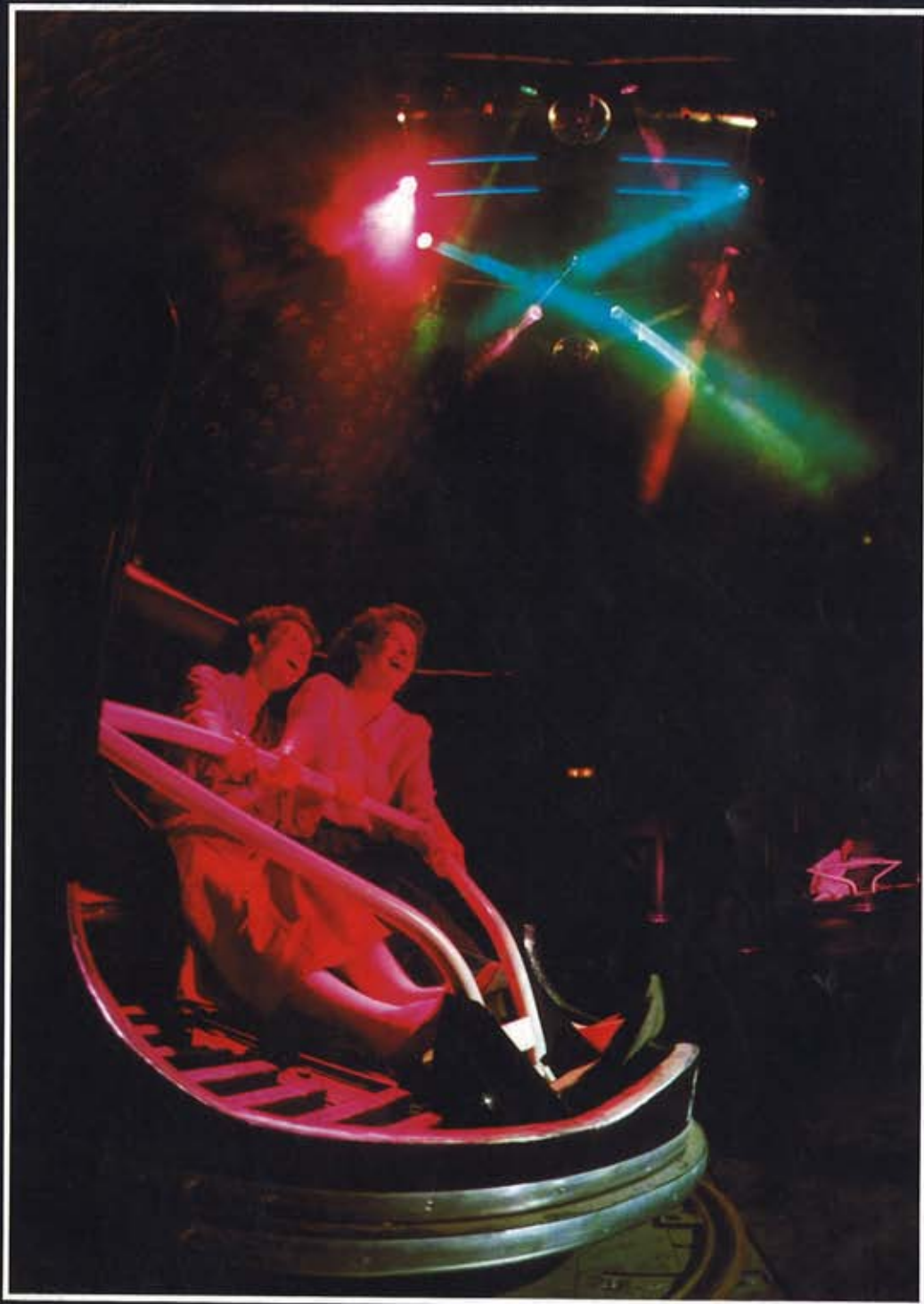


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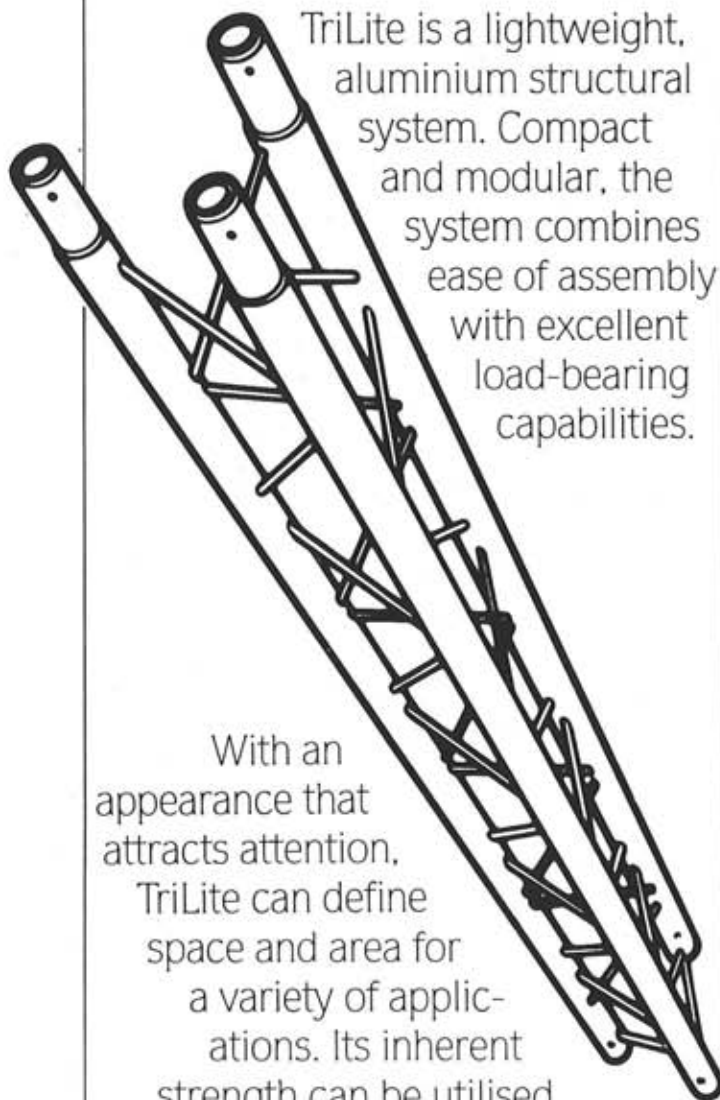
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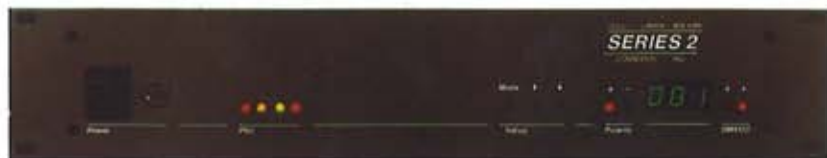
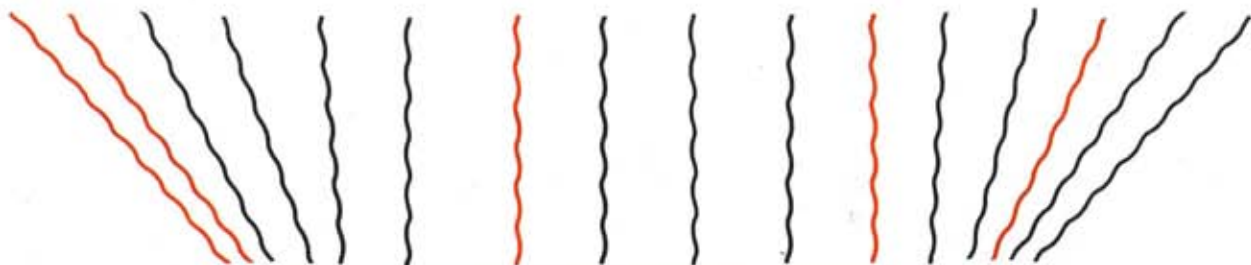


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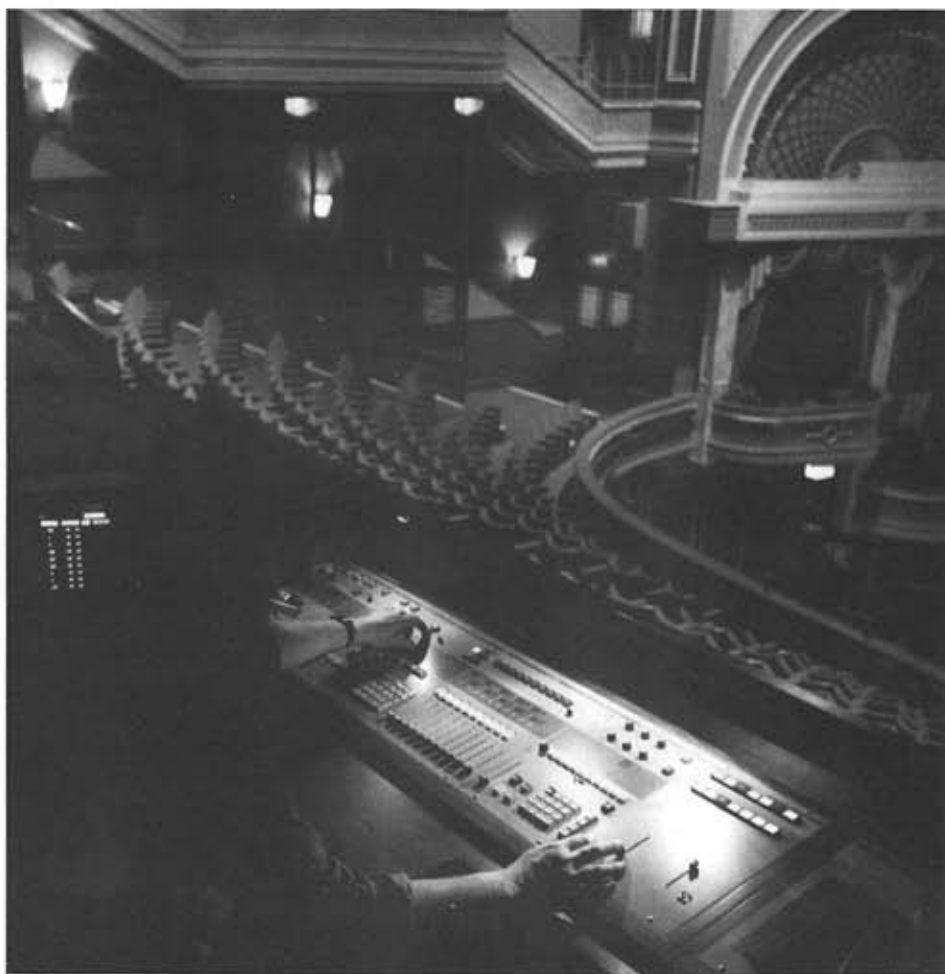
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LIGHTING+SOUND *International*

MAY 1987

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Cover photograph: Studio D Photography, Blackpool.



Lighting control at Southampton's Mayflower Theatre - see feature pages 30 and 31.

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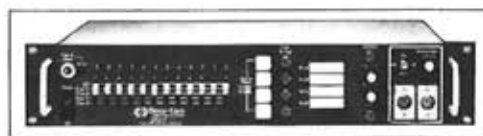
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Pulsar and WB take over Clay Paky in UK

Pulsar Light of Cambridge and WB Lighting of Northampton have been appointed distributors for all Clay Paky products in the UK and Northern Ireland. The move is effective immediately.

Pulsar's Ken Sewell told L+SI that his company had always steered clear of motorised lighting in recent years because of the unreliability of many products introduced on to the market. "However, Clay Paky, together with another Italian company, Coemar, we see as exceptions to the general rule and we are highly impressed with their engineering and quality of product, and look forward to a long relationship with them," he said.

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Open Daily - Except Monday

Francis Reid visits the new Theatre Museum in London



At last it's open. We now have a national Theatre Museum in London. After years of what seemed like a soap opera scripted by W. S. Gilbert with interpolations from Monty Python, the Theatre Museum has opened, (as a branch of the V & A), right where it should be - in the heart of theatreland, Covent Garden market.

Curtain-up was on Shakespeare's birthday, (April 23rd), and it is now open daily, (except Mondays), from 11.00 a.m. in the morning

until 7.00 p.m. in the evening. It costs £2.25 a visit but from 6.30 p.m. to 8.00 p.m. there is free admission to the foyer whose licensed cafe should make it an ideal pre-show rendezvous point.

This foyer includes an elaborately plastered double tier box from Matcham's Palace Theatre in Glasgow and the gilded angel who originally crowned the old Gaiety Theatre in the Aldwych. But the eyes of readers of L+SI are more likely to be caught by the Strand Grandmaster resistance board gleaming proudly in a way that survivors from any industry's steam age always do. This one is situated in a manner that surely represents wish fulfilment for many a departed grandmaster's electric crew; it is built on a perch over the bar! There is a collection of spotlights hung from this bar; they may be historical in that they have departed from the catalogues but most theatres still have them in daily use.

As one starts to descend to the museum's basement galleries, there is a collection of effects machines from the days before the sounds of storm and tempest were electronically processed. This is virtually the end

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of the museum's display of technology although keen eyes will spot a 1716 Drury Lane prop account, (properly countersigned by the management for payment approval), which costs the lighting for King Lear at sixpence a performance. To put this cost in perspective, the same account charges blood at only tuppence. The technically minded will also no doubt revel in such items as designs for Louthborough cut cloths alternatively back and front lit, or prints of the gauze transformation in the 1851 Corsican Brothers.

But the main joy - and the reason for visiting - is to experience the feel of the stage from Shakespeare until today. This is inevitably a potted history of theatre but it is a genuine experience due both to the nature of the ephemera and the way they are displayed. The main gallery is laid out as a darkened tunnel of time with the sequence of items revealed by light. And whether they are posters, props, prints, costumes, documents or whatever, they are able by their associations with performances long past to conjure up a fleeting impression of performance moments so fragile that they can never be re-created.

The use of light and sound to select vision and create atmosphere will strike many readers of this magazine as somewhat primitive but doubtless there will be some fine tuning in future and the installation appears to allow for this. However, there are massive lighting problems in the main paintings gallery where the particular difficulties always associated with glazed frames seem to have been ignored rather than addressed.

There is a lecture theatre where performances could possibly be mounted by the kind of actors who require only planks, passion and minimum light, plus two galleries for changing exhibitions - where one day we shall surely see a display of our heritage of theatre technology including light and sound.

Meanwhile, the message is **go!** Anyone with any interest in entertainment whether drama, opera, musical, circus, puppets, pop or rock, will find something to fascinate, and see that area related to all the other facets of our great performing tradition.

Erasure Sound from Paul Farrah



Erasure monitor desk showing amp racks and outboard gear.

Erasure have recently embarked on a nine-week tour of the UK, Scandinavia and Germany using a 10W rig supplied exclusively by Paul Farrah Sound. The system, which integrates with a lighting rig triggered from Vince Clarke's computer-based MIDI keyboard set-up for

synchronised sound to light effects, is based around NEXO speakers and C-Audio power amps.

Front-of-house requirements are handled by two compact stacks of high-efficiency NEXO Integrated Systems each comprising five 2 x 12" horn-coupled, long-throw bass bins paired to a similar number of mid/high-range cabinets. Each of these houses a horn-loaded high-frequency driver and NEXO patented horn-paired mid-frequency compression drivers, computer designed to produce high SPLs with minimum distortion. Band sidefills and foldback for Vince and the monitor desk engineer are provided respectively by two NEXO Mini Integrated MSIV cabinets and two MSIV stepped wedges. Both types of cabinet are full range housing the same mid/high-frequency components as the front-of-house system, plus carrying custom designed NEXO 2 x 15" bass drivers. Other foldback is supplied by six NEXO MW13 full-range wedge cabinets.

The complete speaker rig, linked throughout to NEXO electronic processor modules, is driven for front-of-house by twelve C-Audio SR606 power amps; for foldback by Rauch DVT250s and NEXO SL2500s.

Mixing consoles chosen for the tour comprise a Soundcraft Series 8000 32-8-2 out-front, and a Paul Farrah Sound custom-built 32-channel D-Series M8 desk in conjunction with Klark Teknik graphics for monitoring.

Front-of-house sound man, Andrew Whittall, is using a wide variety of Paul Farrah supplied outboard equipment including Yamaha Rev-7 and SPX-90 digital reverbs and D-1500 delay, DBX-160X and 165 Compressor/Limiters and Klark Teknik graphics. Mics comprise AKG D-330s and, for singer Andy Bell, a Sennheiser SKM-4031 radio mic and Diversity receiver system.

Pyramid Selling

Loudspeaker and PA manufacturers McKenzie Acoustics have struck a deal with New Technology Marketing of Cairo to distribute their range of drivers, chassis and accessories throughout Egypt.

