the go-ahead, he changed his mind. Maybe a set would be a good idea after all.

Of course, by this time, the budget had been agreed by producers China Plate and Audible (the audio-book company is recording the monologue). There was very little wriggle room. Haydon's suggested solution was to throw a string of strip lights onto the floor, not realising even that would come at a cost. Thanks to a generous loan, he got his way and gave the production, with design by Frankie Bradshaw and lighting design by Colin Grenfell, a striking light-based simplicity.

Performed with understated clarity by Polly Frame, the one-woman show is about a liberal academic who loses her son in an American school shooting. Her reaction, rather than to flee from the obscenity of firearms, is to open herself to their seductive power. The deeper she is drawn, the more she is tempted to turn

a weapon on a pro-gun politician. "To shoot a weapon well is an act not unlike parenting" is her disturbing conclusion.

Scattered over the floor of the Traverse theatre studio, the strip lights might have tumbled from the school ceiling where the massacre took place. Or perhaps they represented the chaos of the bereaved woman's mind, at once lucid and confused. Either way, Grenfell got them to flicker unsettlingly between the movements of the script, providing an edge of anxiety. The play was called *On the Exhale* because you're supposed to squeeze a gun's trigger on an outward breath; Donato Wharton's soundtrack duly breathed heavy sighs, while the lights swelled in ominous accord.

Also using strip lights to notable effect – initially, at least – was Philippe Saire, the Algerian Swiss choreographer whose *Hocus Pocus* played to family audiences in the Edinburgh International Festival. His idea was as simple as it was novel – so simple, in fact, that no lighting designer was even credited.

The set amounted to a pair of horizontal strip lights positioned a few feet apart, one above than the other, on a darkened stage.



On the Exhale
Director: Christopher Haydon
Designer: Frankie Bradshaw
Lighting designer: Colin Grenfell
Photographer: Siu Scott

Coming from behind the strongly directional light with its shallow depth of field, dancers Mickaël Henrotay-Delaunay and Ismael Ouartabal were able to show us a single body part – an elbow, an upper arm, a leg – as if it were floating in the ether. At first, it was hard to make out what we were



Hocus Pocus
Choreographer: Philippe Saire
Photographer: Ryan Buchanan



The End of Eddy
Director: Stewart Laing
Designer: Hyemi Shin
Lighting designer: Zerlina Hughes
Photographer: Tommy Ga-Ken Wan

seeing, just abstract alien patterns, until the dancers revealed more of themselves, crossing arms in geometric shapes before allowing their faces to be seen. For all the originality, however, the concept quickly wore thin, making a 45-minute show seem disproportionately long.

The International Festival's second – and much more successful – theatrical offering for younger audiences also took a minimalist approach to lighting. The *End of Eddy's* lighting designer Zerlina Hughes took advantage of the natural early-evening light outside the Edinburgh Festival Theatre's Studio. As actors Alex Austin and Kwaku Mills told the teenage

life story of novelist Édouard Louis, growing up gay and bullied in a working-class backwater in the north of France, the blinds were left half open. Instead of plunging us into darkness, Stewart Laing's production had the air of a school assembly, with no pretence at naturalistic illusion. Dominated by four television monitors lined up in front of us, Hyemi Shin's set was spare and uncluttered. The two actors played all the characters in the flesh and on screen, a playful and theatrical use of the technology.

It was for the most part, then, that Hughes's lighting design was notable for its absence, which made it all the more

striking towards the end of the show when the natural light had faded and the ceiling of the village bus shelter suddenly glowed with the intensity of a religious revelation. After the violence, racism and homophobia of Eddy's adolescence, the boy discovered an escape route out of town and into the world of education. It was as if he had seen the light.

