

LIGHTING | SOUND *International*

THE ENTERTAINMENT TECHNOLOGY MONTHLY

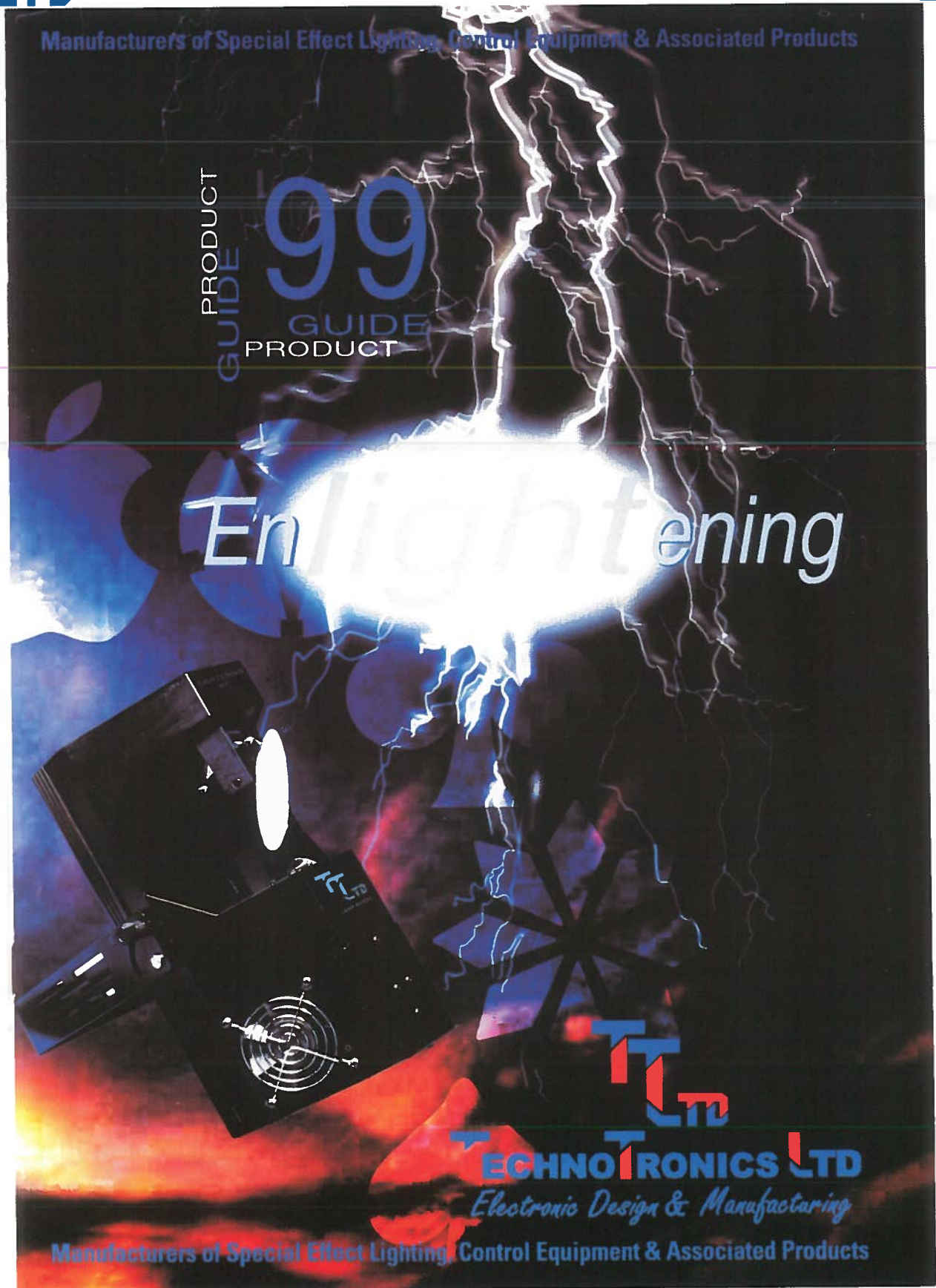


FUTURE TALK ZONES IN TO THE MILLENNIUM DOME

- Night Delights: L+SI Goes to Turkey
- Just Can't Get Enough: Depeche Mode live at the NEC Arena
- Future Talk for the Millennium Dome
- Production Resource Group: Jere Harris interviewed
- Show Report: Audio Update from AES San Francisco
- Ash and Fun Lovin' Criminals hit the touring trail

PLASA

NOVEMBER 1998



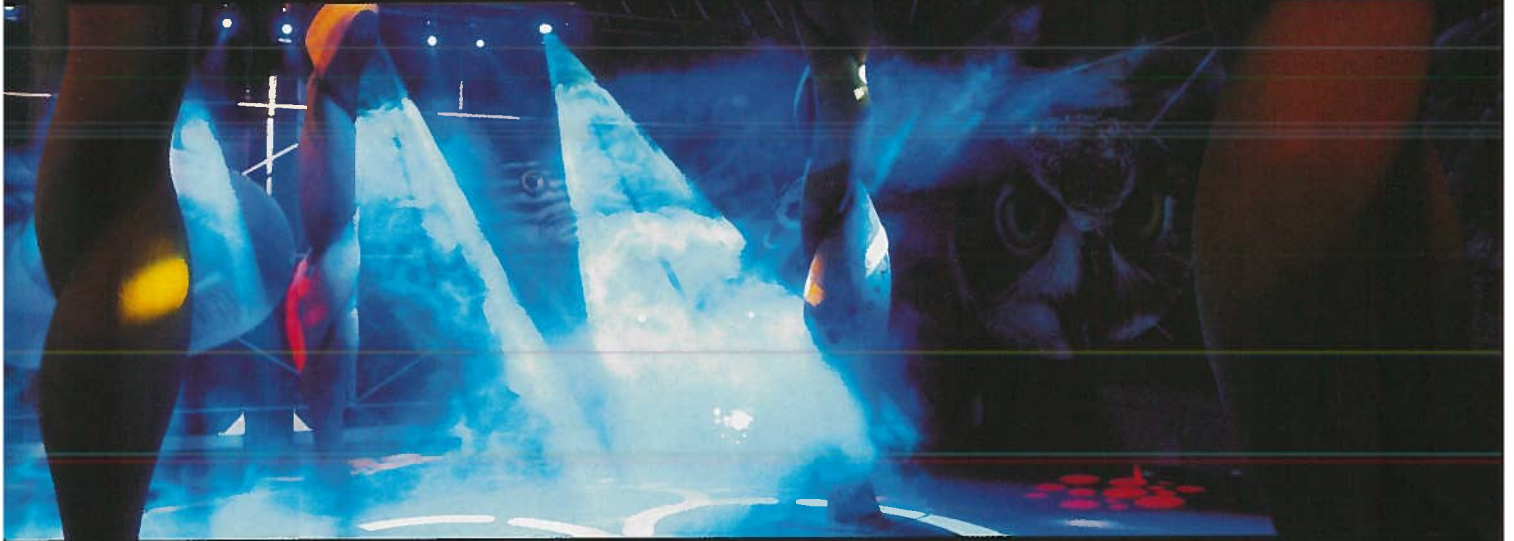
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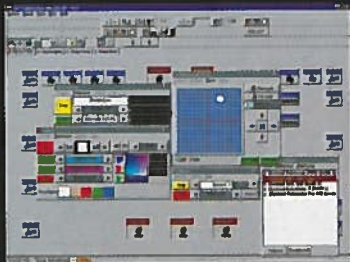
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The new Martin LightJockey^{DMX}

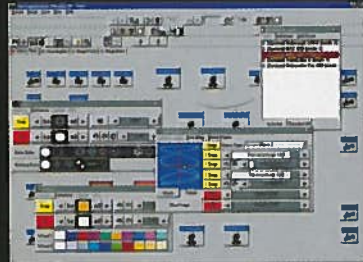
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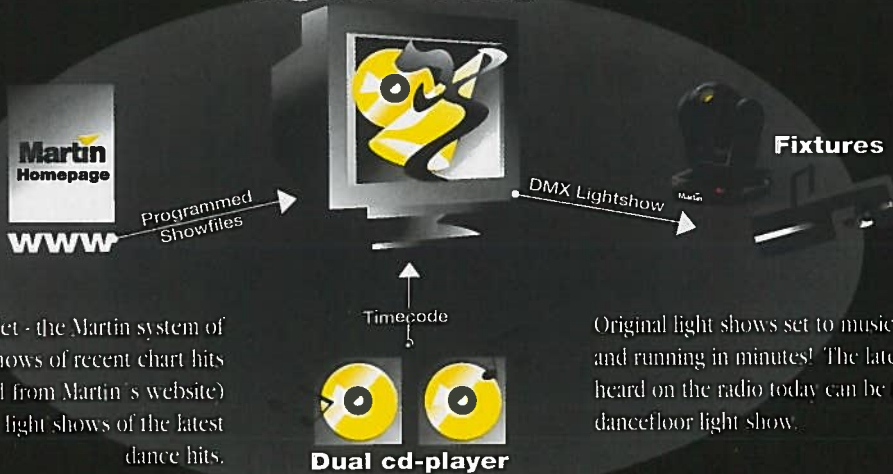


The fixture's movement can be precisely controlled using bezier curves



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LIGHTING+SOUND *International*

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The views expressed in *Lighting+Sound International* are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Professional Lighting and Sound Association



LIGHTING+SOUND *International*

Published monthly by the Professional Lighting and Sound Association
© Copyright Professional Lighting and Sound Association ISSN 0268-7429

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Published from the PLASA Office: 38 St Leonards Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN21 3UT England.
Telephone: (01323) 642639 Fax: (01323) 646905 Internet: <http://www.plasa.org.uk/> E-Mail: info@plasa.org.uk
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The magazine is available on annual subscription
UK £50.00 Europe and rest of world £65.00 (US\$100.00) Airmail £90.00 (US\$135.00) Single copy price £3.50 plus postage
Editorial Advisors: Peter Brooks, Wyatt Enever, Mike Gerrish, Derek Gilbert, David Hopkins, Matthew Griffiths, John Lethbridge, Iain Price-Smith, Neil Rice.

Lighting+Sound International is published monthly for \$100.00 per year by The Professional Lighting and Sound Association, 38 St Leonards Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN21 3UT. Periodicals class postage paid at Rahway, N.J. Postmaster: Send USA address corrections to Lighting+Sound International, c/o Mercury Airfreight International Ltd, 365 Blair Road, Avenel, N.J. 07001



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LIGHTING+SOUND *News* International

Proquip Director Stole to Fund Lifestyle

A former director of video and AV display rental company, Proquip Gearhouse, has been convicted of stealing goods worth thousands of pounds from the company. Neil Higgins was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment by Guildford Crown Court after admitting to six charges of theft and four of false accounting at an earlier hearing.

It was reported at the hearing that Higgins, with a salary of £40,000 and a budget of around £1m under his control, had stolen goods to pay off gambling debts.

The amount involved in the Crown court charges was some £75,000. However, a civil action was initiated against Higgins seeking to recover an amount of £210,220.79. During the course of the proceedings, Higgins admitted part of the claim in the sum of £156,610 and has conceded liability for further claims in the sum of £14,153.

The Gearhouse Group's accounting department first discovered discrepancies when equipment ordered by Higgins never arrived, or was missing at stocktaking. On March 4th this year Higgins admitted stealing when interviewed by senior Gearhouse Group personnel.

At the sentencing hearing Gerard McEvelly, prosecuting, said that one of Higgins' tactics was to draw up false hire contracts. In one instance he had hired equipment to the BBC for no rental charge in order to drum up trade. But when the BBC was contacted this proved to be false.

Another of Higgins' plays was to purchase goods over a period of time and sell them on without these passing through the company's books or stock control system. Gearhouse announced that they would be taking civil action against the recipients to recover money to the full value of the

goods. The police have also repossessed a large amount of equipment sold by Higgins to a nightclub in Guildford, and there is also pending litigation with another Guildford nightclub, in connection with the recovery of the sale of stolen equipment.

Higgins was dismissed for gross misconduct and the police were called at the end of April.

Matthew Scott, defending, said Higgins initially stole to pay off gambling debts but subsequently embarked on an extravagant lifestyle. He was made bankrupt by American Express and his house, valued at £340,000, was placed on the market. Higgins said he hoped to pay off his debts when this was sold, and that meanwhile he was living in a flat. To date Gearhouse have received no money.

After the hearing Gearhouse director, Gary Davis told L+SI: "This was calculated and deliberate theft over a period of time. Neil Higgins was placed in a position of trust and seniority, which he abused. In the interests of the Gearhouse Group and its shareholders we intend to pursue Higgins for the full recovery of the company's money."

L+SI Year Planner

This issue of Lighting+Sound International includes your free L+SI 1999 Year Planner. This highly-prized guide to the next 12 months includes details of major trade events throughout the year, as well as the usual days, weeks and months. Enjoy . . .

Founder Partner Splits From High End



Richard Belliveau.

In what will come as a surprise to many, Richard Belliveau has left High End Systems. Belliveau was one of three founding partners of High End and a pioneer in intelligent lighting technology.

As an engineer and inventor, he has made major contributions to the company and industry as a whole in the area of advanced lighting technology and development. However, it would appear that in the last six months, there has been a difference in philosophy regarding the management and direction of the company and Belliveau has decided to leave, though he will remain a shareholder in the company.

High End Systems will continue with new product development under the direction of Mike Wood, who will be supported by High End's other senior engineering professionals, specifically Steve Tulk - a 16-year engineering veteran of High End systems. Recently, Kelly Kellams, former director of operations at Proxima had joined HES to assume responsibility for all the company's manufacturing and quality control.

See No Comment on page 67.

DMX-Hub Ethernet Distribution



DMX-Hub is the first truly Plug and Play solution for DMX512 cabling and distribution in all applications needing fast and robust transmission of lighting control data. DMX-Hub provides the gateway to transfer DMX512 data to and from a 10BaseT Ethernet link.

Standard Ethernet cabling and transceivers can then be used for the data distribution infrastructure. The Ethernet protocol is designed to allow a total of 256 DMX512 Universes (over 32,000 channels). Each DMX-Hub handles 4096 channels. Available Now!

No-Worries Tracking Show Backup



What would you do if your lighting console failed during a show? No-Worries allows you to sit back and watch the show continue! No-Worries is a four universe DMX512 tracking backup system. Simply record the entire production and then during the show, No-Worries tracks the console and takes control should disaster strike. Available December 1998

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Designers on Colour

RICHARD PILBROW



"Fractured white light reveals colour. Part of the magic of stage lighting is taking complex multi-directional palettes of colour and re-combining them into lucid, dramatic light for the stage.

When I began lighting only about fifty shades of Cinemoid were available. I often used them two and three to a frame seeking new possibilities. Then I discovered Rosco and first brought this wonderful range to Britain. Now the possibilities are almost limitless.

Colour brings life, texture and vibrancy to the stage. I love it."

"An incredible dance finale in *Show Boat* uses a vivid colour palette, at times moody, rich and at times blazing. The dancers are tracked in three dimensions by moving light curtains simultaneously rolling scrollers of Supergel 73 Peacock Blue, Lux 44 Middle Rose to Supergel 19 Fire and 21 Golden Amber."

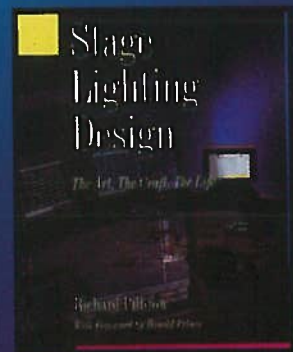


"Cy Coleman's *The Life* brings the tawdry old 42nd Street back to life. Garish neon (Supergel 26 Red, 388 Gaslight Green) conflicts with back alley chill (Cinegel 1/2 and 1/8 Blue) and cheap hotel squalor (Cinegel corrections and Supergel 337 True Pink and 57 Lavender)."

Widely regarded as the dean of lighting designers for both the West End and Broadway, Richard Pilbrow also heads Theatre Projects Consultants. His second book "Stage Lighting Design - The Art, The Craft, The Life" was named LDI Product of the Year.



A copy of the current Supergel swatchbook is available, free for the asking, from Rosco or your Rosco dealer.



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Lighting Musical Theatre

NEWS Shorts

The new **Gripple** Hang-Fast suspension system has been singled out by the Building Services Research and Information Association as exemplifying innovative installation techniques. The system, which eliminates the use of threaded rod and chain in the suspension of electrical, lighting, heating and ventilation systems, gives up to a six-fold reduction in installation time.

The largest single sale of **ARX** AFW-1s has been made in Australia by ARX dealer Sontec Victoria Pty. The AFW-1 is a combination of a single-band 30-channel graphic EQ, feedback exterminator and peak limiter. Sontec supplied 44 units to the Victorian Justice Department in Melbourne.

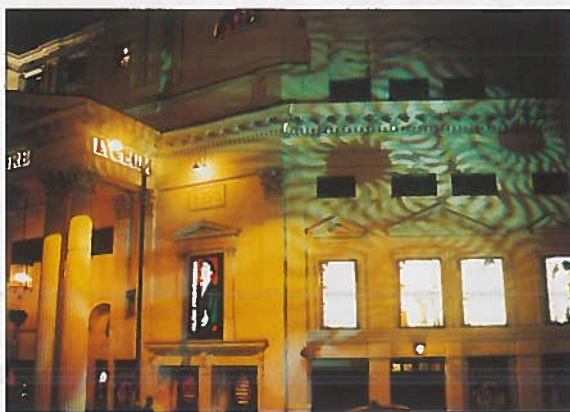
Gerriets Great Britain Ltd, working with The Royal School of Needlework, have been contracted to manufacture and install the main house curtain and pelmet for the new Royal Opera House. Work began with the RSN tracing and reproducing the design of the huge 3m by 4m crest.

The Theatre Royal York has purchased a **Soundcraft** Series Five FOH mixing console from Marquee Audio. The theatre has been saving for the console since head of sound Matt Savage first saw it at the 1997 PLASA Show.

Starlites Welcome Coogan to London

Comedian Steve Coogan premiered his new stage show at London's Lyceum Theatre at the end of September with all the glamour of a normal star-studded celebrity event. Heath Productions were drafted in for the occasion to architecturally light the outside of the theatre before the performance, and the restaurant opposite the theatre for the after-show party.

Lighting designer Johnny Gaskill used Starlite Mk.5 moving yoke fixtures to wash the front of the theatre with a variety of projection effects. With the Starlite's bright 1200W light output and high quality optics, Gaskill was able to cover the whole façade with a small number of units, yet keep a bright and sharp image at all times. For the front of Christopher's restaurant, opposite the theatre, Gaskill used Par 64 lanterns with Chroma-Q colour changers, washing the entrance.



Screen 5 Debuts at Showcase Cinema

In a major audio refit, film giants UCI have specified the first Martin Audio Screen 5 system to handle the sound in their showcase cinema - The Empire, Leicester Square. The three-way Screen 5 boasts a 90 x 50 degree horn to give true coverage at lower frequencies and minimise mid-range distortion. The five-box system will be positioned left, inside left, centre, inside right and right in the auditorium, and the sound will be processed using Sony's proprietary SDDS (Digital Dynamic) system and a CP200 Dolby system with DA20 digital processor.

Martin Audio's Richie Rowley told L+SI: "The purpose behind the Screen 5, and its specification for UCI's showcase cinema, is to achieve better reproduction from the higher frequencies."

Run in bi-amped mode, the Screen will use the Martin CMX2A dedicated cinema controller to feed two separate amplifier channels, driving the bass enclosure and horn section. An internal 2.2kHz passive crossover, housed in the bass enclosure, will operate between the mid-range and HF horns.

No Barrier to UK Show Business

As an international production company the name Mojo has been synonymous with show business throughout Europe for many years. Drawing on their industry knowledge and with an innate understanding of the importance of crowd safety, Mojo produced a barrier system which has set the standard for strength, portability and ease of use, for the past 10 years.

In the UK these barriers have always been available through a tie-in with Edwin Shirley Staging. Now, out of that very close relationship between Mojo and ESS, Mojo Barriers UK is born. Patrick Jordan, MD of Mojo in The Netherlands (the company's home base) explained the rationale behind the coalition. "For us the British market is a good size. So far the co-operation with ESS has worked extremely well, but there's much more that can be done. We have Mojo Barriers established in eight countries outside Holland and it is more than reasonable to do likewise in the UK."

When seeking management for the new company ESS didn't have to look too far: Paul Footitt's 12-year association with Edwin Shirley made him an obvious choice to run Mojo in the UK. Commenting on his new appointment Footitt told L+SI: "I shall be managing the business from the ESS London E15 facility. It's a perfect site for the hugely expanded stock we are now making available here in the UK."



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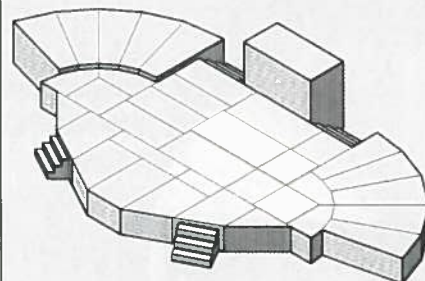
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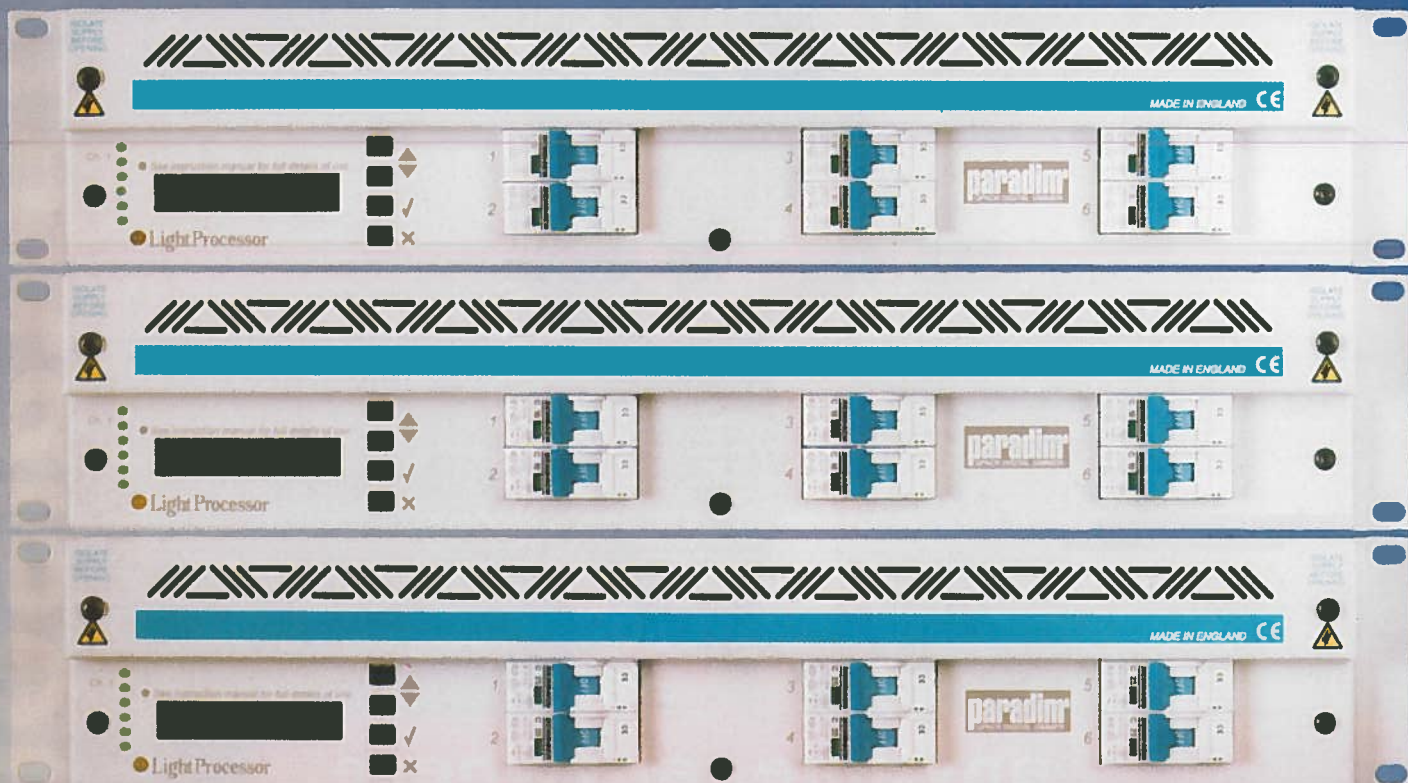
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People News

PLASA has appointed two new members of staff to join the well established team at the Association's head office in Eastbourne. **Gail Taylor**, who joins as PR and marketing officer, has been involved in public relations throughout her career and has most recently worked for an event management and marketing company.

Tim Cox, who recently graduated from Cambridge, has taken up his role as standards assistant to Tony Douglas-Beveridge.

Seth Klion has been appointed Production Resource Group's chief administrative officer. Klion, formerly CFO of DDS Partners, LLC - a New York-based management services company - will operate out of PRC's headquarters in New Windsor.

Production Arts Europe have announced that Glenn Wade will be returning to the US, where he has been appointed as the Production Resource Group's Film & Video Rentals manager for the New York area. PRG has also appointed **Bill Groener** as director of Northeast sales for Production Arts' Systems Sales Group. Groener has spent many years in design and production, including a faculty position at Williams College and theme park design projects for WED (now Walt Disney Imagineering). On the commercial side, he served as executive vice-president of Strand Lighting and was manager of the Systems Group for Barbizon in New York.

