

# Lighting & Sound INTERNATIONAL

December 1999

The Entertainment Technology Monthly

## Into The Groove

- Cher and Texas

## Fabric

- The new fashion for clubs

## Video Nation

- French theatre challenges reality

## Uniquely LA

- Los Angeles' Staples Center

## Image Makers

- Sydney's Laservision Macro-Media in profile

## Back to the Show Floor

- LDI 99, Orlando

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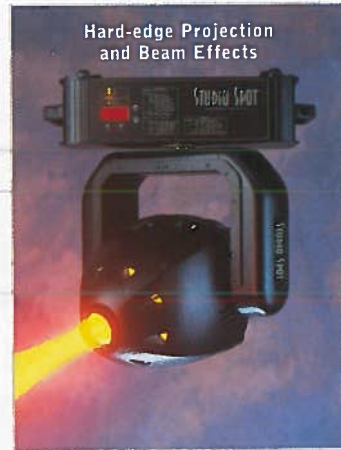
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# Lighting & Sound INTERNATIONAL

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DAILY NEWS SERVICE - [www.plasa.org/news](http://www.plasa.org/news)

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## Teatro Ceases to Trade

**Mike Lowe has confirmed that he is closing down Teatro srl after 12 years in the business. He has contacted all the company's distributors and is currently engaged in the process of selling off the company's stock at near cost price.**

The company was established in February 1987 when Bruno Dedoro of club lighting effects manufacturer Coemar was looking to develop a new range of products aimed specifically at theatre. Mike Lowe had recently resigned as managing director of Strand Lighting and so the two formed a partnership with Teatro taking up residence next door to the main Coemar HQ in Castel Goffredo. Over the years the company developed a complete range of professional theatre lighting, which began with the 1k Tratto and 2k Acuto and grew to embrace a full range of profiles, PCs, fresnels, floods, cyclorama, followspots, parlights, colour changers and accessories.

Anybody interested in purchasing Teatro stock should contact the company direct on +39 0376 780702.

## Color Kinetics Serve Order

Boston-based digital lighting manufacturer Color Kinetics has served a 'cease and desist' writ on UK company Artistic Licence. The order relates to Artistic's Colour-Fill LED technology which Color Kinetics believes is trade-dressed to look like its own line of digital colour-changing lights. The order, which is not related to patent infringement, was served on the first day of the LDI Show in Orlando. Color Kinetics also served a similar order on Avolites Inc, relating to the Borealis product that they distribute in the United States.

## Feedback Sought on DMX512

The Entertainment Services and Technology Association (ESTA) is asking for comment on the first draft of a revised and updated version of DMX512 ([www.esta.org/tsp/rfce1-11.PDF](http://www.esta.org/tsp/rfce1-11.PDF)), which will be formally designated BSR E1.11, Entertainment Technology - USITT DMX512, Asynchronous Serial Digital Data Transmission Standard for Controlling Lighting Equipment and Accessories. Wide public input is being sought in order to finalise this draft and ensure that the needs of the industry are being met. The comment period is now open, and will end at 4.00pm ET, January 12, 2000.

A hard copy of the draft document can be obtained from the Technical Standards Manager, ESTA, 875 Sixth Avenue, Suite 2302, New York, NY 10001, USA.

## Metro Audio is Wound Up

As we went to press, we received news that a winding up order has been served on Metro Audio. The company, well known for its wired intercom and stage management systems, is now in the hands of the Official Receivers Office, which is currently working on establishing a full list of creditors. Although the company is trading as Metro Audio, the order, which went through the High Court on November 17th, relates to Speed 1436 Ltd - the company's official registered name.

## Light Relief

**One of our team of freelance team sent this in, and since it's Christmas and the season of bad taste and all that, we thought we'd risk it.**

There was this sound guy out flying his PA when god looks down, thinks "that's one clever sound guy, I wonder what would happen if I took away half his brain." Half his brain was duly removed but the guy just kept on flying. God then removes half of the remaining brain with no visible change in said sound person. God then decides to remove all his brain at which point the guy puts down his tools and starts focusing the lights.

The freelance's home number will be made available to anyone who wants it.



## Micro-Scope 3 by Artistic Licence

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## ETC Lights up QPAC

*Queensland Performing Arts Complex (QPAC) has overhauled the lighting systems in its original three venues - the Lyric Theatre, the Concert Hall and the Cremorne Theatre.*



Richard Stuart, QPAC executive manager told L&S: "We purchased 250 ETC Source Fours for the national tour of Smokey Joe's Cafe to give lighting designer Donn Byres the great punch he needed for this very up and hot Broadway Show. We also had the first ETC Obsession to be used on a tour in Australia."

The smaller Cremorne Theatre currently uses one of two ETC Express 250s supplied for the two new rehearsal studios, but will eventually inherit a spare Obsession II desk from the Lyric Theatre when its replaced with an Obsession II 1500. The Concert Hall has two ETC Express 72/144 desks and remote video interfaces on stage and the stalls production desk.

The pride of the complex, the Optus Playhouse, opened in August last year. It features an ETC Obsession II 1500 channel desk with full tracking back-up and also features the largest installation of ETC Source Fours in the country - 457 Source Fours and 20 Source Four Pars. The two new rehearsal studios are designed to double as small performance and corporate function spaces and both have an ETC Express 250 console.

## Stage Electrics Relocate

*Stage Electrics is relocating its Bristol branch and Head Office to new premises located in the same area at the junction of Avonmouth Way and Third Way, close to Junction 18 of the M5.*

The sales and hire company is refurbishing the existing warehouse space of 43,000sq.ft. whilst a new 16,000sq ft administrative building will be added onto the 3.7 acre site. This will bring under one roof the Stage Electrics workforce, alongside the lighting, sound, rigging, power, staging and trussing equipment for the first time since 1992. The new premises will increase the Bristol hire and sales operation by 98%. Work on the site has started and the first phase, the transfer of the equipment, is expected to be completed by March 2000. The administrative building will be ready later on in the year.

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## Vorsprung Durch Technical

**In Wolfsburg, Germany, a facility is scheduled to open that will change the way that corporations communicate with their customers. On June 1, 2000, VW will unveil the AUTOSTADT, an ambitious complex that combines an automotive delivery system with state-of-the-art multi-media, and much, much more.**

The architects of this incredibly ambitious corporate venue are HENN Architects and Engineers of Munich. The project also includes several American companies: Jack Rouse Associates of Cincinnati, Ohio, Edwards Technologies Inc of El Segundo, California, and Available Light of Boston, Massachusetts, are all participants in the venture. "This is the ultimate expression of a corporate message," comments Brian Edwards, president of Edwards Technologies. "It's a multi-media experience celebrating the brand and its corporate history."

The project, which is adjacent to the VW Wolfsburg plant, covers 60 acres and is expected to attract between 4,000 and 8,000 visitors per day. An essential service that the AUTOSTADT will provide is the delivery of up to 1,000 cars per day to VW customers. The AUTOSTADT will also include Brand Pavilions which represent the individual brands within the Volkswagen Group (Audi, Lamborghini, Seat, Skoda, Volkswagen Personal Cars, Volkswagen Commercial Cars and Rolls Royce/Bentley) and explores the brand philosophies in a unique and individual way. There's also a 50,000sq.ft Auto Museum, which highlights the history of the automobile and includes a number of significant historic vehicles from around the world.



The AUTOSTADT is also home to a building called the Konzern Forum. This is a three storey, 90,000sq.ft building that explores how Volkswagen defines itself as a corporation and includes a multitude of exhibits, three state-of-the-art cinemas and a motion simulation ride. To round out the project, a Ritz-Carlton Hotel, surrounded by a welcoming garden, will also be on the property, and will contain some 174 rooms. "The most challenging part of the project is marrying the goals of the company into an attraction that doesn't appear to be self-serving to VW," comments Keith James, president of Jack Rouse Associates. "At the same time, we had to create an attraction that's enjoyable to all sorts of people, not only automobile enthusiasts."

Working in conjunction with Jack Rouse Associates is Available Light, who are designing the lighting for the museum, the simulation area, numerous exhibits and the Konzern Forum. "This

is more of an architectural-type project," explains lighting designer Kathy Abernathy.

"We always employ theatrical techniques though, which give our designs a unique look." The project relies heavily on Erco track for the base lighting, and will include various automated fixtures. "We're using a number of moving lights that integrate with the exhibits and some that will help with finding the way through the exhibits

themselves," comments Abernathy. "The project also uses low voltage cable systems, as well as a selection of metal halide fixtures," she adds. At this point, the instrument count is well over 1,000 for



the Auto Museum, the Konzern Forum and the simulation area.

Technologically speaking, one of the most exciting areas in the AUTOSTADT is the theatre. "We're doing the 360 degree theatre in High Definition Television (HDTV), which has never been done before," explains Edwards, whose firm is handling most of the sound, video and film for the project. The films are being produced by various film production companies in Europe and the US. "We'll definitely be breaking some new ground," Edwards concludes.

**Sharon Stancavage**

L&SI will review the project in more detail in a future issue.

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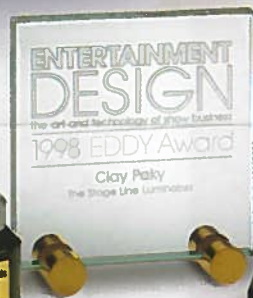


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## News Round-Up



# Changing

## Places

**Mark Hayes**, formerly with Cronshaw Warren, has joined the Coe-tech Group as operations manager. Hayes will be responsible for managing all of the service departments for the Group's products and overseeing the installation of a new computerised system. The company is also looking towards the opening of a new Northern Service Centre.

Turbosound has achieved a key stage in its major R&D investment programme with the appointment of **Philippe Robineau** M.Sc as director of engineering. He served as R&D manager with Nexo for seven years before spending the last five years with Tannoy Professional, latterly as director of engineering. He will lead a top engineering team, which also includes new recruits **Jon Crawley** B.Eng (Hons) and **Laurence Dickie** B.Sc (Hons), alongside stalwart **Danny Cooklin**.

In a move aimed at strengthening the sales department in both its technical and administrative functions, Fuzion has welcomed two new recruits. **Natasha Dawson** joins as PA to sales director Paul Ward, and **Tim Harrison** takes on the mantle of technical sales support. Dawson previously worked as a PA in the City, whilst Harrison spent three years with Raper and Wayman.

Shure Inc has appointed **Markus Winkler** as managing director of Shure Europe GmbH, the sales and marketing office for Shure mics and audio electronics throughout Europe. News of Winkler's appointment was disclosed with that of the changing of the Heilbronn, Germany-based firm's name from Shure Brothers Europe GmbH to simply Shure Europe GmbH.

Industry veteran **Paul Sonnleitner** has joined High End Systems Inc as the director of special projects - East Coast. He will be based in the company's new East Coast sales, support and training facility opening early next year in New

York City. Sonnleitner needs almost no introduction to the lighting business - a well respected lighting programmer, he entered the industry as a technician on the touring production of Sesame Street in the early nineties. Since then he has worked on countless Broadway shows and corporate events.

Penn Fabrication Inc has announced a number of personnel changes. Responsible for the management of distribution and manufacturing will be **Chris Sherwin**, one of the founders of CP Cases. Working alongside Sherwin will be **Liisa Smeltzer**, with **Jennifer Sherwin** taking responsibility for sales and marketing.

**David Pacy** is returning to the Clever Group as chairman and chief executive with immediate effect. He takes over from Stuart Appleton who is leaving the company to pursue other interests.

**Paul Barretta**, formerly general manager of Telex Shuttlesound, has been appointed managing director with immediate effect. Barretta joined Shuttlesound in 1996 as a sales representative and was soon appointed national accounts manager, before rising to general manager.

Following the news that **John Adams** is to leave High End Systems, Bob Schacherl, president of High End Systems, has told us: "John's departure from HES was a result of our transitioning his position as international sales and operations director over to our European headquarters in London. John was not able to relocate back to the UK due to his desire to remain in the United States." Adams, High End's international sales and operations director, has been with the company for six years.

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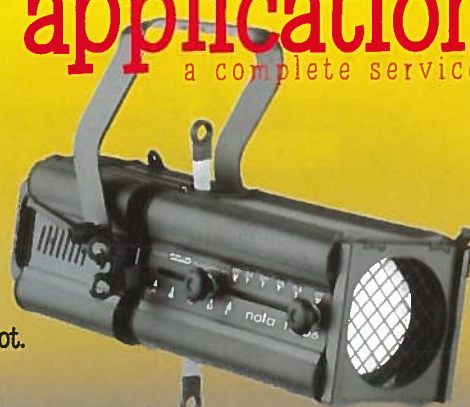
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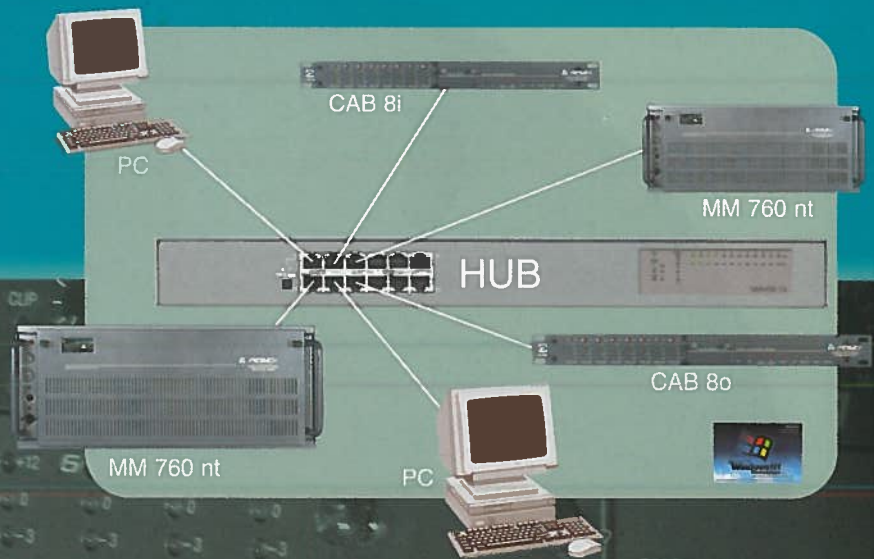
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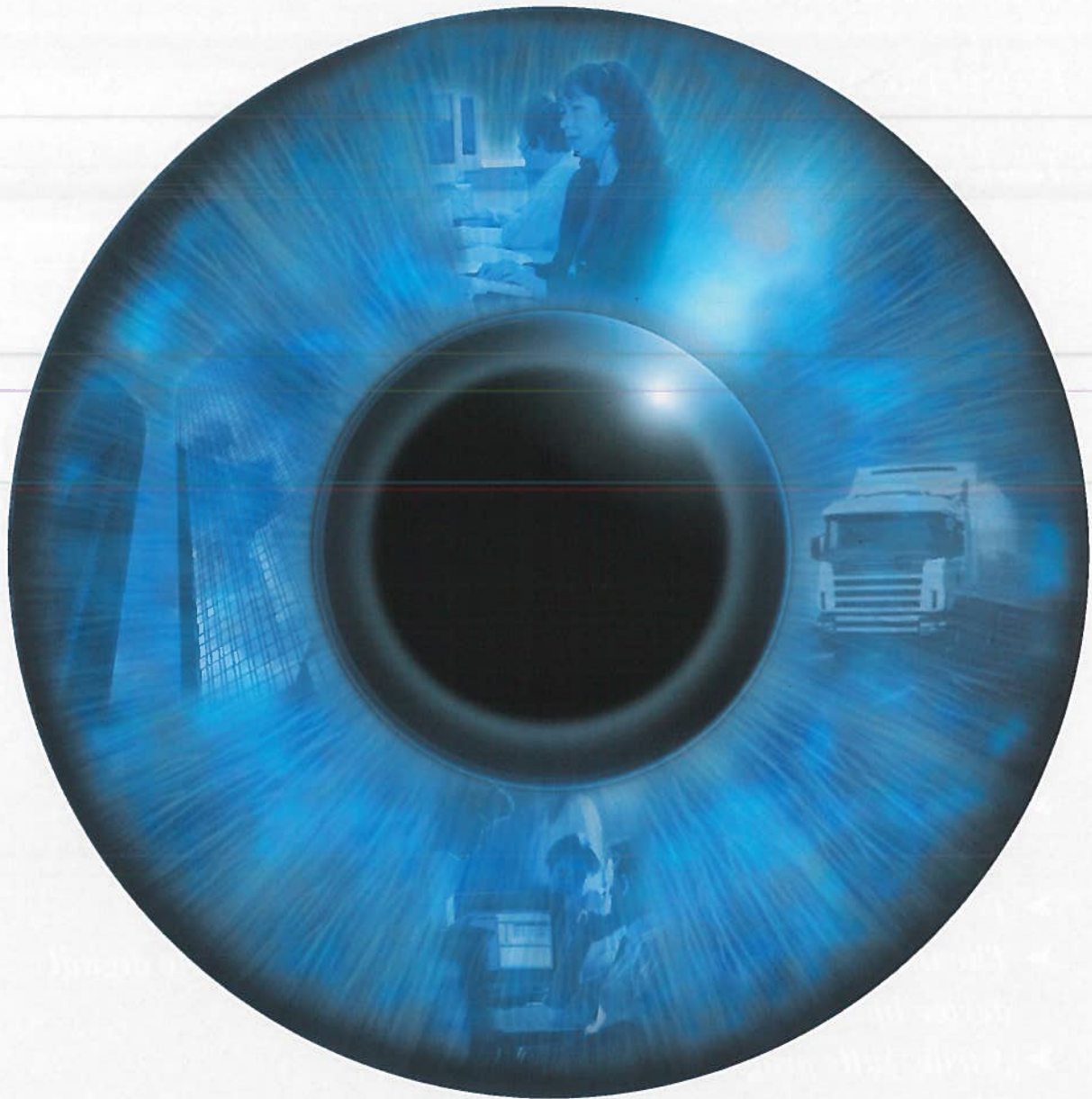
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## Pacific Tidal Wave Hits Russia

**Vladimir Lukasevich - does the name ring a bell?**

It should do - Lukasevich has, for 13 years, been resident LD of St Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre. He now also heads his own company - Lumeko - in St Petersburg. The company has recently become a distributor of Selecon products and the collaboration is already yielding impressive results - the first major sale of 90 Pacifics along with Arena PCs and Aurora cyc lights have been installed in the Academie Pushkin.



## SPS Expand - SPS has expanded its expertise by setting up a new division for the rental of Barco's modular LED daylight display systems.

Heading the operation will be Bryan Leathem who has over 18 years' experience in outdoor screen markets with Mitsubishi and Screenco - he is joined by Stuart Young, former operations manager at Screenco. The division's first rental contract is to be the opening ceremony for the New Millennium Experience Company at the Dome.

## MasterClass

*Continuing its training for excellence programme, Pulsar has extended the range of seminars on offer for the year 2000.*

These will encompass all aspects of Masterpiece operating and programming, along with technical services for the Clay Paky product range. Pulsar will also offer a series of open days which can be tailor-made to suit the requirements of colleges, installation companies and corporate users.

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## Entech 2000

*Twenty British companies have teamed-up to form the British exhibitor delegation to the pre-Olympics edition of Entech (March 5-7, 2000). The exhibition has moved from its harbour-side home to the Dome, the new Homebush exhibition centre within the Games complex.*

The UK delegation will present the best of UK staging and stage automation, effects lighting, loudspeakers, software and trade publications.

Entech - [www.conpub.com.au](http://www.conpub.com.au)

### FEATURES IN THIS ISSUE

"There is no either-or in this situation: if you want a thriving arts sector (and you'd be daft not to, when you look at all the peripheral earnings it brings in), you've got to invest in both people and buildings."

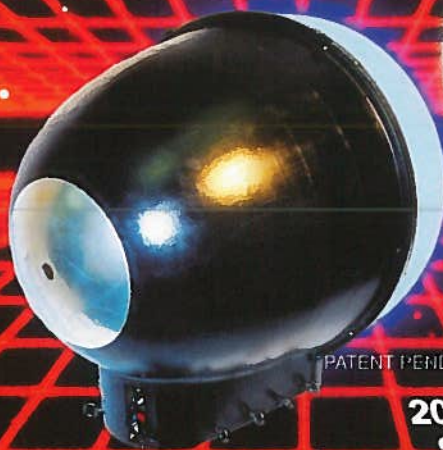
Ian Herbert - Asleep - page 44

There's Something New on the Horizon...  
...and it's Ready for Take Off!

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## New Stage Books Released

### Stage Design - A Practical Guide

In this book, Gary Thorne, a freelance theatre set and costume designer, introduces the concept of art and design for performance. It assumes no prior knowledge of the subject.

Each chapter contains text and illustration, and concludes with practical exercises to ensure that the reader gets the most out of the book. It includes examples of the author's work, illustrating the methods adopted and practised in theatre schools and innovative theatre companies.



### Stage Lighting Design - A Practical Guide

In *Stage Lighting Design*, Neil Fraser, who teaches the subject at RADA, provides a guide to designing effective and appropriate stage lighting.

Assuming no previous knowledge, the book guides the reader throughout the various aspects involved in this craft. The text is accompanied by practical exercises designed to allow the reader to discover the reality of what works at a technical level and at an artistic level, and what can be achieved within a limited budget.

PLASA Book Service (UK) +44 1323 642639

## School Assembly

**A complete new sound and lighting system that would be the envy of many theatres has recently been installed at the Sir Thomas Picton School in Haverfordwest.**

The entire project was managed by Stagetec. The sound system is to be used for everything from school assemblies to rock concerts and consists of two pairs of Martin Audio EM186 speakers for the main seating area and a pair of Martin Audio EM76 speakers for the balcony. Foldback was provided by a pair of Renkus-Heinz Qube 12s which, with their multi-angle design, could also be used as stand-alone full-range speakers in other areas. The sound system is processed utilising a BSS Soundweb.

A complete new lighting installation was carried out including new lighting bars, socket outlet boxes and a cord patch unit incorporating six Light Processor Paradime dimmer packs controlled from a Compulite Photon lighting desk with riggers control. The existing luminaire stock was refurbished and additional units were supplied - namely Selecon Pacific profile spots, CCT Freedom fresnels and ADB floods.

## Bluewater Lit for Christmas

Newcastle-based Centre Design has undertaken the mammoth task of lighting Britain's biggest shopping centre for Christmas. Lighting Technology supplied the technical kit to complete the specifications designed by Iason Larcombe of Electra. Because of the limited timescale, Multiform Technology Group, distributor of Sagitter lighting effects in the UK, were brought in to deliver two Sagitter Infinity Club scanners immediately, with three more units air-freighted to the temporary installation within a week.

## PCM motor schools free flying lessons

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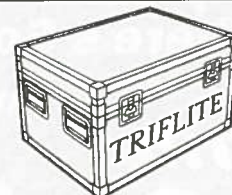
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*Not many stage designers can say that their biggest challenge with a production was making sure the set wasn't engulfed by unexpected rising tides.*

## Bregenz Arts Festival



Antony McDonald was in this unusual position when he designed and co-directed a mammoth production of Verdi's rarely-performed opera *A Masked Ball* for the Bregenz Arts Festival earlier this year.

The production took place on the largest floating stage in Europe, with a base concrete structure of 30m by 24m built out over a lake. Unfortunately, the lake decided to be unseasonably high, giving the organisers and production team a harrowing time before settling down to an acceptable level.

Another unusual aspect of the job for McDonald was the fact that the design brief stated that the stage had to be visually acceptable as a tourist attraction, as it would remain on the lake, which is in a popular tourist area, for two years. McDonald rose to the challenge and created a breathtaking set for the opera with its turbulent

plot of love, violence and death. The design concept was based on a giant open book with an enormous skeleton rising out of the water to clutch at the turning pages.