Ask anybody about Geoff Sobelle's *Home* and it's unlikely the lighting will be the first thing they mention. No, what they'll comment on is how the New York performer turned an empty stage into a two-storey house as if by magic. With just half a dozen actors (and a hard-working

Edinburgh lighting

Mark Fisher

tech team behind the scenes), he built a kitchen and bathroom, with electricity and running water, a set of stairs and a bedroom where an impossible number of sleepers woke up and got out of the same bed.

They'll also comment on how Sobelle transformed this house into a home – and turned an entertaining series of skits into a show of real emotional weight – by inviting audience members onto the stage to join a party that turned into a wake that

turned into a celebration of the places we live.

All this has been rightly celebrated in an extraordinary show, but that shouldn't be to underestimate the contribution of lighting designer Christopher Kuhl. Put simply, the magic couldn't have happened without him. When Sobelle first came on to the King's Theatre stage, he brought with him two stand-alone industrial lights. It was appropriate equipment for a man about to start stapling heavy-duty plastic sheeting to a wooden frame, but they had a more crucial function. Aimed at the audience, the dazzling lights provided cover for a bed, a door and a procession of guests to appear as if by magic from the dark recesses of the stage.

Later, when the show peaked into joyous exuberance, the company rolled out fairy lights across the whole auditorium, stretching right to the upper circle and drawing in the entire theatre. These were just the most apparent moments in a lighting design that was crucial to the task of turning a shell of a building into a place that was lived in and, later, deserted. In one particularly gorgeous sequence, moonlight shone through a side window



Home
Director: Lee Sunday Evans
Set designer: Steven Dufala
Costume designer: Karen Young
Lighting designer: Christopher Kuhl
Photographer: Ryan Buchanan



User Not Found
Director: Daphna Attias
Lighting and set designer: Zia Bergin-Holly
Photographer: Justin Jones

and slowly traced its way over the staircase as night became day.

It would be similarly easy to overlook the work of Zia Bergin-Holly on *User Not Found*, an off-site contribution to the Traverse's Fringe programme that took place in the small Jeelie Piece café up the road in Tollcross. As with *Home*, there are plenty of things audiences will tell you about this novel show before they get on to the lights.

For a start, it was experienced through headphones, with the audio supplemented by visuals streamed to us on iPhones.

Mixed in with the ambient sound effects from a cafe very like the one we were in was the voice of Terry O'Donovan, an actor who was with us in the flesh and moving about the cafe.

In Chris Goode's clever script for *Dante or Die*, he was a man with a dilemma. His ex-lover has died and left him with the responsibility for laying his social media "life" to rest. With a mixture of grief, denial and retrospective jealousy, Terry is drawn into the multiple identities of Facebook, Twitter and the rest, trying to distinguish

the real from the projected, the truth from the fake – and figuring out whether or not to press delete on the whole digital trail.

Bergin-Holly, as well as being responsible for the set design, used subtle interventions to enhance the natural evening light, drawing us from the real world into the emotional landscape of the protagonist. On a rather smaller scale than *Home*, she used fairy lights to give unity to the space and, almost without us noticing, raised and lowered the table lamps in front of us to draw our attention to the actor. Without being showy or spectacular, it was perfectly judged. 🍷

Mark Fisher is a freelance feature writer and critic. As well as writing for the Guardian, he is the author of The Edinburgh Fringe Survival Guide and How to Write About Theatre.



Photo by Lotte Fisher

2018 Knight of Illumination winners

All the winners in the theatre category

This year's theatre judges:

Chair

David Benedict (BBC Radio 4)

Dance

Zoë Anderson (The Independent)

Neil Norman (The Stage)

Opera

George Hall (Opera magazine)

Mark Valencia (Whatsonstage.com)

Theatre

Michael Billington (The Guardian)

Natasha Tripney (The Stage)

The 2018 Knight of Illumination awards ceremony took place on 16 September at the Eventim Apollo in Hammersmith, London. More information and the winners in other categories at www.knight-of-illumination.com.