Production Arts Europe, meanwhile, have appointed **Alison Gill** as sales manager. She previously spent four years working in New York on a number of demanding project applications.

JBL Professional has appointed **Mark Bailey** to the newly-created position of technical support manager, Europe. Bailey joins the organisation having worked previously for Arbiter Pro Group plc, the JBL distributor for the UK and Ireland. In his new position, he will report directly to **Doug Daniel**, JBL Professional director of sales, Europe.

Ken Browne, formerly general manager of industrial sales at Pioneer UK, has been appointed general manager of Gearhouse LED screens where his role is to further develop an international sales and distribution network for the Gearhouse Optiscreen.

Manufacturer of audio mixing consoles Amek has added two new members to its international sales force - **David Letson** and **Ken Lancashire**. Letson has worked at the company for six years as a digital product specialist, and has been mixing live sound for local bands since the age of 13. Lancashire has been with Soundcraft as a technical support engineer for the last 18 months. Formerly an engineer with the BBC, Lancashire joined FWO Bauch in 1986 to provide technical support for Studer products, and has continued in that role through several corporate changes, including the Studer UK subsidiary, until the company became part of the Harman Pro Audio Group.

Italian lighting manufacturer Lampo have appointed **Gareth Balderstone** as sales manager. Balderstone, who has previously worked with La Novalight and more recently Fly, has been recruited to increase the sales of the company and to expand and promote the existing lighting range, along with new lighting developments in the theatrical and architectural fields.



Mark Bailey.

Mike Lethby has resigned as Editor of Live! magazine. He spent four years in the hot seat as editor during which time he developed the look and content of the magazine and was instrumental in founding the Live! Show and Live! Awards. Live!'s publishers Nexus, who

have a portfolio of magazines, including Disco International, are currently looking for a new editor for the magazine and hope to announce the new appointment shortly.

C-Audio have appointed two new sales and marketing personnel, who will be based at the company's new Hertfordshire headquarters in Potters Bar. Co-ordinating and processing overseas and domestic sales is **Melissa Bednarski**, who was

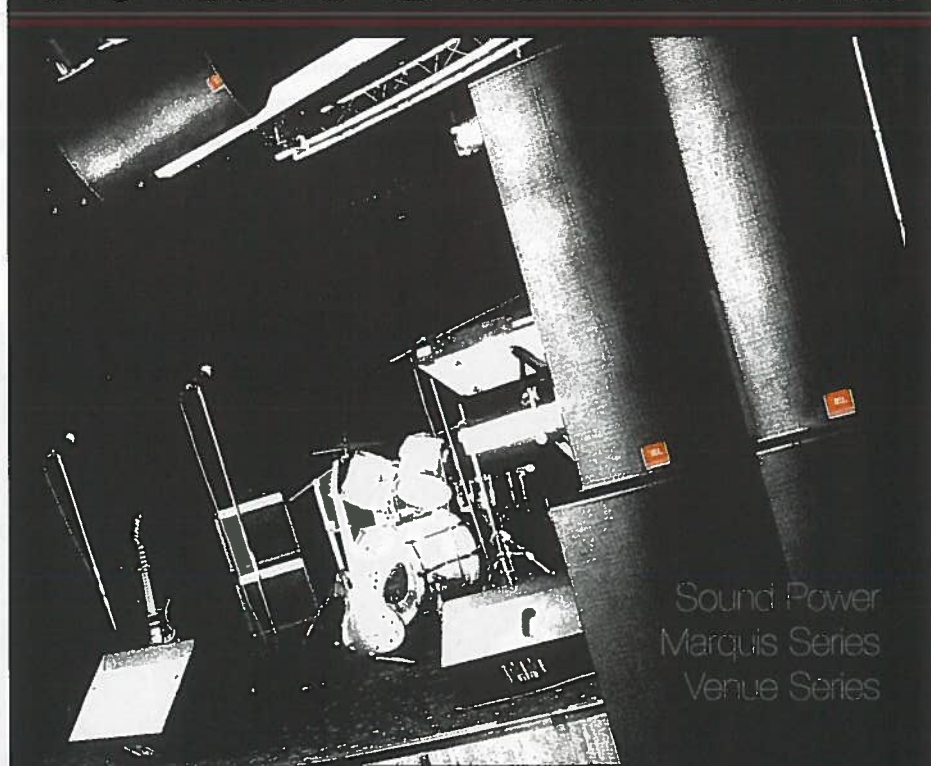


Ken Browne.

previously a customer service adviser in the automotive industry. Meanwhile, joining as marketing assistant is **Paul Bass**, having recently graduated in Marketing from the University of Hertfordshire. His main functions will be to supervise advertisement and sales support materials, as well as exhibition coordination. Both will report to group marketing manager, Dave Neal.

Stewart Hamilton, who founded Stockport-based Unique Systems in 1989, has left the company to start a new venture. His new company, Audiotek, is based in Manchester and specialises in the design, project management and installation of AV systems and effects to the leisure and entertainment industries. Audiotek can be contacted on 0161-223 7556.

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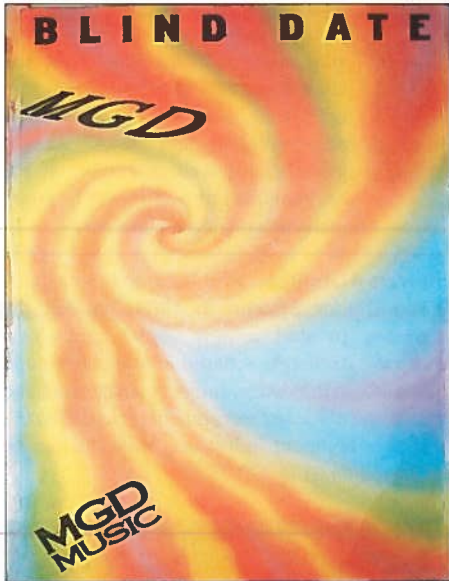
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UV/FX Scenic Productions' Blind Date



UV/FX Scenic Productions of Los Angeles recently provided a special double promotion for Miller Genuine Draft, called 'Blind Date', which took place in Chicago and London. The company provided a series of dual image



murals (pictured above) for the events, which provide completely different looks under normal lighting and UV lighting. This was the first time the company's dual image technique has been used in such an intimate surrounding.

FAX YOUR NEWS THROUGH TO L+SI ON +44 (1323) 646905

AVAB Transtechnik

Transtechnik have asked L+SI to point out that rumours circulating the industry concerning AVAB Sweden having ceased trading are untrue.

AVAB transtechnik AB, Gothenburg, was some time ago split into two companies - AVAB Scandinavia AB in Stockholm and Vestproduktion AB in Gothenburg. While AVAB Scandinavia AB looks after all sales activities in Scandinavia and the Baltic states, Vestproduktion concentrated on manufacturing, but eventually it became apparent that the facility could not be provided with sufficient production volume to stand alone as a production facility. AVAB took the decision to cease payments to Vestproduktion and the company was declared bankrupt. Transtechnik point out that all intellectual property rights involved are held by Transtechnik.

In other developments, AVAB Scandinavia AB has taken over the distributorships from AVAB Transtechnik AB, and is consequently the Swedish distributor for Robert Juliat, Selecon, Clay Paky and Rosco.

In addition, Transtechnik have recently formed Avab Scandinavia AB, based in Sweden. The new company not only undertakes sales and marketing, but offers project planning, system consultancy, project management, service and customer support facilities.

In the UK, meanwhile, Chichester-based AVAB Transtechnik Ltd have increased their servicing capability in order to become an official centre of competence, adding to those in France, Scandinavia and Germany.

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NEWS Shorts

Thomson Entertainment, one of the world's leading manufacturers of entertainment simulators, has chosen Seleco video projectors, from **Owl Video Systems**, for their latest range of Venturer Vxl entertainment simulators.

As part of the company's commitment to service and technical support, **ETC's** first European Authorised Service Centres (ASCs) are now fully operational, providing servicing and commissioning for ETC equipment and systems throughout the UK and Europe.

Metro Video recently designed and installed a new PA system for London-based RU Club - NEC Harlequins. The sound system comprises 15 PA281 loudspeakers which are part of RCF's new PA Contractor Vision Series. The newly-built main stand boasts nine flown speakers whilst the smaller stand features a further six.

Birmingham ArtsFest



Production Arts, in collaboration with Light & Sound Design, supplied two large format Pani 6kW HMI projectors to Birmingham's ArtsFest 98. These were used by artist Colin Pearce to produce a single image, which was projected vertically up the Alpha Tower in Centenary Square, for his piece entitled 'Monumental Text Projection', pictured above.

Lightfactor Deal with Meteorlites

Lightfactor Sales have completed another deal with leading lighting rental house Meteorlites for 64 units of High End Studio Color and Studio Spot automated luminaires. The relationship between Lightfactor and Meteorlites has been long and fruitful, stretching back to the early nineties, when Meteorlites first purchased High End equipment.

Meteorlites (together with Chameleon Lighting - later acquired by Meteorlites) was the initial lighting rental company in the UK to invest in the Intellabeam, the original High End moving mirror fixture, upon its release in the early nineties. Meteorlites then went on to purchase substantial quantities of the Cyberlight moving mirrors, and waited for the market, by then awash with moving light fixtures, to settle down before undertaking their next substantial investment.

Meteorlites supply lighting equipment, crew and services to the film and television lighting industry. The first job for the new fixtures was Songs of Praise for BBC Manchester. The diverse range of work that will be covered by the Studio Colors and Studio Spots will include dramas, OBs, children's programmes and sports events. Meteorlites' recent work also includes Grange Hill, the fourth series of Bugs and Silent Witness, plus a myriad of sporting events from football to athletics to motor racing.

Meteorlites have gone for lighter, flicker-free electronic ballast versions - an important consideration for the TV market. They are also custom designing and building power distribution for their new luminaires and have purchased WholeHog IIs to drive them.

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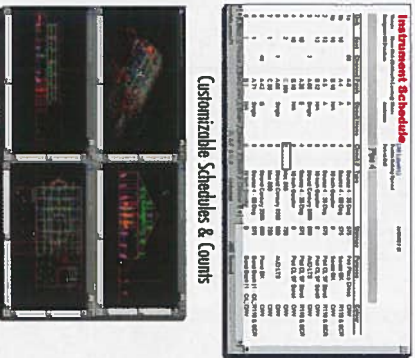
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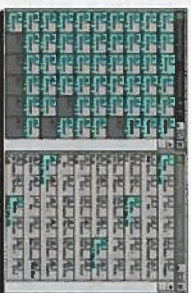
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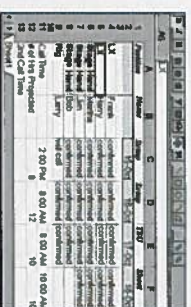
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A New Perspective for the Royal Albert Hall

Broadcast on Channel 4 in mid-October, the Music Of Black Origin awards (MOBO) staged at the Albert Hall earlier in the month, marked a milestone, not only in black culture, but for the RAH as well. This old and venerable building doesn't have the strongest roof structure, and it was never intended to support the tons of equipment found on a modern live presentation. With sound and lighting an essential, live video has always played a poor cousin. Projection screens, although lightweight, have such a restricted viewing angle as to be very limiting, while large daylight screens have previously been too heavy.

Now LED technology has changed all that. "This was the first time anything like this has been rigged in the RAH," said Christopher Milnes who managed the video screen project for the MOBOs. What he was referring to was a pair of Screenco's LED screens, each 4.8m wide by 3.6m high, positioned either side of the organ pipes. "The weight issue is what made this possible," Milnes continued, "an almost 50% reduction over comparable CRT technology."

But there are other considerations for the RAH. "Although it's large, the distance between viewer and screen is small. The high resolution of our LED screen is such that viewing distances as short as seven metres are possible, plus with 160 degree viewing angles virtually every seat sees a full image."

Black Pig Productions were responsible for all TV facilities on the day, calling upon Screenco's expertise for the screens, whilst the delicate task of rigging was undertaken by Steve Armstrong of Star Rats.

Autograph's 25th Birthday



On the afternoon of the Sunday of PLASA 98, a select group of people, including the sound crews from most of the shows in the West End, were nowhere near the hustle and bustle of Earls Court. Instead they were out near Ealing, being by turns fiercely competitive on the softball pitch and cheerfully relaxed in the nearby tent-come-bar. The event? A party celebrating the 25th Anniversary of Autograph Sound Recording.

The whole event was a highly enjoyable affair, blessed with fair weather and filled with good company. The only drawback? Well, you could tell who had been at the party the next day: they were the ones hobbling around PLASA 98 with aching legs and hands from an excess of sporting activity the day before!

Happy Birthday, Autograph. Here's to the next 25!

Rob Halliday

NEWS Shorts

Performance Light & Sound, the exclusive UK distributors for Beyma loudspeakers and Strong lighting, recently supplied the BBC with a Strong confetti cannon to be used on the National Lottery draw show, which airs live every Saturday evening on BBC 1.

PCM are offering a free Leatherman Supertool for every order of eight PCM Lodestar Plus hoists! The Supertool is a multi-purpose accessory, similar to a Swiss Army Knife. It offers a variety of appendages including screwdrivers, knife edges, pliers, even a saw - everything you might need to disassemble and fix a Lodestar in fact! For further details contact PCM on 0151-609 0101.

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PLASA 98 Seminar Programme Prepares Industry for Year Ahead

This year's PLASA show was a resounding success, not only with the business taking place on the exhibition floor and in the private suites, but also at the seminars which ran throughout the week.

David Karlin of BSS Audio kicked off the seminar programme by leading the session on **Local Area Network Technologies** and their application to live sound, which presented a review of the basics of digital audio transmission, a SWOT analysis of network technologies and how these solutions affect real audio systems and their application of the distribution of digital audio for live sound. In his presentation Karlin worked through some case studies of audio distribution for a range of applications and also touched on what the future holds for networked audio control and what new products will meet these demands. Britannia Row's Peter Brotzman, who attended the seminar, said: "Networking is the future of the audio industry and the seminar was very informative and cleared up some very grey areas in plain English. The information gained will be very useful to me in liaising with clients who require a networked solution."

The seminar on **Voice Evacuation**, sponsored by Baldwin Boxall Communications and Sound +Communication Systems International, was well supported by the voice alarm industry. John Revington of Premises Management Services enlightened the delegates on the seriousness of the subject by highlighting a series of fire incidents over the past 100 years. Penny Morgan of The Fire Research Station focused on human behaviour in emergency situations and went on to outline a number of different experimental evacuation studies that the Building Research Establishment had carried out.

Delegates then heard from Alan Patmore, chief fire officer of Luton & Dunstable NHS Trust, giving the end-user viewpoint, whilst the assistant divisional officer of the London Fire Brigade, David Doyle, talked about British standards concerning voice alarm systems and their installations. The importance of proper design was then explored by Peter Barnett of AMS Acoustics, with Terry Baldwin of Baldwin Boxall rounding off the session.

The final session of the first day was devoted to the ongoing **Pop Code Review**, fronted by the



Rick Fisher, lighting designer and ALD chairman, chaired the ALD's popular seminar session on 'Theatrical Effects in the Architectural World' at PLASA 98.

Production Services Association and sponsored by Live! magazine. On the panel were PSA general manager Keith Ferguson, Tim Norman from ESS, Roger Barrett of Star Hire, Mark Thomas from the HSE and Lorraine Miller-Patel, senior environmental health officer at Haringey Council each of whom talked about the various issues surrounding the code. The code is intended to help concerned parties ensure they have the appropriate health and safety management systems in place for events that they are involved with. From the scope and development of the discussion, it would appear that there still exists some confusion about the nature of the guidelines, though there was broad agreement that more mandatory legislation was needed.

John Murray of TOA Electronics Inc led the session on **Sound System Gain Structure and Equalisation** which was sponsored by the NSCA and covered procedures which must be performed on virtually every sound reinforcement system of even modest complexity.

The **Outdoor Displays** seminar, which covered the application of giant screen technology, considered developments in the large screen market, including the introduction of LED screens. David Crump of large screen hire specialists Screenco was joined on the panel by Paul Freeman of Unitek and Peter Lloyd, editor in chief of AV Magazine.

Peter Lloyd was also part of the panel for the **Displays for Clubs and Pubs** seminar which looked at leisure installations of large screen displays and the associated technical and creative

requirements. The panel, which also included Martin Howe of Barco and Frank Jones of Terminal Displays, considered the relative merits of different display technologies, including monitors, videowalls, plasma and projection, as well as considering the most common pitfalls and how to avoid them.

Award-winning lighting designer Rick Fisher chaired the ALD's session on **Taking Theatrical Lighting Effects into the Architectural World**. Fisher was joined by Jonathan Howard from DHA Design Services, Mark Major from Speirs & Major, Tony Rimmer from Imagination and Steve Terry of PRG Lighting Group. Considering both architectural and retail environments, the panel discussed how theatrical effects

could be achieved with standard architectural fixtures, as well as looking at some new luminaires on the market.

David Hopkins OBE, chairman and managing director of Audio Design Services, presented the session on **Public Address for the Non-Technical**. Aimed at staff members on the lower rungs of audio companies who might grapple with the basics of the subject, the session described in plain terms areas of sound level calculation, frequency response, the effect of dispersion and the pros and cons of using specific loudspeakers in various environments.

The session on **Remote Source Lighting - The Future or Simply a Dream?** looked at the applications and limitations of two types of remote source lighting - fibre optics and lightpipe - and the possibility that such sources could become the preferred lighting solution of the future.

Closing the seminar programme on the final afternoon was the seminar on **Developing and Re-developing Theatrical Buildings for the New Millennium**, sponsored by Lighting+Sound International and chaired by L+SI's associate editor, Tony Gottelier, who introduced David Staples of Theatre Projects Consultants. Staples looked particularly at the impact of National Lottery funding on the building and re-equipping of theatres and arts venues.

With the seminar programme very well attended, this year's show was not only about doing business, but also preparing the industry for doing business in the year ahead.

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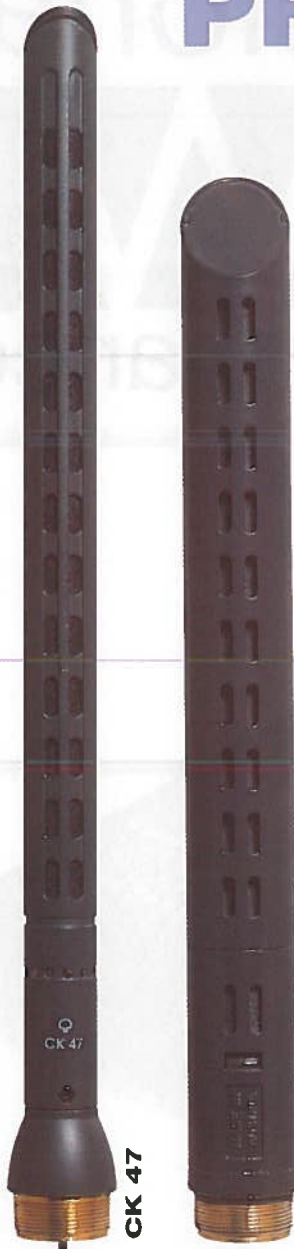


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PLASA Takes to the Road



PLASA's managing director Matthew Griffiths speaking at the PLASA Roadshow in Birmingham in mid-October.

PLASA's first ever series of Roadshows, which visited Glasgow, Manchester and Birmingham earlier this month, received a very positive response from the 35 PLASA members who attended.

The aim of the Roadshows was to take the initiative in terms of increasing communication between the Association and its membership, and at the same time to raise awareness of PLASA's many activities on behalf of its members. Judging by the very positive nature of the feedback received, this aim was successfully achieved, and PLASA now plans to carry the momentum forward into 1999, with further Roadshows planned.

The events consisted of a half-hour presentation from senior PLASA staff and members of the executive committee, followed by an open forum session for general discussion with the evening rounded off with refreshments. The central message behind the sessions was that PLASA exists to benefit its membership, and to do that, there needs to be regular and proper communication between the Association and its members. The presentation stressed the need for feedback and involvement from member companies.

John Jones of PCM, who attended the Manchester Roadshow, said of the event: "It's great that PLASA are doing this. It gives us an opportunity to discuss issues that would perhaps otherwise not be discussed . . . it's definitely the way forward, to involve the membership more directly."

After the Glasgow Roadshow, Alan Lochhead of Tannoy commented: "I learnt an awful lot more about PLASA than I actually understood before. It was very worthwhile . . . I would certainly attend another one."

PLASA's managing director Matthew Griffiths, who gave the main presentation at the Roadshows, commented: "The response has been very encouraging and we have received a great deal of valid and useful feedback. We wanted to stress the need for two-way communication between PLASA and its members, as well as to more fully inform the membership about PLASA's activities and services.

"From what we have heard in response, it seems we have made an important first step towards achieving these goals. We will certainly be continuing with this initiative in the new year, and we look forward to seeing many more of our members."



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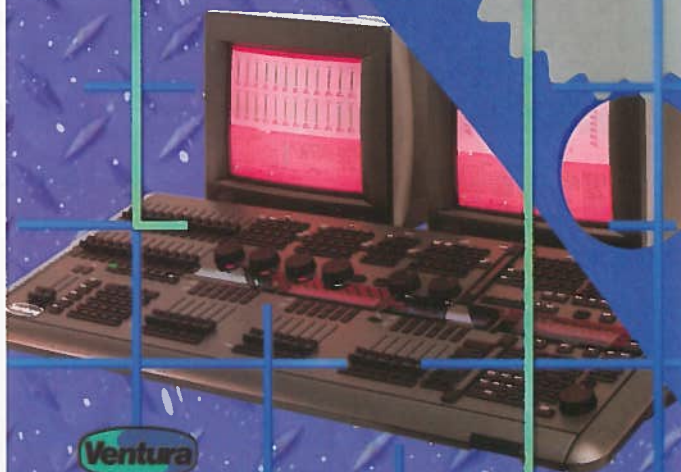
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NEWS Shorts

New Asian cruise vessels currently under construction at the Meyer Werft shipyard in Papenburg, Germany, will have their entertainment lighting systems dimmed by Fusion Rack Mount dimmer packs, manufactured by Celco and installed by Funa GmbH. Celco have combined the digital dimming engine from the Fusion Wall Mount Dimmer with an all-new front end, in a compact 3U high 19" enclosure.

ARRI's latest addition to its range of lighting has won this year's cinec award for Best Lighting Technology. The new ARRILUX 21/50 Minisun is the smallest dual wattage daylight lamphead that ARRI has developed to date.

Currier's Last Stand

Neville Currier has retired from the position of head of lighting at English National Opera after 42 years with the company, following a presentation on the stage of the Coliseum surrounded by many of his colleagues and friends.

Currier joined Sadlers Wells Opera in 1956 working first on Franz Lehár's *The Merry Widow* with distinguished soprano June Bronhill, through a vast repertory of classical and contemporary opera with some of the world's leading singers. For a large part of his formative years he was on the road with the multitude of successful tours that came out of Sadlers Wells.

As a marker to his long career, he told me that prior to beginning with the Islington-based company he worked on the first incarnation of Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap* at The Manchester Opera House, before its West End opening, 46 years ago. He has often lit plays and operas outside of ENO including, most recently, a new production of *Orfeo* at the ADC. His consultancy has been sought on a wide range of projects notably on the design and construction of The Britten Theatre within The Royal College of Music, with its easy workings paying tribute to his knowledge of the craft.

As an electrician initially with the firm, he was guided



"How many supervisors does it take to change a lightbulb?" Neville Currier (centre right) with ENO's past lighting supervisors (left to right) Paul Taylor, Tom Mannings and Roger Frith.

and influenced by Charlie Bristow, whose lighting of *The Flying Dutchman* in 1958 put opera lighting design on the map; with its innovative techniques it established the place of the lighting designer at the previously two-berth production desk.

This creatism and enthusiasm for the art has stayed with Neville and has helped countless directors, designers and especially lighting designers over his distinguished career.

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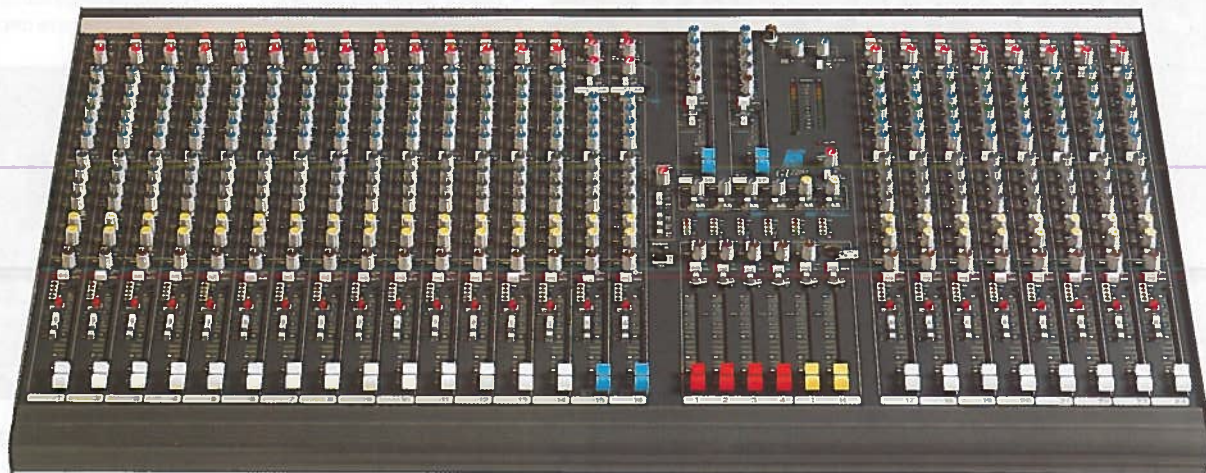
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Vertigo Do 206 At The Oxo Tower



Vertigo Rigging were recently involved in setting up a stunning PR event for the launch of the new Peugeot 206. London's famous Oxo Tower on the South Bank, a listed building which radiates an ambient glowing 'Oxo' in lights via windows from all four sides of the structure, was changed for the first time in its 70-year history. For two weeks only, 'OXO' became '206'. This was a publicity event to tie in with the launch of the Peugeot 206 at The Motor Show being held simultaneously at Birmingham's NEC.