McDonald found the experience quite exhilarating with a generous budget and an exceptional crew of engineers and technicians to convert his imaginative ideas into a technical reality. With no overhead flying facilities, the stage machinery was operated by hydraulics. Some of the more unusual set pieces included a giant crown which rose up through the stage floor with space inside for 40 performers. The stage floor then had to rapidly close again for the dancers to move onto and there were a few close calls during performances where the dancers moved faster than the closing floor!

A huge guillotine had to ascend up out of the water and a giant coffin glide from behind the

book with the lid opening to reveal a chorus of 40 women inside. There was no interval during the performance as it was impossible to move the 6,800 punters out of their seats and back again within a reasonable break.

The opera was performed over a four week period during the summer and McDonald described the production

as: "a bit like doing 'Opera Disney' - it was a spectacle, but one which remained true to the spirit of the opera. The audience was not populated by your usual opera buffs, the majority were tourists, so the production had to have a wide appeal."

McDonald also co-directed the production with Richard Jones, the pair collaborating on the overall concepts, then each of them assuming responsibility for their respective areas, with McDonald providing the detailed realisation for the design and Jones for the direction.

Such was the success of *A Masked Ball* that the pair have been invited to collaborate on the next spectacle for the Bregenz floating stage and McDonald laughingly wonders how you top a giant, waterbound skeleton and a 30m by 24m hydraulically-operated book!

Jacqueline Molloy



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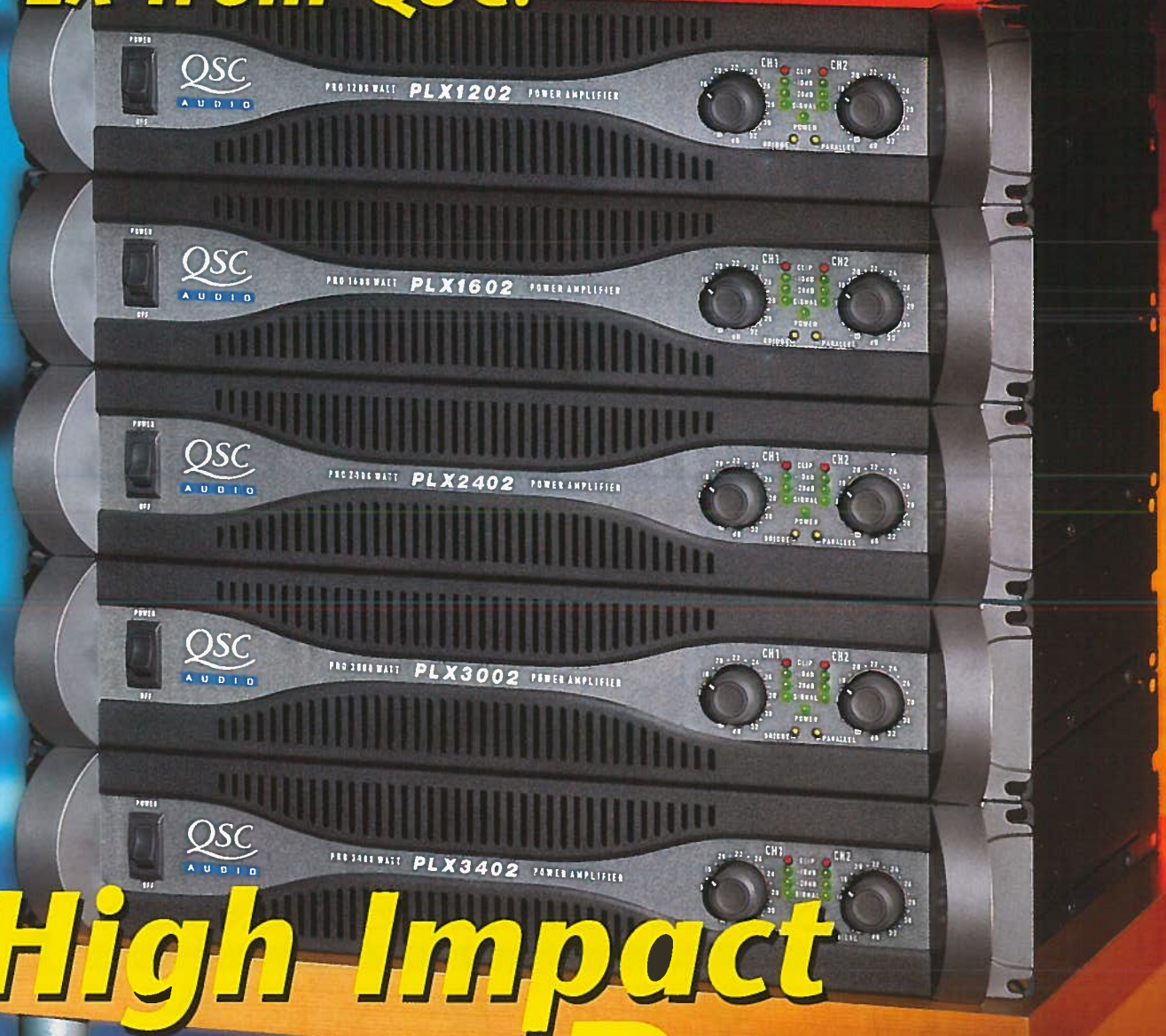
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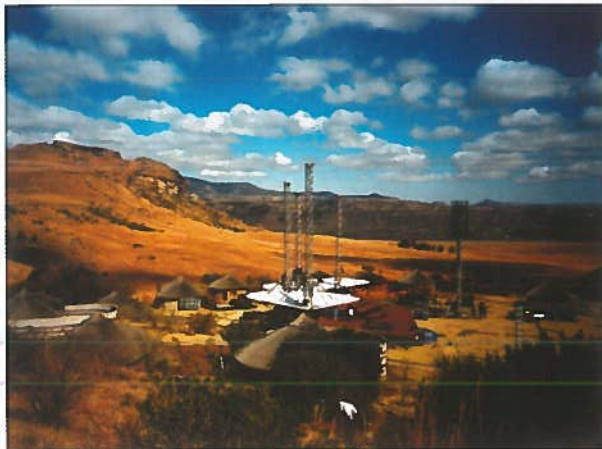
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## Arf & Yes Get In and Out of Africa

*As you may or may not know, Belgian star Helmut Lotti is a very famous interpreter of cross-over classical music (see L&S! September 1997). Over the last few years he has had success both nationally and internationally with his 'Helmut Lotti goes Classic' albums.*



For his next outing, Lotti's management company, Piet Roelen Productions (PRP), wanted a totally new concept, and hit on

the idea of incorporating traditional African music - this led to the production of a CD called (what else?) 'Out of Africa'. Belgian design company Arf & Yes has been involved with Lotti productions in the past, and was called in once again to come up with something original and exotic to promote 'Out of Africa'. After some initial meetings, it formulated the idea of a 'full-scale' live event, and this meant full-scale everything - orchestra, lighting rig, sound system and, most importantly, audience. And all this was to take place in the middle of nowhere, in South Africa.

These initial meetings were held at the beginning of September. PRP were set to crank up the promotional machine beginning September 20th and the show was set for 1st and 2nd October - just three weeks away. Ignace D'Haese and Giovanni De Schampheleire, the two mainstays of the diverse organisation that is Arf & Yes, flew with the television director to South Africa for just one day in order to scout for suitable locations. They eventually settled on a small village set in spectacular surroundings 300km from Johannesburg.

As time was so limited and the distances involved so large, the team had to come up with a show concept that was feasible within these limitations

and yet would still be spectacular enough for a television show. For the set design, De Schampheleire took his inspiration from the large umbrella-shaped trees that grew in the local area. Four large umbrella structures, which could open and close, and rise and fall, were very quickly fabricated in Belgium. To control their movement, a Skjonkberg control system was rented from Stageco. Arf & Yes' team of six people then travelled out to South Africa: D'Haese as LD, De Schampheleire as set designer, Dirk De Wilde and Marc Van Gorp as umbrella operators and Dirk De Pauw and Alain Corthout as lighting operators. All other equipment and crew was provided by Gearhouse South Africa, the main supplier for the event, under the supervision of Tim Dunn. The crew had four days to build the set, bringing everything in from Johannesburg - not only all the equipment for the seating, staging, sound and lighting, but also the crew and ultimately the audience (brought in by bus).

The event was a spectacular success, and Helmut Lotti's success continues apace. As De Schampheleire says: "The reason this project is unique is mainly because of the crazy idea of combining a full-size classical orchestra show with a 'middle of nowhere' location. All this for the promotion of a music CD!"

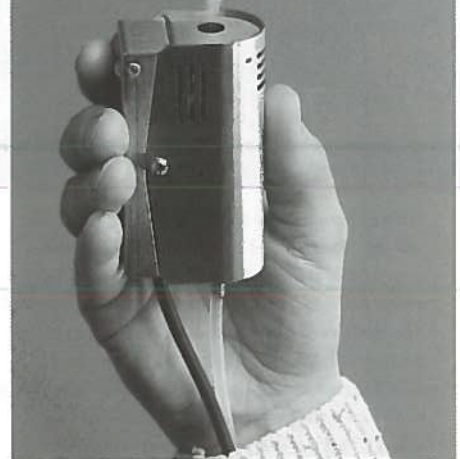
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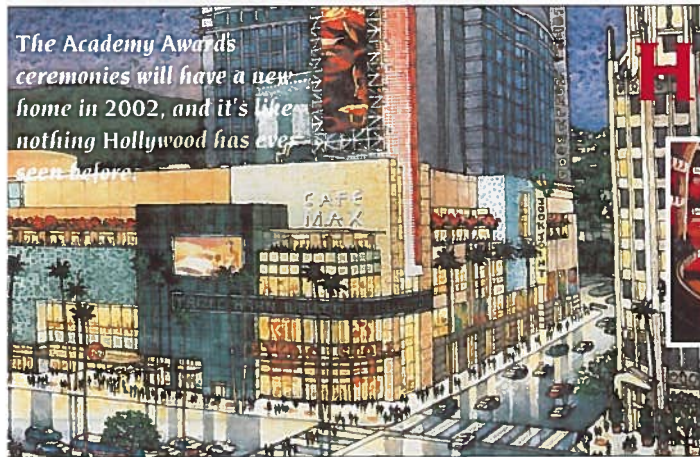
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## Hollywood & Highland



The technical design of the theatre is being handled by Theatre Projects Consultants (TPC) of Ridgefield,

**Framed beneath the legendary 'Hollywood' sign and the Hollywood Hills, the site will include a state-of-the-art theatre, a new world-class hotel, a grand ballroom, restaurants and fashion retailers. The Hollywood & Highland entertainment retail destination, located at one of the most historic intersections in Los Angeles - Hollywood Boulevard and Highland Avenue - is being developed by TrizecHahn Development Corporation of San Diego, California.**

With 640,000sq.ft encompassing the entertainment retail and theatre alone, the numbers speak for themselves. At a cost of \$575million dollars, the project will also include the restoration and expansion of the world famous Mann's Chinese Theatre, a 40,000sq.ft ballroom, a new 640-room hotel operated by Marriott and TV studios for network and cable broadcasts. One of the major components of the Hollywood & Highland project is the Premiere Theatre, designed by architect David Rockwell of Rockwell Group in New York, which will be among the most technologically-sophisticated theatres in the world.

Connecticut, whose credits include the National Theatre in London, the New Amsterdam Theatre in New York and the Shakespeare Theatre in Chicago. TPC is handling a variety of areas within the project, including the theatre auditorium design and the design, rigging, specification and supervision of the installation of theatre equipment, including lighting, rigging, stage machinery, sound, video, communications and seating.

The Premiere Theatre covers 140,000sq.ft in the north-west sector of the site and will feature a flexible seating capacity. The venue will have a maximum seating capacity of 3,600 seats, with 3,000 available on Oscar night. One of the most interesting areas within the Premiere Theatre is the 'media cockpit', located in the centre rear of the orchestra seating, which has room for a large crane and two pedestal cameras, as well as a plethora of other gear. There is also a media sub-pit, which can be used for support racks and equipment and which is also the location of a broadcast control room. "There is no other theatre in the world that addresses modern

production techniques with such facility support, both for the live theatre audience experience, and for telecasts which may be seen by more than a million people live," claims TPC's director of project management, David Taylor. "The theatre is future-proofed, and was designed with HDTV requirements and next generation robotic lighting requirements in mind," he explains.

The theatre will also contain a highly sophisticated audio infrastructure system that offers designers a great deal of flexibility: "We tried to place receptacles for signal and data at every conceivable useful position, but left the decisions about amplification, speakers and processing to the individual designer."

The Premiere Theatre is also on the cutting edge with regards to its dimming system. It contains 828 installed dimmers in 2.4K and 6.0K capacities, a highly developed Ethernet distribution system and a FOH breakout system that enables road circuits to access the FOH receptacles. "We have one of the largest roadshow power supply systems in the world," claims Taylor. The system consists of 10 400A circuits, one 600A circuit, six 200A circuits and 15 100A circuits, which can be used for lighting, rigging, audio etc.

Hollywood & Highland will make its grand debut in 2001, with the Academy Awards Ceremonies introducing the world to the Premiere Theatre in 2002. As Taylor concludes: "At TPC, we've been encouraged to design the coolest theatre factory in the universe, and TrizecHahn have placed it like a jewel in the very centre of the entertainment world."

**Sharon Stancavage**

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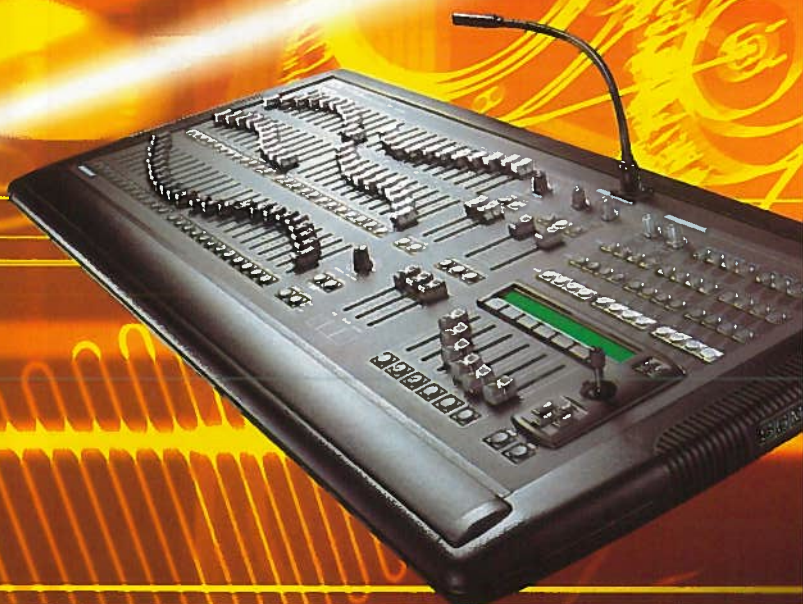
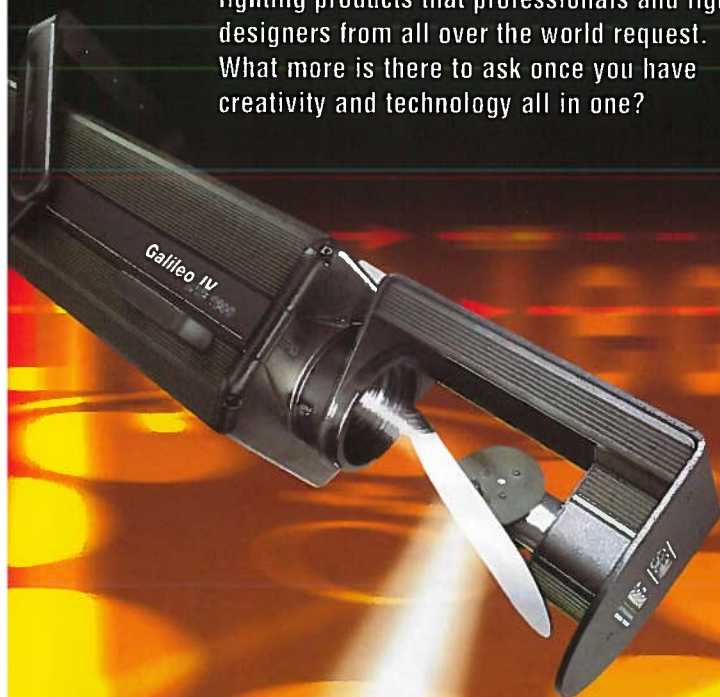
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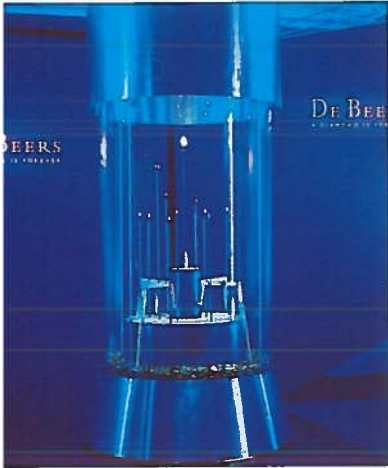
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## Millennium Diamond Launch



**A millennium diamond collection was recently unveiled in the boardroom of De Beers' London Headquarters. Essential Lighting Group provided the equipment to specification from Adam Grater of DHA.**

Not only was the scale of the reveal small, but so too the location, a room approximately 10 x 6m. The reveal was achieved by means of a stainless steel shroud being lifted off the cylindrical glass case housing the collection. Adam Grater told L&SI: "We had to keep the equipment as discreet as possible, so the new Martin Mac 250s were appropriate to bring life to the reveal with the minimum of distraction."

A Slick lite beam structure was put in place to support the Mac 250s and 600s, along with a small selection of ETC Source 4 and Altman low voltage profiles. The system was controlled by an Avolites Pearl.

### FEATURES IN THIS ISSUE

"Reilly puts its long and difficult birth into perspective: "There's people out there dying and starving in the world - that's serious. All we've done is open a club. Sure we've been through a few disappointments but you have to accept and deal with setbacks sent to try you. They're rarely insurmountable and shouldn't ever cloud the real issues."

Louise Stickland talks to Fabric owner Keith Reilly - page 51

## Exhibitor Grants

Next year PLASA and the British Government will be sponsoring UK exhibitor delegations at SIEL in Paris, Entech in Sydney, SIB International in Rimini and PLASA Shanghai in China.

**SIEL** (6-9 February): Sponsoring the UK reception stand and 'Country of Honour' promotion.

**Entech** (5-7 March): 60% of UK exhibitors net eligible space and construction costs up to a ceiling grant payout of £2,300.

**SIB International** (26-29 March): 60% of UK exhibitors net eligible space and construction costs up to a ceiling grant payout of £2,300.

**PLASA Shanghai** (7-9 June): £90/sqm for the first 20sqm, then £40/sqm to 50sqm plus £1,000 per stand travel grant.

For further information call Anna Pillow at PLASA on +44 1323 410335 or e-mail [anna@plasa.org](mailto:anna@plasa.org).

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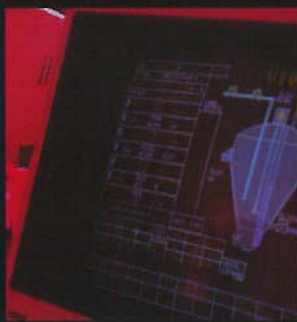
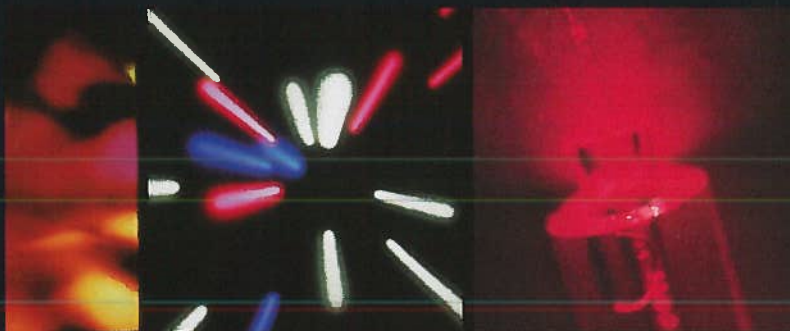
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**Reading's new 1600-capacity venue, Matrix, sees the first installation of EAW's Avalon club system in the UK. Mike Mann reports.**

## Avalon at Matrix

This is a multi-purpose space suited not just to the commercial dance market, but also as a live performance venue. Greek décor and mock foliage contrast with the state-of-the-art sound installation, designed by EAW's UK distributor Sound Dept.

Promoter Finbarr O'Brien is no stranger to EAW, having used the rock and roll standard KF850 system for enormous dance installations in the early nineties. The KF850 was his original choice for Matrix, but following the launch of the Avalon system by Sound Dept at this year's PLASA show, he became a convert: "I wanted something that was visually impressive, with proven components and a little bit out on the edge. When I saw the Avalon I thought, "Yes, that's the one."

drapes, six DC4 three-way cabinets and a pair of DCS2 subs provide a more intimate alternative to the cavernous main room. The system is, once again, Crest driven, with a Soundcraft D-Mix 1000 mixer and the usual complement of source machines.



Matrix is currently open until 4.00am from Thursday through to Saturday, but O'Brien is applying for a 6.00am licence for the club. In line with this (and to reduce the unusable decay time of the main space), a degree of insulation and deadening was required. This came from Audex and has amazed those who had thought the venue's acoustics to be incurable.

Recognising the need for back-up during live performances, O'Brien has enlisted the help of South East London-based rental outfit ML Executive. ML owner Gary Marks assisted with the system installation and has provided EAW KF750s and additional control gear for more sophisticated applications. To facilitate the club's wide potential applications, BSS Soundwebs have been installed as system controllers and to provide flexible zoning between the stage, dancefloor and peripheral areas of the venue. Two 9088 Soundwebs are allocated to the main system, with a hub unit assigned to the VIP and other areas. Now that the installation is complete, O'Brien is quick to praise the new EAW system: "It's just awesome," he enthused.

The system is configured for a traditional rectangular dance-floor, with a top-of-the-range DCI enclosure in each corner, augmented by no less than eight SB1000E 2 x 18" subs. However, for live acts, two of the stacks can be moved downstage to reduce the risk of feedback with live microphones. The design features EAW's asymmetrical, down-firing mid- and high-frequency horns, which give coverage almost directly below the loudspeaker, even when it's mounted horizontally.

Although we've concentrated on audio for the main text, it's worth noting that the lighting rig featured four Anytronics MK II DMX Megastar Strobes and eight Clay Paky Miniscan HPEs supplied by AC Lighting. Six Starlite Mk.5 1200W moving yoke fixtures also feature and these were supplied by Lane Lighting.