DANCE

The Suit
Ballet Black
Artistic director: Cassa Pancho
Choreographer: Cathy Marston
Designer: Jane Heather
Lighting designer: David Plater
Photographer: Bill Cooper



David Plater | The Suit | Ballet Black

Award sponsored by  ETC

OPERA

Eugene Onegin
Scottish Opera
Director: Oliver Mears
Designer: Annemarie Woods
Lighting designer: Fabiana Piccioli
Photographer: James Glossop



Award sponsored by



Fabiana Piccioli | Eugene Onegin | Scottish Opera

October/November 2018 – “More art, less tools...”

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2018 KOI winners

MUSICALS



Follies
National Theatre
Director: Dominic Cooke
Designer: Vicki Mortimer
Lighting designer: Paule Constable
Photographer: Johan Persson

Award sponsored by
HAWTHORN

Paule Constable | Follies | National Theatre

PLAYS



Jack Knowles | *The Barber Shop Chronicles* | National Theatre

Award sponsored by



2018 KOI winners

VIDEO/PROJECTION

*Formosa
Cloud Gate Dance Theatre
Choreographer: Lin Hwai-min
Video designer: Chou Tung-yen
Photographer: Liu Chen-hsiang*



Chou Tung-yen | Formosa | Sadler's Wells

Award sponsored by
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ALD member Rob Sinclair also won an award in the Concert Touring – Stage category...

CONCERT TOURING – STAGE



Photograph by Rob Sinclair

Rob Sinclair | David Byrne

Award sponsored by



October/November 2018 – “More art, less tools...”

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Lighting for babies

Will Evans on his latest lighting challenge

I'm well versed in lighting shows for younger audiences. Children's theatre probably makes up about 50% of my work. Generally the age ranges are something from three to ten years and that tends to be my comfort zone. However, it's nice to push yourself outside of your comfort zone once in a while, so when I was approached by Theatre Hullabaloo in Darlington to light their first show for babies in their second space, I jumped at the chance, not fully knowing what I was letting myself in for!

The Gillian Dickson Creative Play Space, which is a gallery/performance space/play area in the heart of this fantastic new theatre created specifically for children, was to be the venue for *Lullabub*, an immersive show designed for 0-30 months. Although that doesn't seem like a large age span, it is in the development of a baby, so the theatre decided to do two versions of the show, one for babies (0-12 months) and one for toddlers (13-30 months). Both shows would follow the same storyline

and feature similar characters but the baby show would be gentler and the performers would be sat amongst the babies and parents concentrating on the individual babies rather than an audience as a whole.

Lighting this type of show presented some unique challenges. First, the performance was to happen all around

the space with the audience sitting in the middle so there was no traditional stage or performance area to throw light at. Second, the blocking was to be fluid, with the performers responding to the babies and judging the moods and emotions of the little ones as the performance progressed, so I couldn't have specific areas lit for set moments. Third, everything had to be out of reach from little fingers: lanterns, cables, control equipment. I also had to consider the environment of the space in a practical sense. The space had no air conditioning, only ventilation, which was fine for day-to-day use but would not be able to disperse the heat of a tungsten rig.

After a few chats with the director and designer we decided that the performance should not be approached in the traditional way with scenes and cues but that each section of the performance would have a theme and a mood that stitched together to form a narrative. We also decided that the whole space would be lit and we'd work from the point of a "shared space" between the performers and audience at all times. The director, Anna Newel, and I agreed that no lights should be directly hitting the audience



Lullabub
Theatre Hullabaloo
Director: Anna Newell
Designer: Alison Heffernan
Lighting designer: Will Evans
Photographer: Mark Savage



Lullabub
Theatre Hullabaloo
Director: Anna Newell
Designer: Alison Heffernan
Lighting designer: Will Evans
Photographer: Mark Savage

from any direction. Adults tend to always follow the action and accept a certain amount of being lit in immersive theatre; however, babies will crawl, roll, shuffle and look anywhere and everywhere and we didn't want them to roll over and suddenly be blinded by a light. After much looking at the model box and playing around with my Maglite I decided to only use reflected light, bounced off the white ceiling in the room (for once I was grateful to have a white room to light in!), and to light the cyc that designer Alison Heffernan had wrapped the room in, not from the top or bottom as would be traditional, but from the opposite side of the room so the reflected light bounced straight into the centre of the space.