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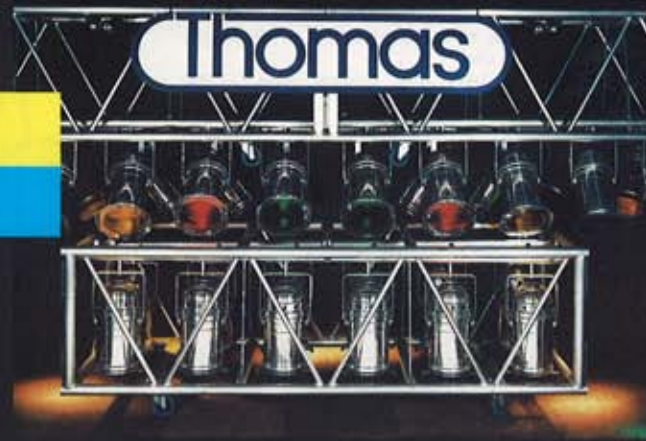
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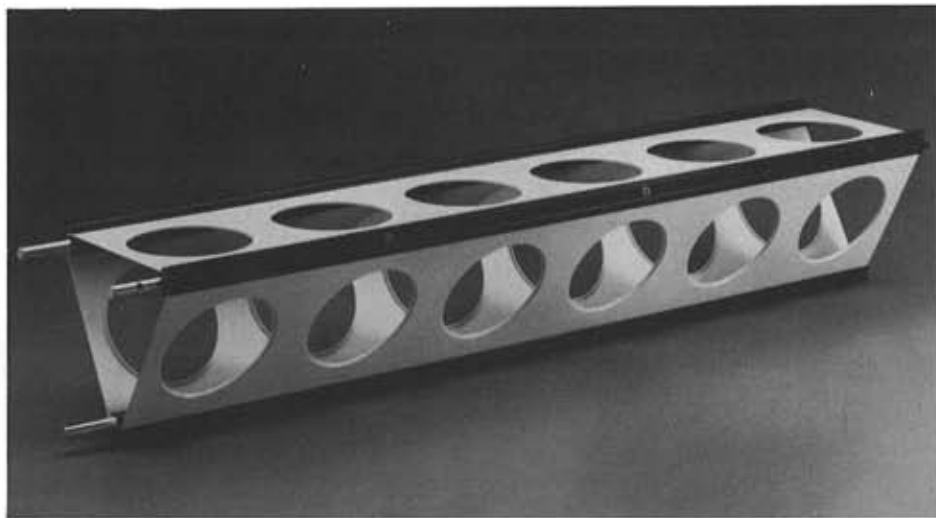
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State-of-the-art Spaceframe

Late of Optikinetics, Colin Freeman and Ted Jarvis have just launched 'System Freestyle' under the banner of their new company of the same name. And they've certainly come out with a product that has a totally different 'look' about it. Gone are the diagonally laced structures that are currently the norm on many other systems.

"A great deal of thought and design expertise has gone into the product," Colin Freeman told L+SI. "By eliminating the need for welding, System Freestyle has a marvellous engineered look about it - clean, graceful lines that will make any designer sit up and take notice. Like all the best ideas, simplicity is the key. Using a panelled configuration means that cabling is concealed, and plain panels are offered as a no-cost option. Club names and company logos can be cut from the panels using a computer-controlled laser, and then lit from within.

"Fluorescent lighting can be fitted into the system and, when combined with externally mounted spotlights, will provide for any commercial office requirement. Even the communications systems can be run through the structure. Especially worthy of note is our method of suspending items from the system. No ugly and expensive G clamps are necessary - instead a beautifully neat and simple hexagonal boss is employed. Just insert, twist, and it's locked in place - anywhere on the structure!"

"With decor panels and shelves as part of the system, the shopfitting potential is obvious, and it is available in standard bay widths, with fully adjustable shelving. The unique method of construction also provides another huge plus - two tone colour schemes. With the ability to paint panels and trim separately, and over 700 colours to choose from, literally any corporate scheme can be faithfully reproduced. "I am sure imaginative designers from a wide range of disciplines will welcome this product with open arms," said Colin Freeman. "System Freestyle is proof that the space frame has finally come of age."

For further information contact System Freestyle, Lordgate Works, London Road, St. Ives, Cambs PE17 4EZ telephone (0480) 65212.

Australia Goes Turbosound

Creative Audio, the Turbosound Agent for Australia, has recently installed a total of 16 Turbosound TMS-4's at Sydney's prestigious Entertainments Centre.

The Sydney Opera House is possibly the best known Australian concert hall however, in Australia, the multi-purpose Sydney Entertainment Centre is widely regarded as the country's premier venue, certainly in terms of popularity and variety of use.

Opened in 1983, the Centre seats 11,500 (equivalent to one and a half times the capacity of London's Albert Hall) and averages over 250 event-days per year. The Centre can be configured to provide a variety of different formats: from 'lyric theatre' mode, providing seating for 3,000, with division curtains creating a conventional proscenium arch theatre, to 'concert mode', when the stage area is located at the extreme western end of the hall, allowing a capacity in excess of 11,000.

The Centre's designers had originally fitted a distributed sound system of processor-based loudspeakers which unfortunately suffered from severe problems of intelligibility, especially during events like tennis and boxing where audience noise levels are high. The system also lacked the flexibility to cope with the Centre's diverse needs. It was soon realised that the only way to address these problems was to fit a new, high-grade sound reinforcement system, Turbosound said.

Their primary requirements were to achieve perfectly intelligible amplified speech (even at high volume levels), hi-fi-quality music replay, and to provide even sound coverage throughout, even with the hall in a variety of configurations. Full sound reinforcement would only be required from the system in reduced seating modes.

Tenders were invited from many of the world's leading loudspeaker enclosure manufacturers, the contract being awarded to Turbosound only after the equipment was subjected to a rigorous, year-long testing and selection process.

Dennis Braham, operations manager for Sydney Entertainments Centre, has reported that the use of the Turbosound TMS-4's in two complementing, versatile clusters has achieved excellent results in all applications, and that the venue was "very happy" with the new installation.

New Venue for Sound Comm

The 38th Exhibition of the Association of Sound & Communications Engineers is taking on a new look with a wider concept of the sound and communications industry and a new venue, the Business Design centre in Islington, London. It is being held from 19th-21st May.

The Exhibition is set to reflect a broad range of applications for communications, including sound reinforcement, public address, telecommunications CCTV, and audio monitoring and visitors will have the opportunity of seeing the latest developments in manufacturing, as well as recent advancements in supply, installation and maintenance services.

The Association of Sound and Communications Engineers, in conjunction with the Institute of Sound and Communications Engineers, the Association of Professional Entertainment Hire Companies and the Communications Marketing and Servicing Association will be presenting a series of papers, mapping developments within the industry, which will run concurrently with the exhibition.

From Norway to UK

Phase Audio Limited of Market Harborough have recently obtained UK dealership for the Dynamic Precision Power Amplifier No.1, a new product designed and manufactured in Oslo and aimed principally at larger venues, hire companies, and recording studios. Stock has recently arrived in the UK and is available for demo/test purposes.

For further information contact Phase Audio UK Limited at 80 St. Mary's Road, Market Harborough, Leicester LE16 7DX telephone (0858) 31717.

New from Powerdrive

A brand new Powerdrive Lighting + Audio Stand colour folder and A2 wall chart is now available from Cerebrum Lighting Ltd.

These technical leaflets show the complete range of stands and fittings available from the range. Also shown are the re-designed range of professional theatre stands which includes a heavy duty follow spot stand as well as the new Powerdrive range of loudspeaker wall and ceiling brackets. These were designed with Ramsa speakers in mind but will also fit Bose and the new range of Celestion SR1 speakers.

For your copies contact The Sales Department at Cerebrum Lighting telephone 01-390-0051.



"It's the master plan to Finnish 'Cats'".



The management and staff of Soundtracs plc who have just won the Queen's Award for Export Achievement for the second time.

Queen's Awards for Six of the Best

Amongst the record number of Queen's Awards given this year the professional audio industry has scooped six for Export Achievement - a remarkable achievement in itself from an industry that consists mainly of smaller companies.

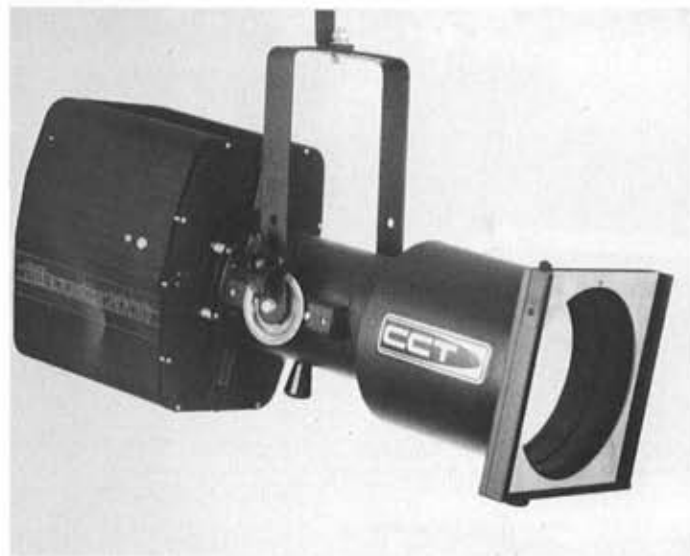
The winners are Dearden Davies Associates, Penn Fabrications, Solid State Logic, Soundtracs, Total Audio Concepts and Turbosound.

New Silhouette from CCT

CCT have recently introduced a completely new 'Silhouette 2000W' lamphouse - styled as the 'Silhouette 2000'. Although maintaining the well known 'Silhouette' appearance of lamphouse with interchangeable lens tubes, just about everything else is new. The reflector optics have been completely re-designed giving superbly improved performance over its predecessor. A rear knob gives lead screw control for trimming the reflector from peak to flat beam.

The side extrusions have been designed to the mechanical thermal and aesthetic objectives introduced by CCT in its 'Starlette' spotlights. The usual 'Silhouette' convenience and safety features are maintained including plug-in lamp chassis, optional yoke adjustment for best balance and a range of gate accessories. All standard 'Silhouette' lens tubes can be used with 'Silhouette 2000'.

Also introduced into the 'Silhouette' range is a new 5 degree, 10 inch diameter non zoom lens tube. This has been designed with the long throws found in many of today's entertainment venues very much in mind.



The new Silhouette 2000 from CCT Theatre Lighting.

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Stardream Roadshow - part of John Barnett's Stardream operation since the late seventies.



'The Village', Blackpool - lighting design and sound by S.A.V. Limited.

Lights Fantastic

L + SI's day out in Blackpool with John Barnett, managing director of Stardream Audio Visual.

John Barnett, managing director of the Blackpool-based Stardream Group of Companies, offers 'services to the entertainment industry' on his business card. And in a resort town as unique as this one you've got to be prepared for almost anything - from party hats to the latest technology in lighting and sound systems.

The odd thing is that many businesses in the town often look outside the area for experts in the field, while in the other direction people looking for the expertise they think will be associated with the town's entertainment activity home in on the place from far and wide, including overseas.

I had a pre-season look at some highlights amongst the resort's leisure complexes in the company of John Barnett, whose Stardream Audio Visual company looks after the supply of equipment to many of the installations involved.

Our first stop was the renowned Pleasure Beach - where else?! This amazing 42-acre complex has been keeping up with the times for over 80 years.

The latest in lighting and sound equipment is used here in some rather extraordinary circumstances. Part of the £1½m spend this year has gone to build a totally new fast and furious big thrill ride - the 'Black Hole'. "It's the ultimate waltzer," said Pleasure Beach managing director Geoffrey Thompson. "Not only is it much faster than normal, it will also be lit by numerous special lighting effects in a completely dark situation, and the whole atmosphere will be enhanced by the throbbing beat of chart music."

The lighting rig, fixed centrally over the 'black hole' and waltzer cars is controlled by a Mode Arc Line control, two Pulsar 6 x 5 amp switch packs, a Mode strobe control SC4, a Mode Unit 4 memory, a Pulsar programmable touch panel, and a Lynx Lighting elevator control - all supplied by S.A.V. An MXF200 looks after corridor sound (for the queues) while two MXF 600's take care of



John Barnett.

internal sound. Other sound equipment includes Citronic EQ250 and SM450 and a Technics RSD200 tape.

Man in charge of technical matters at Pleasure Beach is John Wood, manager of the electronics and sound department, who also has to look after similar subjects at Morecambe, Southport and Myrtle Beach in Florida. A graduate engineer, he spent eight years working with British Aerospace before joining the Pleasure Beach operation. From his workshop-come-office, deep in the heart of the complex, comes the centrally-produced 54 channels of sound that gets fed out to the various rides.

The Blackpool Tower needs no introduction, and neither does the Tower Ballroom -

masterpiece of Victorian magnificence. But tucked away in this First Leisure-owned complex is the Dome of Discovery, there lurks a multitude of industry bits and pieces doing unusual things and set up by installers and designers Sparks Creative Services. Optikinetics, SIS, Mode and Rosco equipment for the project was again supplied by S.A.V.

However, the really big story on the Tower this year is how it will appear at night, because in addition to its unusual lit 'shape', the top level (beneath the viewing balcony) will be ringed with Mode Arc Line programmed for different effect sequences. The equipment was due to be installed immediately after Easter, and the Tower's unit engineer Eric Redfern was as excited as any Blackpool man could be about the likely reaction to it when it's switched on for the first time!

Which leads us to Blackpool's biggest switch-on, the illuminations themselves. The Council's Illuminations Department, which also includes street lighting in its responsibilities, is a totally unique undertaking, as you would have guessed, and their expertise is now strictly limited to the town itself. Gone are the days when other towns and resorts could live up their festive seasons with Blackpool's unwanted lights. The 'specials' at Blackpool won't be seen anywhere else - a hard but no doubt wise commercial decision made to keep the illuminations unique.

The storage sheds and workshops cover acres, with tableau of all kinds from past seasons jostling for space with the latest fibre glass creations. Wires and cables are counted in miles, while controls range in age from just post-war to the latest technology. Many heavy 20-year-old control relay units are still providing sterling service, and able to withstand the long period of sea air and salt spray without a grumble. And they were all engineered by the department's own engineers.



Operator's corner at the 'Black Hole'.



John Wood (left), manager of electronics and sound at Pleasure Beach pictured on site with John Barnett.



Crossed wires can pose a problem in the Council's illumination workshops.

Back in town, and bang up to date, lighting and sound for 'The Village' discotheque, one of the town's most popular, which opened for the first time in May 1986, was designed and installed by S.A.V. Electrical contractors were J. Smith and Sons, another Blackpool company with a national reputation.

* * * * *

John Barnett started his Stardream operation in 1978, and at that time business was 90% Blackpool-based. Nowadays 90% of his turnover is from outside the town, with the remaining 10% equalling the 90% of the early days. His introduction to importing and

distribution had come from his father's business with artificial floral work, and he coupled this with hobbies in electronics and working as a DJ.

With a fellow DJ Steve Edwards he decided to get together a major mobile show. It was launched as the Stardream Roadshow, and its first major client was Mecca - at Tiffany's Ballroom in Blackpool - and from there they toured various other Mecca establishments up and down the country.

"People saw the show and said it was fantastic, and started to ask how they could get hold of the equipment," explained John Barnett. "I told them. But then we set up a consultancy to advise people, and went on to start supplying them. Le Maitre and Optikinetics were our first contacts - and now we're one of the biggest in the North. We move quite a lot of gear.

"Steve was the front man at that time, and I worked behind the scenes and put up the money," said John. "Eventually, after a long illness, he left the country and moved to Canada."

The operation grew very fast, particularly in the supply of carnival novelties, and turnover was increasing dramatically. "We purchased the freehold of this building in 1981, and financially we are very stable, with large cash reserves."

In his 10,000 square feet of space John Barnett operates the Stardream Group as three trading units. Party House Limited supplies the carnival novelties, S.A.V. looks after sales and hire of equipment, whilst Stardream Limited acts as the holding company and also trades, looking after special functions and the Roadshow.

The S.A.V. arm is the Stardream operator in the lighting and sound industry, and installation companies provide the bulk of the



Eric Redfern, unit engineer for the Blackpool Tower complex.

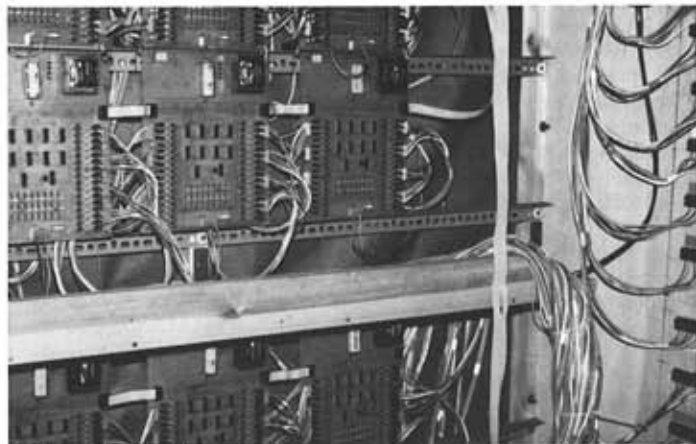
business coupled with the supply of equipment through the trade. Most major names in equipment have S.A.V. on their dealer lists and the company recently became a Northern distributor for both CCT Theatre Lighting and Tannoy Limited. In 1986 he joined the network of Bose Soundshops.

John Barnett is now at a stage where he is building up major contacts within the industry. "We are shipping equipment all over the country, and the service we offer is the most important aspect of our business," he told me.

Latest projects for S.A.V. include the supply of equipment for Tobysound installations, and in 1988 he is committed to an expansion into the educational and theatre markets to widen his sales front.

John Offord

BEHIND THE ILLUMINATIONS



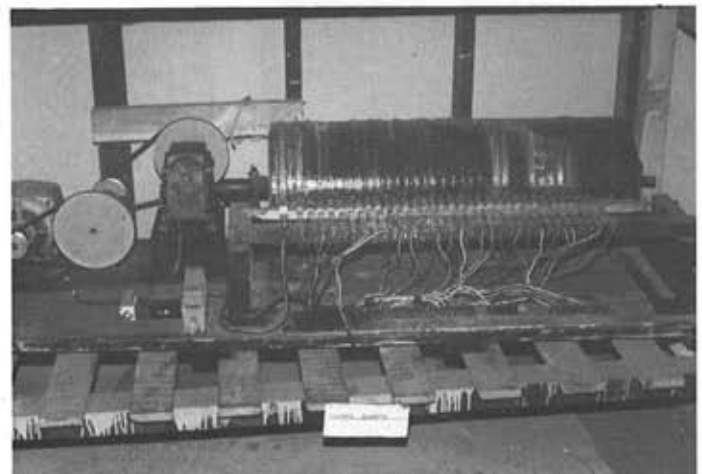
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The Wonder of Woolworths

Lighting designer Durham Marengi describes the recent Woolworth's Managers Conference at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham.

On the 27th of March 1986, Hall 5 at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham was the venue for a large-scale conference held by Woolworths for the 1300 managers of their British stores. The theme for the event was 'A Great Deal', and was aimed to both inspire the managers with Woolworth's future plans and celebrate the company's current success.