Vertigo were engaged by The Visual Connection for this transformation. Frames which fitted against the windows of the tower, completed by vinyl banners being stretched across, were custom-designed and built by the company. The Oxo building itself has a flat roof approximately 100ft high with the tower protruding a further 100ft upwards from that. The frames had to be assembled and bolted together on top of the building's roof - not aided by the fact that access to this was via a small goods lift which dictated that no piece of the frame structure could exceed 108m. Furthermore, this part of the process took place with the Vertigo team battling against high winds and rain. The frames were then hauled up the tower and fixed into place. The rigging process took three days to complete and the 206 banners were then lit from exterior light sources positioned on the roof of the building.

AC Lighting North Relocates

Sales demand has forced AC Lighting's North of England office to relocate to larger premises, with Jonathan Walters at its helm. The new facility provides the company with increased office space, stock warehousing and a showroom facility which allows it to hold a variety of AC Lighting products in stock, as well as a range of equipment for demonstration.

In addition, the company have taken on Adam Beaumont who joins Walters in the sales department. Beaumont brings with him a wealth of experience having previously been employed by Blackpool Pleasure Beach, Opera North and most recently as the chief lighting and sound engineer at a major theme park in the Far East.

AC Lighting North is located at Wellington Mill, Wellington Grove, Broad Lane, Leeds, LS13 2TE. Telephone: +44 (113) 255 7666.

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LETTERS

Dear Editor,

ASLEEP IN THE STALLS - OCTOBER

I feel that Ian Herbert's article in October's issue deserves a reply from someone. Whilst I admit to being slightly biased, I will attempt to answer some of the comments Ian made. I agree with Ian in so far as it is terrific news that critics have noticed the lighting and even better that they have praised it.

I am also happy to note that Ian realises that the final product of the lighting design is not solely down to the lighting designer, but is a collaborative effort between the whole creative team. Some of the best lighting I have ever seen has been on productions where the creative team is just that, a team. One of my favourite examples of this is the Royal National Theatre's production of *Machinal* as produced by the team of Stephen Daldry, Ian MacNeil and Rick Fisher. The lighting on *Machinal* was so intrinsic to the production that it was a perfect example of David Hersey's (and more recently John Watt's) description of lighting as "the glue that holds a show together".

Where I have to disagree with Ian is his description of Mark Henderson's lighting for *Phedre*. Whilst I accept that taste is a personal thing, the lighting for *Phedre* was one of the most dramatic, descriptive and quite frankly, beautiful lighting that I have seen for years. What was even more important was the lighting contributed to, and was an intrinsic part of, the production as a whole; it was completely in keeping with the set, costumes and most importantly the direction.

One of the side effects of Ian's articles are that they provoke discussion and argument, but perhaps it would be better to balance his views with a monthly round-up of reviews from the national papers that have noticed any aspect of the technical side of a production? Or perhaps we could have technical reviews of shows in L+SI from people both within the industry and from outside?

Bryan Raven - White Light

Strand's Custom Solution for Exchange



As touched on in our September issue, the Manchester Royal Exchange, badly damaged by an IRA bomb just over two years ago, will re-open later this month following a £30 million rebuild. A major commitment to sound and lighting technology has seen the Oxford Sound Company appointed as main audio contractors and Stage Electrics as production lighting suppliers.

The new lighting system features a complex, custom-designed networking system from Strand Lighting, modelled on the attributes of the theatre's old Strand Galaxy console. In a project commissioned by the Exchange's head of lighting Vince Herbert, the upgrade extends the range of their 510i series consoles. In time, the combination of 510i, file server and network nodes, custom-configured, will generate a standard format which can be supplied to other sites where the requirements of Galaxy users cannot be met with existing products.

Initially, Strand's new 510i will be supplied (complete with back-up) to provide the processing electronics, while the control surfaces - a 550i in the main theatre and a 520i in the studio - will communicate directly with the 510i. The dimmer system includes seven large EC90 racks, containing 384 3kW dimmers, 41 6kW dimmers and 18 Contacter modules for use in the theatre, with four LD90 dimmer racks containing 72 2.5kW dimmers and eight 5kW dimmers for use in the studio.

Full feature in a future issue.

Make Way for the Euro

On the 1st January 1999, 11 European Member States will introduce a single currency - the euro. Whilst the UK government has decided not to join at present, it is making the necessary preparations to allow the option to join early in the next Parliament (beginning no later than spring 2002).

It is recognised that the new single currency will directly affect many UK businesses on its introduction in the new year, especially those who buy and sell throughout Europe. Many multi-nationals have already indicated that they will be dealing in the euro from the outset in 1999, thereby encouraging the rest of the UK to follow suit, even though they will not be obliged to do so before 2002. If your company is in a supply chain headed by a multi-national, you may be asked to deal in euro from 1999. Likewise, those with investments, premises, or parent companies in the euro zone will be immediately affected.

The euro will become the legal currency in the 11 member states in January 1999, but euro bank notes and coins will not be introduced until 1 January 2002. The plan at present is to run the euro in parallel with the national currencies - the exchange rates of which will be locked to the euro - until 30th June 2002, at which point the national currency will cease to exist. The 11 countries in the zone will share a common interest rate, set by the ECB (European Central Bank).

It is accepted that the IT industry will have the most demands placed on it, as they try to ensure that all software can cope with the euro at the same time as making sure we are all Year 2000 compliant. The IT industry itself is already quoting that the cost involved in preparing for the euro is likely to be two to three times the cost of dealing with the Year 2000 problem.

The start of EMU is rapidly approaching and it is necessary for all businesses to develop a strategy to cope with the changes. In Europe, companies are already using their EMU compliance to give them a competitive edge.

Talk to PLASA if you want further help in this area. Telephone +44 (0)1323 410335.

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NEWS Shorts

Coe-tech have recently supplied Richard Martin Lighting with 12 Coemar CF 1200 moving head luminaires for use at the BBC TV Centre. They were initially used on the National Lottery Show, and were then used by LD Will Charles for Later With Jools Holland. The units were also specified by LD Chris Kempton for Never Mind the Buzzcocks and The Blue Peter 40th Anniversary Show.

Spurred on by the arrival of the new Clay Paky Stage Light 300 and Stage Color 300 moving head lanterns, **Gradav Hire** decided to hold two hands-on sessions during October. The opportunity was also taken to demonstrate the Axiom range of desks and Pacific lanterns from Selecon, with plans for further sessions in the spring. For further details, contact Gradav on 0181-803 7400.

The Bose Solution

Bose Ltd, in conjunction with five of its authorised trade distributors, recently undertook a five-day system sales and installation training tour of the UK. The presentations consisted of working demonstrations of the Bose Professional range of products, and included insights into some of the company's proprietary technologies.

The tour kicked off in Milton Keynes, where Leisuretec hosted the first seminar which attracted over 90 dealers from the Midlands and Southern counties. Other host distributors included Willow Vale Electronics, Dial Sound & Light, RW Salt and Louis Grace.



Pictured at the Leisuretec seminar are Andy Fisher (left) and Craig Buckley (right) of Bose, with Leisuretec's Pete James (centre left) and Mike Henden.

Strange Growth on Side of NEC

An unexpected appendage has attached itself to Hall 4 at Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre. It began to appear the weekend of August 1st and 2nd, yet reports indicate it will not mature until this month.

The interloper will soon achieve proportions in keeping with the NEC itself, reaching 47m in length, 32m wide and stretching 22m high. Built from Edwin Shirley Staging's Tower system this huge temporary structure is once again in place at the behest of Imagination for the Ford exhibition at the Motor Show.

Having experimented with the idea of a show independent free space at the Geneva show earlier this year, Imagination were so pleased with the results that they have enlarged the concept for the UK show. Once again the structure will straddle a road that runs adjacent to the main expo' hall, and once again it will house a fantastic array of high technology presentation equipment.

And why is the ESS building being erected now? It's the only window of opportunity in the NEC's busy schedule when the road can be temporarily blocked for the couple of days it takes ESS to put this massive structure in position.



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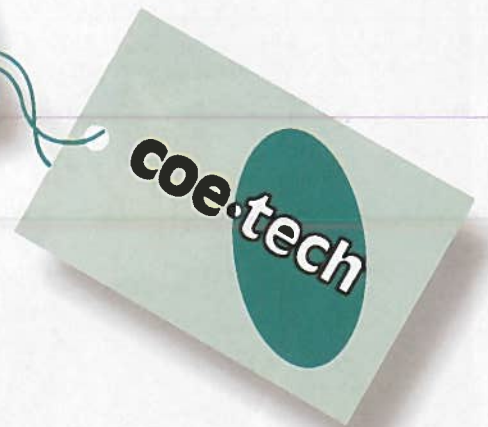
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Underneath The Arches of Tower Bridge

Over the last few years, Tower Bridge Business Complex in Bermondsey, South London, has welcomed a number of growing companies, many of which work in the entertainment sector providing specialist services to the UK and beyond. Managed by Space Direct, what was once Associated Biscuits' factory, has developed into a mini 'theatre village' with staging, set building, lighting hire, rehearsal rooms and events industry specialist services, all housed within 640,000sq.ft.

Most of the businesses are relatively young. **Maltbury** is typical: based in Arch 651, it specialises in the hire and sale of staging, seating tiers and other structures. While many of its day-to-day jobs are straightforward the company also offers a Special Projects team to cater for the more unusual, such as building a demountable altar painted to resemble Purbeck marble at Westminster Abbey, or camera platforms for the Labour Party's election victory rally in 1997. More recently, for London Fashion Week, the company has provided catwalks for a number of top British designers including Sonja Nuttall and Antonio Berardi: for flamboyant designer Alexander McQueen, it built seating tiers to accommodate an audience of 700 in-the-round for his dramatic show '#13'.

Under the guidance of MD Philip Sparkes the company has come a long way in three years and when the time came for expansion, they opted to refit a new office two arches along. The distinctive white Maltbury vans can be seen regularly all over the London area, providing staging in venues for clients as diverse as the Barbican Concert Hall, BBC TV, the Royal Albert Hall and Shepperton Studios.

The range of theatrical businesses within the complex means that they each complement one another and can work together. **Mushroom Lighting Services Limited** moved to the complex in 1996. Established for over 20 years, Mushroom both sells and hires lighting equipment to the entertainment, conference and leisure industries. The two company's close proximity has led to many collaborative projects, such as Opera on The Lawn and fashion shows for Sonja Nuttall.

Round the corner is the British base of **Gerriets**, manufacturers and suppliers of theatrical fabric, drapes and backcloths, while track specialist **Triple E** has only just moved after eight successful years at Tower Bridge. Their new base in Admiral Hyson Estate is just a five minute walk away from the company's former headquarters.

Within the complex there are two set/scenery construction companies - **DRS** and **Stage Surgeons**, the former working in film, TV and commercials and the latter with a strong niche in theatre. Formed in 1995, **DRS Construction** co-ordinates set-building projects for TV, feature films, stills photography and music videos. Their premises comprise a 4000sq.ft. workshop, a design office, a setting studio for prebuilding sets and a store for architectural details. Its portfolio includes commercials for One-2-One and Tetley



Whilst Maltbury were completing the stage extension for **The Shaftesbury Theatre**, prior to **Rent** opening, **Stage Surgeons** were busy putting the finishing touches to the foyer scenery.

Bitter, **Vauxhall Corsa**, **Heineken** and **Cadbury**. The company has also built sets for music promos including **Massive Attack** and **Mark Knopfler**.

Just a few arches away lies **Stage Surgeons**. In 1994, **Ken Milligan** and **Bill Harrison** formed the set building company initially sharing space with the **Royal Court**, as they construct most of the theatre's scenery. The company builds sets, supplies production/project management, production engineers and carpenters to the industry and has contracts throughout the West End for the maintenance of stage equipment and flying systems. Recent clients include **Pola Jones** for **Tommy** in the West End and on tour, foyer scenery for **Rent** at the **Shaftesbury Theatre**, **The Weir** for **The Royal Court** and the **Bound to Please** world tour for **DV8 Physical Theatre**. Within the same small and specialised industry, quite often neighbouring companies will be working on the same projects: whilst Maltbury was completing the stage extension for **The Shaftesbury Theatre**, prior to the opening of **Rent**, **Stage Surgeons** was busy putting the finishing touches to the foyer scenery.

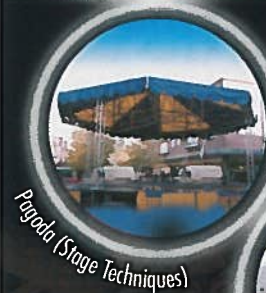
As well as traditional theatre businesses, the complex is also home to a number of companies in the music industry. **Music Bank** provides sound equipment hire, whilst **Waterloo Sunset** studios offer high quality rehearsal space. **Music Bank** also specialises in supporting the television industry. Recent clients include **The Big Breakfast**, **TFI Friday** and **This Morning**. Sister company, **Waterloo Sunset** comprises two state-of-the-art rehearsal suites. The facilities are impressive with each studio incorporating a production office and programming room. There is even an expansive, furnished roof terrace for outside broadcasts, video production and showcases.

Also based in the complex, **The Departure Lounge**, offers touring and immigration services for the entertainment, events and media industries. **Amanda Austin** describes their business as being one of 'professional queuers' and recent projects have involved obtaining passport applications for **Spice Girls** Tour personnel and visas and carnets for the **All Saints** and **E17** tours.

There are a number of additional companies offering media, catering and graphic design services too and no doubt the site will be even more desirable when the **Jubilee Line** extension is finally unveiled!

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Governor's Palace

Located in the Smokey Mountain region of Tennessee, Governor's Palace Theater brings big city entertainment to a small community near Knoxville. The latest addition to Governor's Crossing, a shopping, dining and entertainment complex in Sevierville (named after the state's first governor), the 1,750-seat theatre opened on August 1st this year. It is host to a variety of family-oriented events including live concerts, theatrical productions and even a daily game show hosted by Bob Eubanks of 'The Newlywed Game' fame.

A state-of-the-art theatre which rivals the best Nashville currently has to offer, Governor's Palace stage lighting includes 16 High End Systems Cyberlights, 16 Studio Colors, 12 Wildfire units, 180 Par 64s and 50 ETC Source Fours with Wybron colour changers in a rig designed and installed by Bandit Lites.

The company also provided a further 12 Studio Colors, housed in High End Systems Ecodomes, to light the exterior of the building in a pattern designed by David Haskell, general manager of sister facility Alabama Theater (Myrtle Beach, S.C.) "We designed the [interior] system, but they specified a lot of the gear based on our recommendation from experience and a proven reliability," said Jeff Goetsch, project manager for Bandit Lites.

No doubt the automated lighting is good stuff, but the crown jewel of the system is its integrated power and data distribution network. The high tech system, designed by Bandit's Richard Davis, allows rapid and efficient adaptation of theatre lighting to accommodate both concerts and theatrical productions. "The variability of the system will accommodate any show you put in there," Goetsch assured.

Comprising 380 ETC Sensor Dimmers and 72 208V AC circuits distributed in a semi-theatrical style layout, Davis described the system: "Of the 40 counterweight linesets located overstage, five of them are 'electric' battens, each with a custom-designed circuit distribution raceway. Each raceway has 30 stage pin circuits, with every six repeating in a Socapex multipin connector. This allows a lampbar to be hung quickly for concert-type set-ups, and still accommodate individual fixtures for theatrical performances without the need for cables and fanouts," Davis explained.

In addition, each raceway has both utility and 208V AC circuits built in for automated fixture power distribution throughout the facility. "And every location has two DMX outputs - for a total



of 30 - which go to a DMX patch rack that would make any audio guy jealous," joked Davis. The patch rack houses four DMX universes with built-in Opto splitters, houselight control and DMX merging devices for optimum flexibility.

While the in-house system is controlled by a Wholehog II, any DMX compatible console can be patched in at various locations throughout the facility for simultaneous control. Exterior lighting is controlled by an Alcorn DMX Show control device located with the DMX patch rack. The Wholehog II is also used to record up to three hours of playback into the Alcorn unit, Davis said.

At a cost of approximately \$500,000, the highly functional system, was a solid value for Opryland Productions and its theatrical specifications coordinator, Terry Smith, who said Bandit Lites was hand-picked for the job. "We've worked with them for many years now," Smith said. "And we know their industry reputation."

Tennessee-based Black Hawk Audio supplied and installed the theatre sound system, which includes Meyer Sound Self-Powered UltraSeries speakers (MSL-4, CQ 1 and CQ 2) and 650 P subwoofers for the mains and UPA 1P, 2P, UM-1P and UM-100P stage monitors. Mixing is done on an Amek Recall with FX to include Lexicon PCM models and two Yamaha SPX 900 models.

Kyle Nelson-Cook

PRG: Strategic Consolidation

The Production Resource Group (PRG) is moving its Northeast locations under one roof, just minutes from New York City. The new, state-of-the-art, 130,000sq.ft facility will bring Production Arts and BASH together. Jeff Turner, formerly of Vanco Lighting Services, has moved from Orlando, Florida, to the Northeast HQ to take up the position of general manager where he will work closely with BASH New Jersey, Production Arts Lighting New Jersey and BASH Baltimore to ensure a smooth transition.

Steve Terry, president of PRG Lighting Group, told L+S: "We will continue to maintain our sales presence in New Jersey, New York City and Baltimore, while relocating and consolidating our entire lighting rental inventory in this modern facility. This will allow us to offer the highest level of service possible and the largest inventory of equipment to our clients."



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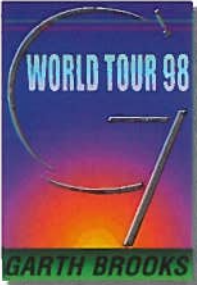
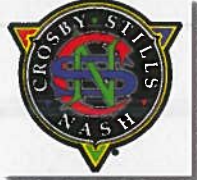


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Lightpower's Bavarian Faust



Paderborn-based Lightpower, Clay Paky's German distributor, supplied 16 of the company's new Stage Color 300 universal washlights and four new Stage Light 300 effects projectors to light the summer season at Weilheim Theatre in Bavaria. Pictured above is a scene from Goethe's *Faust*, with lighting design by Carl Uwe Niesig.

Numark UK Acquire DJ2000

Jack O'Donnell, president of Numark Industries, and David Wale, managing director of DJ2000 have announced the acquisition of DJ2000 by the newly-formed company, Numark UK. DJ2000 has served as Numark's sole distributor in the UK for the past four years, quadrupling the company's UK sales in that period. This move by Numark is seen as the next logical step in maintaining that sales growth. Taking on the role of managing director of Numark UK is Damon Crisp, formerly a director of Lamba plc. Crisp will head the operation from DJ2000's current location in Reading, Berkshire.

Color Kinetics Appoints LT Projects

Color Kinetics Incorporated, the pioneer of full spectrum digital lighting has appointed LT Projects as an authorised master distributor for Europe of its award-winning line of digital coloured items. Color Kinetics, developers of the patent-pending Chromacore technology, burst onto the lighting scene last year, earning 'Architectural Lighting Product of the Year' honours at LDI '97 and 'Best New Product of the Year' at Lightfair 98.

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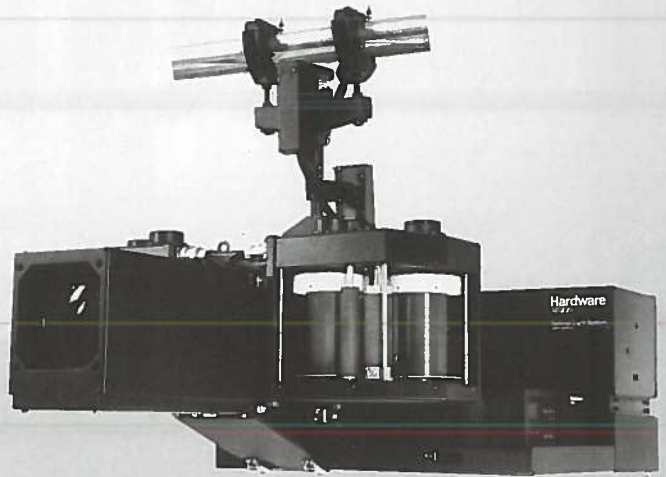
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TURKEY CLUBBING

Ross Brown went to Turkey to find out what this transcontinental country has to offer the travelling nightclubber



The Ally Club in Antalya - Bolton Abbey on acid.

photo courtesy of World Discotheque Review

It's not the world's most exciting airport, Antalya. And, after spending seven hours twiddling my thumbs and reading my copy of *The European* for around the twenty-eighth time, its appeal had departed through the nearest exit, along with my patience.

As Turkish airports go, I would think Antalya is one of the nicest. But once you've walked 200 yards one way, turned around, had a quick coffee at the café, and walked 200 yards back to the world's most uncomfortable chair that has been your home for the last seven hours – even the glamour of clean linoleum, a security guard who insists on speaking to you in German and the world's cutest check-in girl are doing little to speed the wait.

I used to have three rules of travelling and the fact that Turkey made me break all three really should have started those alarm bells ringing. Firstly, never go to a country that doesn't use your alphabet (though as I've also visited Russia and Greece, I think I now have the set); secondly, never visit a country whose monetary system is so inflated that numerical logic goes out of the window; and, possibly most importantly, never, ever, ever visit a country where your only method of finding a bed is to locate a bloke who doesn't speak a

word of your language but has a big piece of cardboard with your name on. I guess it was my own fault really.

Why Turkey, I hear you ask? Do the words Ibiza mean anything to you? A tiny island that has, in the last five or so years, become the mecca for club-goers who like their music loud and bassy, their parties complete with foam and their nights hot and powered at 120bpm: you may have heard of the place. Well, word on the grapevine is that your discerning club-goer is going to be looking towards Turkey in the future for their summer fun . . .

DESPERATELY SEEKING SOMETHING

When I arrived in Antalya, an airport that less than 24 hours later would become like home to me, I scoured the wall of name signs – both professional and home-made – that panned out before me, looking desperately for my name, the magazine's name, the editor's name (could I pass as a Ruth I wondered?) – even my goldfish's name . . . all to no avail. After pondering over a couple of Marlboro Lights, I heard an announcement with the words "Ross Brown" in them: rescue at last.

Never have I been so glad to see a small Turkish bloke with a piece of yellow paper with

my name on before. I attempted to exchange pleasantries and received a friendly but empty smile that indicated that all communication with the person would have to be carried-out through smiles and gestures: so I offered him a fag. Works every time. Accepting the proffered Marlboro with a Turkish grunt I took to be "thank you", we made our way to my luxury transport: and I began my journey to . . . well, I wasn't quite sure.

We weaved, dodged and generally overtook cars on blind corners, the hustle and bustle of the area surrounding the airport slowly fading into a dim memory. The gaps between outposts of civilisation became wider and wider, with nothing but the occasional petrol station to break the boredom. And then, just as I was beginning to give up all hope of clean white sheets and getting my head down, we arrived at a palace in ceramic: the Club Alley Bey, my home for the next 24 hours – or thereabouts.

WISH YOU WERE HERE

Sumptuous doesn't begin to describe this place. A parade of low-rise apartment buildings, surrounded by lush greenness on three sides and a very nice (and very private) beach on the fourth. Outdoor bars in



The High End club - part-owned by three of Turkey's top DJs.

abundance, the kind of outdoor stage that would shame your average small town in the UK and, naturally, more than its fair share of swimming pools. But, before I turn into Judith Chalmers and spend the next four pages extolling the virtues of this paradise by the sea: what I was here for was the lighting and the sound - a (if you will) miniature warm-up for my nights of clubbing ahead.

The Club Alley Bey is an exclusive resort, owned by Turkey's largest manufacturer of ceramics (which would explain the abundance of tiles), and each week during the summer, up to 2,000 guests (mainly, for some reason, German) pay a not inconsiderable sum of money to chill out, kick-back and relax in its opulent surroundings. And these people demand entertainment: that's why the resort's staff of singers, dancers and the like perform a new show each night - in fact I had just missed the end of *Les Miserables* when I arrived. The sight of 35 mainly German performers, acting through a tale of the French Revolution, in Turkey and singing in English is one I was bitterly upset to have missed.

Set back around 150 yards from the front of the outdoor stage was a mock castle, centre for all things technical on the stage. It's an impressive little set-up, featuring some of the latest in audio and visual technology. Centre-stage, audio-wise, is a Soundcraft K1 desk, controlling the mix from two Technics SL-PG 580a CD players (with a back-up SL-PL 887 CD Player), a Technics RS-TR cassette deck, a Sony DTC-ZE DAT player, a Sony MDS-JE 500 MiniDisc and all manner of mics (including seven Shure SC1-CT headsets and two Shure SC2-CE handhelds).