Power for the Avalon installation is provided by Crest CA4, CA9 and CA12 amplifiers, with PA9001 amps selected to provide enough output for the subs. In the VIP area, which is simply screened by

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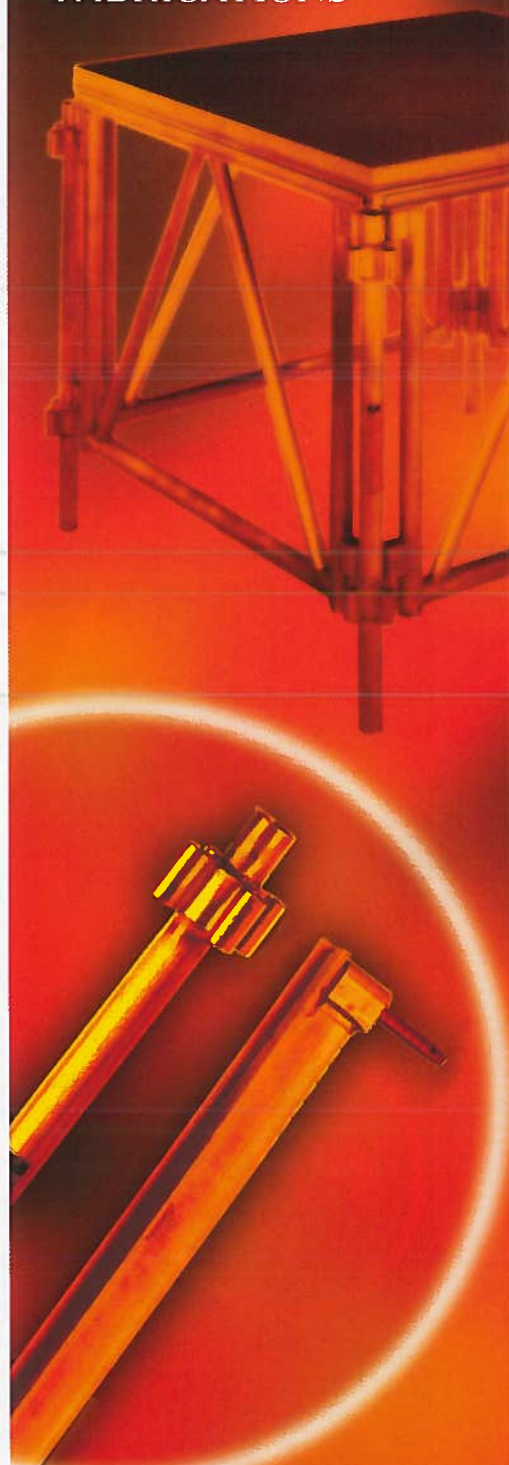
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## ELA/HSE in R&D Project

*The Entertainment Laser Association (ELA) has begun a major programme of research and development on the safety of audience scanning techniques.*

The work will cost around £15,000 to complete, of which half will come from the Health and Safety Executive who are co-funding the programme. It will be managed and co-ordinated by Paul Tozer of Lasermet who will work in conjunction with other companies from the ELA and will report to Steve Walker, the HSE project manager.

The research will be divided into four parts. *Measurement of typical emission levels.* Accurate measurements of emission levels will be gathered at a number of audience scanning shows for MPE (Maximum Permitted Exposure) comparisons.

*Examination of the regularity of laser pulse hits in audience members.* ELA is not aware of any previous studies looking at the temporal distribution of eye hits by lasers during audience scanning.

## Ministry Mag Awards



*Accurate measurement of typical beam divergences out of scanning systems.* This is also required for accurate audience scanning hazard assessments. It is often rumoured that beam divergences from scanning systems are much larger than the original laser specification, but currently no documented evidence exists to confirm this.

*Evaluation of maximum scanning speeds and scan angles.* This work is aimed at improving hazard assessment and finding ways of improving audience safe scanning effects.

Paul Tozer (UK) +44 1202 770 740

*Clay Paky and Pulsar have co-sponsored the first-ever Ministry Magazine Annual Awards hosted at the Brixton Academy in November.*

Opening its doors to over 2,500 clubbers and music fans, the lighting played an integral part in providing the right atmosphere. Positioned on the front of the rig, 12 CP Stage Scans provided the majority of the effects, effortlessly switching between subtle colour washes and stunning gobo effects. The show was programmed by lighting designer Tony Fagin and the equipment supplied by the Spot Co.

## Scotland 1, England 0!

The Edinburgh branch of Scottish retailer Sound Control Modern Music has recently sold the first Nexo Alpha E system in Scotland complete with the requisite Crown MA Series amplifiers. The system, which comprises four ALE B1-18 bins, two ALE-EM mid/tops and an ALE-TD controller plus a Crown MA-5000VZ and an MA-3600VZ amplifier, was sold to a local band, Vegas, for installation into their regular club in Loanhead.

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## Live Performance from Marquee

**Harrison's new Live Performance Console (LPC) will be marketed in the UK by Marquee Audio, following the formation of a trading partnership between the two companies.**

The LPC, which is intended to bring the Harrison marquee back into the touring and theatre limelight after an absence of several years, uses conventional analogue audio circuitry under the control of a sophisticated assignable console surface. The LPC features instant recall of every function, up to 240 input channels and 40 output mixes.

"Harrison has been designing digitally-controlled analogue consoles for many years," explained UK sales manager Jamie Gray, "so it's a small step to adapt the designs for the live environment; instead of timecode, the automation needs to respond to the operator." Mechanically, the LPC design is very new, according to product specialist Kevin Reinen. Audio is handled by plug-in rack cards located in remote racks, with each major processing block occupying a piggy-back circuit board. A 20U 19" rack can house up to 48 channels.

Connection between the console and audio racks is made either via industry-standard CAT5 cable or by fibre, requiring only a pair of PCI cards to be added to a standard Pentium-based PC. Kevin Reinen pointed out the attention to detail that has been paid by the console's American designers: "We have focused on troubleshooting and making sure that the operator can always understand what's going on," he explained. "There are as many common



*Pictured left to right: Kevin Reinen and Jamie Gray from Harrison with Spencer Brooks and Andy Huffer of Marquee and the new LPC.*

component types as we could use, to simplify servicing and to allow users to hot-swap cards or audio modules."

Harrison's long association with the rock and roll touring and film markets has proved invaluable in the design of the LPC, claimed Gray, who also pointed out that Marquee Audio's location in the Shepperton Studios complex means that prospective clients can see an earlier Harrison in action in an adjacent dubbing theatre.

At the UK launch of the LPC, Gray and Marquee's Spencer Brooks agreed that the immediate prospects for the console lie in the musical theatre market; however, the Harrison team was inviting feedback from a wide variety of sound designers, users and industry experts. Brooks added: "We have long been aware of Harrison's reputation, and see this as a rare opportunity to expose a ground-breaking new console to some of our key clients. The LPC is a wonderful and unique piece of equipment and perfectly reflects the market's need for advanced products."

**Mike Mann**

Lightfactor Sales

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# rosco

## Designers on Colour



 Totalisant 60 années de métier à eux deux, Christian Brean et Jacques Rouveyrollis, ces deux grands complices, ont brouillé à travers le monde pour apporter leur touché de la lumière à la Française. Ils ont ainsi éclairé des Opéras, des Ballets, des scènes de Music-Hall, des Evènements, du

Sport-Spectacle, des pièces de Théâtre. Le monde de la Télévision comme celui de la Vidéo ne leur sont pas étrangers non plus. Au-delà des grandes productions pour lesquelles ils sont si souvent appelés, ils aiment apporter leur expérience à des spectacles peut être moins prestigieux mais tout aussi intéressants.



 Gianni Mantovanini nato a Milano, dal 1963 al "Teatro alla Scala". Nel 1975 firmo per la prima volta le luci di uno spettacolo messo in scena nella allora "Piccola Scala", dove dal '75 all'80 ho svolto il ruolo di Lighting Designer. Nel 1981 passo a collaborare alle produzioni del "Teatro

alla Scala", affiancando il lighting designer e mio maestro Vanio Vanni, assumendone il ruolo nel 1991.



 Max Keller hat sich in Deutschland stark

für den Beruf des Lichtgestalters eingesetzt. Mit seiner Bildersprache, die sich vor allem in einer Kombination

von Lichtquellen mit unterschiedlichen Farbtemperaturen vermittelt, prägt er die Aussagekraft des dramaturgischen Lichts. Er entwickelte seine Lichtgestaltungen für das Schauspiel an den Münchner Kammerspielen, aber auch für Opern an anderen Bühnen, vor allem in Europa. Als Autor des einzigen deutschsprachigen Fachbuches über Lichtgestaltung im Theater trug er viel dafür bei, dass die Arbeit mit Licht stärker als künstlerisches Gestaltungsmittel akzeptiert wurde.



Hans-Åke Sjöquist has worked as a lighting designer in his native Sweden for almost 30 years.

From 1978-79 he studied in the USA at the Yale University School of Drama. He worked at the Royal Opera House in



Stockholm for six years as Resident Lighting Designer from 1980 to 1986, lighting over 20 major productions during this period.

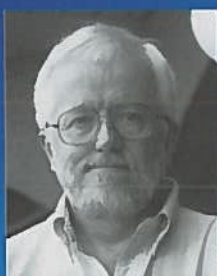
For the past 13 years he has run his own lighting consultant company, Candela Design Limited, designing numerous drama, musical and opera productions in Scandinavia and throughout Europe. Mr Sjöquist also designs architectural lighting for indoor and outdoor environments and has just lit two major permanent exhibitions at "The Museum of Natural History" in Stockholm, introducing the largest fibre optics installations ever made in Scandinavia.

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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. "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."

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## High End Bolsters European Presence

**High End has been ramping up its European presence.**

Grif Palmer, vice-president of sales, has now assumed additional responsibilities for High End's European operations and London office. David Catterall, former sales and marketing manager of Flying Pig Systems Ltd, will now be responsible for both High End Systems and Flying Pig products throughout Europe, whilst David March, former operations manager for

Vari-Lite UK, has joined as European operations manager. Claas Ernst, former business development manager for Eastern Europe, has been appointed regional sales manager for Central Europe.

High End is now looking in the greater London area for offices to house both Flying Pig Systems and High End Systems personnel, as well as future training and demonstration facilities.



## Project News

**If you've been checking into the PLASA Daily News service on the web, you'll have**

**noticed that we've recently introduced a new section which highlights some of the major leisure and retail contracts in the industry.**

Thanks to an arrangement between PLASA Publishing and UK Business Park, these are posted on the site as soon as we hear of them, so check in on a regular basis.

Recent projects detailed on the site include that of Charnwood Borough Council which is considering plans from the Ashquay Group for a £25m retail and leisure scheme in Loughborough town centre. Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, meanwhile, has approved plans from Swan Hill for a £40m retail development in the town centre, including 42 new shops. Further north, John Mowlem has won a £5m contract to build a multiplex cinema on the former ABC site in Aberdeen, whilst Glasgow City Council is to consider plans from the Scottish Youth Theatre to set up a new £3m headquarters in Cowcaddens.

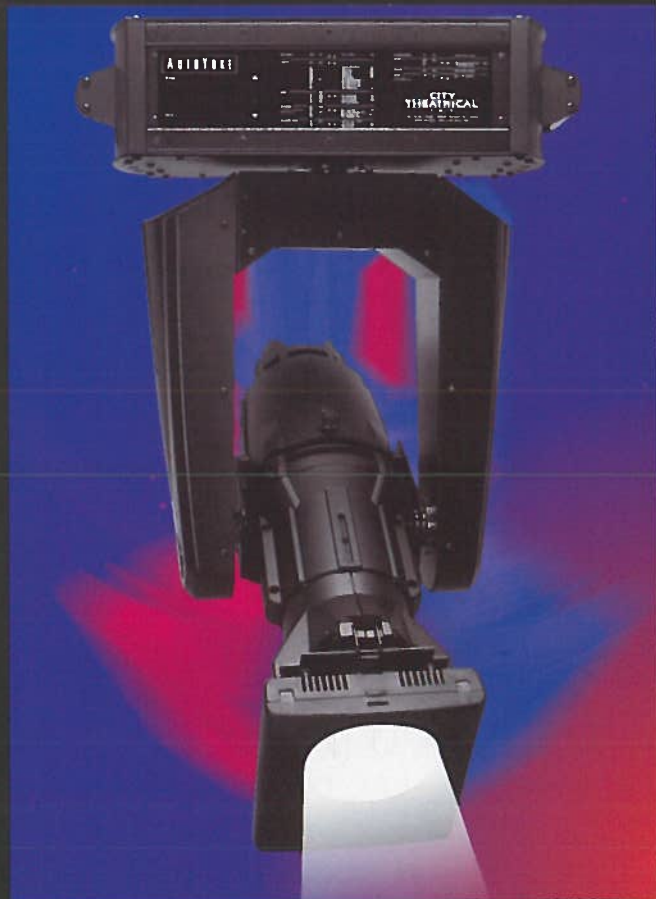
**Forever Ealing** - *The organisation Forever Ealing has been established to safeguard the future of the famous Ealing Studios. Earlier this year, the Studios came close to being handed over to property developers for redevelopment, but Forever Ealing has now co-ordinated a project to secure the Studios' future.*

The plan is to create a museum commemorating its history and a 21st Century production centre on a site that has been in continuous production for nearly 100 years. Forever Ealing intends to form a charitable trust to administer the freehold, then lease the studios to an operator. As well as refurbishing the present studios for increased production, the organisation hopes to acquire adjacent properties for a production village with digital post-production, a visitor centre and cinematheque.

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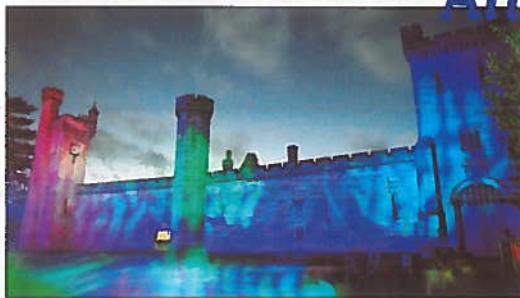
## Stagezone

Prior to the start of the current *Boyzone* tour, which kicked off in late November at the NEC, Lite Structures' production and hire people test-assembled the new *Boyzone* stage in their factory, in readiness for its delivery to Bray Studios in Windsor for rehearsals.

The structure is built from Astralite trussing and Litedeck staging to create a huge 'celebrity squares' type of stage set which is four storeys high and five wide. The overall dimensions of the set are 10m high x 13m wide x 3m deep and the whole structure houses no less than six staircases.

As Mark Jackson of Lite Structures notes: "It's our most ambitious stage set to date, and in terms of shows in Arena venues it's huge by any standards. The flexibility of Astralite trussing is ideal for building this kind of structure, especially as the build time is only three hours and there are a number of back-to-back gigs on the tour."

## Halloween at Alton Towers



**Alton Towers was the setting for an impressive *Son et Lumière* performance on October 30th.**

The focal point of the evening was the illumination of the historic Alton Towers building with four Martin Mac 500s, four Mac Domes and 16 Exterior 600s. Controlled via a Martin Case 1 lighting desk, an endless choice of shades creating stunning scenes, with an ever-changing flow of light catching the eye. In addition, Martin architectural lights, along with a Jem Roadie smoke machine, were used to create a Halloween atmosphere in the 'Spooky Wood'.

## First Celestion CXi at La Plage

**Long-time Celestion installer, RAG Ltd, has taken the first CXi cabinets off the production line for a club system in Felixstowe.**

The 500-capacity La Plage has just been purchased by Extreme Leisure and although the club will close in January for an extensive million-pound refit, the new owners were anxious to upgrade the dance floor system at the earliest opportunity. Richard Garrett of RAG provided four CXi811 bass bins and four CXi1221 mid-top cabinets, flown from just below the lighting rig. When the full refurbishment gets underway next year, eight of the smaller CXi821s, along with four SR6 bass units, will be installed in the main bar areas and in the Extreme Room, a quieter sub-club area.

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## News Round-Up



*In the wildly competitive field of themed restaurants, the experience at the Jekyll and Hyde Club is a bit different.*

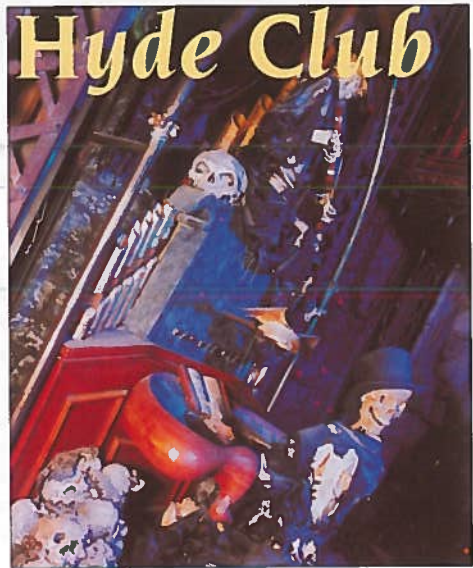
With locations in New York City, Chicago and Grapevine, Texas, the theme of this restaurant is horror, and it goes well beyond the standard pre-programmed shows that are so prevalent in the industry today. At the Jekyll and Hyde Club, which

designed by Soundelux Showorks and a puppet control panel from KXI International of Orlando enable the animatronics to interact with patrons, each other or allow a programmed show to run in the individual rooms of the restaurant. The shows can then be broadcast on a total of 26 Sony televisions that have a video input located throughout the facility. From an audio standpoint, each of the dining areas (all of which overlook the

## Jekyll and Hyde Club

is owned and operated by Eerie World Entertainment LLC, the experience is more theatrical than usual.

Freakishly delightful animatronics sit nestled into seemingly every crevice, actually conversing with patrons, who dine in a variety of highly themed rooms, ranging from the mausoleum to the observatory. The centre of the restaurant is home to the 'main operating theatre,' which hosts a variety of live shows throughout the day. There is also a fully developed retail area, called Bizarre Bazaar, which is the home to several animatronics, as well as a bar featuring Skippy, the animatronic lab assistant.



The first Jekyll and Hyde Club restaurants were developed exclusively by Eerie World Entertainment, but as the concept expanded, they brought in a number of outside contractors. Along with Chicago Scenic in Chicago (led by project manager John Beckman), who handled the theatre and show scenery, as well as the props, Soundelux Showorks from Orlando (project manager Howard Schlieper) were brought on board to handle the audio, video and show control systems. Four more restaurants are scheduled to open in 2000 in four cities, and, with each venue, the concept is being further refined.

The restaurants feature a variety of highly themed animatronics (created by Life Formations of Bowling Green, Ohio). An AMX control panel

main operating theatre) use Soundelux SDX S5 custom speakers as the point source for the animatronics. This is augmented by Turbosound Impact 50s, which are a delayed support from the main clusters in the main operating theatre.

For the audio in this latter area, Soundelux chose to use four EAW MK2194 speakers, as well as a pair of EAW SB150 subwoofers, all of which are rigged in the ceiling of the theatre. There are also four JBL Control 28 speakers in the main theatre, used for extra fill and for the subwoofers.

The Jekyll and Hyde Club in Chicago also features a walk-through attraction, which has an additional fee and is a wonderfully high tech, scary treat.

Sharon Stancavage

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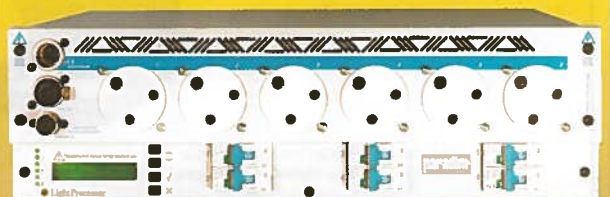
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## Changes at Helm of Klark Teknik

Pending a decision following the recent departure of the Klark Teknik Group's MD, Davis Merrey, the company has been left in the capable hands of VP of sales and marketing, Bob Doyle. Doyle will take on the mantle of acting MD at the company's UK base in Kidderminster

Doyle will take on the mantle of acting MD at the company's UK base in Kidderminster until more permanent arrangements are made in the early part of next year.

until more permanent arrangements are made in the early part of next year. According to Doyle: "Once Dave had made the decision to go, it became clear that filling the breach at short notice was likely to prove difficult, hence the mutual decision to leave the task to me for the time being."

## First Leisure MBO

Paul Kinsey, deputy director of operations at First Leisure has led a management buy-out of the Group's nightclub and bars division.

The £210.5million asking price was reached with a little help from investment company Candover, also recently involved in the acquisition of Earls Court Exhibition Centre. The division includes just over 60 clubs and themed venues.

## Rosco Restructures

Roscolab Ltd has announced a restructuring of its European Sales and Marketing divisions.

The changes include the development of its specialist sales team, the launch of a new customer service department and expansion of the marketing department. Gordon Tomkins, who has extensive sales and account management experience, has been promoted to sales manager for the UK and Scandinavia and a new customer service department has also been developed, headed by Kirsten Smith. Another newcomer to Rosco is Duncan Smith, who joins Joanna Shapley and Denise Piguat in the marketing department.

Log on to PLASA's Daily News site: [www.plasa.org/news](http://www.plasa.org/news)

## New Shure In-Ear Monitor System

Shure has launched the PSM700 series of in-ear monitors. These feature a synthesized design, offering greater frequency agility, which in turn allows for the simultaneous use of up to 16 personal stereo mixes.

The units have Shure's Mixmode technology - one of three operating modes (along with stereo and mono) - which provides high levels of control at the receiver over the mix that the performer hears. Initial demand for the PSM700 has been strong and John Henry's Ltd of London has already had systems out with David Bowie.

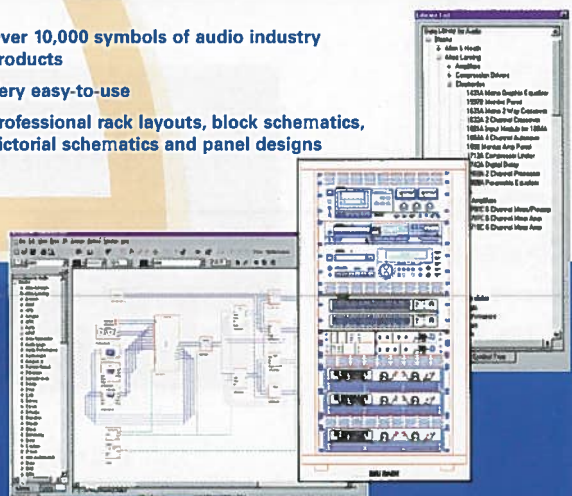
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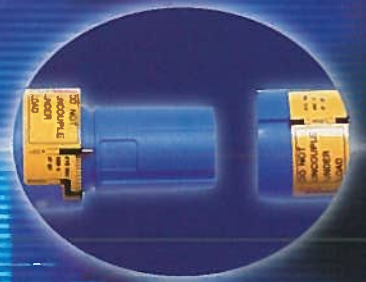
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## Pure Group Introduce new SuperStructure

*The SuperStructure from the Pure Group is a new mobile venue, designed to the highest construction standards and developed by the Group to provide another link in the chain of the Total Production Solution offered by the Company.*

The SuperStructure measures 65 metres long by 14 metres wide and features 14 styled arches, each with a uniformly distributed weight loading of two tonnes - more equivalent to a permanent venue specification. There is 8.5 metres of headroom at the top of the arches which have 4.8 metre centres - again far more than you'd normally expect in a tented structure.

arched roof framework for the new venue. The result is the first such arched outdoor roofing system that Thomas has built.



JTE received the order on the last day of PLASA 99 which left just six weeks to fabricate the 300 truss sections and 200 connecting pieces and made timescale the biggest challenge of the project! The roof is made from standard 45 x 30 cm Thomas SuperTruss which is connected at the nodes by triangular Thomas SuperLite trusses. The sections join together via Thomas's patented truss fork system.

The roof sits on Steeldeck staging so JTE also made 4ft square base plates for the roof trusses to lock into, complete with outriggers that can support up to three tonnes of ballast in each position. Working with their structural engineers, Manchester-based The Broadhurst Partnership, JTE dealt with major factors like wind loading. Each arch is built to withstand a wind uplift factor of three tonnes.

JTE received the order to build their elements of the SuperStructure on the last day of PLASA 99 which left just six weeks to fabricate the 300 truss sections and 200 connecting pieces used in its roof and made timescale the biggest challenge of the project!