The conference commenced at 5.30 p.m. with a conventional lectern and screen presentation in a star-cloth-walled auditorium. After an hour-and-a-half of numerous short speeches interspersed with Clive Cobbs' excellent audio visual modules, the 45ft high star-lit wall moved aside to reveal a 120ft long, 40ft high wall of water changing colour and putting into silhouette six display stands of Woolworth's products, which were subsequently lit up. The water wall then dropped to reveal a vast area of fairground rides and side shows reached by a bridge over the water pond, which was now a display of water sculptures and moving light patterns. Finally the audience became aware of a huge circus tent 120 metres away at the far end of the hall where they would be dined and entertained by Les Dawson and a spectacular cabaret.

The managers were invited down from their seats and walked through the exhibitions, across the bridge, and into the fairground where they participated heartily both on the rides and at the bar! At 8.30 p.m. they were invited into the festoon-lit tent and seated at their tables. Throughout the meal they were entertained by a pianist at a white grand piano revolving on top of the circular stage and after an opportunity to "freshen up" the cabaret began.

A ringmaster then strode on to the 30ft diameter stage and introduced a troupe of circus acts, dancers and the orchestra, who moved around the audience creating a carnival atmosphere as four follow spot operators, in full view of the audience, climbed rope ladders up to their lanterns wearing pantomime hats.

The dancers then moved into 'Welcome to the Pleasuredome' lit by 32 of the new Vari-Lites accompanied by different chase patterns in the festoons above the audience. They were joined by four singers who performed 'Celebration'. Next, the star of the cabaret, Les Dawson, was introduced and entertained both at the piano and roving about his 'audience in the round'. All these cabaret elements were filmed and thrown live on to three video screens around the tent.

After Les Dawson came a Vari-Lite light show and a circular truss of aircraft lamps flew out, up into the chimney to distract from the dancers who were concealing themselves under trap doors in the stage floor. The singers came on stage to perform 'We are the champions' - lit only by follow spots and the ultra-violet blue wash which Vari-Lites create so well. They accompanied a 'candid' video of the managers themselves earlier in the evening - arriving, looking at the exhibitions, and enjoying the fairground. This was a quite excellent piece of instant

video, the cameramen having been on most of the rides themselves! At the end of the raucous applause that followed they were led straight into 'We will rock you' with the dancers climbing up through smoke filled trap doors.

Finally, the singers broke into 'We are the champions' and one entire half of the tent flew away to reveal the fairground active once more, the wall of water lit entirely differently, and the fireworks display culminating in the launching of numerous confetti cannons. This spectacular finale had the managers singing and dancing on the tables and the stage, and for a short time even the revellers and most of the crew and production team were still to be seen on the dodgems at 2.30am!

So much for what happened on the night. Here is how the lighting of the event was achieved.

The brief called for the scale of the event and the lighting of it to echo the Woolworth's 'great deal' theme, i.e. a great deal of colour, a great deal of movement and effects, and a great deal of equipment.

The lighting fit-up commenced eight days before the show with a freelance crew of ten people under the able guidance of Nick Jones, the production electrician. The show was split into four areas and was rigged when and where the Unusual Rigging Company's trusses appeared. Steve Colley and his men assisted us a great deal by leaving most of our trusses on motors at ground level. Normally on a show of this scale the lighting positions are 'dead hung' due to a shortage of motors and have to be laboriously rigged from access equipment. All the lighting trusses were rigged at 12 metres so as not to block the view of the scale of the hall from either end.

The audience arrived on coaches and walked into the hall through a mock car park and across a zebra-crossing on a road complete with street lamps and belisha beacons, which led to a Woolworths store front which was the entrance to the foyer of the auditorium. This area was lit as at night-time with an overall blue wash from 5kw fresnels and moonlight steel on the cars and lorries from Par cans. The large fresnels were chosen to make this rig look different from the rest of the event and to give the area the feel of a 'Royal Premiere' television lighting arrangement. A pool of white light was provided at the store front to enable the video crew to shoot footage for their 'candid' video later, without spoiling the night-time feel of the walk-in area.

The auditorium's entire facing wall was a 14 metre high, 55 metre wide star-cloth with a large screen above a single lectern. The audience seating was lit in a warm pink but the aisles were lit with carefully focused Lekos in a light lavender to enable the cameras to record the audience entering but again without spoiling the ambience of the auditorium. The lectern was lit with ten profiles from all angles iris-ed to head and waist. This might seem a lot, but to light a speaker standing on a white stage whose picture is

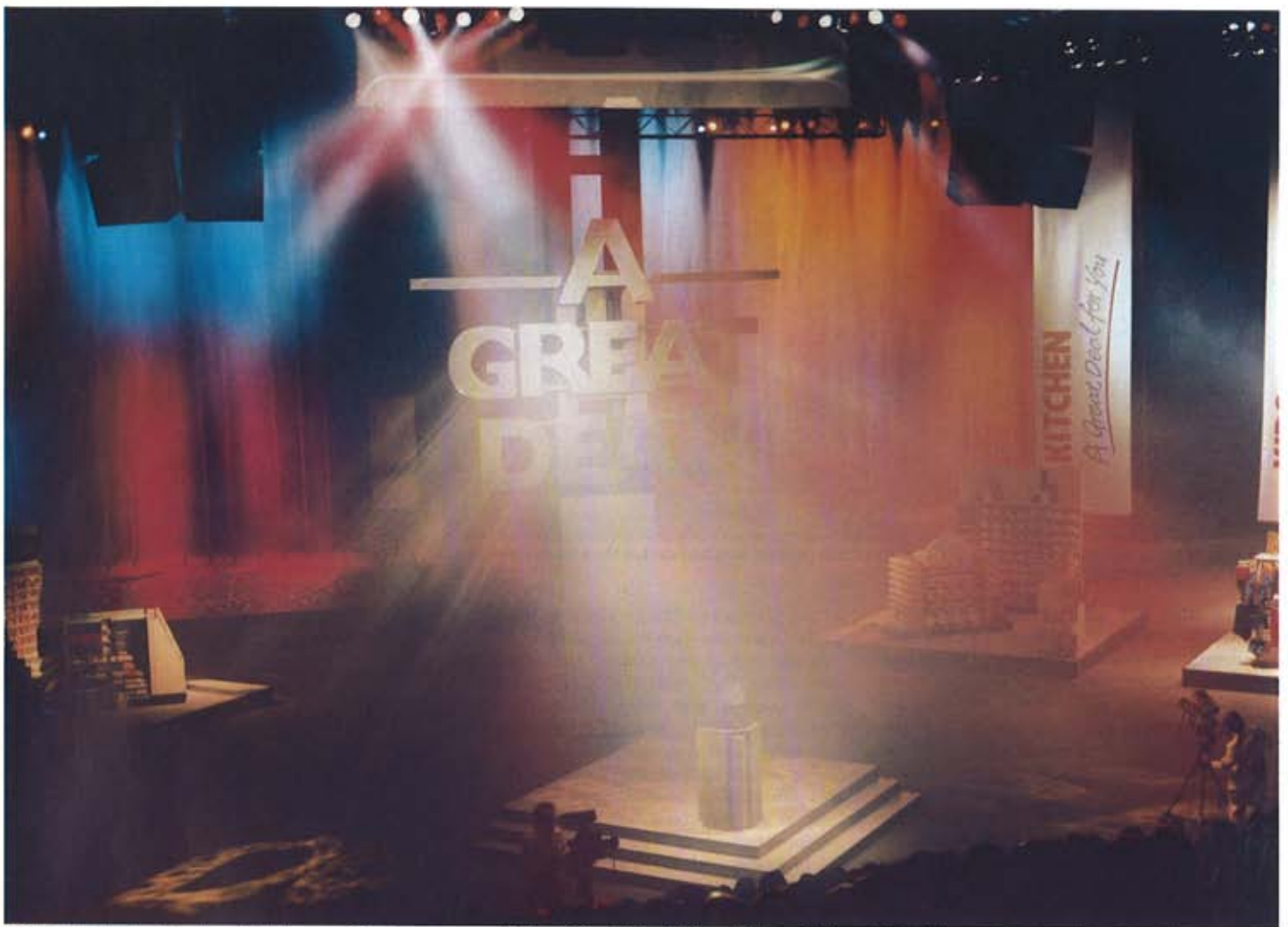
shown live above his head requires a high light level that won't bounce up onto the screen. The floor was lit in a blue wash which, along with a dozen 'A Great Deal' gobos could be randomly chased during the reveal sequence.

Once the star-cloth curtains had opened the wall of water was back-lit by rows of Par cans in three colours patched so that the colours could be mixed in a 'Battenburg' pattern. Once the water dropped to the smaller water sculptures the trusses were flown to a lower dead and the aircraft lights were used in dissolving colours from both directions to light them. Two smoke processors were used to emphasise the beams on the moving ACL trusses, and to enhance two 1kw beamlights lit a large mirrored 'A Great Deal' sign.

The exhibition, having been revealed in red, was over-lit in white to provide an area where good video footage could be taken without detracting from the water's lighting. The audience crossed the steel bridge between two banks of 650w ACL's focused to simulate a suspension bridge's supporting cables. The fairground area was lit by the lights on the rides but six Par 36 Molefays were added to wash the whole area in case of power problems. These lanterns proved to be useful later when they were turned on as house-lights to persuade people to leave without resorting to the Hall's sodium lighting.

Finally, the cabaret area inside the festooned tent posed a few problems in terms of rigging and sight lines, as it was enormous, in-the-round, and the action was to be videoed live. URC manfully overcame the rigging problems, and provided four excellent spot positions using 360 degree spot mountings on which the operators could swing about like nose-gunners from a Star Wars movie. The tables, as well as having their own candles, were lit with alternate pink and blue Par cans; having the ability to provide bright house-lights was useful for getting the audience to take a break or to sit down for the cabaret, as well as providing light for the video cameras to film the reactions of the managers to their show.

The stage was quite large, and being circular posed a problem as light from the far side could dazzle the audience. The rig had therefore to be quite high. Sixteen of the new VL3 Vari-Lites were used to supply a basic wash and 16 VL2's were used to supplement the wash and provide the light show called for in the brief. These Vari-Lites, under the excellent control of Richard Knight, were every bit as impressive as promised. They are very quiet, very quick and when a theatrical-type focus is set up, they return very accurately to their pre-set positions time after time. The VL2, which is the new version of the original Vari-Lite has an HTI source, a wide range of gobos and can be thrown into soft focus. The colour range has also improved and is easier to match to conventional luminaire colours, the colour remaining constant from one Vari-Lite to the next. The VL3 is the new wash luminaire with a custom designed 475w, 53 volt tungsten



A Great Deal - the Woolworth's Managers Conference presentation at the NEC - lighting designer Durham Marengi.



Woolworth's Presentation - the way in.



The star-cloth-backed set for lectures and screen presentations.



The audience make their way over the bridge to the fairground.



The cabaret in full swing.



The wall of water was back-lit by rows of Parcans in three colours, patched so that they could be mixed in a 'Battenburg' pattern.

source, and this gives a beam from the equivalent of a VN5P Par to an MFL Par with a subsequent loss in intensity. The colour system produces over one thousand colours.

The rest of the stage lighting involved a pink and a blue Par wash to 'fill out' the lighting for the video record during rehearsals, and a 'A Great Deal' gobo wash used during the dinner on the piano and stage. A moving circular truss with ACL's, Arc Line and Par 36 scanners was rigged above the stage to give the designer something to do once the Vari-Lites were plotted. Four remote smoke guns were placed under grilled 'manholes' in the set and up-lit to provide

a further effect and to get the smoke as close to the Vari-Lites' beams as possible.

At the end of the cabaret, as the tent wall flew away, the water wall was re-revealed, again back-lit with three different colours. Much equipment was used solely on lighting the water, as it was viewed from both sides and a water wall of this looks totally solid and almost alive when intensely back-lit.

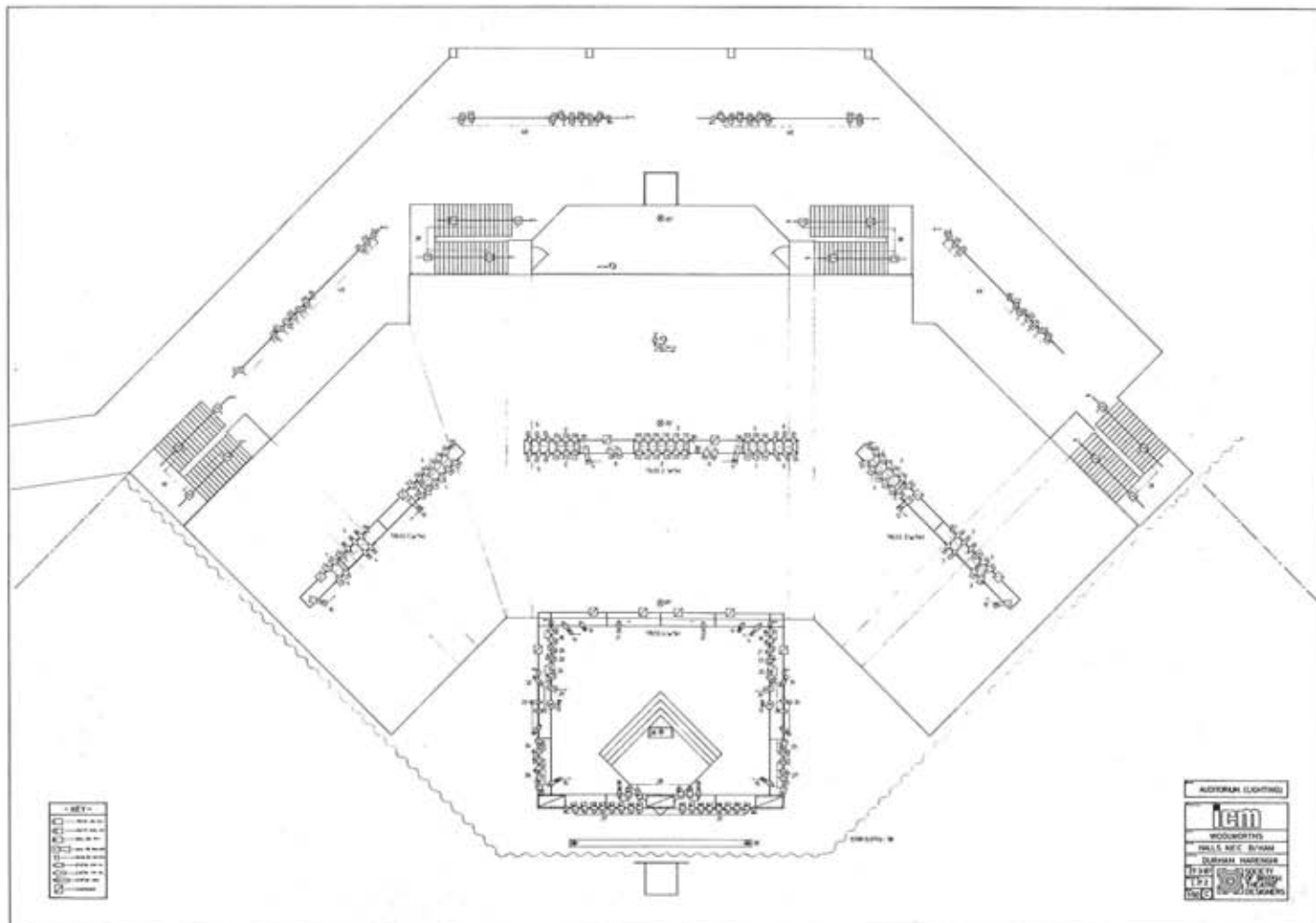
All in all, the show had a great party atmosphere, with a well-managed, excellent set of crews and, apart from the fact that it took more time to draw the lighting plans than to rig the equipment, this Designer had 'A Great Deal' of fun.

Personnel:

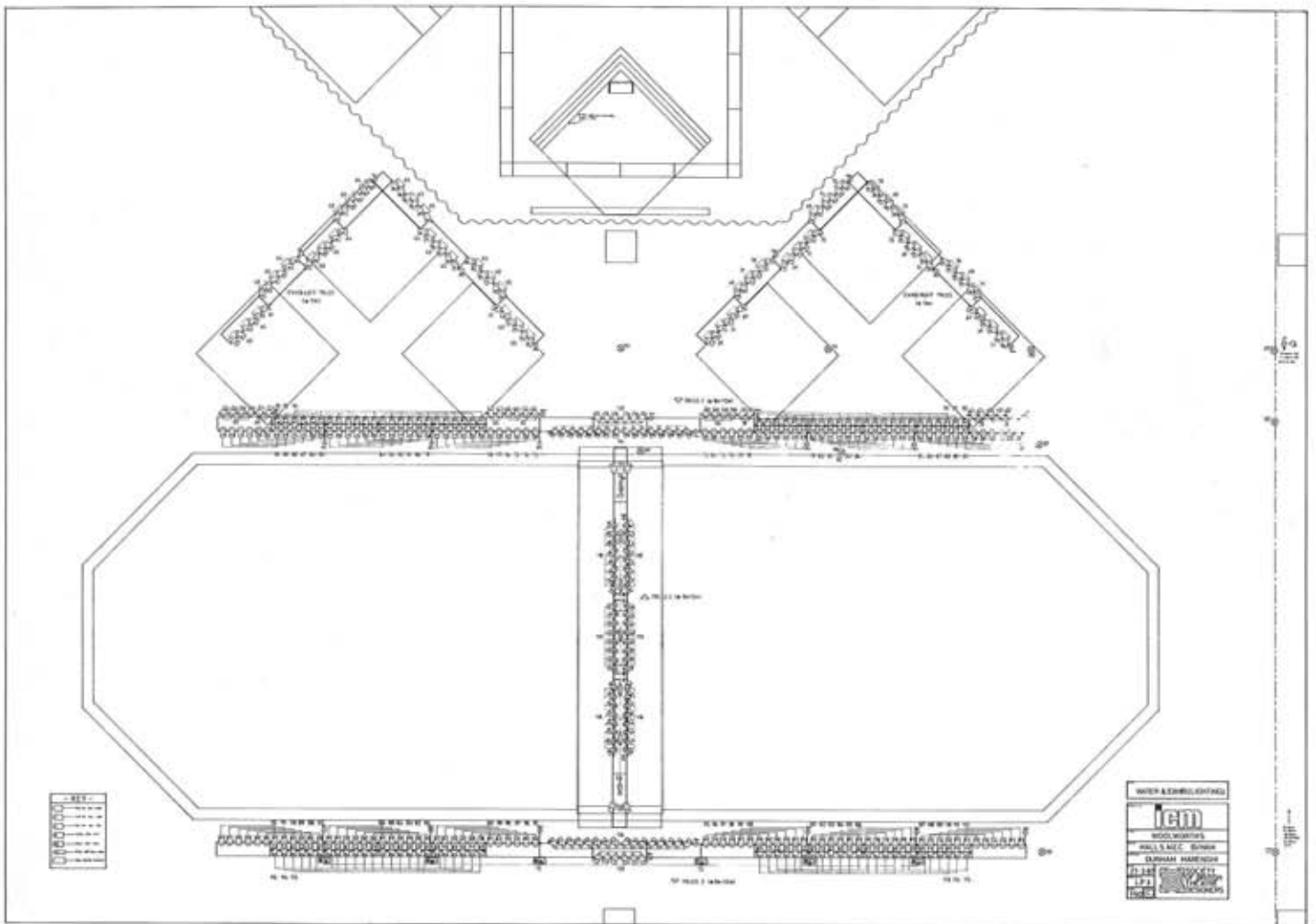
Production Company - ICM International.
 Account Director - Patricia Donovan.
 Creative Director - Clive Cobb.
 Technical Director - Martin Shepherdly.
 Production Manager - Ian Henderson.
 Design Management - Lester Batchelor.
 Sound Design - Richard Rogers.
 Rigging - The Unusual Rigging Company.
 Water - Byll Elliot.
 Video - Creative Technology.
 Lighting Design - Durham Marengi.
 Sound and Lighting Equipment - Theatre Projects Services.
 Lighting Crew - Nick Jones, Nick Moran, Janet Hargreaves, John Tehan, Ian Lamb, Joe LoVetere, Mike Dawes, Paul Maloney, Angus Burns, Mark Basten, Pete Dagnal, Simon Robertson.
 Vari-Lites - Richard Knight, Tim Hall.