On the lighting side, there was one each of Celco's Explorer and Navigator Consoles, an Easy200 SMPTE timecode control computer, a single ARX Eq 15 and a QSC FX 4000 power amp. Monitoring within the 'castle' was courtesy of an Ohm monitor and the whole kit and caboodle was co-ordinated via a PC.

Ouch! And then we've got the stage. Deep breath: 42 Chroma MSR 1200s, three Martin PAL 1200s, four FAL 2000W DMX strobes, two Celco Fusion 1210 12-way dimmers, two

Apogee AE-15s, four each of Ohm's BR 30 and 30s, six QSC EX 4000s and a single EX 2500. From ARX Systems, an AFW-1 anti-feedback work station, a Quadcomp 4-channel compressor/limiter, and an ARX Eq 60, an Apogee P-11.15 RV and, last but not leastly, a Maris DMX split.

Okay, so we're not talking the power of the London Palladium here, but this is a (relatively) small holiday resort on Turkey's south coast and, for my money, that makes this little set-up pretty damned impressive.

Did I mention there was a disco as well? At this point, readers of a tee-total bent may choose to switch off. I'd flown twice since lunchtime, it was pushing 10 o'clock Turkish time, I had a long night ahead of me and the beer was free.

Suffice to say that through my lager-created haze, the disco looked fantastic. People were dancing, lights were flashing, breeze-blocks were being thrown at my chest every time a kick drum came lurching out of the speakers. And a wide variety of extras in French Revolution-style costume were frugging their stuff on the dancefloor.

Again, for a small outdoor disco at an upmarket Butlin's, the set-up behind the noise was pretty damned impressive stuff (but thank the Lord for the power of the fax machine, to ensure I got the complete list of the equipment colossus that was powering this baby). Starting with a Soundcraft D1000 sound mixer, we have a Denon 2500F Mk2 CD player (my feelings of general lust for this machine are widely-known - indeed I am waiting for Denon to send me one for the continued endorsements I give this machine. Hint, hint), a single Technics RS-TR 575 tape deck, the ubiquitous SL-1210s and a Sony SLV-x812 video (we're talking multimedia here folks), one each of ARX's Eq 15 and Eq 60 graphics, an ARX Quadcomp 4-channel compressor/limiter and, finally, a Shure SO-2 CE hand mic, all providing the production end of the system. For the business end, it's time to take an even deeper breath than before. Starting from the top: take two Sony KP-46S3 projection televisions, chuck in three QSC EX 4000 power

amps (oh, and an EX 1600 as well) and, for good measure, add four Ohm BR-15s speakers (with the same again of Ohm's BR-218s bass bins). What we have here is some serious fire power, and with lights to match: 17 FAL Starlets, four FAL 1000W strobes, two FAL eclipses, a pair of FAL 2000W strobes, a single Martin Pro 1220 CMY and a Martin Centrepiece and the small matter of 140 Stream mini-strobes. Let there be light, indeed.

When presented with something as great as this set-up, a man has to make a number of difficult choices: the first was to sit at the bar, watch a variety of strange and interesting people shake their anatomy and contemplate the contents of my beer bottle, the second that time was getting on, and I've got somewhere else to go. To the car my friends . . .

THE DAY THE WORLD TURNED DAY-GLO

Returning back to Antalya was much more convivial than my journey out; for a start my cohorts on this little trip spoke English (Ozan the Turkish entertainments boss at the resort and his German girlfriend, Eva). Yes, in typical Englishman-abroad style, I was conversing with a Turk and a German in English. They could both speak Turkish and German, but they liked the handicap speaking in a foreign language gave them - and it meant I could join in too.

It's a country of contrast is Turkey, as my (brief) visit to Antalya - and later Istanbul - would make me realise. Round one corner can be a hustling, almost European quarter, with neon signs, Coke labels emblazoned on every immovable object and that certain joie de vivre that seems to permeate the air on the continent; turn the next corner and you could find yourself in a shanty street that resembled the gutters of Greece - great idea, but poor foundations (often literally). My trip through Antalya perfectly demonstrated this and, with only limited conversation with Ozan and Eva possible due to the God almighty noise of the engine, I had plenty of time to sit back and soak it all in.

Down one seemingly blind alley we turned, swerving a sharp 90 degrees further down the hill towards the water's edge. We appeared to be in the town's backstreets - how could one of its most popular clubs be down here? It was, of course. Sweeping through the metal detectors and coming face to face with a set of oak doors straight from the set of some Robin Hood film, the only clue of what I was about to enter was the gentle throbbing noise emanating from behind the wood. Oh, and the laser light clearly visible above the walls.

I'm a bit of a simple Yorkshire-lad. Not simple as in mentally deficient (no sniggering on the editorial team please) but simple as in fish 'n' chips, pint of lager and quiet night in by the telly simple. So the sight that panned out before me when I entered the Ally club was not the kind of thing I'm used to. Think of the ruins of some old church or castle, then plonk a handful of bars, three tons of the latest audio/visual equipment and a gaggle of screaming Turks into the equation and you've got a fair idea of what the Ally club was like. Bolton Abbey on acid was how I've described it to friends - you get the idea.

Down the stone steps and in front of me was

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Versatility Without Compromise

the first bar, to my left a second, over to the right numbers three and four, and pushing through a small gap was a fifth: you wouldn't die from thirst in this place. The left hand side of the club was a huge videowall, to the right part of the aforementioned ruins (cunningly disguising themselves as a medium for the projection of a series of fancy laser tricks), nestling behind my right shoulder was a water-curtain with a laser image projected onto it, and by my feet was the main, and extremely disappointing, speaker cluster. But herein lies a tale.

NO SLEEP 'TIL BEDTIME

When the site was originally opened, the speakers were located in the centre of the dancefloor, atop the free-standing rig that remains. Unfortunately, even in a 24 hour party town like Antalya, the locals like to get some sleep at night, and the thing was just too damn loud. I was told a solution would be found soon, but for the time being, the venue's sound capabilities wouldn't quite match the promise.

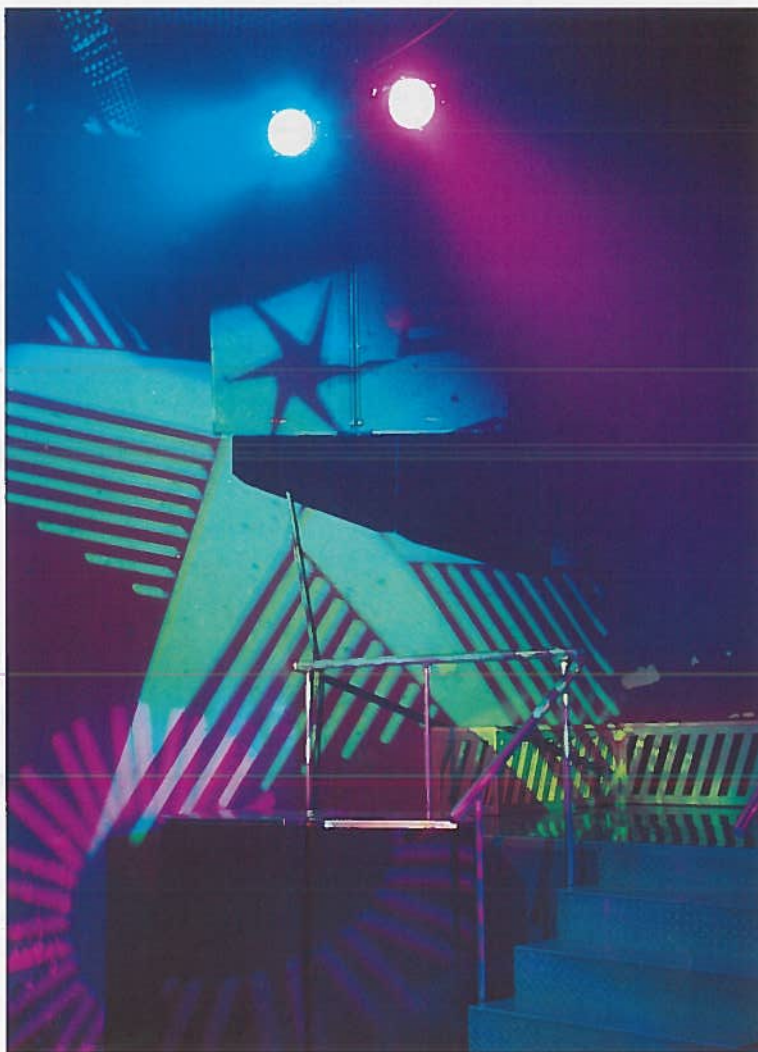
A quick tour around the control box (I know I was introduced to the DJ), but what with my Turkish and his English he may have been called anything - though I was told he was very famous in Turkey, sort of a Turkboy Slim, left two impressions: impressive, and needs a dust.

The noise at the Ally was provided by two, yes two, Denon DN 2500Fs (grovelling appeal for a free 'long-term demonstration' model of this beauty continues), three 1210s, a Cloud CXF mixing desk and a Cloud CX 233 zone mixer, a Denon DN 790 tape deck and DNM 1050 R MiniDisc recorder, a Tascam DA GO Mk 2 DAT machine and the video vision by a Sony SLVE 480 VHS player - with a Shure B 63.1 and a Sennheiser IS 450 thrown in to make up the numbers. Monitoring in the booth is handled by three Apogee AC-54 speakers.

A grand total of 16 Apogee amplifiers (one each of the SA 800B and CA 800, two SA 800b, three SA 400b and DA 700 and six DA 800), powering 28 Apogee speakers (three AE 15 sub-woofers, four each of the AE 7 and AE 7 SX, a single ACS 115 SX sub-woofer and eight a piece of the ACS Sat 3 SX and Point 5 Pro speakers. Pity about the main dancefloor cluster being so low to the floor, and so poorly pushed really.

As you can probably guess, the people who did the Ally (and, also the Alley Bey - and more of them later) don't tend to mess around when it comes to lights either.

The main devices in use are: four FAL Proscans and the same of the company's 1000 robots two each of 0490 and 0559 strobes, a single FAL starlight, eight ZR Promo 3 robots, four Blacklight UVs, two 5000W strobes, eight other assorted strobes, 15 Fly Chroma 1200Ds



High End features primarily Fal and Clay Paky lighting.

photo: WDR

and four Fly Airborne Chromas, with dimming once again from Celco. This list is by no means exhaustive, but suffice to say it was bright, it shone, it kicked butt.

God knows what time it was after I'd sunk a couple more beers - do they sell Amstel anywhere else, except where I holiday? - but it was very definitely time to find somewhere soft and cool to close my eyes.

SO TIRED OF WAITING

This truly was paradise, if only I'd realised that the dream was about to become a nightmare. I should have known; lunch passed smoothly, Eva and Ozan bundled me into their car and dropped me back at the Airport. Handshakes, kisses and addresses were exchanged, and I took a seat to wait for my rearranged flight back to Istanbul. Oh, yes. Antalya airport, the place where dreams can fall down around your ears and a beautiful weekend away can turn into the longest day of your life. I couldn't catch the flight at four o'clock as arranged could I - oh no, I would have to wait until 9pm that night, and even then my seat was only stand-by. Had I been able to make my displeasure known to someone, you can rest assured I would have done. And I wish people wouldn't speak to me in German.

Arriving at Istanbul airport - my second time in as many days, but this time I would see it's outside too - I finally met the man who had brought me here: a mixture of thanks and despair came immediately to mind. Haluk Akgun, managing director of Istanbul-based

Akhan Elektronik has kitted out more clubs, pubs and restaurants than the majority of us will ever have visited. I won't bother to list them - exactly how broad is your knowledge of Turkish venues? Take it from me, I've seen the list that of those venues that have felt Haluk's 'touch' and it's long.

Leaving the Airport, again it was the contrasts that hit most. I could have been in Paris, Berlin or, even, London - but I wasn't. I was at the junction between Europe and Asia, a city where East and West meet and the driver's are the maddest bastards you've ever met. Don't get me started. I've been driven by former-KGB men in clapped-out Trabants around Moscow, I know bad driving when I see it. And Istanbul seemed to have much more than its fair share of atrocious licence holders. And then, as you look beyond the billboards, the bright lights and the swerving cars, there's images of a city that resembles (or at least it did on this Saturday night) how I imagine the abandoned houses lining up on the Eastern side of the Berlin wall used to look.

Arriving - eventually - at my hotel, all negative opinions swiftly left through the French windows of my room. How many times can you say that from your window you could see two continents, had a Mosque to your left, a Russian freighter to your right and in front of you, the mighty Bosphorus.

Quick shower - wonderful things shower gel sachets - and swift change of clothes, and I was back on the streets: with a nose for noise and a passion for bright, flashing lights. And boy did I find them in abundance in Istanbul - and not just on the fume-filled, bumper-to-bumper streets either. This was the one I'd been waiting for. The raison d'être of my trip - and one of Haluk's proudest moments: High End (not to be confused with the US manufacturer). It was still only around 10pm, but there was already a sizeable queue.

TURN IT UP TO ELEVEN

Now, it's hardly a surprise that High End is so well equipped; amongst its six owners are three of Turkey's top DJs and, as events later would testify, Istanbul's punters are wise to the pull of the venue.

How good I hear you ask? Well, if size matters to you, then you're likely to be impressed with a total power of 67,500W. Yup, it's loud. This awesome level comes from a grand total of 28 DA800 (2 x 1200W) amps, powering eight 3X 3S2 and eight AE-15 sub-woofers - all from Apogee. To be blunt, who cares what they're using to play the music, scratching a piece of fluff across a stylus would sound impressive through this system. But, if you must know, we're talking a total of six SL-1210s, a wide variety of CDs, DATs and tape

decks, all running through a couple of Cloud-manufactured mixers. The monitoring system is a JBL system using four 4771s and a couple of TCB sub-bass speakers. Actually, it's the old main system from the previous club, but it's only good enough as a monitoring set-up for these guys. Sound this sweet doesn't really need a lighting back-up in my opinion, but the punters expect it, don't they? Give me eight FAL Pro-scan HMI 1200 scanners, four Clay Paky Golden Scans, a single FAL XL 2500, a couple of FAL 2000W strobes and eight FAL Zeus light effects - and you've got some pretty flashing things to go with Satan's sound system.

However: sound level - low. Audience participation - even lower. It was decided to wander and return later when things were guaranteed to be louder and busier.

It's an example of the philanthropic nature of Haluk's invitation that the club he took me to wasn't even one of his installations. Admittedly, on the way there was an awful lot of pointing, followed by corresponding "done that" comments - but it was a feel for the place that I was after, not an advert for Haluk's business, and he was happy to provide it.

Down the long tarmac path we walked, down into yet another open-air venue, Pasha. On the edge of the Bosphorus, at the base of a deep valley with houses and hotels snaking their way back up the sides to a horizon long since lost in the night's haze, Pasha opened out like some steroid-pumped pagoda. Various bars and coffee stands littered the periphery, with a central bar offering a combination of the two to the Saturday evening visitors. Acting as both a general-purpose venue and the 'en-suite' venue for the adjacent hotel, Pasha was overshadowed at one end by a giant cinema screen. The sound was... passable. The venue itself was much more outstanding than any mere audio signal could be.

If Turkey is littered with sites like this, then why is it such a secret to club-goers? I'm presuming it's because I won't pretend to be a regular club-chick myself but amongst my more trendy friends, I've never heard Turkey mentioned in the same breath of, say, Ibiza or Leeds (national pride may be rearing its ugly

head on that one). An hour later, the streets were swarming and, when we arrived back at High End, so was it.

Wall to wall bodies. All heaving and cutting a rug to some serious sound, bass that could be felt in the vibrating streets outside, and a lightshow that would have Jean-Michel Jarre feeling slightly envious.

Damn, this was club heaven - and my guided tour was its chief Guardian Angel. Everybody in Istanbul seems to know Haluk - and they seemed to like him too, which was handy for one certain journalist of my close acquaintance at least. There's only so much fun you can have in a throbbing nightclub when you've had little sleep and are not under the influence of a small branch of Boots, so after a short re-visit some serious zeds were called for.

I wish I could sleep when I'm tired. A brief respite from the noise that has been ringing in my ears for the last two days and a quick flick through the channels on the TV (viewers of BBC2's 'The Fast Show' will know the standard of the shows, when I say the word "scorchio") - made me realise that, ready or not, sleep was the best scenario.

And so to Sunday: by midnight I would be re-visiting the hospitality of Rocco Forte but in the meantime, it was time to get to know Istanbul and Haluk a bit better.

I don't care what you say, you can travel the world, visit every country on Earth, speak to all its people - but you'll always find someone with a fond affection for Yorkshire. We're just great folk. So discovering that Haluk's knowledge of the English language and electronics was honed at Sheffield University hardly proved to be a great surprise.

What more to say about Turkey? The atmosphere is warm and friendly. The clubs that I saw were the equal of anything I've seen over here - both in terms of equipment and music quality. The infrastructure isn't quite there yet, there's no Turkish equivalent of PLASA for instance, though if Haluk gets his way that will change shortly - but that's not to say that it's a third world country - it's just not quite up to the standards that maybe we're used to yet. But it's not far off.

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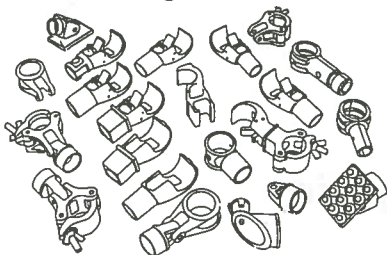
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CAN'T GET ENOUGH

L+SI caught up with Depeche Mode on the last night of the UK leg of their tour - at the NEC Arena in Birmingham



Depeche Mode are probably best remembered for their electronic technofests in the late eighties and early nineties, but their latest *The Singles '86-'98* tour illustrates their ability not only to move with the times, but also take an entirely fresh production approach from the stunning and award-winning *Devotional* set which went out last time the band toured in 1993.

This time the show kicked off in Latvia in early September - an outdoor stadium show in Riga which proved a bit daunting for production manager Lee Charteris since their production rehearsals at Three Mills Island had been scaled for arena shows. The five truck motorcade thereafter maintained a merciless pace across Eastern and Western Europe, arriving in the UK for four concerts before wending its way back through Europe and hitting the USA in late October for a further seven week run taking it up to Christmas.

And for the army of 30-somethings who turned out in their droves, there was no way that Dave Gahan & Co had lost any of their late eighties pre-decline charisma.

VIDEO

Although in many ways a retro, minimalist stage set, fabricated again by Brilliant Stages who have worked with the band since the early eighties (one of their original clients), it proved

a triumph for video support specialists PSL. Tour manager Andy Franks confessed: "It would have been crazy to try and better the spectacle of the '93 *Devotional* tour. For example, on that last tour we had nine video and two 35mm projectors running throughout. This time 14 or 15 people put forward designs and the band again chose Anton Corbijn's because it gave them the kind of look they wanted. He has recut original song footage as much more of a 'peep-show' support to the band via three centre screens angled into a semi-hexagon and hung in portrait shape.

"The 'peep-show' approach is designed so as not to detract from the band's live performance," said Franks. "With one big screen, the tendency is that the audience's eyes stay transfixed to that."

For those not familiar with Corbijn's work, he produced the stunning DM videos and the images for *Devotional* which were reinforced for the first time by Barco 5000 series projectors. But he is probably best known for his portrait photography, with clients who include Michael Schumacher.

The video footage for this tour is, in fact, only used on six of the songs in the set, and is projected from three PSL-supplied Barco 9200s onto the three 8 x 6 portrait screens.

PSL's projectionist is Ed Moore who has most recently been working with Portishead and M

People. Moore, in conjunction with PSL, has introduced a whole new visual concept to the DM tour, as he explains: "What we've done with the 9200s is unique in that we are using them on their side to rear-project onto the three-sided screen at the rear of centre-stage. Not being a physicist I didn't realise that crossing the beams would cause some colour change at the edge of each screen. This has been pretty easy to rectify though, simply rebalancing the colours by eye."

Visuals are controlled using Dataton Trax on an Apple Mac laptop, fired by MIDI from a new sequencer controller on stage. The MIDI fires each song's time-line in the Trax programme via a Smartpax, and subsequently tells the CRV Disc players what to do and when. Seven separate notes are sent, each relating to a song, and this enables the running order to be changed without affecting the programme. Dataton's Bill Bowers handled the Trax programming.

Moore explains: "A lot of the images have been remakes of the videos or morphed effects, all cut to portrait, and it's like a little picture box in the middle of the stage.

"The beauty of the MIDI triggering is that even if the order of the set list changes, the system will kick in at the right point every time. I've worked closely with programmer Andy Philpott to get the desired resettability and



Above left, Chris Mounsor (left) and Ed Moore of PSL; above right, FOH engineer Dave Bracey; below, production manager Lee Charteris.

failsafe system in place, and, touch wood, the whole thing is faultless so far. The disks are quite susceptible to smoke, and the cracked oil is prone to sitting on the reader of the disk and putting a white line on the image - but so far we've been OK." Taking no chances, Ed Moore was running a manual back-up show from stage right, in the unlikely event that the Dataton or MIDI should crash. "This means that I can instantly and seamlessly switch over to manual should the need arise."

AUDIO

The sound reinforcement support was again provided by Britannia Row, who have had an incredible year so far with many other acts currently touring, including The Manic Street Preachers, Simply Red, Portishead, The Verve and the Beastie Boys.

This time, their FOH engineer is the affable Dave Bracey, who worked alongside Jon Lemon on the *Devotional* tour. Bracey used a 48-channel Midas XL4 and Yamaha O3D in his front-of-house rack. "Like Eddie (Mulrainey) on monitors, the only slight hassle has been the 14 drum channels, hence me routing them post-EQ and post-insert to the O3D, with Aux 1 going to one side of the Lexicon 480L digital FX system. The O3D gives me automation with level, and up to three possible effects on each drum send." He added that the XL4 was undoubtedly his desk of choice. "We've even managed to get support band Purity on channels 41-48, with Pete Skan mixing."

The rig's the tried and trusted standard Turbo' configuration, comprising 36 stacks of Flashlight and 16 stacks of Floodlight, with 50 bass enclosures and two underhung arrays. This has worked at every venue except the Globe in Stockholm where they had to sub-hire more Turbo' boxes to cope with the fact that the sound had to reach way up to the seven tier capacity. "But the beauty of using Turbosound," declares Bracey, "is that wherever you are in the world you can always get hold of extra boxes if you need them."

"This time around the show has much more of a live ensemble feel than the *Devotional* tour - with enormous input from superb technical drummer Christian Eigner. "Mic-wise we're predominantly using Shure SM58s, but I've put Dave (Gahan) and the girls onto EV N/D757s. Dave has a lot of reverb and delay in his monitors, and the 757s cope much better with the bleed." With the MIDI and automation flexibility afforded by the XL4/O3D



combination - providing instant resettability from the main board - most of the real work for Bracey had been put in at production rehearsals.

Effects-wise, he is using his favoured TubeTech CL1B mono vocal compressor as well as Summit Audio DPEs and Tube Levelling amplifiers, with three DCL-200 compressor limiters and plenty of BSS equalisation, Drawmer DS201 gates and an Eventide H3000SE.

On monitors, Andy Frank's young prodigy Eddie Mulrainey is fast gaining a reputation, having worked with the likes of M People and James. Mulrainey was working off a Midas XL250. "I'm finding this to be a great board, which I'm using to its full capabilities - especially with the IEM and Wedge combinations on the stage - although I would probably have preferred the XL3 for the VCA grouping had the budget allowed."

Martin Gore, plus backing vocalists Jordan Bailey and Janet Cooke, are using Shure Radio IEMs whilst Christian Eigner on drums is on a stereo wired system. Effects-wise he was using a pretty standard system, including Drawmer DS-201 gates and 402 compression, BSS FCS-960 EQ everywhere and a Drawmer DS-901 for Dave's vocals. "Probably the most unusual pieces of kit I've got in the rack are the Roland SDE-330s (Dimensional Space Delays) to really recreate some of the vocal effects from the album in the live environment," he observed.

"The whole show is click-driven, so I have to spend quite bit of time firing click feeds to various members of the band. For example, on a couple of numbers, Martin actually comes in before the drums, and obviously the video and sequencing is MIDI-driven from that click so it's important that the right people have it at the right time.

He said that the most challenging part of the monitor function was in assigning the drum set-

up. Christian Eigner's kit occupies 14 inputs on the board - plus two FX channels and stereo sampler and sequencer feeds. "In fact, I've had an extra couple of stereo inputs dropped into the desk just to cope with it all," chuckles Mulrainey.

Standing alongside him was a DJ icon of the late eighties - Tim Simenon (of Bomb The Bass fame). He had been booked onto the tour to spin tracks between the opening act, support band Purity and Depeche Mode - an inspired move since Simenon produced a stunning remix of DM's *Everything Counts* back in 1989.

SET/LIGHTING

The versatility of Simon Sidi, the tour's lighting designer and operator, is demonstrated by the fact that he came straight from designing a dynamic moving light show for Tori Amos in the USA to put together a classic theatrical set for DM using static fixtures.

