

# Lighting & Sound INTERNATIONAL

July 2001

The Entertainment Technology Monthly

[www.plasa.org/news](http://www.plasa.org/news)

## Sweet Talking

- Showlight 2001, Edinburgh

## S Club 7

- A new take on the boy/girl formula

## Friends in Low Places

- Satan's Hollow, Manchester

## Storm

- The Generating Company's new production

## The Fred Principle

- Interview with ETC founder Fred Foster



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# Lighting & Sound INTERNATIONAL

July 2001

Volume 16, Issue 7

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## Lighting & Sound

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## Allen & Heath in £9m Management Buy-Out

Allen & Heath has announced a £9million management buy-out from the Harman International. The company directors heading the buy-out are managing director Glenn Rogers, sales and marketing director Bob Goleniowski, finance director David Jones and operations director Tony Williams.



Pictured left to right are Allen & Heath's management team of Glenn Rogers, Dave Jones, Bob Goleniowski and Tony Williams.

Lead investment has come from 3i, Europe's leading venture capital company, with additional investment from the Bank of Scotland. This announcement marks the end of Allen & Heath's 10-year spell as a division of Harman International Industries, Inc, during which time its turnover has increased tenfold. The company's new board will now consist of the four current directors, plus two non-executive directors from its investment partners.

A jubilant Glenn Rogers told L&SI: "This is fantastic news, not just for the Allen & Heath team, but for all our partners and customers. We have become very successful in the 10 years that we have been with Harman International, but the time has now come to pursue our own independent goals. By maintaining our passion for audio, our commitment to quality and our thirst for innovation, we are well positioned to further develop our position as a key player in the sound reinforcement, installation and club markets. With 3i on board as our financial

partners, look out for some exciting new products very soon." Bob Goleniowski added: "We've all worked really hard for this and I'm looking forward to realising our full potential in the future. In the meantime we'll be concentrating on successfully completing what has been another year of record growth for Allen & Heath."

The company will remain at its recently-extended factory in Penryn, Cornwall, and will retain all its current employees. Further announcements about future strategy will be made during the PLASA Show in September, where the company will be further strengthening its portfolio with a trio of new products for the live sound, DJ and installed systems markets.

## Your PLASA Show Preview...

Included with this issue of Lighting&Sound International, you should have received the PLASA Show 2001 Preview supplement.

Produced by PLASA Media, the PLASA Show Preview

features a wealth of vital pre-show information including dates, times, exhibitors, new product releases, venue facilities, special events, Seminars and Masterclasses, London Attractions and more.

If you have not received your PLASA Show Preview, don't despair - call us on +44 (0)1323 418400 and we'll send you another copy. Alternatively, you can find all the information you need, including a constantly updated exhibitor listing and interactive floorplan on the PLASA Show website at [www.plasa.org/show](http://www.plasa.org/show). Look out for further news in the coming issues.



## Water-Pipe by Artistic Licence

See the Entire Range of Artistic Licence products at the PLASA Light & Sound Show, Stand G24 and at LDI Orlando, Booth 1457.