Equipment List:

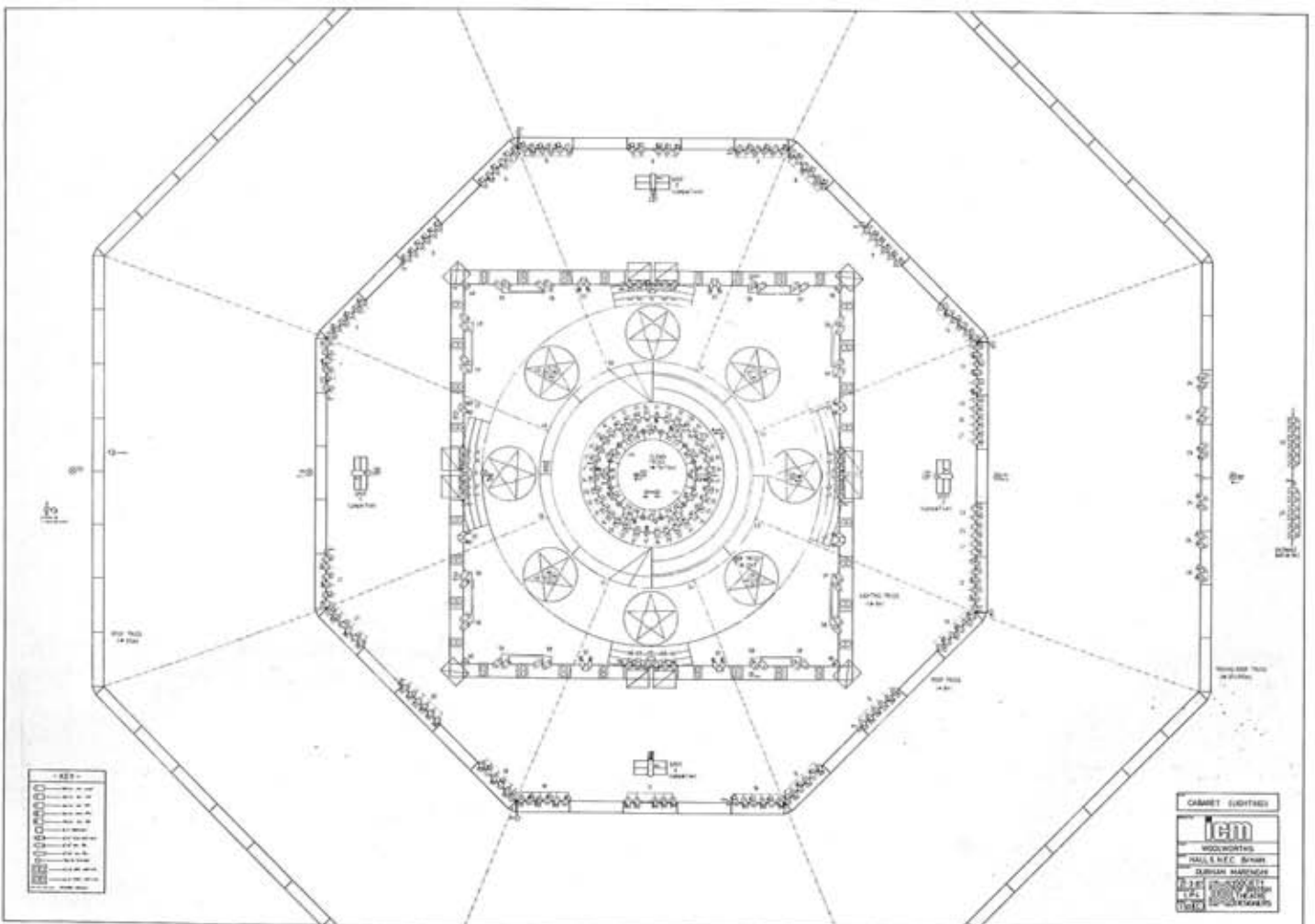
- 16 x 5kw ADB Fresnels.
- 680 x Par 64 Cans.
- 176 x Par 64 250w ACL's.
- 48 x Par 64 650w ACL's.
- 6 x SIL 15 Axials.
- 74 x Lekos (various).
- 8 x Par 36 Ray Lights.
- 6 x Par 36 Mole Fays.
- 12 x Par 36 Scanners.
- 18 x 0.8 Arc Line.
- 16 x Patt 743.
- 8 x 80ft Festoon.
- 4 x PANT Follow Spots.
- 4 x R+V Beam Lights 500w.
- 2 x 1kw Beam Lights.
- 4 x Optimist Smoke Guns.
- 2 x Smoke Processors.
- 1 x 48 Way AVO Rack.
- 3 x 60 Way AVO Racks.
- 1 x 72 Way AVO Rack.
- 2 x 48 Way LMI Racks.
- 2 x 10 x 5kw Racks.
- 2 x 72 Way ZERO 88 Desks.
- 1 x 48 Way ZERO 88 Desk.
- 16 x VL2 Spot Vari-Lites.
- 16 x VL3 Wash Vari-Lites.



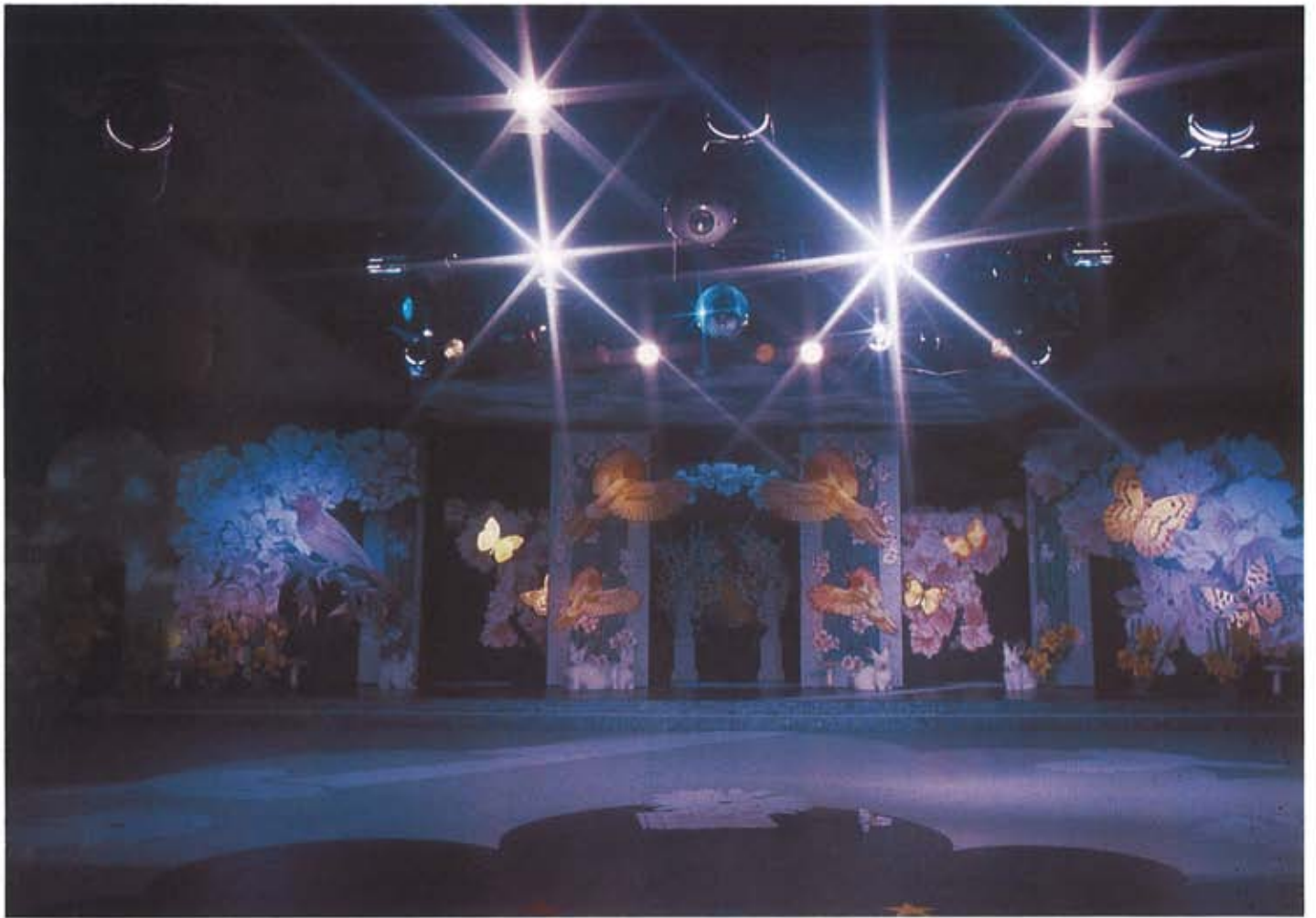
Auditorium Lighting Rig.



Water and Exhibition Lighting Rig.



Cabaret Lighting Rig.



Ready for Miss England - set design by Graham Guest, lighting design by Bill Minto - and the cameras of Thames Television.



Technical chief Robert Goodwin at the Lakeside's Soundcraft desk.

Ladies in Lakeside

Roger St. Pierre talked to Robert Goodwin at the Lakeside Country Club during the set-up for the recent Miss England competition.

Little over a decade ago, Britain had an abundance of plush and exciting cabaret-style dine-and-dance venues where you could eat and drink and enjoy the company of your friends while being entertained by stars of international repute.

Such venues as the Double Diamond Club in South Wales, Manchester's Golden Garter, Caesar's Palace at Luton, Birmingham's Nite Out, the two Fiesta clubs - at Stockton and Sheffield - and, of course, the London West End's Talk Of The Town, all spring readily to mind.

Sadly, all those venues and many more are now defunct, killed off by a variety of factors, not least being the greed of big-name acts who kept demanding ever-increasing fees for their appearances. Having been weaned on a diet of the best, audiences would not accept anything less but were not prepared to live with ever-escalating cover charges either.

One club which has not only survived but actually prospered is the renowned Lakeside Country Club, at Frimley, in rural Surrey.

"We want to avoid becoming a dinosaur," says the club's personable light and sound man, Robert Goodwin. "However, in the long run, we might well end up as a one-off reminder of the golden age of clubs, just as music hall in general is long since dead, but Leeds' Palace of Varieties not only succeeds but thrives.

"Lakeside is now the biggest club in the country, in every sense, and we are getting used as a television venue more and more. In fact, we've extended the back section of the club to accommodate TV's needs. It's good to see that Batley, now known as the Frontier, is back in action and Blazer's in Windsor does well, while a new club called Savva's has been opened at Usk, in South Wales. So, perhaps there's hope for a cabaret scene after all."

Having hosted such acts as Tami Wynette, the late Marvin Gaye, the Drifters, Bobbie Davro, Jim Davison and virtually every other night-club singer and comedian of any worth, and having played host to such major events as the Miss World competition and the Embassy World Masters darts' tournament, Lakeside Country Club seems sure to remain the brand leader.

Besides the impressive main room, which seats 1,300, there's a secondary cabaret room/function suite, (the Canal Suite), 11 squash courts, eight snooker tables and two pool tables. A new 60-room hotel - with convention facilities - is being built to supplement the existing Kingfisher Hotel in the grounds while facilities even extend to an on-site hair-dressing salon and a Mississippi style paddle steamer on the lake itself: "They have dine-and-dance cruises down the canal, to Mitchett and back," said Robert. "We also have a windsurfing club in the summer."

All this is quite remarkable when you consider that the club, which originally opened back on November 27th, 1972, was burnt to the ground one fateful night in 1979 (on November 25th to be precise): "They found the frame of a grand piano and a perfect condition AGK microphone in the rubble -



Lakeside - "the biggest club in the country in every sense".

everything else was destroyed," said Robert. Amazingly, the club was back in action within a year, thanks to the tremendous energy and enthusiasm of boss Bob Potter and his loyal staff.

Over the years, Lakeside has welcomed the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Charles, Princess Margaret, Princess Ann and other members of the Royal Family, as well as such

politicians as Harold Wilson, Ted Heath and Margaret Thatcher. What they have found on their visits is a room with superb sound and light facilities to bring out the very best entertainment value in what is presented on-stage, as well as providing a perfect dine-and-dance ambience.

A Soundcraft Series Four desk takes 40 channels into 16, into eight, into two. It was



Robert Goodwin at the Lakeside controls.



Lighting designer Bill Minto of Thames Television checks out with Robert Goodwin during the final stages of focusing.

installed by Willpower PA who do all the club's sound installation work. "We've also bought an SPX 90," said Robert. "Other com-



Taking care of effects.

ponents in our sound system include Revox reel-to-reel tape deck, Yamaha K540 cassette deck, Ibanez AD230 echo, three MXR 31 band graphic equalisers, Audio Design F600RS limiter, Soundcraft EX4J crossover, a Martin 6kw three-way PA system powered by six 1kw RSD studio master amps and a Bose speaker system.

"A new lighting system has just been bought from AC Lighting of High Wycombe. We've got a Celco Series 2 Thirty 30 channel computer board with soft option and six Zero 88 Rackmaster 610s take care of the audience lighting. There are eight Berkey six-pack dimmers controlling a 96,000 watt lighting rig, controlled through the Celco and an Electrosonic rock board.

"On the rig are 22 AC 1kw cans, 30 Thomas ray lights, 70 1kw fresnels, 20 T84 profiles, 24 aircraft landing lights in banks of eight, 10 Atlas 1kw floods, one Cosmos Ball, four helicopters, four mirrorballs, two UV's, two strobes - and lots more.

"We've got a 30ft by 40ft rising stage and a 26ft revolving stage. Oh, and the latest thing

we've bought is a Sennheiser Mikroport radio which I'm really impressed with.

"When the club was re-built, Bob Potter went for pillarless construction so that everyone gets a clear view of the stage, and the lighting system has also been set up to ensure that there isn't a bad seat in the house."

Now 34 years old, Robert was born at Hyde, near Stockport. He was in bands while at school, and told me: "I went to the careers' master and told him I was going to be in a professional band. He tried to dissuade me - but I realised that I was already making more money playing music than he was making as a careers' officer!

"I went to Germany at 19, running a band out there for a year - it was tough but a very good grounding in the business. I came back to Britain and joined a band working the cabaret circuit. Mike Sweeney, who is now with Piccadilly Radio and Granada TV, was our lead singer, and I was the drummer.

"After a summer season in Jersey I went to work at the Nite Out in Birmingham as a member of the house band and then became musical director at the String of Pearls Club in Wembley before running the band at Blazer's in Windsor for 16 months.

"My first stint at Lakeside was running the band for six months before going out to Dubai for a similar period. When I got back to England I popped into Lakeside for a drink. John Franklin was about to leave so I offered to come in and help run the light and sound system for a couple of months as John eased out of the job and the new person eased in.

"They kept having people come down for interviews but couldn't find the right sound and light engineer so that two-week stint stretched on forever and eventually I was asked if I'd like the job. I've now completed four years here!"

Most acts used to bring in their own PA systems - some of the bigger ones still do - but the club's own system is so good that these days a lot of artists are happy to use it.

"There's a complication if they bring in their own gear," said Robert. "One stage has to go up and down, the other round and round, so that everything an outside PA company brings in has to be plugged in for the sound check then unplugged so that people can dance.

"Our 40 channel desk means that we can cater for virtually any act's needs. While many still prefer their own sound, nine out of ten times I'll do the lighting.

"Working with comedians is good - it's so easy, I even have time for a drink, and to watch the show. Groups like the Drifters are the other side of the coin, with four singers continually switching from one microphone to another, 15 musicians, continuous lighting changes and the need to cue spots. It's hectic and demanding, but because of all the gear we have here, I am able to cope with it single handed."

Robert sincerely hopes that other new night clubs will come on to the scene. "It can only be good for the business as a whole. As it is now, you get new acts appearing on, say, 'Copy Cats', doing really well with a three-minute spot and becoming in-demand with the public. But, because of the lack of clubs, they haven't got either enough material or enough experience to carry off a top-of-the-bill spot at a club like this.

"In the old days, people would learn their craft in the working mens' clubs, appear on TV and then come to Lakeside as seasoned performers."