Corporate events organisers Mask Entertainments lost no time in booking the SuperStructure for their Millennium Winter Season. It's currently to be found on the North side of the Thames, directly opposite the profile of the Millennium Dome. The clear view through the side of the SuperStructure also reveals the panorama of the Docklands area.

The Pure Group turned to the engineering and design skills of James Thomas Engineering to construct the

### FEATURES IN THIS ISSUE

"Take an empty whisky glass (there's one on the corner of the drawing board) shake the selected dice vigorously, toss them on to the plan and rig exactly where they fall. No one will ever know. The rules are that you must throw two 2Ks to start, for it's an unbreakable rule that you need at least a couple of 2Ks to light any show."

John Watt - Second Take - page 60

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## Window Display With Marnix 2000

*A novel lighting project to mark the Millennium has been dreamt up for the headquarters of the BBL Bank in Brussels. Belgian design company Arf & Yes are behind the project, which will combine its knowledge of show and architectural lighting with the specialist Internet skills of its subsidiary company, Orbit One.*



Utilising an application called 'Animation Interface' which has been created with Macromedia Director 7, the Marnix 2000 project will allow visitors to its website to design and submit an animated lighting scheme, which can then be implemented on the facade of the Marnix Building, via an array of lamp clusters in the windows of the building. Each of the 365 window panes will hold three 500W lamps (all supplied by Phlippo Showlights), fitted with red, green and blue filters, while the top mezzanine floor of the building will hold a further 30 groups of 100W lamps, again in RGB colours. Each window pane will also be fitted with a 3M frost filter. By selecting these lamps, using DMX-controlled dimmers from ADB, it will be possible

to realise virtually the entire chromatic spectrum on the front of the building.

The dimmers are connected to a DMX server, created by Orbit One. DMX is read from a Microsoft SQL server database and played via a schedule system. Three DMX universes are used, equal to 1,536 channels, although the server has been developed to cope with 16 DMX universes, or 8,192 channels. Animations are turned to DMX data and 'played' on the front of the building, while being broadcast in real time over the Internet at [marnix2000.bbl.be](http://marnix2000.bbl.be).

## Five Weird Ones

*If you're surfing the net you may like to check out the following web sites*

5

1. Welcome to Planet Ketchup! Ok, so this is a very strange web page to have, but the people behind this have a passion for ketchup.  
[www.ketchup.wonderland.org](http://www.ketchup.wonderland.org)
2. The Toilet Museum online. Here you can click your way through every exhibit in the 'real' Toilet Museum and even buy a souvenir in the gift shop.  
[www.toiletmuseum.com](http://www.toiletmuseum.com)
3. This may prove handy next time you've overslept. The Mother of All Excuses is a record of all the excuses ever given for not attending work.  
[www.madtbone.tripod.com](http://www.madtbone.tripod.com)
4. The Bureau of Missing Socks is devoted to solving the question of what happens to missing single socks. It explores all occult and conspiracy theories.  
[www.jagat.com/jeol/socks.html](http://www.jagat.com/jeol/socks.html)
5. Driveways of the Rich & Famous is no more and no less than what it says it is. The pages enable you to view the garages, ports, and blacktops of more than 100 stars.  
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# Ian Herbert, Asleep in the Stalls...

As the year, and what the unmathematically inclined insist on calling the millennium, draws to a close - though we know the millennium actually comes in a year's time, don't we - those who build and equip performance spaces can allow themselves a seasonal glow of satisfaction. Covent Garden is up and running, Salford's impressive Lowry is on schedule for Spring, the Dome will open on time at the year's end (quite possibly with an Underground service to match) and there's a fair chance the Royal Court won't miss its first Press Night in January.

"In the first heady years no proposal seemed too extravagant. That's all changed now. Suddenly the Little Piddlecombe Village Players' request for a new set of tabs and a sound deck looks like greed on the grandest scale."

**MILLIONS OF POUNDS** of Lottery-players' money are at last being expressed in bricks and mortar, not to mention trunking, cabling, intercom systems and box office computers. With these palaces of entertainment at last on view, and accessible to anyone who can afford a Chelsea season ticket or shares in Manchester United, we shall perhaps hear a little less from the 'waste of taxpayers' money' school of thought, a group which conveniently chooses to forget that most of the folk paying for these cultural monuments with their weekly flutter are too poor to pay tax in the first place.

**ANYONE CAN GO** into Covent Garden's foyers now during the day for a cup of tea and a bun in the Floral Hall; if you're looking for the same refreshment in Sloane Square, there's the new not-too-snobby Royal Court restaurant. The

beautiful waterside Lowry is as much a place for hanging out as going out - the public areas have had the same attention lavished on them as the performance spaces. Only the Dome costs money to enter, and even here it makes a great free contribution to the quality of life on its bend of the river: approaching its softly lit contours at dawn or dusk, by road or better still by boat, is a magical experience.

**THE SAD THING** is that just as we are about to feel the real, lasting benefit of what has been for so long scorned as a monumentally useless spillage of cash, the tap is being turned off. London, Salford and - for some unfathomable reason - Gateshead have picked up millions. Bristol, Cardiff and other equally deserving centres have not been so lucky. The millennium folk will shut down, and their stream of Lottery cash will presumably go to fine causes like hospitals and prisons. But the Arts Council, too, with their own stream still flowing, seem to have much less to spend on grand projects. Where's it all gone?

**IN THE FIRST HEADY YEARS** no proposal seemed too extravagant: fifty million here, a hundred there - no problem, squire. You want to upgrade the lavatories at the National? How about forty million? That's all changed now. Suddenly the Little Piddlecombe Village Players' request for a new set of tabs and a sound deck looks like greed on the grandest scale. I fail to understand why, now that we've built a new Sadler's Wells and rebuilt the Garden for a total public investment not too far off the cost of five new regional opera houses, it's become so difficult to think of spreading the lottery largesse around a bit more.

**YES, THE FUNDING PLANNERS GOT IT WRONG**, in not realising that a spanking new theatre is no use in itself without the ongoing money to programme it on a suitably ambitious scale. Yes, there are signs that new lottery earnings for the arts strand are going to be put to sensible use in supporting theatres who can't afford to run

themselves properly after years of budget reductions. But why must it always be either-or?

**OUR STOCK OF GREAT OLD THEATRES** is still in serious need of renewal and upgrade - ask Peter Longman of the Theatres Trust and he'll give you a list that could keep the lottery boys busy writing cheques for another hundred years. If the momentum created in the last few years is allowed to flag again, we'll be back where we started, with second-rate touring companies stuck in third-rate facilities all over the country. Of course we must give those companies the human, as well as the technical, resources to make proper use of their theatres, and aim for the first rate in productions as much as in facilities. There is no either-or in this situation: if you want a thriving arts sector in the economy (and you'd be daft not to, when you look at all the peripheral earnings it brings in), you've got to invest in both people and buildings.

**OVER IN THE COMMERCIAL SECTOR** there are clear signs that the managers have grasped this fairly elementary idea. Janet Holmes A'Court has been an enlightened boss of Stoll Moss, upgrading and redecorating her theatres inside and (occasionally) out. The blessed Andrew and the equally sainted Cameron have put a few of their millions into scrubbing facades, gilding proscenias and bringing back some of the sense of occasion that can add so much (in income as well as enjoyment) to a night at the theatre. Less acknowledged, but probably even greater in cash terms, is the amount Apollo put into a strong refurbishment programme all over the country. It probably made a useful difference to the price SFX paid for them.

**IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS** we should see the result of the shake-down which is going on in West End theatre ownership. I hope we can then watch more investment being made in these national treasures. The commercial boys haven't yet found a way to break into the charitable vaults of the lottery distributors, and now that those vaults are being double-locked for even the best of causes there's not much hope for them of nicking a bob or two from Camelot. But at least the managers seem to have the sheer commercial common sense to see that this investment is well worth while, even if they have to make it for themselves. Perhaps in time our higher-minded planners in the subsidised sector will come to the same conclusion.

*The January issue of L&SI will carry as much coverage of Millennium Mania as we can cram into its pages. If you are involved in any major projects that deserve an airing, contact us on +44 1323 642639. Further millennium news will be posted on our daily news service at [www.plasa.org/news](http://www.plasa.org/news)*

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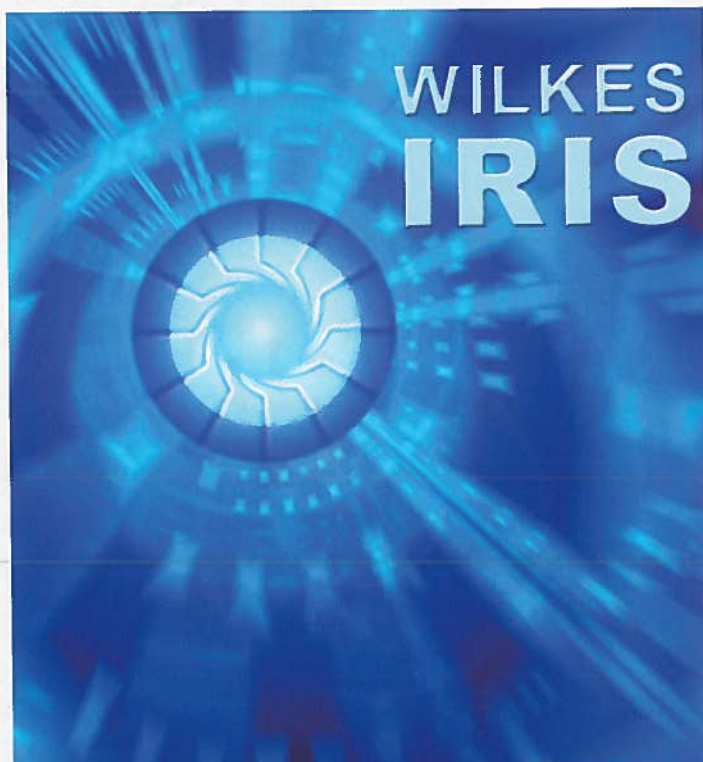
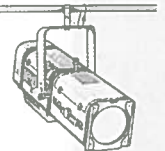


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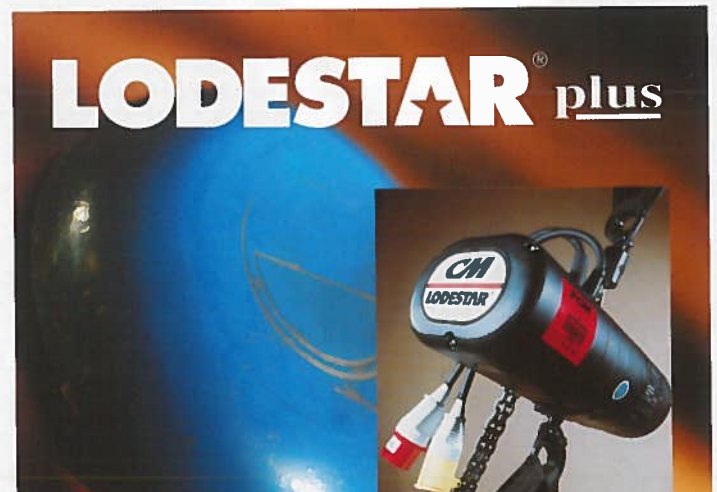
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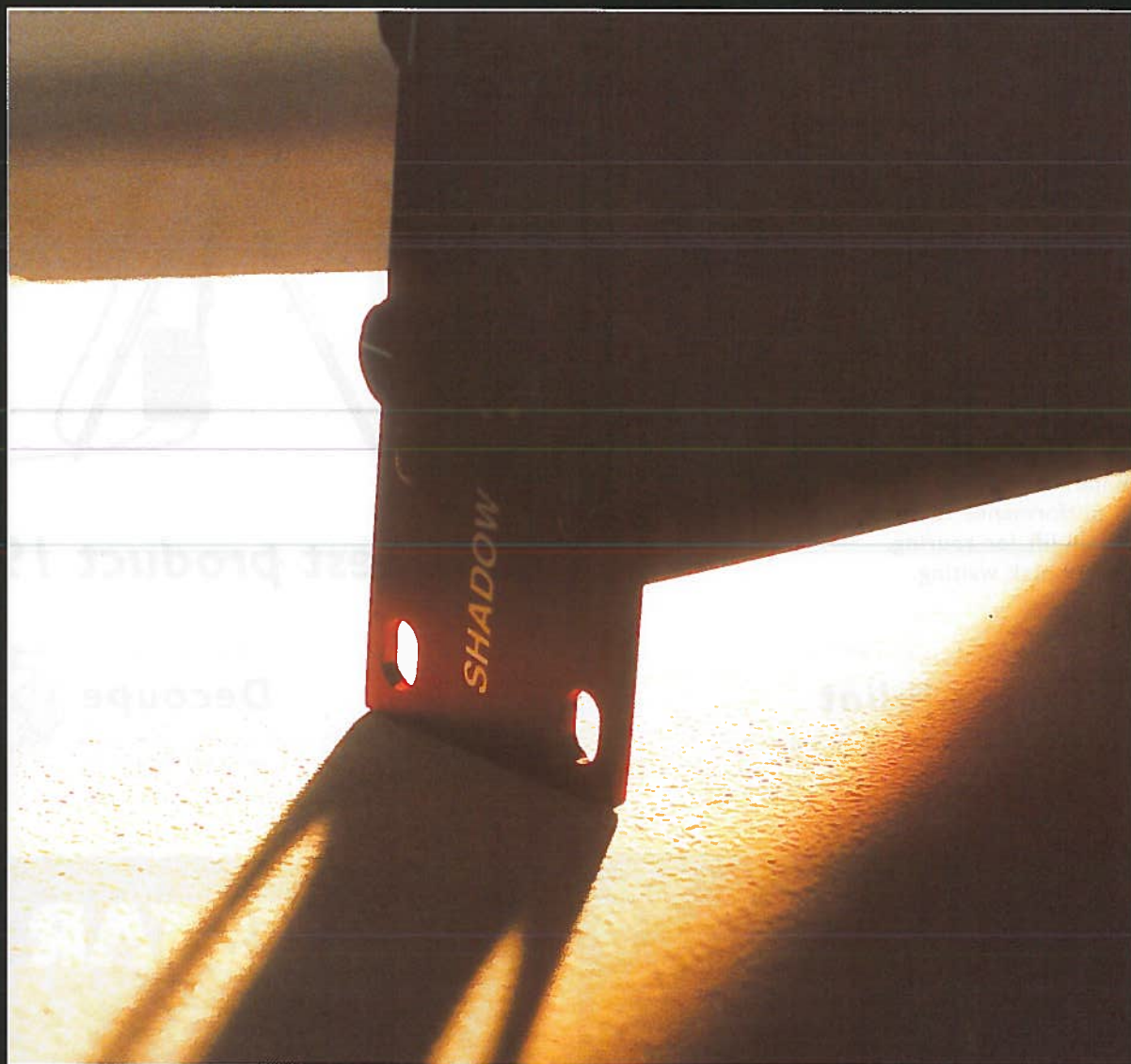
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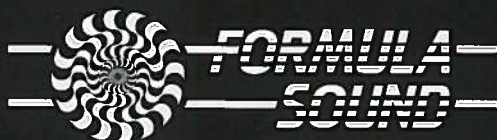
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# Into the Groove

*Do Cher and Texas still have what it takes? Of course as Steve Moles found out*



**Y**ou heard it here first. Like She in H. Rider Haggard's famous novel, Cher has discovered the route to eternal youth. And now she's given us her secret: gardening. I kid you not. "I'm going to join Ground Force with Charlie Dimmock," she said. She also managed further self-deprecation when she referred to herself as Darth Maul's mum, a nod to her own over-the-top costume for the opening number.

Anyway, self-deprecation: this was a surprise. Sex goddess? maybe - joker? surely not. But it was true, the gardening exposition was lengthy and amusing, the Stars Wars reference likewise. When I saw her several times in the US 10 years ago, there was none of this - she was the super-cool ice maiden. If nothing else, you have to say she's smart. She can work a crowd, and so assured is her act that you'd believe even the between-songs banter was off the cuff.

So to the show. This is yet another amazingly lavish presentation (at the Manchester Evening News Arena) from Messrs Woodroffe and Fisher - the sumptuous feast of lighting and scenery to which we have become accustomed. And in terms of the audio, this is no playback show, it's apparent that Cher sings it live, and we have to love her for that.

Since coming out of rehearsals, the show has been run by Jim 'Jack' Straw. A native of Australia, and survivor of the Eric Robinson commando school of roadie-hood, Straw has worked with Woodroffe before, notably on Michael Flatleys' Lord of the Dance.

"The lighting is in fact a co-design," reported Straw. "Jeff Johnson, Cher's designer of old, worked with Patrick." So it was that, thanks to Johnson, the original rig of 44 Studio Colors and 36 Studio Spots was augmented by 26 Cyberlights (do High End sponsor Cher, we ask ourselves?) and a phalanx of 28 VL5 Arcs arrayed across the rear. "I added 24 Pars for the dancers," was Straw's contribution. Dancers are a big part of this presentation, not just to provide entertainment when Cher disappears for yet another costume change, but to give pace and continuity throughout. Straw's justification for the front truss of Pars was simple. "We tried following them with spots but it wasn't that successful. The Pars are nice and even which means that when Cher, already in the beam of two spots, walks across the front of stage, the light level remains almost constant, which is important for the cameras."

The only other element worthy of note about the rig is trussing. LSD are the main lighting contractors and they have shipped over Intelligent Pre-Rig Truss (manufactured by Total

Structures in the USA) from Los Angeles for the European tour. Designed to have the moving lights ride 'in-truss' during transportation, the pre-rig is one of the reasons this 10-truck tour loads out in just two hours, 15 minutes. (The other being the fact that Jake Berry is production manager. They don't call him Captain Load-Out for nothing).

This is a big, bright show, "very Vegas," as Straw so aptly described it. Nocturne have a big 6:9 LED screen slap bang centre rear, so it needs to be bright, not just for the cameras, but to provide some visual balance also. I won't mention the screen manufacturer, but blackout glitching - whereby individual modules some 30cm square lost image briefly - occurred several times throughout the night, and spoilt an otherwise flawless show.

The nice thing about the lighting was the sheer variety to be extracted from the design. The textured 'rock wall' backdrop used for the opening allowed a big 60ft wide stage to be painted-in up to the full 30ft trim of the rig. The inflatable lava lamp and other assorted sixties motifs that swelled out of the scenery for a segue selection of her earliest hits, screamed out for the Cyberlight gobos that were duly laid upon them. When the obligatory 'unplugged' moment arrived, three circular trusses descended to form a cupola and lent



that air of intimacy to what would otherwise have looked rather ridiculous on such a large stage. As ever, my favourite was in the detail. A huge fibre-optic starcloth covered the back wall, extended by legs to the sides. What made it special was how the front elevation of scenic elements, like the centre-stage elevated walkway, also had star cloth on them. It would obviously have been easier (not to say cheaper) just to clad such pieces with painted flats or grilles. The extra effort of those small pieces of star cloth made the stage that much richer.

SKM 5000 UHF radio system. Staniforth revealed: "It's her first tour on in-ears - she wasn't really into it at first. I had to get very soft moulds made for her inner-ear canal." Staniforth is nothing if not fastidious in cajoling his artists onto in-ear monitors. "Now I don't think she'd be without them." As for his spanky new desk? "I always liked the original," he said, "but it needed refining. This just has every facility you could ever want and more inputs and outputs than you could need, even for an orchestral show. The only thing it lacks is a cup holder."

With such a controlled stage sound, Cob is given free range with his mix. Cher's voice does still present him with problems: "There are certain ranges with certain songs where she produces these weird bands of power." Not least in the lower registers, but also some strange sibilance higher up. "I just do a lot of EQ'ing," he says, and having watched him at work, lots of balancing too, chasing around the board. There is, of course, the famous vocal effect on 'Believe' -

"that's courtesy of a TC pitch shifter they were messing with in the studio when she recorded it. That's on a loop, I just fade it in." Everything else is real, and you can hear it.

**I'd just about made my mind up on Texas. Five songs into the show at Sheffield Arena and the best I could muster was 'nice, but safe'. After all, how does adding some guy with twin turntables make you contemporary? Admittedly, there's some skill to it, but let's not get excited here, it's only the electric equivalent of Rolf Harris's wobble-board. Then they launched into 'Postcards' and those two razoring guitars reminded me of what powerful antecedents this band has. When they start to rock, this band hits the groove.**

Even if I'd never deviated from my initial appraisal, I'd still have found a lot to say about the lighting. Steve Marr has been designing for Texas since '89. By his own admission, Texas are the only name band he's covered in that time, though he's deputised for LD Dave Byars (Blur) and runs his own successful lighting company in Glasgow - Total Quality Lights. This doesn't make him a one-dimensional designer - far from it.

Take for example the two 'screens' he has each side of the LED video screen centre stage. Lit from behind by Arena Visions (the old 1.8kW xenon building floodlight from

Philips) Marr has managed a trick that would excite Tim Head (see last month's Eurythmics On Tour): "The band gave me a couple of pointers on what they wanted for this tour. 'Bohemian Rhapsody/Queen', meaning those big lighting looks that the band were famous for. Very seventies. And in the same era, 'disco dance-floors', those old under-lit coloured square floors." The Arenas have Wybron scrollers and dowers fitted to the front end, as well as barndoors - hence the desired dance-floor look, even if they are vertical.

Marr, it should be noted, is using two contractors for his rig, Dutch company Flashlight and Neg Earth. "I took some Hi8 video off the screens, brought it home, enlarged it and gave it to Dick [Carruthers, video director, for it is he] to use on the LED." What you get is video image that in scale and colour matches Marr's Arena screens each side. The output level isn't quite there, making the colours look generally cooler, but that doesn't diminish the effect. This is a full-width backdrop that integrates steam lighting with state-of-the-art video display.

Marr's other concession to the band's whims is his decision to use Studio Spot 250s - 40 of them. "This way I can have more of them - the quantity is part of that Queen thing." There are other advantages too. They only eat 1.6 amps, and while they might not have the big 575W punch of their forebear, this is not some puny toy. He also has Studio Colors, Pars and Deathstars in the rig. Marr puts two DF50s at the desk position and it's apparent in the haze they cast, that the 250s easily read 25m down the room.

His show utilises the Arena-lit screens in a big way; checker board, random squares, chase and full (there's a grid of 12 lamps behind each screen), the dower unit providing an excellent 'found' effect of sweeping the lamp 'On'. But there are more subtle elements in there. Profile Source 4s key the band members who don't warrant a followspot: corrected with 1/2 CTO, they're as near as dammit to the Lycian Stark Lights. Thus you may get a number with just those two elements, some live video content on screen, and perhaps a distant two-colour wash from the Studio Spots on the extraordinarily high rear truss.

If anything the video is too bright. The screen is from PSL (as are the cameras, PPU, etc) and there are times when it could be pulled down dimmer than I know Dick Carruthers already has it trimmed. It still galls me to find most video directors tucked away backstage, where the only perspective they get of the whole show is what they see on their monitors. Imagine if the front-of-house sound engineer mixed from a small room with just a pair of speakers to work from? The sound might be balanced for him, but would take no account of the room, a single standing wave could seriously compromise the quality of a live mix and he/she would never know about it.

*This just has every facility you could ever want and more inputs and outputs than you could need, even for an orchestral show. The only thing it lacks is a cup holder.*

As mentioned at the beginning, Dave Cob was at pains to allow the audience to know Cher was actually singing live. "I only joined the tour four months in, but I'm told that during the early shows in the US, members of the audience asked if it was really Cher singing or a tape." Ever the naturalist, Cob has his usual rack beside him out front: Eventide H3000, Lexicon 480 and TC Electronics TC2290 effects "just for some long spins on her vocals. Apart from that, all I have on her voice is a big old Tube compressor. That's there because the pre-amp is stunning."