The concept of *Lullabub* was "a magical dreamland of sleepy byes in a playful, peaceful and wonderful performance" so I looked into a lighting journey that

would go from dusk to dawn through a dreamland of deep pinks, blues and purples, finishing in a sunrise that enveloped the space in rich oranges and yellows. I love colour and all it can do but in particular I love the transition of one colour to another and how the space morphs and changes as the colour shifts. This, coupled with the heat requirements of the space,

led me to an all-LED rig comprised of linear battens and ETC Colorsources. My only tungsten lamps were three Source Fours with gobos and animation wheels for a rippling wave effect during the underwater sequence.

There's no traditional control position in the space and the creative team really didn't want a control position in the corner with monitors and lights, etc. We ended up placing the Qlab system for sound and ETC Nomad system outside of the space, tucked under the cafe's counter (much to the annoyance of the cafe staff!), routing all of the cables through a high window to keep them out of reach. Our stage manager, dressed all in white to blend in to the room, then operated the lights and sound from two iPads over a secure Wi-Fi network. I was more than a little apprehensive about this but with some

simple adjustments, like making sure the iPads didn't go to sleep and locking the computers to their designated networks, the trick worked.

Worth also mentioning is the child-friendly nature of Theatre Hullabaloo. One of our actresses had come to Darlington with her ten-month old baby and partner for the duration of the rehearsal period. While her partner still had to travel back and forth most days for work, the little one was supposed to be in childcare. Unfortunately, this fell through at the last minute. It was suggested straight away by the director and producer that she bring the baby in with her to rehearsals; the actress didn't even have to ask. Most of the time the baby was actually used to test ideas in the rehearsal room, and when we were doing notes or other work where it wouldn't be safe to have a baby crawling around, the people in the office were only too happy to babysit (although I heard that not a lot of actual work was done in the office on those occasions!). I mention this as a follow-up to Lucy Carter's article in the last issue about having the director's baby in tech with them – and would that happen if it was anyone other than the director? I'm pleased to say the answer, in Darlington at least, appears to be yes! There is a shift in attitudes to having children and working in theatre; it's slow – glacial at times – but it is happening and moving in the right direction. 🍀

Ghost train of thought

ALD company secretary [John Leventhall](#) recently encountered a bit of theatrical ingenuity...

Being a denizen of the community and recreational theatre sector (OK, OK... amdrams), doing things on a shoestring is often considered outrageously expensive! So imagine the satisfaction felt by Mike Dobbs, who was the LD for this show, and I, as associate LD (in the amateur world this means installing the effects, smoke m/cs, practicals and the skilled preparation of hot beverages), when we solved, for almost no cost, how to indicate the passage of a train at night against the windows of the waiting room of the station dramatised in Arnold Ridley's iconic play *The Ghost Train*.

The play was performed at the Robin Hood Theatre, Averham, Nottinghamshire, which was opened in 1913 by the parson Rev. Joseph Walker. He was obsessed, as was the great John Christie of Glyndebourne, with building an opera house, which he did in his parsonage garden... on a rather more parochial scale than Christie. The 150-seat house is built like a German opera house with ornamental proscenium, bridges over the stage (one survives), stage traps (sadly out of use), hemp flying and a deep rear stage well.

Mike and I scratched our heads. Projection was out – only a metre or two throw. We wondered what a train looks like when it passes a grimy station waiting room... A nocturnal research visit to nearby Grantham station proved fruitless – the windows faced on to the station forecourt! It was then that I Googled the subject, looking for others' experience, and discovered a 2004 reference in The Blue Room forum from Richard Bunting of LSI Projects, who commented that Theatre Projects used to have an effect that "consisted of a wooden octagon cylinder with angled sides with a length of mirror on each side. This was then attached to a stand and rotated at the appropriate speed, with a profile focused on to one side of it." I later discovered that this effect was called The Toblerone, used numerous times on several shows. Maybe it still exists!