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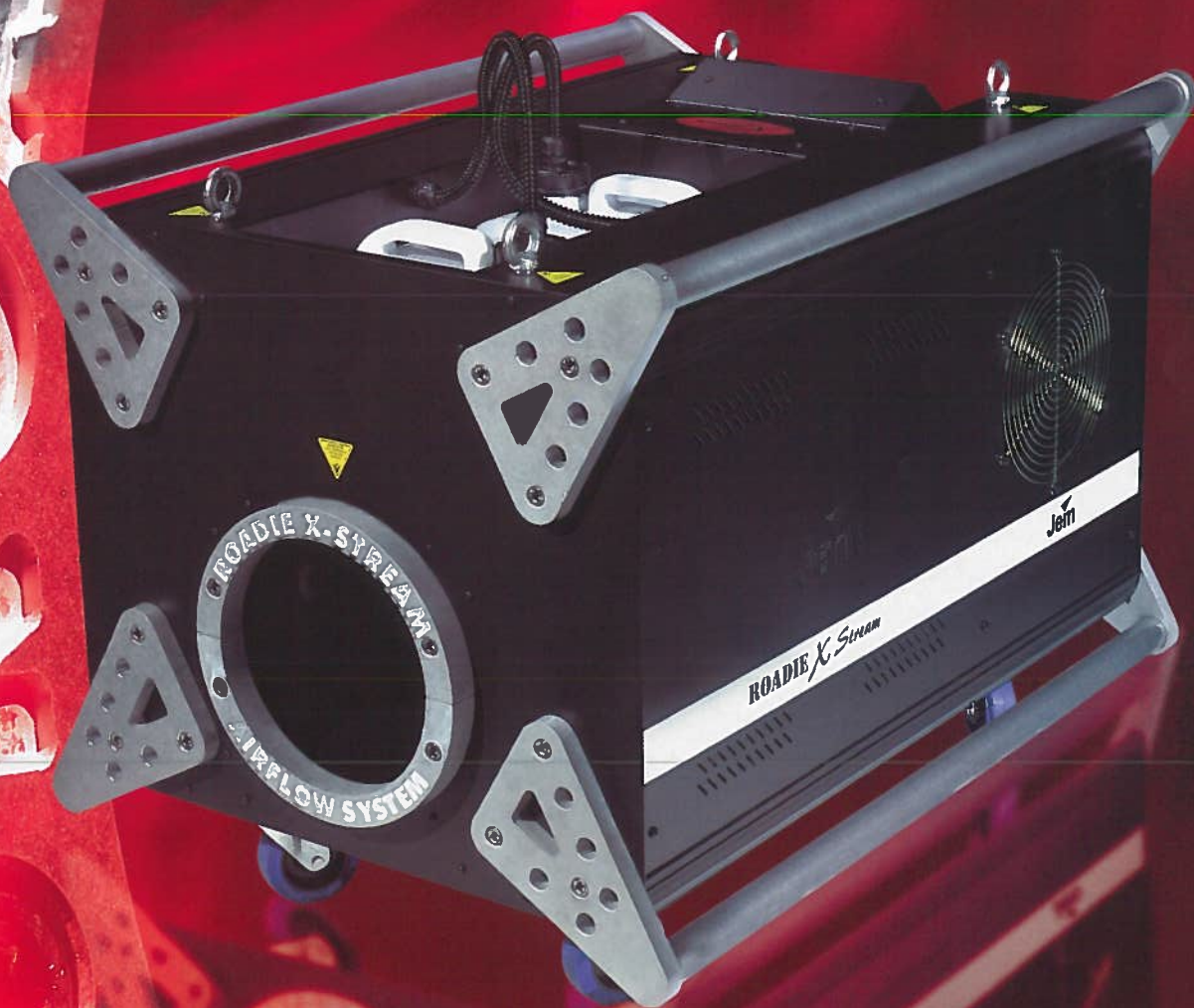
The Roadie X-Stream can be controlled via a dedicated on-board control panel, external DMX 512 source, optional multifunctional remote control or optional PLC Interface. It can be easily and conveniently operated in stand-alone mode. Built around a rigid chassis, the Roadie X-Stream is ideal for:

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## Landmark 'Smoke and Fog'

*For the first time, a comprehensive study of the effects of theatrical smoke has set absolute limits on the amount of smoke that can be used safely on stages.*

The report, commissioned by Actors' Equity Association and the League of American Theatres and Producers, concluded that Actors are at risk when exposed to "elevated or peak levels of glycol smoke and mineral oil." However, it also noted that if exposure levels are kept below the limits established in the study, actors should "not suffer adverse impacts to their health or their vocal abilities."

"The best thing about the study," commented Equity's executive director Alan Eisenberg, "is that for the first time, actors can be sure that when they step onto a Broadway stage, they won't be putting their health at risk from exposure to theatrical smoke. All Broadway and First Class Touring productions are now prohibited from using more smoke than the study's identified guidelines." It is expected that the new exposure limits and usage guidelines will

## Study Completed

become the universal standard for the use of theatrical smoke on all stages presenting live theatre in the United States and internationally.