Cob uses a PM4000, whilst Jim Staniforth on monitors has the new ATI Paragon monitor board. The system is from Clair Brothers, though sadly not the I4, but Clair's much-talked-about new line array PA. Staniforth has the entire band and Cher on in-ear systems. Most of the band are on Garwoods with a line feed as they're static, while backing vocalists, guitars and Cher are using the Sennheiser



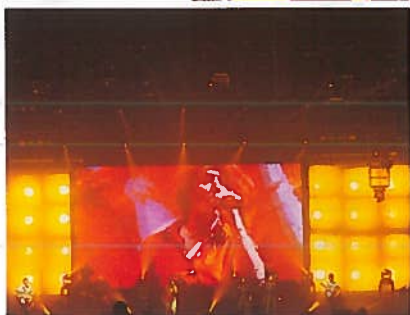
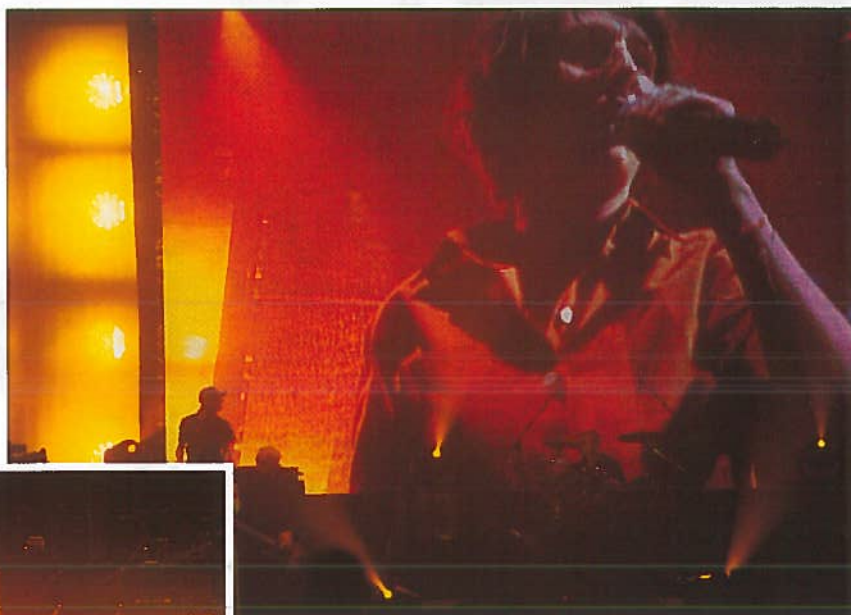


Having had my rant, there are many things Carruthers does that are worthy of note. He obviously colluded with Marr a great deal. "What he did with the Hi8 of the Arenas was very clever," he graciously admitted, but that didn't mean Carruthers didn't still have to find a way to make Marr's concept work in practice - he could equally have thrown the idea out.

"Think of the screen as a big light, I told Marr," and Carruthers, bless him, does likewise. In Halo, he takes Marr's predominantly red wash and uses it as a key colour effect; likewise on Move In he takes the blue. He's also, by his own admission very fond of effects and liberally sprinkles them around, the feedback effect in Insane, where the image ultimately over-exposes itself, being one I'd never seen before. These effects are no small undertaking, Carruthers gave me ample insight into what a cow the Magic DaVE is to operate in the live environment. He did justify his screen output level: "It's an indoor gig with lots of smoke." He should pop out front.

Like Marr, Andy Docherty and AdLib Audio have been servicing Texas for most of their career. Last time out, he dipped a tentative toe in the waters of the Martin Wavefront 8 and obviously liked it. This tour has a full arena system, all driven by brand new Crowns (VZ5000, 3600 and 2400) which AdLib have added to their inventory. This was no small decision on Docherty's part (it's his company) having developed his own PA system: "But I needed a 'name PA', one that freelance engineers know and trust, to attract other business. When I weighed up costing and performance, the W8 was the best deal."

The system is extensive: 20 hi-packs per side, another 12 as a centre delay cluster, with WSX subs floor-stacked, and the odd hi-pack on near-fill duty perched on top. I walked the whole room and found coverage and level to be largely even, with one or two inevitable gaps and hot spots, but not the kind that totally exclude all other information, just a little lighter in the mids, a little hotter in the highs. What upset the general mix for me was the gap in the low mids. I emphasise this is a personal observation - all the punters I quizzed found no fault with the sound other than it being too loud on occasion. According to the system engineer, the low mid was deliberately dialled down on the brand new BSS 366s, to ameliorate boosted level from a coupling effect. Docherty also claimed that with the "moodier content of their newer songs - she



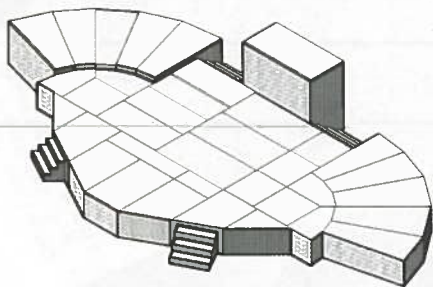
(Sharleen Spiteri) sings much more soulfully than she used to - it is difficult keeping her vocal on top in those circumstances." Spiteri has a powerful, full-range voice, not unlike Cher's. She can belt it with the best of them, and make angels weep when she wants. In deference to Docherty, I have to admit I never once lost touch with her voice.

It's been a bit of a buying spree for AdLib. Front-of-house also sports a rack-full of brand new dbx160As, but is otherwise fairly bare. Docherty mixes from a Soundcraft Series FIVE, "a desk I was involved in the development of. I particularly like the layout and features," which is no doubt one reason why he also chose this tour to buy monitor man Mark Peers a Series FIVE Monitor board.

Docherty's style is natural, like Cob. He does use an SPX 990 on the kit, and a touch from a PCM81 on the BVs, but Spiteri's vocal only receives attention from a BSS 901, "for a bit of programmed selective frequency conscious compression," and a Neve 9098 for overall compression on her voice. The punters were right, it is loud, but not always, and those razoring guitars are a joy to hear. Bands that sport a twin lead and bass style line-up can lose definition but not so here.



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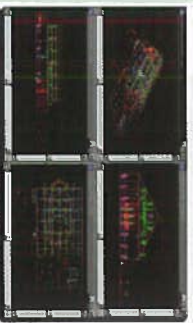
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4	Lighting Fixture	40	ea	4000	
5	Lighting Fixture	50	ea	5000	
6	Lighting Fixture	60	ea	6000	
7	Lighting Fixture	70	ea	7000	
8	Lighting Fixture	80	ea	8000	
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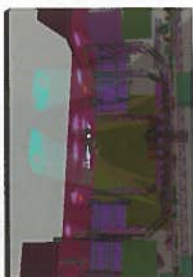
**Interactive Plot Data Editing**

ID	Item	Qty	Unit	Material	Notes
1	Lighting Fixture	10	ea	1000	
2	Lighting Fixture	20	ea	2000	
3	Lighting Fixture	30	ea	3000	
4	Lighting Fixture	40	ea	4000	
5	Lighting Fixture	50	ea	5000	
6	Lighting Fixture	60	ea	6000	
7	Lighting Fixture	70	ea	7000	
8	Lighting Fixture	80	ea	8000	
9	Lighting Fixture	90	ea	9000	
10	Lighting Fixture	100	ea	10000	

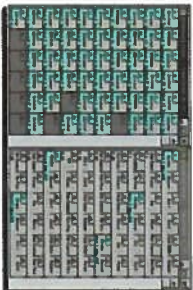
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*Music and people: these are the two vital elements to make a club kick! Louise Stickland met with Keith Reilly, club culturist and owner of Fabric, to talk about his vision of a central London club with a style all its own*

# FABRIC

**F**abric has undergone a protracted and arduous eight-year gestation period, but owner Keith Reilly has never for a moment lost his absolute passion for the project or the tenacity to hold out for precisely what he wanted - despite leaving several venues, backers and contractors in his wake.

Reilly has been involved in clubs since he was 13, so when he first set foot in the atmospheric, labyrinthine, interlocking arches below Charterhouse Street two and a half years ago, he knew he'd found something very special. There had been other beguiling buildings in the past, but this one had something unique, something which totally overwhelmed him: "There's a spirit in the building," he enthuses. "I can always hear music in there - even when it's empty." Indeed, Fabric oozed more charisma as a building site than most clubs ever do in their full operational glory.

Fabric was originally a Victorian cold-store for meat from the old Smithfield Market just over the road. Reilly is quick to return to his opening point: "The building is important, but it's only part of the background canvass that we're providing - the essence of an exceptional party is good music and people."

Fabric has been probably the most highly-anticipated club opening of the nineties. Frustrated by a minefield of planning

restrictions and a multitude of bureaucratic, administrative, logistical, structural and environmental stumbling blocks, Reilly has navigated the tortuous process with foresight, determination and ultimate patience. There have also been some enormous bills! Getting electricity to the club alone was a snip at £275,000 (it materialised that there wasn't sufficient power on the street) which involved the costly process of craning in their own transformer. They also had to crane their own water heaters and cooling plant onto the roof - and not on the same day as the transformer! Despite all the setbacks and an eleventh hour postponement of the originally-planned launch at the start of October, Fabric opened its doors to an eagerly-salivating public three weeks later.

Since then, it's been completely rammed to its 2,500 capacity for all of its public nights. Reilly's vision of a forum for a resolute clubbing community to unite and experience some seriously good music has finally found fruition - away from the glitz and tack of the West End. Reilly always intended that the club would offer a fusion of experimental music and the quality end of mainstream. He has great respect for The End, their musical policy and their 'all welcome' dress codes.

Fabric doesn't have a rigid star-oriented DJ system - and it certainly isn't reliant on this to pack the floors. Instead, it thrives on an intensely credible line-up, from established names like Sasha (who has a regular slot) to

Craig Richards and Terry Francis who have been at the cutting edge of dance for 10 years. Inside Fabric, the three main dance areas are linked by a complex series of nooks, crannies, passages and alcoves - some of which pre-existed, while some are newly-created. Area three is for airing new and experimental music and performers. It's taken massive amounts of interior structural work to produce some of the smaller areas: each time a piece of infrastructure was removed, it needed rigorous reinforcement and Fabric's seven levels are effectively the subterranean substructure holding up Charterhouse Street.

Paramount at every juncture has been the desire to preserve as much of the original building as possible. The old brickwork is exposed throughout and the look is stripped back, stark and spare. With such a clean interior design (by John Ford of Forward Architecture) it was important that the technology didn't swamp the place, but instead assumed its own role in the aesthetic pecking order. Reilly asked Dave Parry of The Most Technical Partnership to come onboard as overall technical consultant, to design and specify the lighting and also advise on the sound system.

Parry has worked on numerous club projects, including lighting at the Ministry of Sound and at The Kitchen in Dublin, where he first met Frank Murray and Audio-Tek who were appointed as lighting



BOOGIE NIGHTS





*Inset into a shot of the main entrance are technical consultant and project manager Chris Parry (top) and Frank Murray of installers AudioTek.*

*Far right, part of the comprehensive JBL sound system installed at Fabric.*

and sound installers for Fabric. The most important requirement for lighting was that it should be flexible and multi-functional. The lighting spec changed quite dramatically over the two years since it was first mooted. The initial headroom in the main dance area shrunk quite substantially once the air-conditioning system was installed. As an experienced and active LD and operator, Parry was determined not to go down the route of committing or limiting himself to one fixture manufacturer - and he was also keen not to have salespeople trying to tell him what he should use just because they happened to sell it!

All instruments were carefully selected for their individual capabilities and referenced to Parry's past experiences as a user. His favourite moving mirror lights are High End Cyberlights, four of which were chosen for their projection capabilities. He also decided on 20 High End Technobeams for additional hard-edged scanning and beam effects (he was looking for a bright and powerful medium-sized mirror fixture and Technobeam came out on top). These are distributed between areas one and two, and were supplied by High End's UK distributor Lightfactor Sales, where he dealt with Bill Jones.

These were joined by 16 Martin Professional MAC 500s and 600s, which Parry feels are excellent moving yoke luminaires, again distributed between areas one and two. There are also 48 Pars, some High End Dataflash strobes and a batch of Martin Pro 400s. While technological overkill is certainly avoided, what's there is more than capable of spectacular awesomisation when the club's rocking! Lighting for area three is a mixture of MAC 300s and High End Trackspots, chosen for their unobtrusiveness and light weight, enabling them to be secreted into this smaller space. Dimmer packs in all areas are LightProcessor Paradime digitals, again picked after thorough evaluation of the options, and also supplied by Lightfactor.

For control, Parry chose two of the new Avolites Azure Shadow 2000 consoles for areas one and two, and a ShowCAD system for area three. He went for the Avo' desk because he "needed a small, reliable, good quality desk that had flash buttons," adding that the desk is eminently buskable and they are really happy with it. Prior to Fabric's opening, the three-person lighting team, headed by Chris Oldfield, spent time at Avolites with Parry to Visualise the rig and the show and get as much pre-programming done as they could. Both Avolites and Martin supplied their equipment directly to Audio-Tek. Sound was supplied to

AudioTek by Arbitr/JBL, who were not the original sound contractor for the project, and coming on board quite late in the day, excelled in pulling an incredibly solid system together at lightning speed and under difficult circumstances.

Before being confirmed for the job, a reference-site system was selected and was pummelled relentlessly by Reilly, who turned up to audition it himself for three hours with an eclectic and demanding collection of specially-recorded tracks - all of which he'd played on other sound systems. "I threw everything at that system," he says, "and I couldn't make it misbehave . . . it sounds really lush and just rolls over you."

Sound - all JBL speakers and amplifiers - was also installed by Audio-Tek and the project was managed for Arbitr by Santi Arribas and Tim Gray. Arribas, who specialises in dance music systems and previously worked as technical manager at The Ministry of Sound for four years, also contributed to the complex audio design for Fabric.

The main room features four flown clusters of three speakers: a double 15" horn-loaded sub and two three-way full-range boxes (containing VS3215-6 mid-highs and VS125HS bass from the Venue series) flanking each one - all are pointed down at the dancefloor. There is also a circular tweeter array of eight JBL 2402Hs and, unsurprisingly with throbbing bass being de rigueur, the low frequencies are enhanced with an extra four JBL Sound Power SP128S subs beneath the dancefloor - so there are actually eight subs and 30kW of amplifier power in this highly contained space. This measures a cool 149dB on the dancefloor Gray informs me, adding quickly: "Not that we'd run it at that of course!"

The same cabinets are being used as front-of-house speakers and there are also some side-fills. The desk is a Soundcraft Series Five, with a Soundcraft SM12 for monitors. The DJ monitors consist of two SP212-A mid highs and two SR4718X subs. All amplification is from JBL's MPX Series. The small rooms along the passageway linking dancefloors one and two each have four MS28 speakers.

Area two is intended as the main live performance space, so maximum allowance has been made for the varying dynamics of both live and dance sound. As in area one, everything is kept off the floor where possible, apart from the subs which are concealed below the stage. The enclosures are again JBL's Venue

"The aim was for the sound installation to meld into the building - rather than it being a disconnected relationship of putting speakers in a building - so they become as crucial a part of the equation as the toilets!"

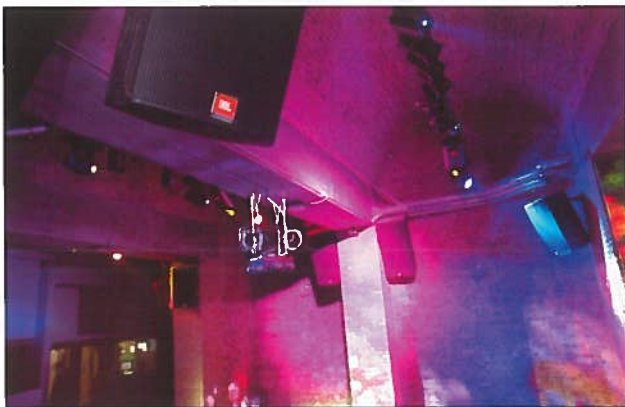
and Sound Power series speakers - three-way horn-loaded boxes containing VS3115-6s (mid-high) and VS125HS (main bass) and more SP128S subs. There are SP222 full-range in-fills, SP225-6 in-fills and another tweeter array, as per room one.

Room three is very interesting, with lots of speakers dispersed far and wide. Eight full-range MS28s are scattered across the area, joined by two single 12" by 1.5" SP212-A mid-highs from the Sound Power series. Two of the direct-radiating double 15" SP125S subs are mounted on the ceiling pointing directly downwards . . . an experimental trajectory which so far seems to be working by swooshing the low frequencies around the whole of the room.

There is a Yamaha PM 3000 for control in room two and a Digital 328 console from Spirit-by-Soundcraft, which is also currently used as a roving mixing console, for monitors, small PAs or for logging on to the internet - which will become an important factor as the club's conferencing facilities are developed in the near future. DJ booths in all areas feature Vestax D3 decks with Vestax PMC50 mixers. There is also an itinerant Urei mixer in the club and they are trying to source another!

Arribas is keen to point out that the aim was for the sound installation to meld into the building - rather than it being a disconnected relationship of putting speakers in a building - so they become as crucial a part of the equation as the toilets!

Further JBL systems are located in the VIP rooms and the chill-out area with MS28s. Sound processing throughout the club is dealt with via seven networked BSS Soundweb 9088s (almost becoming a club standard) supplied with five 'jellyfish' remote controllers. Arribas comments: "The quality of Soundweb is fantastic, so are



the in-built converters. It's extremely workable and its design flexibility makes it the perfect tool to complement and get the best out of any JBL speaker."

Fabric sees the first European installation of a Bodysonic dancefloor, undertaken by Luke Pepper from HIT. The floor was originally developed in Japan and harnesses the principles of induction (bone vibration) which enables people to feel as well as hear music.

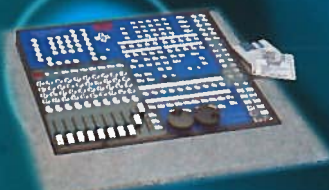
The underside of the Bodysonic floor is fitted with over 900 transducers (a patented system) which work in opposition to speakers, transmitting bass frequencies via the feet straight up through the skeleton. The dancefloor is divided into three sections and different intensity and rhythm patterns can be selected from a control panel in the DJ booth.

Fabric is already considered the cool place to club and a bit of an atmospheric London phenomenon - a fact never really in question. Reilly puts its long and difficult birth into perspective: "There's people out there dying and starving in the world - that's serious. All we've done is open a club. Sure we've been through a few disappointments and we missed our original opening date, but it's important to always remember that there are much bigger things going on out there. You have to accept and deal with setbacks sent to try you. They're rarely insurmountable and shouldn't ever cloud the real issues."

# 2000 Azure

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Azure Shadow



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**F**rom LDI'99: Once again all the talk at the Show was about the patent wars raging in the US, now escalated by the arrival of a new combatant in the shape of Color Kinetics, who delivered three virtual letter bombs to previously unsuspecting exhibitors during the duration.

"If you are thinking of taking a new innovation to the USA, check the patents first - there are people making a living out of exploiting the system"

What became clear from conversations with the various participants at LDI is that the rules of engagement are very different in the United States and, because of that, and keeping with the military metaphor, patent issues there can be more a matter of stepping on concealed landmines in unmarked territory that carries no early warning message at the barbed wire.

The American system seems to allow combinations of previously known technologies, provided they are applied in a new configuration. There is no open investigation into the validity of any claim unless someone instigates a claim after a patent has been granted. The declaration of prior art seems to be the sole responsibility of the applicant, and American courts are likely to give less credence to prior art from outside the country. Once granted, a US patent grants a monopoly to the holder. American patent attorneys advise their clients to 'shoot first and negotiate afterwards'. This is alien to European business culture and sets up an atmosphere of animosity from the start, as could be seen from those who were served

papers in Orlando and from statements by others. Furthermore, the 'No win, no fee' system, which it is suggested is at work here in some of the current cases, is a positive incitement to litigation.

My advice is, if you are thinking of taking a new innovation to the USA, check the appropriate patents first - bear in mind that there are people making a living out of thinking up patents and thus exploiting the system to the full. If you find one that you may be infringing, take advice. Then try to agree a licence, and if you can't make a deal, change your design.

Be aware, however, that this could put you into a position which you may consider absurd. Witness LSD when they were developing their original Icon luminaire, and the accompanying eponymous desk. They were apparently advised by their American patent lawyer not to use DMX from the Icon board as the means of data transmission to, or from, their heads, or to other external devices, for fear that it might infringe a Vari-Lite patent. Consequently, they settled on a dedicated protocol of their own and you can imagine what that means in the real touring world when every other item they are hooking up to requires DMX512. So DMX, which we were assured is a universally open protocol, may not, after all, be the property of USITT. I must say, I don't like the sound of that! So, take care - it's jungle warfare out there.

A couple of amusing anecdotes from LDI'99 to bring back a little cheer for the time of year: You will have heard the one about "How many (fill in nationality of your choice) electricians does it take to change a light bulb?" Well, on arrival in Orlando we discovered how many US police officers and

airport officials are needed to escort one belligerent and persistent smoker from the toilet of a 747. The answer is six! Yet the miscreant was knee-high to a grasshopper, but I suppose they were not to know that beforehand.

However, not an auspicious start to our sojourn at LDI'99. When Hermann Sorger of Vienna-based Lighting Innovation was still rigging his demo lights on day two of the Show and we asked him what was going on, he came up with the following typically pragmatic response (try to read in Hermann's charming Austrian accent), "US Customs liked my products so much, they were extremely reluctant to part with them. Yes?" We liked that almost as much as we liked his new Inno-Four 575 HMI upgrade for ETC Source Fours.

Were MA Lighting aware of what they were doing when they chose to name their well-received and highly innovative desk 'GrandMA'? Or maybe they were intending to compete with the Pigs on the humour front as well. Anyway, we all had a good laugh when Mark White pointed out that Granny also has a Viagra button, and sure enough there it was on the front panel: 'Push for Erect'.

Perhaps it's not only on the legal front that we are separated from our American cousins, it may be in the humour department also. Vari-Lite's ads prior to LDI saying, 'It'll be a cold day in Orlando', went straight over my head and everyone else that I asked was mystified also. So, I was forced to get clarification from the man himself. Naturally I could have kicked myself when Rusty Brutsché reminded me that he had always said: "Hell, will freeze over before Vari-Lite will sell a single item of our product." Clearly, I am not the one to solve cryptic crossword clues.

I had promised John Lobel that I would make good the omission in my October column of failing to credit LSD's R&D team, and in particular Bill Hewlett, for their achievement in developing the pivotal Icon-M. So here goes: Aside from Bill, there's Ian Clarke, Nigel Evans, Mark Hunt and Richard Parker. Oh, and Jere Harris for finding the cash.

Finally, while on the congratulations, I want to add my felicitations to Don Stern for achieving the Wally Russell award for his lifetime contribution to the industry and to Sonny Sonnenfeld who received a 'Light in Life' award for similar reasons.