Sidi is a product of the punk art school of lighting technicians and served his apprenticeship experimenting with avant-garde artistes like Diamanda Galas, Mute and Nitzer Ebb, before getting his big break with Jesus Jones. The priority on this tour was to keep the fixtures at low level, using the new Vari-Lite VL7 automated profile spots as highlighters and VL5Arc washlights to provide the rich wells of colour that illuminated the set.

The show was originally designed around DHA Light Curtains and Colormags but production couldn't get the footlights to below 18" high - so they reverted to using around 22 VL5 washlights around the front fascia of the stage set with MR16s edging the top of the set. "You could be misled into thinking that this is a low-tech show, but there's as much technology as on the last tour . . . only this time it's retro," commented production manager Lee Charteris.

Simon Sidi also pared back some of the VL7s to make way for 10 giant antique 10k studio lights, replete with barndoors. Four of them were purchased from Elton John, the rest sourced by Vari-Lite, who obligingly reconstituted them by a process of evisceration and replacement, substituting Molefays and colour changers to convert them into working lights as well as highly-effective stage props.

This kind of outline was meat and drink to the much in-demand talents of Simon Sidi. "I've wanted to do Depeche Mode for ages," he exclaimed. "Ironically I'd worked with them in the past as support band LD and also as a

crew man." He didn't enter the picture until the LD decision had almost been taken, but some hastily faxed designs at the eleventh hour ultimately earned him the call-up.

"I didn't want to use too many modern lights," he explained. "When you first listen to the tapes you get an idea of what you want to do and this show is more about groundrows, followspots, stripped-out police lights, Par 64s and the obligatory mirrorball, than moving lights. Even the VL7s are used merely as conventional automated profile spots to highlight the drummer and guitarist - so in that sense it's very un-rock and roll."

As for the giant 'DM' backdrop, the letters are formed from countless domestic tungsten lamps, occupying six channels-per-letter of the Wholehog II board.

The three-faced videowall at the rear of centre stage sits neatly between these huge crafted and illuminated figures, which flat-pack nicely into a dolly. In fact, Dr Martens have expressed an interest in buying the letters from the tour when it wraps in December. "Because I'm using a lot of conventionals," Sidi concluded, "Flying Pig kindly rewrote some of the software for the expansion wing to give me the feel of a more customary moving light desk, such as the Icon."

Visually, he enjoys interfacing with the projection work of PSL, who were also present on the aforementioned Tori Amos tour, and this outing has given him the opportunity to renew his acquaintance with video technician Ed Moore, with whom he previously worked on The Beautiful South tour.



Lighting designer Simon Sidi.

PRODUCTION

Lee Charteris worked on the last six months of the *Devotional* tour and was given the task of scaling-down that tour from nine to five trucks to make it cost-effective for air-freighting to Asia. This has also been restricted to a five-truck haul.

As stated earlier, the look of the show is low level - a kind of seedy nightclub in which the VL5s are mounted under the stage to light the fascias. "At the outset Anton (Corbijn), Simon (Sidi) and I worked with Tony Bowan at Brilliant Stages to try and create a CAD reference from the artistic renderings to ensure that the overall image of the show didn't envelop the band themselves," he explained. "Unlike previous

tours, when Dave was at the front of stage and the rest were on high risers behind him, the band members now have a kind of 'equal billing' visually, and the whole feel of the set and mood is much more relaxed. The band don't take themselves too seriously these days, and even smile occasionally."

From that you might conclude that this has been a good-natured tour - and you'd be right. Pretty remarkable considering they'd not had a night off since opening up in Latvia. "I must say I was pleasantly surprised by the audience response in both Latvia and Estonia," stated Charteris. "In fact, the most stressful part of the tour so far has been spending 19 hours on the Russian border, with only crisps to eat!"

Probably only Depeche Mode could have persuaded him to leave his studio and go back on the road. "I worked with Queen before I was 20 and I have always made that my marker as far as a spectacle is concerned. But Dave Gahan takes me to that same point."

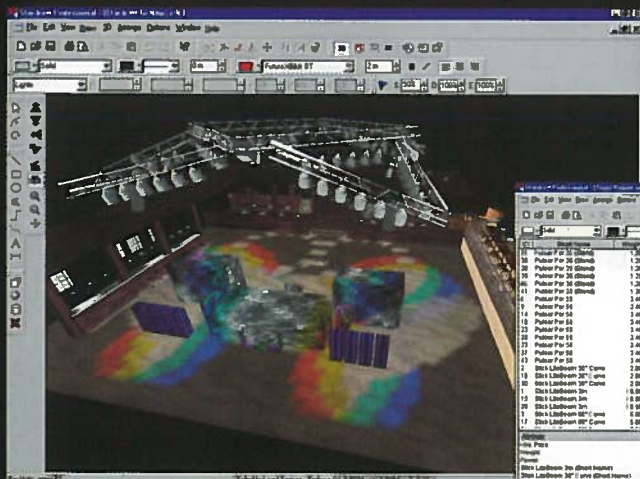
PERFORMANCE

The show itself hit all the highlights of the band's career, closing their set with *Personal Jesus* and *Barrel Of A Gun* and included the popular *Stripped* and *I Feel You* in their encores. Earlier, Corbijn's stunning visuals had cut in around *Never Let Me Down*, and the show took a further shot in the following number *Walking In My Shoes*, when strobes were introduced for the one and only time. The final encore at each show on the tour is *Just Can't Get Enough* - a quite fitting finale in the circumstances.

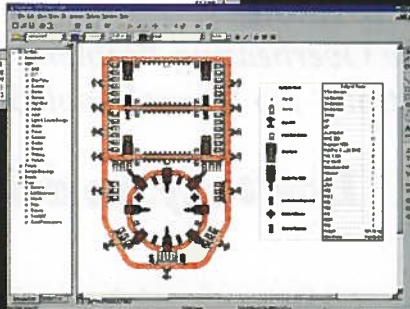
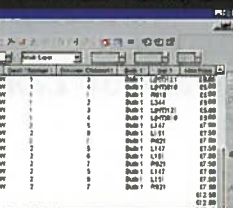
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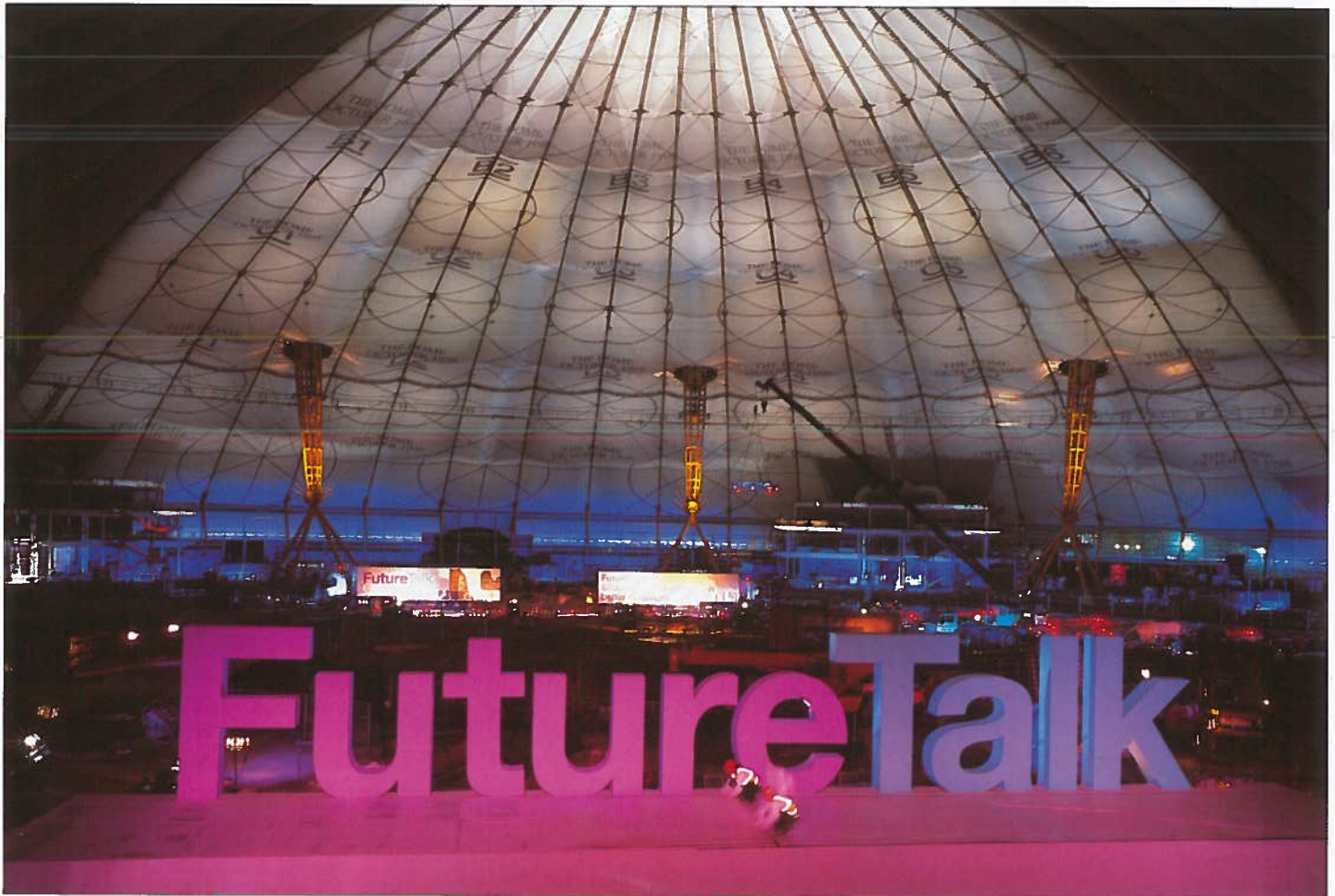


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THIS LITTLE PIGI

Tony Gottelier looks at how Imagination turned to multiple projectors for a big picture shoot in the Millennium Dome



Against the huge backdrop of the Millennium Dome's interior, the projected images from 30 double-scrolling large format PIGI projectors from E\T\C UK are fine-tuned. The combined image covered an incredible 36,000 square metres.

Like harbingers of Spring, the first shots (or shoots) in the battle to focus the public's attention on the features to be incorporated in the forthcoming Millennium Experience at the Greenwich Dome, are being fired. The time has come to address the real thing and no longer to rely on the fantasy descriptions which had previously become the stuff of sound bites since the launch of the controversial project.

British Telecom is the sponsor of the Future Talk area in the Dome and they are naturally keen to talk up their contribution to the entire project. With the Dome still very much in a constructional state, how and where could they do that?

Enter Imagination, in the shape of Chris Slingsby, a show designer with the well-known Covent Garden-based creative outfit. The second part of the question was quickly solved with the bold decision to brave the worst and go with the Dome itself, despite the problems of restricted access, a war machine of heavy construction equipment, armies of building workers, a town of temporary offices, hot metal, wet concrete - the lot. So, that still left the question of 'how?'

Even if you could hide all of the

aforementioned detritus of a vast and active building site, for what was going to be a television event as well as a photo-shoot, how was the message going to be put across on the massive scale needed to make an impact in a space the size of two soccer stadia? Look at the stats: 364 metres diameter, 50 metres high in the centre and 80,000 square metres of floor space. As Mark Fisher is fond of reminding us, you could fit the whole of Trafalgar Square - with Nelson's column - into the centre of this space alone.

There had been a great deal of talk in relation to the Dome about the potential of the roofing material as a light-receptive surface and it was made known by the Millennium Experience Company that tests would be carried out. It is not clear whether Slingsby was party to the results of these tests, or whether he did his own, but in any event it was decided that projection onto the Dome's surface was the way to go.

And to make it impressive enough, projection onto one quarter of the total surface was prescribed for a single composite image - we are talking about a potential projection area of 36,000 square metres, possibly the largest

single projected image ever undertaken! If that was not a daunting enough task, now the question was, who could deliver the projection equipment (and, indeed, enough of it) to do the job? As it turned out, E\T\C UK, the British arm of the Gallic giant image people, were able to scrape together no less than 30 7kW PIGI double-scrolling projectors, which would enable this no-mean-feat requirement to be accomplished. As can be imagined, that number of large format projectors were not exactly laying around in the UK either - most had to be sent from France, some had to be retrieved from Expo '98 in Lisbon which had, conveniently, just closed its gates.

However, once again, this was by no means the end of the battle. Time was the next imperative. Due to the pressure of the construction schedule only a very narrow window was available to the team: 60 hours from get-in to get-out, so meticulous pre-planning was absolutely vital.

As Chris Slingsby commented: "Projecting onto the Dome's surface was a daunting challenge. Due to the ever-changing landscape of the rapidly advancing work on the floor, it was inevitably close to the event date before



Above: a PIGI projector on its custom-made angled platform in position inside the dome. Below: two three-storey buildings and a 40ft truck are dwarfed in the background beyond the Future Talk set.



we knew where we could, or could not, site the projectors." Finally, however, Slingsby was able to draw up detailed plans, positioning each PIGI together with its incident angle to the Dome surface. Then, Maltbury Staging was called in to build the platforms which would support the projectors in their pre-calculated positions: so successful was this in the final analysis that the line-up of the entire system took only four hours.

"It was a huge relief to see E\T\C's engineers achieve a 30-projector line-up that exactly duplicated my calculations in such a short time," Slingsby observed. "Without any zoom lenses to make up for discrepancies, there were always anxieties." This last remark almost certainly conceals the pre-show nerves that the designer must have experienced at the time.

Along with the 30 PIGI projectors, E\T\C also provided technical crew, backed up by Show Force, two kilometres of data cable, and one of power from three Show Power twin-pack generators for the 2,000 amps supply required. "The sheer scale of the installation was our biggest problem - it was 250 metres between the furthest projectors. One enterprising crewee even brought his own bicycle," Ross Ashton, managing director of E\T\C UK, told us.

Vari-Lite Production Services provided lighting support in the shape of 640 Par cans, 20 Molefays and 20 HMI 2.5k fresnels, run from a Wholehog II, as well as three Roadie smoke machines. The lighting designer was Mike Sobotnicki.

The production was managed by Geoff Summerton of Imagination and the huge single image, staged specifically for the photo opportunity, was supported by a 25 metre Future Talk logo. Two juggernaut trucks were added to give scale. As the accompanying pictures, and this month's cover shot, give testament, the risks taken certainly justified the means employed.

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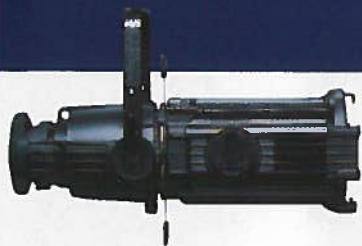
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Asleep in the Stalls . . .

Ian Herbert

The Edinburgh lull is over and designers' books are filling up again. *Annie* and *West Side Story* have brought museum theatre to the West End, while on the South Bank *Amadeus* at the Old Vic goes head to head with *Antony and Cleopatra* and its Carry On spin-off at the National.

On the sound side, it's a case of slapped wrists for Rick Clarke at both the Prince Edward and at the Victoria Palace, though his *Annie* wrist should be slapped harder. The built-in brassiness of *Annie*'s vocals and the shrillness of its moppet chorus is quite enough without the heavy hand on the treble slider that makes most of the singing in this revival pretty unbearable. No sound engineer can do anything to save Kevin Colson when he decides to go off-key, of course - and unfortunately he often does. The *West Side Story* sound lapses are probably more attributable to the board operator, for instance that unfortunate tendency for songs to start a second or two (which means a note or two) after the singer opens their mouth. But who's responsible for the setting of levels, which gave the detective, Schrank, an unexpected starring role by putting him a notch or two louder than anyone else on stage?

On the lighting side, both shows benefited from being left well alone. *West Side Story* used the original 1950s sets and costumes and the lighting was in keeping with them - only the hairstyles were anachronistic. Like Ken Billington on *Annie*, Mark Henderson showed commendable restraint in his rig, letting his followspots do a lot of the work, as in the original. The lighting can't all have been in period, though, for there was a tell-tale hum from some new gizmo or other to mar the show's near-silent finale.

The thoroughly modern side of Mr Henderson was on display in Sean Mathias' Olivier production of *Antony and Cleopatra*, responding to a generous NT budget and Tim Hatley's brilliant set. Some of the Hatley spatial trademarks we saw earlier this year in *Flight* (and again in *Puntilla*) resurfaced, with an added use of the drum. So you got not only a *Flight*-style segmented frame acting rather like a frontcloth to push much of the early action downstage, but also a whole galley rising out of the floor (reminiscent of the Peter Stein boat in *The Hairy Ape*) for the Pompey banquet, and the climactic opening up of a stage lit by hundreds of candelabra, like *Phantom of the Opera* in the round. Henderson rose to all these challenges with a superb series of lighting states, making clever use of colour-changing Light Curtains (which lovers of American chocolate would probably call Hersey Bars) in front of and behind the 'frontcloth'. (In *Antony and Cleopatra*, of course, they have real frontcloths, and the number of marking-time scenes played in front

of them shows just how far the design and plotting of musicals has come since what was considered a revolutionary way of telling a story in music, and how much the development of new stage machinery has aided the smooth flow of plot.)

The trouble is, no matter how good your technical team, you can't design away a duff show. *Antony and Cleo*' is full of stunning visuals, but the director has a very insecure hold on what to do with the text they are supposed to illuminate, and his actors (even the wonderful Helen Mirren) haven't been able to help him much. You can hardly complain about the script: it is in the performances that Shakespeare's wonderful lines go to waste.


You can complain about David Belougou's costumes, though. He's worked a lot at places like the Casino de Paris and the Folies-Bergère, and it shows in his very de Mille-like interpretation of the ancient world. If Terry Johnson's *Cleo, Camping, Emmanuelle and Dick* next door at the Lyttelton had called for some cod movie costumes he'd have been the ideal man, but in the real thing they border on the ridiculous. As it is, for *Cleo, Camping etc.*, Bill Dudley has produced a most evocative Odeon proscenium, complete with exit doors and clock, in which to set this affectionate memoir of the Carry On films. Unfortunately, since the main action takes place in a wobbly film-set caravan, it rations the stage space something chronic and is a bugger to light - a problem Simon Corder hasn't really solved.

Dudley is on top form again for *Amadeus*, where he puts what I can only describe as a lateral version of Pepper's Ghost on to the Old Vic stage to facilitate the most effective use of architectural slides behind a now-transparent, now-opaque mirror wall. And Paule Constable, given a rare chance to light a conventional show on a proscenium stage, gives some atmospheric support. The old trick of an actor walking towards a ground-spot to produce a giant shadow image works for the fateful figure who visits the ailing Mozart.


Some of the most interesting recent work, as usual, has been seen on the smart small stages. Mark Thompson's clean sets and Hugh Vanstone's equally clean lighting gave a precision to David Hare's sexy episodes in *The Blue Room* at the Donmar, while the combination of Julian McGowan and Alan Burrett at Hampstead moved us deftly to and fro between 1799 and 1999 in Matthew Lloyd's production of Shelagh Stephenson's *An Experiment with an Air Pump*. The play opens and closes with *tableau vivant* recreations of paintings by Joseph Wright of Derby, evocative moments only slightly marred by the great slew of lanterns poking out from the plush hangings above the acting area.

Julian McGowan steps down as set designer for the James Macdonald/Nick Grosso team at the Royal Court for their new one, *A Real Classy Affair*, but there are echoes here of the slide technique he used so successfully to create the many scenes of its predecessors. This time, however, Grosso has only two settings, and it's amazing how heavy a job Rob Howell has made of the transitions between them. A leisurely show, half an hour too long in the writing, is made even longer by some clunking scene changes. I got the feeling that Alan Burrett (for it is he, again) didn't quite know whether to point up or tone down these long interludes - were those working lights or part of the plot?

What emerges from seeing these shows is the feeling that we are at a watershed moment in technical stage design. In terms of sets and stage machinery we've come past the design-dominated eighties, and any design-led production these days is more a sign of a weak director than of a strong designer. In sound and lighting, we've reached a point where (subject to budget) anything is possible: the designers can give a director pretty well anything he asks for. Whether the operators can deliver on the night is still, unfortunately, a matter of luck.



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HARRIS TALKS BACK

The PRG supremo answers his critics and talks to Tony Gottelier about his vision for the fast expanding Group

Over the past few months Production Resource Group, until recently an American provider of entertainment technology and scenic services with a spectacular track record in terms of headline projects, but otherwise of average profile in the wider industry sense, started gobbling up peer group companies in what seemed to outsiders like a feeding frenzy.

Who, or what, was behind this game of Pacman? Consequently, it wasn't long before the Ghosts in the shape of the doubters of which I was certainly one, started sniping from the sidelines. Actually, it wasn't that easy to find out much about PRG as a corporation: there was nothing of structural significance on the Web and, I think it is fair to say that the PR effort lagged way behind the tidal wave of speculation which emanated as the result of its acquisitive posturing. Nor was there much on record about Jeremiah Harris, the enigma behind the public face of PRG. Now, in an attempt to track down that enigma and to establish motivation, I found myself in a car driven by Steve Terry of Production Arts, now part of the grouping at the head of the lighting companies, since PA was itself sucked into the amalgamation.

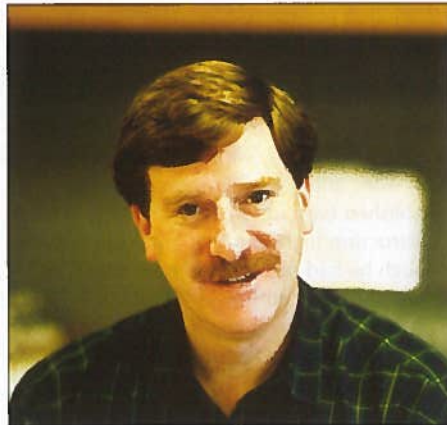
I have always seen Steve as a benign force and certainly his contribution, if only on the basis of his dedication in fostering, if not actually parenting, DMX and beyond DMX, has been significant. I couldn't imagine him being taken in easily, though large heaps of the folding stuff can be a powerful mind-altering drug. Reserving judgement, the beautiful Autumn scenery of upstate New York was a constant distraction almost the entire way to New Windsor.

The massive building which eventually hove into view, houses a company called Scenic Technologies and a long list of affiliates and the fact that it has become the epicentre of the PRG universe is almost incidental, as I was soon to discover during a guided tour of the 200,000sq.ft (!) facility.

So, about now I meet the enigma, who turns out to be both genial and certainly credible in his boyish enthusiasm for the undertaking on which he is engaged and for which he is certainly a persuasive missionary. If anything, he is somewhat bemused by the brouhaha that has resulted from his strategic manoeuvring, yet still overtly excited by the contents of the toy cupboard about to be revealed. As we walk into to the main scenery shop, 125,000sq.ft of open space where materials come in at one end and, in an alchemy of advanced technology and creative art, a finished and often automated set leaves at the other, he begins to weave his spell and to sprinkle the



PRG's 200,000sq.ft New Windsor facility. Below, Jere Harris.



stardust. He reveals that this is probably the biggest scenery facility outside the Hollywood Studios and Disney Imagineering. I can believe it: its scale, and remember this is only one of the spaces, is more akin to that of a bus factory than to a provider of entertainment backdrops. When I was there, three sets were in various stages of finishing, including the Scrooge house for *A Christmas Carol*. Universal's new *Cat in the Hat* attraction had left them the previous week. These two dichotomous productions give a clue as to the spread of work available to an integrated group such as PRG in the USA.

So you can see, Jere (pronounced Jerry) Harris is both an enthusiast and an achiever; things do seem to happen when he shows his characteristic determination to get things done. I was curious to find out what it is in his background that may be the motivation for all of this. So, when we sat down to conduct the formal interview my first question was directed at his personal history. "I am fourth generation legitimate theatre," said Harris, clearly proud of his inheritance. "My great-grandfather was a theatre manager in the West End of London before he emigrated to Albany in the United States around the turn of the century, where he managed vaudeville theatres. My grandfather

carried on the tradition and my father was a Broadway producer and manager. When I was 16, my dad arranged a summer job for me with a family friend who owned a scenery shop and I was hooked. Although I completed my education, basically, I never left and have been in the business ever since."

Clearly, Harris believes that this lineage legitimises his position and confirms him as one of the good guys on the basis that, with that behind him, how could he possibly have anything else but the best interests of the theatre industry at heart? What I can say, is that I have looked him straight in the eye and I'm convinced that his intentions are well meant, so it won't be for lack of the right motivation if it all goes pear-shaped.

To what about his early experience might he be responding with his current moves?

"Well, I was very conscious as a child that some shows are successful and others turn out to be flops, and life at home had to be adjusted accordingly. I suppose that I was determined to even out those peaks and troughs on what was otherwise a bit of a rollercoaster ride. When we set up our own scenery business, we were lucky that, by chance, we got some Industrial work, what we call Corporate Theatre, not just because it was fun to do, but also because in the Summer when the theatre work was slack, we were out on the road with General Motors. Others might turn their noses up at that, but we never had to lay people off for seasonal reasons and it held us in good stead for the future. Now I guess we are applying that same philosophy, but on a much bigger scale, to our new 'one stop' operation."