LIGHTING+**SOUND** *International*

IN OUR JUNE ISSUE

PROJECTION (Tony Gottelier)
ACOUSTIC MEASUREMENT (Ben Duncan)
MAYFLOWER SOUND (David Martin)

PLUS

SIB/MAGIS Report (John Offord)
SOUND COMM '87 Report (Graham Walne)

together with other articles and regular features

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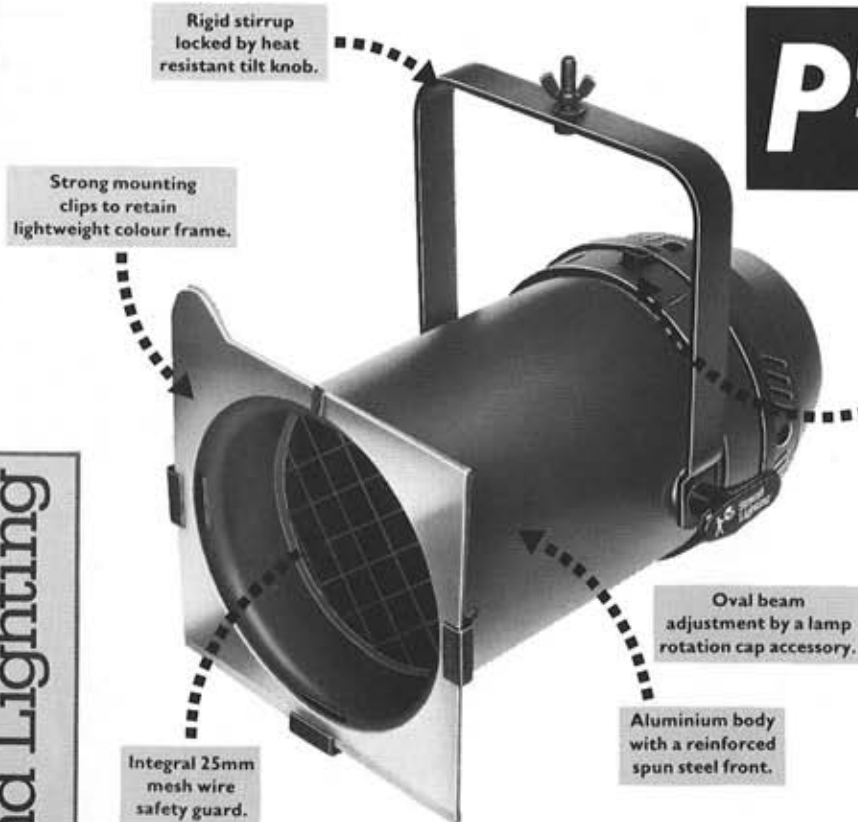
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Strand-Style Strategy

John Offord talks to Russell Dunsire and David Brooks about Strand Lighting's UK and worldwide sales policies.

In recent issues of *Lighting+Sound International* we've talked to both a new Strand dealer, and a former Strand dealer - and also to various companies who supply equipment from both limited and extended lists of other manufacturer's products on an open-house basis. It's a free country, and it's up to any company to play it any way it wants to. But if you are a Strand dealer you have to accept that brand loyalty is paramount. It's part of the deal.

I talked to Strand Lighting's general sales manager Russell Dunsire at the organisation's Brentford headquarters, and asked him for his views on what, in addition to top quality products, had added to Strand's tremendous success in dominating the UK market for theatre and television products?

"As is generally known, Strand lead the world market in the design and manufacture of their products using the most up-to-date technology to produce quality products, competitively priced. What, however, may not be so obvious, but yet has in my opinion made an unparalleled contribution to Strand's success in the UK, is our distributor and field service nationwide network," explained Russell Dunsire.

"Strand realised a number of years ago that whilst many customers wished to deal direct with them as the manufacturer, there were equally as many, if not more, who wished to be serviced with Strand products locally rather than from London. Additionally, with the mass of Strand products in use from Thurso to Penzance, and Aberystwyth to Skegness, it was fast becoming apparent that a nationwide engineering service was necessary to both commission installations and service/maintain equipment, if Strand were to provide the necessary back-up for their customers. An added requirement of both Strand and their customers, was to have available the facility to hire Strand products.

"Out of these needs came Strand's commitment to create and develop a national network of distributors who, being committed to selling and servicing Strand products, could give Strand customers both product (sales or hire) and engineering expertise on a local basis.

"Although in 1980 Strand already had a few distributors who fulfilled some of the required criteria, it has taken until the present to find the top 14 companies covering England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland and the Channel Islands, who could provide all the facilities necessary to become a Strand distributor."

What was the required criteria?

"To ensure Strand customers have the best available local facilities, we make a range of set demands from our distributors," said Russell Dunsire. "We insist that they stock and sell only the Strand range of theatre lighting products. This brand loyalty policy ensures the distributor's staff are, or become, experts on the complete Strand product range, thus ensuring customers get



General sales manager of Strand Lighting Russell Dunsire (left) in his office at Brentford with Ivan Myles, UK sales manager.

expert advice. We also state that they must provide an engineering back-up service to Strand products and that their engineers be trained on product courses run by Strand's Engineering Department. They must also offer a hire service on Strand products, and agree to work closely with each other as a group of distributors."

I asked how dealers were organised, and what their territorial 'rights' were. The explanation given was that dealers are assigned an agreed territory, but if they are invited to tender outside their own area, then they are free to do so, according to Russell Dunsire, although they are not encouraged to advertise or scout for business in other areas.

"Strand get many requests each year from companies wishing to become part of their

exclusive club of UK distributors, but unfortunately very few can meet our requirements. Of course, one or two of our distributors have fallen by the wayside over the years, where they have not continued to meet the criteria required of a Strand distributor, but in each case through selective appointment and training, replacement distributors have been found who go on to give the full range of services expected of a Strand distributor," explained Russell Dunsire.

When a major contract comes up for tender, then Strand retain the right to go direct, just as they have retained their own trade counter. With a project that obviously needs dealing with on a group management basis, then Strand is able to call on all the



Susan Dandridge and David Brooks - co-ordinating marketing plans.

residual skills at its disposal - such as at the recently completed Mayflower Theatre for Southampton Leisure Services featured elsewhere in this issue.

I asked Russell Dunsire to develop Strand's ideas on brand loyalty in a situation where much present activity in the market seems to be moving in a different direction.

"There are, of course, other companies servicing the theatre industry who take an opposite view from Strand and their distributors," Russell Dunsire continued, "and they wish to be 'all things to all men', selling any lighting manufacturer's products. We believe this supermarket approach to selling lighting equipment is a retrograde step for the customer. It is impossible to be an expert on all manufacturer's complete product range, yet expert advice is what all of our customers expect.

"Equally, who can afford to carry spare parts for all companies products and who, if any, provides a back-up engineering service on all the different product ranges they sell? We think none. Only Strand distributors and service agents can provide the high degree of expertise in product knowledge and service back-up on the range they stock, and that range is the Strand Lighting products.

"On the other hand, Strand's manufacturing competitors have all tried to emulate Strand's success with a national distributor and service network, but without any real progress, for there is one other essential ingredient in creating such a network that remains a Strand secret!"

Strand Lighting Ltd is today very much a world-wide business, and recent months have seen some substantial additions to the company, increasing its strength both in distribution and manufacturing. These moves are seen by the organisation to complement the original core companies of Strand - founded in London in 1914, and Century - in New York in 1929.

I took a trip down the corridors of Brentford to talk to UK marketing manager David Brooks, who was busy co-ordinating marketing plans with Susan Dandridge from the US operation at Rancho Dominguez in California. He took me through Strand's international set-up.

"Today, the original companies you mentioned operate under the unified name of Strand Lighting, and this new international name with the associated Rank Organisation gongman logo has rapidly gained recognition and continues to project a very positive image around the world.

"Whilst the two founder companies based in Brentford and Los Angeles remain key centres for marketing and sales direction, as well as R&D, service, central administrative and financial functions, a number of other operations are strategically located across the world.

"In Strand Lighting's European sector of operations companies have been established in the key EEC countries supported by a strong dealer network in surrounding areas. Of these, Strand Lighting GmbH situated



VIP visit to Strand Lighting in Germany. Left to right in the photograph are: Sir Patrick Meaney, chairman of the Rank Organisation; Marvin Altman, president of Strand Lighting; Phillip Race of the Rank Organisation; and Heinz Fritz, who heads Strand Lighting in Germany.

near the historic town of Wolfenbuttel already has a long and successful history in its own right. In Italy, the Quartzcolor production plant has now joined the European operations structure (together with the existing plant in Kirkcaldy, Scotland), and provides studio and location lighting equipment to Strand worldwide. The Quartzcolor Trading company has become Strand's sales and distribution arm in Italy, and will be presenting the full product line at the forthcoming Rimini exhibition. Strand Lighting (France) is poised for expansion as success in this market has outstripped the current scale of operation.

"Attendance on the Strand Lighting stand at the recent SIEL exhibition in Paris confirmed the interest in Strand products in the French market. The added selling strength and technical support at the Paris office will now build up this operation to service the higher level of business.

"Strand Lighting in North America is based in Rancho Dominguez, California with offices in New York and Toronto and a strong dealer network from coast to coast. Electro Controls centred in Salt Lake City has brought an additional dimension to the Strand company with its own line of products and particular strengths in the architectural dimming business.

"In the Far East, our operation is centred on Hong Kong servicing a network of dealers

and recently strengthened with the addition of Strand Lighting in Australia based in Melbourne.

"Perhaps this is sufficient to establish the scope of Strand without becoming a travelogue! One measure of our success is the rapid adoption of Strand's top of the range Galaxy lighting control system in 28 countries around the world and in a series of prestigious venues. Famous opera houses from Germany to Sydney, major theatres and TV studios; from China to Stratford-upon-Avon and Moscow to Japan. And there is a similar success story for Light Palette - the North American equivalent, from Broadway to Hollywood. Expo '86, for example, employed Strand equipment in 11 different theatres as well as several of the national pavilions.

"But, while it is these venues and the lighting boards chosen to go in them that have the glamour, Strand is also a company with strong links in the areas of amateur drama and education. It is the broad product range from simple but effective control boards and dimmer packs and good quality luminaires that have been welcomed and accepted for use in schools as readily as in the professional theatre.

"And this is where the Strand policy of its distributor network is such a major strength in supplying and supporting a wide user base."



Ian Haddon is Strand's newly appointed Australian manager.

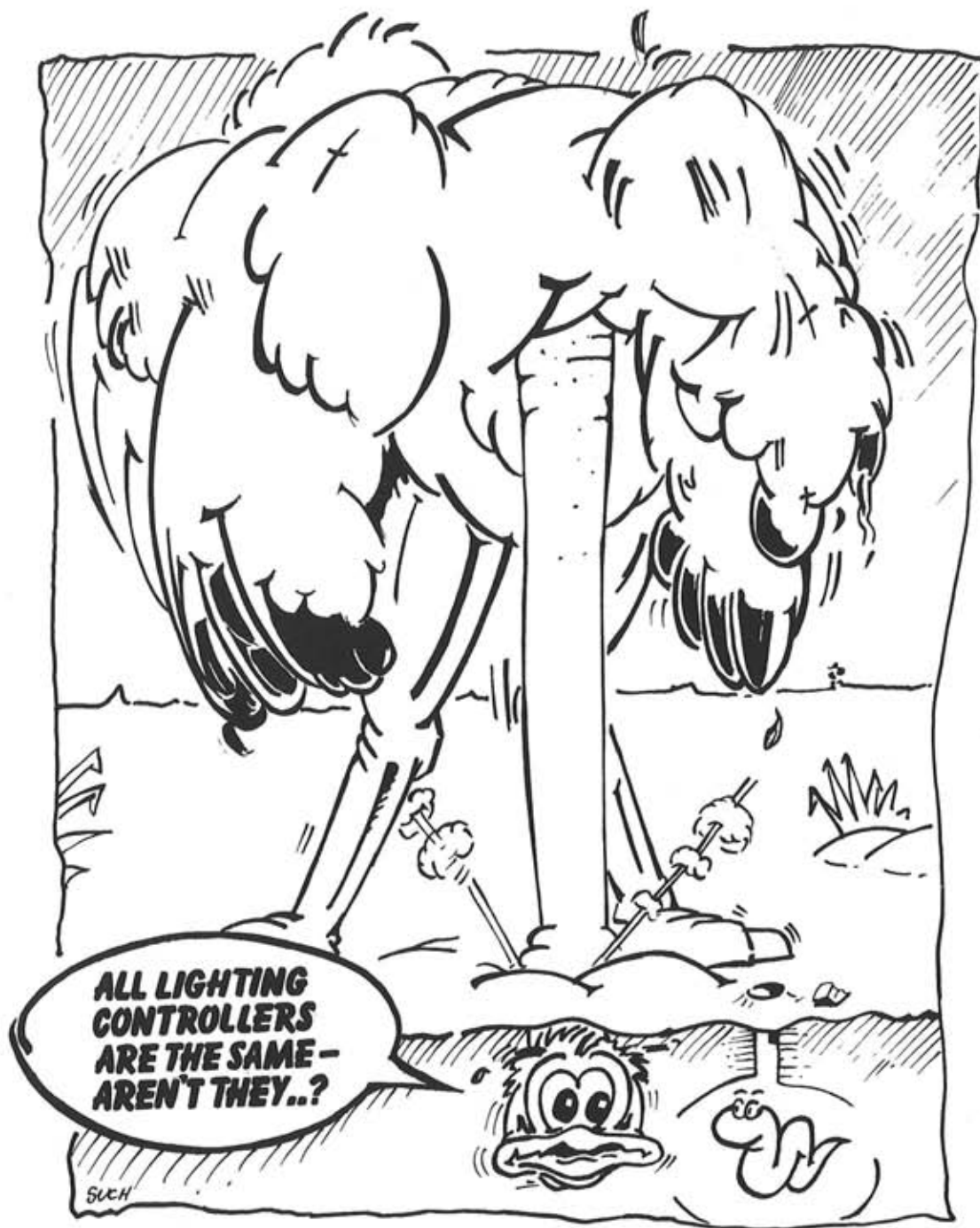


Alessandro Rossi is the new general manager for Quartzcolor in Rome.

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Playlight Inter City

John Offord talks to Mike McMullan, managing director of Playlight Hire Limited

Playlight's managing director Mike McMullan, a self-confessed accountant who can usefully be side-tracked into football talk while you get your act together, crossed the water from his home in Northern Ireland to England in 1966 - World Cup year.

His background in the world of management accountancy began at Heinz and continued at the newly-created Securicor where he was a right-hand man to the founder, Keith Erskine. "It was quite astonishing what he did, what he could foresee, and what he could do with people. I was very impressed. I actually ended up as senior accountant in the place, which was a historical accident and wasn't really worth very much in accountancy terms. I didn't learn anything about accountancy, but I did learn a lot about management.

"From there I went to Lyons Maid, which was like going from a new-born infant to a dinosaur, and a few years later moved on to join Rank Audio Visual. It was then a real hotch-potch of different companies, and at that time the hi-fi side was the high-flyer. But it was the old, old story of management refusing to acknowledge that sometimes, at some stage, something declines and you can get caught on the hop.

"At that stage they were conducting a re-assessment of the entire operation, and in the course of that, in my opinion they made some dreadful decisions concerning Rank Strand. It basically demonstrated that they didn't understand the infrastructure of the company - and this is all with perfect hindsight, a terribly exact science!

"A consequence of that mis-judgement or misunderstanding was that I ended up with a hire business in the North. At that time I'd already decided I wanted to get out and into something else, and having made an offer for their Northern Hire Department, which was successful, came up to Manchester.

"The first thing I realised when I got here, was that even though I'd worked in that division for several years, I knew nothing at all about the business - which is something you must bear in mind whenever you look at ac-



Mike McMullan - "it's the only low volume, low margin, luxury market in the world."

countants again! The second thing I realised was that it was totally under-developed. These two realisations were several months apart, but from there we've moved forward ever since."

When Mike McMullan took over, the Northern operation was run very much as an add-on to the sales side. "It wasn't run for its own sake," he explained. "Business-wise, their main emphasis was very much amateur and pro-theatre, with little bits and pieces on the side, and it wasn't sold as a service generally. I realised there was a lot of potential for expanding the service, particularly into the television area, because a lot of embryonic things were going on at this time."

Playlight now operates from two main bases - London and Manchester - with additional branches at Leeds and Birmingham, but in the early days it was totally Northern orientated. "There is no natural business

base up here at all - it's everywhere. There is no natural reservoir of business about, you have to travel miles to get orders. It was a really fantastic time because we just kept growing, but we needed to add to the capital base which we did by just ploughing all the money back in again and again and again.

"After about two years we realised that if we were to grow any further, we had to have an address that was more acceptable - that was near somewhere. (At that stage we were still operating from Rank's premises out near Haydock.) It took me a year to find these premises at Swinton, which we purchased rather than get ourselves tied into a lease situation that you can't get out of."

Part of the agreement on the take-over from Strand was that the operation would remain a hire company whilst at Haydock. Once established at Swinton, however, and now located nicely adjacent to the motorway network and Manchester city centre, Mike gradually introduced a sales element into the trading.

"We weren't anxious about pushing it; we simply carried on doing what we were good at which was developing the stock base and our range of people skills, and also making inroads we could see opening up in the commercial television and installation markets. That's the formula I carried on with for a further two or three years until I picked up on the fact that the business base was extremely narrow.

"The problem with all these markets is that there's a tremendous seasonality about them, and if you are dedicated to a permanent nucleus of staff which you intend to support, then you have to make sure the work is coming through for them. I've always realised that the main strength of this business is not the gear, not the building, but people and their experience.

"If we were to carry on growing, we had a problem. From here we were going out as far as the deep Midlands, to Leicester, and across to Hull. Now that's difficult to sustain unless you've got a local base, and we were also starting to do some work in the London area.



Chester's Gateway Theatre - the first Arri 'Image' control ordered outside London was installed here last month by Playlight.



Playlight recently installed a full concert sound system at the famous Wigan Pier complex.



Neil Cartwright.

"London was a totally different ball game. I never saw any great business coming out of Birmingham or Leeds, because we didn't think about them in those terms. I only think about them in terms of areas as opposed to towns. But with London you had to be in at the beginning if you were going to take any piece of it, so after five years we made a move to London. John Lethbridge of Cerebrum was very helpful in this respect, and we based ourselves initially next to his operation at Surbiton, sharing some of the costs.