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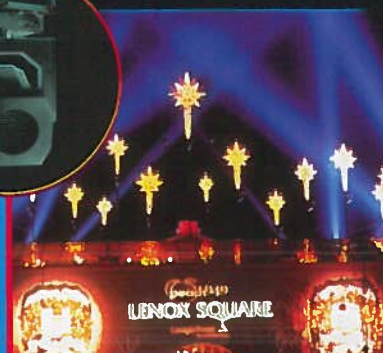
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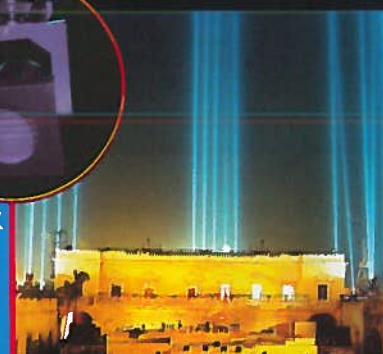


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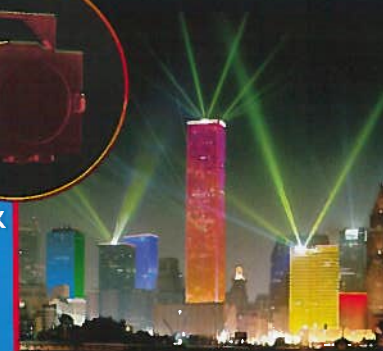


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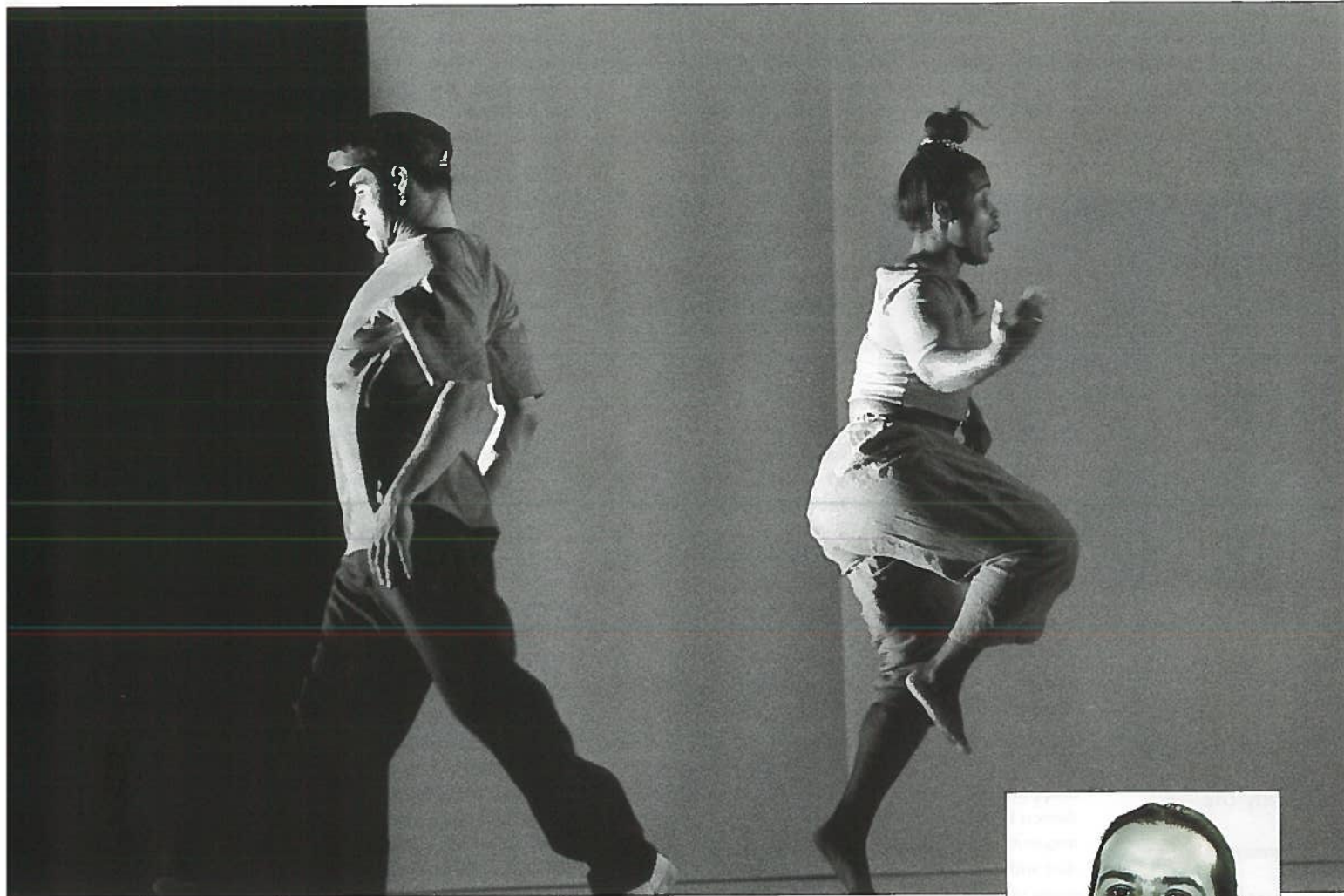
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**F**rench contemporary dance has long held an international reputation for being dangerous, sensuous, eclectic and definitely worth seeing. The delightfully inventive show *Paradis*, from Paris-based Compagnie Montalvo-Hervieu, is all of the above with its marriage of sexy, humorous choreography and technology - a feast for the eyes and soul. The company recently made their British debut performing at London's Queen Elizabeth Hall as part of Dance Umbrella 99, a seven-week-long smorgasbord of home-grown and international dance, now in its 21st year.

Compagnie Montalvo-Hervieu was formed in 1985 by choreographer Jose Montalvo and his collaborator, dancer Dominique Hervieu, and for over a decade the pair were a successful team at professional dance competitions. But it wasn't until 1994 that they really made their presence felt on the dance scene with their show *Hollaka Hollala*. This was the turning point for the duo and their company; since then they have created a body of work that has been seen and applauded from China to New York and Noumea to Brazil.

*Paradis* has been in the company's repertoire for two years and what sets the work apart from simply being a stunning piece of contemporary dance, is the use of technology which turns it into a tantalising visual feast that taunts and confounds the senses. The company have been experimenting with video for the last eight years and in *Paradis* have developed an amazing visual universe with a seamless relationship between video and live action that leaves the audience entranced.



THEATRE

# Video Nation

*Jacqueline Molloy joins French dance innovators Compagnie Montalvo-Hervieu for their production of Paradis*

Jose Montalvo created *Paradis* based on themes of cultural diversity and perceptions of reality. The first he explores through the choreography itself, with styles as diverse as hip-hop, African, classical and contemporary, which then combine to create "a poetry of juxtapositions" according to Montalvo. The company consists of 10 dancers, male and female, who reflect the diverseness of the human form and make a welcome visual change from the archetypal dancer.

*Above, Paradis in performance. Right, technical director Yves Favier*



The theme of challenging our perceptions of reality is explored via the interaction of the dancers with the video images which are projected onto two white plastic projection

screens which serve as a backdrop for the bare stage. White Tarkett covers the stage floor and a sterile temporary universe is created, awaiting the vivacity of the dancers, lighting and video to bring it to life.

Yves Favier is the company's technical director and has spent the last couple of years on the road with *Paradis*. He has been with the company since their inception and it was Montalvo's passion for creating new



Far right, Paradis again.

Below, lighting operator Thomas Godefroid (left) and sound engineer Bertrand Neyret in the control room.

Video operator Samuel Carre with the Sony and Panasonic equipment.



works with video that initially attracted Favier: "I was interested in his commitment to exploring new ways of working with technology, but technology is only the means to an end, and that end is to produce a creative and exciting work for all to enjoy: that's what's exciting about what we do."

Favier is responsible for overseeing the video shoots which precede each new production and these are storyboarded down to each precise detail. One of the most difficult aspects of the shoot is finding appropriate locations. As much of the Paradis footage is shot from steep angles and directly overhead, it was imperative that the location had a high ceiling, although it didn't need a lot of floor space. In Paradis the concept is that the dancers onstage interact with their video images, all of which requires a great deal of precision. They perform amazing

feats with their screen images or perform pas de deux's with themselves; often with their screen images being larger than life or infinitely smaller.

**"Technology is only the means to an end, and that end is to produce a creative and exciting work for all to enjoy: that's what's exciting about what we do."**

The clever opening video sequence toys with our perception of reality, as house-tabs appear to fall to the stage and disappear. Deftly hidden slits in the two screens allow the dancers to make surreptitious entrances and exits that frequently defy comprehension. At times, a sequence may start with two dancers onstage and end up with a crowd far in excess of the 10. To add to the mayhem, wild animals come and go, as do a small group of children who seem to be forever on a journey.

One of the headaches Favier is presented with is reshooting sequences of footage if a new dancer joins the company - or even if someone changes their look. "One of the women cut her hair last year: as the success of the production relies so heavily on the interaction of the live dancers with their exact video images, we had to reshoot all of her sequences. It turned out to be a very expensive haircut and now, of course, she's growing it again," laughed Favier.

Samuel Carre has been with the company for two years and operates the video system during performances. There are around 20 video sequences in the hour-long show and they occupy about one third of the production. The company owns all their own video equipment and tours with around 700kg of it - always carried by the technicians as hand luggage in specially-made flightcases. During performances a back-up system runs in tandem with the main system, though fortunately there have been no major problems to date. All the footage is shot with DVD digital cameras and the system consists of Sony and Panasonic equipment.

Carre operates the video equipment from front-of-house and his area resembles a mini editing studio, which essentially it is. Each of the two screens has its own system, consisting of a Sony player plus monitor, Panasonic mixer and Sony projector which is positioned on the edge of the stage. Carre operates all the cues manually, which tie-in with either a sound cue or a visual cue from the dancers. Favier adds that being on talk-back during a performance is like being on headsets during a NASA countdown!

The keyword for the smooth running of Paradis is 'precision' - a word the crew use frequently when discussing its various elements. It doesn't help that the company's productions are still evolving even after two years on the road; but this is an essential part of the company's philosophy and one that ensures their works stay vital and immune to getting stale.

Each performance is taped with a Sony DV handycam, so sequences can be reviewed and tightened up if necessary. As Favier notes, you can never really predict exactly what the dancers are going to do during a performance and the crew are at all times alert for any unplanned choreographic changes. One of the crucial elements of the success of the video is the stage-depth, and various stages around the world have caused the company some serious headaches. The ideal distance between projector and screen is 11 metres, but the projectors can be fitted with lenses to accommodate a minimum distance of eight metres. The company has been caught short in the past when venues have supplied inaccurate information. Favier adds that one of the company's biggest headaches was the performance of Paradis on an outdoor stage. "The wind was blowing the screens around - they were taking a bit of a battering, which unfortunately did detract from the look of the video and made it hard work for the dancers and crew." Though Favier has no hands-on role during performances, he always sits in the audience close to the video operator in case of problems.

Thomas Godefroid, who's worked with the company for five years, is the lighting engineer on this tour of Paradis. He finds lighting the show a challenge, particularly because of the white floor: "The focus has to be soft and seamless, otherwise it ends up a horrible mess. With a white surface, there is no room for focusing errors, so I aim to keep the beams from overlapping, otherwise I end up with trouble. We prefer to use PC (plano convex) lenses for the washes as they give a softer look around the edges of the beam and the colour filters last longer in a PC than they do in a fresnel."



It soon became apparent why the company go through a fair amount of gel and why they use a heat shield with their filters, as Godefroid explained: "Montalvo was, and still is, going through what he calls 'his blue period' and that is the only colour we use in the rig for Paradis."

'Saturation' sums up the colour choice with Lee 120, L119 (doubled!) L200 and a double dose of Rosco 79 dominating the luminaires in the rig. For good measure there is open-white to add balance. The end result is some

stunning lighting states that look ethereal. There are 52 lighting cues in the show which include the black-outs that are employed each time the video is used and there are no occasions when video and lighting are used simultaneously. The rig usually consists of 64 PCs, 12 2kW profiles, 16 1kW profiles and 30 Par 64s, although in Moscow Godefroid loved the look achieved by utilising the 2.5kW fresnels in the rig. I haven't listed any any specific products since the company tends to use whatever equipment it finds at a venue.

The sound requirements for Paradis are quite straightforward, with sound engineer Bertrand Neyret explaining that the bulk of his work is done pre-production, sourcing material and editing the soundtrack. The music, like the choreography, is varied and is played back via two Sony Mini disc players and a CD player. A Sennheiser wireless microphone is used during one sequence which is mainly for the dancer to hear himself via the foldback monitors as he vocalises an African rhythm.



Six speakers are used in total for sound amplification, with two of them providing foldback for the dancers who, Neyret says, "like their music loud!" The other four are balanced for the audience. Precision is again a keyword, with Neyret delivering the 24 sound cues with a fluidity that keeps the show moving.


Compagnie Montalvo-Hervieu have chosen an expensive path in opting to work with video and the company's dedication to it means that it draws on a substantial portion of their budget. Fortunately, they are in a reasonably good financial position with their status as the only choreographic centre in Paris and the surrounding areas. It also helps that they give more performances in a year than any other French dance company, with around 180 performances notched up in the last year. During their working year, they have around 60 company members who are touring with various shows from the company's repertoire. Paradis has two touring productions on the road, though the production is being given a rest after its current tour finishes in New York.

Favier comments that the company are fortunate in that they can afford to develop new works and have the luxury of only undertaking projects that they want to do. Such is the prestige of the company that they were recently asked to collaborate with a leading car manufacturer on its new advertising campaign - a request they had to refuse because of other commitments.

One such is to create the opening performance for the Cannes Film Festival in the year 2000 which they are currently researching. Naturally,

they plan to do something spectacular with video, though their concept of incorporating archival film footage is proving difficult due to copyright and other restrictions. However, Favier is confident that whatever they do will enthrall their audience. If you've been fortunate enough to see any of the company's work you won't disagree.

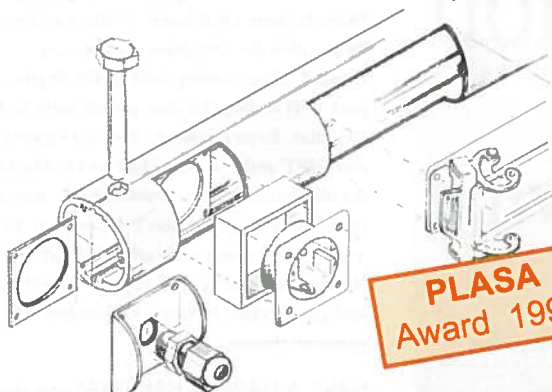
The company are also working on a project to celebrate the history of the Paris Opera and again plan to incorporate video images into the performance. After the Cannes film festival project, the company is hoping to head in a completely new direction with their use of video, but who knows where this might take them: "We are great believers in research and development, but that takes time and money and maybe after Cannes we will have a little of both," explained Favier.

The company's latest offering, *Le Jardin lo lo-Ito*, opened in October in Brussels and is booked into the Barbican centre for a British season next June. Meanwhile Paradis will be given a break from the repertoire and the company will continue to develop their unique relationship between video and dance. In case there is any chance of the creative juices drying up in between tours, Compagnie Montalvo-Hervieu always have their community-based projects to keep them occupied: a recent undertaking involved teaching 5,000 members of the public a dance routine which they then performed - that's definitely dedication to an art form from a company that harnesses and embodies the human spirit in all its many guises. 



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# John Watt

## Second Take...

John Watt's view from beside the camera

**H**as the moment arrived to boldly get in to the second career, which we are all told is rapidly becoming the norm, in case things don't pick up in the new millennium? It seems logical to draw on hard-won skills, though it's not immediately obvious who needs a bloke who can drive and talk fast on four hours' sleep a night and look into a 10kW lamp without blinking.

"The mottos are always a good read though, so maybe they could be my forte: 'People who live in glass houses should have lots of ND'; 'A job in the hand is worth two in Shepherds Bush'. Perhaps not.

**SO WHAT ELSE?** Well, they say the pen is mightier than the sword and it's nearly done for me a couple of times. I could do slogans for those special lighting directors' Christmas Crackers that the STLD are bound to get round to next year. You know the ones, give them a tug and out pops a silly hat and some small useless plastic object like a BBC lighting stencil (I've tried, but I can't find a hexagonal lamp or a profile shaped like a ping pong bat). The mottos are always a good read though, so maybe they could be my forte: 'People who live in glass houses should have lots of ND'; 'A job in the hand is worth two in Shepherds Bush'. Perhaps not.

**MAYBE THERE'S MORE MILEAGE** in Lighting Liar Dice. Not new, I hear you say, but this is a fresh application that the lighting business really needs. They will be marketed in a leather belt pouch to go alongside the Leatherman tool and the Maglite. You also get a roll up transparent grid marked in a quarter inch to the foot scale. Spread the grid on top of the designer's plan and fix with camera tape - there's always a bit on the floor with enough sticky still on it. To plan the lighting of any show, proceed

as follows. Unpack the four dice supplied. You will notice that each facet has a picture of a lamp - all the lights you are ever likely to need are included. If you are lighting a drama or Eastenders, put the die with soft lights to one side, but keep it if you are lighting a sit com. If you are plotting for light entertainment, it may be worth investing in an extra moving light die. News, magazines and talk shows need the lot, unless you want a Videssence look, which only needs the 'soft' die.

**METHOD:** take an empty whisky glass (there's one on the corner of the drawing board) shake the selected dice vigorously, toss them on to the plan and rig exactly where they fall. No one will ever know. The rules are that you must throw two 2Ks to start, for it's an unbreakable rule that you need at least a couple of 2Ks to light any show. This will unfailingly produce results, which will rapidly get you known throughout the business. You should read the glossary of useful lighting explanations included in every pack to disarm any doubting producers. There are over 1,000, but these include all the popular ones such as "Rembrandt often lit a group with a single candle" (ignore the answer "he must have still been on cameras when I was at the Beeb"). Or try "This is similar to a technique first used by John Treays on Much Ado About Nothing in an attempt to add visual interest to an otherwise weak script."

**IF YOU ARE IN A BBC** saturated rig studio, buy the special blank dice, because you will get a double ender whether you like it or not. If you are a news cameraman or specialise in political interviews you need the special 'ENG' set - lightweight and waterproof, the dice just have Blondes, Redheads and Paglights - more would only confuse you. You need two Redheads to start the game, otherwise no special skills needed. The Paglight die also indicates the camera position, one always being mounted above the other. Try to throw away from the sun in daylight so that the camera position is

opposite the sun; the resultant flares and silhouette effect are considered essential for realism. Buy the 'ASS' set (Arts Special Series) for arts interviews. This is exactly the same as the ENG set, but all the lamps are in a special shade of blue chosen by Melvyn Bragg.

**THIS IDEA COULD CATCH ON**, but I suspect someone may have beaten me to it. If there are no dice in stock at your local lighting directors' supply superstore, try asking for Wattington's latest bored game 'RIPOFALY'. This is a variation on an old idea. Around the edge of the board a number of sites are represented, i.e. London, Nottingham, Manchester, etc. Each player dons a mask portraying fictional tycoons such as Lord Hollick, Michael Green, David Liddiment, etc. All start with a sack of money and travel round the sites at the fall of a die (this is the only part where it's difficult to imitate real life, as the dice are a damn site more predictable than the antics of the real people).

**PLAYER'S POSITIONS** on the board are shown by a counter in the shape of a Rolls Royce or yacht. When a player lands on, say Nottingham, he may purchase if he wishes and if he's completely off his trolley he can build a TV studio on it. The South Bank is a licence to print money, whereas Tyne Tees would turn into a passable Tesco if half the population weren't out of work. As the players travel round the board buying, selling and building studios, they can land on 'Chance' and 'Community' squares. They pick a chance card which may say, "Congratulations you have just made 200 people redundant, collect £500,000 bonus." On the other hand it may say "You let Jeffrey Archer know about a take-over bid ahead of the market, go to Norwich, do not pass go, do not collect £2million. You can only get out of Norwich by playing your Vanessa card, and you don't get many Vanessas to the pack. Community cards are less popular - "You owe the tax man £1million as his and hers helicopters are not a legitimate business expense."

**PLAYERS CAN TRADE** with one another whenever it's their turn and can diversify into hotels and newspapers or anything else likely to turn a fast buck. In theory, it would be possible for one player to own say Central, Westcountry, half of On Digital and part of ITN, but the dice are unlikely to fall like that. Even less likely, Granada might own LWT and the other half of On Digital. It's all enormous fun, providing you don't take it seriously and don't depend on it for a living. The game ends when all but one of the players goes bust or tips the board over and goes to bed in tears. Remember, it is a game of chance.

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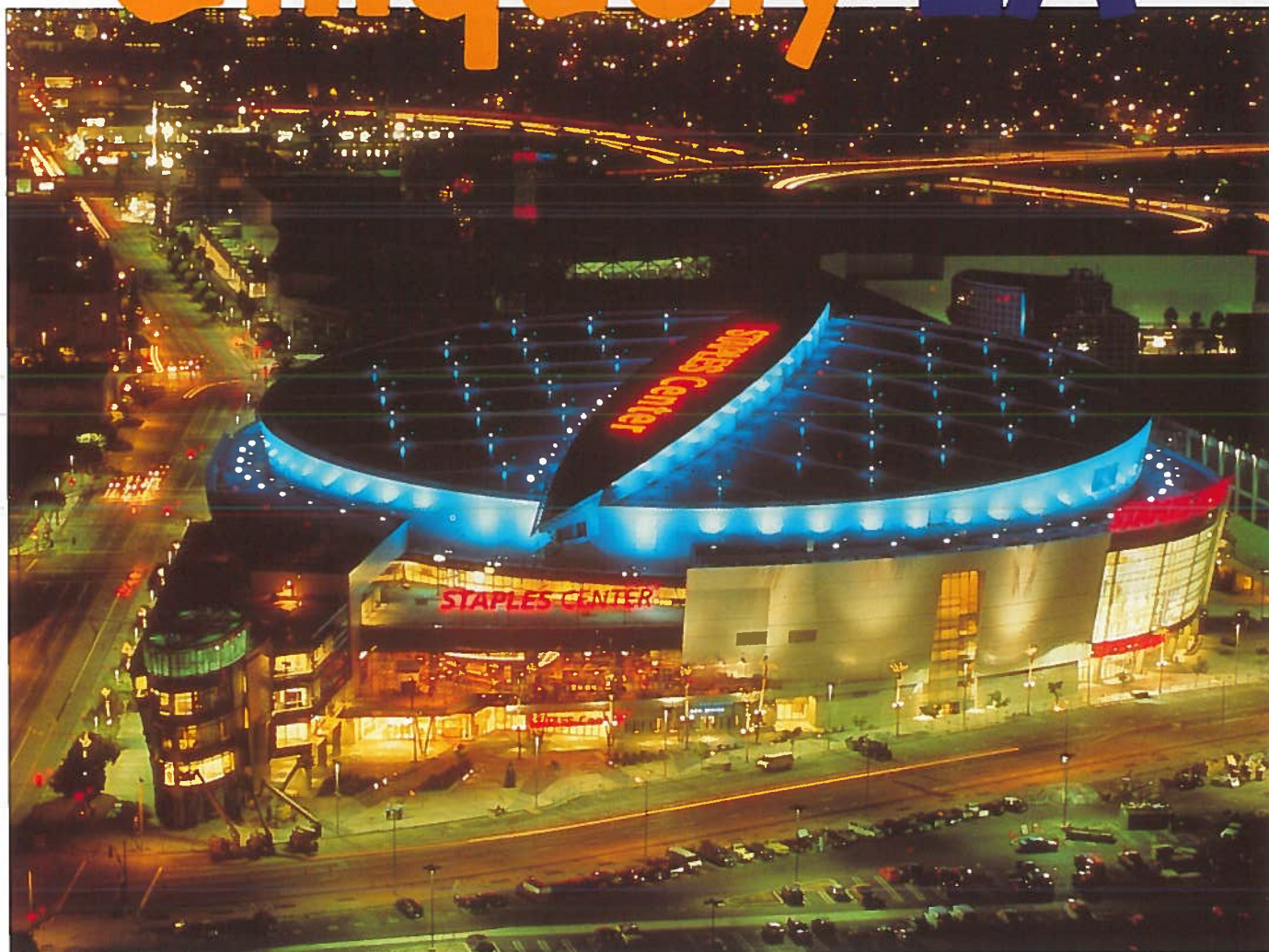
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# Uniquely LA

U S A



**T**he Staples Center arena, which opened in October, carries the state-of-the-art up a notch - not surprising since the venue has already been nicknamed 'The entertainment capital of the entertainment capital,' and features a sophisticated sound and lighting package.