Through the eighties, Harris grew his business on Broadway and elsewhere until along came Cameron Macintosh and Martin MacCullum with a show called *Phantom of the Opera*. If you discount the General Motors work, this was the first big break for Harris, for his eponymous Production Services and its associate, East Coast Theatre Supply, were given the opportunity to pitch for the automation contract for the show. "Even collectively, we didn't have the appropriate technological experience, but Cameron wasn't very happy with some stuff he had had done for *Les Mis*, and I guess he thought that we were theatre people and so we could probably do the job." There we go with the pedigree again, but that was about all they did have at the time in the automation department. Nevertheless, Harris and his partners were subsequently given the contract to supply the computer system and all the mechanical effects for *Phantom*. Though this might be thought of as 'flying by the seat of one's pants', they took it on and then looked around for solutions,

eventually hitting on the idea of adapting an existing industrial system for the purpose.

Harris continued: "At the time, all FedEx packages for the entire US were being routed through a single entity in Memphis, Tennessee, so they couldn't afford anything to go wrong, ever, so they'd commissioned a handling system with multiple redundancy and back-up built in. We leveraged off the back of this system and adapted it for *Phantom* with the customer's approval, and for successive shows thereafter up to the present day, though now it is more compact and a great deal faster."

There is a related story that I had heard on another occasion which, though it may be apocryphal, bears repeating at this point for the sake of balance, because it shows that Jere Harris is indeed a risk taker, in much the same way that his father was, when it comes to backing a hunch. Not only did HPS not have the technological know-how, they didn't have the capital either. Nevertheless, Harris made the producers of *Phantom* on Broadway an offer they couldn't refuse when it came to the bidding. He extended the pay-back period way beyond what was the standard expectancy at the time because he was convinced that the show would be a hit and would run and run. Having won the job on the strength of that, he went shopping for the one million dollars needed to fund the package. Cleverly, he approached Sir Cameron's own bank, and when they said no, he threatened to report the fact back to the impresario. There was a change of heart and Harris got his money. "At the same time I tied my entire life and that of my partners to the success of the project in order to raise the money. After all, we had no real money, just our houses, and all of that was on the line."

Subsequently, of course, his risk-taking has been vindicated and several *Phantom's* and *Les Mis* later, we can reflect that this financial leap put HPS as the foundation stone for PRG. Not only that, but the same move may have also started the general softening of rental pay-backs which has led to today's situation where, as Steve Terry says: "The technology turns round far quicker, but returns are moving in the diametrically opposite direction." It could be argued this has fed back directly to the amalgamation in which Harris is currently engaged. It is to be hoped that Jere Harris still retains the sorcery required to make it all stack up again this time around.

By October '95 the Harris entourage were ensconced in the giant facility which we could call 'New Windsor Castle'. It must have been just prior to this move that the second major milestone in the Harris biog' occurred. He was engaged, through someone who obviously had a high regard for both his integrity and ability, to be the Technical Producer of the MGM Grand's gargantuan *EFX!* Show in Las Vegas. "You have to realise that out of a total budget for a show like that of, say, \$45 million, \$38 million goes on scenery, lights, sound, costumes, sets and I was hired to oversee that part of the project. I realised that if I could take all those companies and make them work together successfully on what was a major collaborative effort, why couldn't we all be one company and go after other similar projects? Not only that, but we now had all those



The Lighting Group executive: Nick Jackson, Steve Terry, Don Stern, Bill Ennis and Bill Gallinghouse.

technologies talking to each other on the show - it no longer made any sense for Steve Terry to be working away in isolation on communications from a lighting desk, for example, while I was resolving similar issues for motion control. Those confined boxes could not be justified any more." So the bells started ringing and it is the resonance from that which we are still hearing today.

By the time *EFX!* was underway, Harris had repositioned HPS as the event services specialist and his new brand, Scenic Technologies, was established to front the motion control systems and set production facilities. Scenic had, by now, also an established presence in Vegas where, as we all know, the money grows on trees. Not too much later, two fruits dropped from said trees into Jere Harris's outstretched hands. The first was Cinema Services based in Vegas, and the second was Vanco, with a strong presence in New York and, possibly more interesting, an established base in Orlando since 1989 when construction first started at Universal Studios. Though he had been talking to Production Arts since the beginning, apparently the timing wasn't appropriate at the time, so it fell to Bash Lighting Services, PA's near neighbour and great competitor, to be the next to join up in July 1997.

I don't want this to turn into a litany so I'm going to cut to Production Arts and LSD who, with others, were spliced into PRG this year. In particular, Harris believes that they have much to learn from LSD, especially from the pragmatic aspects of concert touring which, he believes can be applied to touring theatre - also big business in the US. In turn, he believes LSD will gain a great deal from the internal market within PRG, especially when it comes to their new light, Medusa, which PRG are backing.

Steve Terry has the unenviable task of welding this long list of lighting companies together in such a way as to maintain their individual profiles, while also presenting a coherent front, achieving economy of scale and, at the same time, keeping the people happy - not an easy task where companies have previously been highly competitive. The good news for equipment manufacturers, however, is that both Jere and Steve assured me that they see no advantage in squeezing their trade suppliers: "We need these guys - in a sense they are our lifeblood, so we are not about to do anything to damage their viability."

Harris swears that he had no strategic plan as to which companies to go for, just a general idea as to what he wanted to achieve. "Nevertheless, I believe that it is good people

that make good businesses and I believe that PRG combines together some of the very best people in the industry and I am very happy about that." As you can see Harris is definitely a people person and is fanatical in his zeal to continue PRG as a partnership between all the lead characters who are first and foremost 'his friends from the theatre business'.

Nevertheless, to do all of this Harris had to have a conduit to serious financial acumen: where did that come from? "A Financial House with a special interest in entertainment helped us arrange the finance for the first couple of deals and generally showed us how to change the way we managed the financial side of our business, so that we now have business practices and principles which are probably more advanced than most people in the industry. However, the business is still run by me overall, Steve and Nick at lighting, Lou Meade on the sound side, and by my original partners Fred Gallow, Roy Seers, John Wolfe and Kevin Baxley at Scenic."

So now, as you might say, the 64,000 dollar question - how did Harris fund the more recent expansion? "There comes a point when you grow a company that you get to choose the sort of debt you need. As somebody once said to me, you get to select from a smorgasbord of funding options. Publicly traded debt is actually a bigger market than equity trading and the people who buy these bonds have no influence on the way the business is run. They can't come into the boardroom and tell us how to do things, and they only receive the basic facts to which they are entitled by law. This was very attractive to me - I didn't have to give anything up, it doesn't impact on the balance sheet, in fact the banks see this funding as cashflow, so all we have to do is grow sufficiently to cover the interest payments."

Of course, there was the nub of the other question that I had raised in my previous piece: having bought several of the top businesses in the industry, where would he find the extra turnover to cover the coupon? The answer clearly lies in the potential of those vast projects, which are often peculiar to the US, but where the sum of PRG would enable them to take a bigger and more composite bite. The trick will be to pull off this one-stop approach while, at the same time, maintaining the flexibility for the customer to cherry pick if he wishes to. PRG already have plans afoot to provide these solutions and, meanwhile, they are continuing a push on trade shows and corporate events to provide a counterbalance to the exigencies of their creative services businesses.

Harris maintains a desire for his business to outlive him and not, he says, as some vain legacy. But we shall have to wait and see how his curious mixture of impish exuberance and passion for the industry and its people squares with the newly realised, self-imposed, financial straightjacket which, albeit made-to-fit, he has assumed with the territory. Perhaps there is a clue in the first part of the current PRG mission statement: 'The continued formation of an integrated family of unique entertainment technology companies, under one parent, and with a singular goal . . .' and so it goes on. We shall have to wait and see how it all pans out, but note the 'continued'!

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ON TOUR

by STEVE MOLES

AND PRODUCTION NEWS



Ash

Leeds Town & Country

LD: Nick Ayres

SD: Ian Laughton

The flurry of charting singles this band has had over the past 12 months puts them in the pop league. The tunes are catchy and fresh, the subject matter trendy - *Girl from Mars: Goldfinger* - and their image on TOTP is clean and bright. Thankfully they're no Take That; far from it in fact. They're a typical rock quartet - bass, two guitars and drums - but they project the kind of persona that parents wouldn't mind splattered poster-size across teenage walls.

See them live however and be prepared to enter another dimension. They are loud - ear whistling loud - and the music fluctuates between ballad and thrash. With the exception of the drummer, and he's trapped by his instrument, everything about Ash reeks of energy. Pop on TV maybe, but in action this is a power pop combo that has managed to square the circle between metal and melody.

Despite their pulling power - and the queue outside the T&C indicates they are ready for the next step up the touring ladder - the band bring with them the service companies that have nurtured them through the growing pains of poverty. Outside stands a brand new 45 foot high-cube trailer, the cab fitted with on-board computer, video and phone - even the seats are electric. The name on the side is Fineline. Based down in Bristol, Fineline is ostensibly a lighting company, "But the owner has this thing about trucks," said LD Nick Ayres. "It's something to do with sibling rivalry, his brother has a haulage company next door." Whatever the justification, the truck is a fair reflection of the rest of the gear - provincial maybe, but this is no tatty corner of the production industry.



LIGHTING

Nick Ayres has been LD for the band for the past two years. Mirroring the scenario further up the food chain, he operates the moving light system (from an Avolites Pearl) as well as designing, while the generic system is driven by Steve Brown (on a Jands Event). Brown has the advantage of an extra year with the band, something witnessed by his impeccable timing throughout the show, but both men do a splendid job.

Mindful of the frequent reproaches I often receive for being too free with my praise I have to say that for the scale of production, this is the best lighting show I've seen in the T&C. The design, supplied of course by Fineline, is simple enough: 'V' truss, apex upstage centre over the stage, plus front truss. The rig's not even that busy with just three Mac 500s, 12 Pars, two Trackspots and two ACL bars, each side of the 'V', the front truss holding 24 Pars, another string of Aeros and eight S4 profiles for keylight. There's a fair sprinkling on the floor and a surprise too - six Mac 600s, a

vertically-rigged ACL string and two Studio Due City Colors. "These lamps are excellent," said Ayres, "turn them on and they flood out the venue. They are designed for floodlighting buildings and thus the dimmer shutter's not perfect, and the colour changer takes some getting used to, but for the light output, and the fact that they just need a 16Amp feed, you can't beat them." They are indeed a potent lamp, with Ayres recounting how he used just one behind a full width scrim beneath an Orbit roof as a one cell cyc' system. He has them forward-facing behind the back-line for this show, and they're everything he said. Just one word of caution for designers who might be keen to give them a try: watch where you put them - the dimmer shutter bleeds badly, not a consideration if you're lighting a building, but if they are placed in line of sight they can be quite distracting.

The finishing touch to Ayres' design is a pair of cargo nets hanging from the 'V' to frame the stage: "I didn't know where to get them so we did an Internet search which turned up a place in China." Resorting to tried and trusted technology, Ayres looked for a local fishing net maker in the Bristol locale and, for double indemnity, contacted Blackout. Both sources provided the same answer, Gundy's in Bridport, so now you know. They look great, take colour beautifully, and deliver such a wide web that light behind them can instantly transform the stage from enclosed to open. They're relatively cheap but, "the rope is so thick and absorbent that having them fire-proofed adds another few hundred quid to the cost," warned Ayres. The nets are hung from screen bungies, a necessary disincentive to the bass player Mark Hamilton who's not averse to scaling the ridiculous. One other thing of note: the Pearl is loaded with an additional 100 shapes for the Shape Generator developed by Dan Hardiman at Utopium, a feature Ayres exploits heavily for Ash's thrash frenzies.

Why I liked it all so much was the constant change of stage dimension, colour and technique. A real put and take approach to lighting that wouldn't shame a Roy Bennett show.

SOUND

The PA comes from a bit further up the M4 in Reading. Skan PA, now under new management I discovered (have I been asleep for the past two years?) provides a Turbo' Floodlight system all powered by Lab Gruppen amps, as indeed are Skan's own design monitor wedges. Front-of-house mixer Ian Laughton is, like Steve Brown, an old hand with the band. His engineering pedigree must go back a fair way as he recounts using the original Turbosound festival system when justifying his PA preferences, but then I still see fragments of it floating around Yorkshire from time to time.

"I've used just about every system over the years," he continues. "The Floods suit this band, especially the warmth of the bottom end." Laughton claims few challenges in finding his mix, though the stage levels are high, "but I've got a mad bass player (there he is again) who wants to

be a guitarist. He plays with three strings open, good and loud which can sometimes make it difficult to discern the guitars."

His three-and-half years with the band have given Laughton a certain influence: "I was the one who suggested they add a DJ to the show ('DJ Fluffy' as he's affectionately known) to help take their music to another level." It's an interesting concept, a bit of scratching here, a sample there, and used sparingly in just a few numbers, it does add another dimension.

Laughton mixes from a Midas XL200 (Nick Stag on monitors uses an XL3) and this, like the PA, is far and away his favourite console, with XTAs for system controllers. Likewise for the monitors, where the XTAs also double as pre-EQ. Stag does have graphics in his system - "but just for emergencies."

Both men have the system controllers subordinated to software control: "Which is very handy," said Stag. "The two laptops are linked so we can use them to send messages to each other. Handy when you're too busy dealing with something to answer the normal comms link, as the information sits on screen until you've acknowledged it."

Laughton has little to do effects-wise, but is a big fan of the valve pre-amps when it comes to shaping signal. A pair of Avalons for vocals; three Summits for kick and snare, both guitars and keys and samples; and utilising some older stock (this particular rack is his own), he has a pair of Drawmer 1960s allocated to bass and decks. All round it's a very big sound, the guitars whale it out, drums solid, and the bass profound, despite which the vocal sound is sharp. Tim Wheeler has good tonal qualities and Laughton runs him dangerously close to the edge of sibilance to let this shine through.

Fun Lovin' Criminals

Hull City Hall

LD: Chad Smith

SD: Grier

Well, call yourself Fun Lovin' and you'd better live up to it. An engaging threesome from New York, the band not only live up to their name, they positively extol the virtues of fun, listing dance, dope and booze in no particular order. Despite the steady stream of exhortations to indulge they're not a bunch of fall-down drunks, or too stoned to know what town it is.

This is a band that self evidently likes a buzz but doesn't want to get smashed, not on stage anyway. It's all about loosening up and they can do it. Look around the audience and there's all sorts - nerds, geeks, long-hairs, students, students' parents - I wouldn't be surprised if one of their number was an off-duty policeman. People come to see this band to have a good time and it starts the moment they hit the stage. In a stand-up venue around the 2,000 capacity, this band must be one of the best live acts around. Even a jaded, fat, 44-year-old who's seen it all before did more than tap his toe.

LIGHTING

"They're big in England (meaning the whole of the UK) and growing in Europe, yet in America



Above and below, Ash - everything about them reeks of energy. Bottom, Fun Lovin' Criminals.



(meaning USA) people don't know about this band." So said LD Chad Smith, "They can't get air play because the radio stations don't know what category to put them in." There's more than an element of truth to that, for the prevailing musical platform is Hip-Hop, with a little bit of reggae and some well observed black soul, and then there's the astonishing repertoire of classic rock and blues guitar solos lashed on deck. One minute Dave Gilmour, the next big EC.

For Smith, their first ever payrolled LD, lighting FLC is a labour of love, as he explained: "I was the Studio Color technician on U2 and FLC opened for them for a while. I was asked to light them and they said from the start that they couldn't pay me, but I listened to their music, got into it and said OK."

Not such a foolish arrangement when eight months later Smith receives a phone call to his hotel room in Australia at 2.00am - he's still doing the last knockings of U2 - and FLC offer him over a year's work. Smith is quite modest about his good fortune: "They must have liked what I did on U2. One day in Kansas I put up a blue look and after the show they said 'hey great'. The next day they said 'how about purple?' Why not?" Which sounds rather simplistic, but Smith studied Theatre Lighting at UCLA before running away to LSD in Newbury Park to earn enough money to pay his college fees. "There's no money in theatre in the US. I was working every hour of the day, drawing up four to five show designs a month, putting them in, programming them and still not making a living." Theatre's loss is touring's gain; this tour of the UK may be Smith's first production rig, but he's no shirker in supplying the goods. The rig is fairly simple (from LSD, naturellement) with just a front and rear truss: on the front three, there are six-lamp bars and two Icons, whilst on the back slightly more Pars and just four more Icons on top of up-ended truss sections. There's also four Studio Colors on the floor and three ETC Source 4 profiles on the front for band pick-ups (there's no spots).

Not a whole lot but it's how you use it: "I don't do washes," Smith declares. "Everything is focused tight to the subject - I don't criss-cross anything, it's all direct." Generally that's true, although towards the end of the set he does allow a couple of Icon gobos up on the silver lamé



"People come to see this band to have a good time and it starts the moment they hit the stage . . . this must be one of the best live acts around."

backdrop. The pervading image is retro eighties schtick, lot's of Par work (Smith uses all 240V bulbs ganged in 5kW groups which makes for a subtle new/forgotten look) and muted use of moving lights. There's no motion cues to speak of and in some songs he doesn't use the Icons or Studio Colors at all. Despite which it's eye-catching, lively, warm and pretty busy - which is not bad considering Smith received his Icon console training on tour. "I just learned one new thing every day," he said, but he was fortunate in having Rob Lancaster (one of LSD's console

instructors) as his Icon tech'. There again, Lancaster was lucky too; Smith is a trained Icon tech himself, a real hands on kinda' guy.

SOUND

Grier (he is known by no other name), doubles as tour manager and sound engineer. That's fairly typical for this band, the similarly truncated 'Skills' is back-line roadie and production manager, and Smith is also rapidly acquiring an alter ego 'Dirty Dan', but we'll have to visit the next tour to see how that develops. Grier has considerable experience in the UK, having toured extensively with the Chilli Peppers. His preferred tool is the A2 system from Audiolease: "It's loud and it's clean, but don't ask me what's in it," is a refreshingly honest statement from an engineer who drives the vehicle hard and fast but doesn't care too much what's under the bonnet. "I don't do a lot effects-wise," something patently true in the delivery, "the music is open to interpretation but I don't think it's justified. I'm a 'less is more' kinda guy. There are a lot of sub-harmonic frequencies I have to keep away from, otherwise I leave it alone." Grier already had his levels pretty much set by the time the band hit stage. He stood at his Yamaha PM3000, concentrating hard for the first five numbers - a useful selection of hard and fast, jazzy ballads, and two big guitar solos - but only altered faders incrementally. Most things he left untouched with just a bit of delay on the lead vocals for thickening, but otherwise ready to sit back and enjoy the show by the time 30 minutes had passed. Despite Grier being able to slope off to the loo mid-show, it wasn't all relaxation, he just knew when it was safe. "There are a couple of things I have to mess with, some of the tape loops were made in the studio years ago and they were never intended for live use, but generally things are stable. I'm using all Audio Technica microphones - they sure appeared out of nowhere to become a big presence - and they're great, really reliable."

Couldn't fault the sound in this City Hall, the high soaring guitar solos, the bright parpy horns, and as Grier indicated, the band has a pre-occupation with low end, but even so he kept this tight and clear.

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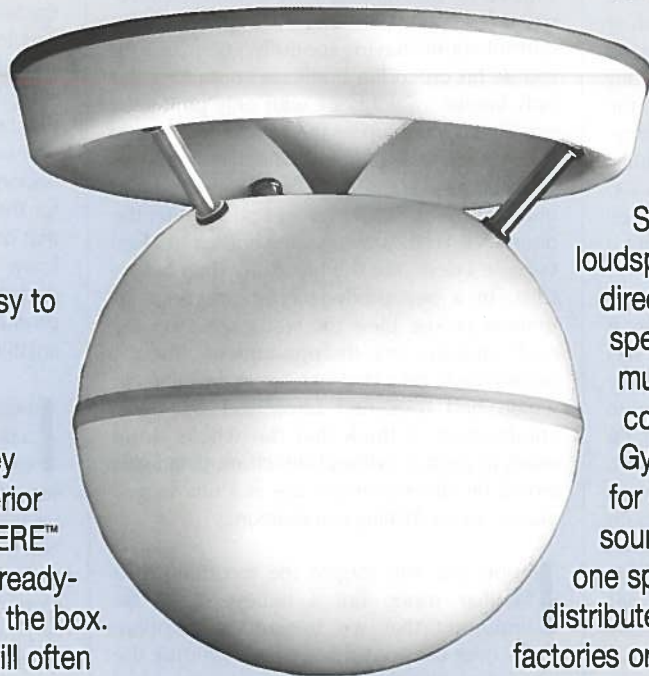
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Second Take . . . *John Watt's view from beside the camera*

Such is the speed of events nowadays that I've resolved to only write stuff with a long shelf-life. Given the lead-time required to get this from my PC to your letterbox, I'm learning that some of my apparently newsworthy comments become history before you read them. Last month the Clinton/Lewinsky revelations resulted in news programmes running inserts from Washington, providing me with plenty of ammunition, but who remembers those pictures that caused me to foam at the mouth now? There's a moral there that I don't care to contemplate. I also managed to miss a 60ft truck at PLASA of which Strand Lighting is so proud! Sorry chaps, I'll pop in next time it's in one of those jams near me on the A1.

Incidentally, I wonder if Strand have considered the psychology of calling their latest training programme the Strand Academy? For me it conjures up all the wrong images, and anyway, who runs it? Shouldn't the lead's name be above the title? 'Academy' means something like West Point or Sandhurst to me, where all the instructors are sadists. Do you have to do a hundred push-ups and then find your way to Kirkcaldy armed only with a tenpence piece and a tin of pilchards to qualify? The army rules used to be (sorry younger generation) if it doesn't move, paint it and if it does move, salute it - well, this was definitely the pre-moving light era. Maybe they had a dancing academy in mind, perhaps more on the right lines. I still get crews who do everything at waltz tempo and only break into a quickstep when the bar opens. My own cunningly stylish foxtrot usually keeps them on their toes, though. Do the instructors remind the students to never paso doble as you don't know how far away the next doble will be! Formation lighting will never catch on in my opinion, even if several lighting directors have already bought the outfits in anticipation.

I'm currently doing a modest little gig at LWT which I propose being even more circumspect about than usual, since the production team exhibit the sort of old-fashioned approach that will probably result in them being seriously 'downsized' - management speke for being nose bounced along Upper

Ground to the job centre. They are first and foremost decent people who work as a team with never an ego in sight. Secondly, they know what they want and how to get it. Thirdly, they assume that you have similar abilities. Lastly, the show is recorded as live and transmitted two hours later: there is a God.

Whilst at the South Bank, home of many successful shows, not least *London's Burning*, I thought I had a scoop as, not only did the fire alarms cause us all to abandon our posts and troop out into the street, but the real fire brigade arrived in force. My thoughts immediately turned to *The Towering Inferno*, and I wondered what role I would slip into as I looked up at that gleaming white tower that is LWT, now looking a little sinister in the half-light of a chill October evening. Was Mike Lingard trapped in the control room, having foolishly gone back to rescue his crocodile briefcase containing the only known swatchbook with only pink gels? Was Shaun Moon up on the twelfth, gazing into the eyes of the beautiful weather lady, earnestly explaining the complexities of digital television, unaware of the deadly flames licking under the door? Was Fred Astaire lashing himself to Nigel Lythgoe's desk (not the first to try that) before Cilla, in a beautifully-tailored fire brigade-themed jacket, blew the water tanks on the roof? Imagine my disappointment when it turned out to be a chip pan fire in the canteen, which had remained unnoticed by crews conditioned to think that the whole world exists in a haze, without which moving lights would be about as much use as a one-legged man at an ass-kicking competition.

I hope you will forgive me returning to a familiar topic, but I believe it to be important that we freelancers compare notes over the sordid business of getting the rate for the job. It's not always bad news: I had a show cancelled at very short notice the other week. I had already done all the prep' and had driven 300 miles with the plan to check a few points with the crew: when the call came that the shoot was off, I realised that the nearest thing I had to a contract was a couple of phone calls with people I had never met (written contracts are rare in my experience). I needn't

have worried, as the full fee was paid without question.

Perhaps a more familiar situation arose over a quiz show pilot which I really wanted to do as it is to be directed by someone who is an old friend, as well as being one of that rare breed that you enjoy working with. The young production manager readily agreed my daily rate, but thought one day planning was all the budget would stand. It was also pointed out that this was a pilot and would "probably" result in a 15-week series for which I would be in line. Well, I seem to have heard that before somewhere, about once a week, actually. My experience is that you let someone else do the pilot because there's plenty of potential for cock-ups and in the search for someone to blame, lighting are first in the firing line. Do the series, having seen the pitfalls of the set which the other guy struggled with on the pilot, and you can collect the bouquets, not to mention the money! Anyway, I politely turned down the opportunity to do four days preparatory work for the price of one and no doubt will be off that company's Christmas card list as a result. I know this is a familiar scenario; most lighting designers I know have difficulty persuading production managers that they actually do anything at all prior to 'the day'.

I begin to wonder if this journal ought to run a traffic service and feature road test reports too, given the amount of driving we all seem to do. I know there is a select band who resist going north of Watford, but it's their loss. Not for them the gourmet pleasures of 'Brians' in Headingley, which is a must if you are working at YTV. Then there's 'Grisslys' on the A1, the only food available for 100 miles going north after midnight. It's a portacabin on an artic' trailer where the truckers CB their orders ahead. During the day try Sainsburys at Biggleswade - coffee refills free and a decent loo. If you're Manchester-bound, there's another greasy spoon establishment on the Leek Ashbourne road - a useful winter route if 'the snake' is shut - which has a juke box full of 78s which will play Moonlight Serenade if you kick it hard enough. It's a good idea to keep a boiler suit in the boot, which you can don before venturing in - they don't take prisoners in the Peak district and they definitely don't eat quiche. A trip to Gateshead recently ended in a real gourmet meal in a pub in Sedgfield, but legend has it that Tony Blair eats there as well as me, so it's definitely the 'in' place.