"But I realised very quickly that we were too far out to run a hire operation, and the buildings weren't big enough. I spent a long time looking for larger premises, but eventually found what we wanted at Park Royal. It was the right side of town, and from that day the operation has gone forward at all points and all the time."

Between times Mike McMullan had established a Birmingham base for Playlight in 1982, and more recently a small operation in Leeds.

Following on from talking about the times when he played football with Georgie Best in a youth team, I asked him how the operation was controlled and structured.

"It's quite an interesting point because I've developed the people as the business has gone along, and there have been very few single additions. They've managed to grow with us. Our management team is very

strong. We've managed to expand it with the people we've had. The real guy who fronted it all was Nick Rowland, who joined me two weeks after Playlight started, and now in London we also have Mark Bitelan. On the way Ron Lamb, who joined us in 1982 as sales director, has also played a very vital role, bringing in a lot of general management experience."

Of Playlight's total turnover, 65% is from equipment hire, and 35% from sales, and it is spread reasonably equally across four areas: commercial presentations, television, theatre (amateur, professional and local government), and education.

There are two other operations within the Playlight building at Swinton: P & G Draperies, and P & G Stage Electricals. Founded five years ago P & G Draperies is jointly owned by Mike McMullan and Stan McFerran of A.S.Green and Company and is managed by Neil Cartwright. "In the two years Neil's been running it the turnover has trebled," said Mike. "He's done a magnificent job."

P & G Stage Electricals is a much more recent development and is managed by Barry Crewdson who was formerly with Rank for 21 years. "We'd previously passed all our installation work out to sub-contractors, but when we hit some flat spells, where our labour force had nothing to do, I was determined to try and bring the work in-house - again to protect my own people and guarantee their work for as long as I could. I struck a chord with Green's on the same basis, and we decided to put it together. We've now got five people working in this new operation, and it's turning over quite a lot of money.

"It'll take two years to get it on the right footing, because the main point of setting an operation like this up is getting the right guys in. The work is no problem - it's coming through like nobody's business. It will expand to a reasonable level and that's all we want. We want to get something more for the work we were finding but not really getting anything for."

Without time for more football talk, I set Mike McMullan off on his business philosophy, and his approach to this particular market place.

"Overall, looking at the different markets we've been involved in, there has never been a market which we could live off solely, or a service we could live off solely. It's very seasonal. Pro-theatre doesn't really have very much money. In television there is a lot of competition, and you're at the mercy of schedules. In the last five years education has been decimated in terms of either teacher's strikes and capital grants in particular.

"So there's never been a market that we could depend on and could support my own people over any length of time. What I did was to look at what we could do and ask where can we sell this? When I say, what could we do, I mean our range of technical skills as well. There isn't a great deal of difference between putting a sound rig in and putting a light rig in. I know some people would say that's a load of nonsense, but good technicians can cross the divide fairly easily as many professional theatres and local government set-ups clearly demonstrate.

"Using the same technical labour base, we've tried to add as many services as we possibly can to add more appeal to the market place, and add greater security internally. At the end of the day the really vital



Nick Rowland.

thing to your business is having the right people - not the right gear, not even the right building, or the right location. Having the right people is the critical thing and they must be looked after - that really is the top and bottom of it.

"Fundamentally, business is about 'I've got this, you want it' and how much will you pay and how much will I sell it for. I think you can over-complicate that. Our business is very, very fast moving and you've got to get in quick and out quick. Which means you've got to get your money back fairly quickly. If you don't, because the margins are so tight, you've got a problem. It's the only low volume, low margin, luxury market in the world, and I think that sums it up perfectly. I don't think many people look at it in that way and actually realise what it is. In the majority of business transactions there is no long-term relationship established, which is unusual. You're almost in a consumer environment, yet you're not selling to the public. It's very strange.

"In the future I think many companies are going to become multi-faceted. I think they're all going to have to adopt a very 'rounded' approach because basically the technology they're selling is fairly similar. It's just that although they've started from different areas, they're all going to end up back at one point.

"I see this consolidation continuing, and I think what PLASA is doing is good, trying to create professional standards within the market-place generally. I think that's superb, because there are far too many people around, even now, who don't run their businesses as businesses. God knows what they do, but there are far too many around. How you keep the cowboys out I don't know. I think it will be a long process.

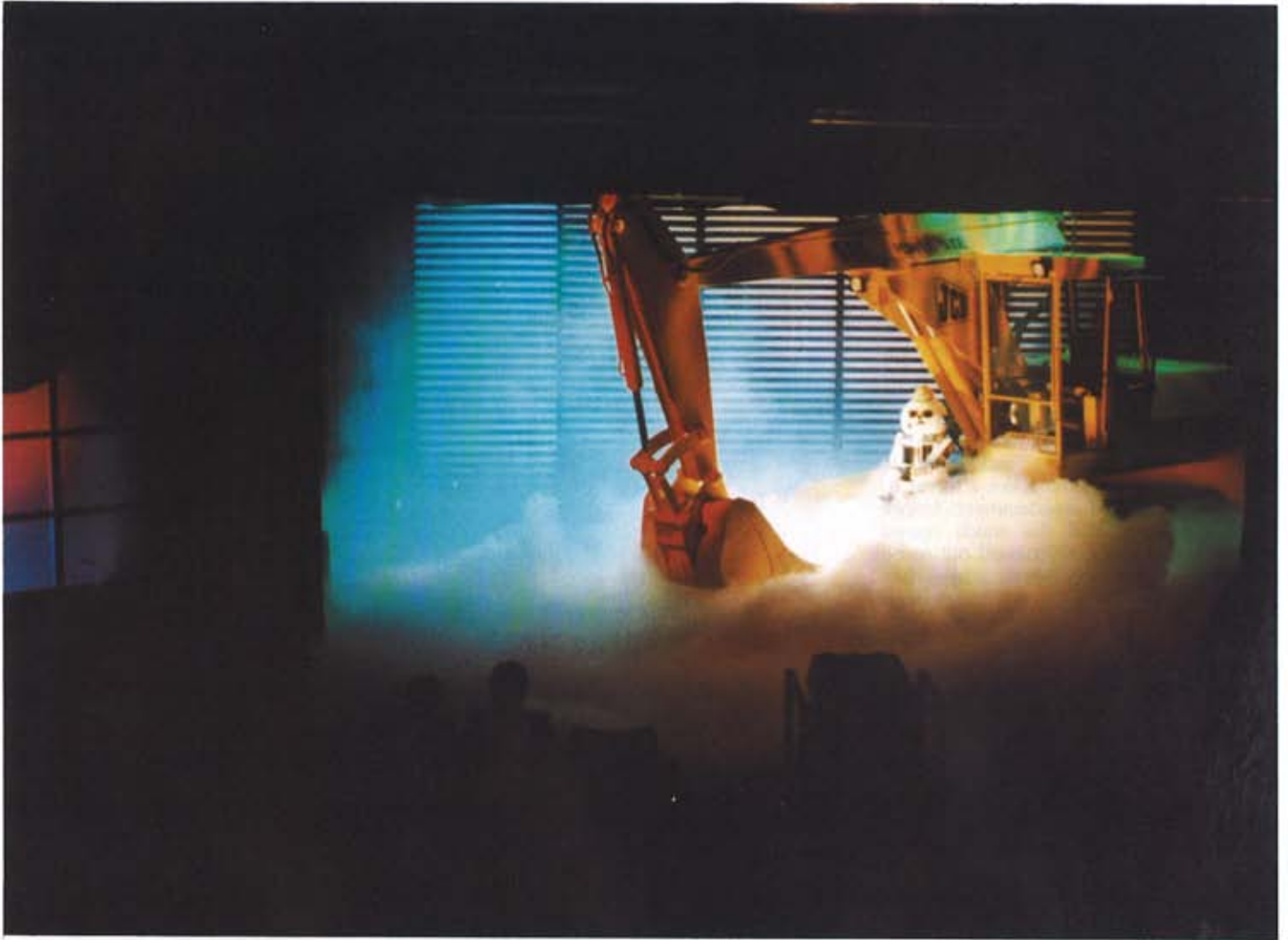
"From Playlight's point of view the future will be much more of the same. We've not consolidated our position in London by any means, and our Leeds and Birmingham operations need a lot more development. Where there are areas we can move into, we are pressing ahead in a fairly strong way. In other words I'm adding to the technical end in Manchester, and developing the other areas in line with the services we've developed here in Manchester. We are also doing this in line with what the market wants, because demands are slightly different from area to area.

"I can see the way forward over the next eight years very clearly.

"And that, to me, is pretty long-term in a business sense. Particularly in **this** business."

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Two Megawatts in Southampton

Richard Harris, Editor of *Strandlight* magazine, visits the born again Mayflower Theatre, Southampton

Nineteen twenty eight was a very good year. Lancashire boomed under the benevolent rule of king cotton and the new car factories of Coventry and Birmingham looked set to carry prosperity ever upward. Britain was on the gold standard and one pound sterling was worth five U.S. Dollars.

Films did not get talk - although on September 27th of that very same year Jolsen did tell his mammy that she hadn't heard nothing yet via the screen horns of the Tivoli in the Strand.

But everyone in showbusiness was certain talkies were just a passing fancy. After all, hadn't roller skating looked like a threat to the more established entertainments before the Great War? And the much feared gramophone had actually turned out to be yet another milch cow whose udders succumbed to the none too gentle hands of Sir Oswald Stoll and C.B.Cochran.

This little sketch of the showbusiness climate of the year may explain why Moss Empires should choose to construct such a very large - 2350 seats - theatre in a rather off centre site in Southampton. They, quite naturally, christened it the Empire. Nothing was skimped in its original planning and, as we shall see, very little has been skimped at its rebirth in 1987 as the Mayflower.

So when the curtain rose fifty nine years ago a full-time live programme was the firm intention. Even so, I feel that there must have been a fair bit of optimism in the Moss offices to make such a large investment. I suppose Southampton, then entering on its greatest era as the home port of the transatlantic liners, looked a fair prospect and the coach parties which now do so much to sustain the large scale West End show were not yet draining away local audiences.

It is a little ironic that the Liverpool Empire was built by the same company about the same time. It was from Liverpool, of course, that Southampton was stealing its passenger trade.

Alas, by 1935 the struggle was over, and my favourite bedside reading, the Kine Year Book, reveals that by 1936 the Empire was just a large but ordinary (no organ!) cinema among the eighteen then functioning in the city. The name had changed to Gaumont, and one could enjoy the show by parting with 6d front stalls up to 2/- front circle.

Then, in 1950, live theatre returned with a provincial tour of the very successful 'Annie Get Your Gun'.

In more recent years the Gaumont's main fame has been its Glyndebourne seasons, although I can't help wondering how those superb but relatively small scale productions transferred to this treble sized auditorium.

The future of the theatre had been somewhat uncertain over recent years. Bingo was rumoured. But, luckily for the local citizens the City Council stepped in and made the wise decision to purchase the only large theatre serving this stretch of the South Coast.

They then made a whole series of other wise decisions, not the least of which was to appoint Tony Easterbrook, of John Wyckham Associates, as their theatre consultant. More good decisions involved the appointment of



The born-again Mayflower.



The Galaxy lighting control - and the sound desk - centre circle.

Bryan Andrews as architect, while John Hasp and Andy Diaz represented the City Architect. George Butlin of Dry Butlin and Bricknell Partnership was the very successful interior designer. Finally, and here I will admit prejudice, the management of the whole project was wisely entrusted to the Rank Organisation Technical Services under Hugh Corrance.

When I said that little had been skimped this certainly applies to the theatre's technical equipment. There is a complete new stage lighting installation, including 30 2k Cadenza profiles and 32 Harmonys front of house. There are ten Harmonys on each

Proscenium boom, while on stage Harmonys, Parblazers and Iris Cyc floods ensure that light levels will be, to say the least, adequate - all controlled by a 300 way Galaxy 2 Premier with Effects Panel, Chase, Cycle, Flash, Audio, etc., and two 14 inch colour monitors. There is an infra-red hand-held Designer's Control.

Dimming comprises two 24 x 20A, ten 24 x 10A and one 12 x 10A Permus Racks.

The Galaxy has been sited in the centre of the dress circle, with the sound desk alongside. This must be one of the finest control positions in the country, and I imagine that the large seating capacity made

the loss of twenty or so seats a bearable sacrifice.

The sound installation is by Dave Martin Sound.

The whole building has been re-wired to a total capacity of 2Kva. "Comfort Cooling" has been installed just in case we ever get another summer like 1976.

All Stage Equipment is new, by Halls, and the orchestra pit lift, divided to accommodate a large orchestra or a smaller group of musicians, is by Theatre Tech Limited of Epsom.

A new scene dock and a "get-in" ramp of comparatively gentle slope has been provided. The Mayflower is blessed with a large open yard to the rear so that even the longest of Mr. Lucking's pantechnicons can manoeuvre in unaccustomed freedom.

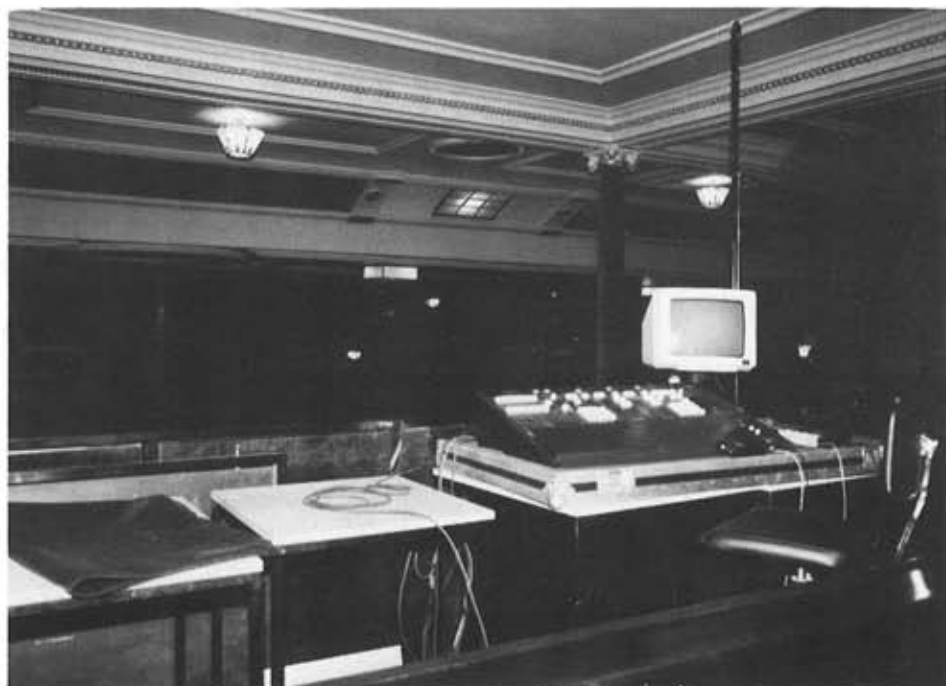
And now for a few words about the scenes enjoyed by the audience from the moment they enter the foyer. Where marble should be, marble there is. The box office and sales counter - narry so common as the work kiosk might imply - is of panelled mahogany. The doors throughout are of that same splendid timber. Where glazed, the glass has polished bevelled edges. The door handles and plates are elegant in brass. In short the whole thing is not just 1928 - it is high style, no holds barred, no expense spared, 1928. In only one particular that I found has the standard slipped. To either side of the auditorium at stalls level the edge of the flat floors in front of exit doors are protected with very finely detailed brass railings. But the new orchestra pit rail, the most visible metalwork of the building, is a device of rather crude black painted iron. I suppose I am contrasting new with refurbished, always a risky thing to do.

Some critics have found the colour scheme a touch robust. I love it! Deep vibrant greens and red plush seating and very jolly too.

Although I consider myself something of a connoisseur of vintage auditorium seating I am not quite certain, but I think the Mayflower has 60's chairs (as we cognoscenti call them - **never** seats) re-covered. The originals would probably have had sunburst end columns while these are plain to a fault. But who but you and I, dear reader, would ever notice such a detail?

And speaking of details, even the gents - and presumably the ladies - have wall tiling incorporating coloured banding. But I hope no-one dries their hands during a quiet on stage monologue, or the roar of that invention of the devil, the hot air drier, may, as a door swings open, make the last few rows wonder what effect is being provided for them.

But these small points are just minor carping. The Empire was built as a super theatre, and now, as the Mayflower it is even more super. Southampton is fortunate to possess such a jewel.



Touring boards accommodated - a Gemini set up at the rear of the stalls.



Part of the F.O.H. rig.