Looking at the overall statistics of the project, the Staples Center has a maximum seating capacity of 20,000, with 160 luxury suites and 13 event suites, an eight-sided video scoreboard and 1,200 television monitors. It's also the home for four major professional teams, including basketball's LA Lakers and hockey's LA Kings. Overall, the facility covers over 950,000sq.ft and is located on a 10-acre site. The ground-breaking on the facility began in March 1998 with the Center officially opening some 20 months later on October 17th 1999 when Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band took to the stage.

Two of the key firms involved were The Obie Company of Torrance, California, who oversaw a variety of areas, including lighting, rigging, telecommunications and project management, and

Bose Corporation of Framington, Massachusetts, who designed the audio system for the bowl and concourse, as well as the remaining areas in the venue. Acromedia Systems of Los Angeles and WJHW of Dallas, Texas, were also involved in the project.

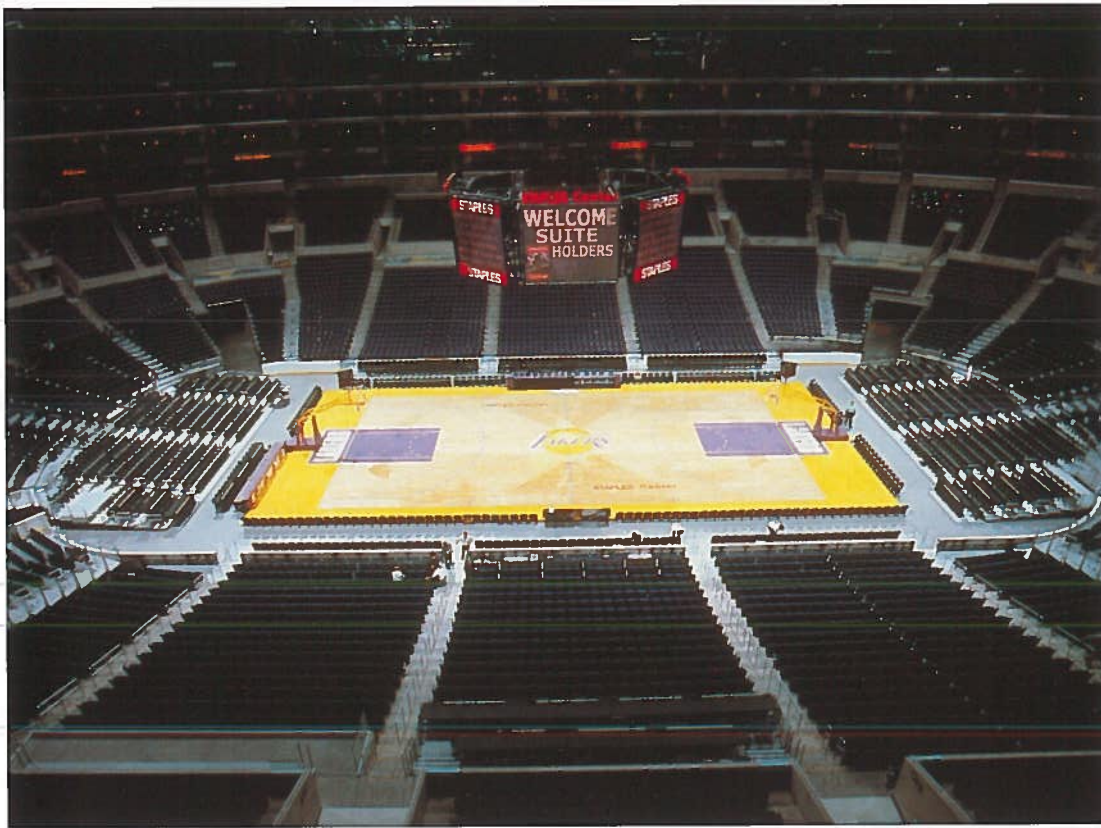
Over the years, the show element surrounding professional indoor sports has evolved in the States. Although there are strict rules in hockey as to when music can be played and so on, the restrictions in professional basketball are much more lenient. Therefore, the games include much more than the action on the court; there are player introductions which include a variety of venue lights, half-time shows and music that is played almost continuously.

In addition, the arena also has to have a system that is capable of delivering voice intelligibility on any announcements that need to go through the arena. "The ownership group that we worked with were very clear from the beginning that this was a sports/entertainment venue and that they really wanted to have excellent audio visual capabilities within the building," explains Tom Clelland, the senior project manager for the Bose

*Los Angeles' \$375m Staples Center is destined to set the new standard for sports/concert venues. Sharon Stancavage limbers up with the technical team*



VENUE TECHNOLOGY



steps. "By building this specialised bass array, we're able to steer the bass out into the audience where it can be enjoyed, rather than keeping it up in the ceiling or on the ice, where we don't need it," Clelland comments. This steerable bass technology gives the Staples Center an important advantage over many other new arenas and is one of only a handful of venues worldwide taking advantage of this technology.

The audio system also features 12 Bose Acoustic Wave Cannons. "Three Acoustic Wave Cannons are rigged behind each Panaray cluster," Clelland explains. "They're designed specifically to deal with very low frequency information, from 25Hz to

Corporation, adding: "The quality of sound system was really one of the priorities for them from day one."

To convey to the owners what the audio system in the Staples Center would sound like, Clelland and his team used the Bose Auditor system, already widely used to demonstrate the acoustics in venues around the world, from the Sistine Chapel in Rome through Nice Stadium in France, to the General Motors Palace arena in Vancouver. The Auditor offers a computer model of the venue and a small listening unit that acoustically takes clients inside their venue. "It allows us to listen to the acoustic performance of a room before the room is built, from any seat in that room," explains Clelland.

*"By building this bass array, we're able to steer the bass out into the audience where it can be enjoyed, rather than keeping it up in the ceiling or on the ice."*

When designing an arena system, a number of factors are considered, including speech intelligibility, the ability to maintain even coverage, fidelity and overall noise levels. Keeping those variables in mind, the Bose team came up with a four-cluster loudspeaker array for the arena itself. In most arenas, this is positioned near the main scoreboard, traditionally in the middle of the venue, but this is not the case, however, at the Staples Center. "In hockey, you have the dasher

boards and glass in front of you, surrounding the ice rink," Clelland explains. "With speakers mounted in a central scoreboard location, you can't hit the seats directly behind the glass with sufficient high frequency information. Essentially, the glass is a barrier between the audience and the sound system," he explains. "By aligning the clusters over the dasher boards, we're able to pitch down and hit all of the seats in the first five or six rows around the rink." In the Staples Center system, there are two clusters at mid ice, hung over the penalty box and the player's bench, while the other two clusters are at either end of the arena, just behind the goalies. "We've created a non-symmetrical array of loudspeakers because the rink is oblong," he remarks. It's a tried and tested formula, for this dasher board configuration is also used in the General Motors Palace arena in Vancouver and the Air Canada Center in Toronto.

Inside the arena Clelland's speaker clusters consisted of 62 Bose Panaray long-throw mid-high units that are stacked four high. (30 long-throw 3202 cabinets that have a 30° x 20° dispersion pattern, 27 long-throw 4402 cabinets with a 40° x 40° dispersion pattern and eight long-throw 9702 cabinets with a 90° x 70° dispersion pattern). The cabinets are divided between the four array positions in the ceiling and, through the use of the various dispersion patterns, each and every seat in the house is hit with optimal sound.

To round out the arena system, the Bose team used a total of 20 bass units. There are four bass clusters located above the arena grid which, visually-speaking, resemble clusters of

around 60Hz." The audio package is controlled by the Bose Entero Control System - the heart of which is an Entero SE 16 audio processor, a KP 12 keypad, a ACM-1 amp control module and dedicated software package. "All the time delays, settings, volumes and routing through the building are all controlled by the Entero," Clelland adds. To complete the system, he spec'd over 100 amplifiers, which include 77 Bose 1800 V amplifiers and 66 Bose 1600 V amplifiers. Overall, the system uses an enormous 125.5kW of amplification.

While the Bose team were working on creating highly intelligible audio for the 20,000 seat arena, the Obie Company was busy putting together a lighting package that could be used in any and all sporting applications, as well as for general arena illumination. The speciality lighting alone for the Staples Center cost \$2million dollars, which includes aisle lighting, banner and flag lighting, photostrobes and a variety of advanced automated fixtures. "The technology at the Center is quite simply state-of-the-art," says Obie's technical manager Tad Infrerra.

To get the level of flexibility needed, Obie specified 16 of Coemar's new Nat TM 4000s - an automated 4000W HMI fixture. "This is a pretty specialised fixture that we use for long-throw applications," notes Infrerra. "In fact, it was designed with arena applications in mind." The TM 4000 features 10 variable speed bi-directional gobos, a 5° or 10° beam option, CMY colour mixing and continuous 360° head rotation on both the X and Y axes. An automated 4000W fixture is something of a



rarity in the States. "In America, there really aren't any other 4K units," Inferrera comments. "Even the Coemar NAT TM 2500s are exceptionally bright - in fact, at 10 metres, they put out 1,500 foot-candles," he adds.

To complete the arena package, there are 32 TAS Colore fresnels, a long-lasting, metal halide automated washlight that has an internal colour wheel featuring nine colours. There are also 12 High End AF 1000 Data Flash strobes mounted in the steel, which are now becoming more prevalent in the US arena market. "Having the TM 4000s, the Colores and the Data Flashes all in the area is the new norm to provide the pizzazz for the beginning of a basketball or hockey game," says Inferrera.

There are also 150 Strand 26° and 10° Lekos, which have a variety of uses, from banner and flag lighting to aisle lighting. "This is the fixture you should use if you need to light an aisle," Inferrera asserts. The lighting package also contains 48 2.4kW Photostrobes, which can be rented by photographers, and which are also becoming more widespread in the US market. The Photostrobes are grouped in six sets of eight, allowing rentals by six individual photographers.

The Center also features eight brand new automated 3k spotlights available through Lycian Stage Lighting. The Lycian 1293 X3K 30,000K long-throw followspot features a colour changer fade module that allows full colour mixing with a dichroic filter and mechanised fader. "The spotlight can be operated either manually or by remote control," Inferrera explains. "Basically, these are automated long-throw fixtures." The Lycian 1293 X3K also accepts standard gels and operates on four DMX channels. Staples is the first arena to feature the 1293 X3K, which completes their automated lighting package.

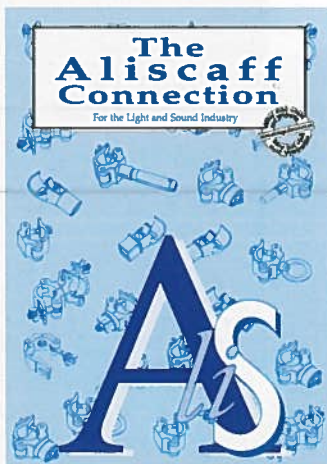
The Center also has a run of 79 media patch panels located throughout the area. The patch panels have DMX, camera and audio inputs, and are also found at 34 fixed broadcast camera locations. "When we were doing the patch panels, we pulled over 3,500,000 feet of low voltage wire," Inferrera reports.

The lighting and sound packages didn't stop at the arena bowl, however. There are a total of five concourses (two public and three private) in the Center, which also required lighting and sound reinforcement. Along with the emergency lighting system, there are 50 to 60 units throughout the concourse. "They're actually the shell of a Par 56 with a 175W HMI light source and a dichroic filter inside," Inferrera reveals.



The audio system in the concourse area (which includes all of the public areas, including the restaurants and the rest rooms) has the same high quality sound as the arena itself. "They wanted a quality sound in the concourse, not a tinny-sounding little ceiling speaker," reports Clelland. To achieve this goal, over 300 Bose FreeSpace Model 8 loudspeakers were installed throughout the concourse, augmented by more than 200 FreeSpace 32s and just over 100 FreeSpace 25s. The 32 and 8 versions are both ceiling-mount loudspeakers, while the 25 is a compact bracket-mounted cabinet that's used where ceiling installation isn't possible. "The concourse is stunning, audio-wise," Clelland reports.

Along with a myriad of sporting events, the Staples Center will also hold a variety of concerts and other events, including the Democratic National Convention and the Grammy Awards. In fact, the Staples Center may very well prove to be the entertainment capital of the entertainment capital!



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TO  
NIGHT  
SCENERY

John Fogerty



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*Andy Ciddor  
meets with the  
talented team  
at Laservision  
Macro~Media -  
specialists in  
the creative art*

# Image Makers

**L**aservision Macro~Media is the company behind some of the Asia Pacific region's most familiar images: the Sentosa Island Spectacle in Singapore, Sydney's AquaMagic Film and Laser Spectacular and Everland - South Korea's largest theme park. In addition to this, they will be involved in a number of events surrounding the Sydney 2000 Olympics, including trade shows, product launches, cultural and arts festivals and public celebrations.

The company is a provider of both image content and the presentation technology to view it, with offerings that include video, film and laser image projection, pyrotechnics, water projection screens automated lighting and digital surround-sound. The full range of services offered encompasses all phases of a production, attraction or event, from initial consultation through writing, performing and producing and recording material, to the turnkey installation of entire productions.

## HISTORY

In 1981, Australian Paul McCloskey developed and patented a real-time laser control head which, unlike anything then available, used a positional feedback loop to produce high-speed, high-accuracy, repeatable laser movement. This technology became the basis for the Spectravision Control System for laser graphic displays, and today remains at the heart of the laser imaging systems that are incorporated in the installations undertaken by the Laservision Macro~Media group of businesses.

Laservision may have started out as a laser display company, but as Laservision Macro~Media, it has spread organically into presentations, attractions, events, consulting, show control technology, the production of audio, video, film and pyrotechnics, lighting design, projection and, of course, ever-more sophisticated laser technology. The term Macro~Media was invented in an attempt to link together the broad range of production elements that are involved within the spectacles that the company contributes to.

In 1999, in addition to winning the International Business Asia Award for Best Use of Australian Technology in Asia for the second year in a row, the company received three awards from the International Laser Display Association (ILDA). These were for 'Outdoor Show' for 'Tan Gun Shin Wha' - the latest Laservision

Macro~Media attraction at Everland South Korea (claimed to be the world's largest macro-media display spectacular); 'Graphic module' for the recently-opened 'Fish Opera', which is performed three times nightly on AquaMagic, the world's only floating Laservision theatre at Sydney's Darling Harbour; and finally 'Beams/Atmospherics' for 'Heliotrope', a kaleidoscopic 3D Laservision experience created for six synchronised laser effects outputs.

Today, at its Sydney headquarters, set in five acres of native bushland, the company has departments which specialise in attractions, presentations, research and development and manufacturing, and a recently-formed consulting division, in addition to the usual customer service and maintenance departments. The facility comprises two large production studios for laser programming, a digital video editing suite, a separate audio editing studio, lighting programming facilities with a permanently installed rehearsal rig, a client preview and a showroom. In addition, there is an animation studio, a large sound stage and a training room.

The large preview area is equipped with a 20m wide screen, along with motorised rear-projection laser screens and a waterscreen, to enable the simulation of events ranging from a major sports event to a ballroom or outdoor laser spectacular, complete with pyrotechnics and surround-sound. This area also serves as a film and rehearsal studio, and is used for stage and exhibition stand construction.

Initially Australian in its perspective and operations, as the company has grown in size it has also broadened its view to encompass the Asia Pacific region, with forays into the Middle East, Southern Africa and Europe. Most recently, with the release of the Sinodial Series show controller at LDI (Lighting Dimensions International)



*The main picture shows Everland - South Korea's largest theme park.*

*Above is the 'Merlion' at Sentosa Island, Singapore - a half-fish and half-lion creature which is the central figure of the 'Spirits of Sentosa' show.*

*Overleaf, shows the public celebration of the announcement of Sydney as the venue for the 2000 Olympic games. As it was made, a lighting, pyros and laser show was triggered for the tens of thousands gathered in Sydney and the nationwide TV audience.*

*All images supplied by Laservision Macro~Media*

## The AquaMagic Film and Laser Spectacular, Cockle Bay, Sydney

- Presentations typically involve large-scale projected moving images which materialise in a previously empty space, usually accompanied by high fidelity surround-sound, pyrotechnics and other special effects - laser tunnels, cones and similar light structures carved out of smoke or water screens, dancing water displays, mechanical automation and moving light beams from automated lights and lasers.

- The AquaMagic Film and Laser Spectacular at Cockle Bay in Sydney is a 20-minute-long, saltwater, dual waterscreen and laser spectacular, comprising two floating waterscreens which display the show simultaneously to two audience areas around Sydney's Cockle Bay, three times each night. Each custom-built waterscreen vehicle is a triangular floating structure supporting Aquajet water screen nozzles. These are driven by submersible pumps that project 550 tons of water into the air during each performance. Laser and film images are projected from equipment housed on two barges floating behind the waterscreens.

- Each of the projection barges contains a Laservision 'Spectravision' full-colour 10W laser display system, an automated 70mm film projector and a sound system. Each barge is climate-controlled and has an active mooring system which dynamically maintains the correct spatial relationship between the projection system and the water screens in changing tide and weather conditions. The systems are remotely controlled from an on-shore control suite via Laservision's proprietary show control technology. For this production, Laservision also created the Laser graphics and animation that were then choreographed to, and overlaid on the Australian-produced film

and IAAPA (International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions) shows, Laservision Macro™ Media is now firmly committed to playing on the world stage.

The staff have wide-ranging and complementary backgrounds in technical and creative production disciplines, including animation, sound recording, radio, television and video production, art direction, lighting design, exhibition, museum and gallery design, special



event and corporate theatre production and stage management, plus a range of engineering and technical disciplines. The production and operations staff consist of four designer/producers of events and attractions, two project engineering managers, a production manager, five senior production assistants, two audio and video editors, five laser operators, three Coherent and one Spectra Physics laser field engineers, an art director and three lighting designers. According to Laservision's John Eustace: "There are also a heap of guys who just seem to turn up at beer o'clock on Fridays," but he declined to speculate further on their roles within the company.

The Consultancy unit is one of Laservision's more recent ventures, arising from the company's work on a diverse range of productions. Its approach encompasses the initial, culturally sensitive, conceptual development of the project, combined with a site and skills audit. Laservision Macro™ Media then provides the preliminary design options, concept visuals, an engineering feasibility report and budgets for appraisal. Once approved, the company offers follow-through services that manage and supervise all aspects of the project. As an additional service, attraction owners can call on the company to co-ordinate staff training, manage operation and maintenance, even preparation of themed merchandising and performance production.

The Attractions unit has been set up to market Laservision's proprietary hardware, license its software

and provide specialised 'value-added' consulting, production and support services.

These include creative and engineering design services, operational and technical training, maintenance and support. The major target is to offer complete, operational turnkey attractions from the client's initial concept. The Presentation division was set up to provide specialist services to the events, entertainment and advertising and corporate theatre markets. It provides facilities and services in two distinct areas: the hire of Laservision's proprietary technology and the integration of its various creative and production services. As a company with its roots firmly planted in laser technology and the various projection, control and interfaces which have become part of laser-based productions, Laservision Macro™ Media has maintained a high-priority R&D programme which has often exceeded 20 percent of its annual turnover.

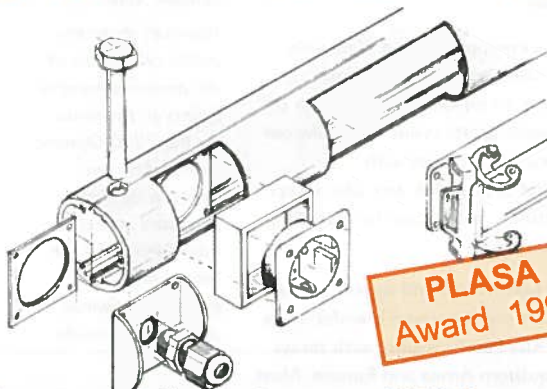
The laser control system originally developed by company founder Paul McCloskey was progressively enhanced and extended until the Spectravision system became a show controller with interfaces to a variety of technologies. In developing the Sinodial Series, its next generation of controller, the decision was taken to build it from the ground up as a show controller with laser control capabilities, rather than as a dedicated laser control system.

The Sinodial system goes several steps further than anything currently on offer by being capable of completely eliminating the need for the multiple control systems that are supervised by the show controller. During rehearsals, multiplexers capture the data streams being sent by each of the controllers in the production, store them on hard disk in the Digital Data Pump and replay them in real-time during the performance via fibre-optic links that can cover distances of up to four kilometres. The first Sinodial system has been ordered and will commence operation early in the New Year as part of a major (\$4.2m) upgrade to an attraction in Singapore.

The presence in Sydney of the 2000 Olympic Games signals a very busy year for Laservision Macro™ Media. The worldwide obsession with celebrating the end of 1999 (if not the end of the twentieth century or the second millennium) sees Laservision Macro™ Media involved with many projects, including laser image projection onto the Sydney Harbour Bridge and celebrations in two of the first places to see in the new year: Noumea in New Caledonia and Manila in the Philippines.

There have been difficulties within the company in finding staff for the other New Year celebrations which it will be servicing, as it appears that the New Caledonian project mysteriously requires the entire staff - including the marketing manager and the office assistants. It seems that the control software will be well monitored for Y2K defects.

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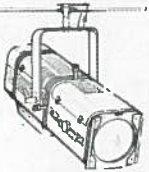


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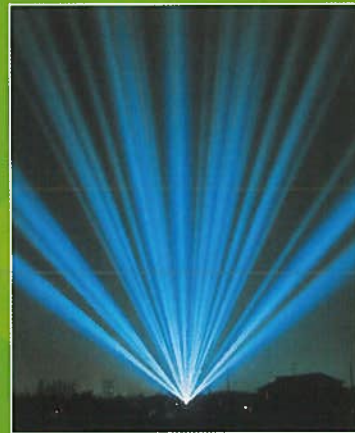
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# The Eurocos are Coming



*L&S's team  
reports on the  
highlights of  
LDI'99*



*Left, a line-up of major award winners (too numerous to mention). Inset, the winning lighting designers - Anne Militello (themed project), Don Holder (entertainment), Pat Gallegos (architecture).*

**T**his year at LDI, European companies (can we call them Eurocos?) really did make an impact with radical innovation that ensured that they received due credit when it came to handing out the accolades. Two French companies scooped awards, **Robert Juliat** for its brilliant new **Cyrano** followspot and **Hardware for Xenon** for Yves Ruellan's extraordinary 180° lens, so well demonstrated in **Airstar's** giant balloon. Gallic technology was also involved in the award that went to **Protech** for its **Linklift**, which uses the French **Serapid** rigid chain system, to create a really compact yet secure stage lift. The Danes, in the shape of the **Martin Group**, took the architectural light award for the new **MAC 250**, aimed at shops and stores.