I think the road tests must wait, I don't want to steal Jeremy Clarkson's thunder, but you must admit this really has a lot to do with the real world of lighting. Before you can begin to be creative you have to arrive, preferably unhassled and in one piece and with a boot full of blackwrap, gaffer and gobos. I must stop, the spellchecker is really getting to me. I think Windows 95 and I speak different languages.

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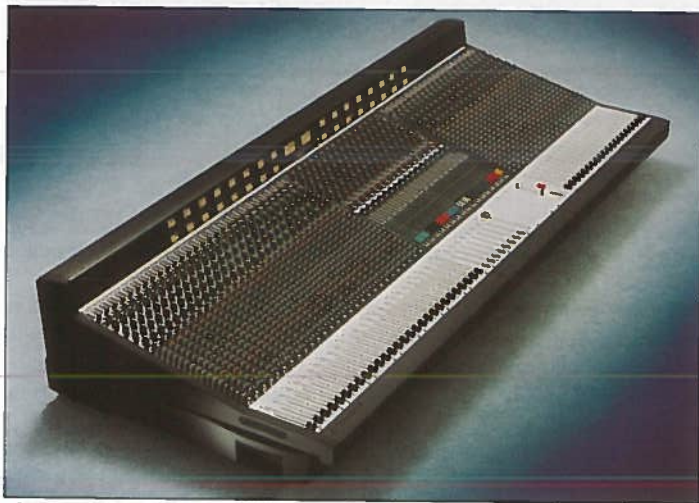
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AES UPDATE

San Francisco was the setting for the 105th Convention of the Audio Engineering Society. Jim Evans went to see what was new



The Soundcraft Series FIVE console.



AKG's Emotion series of vocal microphones.

With all the usual suspects on board - and a few more besides - the pro audio exhibition circus rolled into San Francisco in the last week of September for the 105th AES Convention, held at the Moscone Center. Quite what those old stagers Barnum & Bailey would have made of digital desks, surround sound and phased point source technology, we shall never know; but in a city with such a great musical heritage which is home to the Birdman of Alcatraz, the Golden Gate Bridge and the Fillmore Auditorium, it takes more than the eccentricities of the pro audio industry to raise eyebrows.

While former San Francisco femme fatale of rock, Grace Slick, celebrated the launch of her autobiography *Someone to Love?* with the oft-quoted line "If you remember the sixties, you weren't really there," some other well-known names chose the Bay Area in September to mark various landmarks and anniversaries. First out of the blocks was **EAW** with their 20th anniversary bash at the legendary Fillmore Auditorium. At the recently-renovated venue that once played host to Jefferson Airplane, Grateful Dead, Hot Tuna et al in what many regard as San Francisco's Golden Musical era, EAW invited the pro audio world and his wife to hear Edwin McCain and his band put the new KF700 Concert Touring Series through its paces. It was a brave move, but it worked.

"The Fillmore was a great event for us," said EAW president Ken Berger after the show. "When you do a concert for all the audio guys, the great danger is that unless it comes off perfectly, you actually make a big fool of yourself. Fortunately, it went very well for us. It was the most successful event we've ever had, from both a social and demonstration standpoint."

The KF700 series, which was first seen at PLASA in London, looks set to take over eventually from the KF850. The primary building block of the series is the KF750, which boasts, along with considerable long-throw

capability, smooth power response and coherent tonal quality. At its core, the three-way KF750 is actually a very large mid-frequency horn filling nearly the entire front of the enclosure.

Also making their debut were the KF400a, claimed to be the first powered three-way loudspeaker system, and the LS Series of line source loudspeakers. Berger, while observing modestly that EAW "has only just begun to tap its potential of creating and bringing solutions to the market," added that his company would be undertaking a major European push over the coming 12 months.

Others celebrating in San Francisco were UK console manufacturers **Soundcraft** and **Amek**. The two companies, both now part of the Harman empire, hosted a joint party to celebrate their respective 25th anniversaries. It was good to see Soundcraft co-founder and now Focusrite chairman Phil Dudderidge in ebullient mood.

On the product front, Soundcraft launched its SM20 monitor console, the latest addition to its range of dedicated stage monitor desks. Available in 40, 48 and 56 input frame sizes, the SM20 can provide any combination between 20 straight mono sends and seven stereo, plus six mono sends.

Also new to the US market was the Series FIVE monitor. Interestingly, via a pair of auxiliary MIDI ports, this desk can send messages to a BSS FPC Varicurve Remote Controller to select particular slave EQ devices in a rack whenever a Series FIVE output solo is activated. A 28-channel expander is now available for the Series FIVE. The module is designed to increase the input channel capability of any Series FIVE console, providing up to 28 mono or stereo inputs in a special frame. Completing the Soundcraft line-up is the recently-launched Broadway console with its automation system designed specifically for operation in the live music environment.

The star turn for **Amek** was undoubtedly the

presence of the usually reclusive recording industry pioneer Rupert Neve, currently a long-term design consultant to Amek, where he designs analogue rack-mount mic pre-amps, EQs and consoles for live sound, film and music recording. 'An afternoon with Rupert Neve' was one of the top attractions in the AES seminar programme.

The latest example of Neve's input with Amek is the aptly-named Recall RN console - a new incarnation of the successful Recall live performance desk, featuring input modules with a Rupert Neve-designed mic amp and EQ section. The implementation of a second automation package gives the desk added flexibility and versatility. The studio automation package, Supertrue, can now be ordered in addition to the console's existing live automation system, Showtime. Amek is aiming the desk at both the live mixing/recording and studio tracking markets and emphasises that it is particularly suitable for outside broadcast applications.

As at this year's PLASA Show, **Allen & Heath** showed an impressive range of new and established gear. Making its US debut was the latest addition to the GL Series of sound reinforcement consoles. The GL2200 is a four-bus mixer available in 12, 16, 24 and 32 channel configurations. As a dual function console, the GL2200 is intended for front-of-house, monitoring, recording and combined applications for PA companies, bands, theatres, clubs and places of worship. New features on the GL2200 include the 'engineer's toolbox', comprising a built-in 1kHz sine oscillator for equipment line-up, a pink noise generator for speaker calibration and full talkback routing.

Also debuting from A&H and attracting considerable interest was the Icon Series of compact digital mixers for live sound applications. The first two models in the range are the 10-input, four-output DL1000 and a powered version, the DP1000, which comes complete with a 600W stereo power amplifier.



JBL's new 2012H 10" and 2020H 12" mid-range transducers.



The 7000 Series multi-channel UHF wireless from Audio-Technica.

Both mixers began shipping in October. The latest generation of MixWizards was also on display.

Making its 'world debut' was Cadac's Sound Automation Manager for Windows which was shown alongside recently released and established sound reinforcement products. On show were the J-Type and F-Type live production consoles, complete with the latest automation modules; the M-Type monitor board (fresh from tour duties with the Rolling Stones) and the new Remote Microphone Amplifier/Splitter which was making its first appearance Stateside.

On the Mackie front, aside from the speculation as to what the new association with RCF might bring forth and the latest digital desk developments, there was considerable interest in other recently released products. The M.2600 is the latest addition to the FR series of power amplifiers, which aims to provide high quality performance and good looks at an affordable price. Desk-wise, the SR56.8 is now starting to ship.

Two of Hollywood's largest film studios, Disney and Warner Bros, were confirmed as having bought Digital Film Consoles (DFCs) from AMS Neve for feature film mixing, while another studio, Paramount, has upgraded its VR series to 96 inputs for film scoring.

Crest Audio reported that the first orders of its flagship V12 'maximum performance' console are rolling off the production line. Crest say they delayed the release of the V12 until they implemented a whole range of the latest feature modifications.

Meanwhile, at a brief first-day press conference, Peavey Electronics and Crest Audio announced a strategic alliance which will permit a sharing of resources and proprietary technologies for the benefit of all. Each will continue with separate operations in their existing locations. Hartley Peavey stated: "This alliance with Crest will position both companies for explosive growth for the next millennium." No financial details of the alliance were forthcoming.

While the US television newscasters were positively salivating at the prospect of the havoc that Hurricane Georges might cause on the East Coast, the famed San Francisco fog lifted bang on schedule for the AES press trip to Meyer Sound's HQ across the Bay in Berkeley. Meyer's testing facility features an anechoic

chamber large enough to test concert speakers, such as MSL-10s. The chamber's custom, computer-controlled test fixture lets engineers rotate a cabinet in increments of 1/100th of a degree in any direction, so they can precisely quantify the polar response of any loudspeaker. We can expect some serious new product developments from Meyer shortly.

Back at the Moscone Center, John Adams, Mickey Hart and George Duke were among the guest speakers at Meyer's stand seminars that discussed the challenges of sound design for touring, studio, theatre and consulting. During the convention, the company announced that its high definition studio monitor, the HD-1, has been approved for use in the new THX Certification Program, THX PM3, which includes multi-channel mixing and monitoring rooms.

Those attendees who took time out to visit Alcatraz were greeted by PA messages broadcast via a sound system anchored by Community RSjr Series 915 loudspeakers, installed three years ago and still surviving everything the Bay's weather can throw at them.

At the convention centre, Community introduced the R-1 series of two-way, fully horn-loaded loudspeakers. Designed for a variety of indoor and outdoor applications, they offer pattern control to below 500Hz. The R1-66BNG is designed specifically for wide area announcements and projection of background music in convention centres and similar facilities that have high ceiling distributed sound systems. The R1-94 and R1-64 are for short and medium throw applications; their directionality makes them particularly suitable for indoor situations with difficult acoustics or where outdoor noise control is needed.

JBL announced the formation of its dedicated sales and marketing group, headed up by Rick Kamlet in the role of director of marketing for commercial sound. New products on show included additions to the Contractor series surface-mount loudspeaker line. Also, the company announced the introduction of the new 2012H 10" and 2020H 12" Maximum-Output cone mid-range transducers for direct radiating and horn-loaded applications.

Audio Independence, US distributor for Turbosound, reported a number of recent

contracts including a system for the Kohl Center in Madison, Wisconsin - a multi-purpose sports venue with seating for 16,500.

California's Audio Composite Engineering, which earlier this year introduced its G-5 touring system, had a number of new items on their stand. The model 1250WR is a fully weather-resistant version of the 1250; a multi-layer grille, treated cone and corrosion protected crossover network are added to the standard model for added protection at a nominal cost. A field-serviceable internal jumper replaces the bi-amp switch, further reducing potential contact corrosion problems. The model 1200 is designed for use as a stage monitor, mounted on a stand, or suspended. Array kits are available.

Stage Accompany's Performer P2-29 SB has been specially developed for the live sound/touring market and is the latest development in the established Performer series.

Martin Audio gave a US premier to a new version of its boutique speaker, the C115, in a graphite grey finish which is aimed at the bar, restaurant and retail sectors.

One of the highlights of the Renkus-Heinz stand was a new series of power amplifiers with plug-in loudspeaker control modules, optional R-Control remote computer control and monitoring facilities. R-Control features include computer control of power, volume, polarity and mute for each amplifier channel.

Suited for most live music applications from classical and opera to jazz and rock, the FS-2 from Apogee Sound features a high-power, fluid-cooled, 2" throat compression driver coupled to a specially-designed horn. The high-frequency section is teamed with a rugged 12" bass driver, also fluid-cooled and loaded by an optimally-vented enclosure. Frequency response is 50Hz-19kHz +3dB.

Panasonic showed three new additions to its AT Series line of loudspeakers. The AT200, AT250 and AT80 are all designed for sound reinforcement applications: the AT200 and AT80 are both high-powered bass reflex compact systems which incorporate Panasonic's Square Contour Wave Guide horn design. The AT250 12" bass reflex compact subwoofer is designed to maximise the system characteristics of the AT200, offering an 800W continuous programme spec with a frequency response of 30Hz-500Hz.

AKG chose the opening day of AES to announce the availability of its new H100 'Spider' Suspension. Designed for use with AKG's large-diaphragm models such as the C3000, C414B/ULS and the C4141B/TLII, the H100 features a new shock-mount, and in the future will be included as a standard accessory with the previously-mentioned AKG models. It will also be available separately for upgrading existing microphones. Highlighted on the AKG stand was the Emotion series of mics for vocal performance applications, plus the recently-enhanced version of the 10-year-old C1000S microphone.

As well as the introduction of its AT4060 cardioid vacuum tube capacitor microphone, **Audio-Technica** announced the new 7000 Series multi-channel UHF wireless microphone systems. The 7000 Series is designed for live performance, places of worship, lecture circuit, public address and aerobic instruction. The systems offer UHF wireless technology with up to 100 switch-selectable PLL-synthesised channels. A-T also reported that over 200 of their microphones were used at the recent MTV Video Music Awards held at the Universal City Amphitheater, which featured live performances by artists such as Madonna and The Beastie Boys.

There was plenty more new on the microphone front: the UR-700 from **Telex Communications** is its latest UHF wireless system, following in the footsteps of the established FMR-70.

Sennheiser's EM3532 is a two-channel, computer-controlled UHF true diversity wireless microphone receiver. It offers more than 4,800 selectable frequencies with a maximum switching bandwidth of 24MHz and each receiver can store and display up to 32 UHF channels.

Audio Intervisual Design showed the Sanken CS-3 Short Shotgun mic, which features a low-frequency roll-off switch. Stars of the **Neumann** presentation, meanwhile, were the new TLM 103 large diaphragm, transformerless condenser mic, and a 70th anniversary limited edition of the benchmark U87 mic - the U87 Gold.

Shure's new KSM32 microphone for the high-end studio recording market caused considerable interest, as did a couple of other new Shure items. The new WH20 headworn mic is a dynamic, close-talking unit featuring a frequency response of 50Hz-15kHz and is aimed for use in any vocal application where freedom of movement is required. The computer-controlled DP11EQ from Shure combines the digital power of a comprehensive dynamics controller with parametric equalisation and delay, all within an enclosure occupying half a single rackspace.

Denon's new DN-M2300R is a dual MiniDisc player and recorder for the professional DJ market. As well as full feature editing and dubbing capabilities, the machine permits multiple levels of 'Undo' and 'Redo' for correcting mistakes or A/B-ing different mix ideas. When dubbing MDs, the DN-M2300R can also internally dub the disc name, track names and cue points, eliminating the need to rename tracks. Also fresh from Denon is the DN-C360 2U single CD player for professional



Panasonic's WS-AT200 loudspeaker - one of the latest additions to the AT series.

applications, and the DN-A850 multi-zone mixing amplifier for the systems contractor market.

The four-day convention was an undoubted success in a number of respects. Aside from providing a West Coast showcase for current and new pro audio products from around the world - for all fields, recording, live sound, installation and broadcast - this event has become established as a vital arena for discussion and debate. "This is the most successful convention we've ever had," said Convention committee co-chair David Robinson. Backing this assertion was the fact that the 1,600 tickets for the Bay Area Audio Manufacturers (BAAM) and AES party sold out almost as soon they went on sale, while tickets for the technical tour of Skywalker Sound sold out in four minutes!

The four days' proceedings had been opened by Alan Parsons, whose keynote address emphasised that, in his esteemed view, the business was now "a musician's, performer's and composer's industry - not a high-end studio industry. This should all take the real users into account. The hair should be longer here."

Parsons was also on hand at the 1998 TEC (Technical Excellence & Creativity) Awards to present Neil Young with the Les Paul Award for Lifetime Achievement. At the same ceremony, the late Colin Sanders, founder of Solid State Logic, was inducted into the TEC Awards Hall of Fame. In addition, TEC Awards were handed out in 27 categories. Among them, JBL took two technical awards for its SMAART Pro Audio acoustic measurement system, while other awards went to Clair Brothers, Hafler, Mackie, Roland, Soundcraft and Tascam.

While changes in media formats, recording methods, surround sound, DVD and associated topics and products were much to the fore in San Francisco, there's no getting away from the fact that the sound reinforcement, installation and contracting markets are looking very healthy. And so are the companies that design, supply and install the increasingly sophisticated equipment. Interesting times are ahead.

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No Comment . . .

Tony Gottelier

Tales of the Unexpected: It seems that we are in a phase when unexpected change is the order of the day. First, this past month saw the passing of Vari-Lite's Irideon architectural lighting subsidiary to ETC. At first sight this seemed like a strange move for both parties, but as the news sunk in the justifications came to the surface and it all started to make more sense.

For Rusty Brutsché of Vari-Lite, whose share price is under severe downwards pressure so soon after its arrival on the Nasdaq, it is an opportunity to reduce distractions and refocus on his core business. For Fred Foster, it is an irresistible opportunity to gain an entrée into the architectural lighting market with a range of products to complement his Unison programmer. And timing-wise, with the Irideon product possibly on the verge of a breakthrough with new building projects now coming on stream, it could turn out to be the bargain of a lifetime. And my moles tell me that some existing major landmark buildings could be coming in for the Irideon treatment also. As somebody who knows about these things said to me just the other day, 'Fred knows about production and, at the end of the day, in architectural lighting that's what it's all about'.

The other big story is the sudden parting of the ways between High End Systems and Richard Belliveau, its creative genius and flamboyant sorcerer of tasty lighting recipes. Belliveau always reminds me of one of those enfants terrible of fashionable haute cuisine. They make beautiful food, but are uncom-promising in their attitudes to staff and customers alike. Like these same chefs, and indeed Julius Caesar, by all accounts Belliveau was both arrogant and tyrannical in the way he ran his kitchen, a.k.a the development and production departments of HES, and he took no prisoners. A good example of his single-mindedness is the famous story of how he got High End involved in making dichroics. He simply went out and bought the necessary processing equipment, piecemeal fashion, and welded up his own vacuum chamber. This DIY effort cost the corporation close on one million bucks all those years ago, though that was a great deal less than it would have cost had they acquired a package from one of the well-known manufacturers and providers of vacuum coating plant. But it worked, and HES have been producing their own colours ever since. And remember, this is a guy with no formal scientific or engineering training, just a passion for lighting and a brilliant, if mercurial, mind.

Richard was certainly the Pied Piper of Austin, playing his own tune and pulling everyone else along on his coat-tails. Despite his complex personality, he was without doubt the creative driving force in the business, but it's hard to judge what impact his absence will have on High End. Something dynamic will certainly be lost by, but perhaps his erstwhile partners simply figured that it was time to calm down a bit - after all, they are playing for very high stakes these days. Mike

Wood was in place and ready, but certainly not anticipating that he would be called to pick up the mantle, which I am sure he has done subsequently with a certain reluctance and considerable humility.

People will, no doubt, try to make a link between this event and the patent dispute with Vari-Lite, but if there is a link, it's probably tenuous at best: that is that the new management, which is there as a consequence of additional investment, which might not have been required otherwise, were the ones that ran out of patience with the delays in the release of production versions of Sudio Spot. I have no doubt that we will again see Richard making a powerful contribution to our industry in a new guise in the future. It should be fascinating to watch how he sets about it.

Mike Wood for President: No, this isn't a prediction that Mike is about to step into Bob Schacherl's shoes as well, but the news that, on top of everything else, Wood is about to be confirmed as the new President of ESTA. While this is a great accolade, and appropriate recognition of Wood's great contribution and dedication to the industry over many years, the coincidence with his new responsibilities at High End must be causing him heart palpitations. Assuming that he goes ahead with the ESTA role, Mike will have achieved another very unusual first which will probably never be repeated - that of a past Chairman of PLASA later becoming President of ESTA. Congratulations Mike, it really couldn't have happened to a nicer or more deserving individual.

Brief encounter: Several years ago, when staying in Manhattan, I ran into Richard Young, the society paparazzo, who as they say in the Diaries 'I knew slightly', in the gymnasium of my hotel. We exchanged pleasantries from astride our various aerobic contraptions, a conversation as you can imagine, liberally sprinkled with grunts. During my latest visit to the Big Apple for the Jere Harris interview (See Page 53) I took myself to dinner at a chic restaurant on Madison Avenue

which had been recommended to me. Imagine my surprise to find that the restaurant was, in fact, on the very site of that same gym. A little different now, with interior conceived by that great French design alchemist Phillipe Starke, and not a little metaphorical of his bedrooms at the Paramount Hotel in the same city.

Monsieur Starke I also 'know slightly'. 'How are you Phillipe?' quoth I. "I am wanderfall, I am purification as always," said he, with that wicked twinkle that he has in his eye. "In fact, I am a dream!" It is a fantastic talent that Starke has that allows his innate sense of humour to translate directly to his designs, which are both droll and often highly comical. If it were anyone else, we would think he was taking the peepee, or even that he was starke staring mad. He, however, can carry it off with grand aplomb.

Footnote: People will be asking what I think of Jere Harris and his ambitions now that I have met him and actually bearded him in his den, so to speak. Is he on the level? Yes, I believe that he is. I think that he genuinely believes that he is doing something for the industry and, in that sense, PRG should be a benign influence. In that case, is he being naïve? Possibly. After all, he has bitten off several large mouthfuls in quick succession, so the indigestion could prove to be spectacular en route to making sense of it all. However, he has convinced me that his heart is in the right place. If he continues to run the businesses as separate entities, with the individual creative leaders remaining in place, and PRG basically acting as bankers for the group, as he promises, then there seems no need for paranoia at all - just a big imagination.

Is it viable? I think in the context of the United States it may be. There are massive projects which the combined group could exploit far more efficiently together, rather than as disparate entities. So, if they get their act together they could make a spectacular success of it. There is no doubt that Harris's evangelical zeal is infectious and his ambitions seem plausible. So am I being naïve? Who knows, we will just have to wait and see.

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ASG specialise in the design, manufacture and installation of a wide variety of stage equipment within the Leisure, Television, Theatre and Education sectors, primarily based around mechanical engineering ranging from tracks and drapes to counterweights and safety curtains, although electrical knowledge would also be an advantage. We are currently looking to fill various positions which include:

Contracts Manager

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Successful applicants should be self-motivated and conscientious, with high standards and excellent organisational abilities. Please write enclosing a full CV for the attention of The Company Secretary, ASG Stage Products, Redgate Road, South Lincs Industrial Estate, Ashton-in-Makerfield, Lancashire, WN4 8DT.

Gearhouse Systems, a wholly owned subsidiary of Gearhouse Group plc, are specialist contractors carrying out design and installation of turnkey lighting, sound, video, audio visual and rigging systems for theatres, conference centres, hotel ballrooms and studios. From our offices in the Middle East, the UK and Indonesia we are expanding rapidly and are involved in numerous projects world-wide.

Due to our continued expansion we now require a number of additional staff for various locations both in the UK and overseas.

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We also have a regular requirement for freelance engineers and would like to update our database for forthcoming projects.

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*CVs please to
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United Kingdom
Fax: 01932 571708
e-mail:
gking@gearhouse.com*



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DIRECTORATE OF LEISURE & CITY SERVICES

CONTRACTING SERVICES DIVISION

EVENT AND ENTERTAINMENT SERVICES

TECHNICAL MANAGER

£18,006-£19,194 (Grade SO1)

To commence 2 February 1999 - Interviews will be held on 14th December 1998.

Event and Entertainment Services operates a range of venues including the Southampton Guildhall which is a 1750 capacity multi-purpose venue. The all year round programme includes: amateur productions, touring rock/pop concerts, classical concerts, dance events, exhibitions, corporate dinners and comedy.

Southampton City Council invites applicants with Technical/Stage Manager experience in a multi-purpose producing or receiving venue. You will need to be highly motivated, a good communicator and have a sound knowledge of stagecraft, sound and lighting systems, a firm grasp of Health and Safety legislation and working practices, and a commitment to provide a quality, professional service.

Ideally, applicants should have a minimum of four years experience managing or supervising a team of technical staff and resources.

If you would like to discuss the post informally, please contact Nigel Greene, Venues Operations Manager on tel: (01703) 832453.

Application forms, job descriptions and person specifications are available from the Personnel Group, Contracting Services Division, Directorate of Leisure and City Services, The White House, Sports Centre, Bassett, Southampton SO16 7AY. Telephone: (01703) 780775 (24-hour answerphone). Please telephone (01703) 790693 if you are a hearing impaired caller and have access to a minicom.

The closing date for receipt of completed applications for this post is 1st December 1998.



HOLLAND PARK OPEN AIR THEATRE



CONTRACT TO PROVIDE, INSTALL, SERVICE AND REMOVE LIGHTING, SOUND AND TRUSSING SYSTEM.

The Holland Park Open Air Theatre is seeking a contractor to provide hire out, service and remove a complete venue and stage electrical distribution, lighting and flown trussing system for the theatre over the 1999, 2000 and 2001 seasons. Companies interested in tendering for this contract should contact:

**Mr R Van Goethem at
The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea,
The Town Hall, Hornton Street, London W8 7NX.
Tel: 0171-361 3345 • Fax: 0171-938 3690
E-mail: edurvg@rbkc.gov.uk**

Your letter, fax or e-mail must reach the above not later than Friday 8 January 1999

Following successful projects with Virgin Atlantic Airways and Fairchild Dornier, Equation Productions wish to recruit experienced permanent and freelance staff who can cross the boundaries of industrial design, commercial and corporate lighting, television and theatre events.