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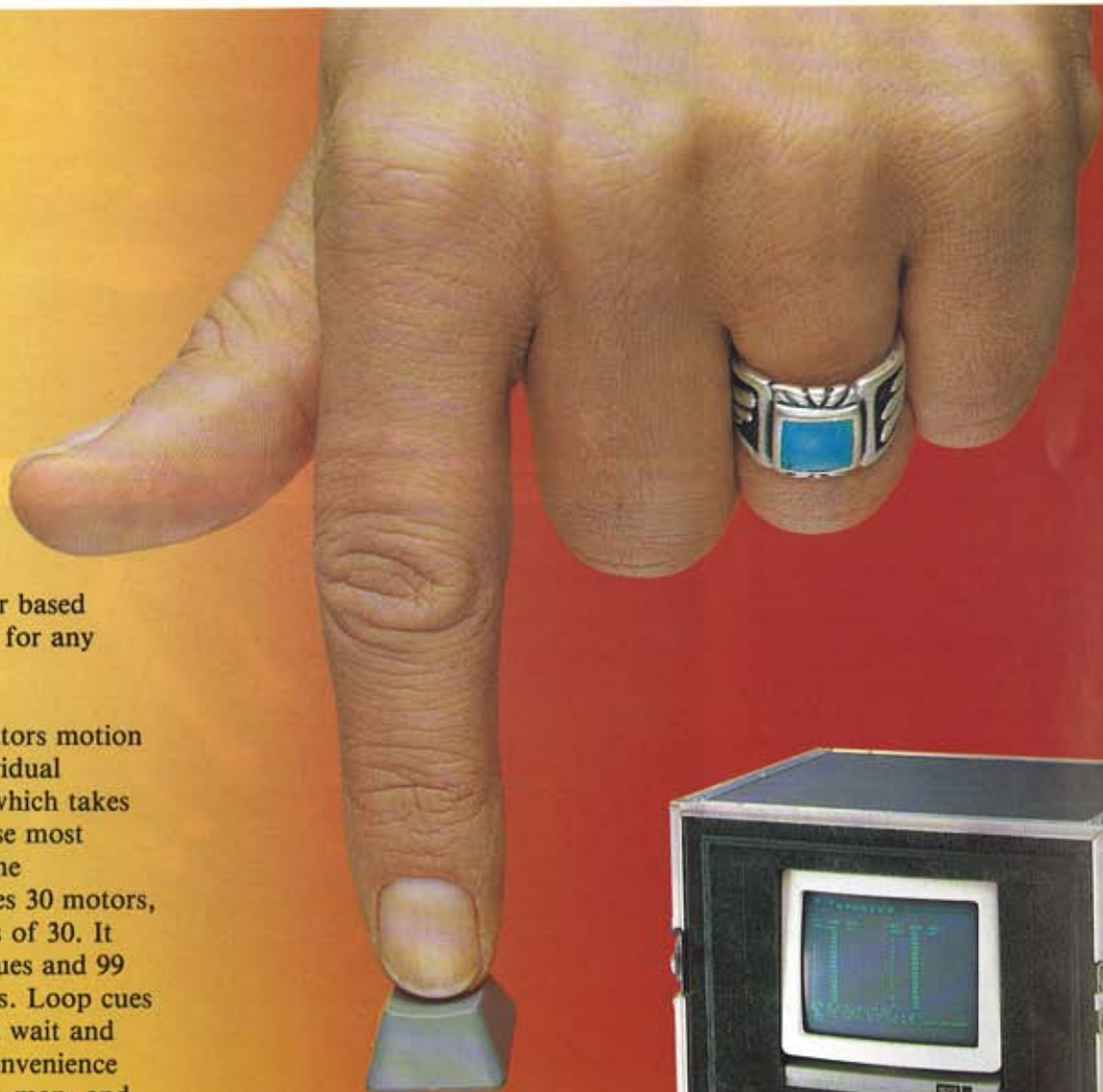
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DAVID MARTIN
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We will also be looking at
aspects of the stage engineering
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The Motor Commmander



A microprocessor based controller designed for any motorized staging.

The system monitors motion sensors in the individual motors, fitting of which takes 15 minutes for those most commonly used. The Commander handles 30 motors, expandable in units of 30. It stores 99 discrete cues and 99 complex Loop Cues. Loop cues allow repeat, timed wait and wait for go. For convenience the ability to name, map, and save cue sets is provided. When a cue is running the Commander monitors and displays all movements in Real time. Motors may be assigned to working groups, and for safety any failed motor will disable all motors in its group. This package is suitable for either fixed or touring applications.

One Touch Control



EQUIPMENT *News*

Finer Fog Control from Rosco

With seven years of fog machines behind them, Rosco have added a new model to their existing range of three fog machines. The Rosco 1500 Smoke Machine incorporates all the design features of previous models, plus major new state-of-the-art developments.

It is equipped with a long-life pump, designed to meet the life-or-death quality control of blood pumping equipment and a totally new heat exchanger, both of which have been developed by Rosco to provide continuous, fail-safe operation. These additions, together with an external tank which can be refilled while the machine is in operation, mean that fog can be produced for as long as required. In addition, an easily accessible filtering system for the fluid traps any contaminants before they clog the system.



The new 1500 smoke machine from Rosco.

A new facility has been added to the smoke generation controls, allowing total control over the quantity of smoke produced. A ration of 10:1 can be dialled to supply anything from a Scottish mist to a San Francisco smog. The machine can be operated either from the controls built into the top of the machine or from the remote control unit which is supplied as standard equipment. An optional extra is the Super Remote control which can be programmed to create smoke at pre-set intervals as well as for the duration required.

The 1500 uses Rosco's own Smoke Fluid, for which the company received an Academy Award for 'the development of an improved non-toxic fluid for creating fog and smoke', the only Academy Award ever presented for smoke fluid.

Technical specification for the 1500 is available from Roscolab Limited, 69/71 Upper Ground, London SE1 9PQ telephone 01-633-9220.

Starlight for Self Assembly

Astron has announced the introduction of Self Assembly Starlight Tube Lighting, and it could prove to be the answer to your on-site problems of custom-made lighting that doesn't quite fit!

In addition to the numerous features this universally popular form of lighting performs, it is worth noting that it is particularly useful in Step Edging and Astron Starlight is made to fit Ferodo and most other types of Step Edge Profile.

The kit contains - Wiring Harness, Polycarbonate Tubing, Lamps, Ferrules, Tail Cable and End Caps, plus full fitting instructions.

For sale enquiries please contact Astron, Unit 2, Barrowmore Estate, Great Barrow, Chester CH3 7JS telephone Tarvin (0829) 41262.



MicroStar and ProStar from WestStar, USA.

Memory Lighting Control for IBM and Apple Computers

The ProStar and MicroStar memory lighting control systems, based on the IBM PC and Apple IIe personal computers, offer the professional features found on other dedicated lighting controllers at a fraction of the cost. Modular input/output channel cards are simply plugged into the expansion slots inside the computer and do not modify or prohibit the use of the computer for other purposes.

The ProStar, starting at \$1995.00 U.S., for IBM PC or compatible computers offers 24 or 48 channel I/O controller cards and is expandable to 192 analog outputs. Standard features include multiple independent X/Y and A/B timed crossfades, proportional overlapping electronic softpatch, 252 cues per show stored on standard 5.25 inch diskettes and played from internal RAM (no disk access required), insertable point cues, loads levels from secondary manual console, 18 proportional overlapping submasters, manual override of timed fades, reverse fades, chase, copy, speed up, slow down, delay, hold, blackout and printed cue sheets.

The MicroStar, starting at \$995.00 U.S., for Apple IIe or compatible computers offers 16 channel I/O controller cards and is expandable to 96 analog outputs. Standard features include X/Y timed crossfades, 250 cues per show stored on standard 5.25 inch diskettes and played from internal RAM (no disk access required), insertable point cues, loads levels from secondary manual console, manual crossfades, synchronize to audio, chase, copy, speed up, slow down, hold, blackout, printed cue sheets and more!

For full information including colour brochure and free demonstration disk contact WestStar Corporation at 2665 Shell Beach Road, Shell Beach, California 93449, U.S.A. telephone (805) 773-3000.

McKenzie Q-Max 600 Amplifier

McKenzie Acoustics are now offering their Q-Max 600 amplifier to complement their recently launched Q-Max 7000 PA loudspeaker enclosures.

Conservatively rated at 300 watts per channel the Q-Max 600 MOS-FET stereo power amplifier, or rather 8000 watts worth of the same were subjected to the continual rigours of 6 months on the road before the launch.

Equally suited to both roadwork and permanent installations, the absence of fan noise makes the amplifier particularly suitable for studio use, and hefty cast aluminium heatsinks ensure adequate heat dissipation. The Q-Max 600's input circuit has been designed to eliminate hum loops without disconnecting the mains safety earth, whilst a relay controlled delay banishes power surges and speaker thump during switch-on.

A classic matt black design incorporates LED bargraph protection on the front panel. At the rear XLR connection is offered via male and female sockets. The standard 3 unit 19" rack mounting Q-Max 600 weighs in at 17Kg.

For further information contact McKenzie Acoustics Limited, Albion Drive, Thurnscoe, S.Yorks S63 0BA telephone (0709) 898606.

Clean Lines

A useful unit - the Reguvolt 'M' Model mains conditioner - has been put on the market by Cetronic Power Products of Ware. Built primarily to guarantee a clean mains and stable voltage for word processors and computer systems, it will find a ready use for small recording studios and other similar applications. Full details from Cetronic Power Products Limited, Hoddesdon Road, Stanstead Abbots, Ware, Herts SG12 8EJ telephone (0920) 871077.



Cetronic's Reguvolt.

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Telex: 945114 FARRAH G.

01-549 1787

Soundcraft Series 200BVE

Soundcraft Electronics have announced the launch of their Series 200 BVE console, made to interface with the Sony BVE 9000 video editor. It comes with an optional linear cross-fade depth control and is based on the existing Series 200 B - a versatile, compact professional mixing console that brings together excellent audio quality with comprehensive flexible facilities.



The Soundcraft Series 200B mixing console.

Whilst the Sony BVE 9000 editor mixes two video sources on to one master, the flexibility of the Soundcraft Series 200 BVE, when interfaced with the editor, allows the operator to cross-fade between two groups of synchronised or spot effects as well as bringing the video sources together under the control of one fader, thereby allowing cross-fades for audio-follow-video applications in a very low cost format.

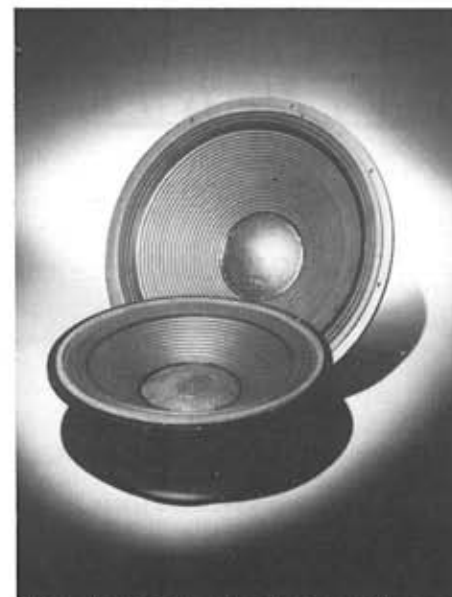
The Series 200 BVE has a choice of three types of input modules: a mono input with a four band fixed frequency equaliser; a further mono input with a four band equaliser and variable frequency of the two mid bands; and a stereo input module with four band fixed frequency equaliser.

The frame sizes range from 8, 16 and 24 to 32 channels and the 8 channel version can be supplied in a 19" rack-mount frame. Whichever combination is selected, Soundcraft's sophisticated and co-ordinated layout is very clear and has straightforward colour coding throughout.

For further information contact Soundcraft Electronics Limited, Unit 2, Borehamwood Industrial Park, Rowley Lane, Borehamwood, Herts WD6 5PZ telephone 01-207-5050.

McKenzie on the Road

The McKenzie C15-500 and C18-500 are two brand new extremely powerful extended bass drivers designed to enhance the company's reputation for producing products that will take punishment on the road.



McKenzie C15-500 and C18-500 bass drivers.

Both 15" and 18" 500 watt loudspeakers (with the accent on loud) have a magnet system that bolts together via six 8mm tensile bolts to ensure maximum magnetic and physical strength. A flux gathering ring at the base of the pole piece improves magnetic flux and locks the ferrite core in a permanent position.

Cone components have also been chosen, designed and tooled for optimum performance and maximum strength. The 4" diameter voice coil is edgewound for greater sensitivity and simultaneously reduces voice coil mass. It is then wound on ventilated high temperature Kapton to handle and dissipate the heat generated.

A double coil suspension system is employed to give improved voice coil stability and control on long excursion with the additional benefit that this system minimises suspension fatigue during use resulting in extended, consistent performance.

For further information contact McKenzie Acoustics Limited, Albion Drive, Thurnscoe, S.Yorks S63 0BA telephone (0709) 898606.

Strand's New Punchlite

Strand Lighting's new Punchlite Par 64 housing for 1000/500w sealed beam halogen lamps was launched at the recent ABTT Trade Show in London, and features easy and safe lamp change.



Lamp change on the Punchlite.

To re-lamp, you press a spring loaded catch, and the rear housing hinges down, but stays attached so there is no strain on the earth/ground wire. The lamp is then pulled out backwards, the rim of the lamp depressing the spring catch as it goes past. The replacement lamp is then pushed in past the retaining spring clip, the EMP lamp holder is replaced, the lamp rotating cap, an optional extra

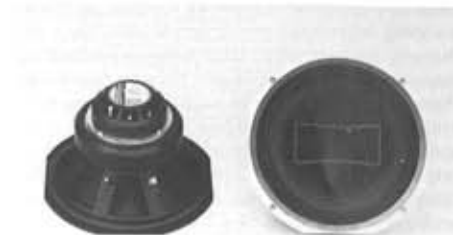
pressed on, and a one-handed job is complete.

The unit is of aluminium alloy construction with front reinforced ring of mild steel supporting the clips for the colour frame. The Par 64 lamp is secured in the rear of the housing by a spring steel leaf which allows lamp rotation. The 245mm x 245mm square colour frame is made from aluminised board designed to support colour filters. A complete range of lamps is available in 120, 220 and 240 volts.

For full details contact any Strand Lighting dealer.

More Co-Axials

The first Fane co-axials, the CX12 and CX15, and launched at the 1986 Frankfurt Fair, have proved largely successful and specified by up-market system producers such as Stephen Court, and by installation companies as far afield as Thailand, New Zealand and U.S.A., say the company.

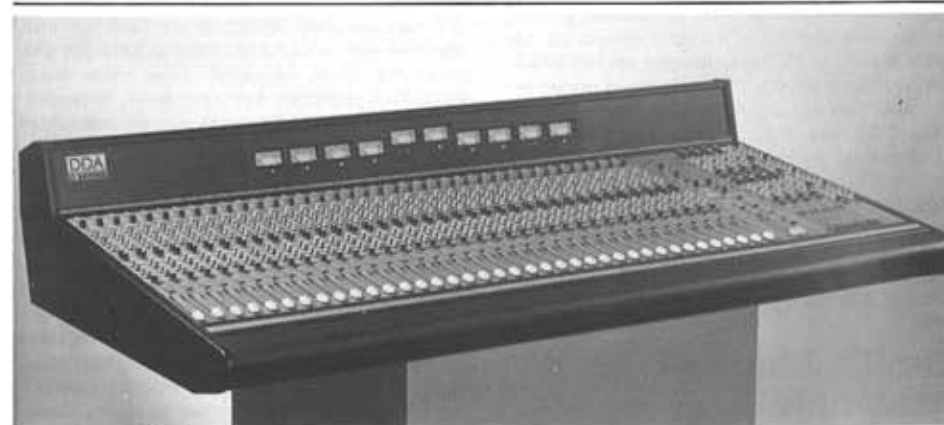


CX10 and CX18 from Fane.

The range has now been enlarged by the introduction of 10" and 18" models, the CX10 and CX18, intended for wide range, high quality professional applications; and by three extra high power models intended primarily for stage usage, the CX12PA, CX15PA and CX18PA.

The standard CX models feature low resonance, urethane half roll cone termination and smoothly maintained response up to 20KHz. The P.A. models incorporate a higher resonance, double half roll suspension and increased magnetic flux to withstand sustained and rigorous stage usage. The 60° x 40° integral high frequency constant directivity horn provides wide dispersion coupled with absence of colouration and distortion.

Full technical data is available upon request from Fane Acoustics Limited, 286 Bradford Road, Batley, W.Yorkshire WF17 5PW telephone (0924) 476431.



DDA mixer with a re-style.

Re-Styled D Series

DDA's successful D series range of mixing consoles has recently undergone a re-styling and the addition of another module to the selection already available.

The re-styling has been carried out on the frame allowing more flexibility for standard metering options and incorporates a unique new module fastening system allowing much easier access.

This new design has also allowed the production of larger frame sizes with standard frames of 32, 48 and 56 modules allowing a maximum con-

figuration of 44/8/2 using P.A. type outputs.

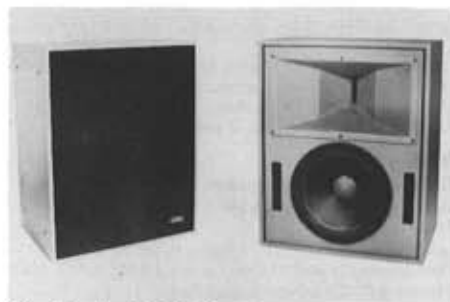
The consoles are, however, electronically compatible with existing consoles and there are no problems in mixing modules from old and new style frames. To this already impressive array of modules has been added an Auxiliary Returns module. Each module contains four independent return sections and all standard frame configurations have been quoted with the space to fit two of these modules.

For further details contact DDA, Unit 1, Inwood Business Park, Whitton Road, Hounslow, Middlesex TW3 2EB telephone 01-570-7161.

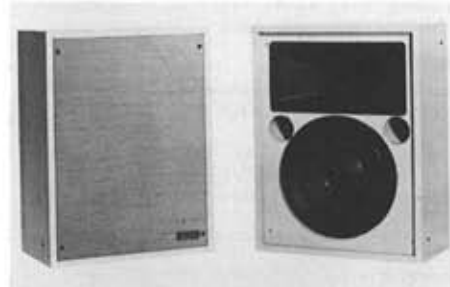
New from Altec Lansing

Two new loudspeaker systems were launched by Altec Lansing at the recent AES Convention in London, and both products are available in the UK from Audix Limited.

The 9812-8A Loudspeaker System is a two-way, factory-assembled system capable of producing large acoustic outputs efficiently from a small package. It is ideal for high level sound reproduction in churches, schools, meeting rooms, night clubs, or reinforcement installation in any small to medium size hall. It reproduces a controlled, wide angle pattern for maximum uniformity of tonal quality at all listening positions, and provides smooth response and excellent linearity throughout the audio band.



Altec Lansing's 9812-8A system.



The 9872 loudspeaker system.

The 9872-8A and 9872-8F loudspeakers are two-way, factory-assembled systems featuring high acoustic output capabilities from a compact enclosure. They are well suited for high level sound reproduction in churches, audio visual presentations, conference rooms, or other smaller acoustic environments.

For further information contact Audix Limited, Station Road, Wenden, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 4LG telephone (0799) 40888.

Greater West Lighting

Scintilla, the Southampton-based manufacturers of Great West Lighting effects desks and dimmers have expanded their range.