So we had our archetype! With scraps and offcuts, I built a triangular rotating box with some pieces of acrylic mirror glued on each side and provided "intelligent automation" in the guise of Giles Gregory, our ASM, and a cue light, to twiddle it at the appropriate speed.

Using an iconic Patt23 in open white, it worked a treat. With sound effects and some smoke through the door, we had a very credible, dynamic impression of the train passing by.

"All smoke and mirrors," they say ... true in every sense! 🚂



Photograph by John Leventhall

Photograph by John Leventhall



*Above:
The Ghost Train
Robin Hood Theatre
Director: Patricia Marks
Designer: Steve Wing
Lighting designer: Mike Dobbs
Associate lighting designer: John Leventhall*



*The brains behind the operation...
John Leventhall (left) and Mike Dobbs (right)*

Right: ASM Giles Gregory operates The Toblerone



Photograph by John Leventhall

A postcard from...

Sean Webster*, Cartmel

This is my second postcard from Cartmel. Since the first, we've made changes to the rig design for *Much Ado about Nothing*, allowing greater freedom to light the set and cast and embellish the already beautiful Cartmel Priory. In 2017, the Priory became the first Church of England establishment in the UK to support its very own community theatre company, The Marshal's Players. 🇬🇧



* Design by Sean Webster, with "hindrance" from Richard Thompson!



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Richard Pacholski

Hugh Vanstone remembers his friend, better known as R2

I am just one of the many ALD colleagues who are mourning Richard Pacholski – known to most as R2 – who died on 19 August after a brief battle with cancer.

I've found myself deeply affected by his untimely death and have been thinking about why. There is no doubt that he was a consummate professional and excelled at his work. He started as a production electrician and then became the "go to" associate in his native Australia. But it was the other side of R2 that made him really special: the fatherly/pastoral side, the best friend, the *bon viveur*.

I first worked with him on the Melbourne production of *Joseph* in 1992. Andrew Bridge was unable to attend so sent me as his associate. I was very green and more than slightly scared! R2 was incredibly kind and supportive and gently initiated me as to how the Aussies did theatre! Thanks to his brilliant organisation things went so well that I once reported back to Andy that things were going "swimmingly" (code that I was at the beach with R2!).

R2 soon became my best friend whenever I found myself spending a few months on the underside of the globe. Since then we worked on countless shows, and as my own design career developed he became my

associate for every single production I took to Australia (most recently *Matilda*).

Throughout this time, as well as doing the work, he took me on innumerable early morning swims, improvised picnics, concerts, movies, to his home at Avoca beach for weekends, and the meals out... well, they're legendary. And throughout these adventures he was absolutely the best company, even when times were hard for him. It is no exaggeration to say that he was one of the very kindest and good people I have known, and that is why I shall miss him so very much.

It has been overwhelming to hear and see the number of incredibly heartfelt expressions of love and admiration for Richard from so many people (*see right*).

He was a comedian to the end. I'm told that in his final hours in hospital, surrounded by teary eyed relatives and friends in the process of saying goodbye, he suddenly awoke, sat bolt upright with his trademark wry smile and said, "I'm still here, you know!"