- **Lighting Designers and Engineers** •
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- **Lighting Project Managers** •

Please forward CV's and SAE's to David R Lawrence at the address below:

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FAX: 0181-671 8150

MOBILE: 0802 800 963

EQUIPMENT NEWS

Optikinetics K2+



Optikinetics have introduced the new K2+ effects projector, which supersedes the K2, producing 30% more light output at 2600 lumens, with no increase in price and only a minimal increase in gate temperature. Using a Philips MSD metal halide discharge lamp with a 6500K colour temperature, lamp life of 2000 hours and utilising less energy, at a maximum of 550W, than comparable incandescent fixtures.

A computer-optimised optical system and a smaller light source provide improved optical control. Forced air cooling enables the use of duplicate 35mm transparencies, as well as silk-screened, chrome-etched and dichroic gobos.

Optikinetics - UK: +44 1582 411413

Hire Track v1.3

Navigator Systems Ltd has just released Hire Track Version 1.3. The new version demonstrates a number of improved features, including an Invoicing module which allows a break-down of cost categories, cumulative tax code calculations and a nominal field which links with other accounts packages. The Crew Pricing module allows calculations on an hourly rate, whilst the Planner module has been re-written to guarantee major improvements in performance such as crew and transport allocation which are more efficient and user-friendly.

A daily Diary and Pat Testing module are also now available as options. The standard upgrade is free to existing Hire Track users.

Navigator - UK: +44 7000 628 797

Bose Launch Freespace 360

Bose UK have launched the Freespace 360 environmental loudspeaker.

As versatile as it is durable, the Freespace 360 is designed for a wide range of outdoor locations such as outdoor cafes, theme parks and hotels, as well as large indoor locations like shopping malls and showrooms. Furthermore, its low-profile design helps the 360 blend in easily with its surroundings.

The Freespace 360, which carries a five-year warranty, is a heavy-duty enclosure and long-lasting driver with an ultra-durable, polymer composite cone.

Bose - UK: +44 1795 475341

GMR's New Quartet for Pubs and Clubs

Lamba plc are introducing a number of new mixing products for the club, hotel and retail markets from Italian company GMR, for whom Lamba are exclusive UK distributor.

Leading the way is the DxPro modular club mixer - an eight-channel, modular output frame with 24 inputs. Each module features line, mic and phono with full EQ, and a master send and return, and is also switchable between balanced and unbalanced inputs. Features also include sub filters and ALPS faders and an external power supply. The AP150 is a 150W + 150W RMS/four ohm, 1U power amp - aimed at pubs, bars and mobile DJs.

This is partnered by the four-zone AP504, which offers separate channels of 50W RMS power into four ohms, providing the option of having two different sound sources running simultaneously, switchable from the front panel. Also fully protected, the AP504 has two switchable line inputs high and low tone control, volume and balanced mix input with automatic override, making it ideal for public places.

Finally, the DP7 is a two-zone pre-amplifier with digital input switching between seven stereo inputs. Features include balanced mic input with the option of mixing with the music fed out, mute switch, treble and bass, EQ along with tape out/monitor output with volume control.

Lamba - UK: +44 1727 840527

Gearhouse Unveil New Optiscreen

Gearhouse have launched Optiscreen, a new large format LED screen. The result of many months of R&D into the limitations of existing large screen technology, Optiscreen features many enhancements which set it apart from other large screen systems currently available, Gearhouse claim, most importantly the use of Virtual Pixel Technology, which effectively doubles the perceived screen resolution.

The visible screen is made up of rows of modular self-addressing panels, each measuring 1280mm x 960mm, the standard 4:3 television aspect ratio. 16:9 ratio screens can be constructed by varying the number of panels in the vertical and horizontal dimensions.

When used as a portable 'touring' system, the lightweight aircraft grade aluminium supports automatically engage and lift the Optiscreen panels into position, whilst all permanent installations feature a low-cost steel matrix support system as standard. Each panel is again crafted from aircraft quality aluminium and weighs less than 70kgs.

Signal input to the Optiscreen panels is via a single fibre-optic cable, which offers considerable advantages in ease of handling, maintenance and reliability. The employment of this technology provides complete isolation of the signal path and reduces EMC emissions and susceptibility. The Optiscreen system complies with current CE and EMC regulations.

Gearhouse - UK: +44 181 208 7100

Rosco Poster for Colour Effects



Rosco have introduced an A1 wall poster featuring all their principal colour effects and correction filter comparisons. The poster sets out E-Colour, with Supergel colour equivalents and Lee Filter references, as well as unique Supergel colours and Cinegel correction equivalents.

Rosco: +44 181 659 2300

Allen & Heath Contractor Series CD-ROM

Allen & Heath have released a free CD-ROM for their Contractor series, covering the DR128 and DR66 digital installation mixers, plus the GR1 and GR05 zone mixers.

The CD provides a full version of WinDR System Manager software, as used by the DR128 and DR66, allowing prospective users to gain a clear picture of what the products can achieve. Also included are tutorials, brochures, application guides, architect's specifications and more, offering systems designers a wealth of information and a source of material for use in presentations to clients. The CD can be obtained free on request.

Allen & Heath - UK: +44 1326 372070

STAGE LIGHTING DESIGN

Richard Pilbrow

Set to become the new 'bible' of stage lighting, this comprehensive book is illustrated on every page by one of the most respected lighting designers in the world. The book covers Design: the basic principles. History: a brief survey of the historical development of stage lighting. Life: interviews with 14 other lighting designers, plus notes on Pilbrow's own career. Mechanics: a vast section dealing with technical data today's designer will need.

Nick Hern Books • ISBN 1 85459 273 4 • 1997 • 488pp • h'back

Price £29.99

LIGHTING TECHNOLOGY

A Guide for the Entertainment Industry

Brian Fitt and Joe Thornley

This book is a comprehensive guide to the basic theory and practice of lighting. Formerly 'Lighting by Design', this book has been revised to include the latest advances in lighting technology, additional information on lighting theory, up-to-date information on European safety legislation and greater detail on the control of light.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 51449 1 • 1997 • 480pp • paperback

Price £35.00

STAGE LIGHTING CONTROLS

Ulf Sandstrom

This is a handbook for professionals and students alike. It offers an introductory explanation of advanced computerised lightboards. It gives the reader an understanding of the software in these systems, explaining where general functions have evolved from, and how they are designed to be used. It also points out the differences in the solutions of control philosophy and their pros and cons.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 51476 9 • Oct 1997 • 160pp • p'back

Price £25.00

CONCERT LIGHTING

Technique, Art and Business (2nd Edition)

James L Moody

Concert Lighting is a comprehensive primer on lighting design for concerts. Placing special emphasis on rock-and-roll concert lighting equipment and techniques, the book takes the reader 'on tour', covering every aspect of that experience for the touring professional lighting technician and designer.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 80293 4 • Oct 1997 • 208pp • p'back

Price £19.99

CONCERT SOUND AND LIGHTING SYSTEMS (2nd edition)

John Vasey

This book shows how to set up, maintain and operate sound and lighting equipment for the performance of amplified music or any kind of touring production. An excellent guide to procedure, the book provides descriptions of all the components that make up a system, including explanations on how they work together, photographs and illustrations that show specific equipment and stage set-up.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 80192X • 1993 • 200pp • paperback

Price £19.99

STAGE LIGHTING FOR THEATRE DESIGNERS

Nigel H Morgan

This book covers every aspect of the lighting design process, from, equipment, lighting styles, relationships with directors and set and costume designers to the development of a design from first ideas to the first night. All practical aspects, including constraints of budget, time and space, are considered, along with explanations of the physical behaviour of light and how to make the best use of it.

Herbert Press Ltd • ISBN 1 871599 71 0 • 144pp • paperback

Price £12.99

LIGHTING THE STAGE

Francis Reid

This new edition is concerned with the relationships between the people involved in lighting and how they fit into the creative team. Francis Reid draws on his many years experience as a world renowned lighting designer to pass on tips which will interest all those concerned with designed light on stage.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 51375 4 • 1995 • 112pp • paperback

Price £14.99

STAGE LIGHTING HANDBOOK

(5th edition)

Francis Reid

A revised and enlarged edition of this standard introduction to stage lighting, an excellent source of advice and information for everyone involved in lighting design. New chapters cover lighting dance, new technologies and more on organisation and planning.

A & C Black • ISBN 0 713 8443982 • 208pp illus • paperback

Price £13.99

NORTHERN LIGHTS

Michael Northen/Foreword by Ned Sherrin

This book provides an insight into British theatre. Michael Northen's pivotal role as one of the UK's first lighting designers reveals the tireless community behind the scenes who are responsible for the glittering spectacle that greets the audience on opening night.

Summerdale Publishers • ISBN 1 84024 0385 • 265pp • p'back

Price £7.99

STAGE LIGHTING Step-By-Step

Graham Walters

Stage Lighting is a comprehensive introduction to a seemingly technical subject. Assuming that the reader has no prior knowledge of theatres or electrical theory, this book provides both the novice and the aspiring professional with the knowledge and confidence to light their own theatrical production.

A & C Black • ISBN 0 7138 4839 X • 1997 • 144pp • hardback

Price £14.99

THE ABC OF STAGE LIGHTING

Francis Reid

This glossary of lighting terms is for both amateur and professional theatre workers. It assembles all the key current words and phrases and explains them simply and clearly, allowing a deeper understanding of terms and facilitating better communication between specialists and non-specialists.

A & C Black • ISBN 0 7138 380 2 • 1992 • 136pp • paperback

Price £9.99

THE ABC OF STAGE TECHNOLOGY

Francis Reid

This illustrated reference book is an encyclopedia of stage technology terms. A companion volume to The ABC of Stage Lighting, it embraces all aspects of the technical operation of the stage, including the use of flying and other machinery for effective scenery handling.

A & C Black • ISBN 0 7138 4055 3 • 1995 • 108pp • paperback

Price £9.99

LIGHTING AND SOUND

Neil Fraser

One of five inter-related volumes designed to help amateurs develop their theatre skills. The author shows how, by careful planning and a creative use of often limited amounts of time, money and energy, truly outstanding results can be achieved. The manual offers new and imaginative approaches to classical plays, whilst also tackling less conventional outdoor shows and productions in unusual settings.

Pheldon • ISBN 0 7148 2514 X • 128pp • 180 illus • paperback

Price £9.99

FILM AND VIDEO LIGHTING

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Richard K Ferncase

This reference clearly defines and illustrates more than 1,000 of the most commonly-used terms and phrases that cinematographers, lighting directors, camera operators and assistants, gaffers, electricals, and grips may encounter during a typical day on the set.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 80157 1 • 1995 • 170pp • paperback

Price £14.99

SET LIGHTING TECHNICIAN'S HANDBOOK

(2nd edition)

Harry C Box

This handbook provides practical, hands-on information essential to the motion picture and television set lighting technician. All aspects of the job are covered providing basic knowledge and a discussion of the most advanced aspects of electrical distribution. This book has been updated to include checklists, National Electrical Codes, safety guidelines and extensive appendices of reference materials.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 802578 • 1997 • 416pp • paperback

Price £30.00

MOTION PICTURE AND VIDEO LIGHTING - Revised

Blain Brown

This book explores all aspects of lighting for film and video. Insightful diagrams, tables, charts and photographs emphasise a hands-on approach without losing sight of the powerful effect light plays in the medium of film. It reveals inside information based on years of experience and explores the challenges facing cinematographers and TV lighting designers.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 80249 7 • 1996 • 224pp • p'back

Price £27.50

THE TECHNIQUE OF LIGHTING FOR TELEVISION AND FILM

(3rd edition)

Gerald Millerson

This third edition of this book has been reformatted and restyled to reflect current developments. Although still concerned with the fundamental principles of lighting in studios, on location and display, the vastly extended text now covers single-camera, small unit production, improved and economy lighting, and working with limited facilities.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 51289 5 • 1991 • 448pp • hardback

Price £32.50

BASICS OF VIDEO LIGHTING

Des Lyver and Graham Swainson

This book explains all aspects of lighting a video production. Starting with the make-up of the lighting team and who does what, it goes on to discuss different lights and their control, to studio and location settings.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 51414 9 • 1995 • 128pp • paperback

Price £10.99

LIGHTING FOR VIDEO (3rd edition)

Gerald Millerson

Enables practitioners to produce top-grade results whether lighting off-the-cuff with a portable compact kit or tackling a major project with an extensive heavy-duty rig. It guides readers towards ways of handling projects and professional solutions to everyday situations.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 51303 7 • 1991 • 178pp • paperback

Price £15.99

PROFESSIONAL LIGHTING HANDBOOK (2nd edition)

Verne and Sylvia Carlson

This book contains details on hardware, as well as lighting techniques, giving guidelines to the proper use and operation of all kinds of lighting equipment, primarily for film and TV. It features

different types of lamps, fixtures, lenses, reflectors and filters. It also covers controllers, powerlines, modifiers and generators.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 80020 8 • 1991 • 250pp • hardback

Price £35.00

THE ART OF SOUND REPRODUCTION

John Watkinson

John Watkinson, a consultant in audio, video and data recording, has produced a clear and thorough reference volume on sound reproduction for beginners and professionals alike - from the basic theories of acoustics and psychoacoustics to transducer technology and the advantages of analogue and digital recording techniques and optical discs.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 51512 9 • 1998 • 552pp • paperback

Price £35.00

THE SOUND STUDIO (8th edition)

Alec Nisbett

This comprehensive guide includes recent developments in both videotape editing and in the audio field, as well as extending the coverage of audio digital systems and commercial studio techniques. It has been carefully written to inform those interested in understanding the various stages of operation without being lost by technical jargon.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 51395 9 • 1984 • 400pp • p'back

Price £35.00

SOUND SYSTEMS ENGINEERING (2nd edition)

Don Davis and Carolyn Davis

This is a necessary addition to the library of anyone involved in audio engineering. It covers topics such as the history of audio, audio mathematics and audio and acoustic instrumentation

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 80305 1 • 1988 • 685pp • p'back

Price £ 37.50

BASICS OF VIDEO SOUND

Des Lyver

Starting with a basic understanding of acoustics, microphones and an introduction to technical terms, the book goes on to consider the specific problems of creating good sound for a single camera shoot. The studio shoot is covered, explaining mixers and studio techniques of foldback and effects units. An explanation is offered of the electricity and physics to become a good sound recordist.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 51410 6 • 1995 • 128pp • paperback

Price £10.99

SOUND RECORDING AND REPRODUCTION (3rd edition)

Glyn Alkin

A comprehensive guide for newcomers to the industry who want to improve their technique and gain a better understanding of the recording medium and sound quality. The book follows the processes involved in producing a recording from the acoustic environment and production techniques to the various methods of sound recording and reproduction.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 51487 X • 1998 • 256pp • p'back

Price £15.99

SOUND EFFECTS: Radio, TV and Film

Robert L Mott

Newcomers to the field of audio/sound production, or producers, directors and other production personnel could find no better resource than this latest book which provides the first treatment of sound effects - their history, make-up, equipment and applications in radio, TV and film.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 80029 X • 1990 • 222pp • hardback

Price £35.00

SOUND TECHNIQUES FOR VIDEO & TV

(2nd edition)

Glyn Alkin

This new edition is an updated version of TV Sound Operations. The new book describes in detail the techniques for producing effective sound in conjunction with visuals. It also covers the basics of audio theory and equipment in very straightforward, non-mathematical terms.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 51277 4 • 1989 • 240pp • p'back

Price £15.99

PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEMS

Vivian Capel

Vivian Capel trained as a radio engineer and through his work has gained knowledge of audio and PA equipment and has worked on many PA installations. This book covers a range of PA systems, from the small club room to the large factory, theatre or sports stadium installation.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 51423 8 • 1995 • 284pp • paperback

Price £19.99

THE DIGITAL AUDIO CD RESOURCE PACK

Markus Erne

(Edited by Dr Francis Rumsey)

This resource pack consists of a manual with photocopied handouts and overhead masters to support teaching. Explanations of theory are given alongside exercises for the students to test their knowledge. It forms a training resource for lecturers in engineering, broadcasting and music technology.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 51502 1 • 1998

Compact disc and Resource Pack £50.00 + VAT
Compact disc only £10.00 + VAT

MAPLIN APPROACH TO PROFESSIONAL AUDIO

T Wilkinson

Based on the acclaimed series of articles published in Electronics, The Maplin Magazine, this is a technical introduction to the sound industry which provides a fascinating tour of the state-of-the-art, and also encourages anyone with an interest in audio to examine best practice and improve their own skills.

Butterworth-Heinemann • ISBN 0 7508 2120 8 • 273pp • p'back

Price £14.99

AUDIO & HI-FI ENGINEER'S POCKET BOOK (3rd edition)

Vivian Capel

This is a concise collection of practical and relevant data for anyone working on, or interested in, sound systems. Since the second edition, the Sony Mini Disc has arrived, interest has grown in valve amplifiers/vintage radios and new safety regulations are in force for PA systems; all of these are covered here.

Newnes • ISBN 0 7508 2001 3 • 1994 • 323pp • hardback

Price £14.99

AUDIO/HI-FI HANDBOOK (3rd edit)

Edited by Ian Sinclair

Written by a team of expert and specialist contributors, this guide has proved to be an invaluable resource to professional design and service engineers as well as the home user. This third edition is updated to include modern valve amp designs, Nicam and satellite radio, and new sections on servicing and in-car audio.

Newnes • ISBN 0 7508 3638 X • 848pp • 1998 • hardback

Price £50.00

THE ART OF DIGITAL AUDIO (2nd edition)

John Watkinson

The first edition of this book is now regarded as a classic in its field. Because of the fast moving nature of the technology described, the new edition has now been updated to include all the latest developments, including DCC, the Minidisc and digital audio broadcasting.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 51320 7 • 1994 • 490pp • hardback

Price £55.00

CONTROL SYSTEMS FOR LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

John Huntingdon

This book covers the control of lighting, sound machinery, video/multimedia, projections, process control and pyrotechnics in live entertainment. Control concepts and protocols are brought together and demonstrated in several realistic example systems: theatrical productions, a computer multi-media trade show, a rock concert and a theme park.

Focal Press • ISBN 0 240 80177 8 • 1994 • 312pp • paperback

Price £35.00

AN INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL AUDIO

John Watkinson

This book brings fundamentals of digital audio to a wide audience. All key technologies are covered including over-sampling, noise shaping, and error correction theories are treated in a simple, yet accurate form. DAT, DASH, DCC, CD and MiniDisc recorders are all described, together with the growing technique of audio editing on hard disks.

Focal Press • 0 240 51378 9 • 1994 • 256pp • paperback

Price £25.00

AUDIO POWER AMPLIFIER DESIGN HANDBOOK

Douglas Self

This is a detailed and practical manual on the design of audio amplifiers. Both pre- and power amplifiers are covered and the book provides a clear practical text on the state-of-the-art, and will be useful as a text for teaching, as well as a key source for engineers.

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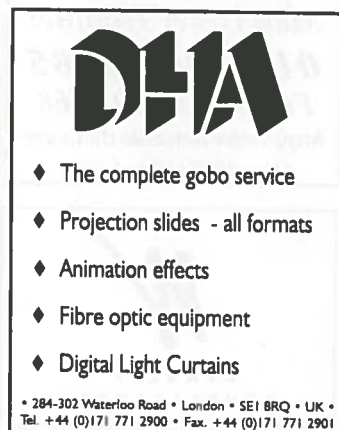


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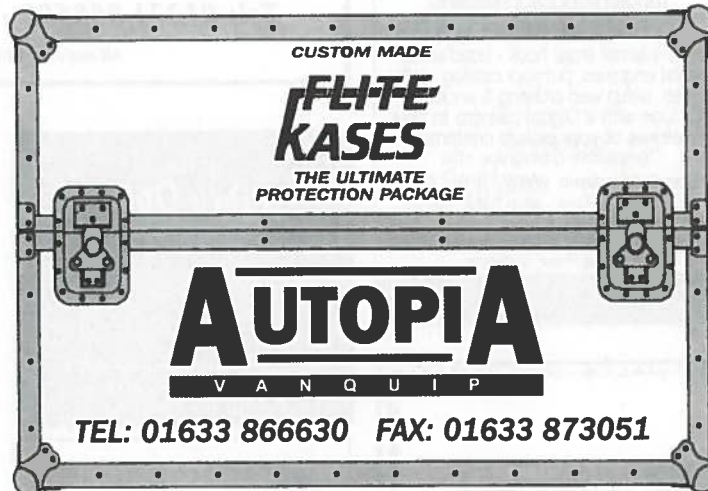
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L+SI talks to lighting designer **Howard Eaton** of **Howard Eaton Lighting Ltd**

Born in London in 1954, the son of a production engineer, Howard Eaton made his debut as a stagehand at the local Ashcroft Theatre, Croydon, aged 14. Some five years later he determined to study Electrical Engineering at Newcastle University. Within the year a full-time job at the University Theatre had replaced college and by the age of 21, Eaton had progressed to the lighting department at Glyndebourne, improving his skills over two seasons as a technician under Robert Bryan. It was here that he realised the enormous contribution lighting could make to a production.

In 1976 he accepted a job at TSL as Joe Davis' lighting assistant: "He was the personal lighting designer for Marlene Dietrich," Eaton notes. "I met huge numbers of people in the industry working with Joe, as he lit almost every West End show in those days. Doing Joe's shows, there was hardly a theatre we didn't end up in." His obvious admiration for Joe Davis lives on, especially his skill as a designer, his drinking capacity and the ability to still get up the following morning.

By the late 1970s, increasingly interested in the variety that freelance work provided, Eaton felt it was time to spread his wings. In 1979 he worked on his first show with David Hersey - *Evita* - which proved to be a landmark for the British musical. Further work followed with Hersey including *Cats*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Song and Dance* and *Starlight Express*, and Eaton has now been working on, and reproducing the lighting for *Cats* around the world for well over 10 years. It was during this period that he also met and started working with Andrew Bridge, doing numerous trade shows for Imagination and further West End musicals, including *Time*, *Phantom of the Opera* and *Aspects of Love*. Much of the work on these shows involved building the specialist lighting equipment in the show: "There were no specialised shops around," he recalls, "so the electricians built the custom kit then and there." With this flair for the unusual he started making products at home: "I built more and more things in the garage, and in the living room as well when it got cold." One of the early associations during this period was with the fledgling Unusual



Howard Eaton.

Lighting, with motor control equipment for acts such as Genesis and David Bowie coming from Eaton's garage workshop.

In 1988, with the increasing need to employ engineers and support staff to service the customer base, he formally established the company Howard Eaton Lighting Limited. His working environment is no longer the garage, but offices and workshops situated in beautiful farmland deep in the heart of East Sussex, with a staff of 14. The tranquil idyllic setting provides superb views of the South Downs, with the peaceful scene being shattered once a year for the infamous HELL Barbecue.

Behind the scenes some serious innovation is taking place: from Howie battens and flickering flames, to fibre optics and DMX distribution, the company specialises in the design, building and installation of special effects. Candles from HELL have lit the way for more than a dozen *Phantoms*, whilst mechanics have wilted the rose in *Beauty and the Beast* and fibre optics have illuminated the dance floor of the recently-opened *Saturday Night Fever*.

Eaton now has a list of credits anyone in the business will find impressive, including 14 productions of *Phantom* around the world, five productions of *Cats*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Crazy for You*, and *Oliver!* for which HELL is responsible for all the radio controls, practicals and "anything which lights up, really."

Eaton continues to add to his portfolio with flame effects, authentic vehicles and fibre

optics: "I like the idea of designing and creating something unique," he says, before proceeding to reveal the secrets behind the rose in *Beauty & the Beast*: "As the rose flowers from a bud, a tracking mechanism pulls back a sleeve which allows the individual petals to open. They then fall via servomotors, with fibre optics dotted amongst the petals for that extra sparkle." When Disney's animated film *Hercules* opened in Europe in late 1997, HELL designed the lighting, sound and video for a four-carriage train (see L+SI January 1998). There were three walk-through scenes, like a miniature theme park. The small size of the installation was overcome with fibre optics, Lightsticks and plenty of MR16s and MR35s.

One of the most challenging projects to date undertaken by HELL was the unusual and highly complex commission to build five, 4.5m high, cracked glass bottles of various colours, for Glyndebourne's production of *Theodora* in 1996. Talbot Designs produced basic polycarbonate shapes which HELL then used to fabricate the broken bottles. The company then produced moulds for vacuum-forming some of the pieces. "I believe that this is the first time that giant scenic bottles have ever been built for this purpose and we are delighted to have met the challenge head on. I think this project shows just how flexible and creative we can be."

When asked for his business mentor he chooses Richard Pilbrow. He regards him as one of the early innovators: "Richard was the first designer to start using fibre optics in the theatre." Working with Molly Pilbrow they built a firework curtain that was used on *Joking Apart* at the Globe Theatre in 1979.

And to the future? Eaton maintains that his company, with two engineers solely dedicated to R&D, will: "remain committed to designing and producing all things technical that no-one else does. This also ensures our stock product lines remain unique with every product being the result of a very real lighting need. The core of my business will always be theatre - I am a theatre person. But what makes any job interesting is doing something that I don't know how to do - taking old ideas and applying them to a new situation."

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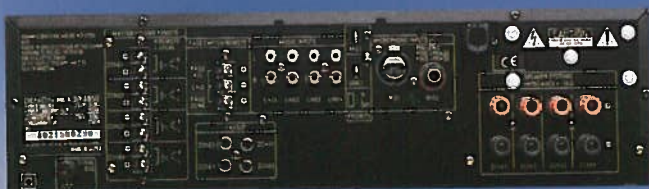
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