Of course, as expected, the product which raised the most eyebrows, and was duly recognised as a generational landmark product, was the **Icon-M** from **LSD**, essentially a British designed and made product, though the company is part of **PRG**, so they must get full credit for backing the project. Nevertheless, **Bill Hewlett**, head of **LSD R&D**, collected the award and rightly so. All the effort now is apparently going into improving the light output which, if realised, will make **Icon-M** a very hot property indeed.

Another British success, at the more workmanlike end of things, was **Triple E's** **Uni-Ring** drape clip, which neatly twists into, and out of, **Unistrut-type** channel, but remains attached to the cloth for quick re-hanging - the epitome of a time-saving gizmo. **City Theatrical** collected yet another award for the **Autoyoke** which turns the **ETC Source Four** profile spotlight into a theatrically-oriented moving light - 30 of these units have recently been spec'd by the **Royal Opera House** in London. Indiana-based **Apollo Design Technology**, was rewarded for its 10,000 dpi, full-colour, photo-quality, glass gobo process, though **Rosco** was also boasting similar technology at 12,000 dpi at its stand. However, **Rosco** and **Cast Lighting** carried off the 'Lighting Tools and Software' award for **Gordon Pearlman's** **Horizon PC-based** control unit which is now being made available packaged together with **WYSIWYG**.

There was an element of emotion in the latter award, with the judges using the opportunity to indicate their support for co-operation between companies, as against the enmity which was all too evident elsewhere in the hall. It seems that once again we are moving into another phase of patent wars as **Color Kinetics** served 'Cease and Desist' notices during the Show on **Artistic Licence** and **Avolites Inc** (see news). Elsewhere, while hell froze over at the massive **Vari-Lite** stand as they broke with their past reticence and rather reluctantly introduced two 'for sale' products, it also became known that **VL** had added **SGM** and **Studio Due** to their fast-expanding list of prospective litigants. Conversely, **Rusty Brutsché**, **VL's** president, confirmed to **L&S** that **Clay Paky** and **Coemar** had filed

counter suits in New York contesting the validity of the **VL** patent in an aggressive defensive move which brought any immediate prospects of a negotiated settlement to an abrupt halt. (More about all this and other **LDI** gossip in **No Comment**, page 54).

On the product front there was much activity: **Altman** launched its 150W **CDM-TV** fresnel, described as a cool point source for studio or location purposes with integral electronic ballast and advanced optics, using an efficient ceramic discharge lamp which delivers a warm 3000°K and 10,000 hours rated life. Despite the legal papers served on it by **Color Kinetics**, **Artistic Licence** kept smiling and having introduced its first LED lamp **Colour Fill** at **PLASA** this year, followed at **LDI** with the **Colour Pipe** and **Water Fill**. The latter is a submersible LED variable colour wash fixture rated **IP67** to a depth of one metre. **Colour Pipe** is a line array of direct coloured LEDs (either wide or narrow angle emission), to give colour mix variety. **ARRI** showed its **Ruby 7** variable axial focus lantern which utilises seven **Par 64s**, either 1kW or 1.2kW, on flexible mountings and allows all seven beams to converge or diverge simultaneously at the turn of a handle to change the combined beam angle. **AVAB Transtechnik** was showing an early iteration of its new highly interactive control system for studios, which uses a touch-screen and graphics of the lighting instruments to enable direct adjustment of attributes for programming purposes.

When it comes to novelty items, **CITC** had it in spades with the **Ring Rocket**, a fog machine that blows large diameter smoke rings up to 50 feet. The last time we saw one of these was at **SIB Rimini** several years ago, where an industry wag named it **Ivor** after one of our best-loved smokers. Sadly, it never found an application - it will be interesting to see whether this fares any better. Over the last 25 years, water columns have been and gone several times, so it was a bit of a surprise to find a high-tech lighting company of the calibre of **Clay Paky** getting involved in them, but then the pressure to break into the architectural market must be intense. **CP's** version of this perennial is two metres high with a stylish base available in various decorated finishes. The illumination is an eight-colour disc in front of a 12V 65W halogen, dichroic lamp and the bubbles are released at intervals rather than continuously.

**Compulite** was plugging its **Sparktop**, a laptop version of its control system for lighting designers 'on the fly'. **ETC**, determined to keep ahead of the plagiarisers through 'innovation not imitation', revealed their **Source Four PARNel** which, as the name suggests, is a **Par** turned fresnel. Using the 750W **HPL** lamp with a modified parabolic and patented zoom lens optics, the **PARNel** delivers a variable beam angle from 25 degrees to 45 degrees without, they claim, any loss of efficiency and with a smooth symmetrical field throughout.

It was interesting to see that what seems like a practical way to achieve flowing neon has been attained by **Fluid Light Technologies** via their **X8TT** electrode boot assembly, which can be



## SHOW BRIEFS

Avolites was demonstrating its Visualiser to the US market for the first time. UK readers already familiar with the product will be interested to learn that there is now a Laptop version available, with direct data link out of the Mini-Port of the desk.

Bandit Lites was upbeat about tours it has coming to the UK/European market in the near future. The company kicks-off with Barry Manilow in January, and listen out for Garth Brooks sometime after April, though he's likely to plunder the US first.

Cirro-lite returned the favour to Lightning Strikes by supporting their US partner's stand at the show. John Coppen reported that the Cirro cracker machines attract most attention in the US because they will also run quite successfully with water-based haze fluid. Lightning Strikes now acts for Balloon Light, a company which, as the name suggests, produce an aerial light mounted within a helium envelope. The light source is a metal halide unit, with red, blue and green bulb colours available. Similar to the European Airstar units, this was the first time at LDI for the Balloon Light. Lightning Strikes also had a 'first' for the show, its 40kW 30 degree high intensity spot demonstrated at PLASA earlier this year.

Disney was exhibiting in its own back yard - who'd have thought it? But it had good reason. The latest Disney Park 'California Adventure', is scheduled to open in February 2001. Built on one of the original Disneyland's parking lots in California, the new park is already recruiting right across the gamut of entertainment business skills.

Lampo, on the stand of Techni-lux, was showing its new Leader projector, a compact unit that has a 1200W MSR/HSR lamp.



*Top to bottom*  
*The Hardware/Airstar team with Yves Ruellan of Hardware (centre).*

*Jean-Charles Juliat of Robert Juliat with the Cyrano followspot.*

*An LSD/PRG trio of Bill Hewlett (designer of Icon-M) Dave Keighley and Alan Thomson*

retrofitted to existing installations, in conjunction with their Smart Neon controller. It seemed to us that the trade-off was some loss of brightness, though this was denied by FLT. Another special effect which caught the imagination, and was

consequently used to good effect in the Roman theme of the awards ceremony, was the **GAM Torch**. This flaming Olympian torch, fuelled by solid paraffin pellets, extinguishes instantly should it be dropped, which will bring a sigh of relief to stage managers and fire officers alike. Perhaps of even wider application, but also seen on GAM's stand, was **Lighting Innovation's** brilliant Inno-Four 575 HMI upgrade suitable for the whole range of ETC Source Fours and the S4 Par, which can quadruple their light output compared to halogen. The compact, lightweight electronic ballast simply clips onto the back of the luminaire and, though it uses no fans, is cool to the touch even after a considerable time in use.

Ian Kirby reported a high level of interest in his **G-E-T.com** internet search engine which will serve as a day-to-day virtual market for the concert and performance industry. G-E-T.com should be live by the time L&SI hits the streets, though it is bound to take a while to develop a momentum of its own. **High End** was offering a much more 'people and product' orientated atmosphere than previously, with less emphasis on the visual effects. While continuing to show the world the merits of its Studio 250 Series' extraordinarily high optical efficiency and snazzy mechanical positioning system, HES had something new to crow about in the shape of the Studio Beam PC. Using the same mechanical components as the 250 Series, Studio Beam brings the distinctive quality of pebble convex lighting technology to automated lights for the first time. By using the MSR 700W short arc lamp, in harness with a unique reflector and aspheric lenses in an optical train of similar high efficiency to that mentioned above, output of better than 20,000 field lumens is claimed, twice what you might expect from a luminaire of this compact size and power. The return of a single lamp ColorPro was previewed at PLASA and covered in our report afterwards (see L&SI October 1999), but something we hadn't seen in London was the Cyberlight Turbo - close to twice the light output of the original Cyberlight through using an improved short arc light source - the MSR 1200SA - in an enhanced optical system.

There is no doubt that **LSD's** Icon-M will be the talisman of this year's show, being the significant development that most visitors will remember when asked to recollect LDI'99. LSD had the opportunity, not available to it at PLASA, to produce a co-ordinated show using multiple M units in conjunction with its own washlights and a couple of ETC Audiovisual's PIGI

projectors, to give us a vision of the seamless, virtual effects which can be created through the combined genius of Texas Instrument's DMD projection engine and LSD's own optical and moving light technology. The future of performance lighting, here and now. Well, very shortly, anyway.

It is always useful to find a new and improved fibre illuminator and **Laser Media's** LM100 sets out to be just that. Using a pre-focus lamp, similar to the Philips Focus 100 but claimed to be more efficient, the box is convection-cooled, so no noise, and the CDX version offers DMX control of a dichroic colour wheel. **Le Maitre**, master of the SFX universe, made quite a splash outside the front of the convention centre showing off two of its new bubble generators to welcome guests on arrival. Inevitably called Bubble Master 2000, this revival of an old favourite with 'bells and whistles' adds a range of up-to-speed control features.

**Lighting Services'** BP75 is a smart and stylish architectural light which claims a theatrical heritage, as its features demonstrate. Using the 15 degrees MR16 75W lamp, the fixture offers a range of zoom optical options from minimum 15 degrees and 25 degrees, to maximum zoom of 25 degrees and 40 degrees. However, its main claim to fame is the drop-in cartridge which facilitates the possibility to project or focus two gobos simultaneously. You can position and frame the images within a 90 degrees rotation.

High End Systems has re-invented **Lightwave Research** as its architectural lighting brand for the future and, as if to emphasise the point, was showing its ES-1, an IP66-rated outdoor fixture which has more attributes than you can shake a stick at, including the ability to project logos et al.

As has been said, **Martin Professional** has an eye to the interior architectural lighting market for its new MiniMACs, Profile and Wash. Sculpturally stylish, the head is suspended from a single arm and the two fittings, between them, offer the essential ingredients to bring a taste of theatricality to the retail environment. That is not to say that they won't make it onto small dancefloors also.

**Pulsar** took its new flagship product - the Masterpiece 216 (an ongoing product development for the original Masterpiece 108) - to the US. Capable of driving 512 DMX channels, the unit is now in full production and the first shipments were made recently.

**Robert Juliat** has appointed a new distributor in North America in the shape of Canada-based SSP who also handle Compulite there. Juliat were flushed with the

success of their new Cyrano followspot, the joke being in the 'long nose' of the beast, though the performance of the instrument is certainly no laughing matter. Prime features are 2.5kW HMI effective over 100m, zoom from three degrees to eight degrees using quartz optics, full iris, slide gobo, colour and frost on flip levers, remote dimming, electronic or magnetic ballast to choice and numerous other nice touches. As the name suggests, quite a performer. Juliat also confirmed its agreement with WWG to develop the





Fantôme automated luminaire, having its second outing on their stand, as commercial product. Aside from the award-winning WYSIWYG and Horizon combi, Rosco released Fusion FX, which allows designers to see, adjust and record the results of combining any of Rosco's gobos in real time. Focus, speed and direction can all be simulated.



Selecon was another company showing an architectural spot with theatrical pedigree based on the MR16, this one, called Aureol, with facility to add dichroic colour, diffusion, gobo or a lens tube with framing incorporated. Perhaps even more interesting was its Finelite image scroller, a joint development with Angstrom Stage Lighting, which enables any Selecon Pacific to become a scenery or effects projector shunting up to 24 transparencies. Stage Technologies demo'd its Solo rigger's remote. In conjunction with ST's standard control consoles, Solo allows variable speed control of all axes in an integrated stage automation system. For smaller systems it will also fly solo!

Strand Lighting was making less ballyhoo about its SL Series luminaires than we might have expected, despite the fact that the SLs must be new to most American lighting designers. However, it proudly unveiled its 300 Series of modular consoles which start from 24/48 channels right up to 600 channels, using the Strand S Buss to link modules as far apart as 300 feet to a central processor, thus adapting the successful principle established by standard PC-style architecture. ParkNet is Strand's new lighting management system: developed with theme parks in mind, it will manage events scheduling using an astronomical clock to time events throughout a calendar year.

Tracoman, who seems to have been lying low since parting company with Martin Professional, came back with a splash, if not a bang, at this year's LDI with the Coemar distribution in the USA and with Marcel Fairburn on board to open distribution channels for the company. Coemar had the new CF4 HE hard-edge yoke luminaire which incorporates colour mixing, zoom and focus in one package. Aside from Mobil Tech's structures, the Hollywood, Florida-based company, was also promoting the Con-Dome, though they had changed the name to protect against national

sensibilities. Tomcat was demonstrating a new item - hanging frames for PA systems. These are simple trapezoidal frames for close couple systems - there's no facility for varying the angle of wrap. The company has also made a modification to its standard truss; by increasing the wall thickness of the four main cords to 3/16ths, truss joining can be effected by conventional gusset plate to gusset plate or via pre-drilled holes for spigot and pin joiners.

We all liked the simplicity of Total Structures' MkII version of their IT pre-rigged truss. Designed for automated lights, a simple ratchet crank has been added to the mechanism to enable the lamps to be rapidly and easily deployed using a socket wrench or battery-powered electric drill with socket driver.

At last we got to see what Vari-Lite had in mind when it finally caved in to industry pressure to offer products for sale. In keeping with tradition, Vari-Lite is sticking to its number system, so the VL2201 is a 400W automated spot luminaire but with turbo light output, courtesy of a dichroic coated reflector and superior optics. It offers 3:1 zoom, 11 colours and gobos, five rotating gobos, iris, strobe and full field dimming. No fans are used. The VL2400 is more strictly a series of automated wash lights with a choice of Arc or Incandescent lamps and flood or collimated beam options from 10 degrees to 55 degrees. The parabolic optical system is paramount to the quality of the beam, Vari-Lite told us, and colour-fading is improved and speeded up to less than 0.35 seconds. Both units are power factor corrected.



Xenotech-Strong was finally able to show the production version of its massive 7kW, P-3 image projector together with the first American made RazorHead, and a new slimmer ChromaScope, WWG's large frame convolving colour changer for floods and searchlights.

*L&S's Tony Gottelier and Vari-Lite's Rusty Brutsché with one of the two new products that will now be sold direct Gareth Balderstone (Lampo), Luciano Salvati (Techni-Lux), Carlo Dario Pezzini (Lampo) and Marcello Bertini (La Novalight)*

PRG didn't neglect their wider remit as a leading provider of lighting to all parts of the presentation industry, with many of the Group's principal officers in attendance, Production Arts in particular were strongly represented on the stand with a range of large format projectors.

One UK company had our American cousins in the Opera world reaching for their purchase orders. RAT Music Stands is now producing a very stylish version of its well-known product with much reduced light spill and, believe it or not, a custom slot for the gel. So no more gaffer tape in the orchestra pits of the world!

Triple E has designed an interactive CD-ROM which the company hopes will revolutionise the way you choose and order track curtain and effects. Operation is remarkably simple and allows the specifier to configure Triple E track on screen thanks to animated curtain and scenery effects. The company also picked up Widget of the Year Award for its Uni-Ring designed for the rapid connection and disconnection of drapes, cloths and cables.

Lampooned by TMB at PLASA for an alleged assault upon the beaver population of Colorado Springs, Wybion brought some good humour to an otherwise serious expo' by using a beaver suited actor to highlight the virtues of its Autopilot system. Company founder Keny Whightlight confided that there will be a new Autopilot 2 in a year or so, re-engineered specifically to handle the profusion of new intelligent fixtures.

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# In Profile...

L&SI Talks to the Industry Trend-setters

**H**aving seen the concert industry become more serious and businesslike over the last two decades, Moray McMillin believes strongly that this should be supported by better training and education for engineers. "You need places like the SAE for general audio training, but there is a need for more specific live sound courses. I'd like to be involved with that - when I can't drag myself around the world any more! At the moment, the only way to learn is by practice."

So how does an engineer keep a handle on the quality of the sound for which he is, ultimately, responsible? "I used to record show tapes for myself, but in all honesty, by the time you come to listen to them again, you can't remember the details of an



and I am sure that designers like Christian Heil don't either. It must be only a matter of time before we arrive at a more up-to-date transducer - the cone speaker has been around for a long, long time. Ultimately, we may well see big touring systems with a single large transducer per side - the possibilities are very exciting."

As most engineers seem to end up in the business by accident, it is interesting to discover that McMillin's early interests were, on

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McMillin has recently put this philosophy into practice: "I've taken two people out on the road at the start of their careers - and now they're both doing very well."

As well as handling sound for P.I.L. and Suzanne Vega, McMillin's biggest tours have been with some of the world's noisier bands (including Ozzy Osborne and Black Sabbath). His belief is

that the old adage 'good enough for rock and roll' no longer holds true. "When I started, bands were doing gigs for their own entertainment - many of them would be out of their brains before they even got onto the stage, so punters would take pot luck as to whether the show was any good at all. Nowadays, even at the most basic shows, there is an expectation of a certain level of quality - most gig-goers are aware of what's good and what's bad. In the days when we all went around with 4 x 12" columns, the sound would get a mention in reviews if it was good - now it's only featured if it's poor."

individual show. Now, I only make show tapes if people request them. Also, I have a personal superstition - if you don't record a show, chances are it'll be a cracker. I'd rather have to say 'I wish I'd recorded that' than have to lose the tapes at the end of the gig!"

Asking an engineer to recall his or her career peak almost always earns an evasive answer - and McMillin is no exception: "There have been a lot of 'best times'. If you get goosepimples from your own show it makes it all worthwhile. Sometimes, when I've not had so much as a line check, it just happens to come out really well."

In 27 years, touring sound equipment has changed out of all recognition, but McMillin is convinced that one area has had the biggest effect on his and other engineers' work - loudspeaker design: "20 years ago, I'd enjoy one or two gigs in 10, but nowadays, the balance is reversed. The improvements in phase coherence of speaker systems, for example, have made a huge impact. I took the first Meyer MSL3 system out in Europe and it opened my eyes. It's not what's in the box, but the way it's been developed, that counts."

These days, McMillin is a committed V-dosc fan. "I'm a firm believer in the V-dosc design - though I don't believe that it's the ultimate solution -

the face of it, an unlikely prelude to a successful career in live sound. "Though I was an art student, I was always interested in the Navy and wanted to be a helicopter pilot. In many ways, touring is a similar life - you travel as a unit, with your 'armament', and wherever you go, you have to make it all work. I certainly enjoy the camaraderie and the teamwork that goes into a big tour. I'm not a musician - frustrated or otherwise - I'm just a music fan. I wish in some ways that I could follow the language, but I'd rather leave the playing to the professionals!" McMillin is also keen to point out that he is not a boffin - though he has been known to wield a soldering iron when the situation demanded it.

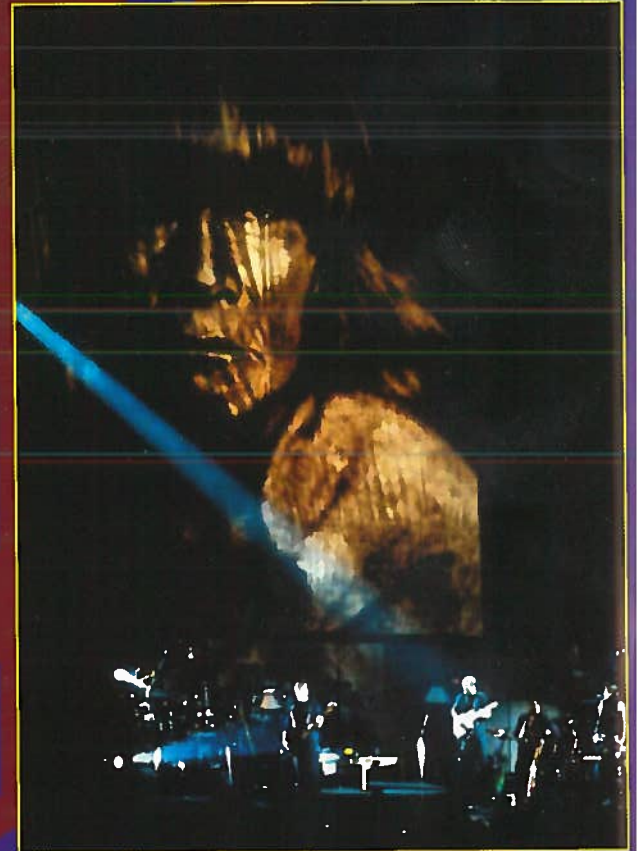
So what pearls of wisdom can an experienced touring pro offer those who are starting out in the business? "Never put off an artist before a show. Take anything the promoter says with a pinch of salt. Above all, trust your ears - it's not just about the gear. You can specify the best equipment and get a good sound - but when you're stuck in the middle of nowhere and can't get what you want, you have to sort it out at the root." ■

Lighting & Sound INTERNATIONAL

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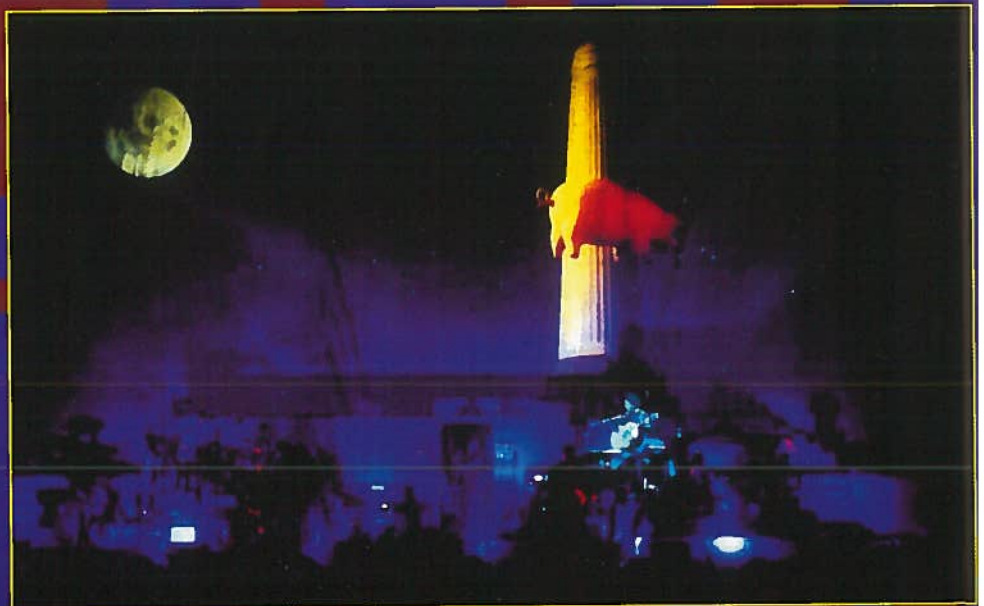
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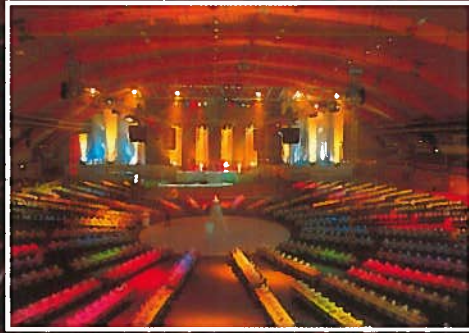
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