In a way he is still here, and will remain with all of us who knew him as one of the nicest people to walk the earth. To close, as R2 would doubtless be telling us now, look after each other and be sure to make the very most of every day. 🌸

"Such sad news that a true professional and good guy has departed. You were always in such safe hands with R2."
— Andrew Bridge

"You never knew where or when R2 was going to pop up, but you could be sure that when he did he would be enthusiastic, helpful and full of laughs. His generosity and modesty belied his great talent: always working tirelessly to make the rest of us look better."
— Willie Williams

"You never quite knew where you'd see him next – but seeing him was always a delight. He was adored by everyone he worked with, everywhere, always a fine balance of serious professionalism and serious fun. A pleasure and a joy to work with."
— Bryan Raven

"I am sure there will be tech teams around the world dimming lights. He was such a joyful beacon of calm skill."
— Chris Grady



Chahine Yavroyan

ALD members pay tribute

I first met Chahine over 40 years ago. His signature deadpan style and self-deprecating but intensely dedicated approach and attention to detail within the seemingly anarchic People Show performances were inspiring. The respect that the rest of the company had for him was apparent and helped me learn how creatively involved technical support (which was how I had viewed it) could be in the creation of theatre.

His signature style was well developed and never really wavered. He brought that same fierce eye when he moved into working as a lighting designer but always kept that sense of fun, anarchy and twinkle which I will miss so very much. Even though he was not a member of the ALD we should celebrate his passion and excellence in what we do.
— Rick Fisher

I worked with Chahine in the dance world. He was a total joy to work with. Nothing was ever a hassle and everything was so easy. His designs were simple but elegant. Nothing over the top. Nothing fancy. Just the light doing the job it needed to and just what was needed to evoke the right moment. Understanding the whole process of creating some (at times challenging) pieces of work, Chahine just took any situation thrown at

him with grace and a calmness that many could learn from. He was always to be found sat at the back of any theatre with trusty briefcase in tow and a well-travelled trilby hat and waistcoat patiently waiting for his moment to create beautiful lighting. I will remember Chahine with the total respect for a man who was quite fantastic (and lovely at the same time) at his art.

— Ben Payne

I first met the gorgeous Armenian in 1987. In Bologna. He had the freedom of the city. His beloved People Show performed there for New Year – but more than that. Chahine was master of ceremonies. He threw lights at medieval palaces and created anarchic beauty in the way only he could. A Gauloise sticking out of his mouth, taking the piss in five languages. Mercurial, elegant, funny, wild. I fell in love.

Over the years many of my favourite acts of madness have had Chahine at the helm. He lived in a shed. He was from another world. He was an artist. A provocation. He drove around London with no licence in a beaten-up old Land Rover. Often lights hung from the rails in the back. No seat belts. Safety chains rattling.

The thing I will always want to thank him for was for being so other. For showing me that the world of theatre was a place for those of us who didn't fit elsewhere. He believed in and encouraged acts of madness. Of risk.

His death makes me look at our world and wonder where the next Chahine is. We

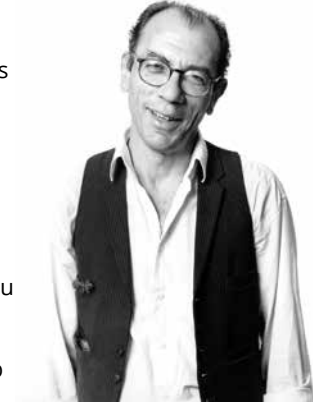
need to hold madness in our hearts – to hold hands and take risks together. With a personality like his leaving us we are left in a slightly duller world. Don't let it become too dull. If you knew and loved him then do something bonkers today – keep taking risks and do it at least once a day in his name.
— Paule Constable

Chahine was a visionary in the way he saw and used light. He was a performer, an artist, and he used his lighting craft to be another performer in the show. I use the word craft – but Chahine broke all the rules of lighting design and in doing so created the most amazing work.

I first met Chahine at the Royal Court Theatre in the 90s. His lighting plans often made no sense in a conventional way and were often very sparse, but he would engage me and my team and would take us on a journey of experimentation and creativity, which he did with charm, passion and fun.

I learned much from his very individual approach to lighting design, especially how important it was to take one's ideas, however crazy, and to share them.

Thank you, Chahine. You will be missed.
— Jo Town 🍷





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