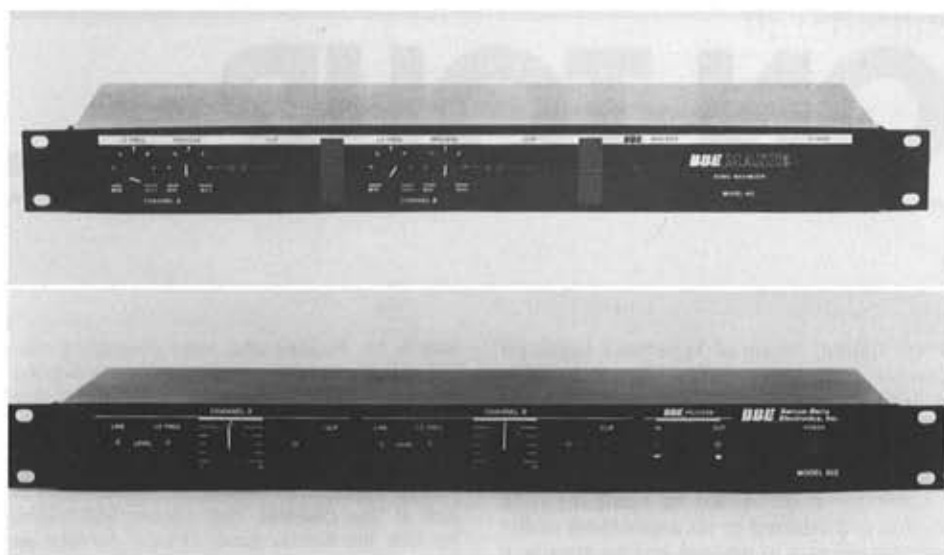
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The Barcus Berry BB 402 (top) and the 802.

The Unprocessor Arrives

Barcus Berry Electronics have now announced the release of a new processor available in two different versions. This process can be applied to any audio signal, either during recording or playback and is a single stage device requiring no encoding or decoding equipment.

The BBE 402, aimed at the semi-pro market - ideal for home recording studios, smaller musical groups or small club sound systems - improves the overall clarity of virtually any reproduced sound in systems operating at -10dB average levels.

The BBE 802, aimed at the professional and commercial sound market-place - ideal for use in

recording studios, live concerts, TV and radio broadcasting and other commercial sound applications - is a multi-band, program controlled signal processor. With the BBE 802, phase adjustments are primarily directed toward preventing high-frequency time lag, or transient distortion, and the automatic gain changes are based on interband program amplitude ratios. The BBE 802 requires nothing more than insertion between the program source and an amplifier, recorder or signal transmission line.

Both units are packaged in a rack-mounted chassis designed to occupy one standard EIA space. For further details on the product and it's uses contact Shuttlesound Limited, Unit 15, Osiers Estate, Osiers Road, London SW18 1EJ telephone 01-871-0966.

The popular D606, and D602, double pre-set expandable lighting system has been extended with the introduction of two new modules, a 6 channel sequencer and a matrix module. The sequencer offers 128 effects which can be operated manually, by sound, or automatically. The matrix extender is a 6 to 18 way unit with buffered outputs, and like the rest of the range, several modules can be simply plugged together to expand the system.

In the dimmer range the 19" format 6 channel

units have been retained. In addition there is now a single channel 2.5KW dimmer, with a slider, for follow spot use, and two versions of a 3 x 1200 watt unit available. For installers and system builders low priced 2.5KW and 5KW self contained modules are available.

For full details contact Scintilla Technology Limited, Unit 42, City Industrial Park, Southern Road, Southampton SO1 OHA telephone (0703) 222667.



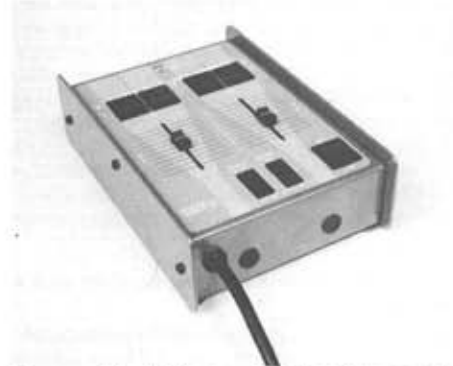
The AVAB 211.

Two New Controls from CCT

'Command 2' is a portable dimmer pack with four CEE22 outlets and two 1.3kw dimmers. Control selection for off/on/dimmer, local fusing, fault and power indicators and master switch. It is ideal for drama rooms and those situations where a small portable dimmer unit is required, say CCT. It can be used desk top or attached to a vertical pipe, such as a telescopic stand or wall mounted.

The 'AVAB 211' is another example of the excellent lighting controls available from this Swedish company, for whom CCT are the UK distributors. The 211 has channel shift for

72 ways in blocks of 24, together with 250 memory pre-sets. It also incorporates all the features of the 'AVAB 201' system - too extensive to list here. However, full details on this product and all the recent introductions by CCT are available from Eddie Hunter at 26 Willow Lane, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 4NA telephone 01-640-3366.



Command 2 - CCT's new portable dimmer pack.

Details of New Equipment for inclusion in this section should be sent to:

The Editor, L+S
7 Highlight House, St.Leonards Road,
Eastbourne, East Sussex BN21 3UH.

ON TOUR

Keith Dale

Peter Clarke, owner of Supermick Lights (or Supermick Lights as their letter heading states!) has recently been involved with the BAFTA Awards and a presentation for David Bowie - such is the diversity of the man and his company.

Catriona Forcer spoke to Peter at these events and listened to his assessment of the lighting industry in general and his approach to designing lighting in particular. I'm sure most readers will find his comments honest and sincere.

On tour currently are Simply Red with an impressive (by all accounts) lighting design by Ian 'Bucko' Buckstone and equipment by Tasco Ltd. Catriona managed to catch the show at London's Hammersmith Odeon and talked to Ian about his striking light and shade effects used in the design.

Equipment on-tour this week features productions organised by Celco Ltd., who, due to my association with both them and this magazine, have not had a mention before. Indeed, I'm not sure that most people even know we have a lighting rental department

Simply Red

Hammersmith Odeon

Catriona Forcer talks to lighting designer

Ian 'Bucko' Buckstone

How did you become a lighting designer?

Ian Walley of Avolites came from the same small market town in Staffordshire as I did, and we have been friends for a long time. He was working for a company called Scope and looking after a band called Caravan when he invited me on tour to learn about the business. A short time after that Ian formed his own company, which was originally just a straightforward lighting company with a regular two or three tours a year. These were with bands like Status Quo and Gordon Giltrap and they were quite enough to keep the company going. Then Avolites went into manufacturing, and I branched off because I was more into the design side of lighting rather than the technical side.

I became very involved with Barclay James Harvest, who had never had much of a market in the UK, but who were massive in Europe, breaking box office records. I worked for them almost full-time for several years.

Do you regret staying with one band for such a long time?

Yes and no. The Barclays provided massive potential for design because they used a huge lighting rig for their period. Also they were a very useful

vehicle for Avolites who were developing new technology and equipment which we were the first to use. Career-wise it probably wasn't that clever to stay with them for so long but at the time it suited me. They gave me a lot of potential and my designs blazed a path at one stage.

I also worked with Sky for a couple of years as well as The Damned, The Adverts and Aretha Franklin. But Barclay James Harvest did take up most of my time.

Tell me about your designs for the Simply Red show.

I like to think that I have come up with something a bit different. I feel that most designers rush around trying to watch each other's shows and then try to think of something new, whereas I tend to sit at the desk and think of original ideas. I think that the Simply Red show is quite original. In fact I know it is because the general reaction from other lighting designers and people in the business suggests as much.

How is the show so different?

My basic concept was rather than thinking about light I started thinking in terms of shadows. I use the light in order to achieve that effect rather than the other way round. It was a bit of a gamble, but fortunately it seems to have paid off. It's an effect which has empathy for the band and they recognise that.

Which band would you most like to light?

I'm doing them now! Simply Red are a fabulous band and I'm a great fan of them. Barclay James Harvest are going on tour this year and I've had to relinquish my position with them in order to stay with Simply Red. I can't think of anyone else that I'd rather be doing!

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Equipment on Tour

New Order

Lighting Designer **Andy Liddle**
Lighting Equipment **Celco Ltd**
Tel: 01-698-1027

Lamps: 6 x 6 lamp bars, 10 Axial CCT Sils, 4 x 4 cell Ianiro Pallas 4's

Desk (control board): 1 Celco Series 2 Sixty, 1 MCS 1608
Dimming: 1 48channel Gamma Rack
Effects: 10 6" CCT Colorsettes, 2 DHA Gobo Rotators
Trussing: 2 Zip-up Towers, 2 Tank traps

Mark Almond

Lighting Designer **Hugh Feather**
Lighting Equipment **Celco Ltd**
Tel: 01-698-1027

Lamps: 22 Axial CCT Sils, 4 Ianiro Pallas 4's, 24 Par 64's
Desk (control board): 1 Celco Series 2 Sixty, 1 MCS 9900

Dimming: 1 48channel Gamma Rack
Effects: 16 6" CCT Colorsettes, 1 Starcloth, 1 Rosco Smoke Machine

Trussing: 1 40' Folding TTR Truss, 2 Supertowers, 2 Verlinde Hoists, 1 40' Truss

Julian Cope

Lighting Designer **John Featherstone**
Lighting Equipment **Celco Ltd**
Tel: 01-698-1027

Lamps: 6 x 6 lamp bars, 8 Par 64 Floor Parcans,
33 Axial CCT Sil 30's, 8 Par 36 Scanners

Desk (control board): 1 Series 2 Gold, 1 MCS 2408

Dimming: 1 72 channel Gamma Rack, 1 Gamma relay rack

Effects: 27 6" CCT Colorsettes, 8 8" CCT Colorsettes, 4 Strobes, 8 Eggstrobes, 8 DHA Gobo Rotators, 2 Rosco Smoke Machines

Followspots: 1 Coemar 1kw CSI Followspot
Truss: 2 40' Folding TTR Truss, 4 Verlinde Hoists, 3 Supertowers, 2 Zip-up Towers

Westland EH 101 Helicopter Roll-Out Yeovil, Somerset

Production Company **ICM International**
Equipment **Theatre Projects Services**
Rigging **Unusual Rigging Company**
Lighting Design **Durham Marengi**

Desk (control board): 1 72 Way ZERO 88 Desk
Lighting Equipment: 192 Par 64 Cans, 128 Par 64 ACL's, 64 Chrome Par 64 Cans, 32 Chrome Par 64 ACL's, 20 Patt 252 Projectors, 26 AC 1001 Floods, 8 Superhite Strobes, 12 Par 36 Scanners, 24 1.8 Arcline, 30 Lekos (various), 30 Patt 743, 2 Par 36 Molefays, 1 60 Way, 1 72 Way AVO Rack
4 Optimist Smoke Guns
6 Londoner Dry Ice Machines

Please note that equipment lists can be sent to Keith Dale at Celco, 3 Bellingham Road, London, SE6 2PN or via EMAIL to Keith Dale, DGS1249. Please send information by 10th of the month for following month's issue.

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Simply Red at Hammersmith Odeon - lighting Ian Buckstone.



The 1987 BAFTA Awards set - lighting by Peter Clarke.

The Operator

Catriona Forcer set Peter Clarke (Supermick) talking . . .

"I originally trained as a hotel manager but I didn't like the work! Fortunately a friend of mine from Ireland was in the lighting business. He was giving it up, and I took over. This was in the old hippy days of projection and strobes. I had saved up some money which I spent with Optikinetics and bought a small lighting system.

"I then presented myself to an Irish group called 'Horselips' and they agreed to employ me. I knew nothing about lights at the time - and luckily they didn't either - but eventually I managed to convince them (and myself) that I knew what I was doing. I worked for them for about a year during which time they supported Steeleye Span who I then went on to light. Lighting was still in its early stages, and little equipment was needed to make a show look wonderful.

"Supermick is not a company but a business of which I am the sole proprietor. It was formed while I was working with Steeleye Span and the name came from their crew who used to take the mickey out of the Irish people working with Horselips. They called us 'Micks', and because I was in charge - or because I had the biggest mouth - I was called 'SuperMick'.

"My business has looked after the lighting for lots of people and I employ about 20 people depending on the time of year and how busy it is. Currently I have Paul Young touring the USA, Anita Baker touring the USA and Maze on tour. I have a lighting system working all the time in The Town and Country Club and in the next month or two I have Neil Young, Suzanna Vega, U2 and Alison Moyet going on tour.

"Personally, I have done the lights for Dr. Feelgood, Van Morrison, Roxy Music, Cliff



Peter Clarke - "I'd rather use the term 'lighting operator'."

Richard, Talking Heads and The Pretenders. Dr. Feelgood were one of my first and probably favourite bands because they were so down-to-earth and straightforward. A lot of my basic attitudes and training came from them. I tend to do a lot of one-off shows. I was lighting co-ordinator and designer for the Live Aid show. I do the Princes Trust shows and I also did Charles and Diana's wedding reception. In June I'm doing two more Princes Trust shows at Wembley Stadium where there will be four or five bands playing and it will finish with the usual finale of a large collage of rock stars.

"Since Live Aid I am regularly asked to co-ordinate these types of concerts because people trust me to be diplomatic and reliable. When you are dealing with stars like Paul McCartney, who hasn't toured for years, you have to be able to reassure them that everything is going to be alright so that they don't have to worry about the lights. You have to have a certain 'blarney' as I call it.

"I do a lot of charity work because I own the firm and I can decide when to do things for nothing. I've looked after Miners benefits, the Tory Party, and the Royal Family and I'm currently arranging the lighting for the Amnesty International's Secret Policeman's Ball. Because I'm not a company or a big name, people know me and can approach me to ask for favours.

"The Bowie promoters asked me to light the recent Bowie Presentation in a professional but discreet manner. They didn't want a large, over-the-top production as it was supposed to be a surprise, low-key event. I had no instructions from Bowie's people on how to do the lights so I used a lot of simple, straightforward lighting. Bowie did

two numbers for the small invited audience and I had to light without rehearsal.

"I have worked for the BBC on several occasions since Live Aid looking after events like the BPI awards, the Evening Standard awards, the Variety Club awards and just recently the BAFTA awards. The BBC design the show, taking a few ideas from shows that we have done recently, and then combine their expertise and design ideas with rock and roll ideas, using equipment like silver Par cans to make the room look more attractive.

"I recently saw The Eurythmics, and although the company that light them are competitors of mine, I have to say it was a really well presented show, and I told a lot of people to see it. I'm not impressed by high tech and vast amounts of money being poured into a show. What really impresses me is someone doing 'something with nothing' so that you can see the human element in a show. The Eurythmics lighting designer used some old and wonderful effects which people don't use any more because they are too snobby. I compliment and applaud that kind of show as opposed to huge shows like Prince or Genesis which have lost the human touch.

"And I dislike the use of the title 'Lighting Designer' because so many people claim this title when they don't really deserve it. It's very rare now in rock and roll to see a lighting designer in the true sense of the word. I believe that Edison was a lighting designer and I've yet to meet somebody to match that. So many people use high tech equipment and then claim that they've produced a personal design whereas really it's all mechanical. There is a snobbish element in this business where people call themselves designers but tend not to do any work or get involved. I'd rather use the term 'Lighting Operator'."

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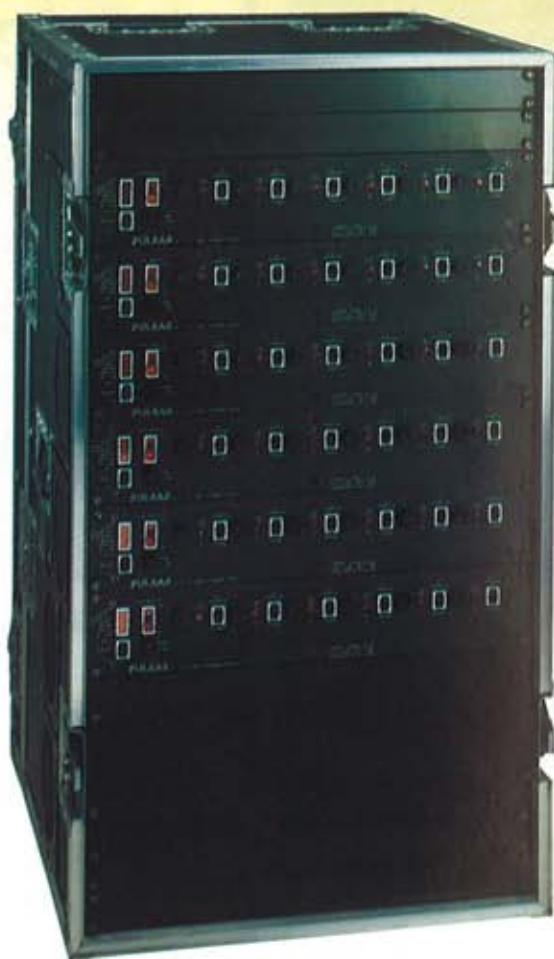
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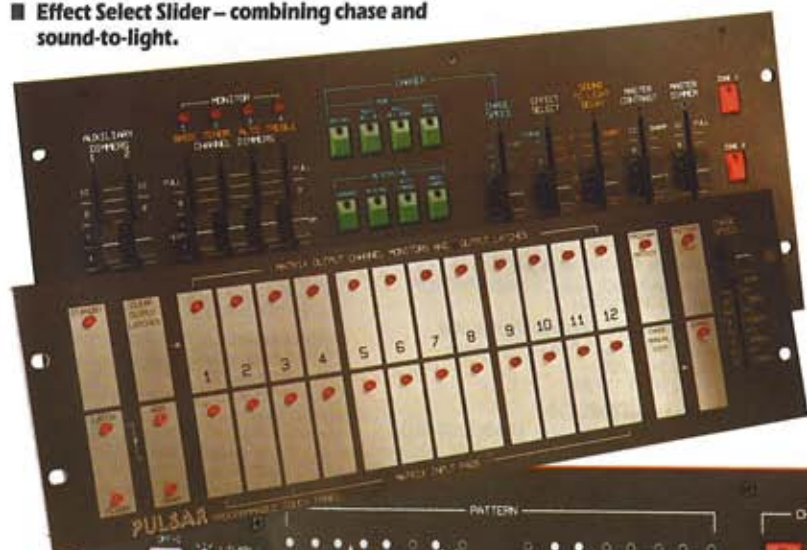
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