The study, which took three years to complete, was jointly prepared by the Mt. Sinai School of Medicine, a nationally recognized research institution, and the ENVIRON International Corporation. It included the participation of 439 Actors performing in 16 Broadway musicals during the 1997-1998 seasons. In four of those productions - *Jekyll & Hyde*, *Les Miserables*, *Miss Saigon* and *Phantom of the Opera*, the potential peak concentration of smoke exceeded the recommended levels. Of those shows, only *Les Mis* and *Phantom* are still running.

The study, initiated in response to concerns from actors, was divided into two primary components - an epidemiologic assessment and an exposure assessment. The medical evaluation involved a video-endoscopy/video-stroboscopy, a

computerized vocal test, perceptual vocal rating and pulmonary function testing. The exposure assessment measured levels over the course of an entire performance, as well as peak levels of exposure at any given time.

Following consultation with Equity and the League, ENVIRON developed an 'Equipment-Based Guideline' to allow a production to use effects without having to conduct its own stage-specific testing, provided the machines are used in accordance with manufacturer specifications, are well-maintained, and are functioning properly. The guideline ensures that by arranging the blocking and choreography so that an Actor is not within a high level zone during the specified times, the actor will avoid peak exposures.

A more detailed version of this report, including its full recommendations, can be found on the PLASA website at [www.plasa.org/news](http://www.plasa.org/news), or at [www.actorsequity.org](http://www.actorsequity.org)

# INVITATION

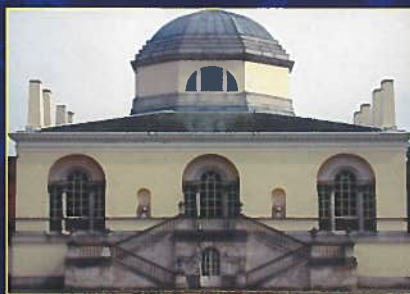
## The Chiswick House 'Son et Lumière'

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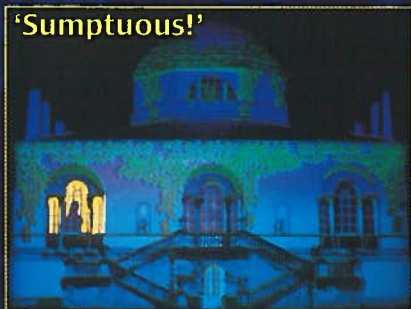
"With responses from the audience such as, "sumptuous.", "innovative.", and "cool.", we could not ask for more."

Philip Butterworth - Hounslow Community Initiative Partnership

"It was a brilliantly researched and visually stunning event that vividly brought to life the fascinating history of one of the country's most glorious examples of 18th century architecture. We were more than pleased."

Marion Docherty - Hospitality Manager Chiswick House

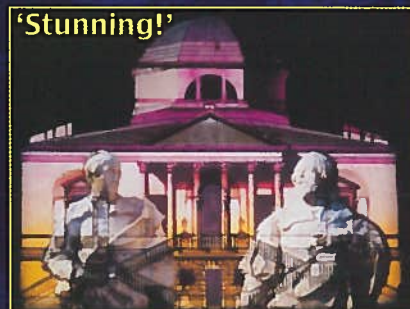
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## BECTU Defeats Government Over Working Time Directive

**BECTU (the Broadcasting, Entertainment, Cinematograph and Theatre Union) has won its case at the European Court of Justice over the UK Government's implementation of the Working Time Directive.**

The Directive, implemented by the UK's Working Time Regulations (1998), gives workers a minimum of 20 days per year paid leave, but to qualify, employees have to complete 13 continuous weeks with the same employer. This means, of course, that most freelance and contract workers would not be entitled to any paid leave.

To address this, BECTU launched a legal challenge against the legislation and on 26 June, the European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruled that national governments may not exclude groups of workers from the rights that the directive gives them. The judgment,

therefore, effectively extends the entitlement to paid leave to all workers from their first day of employment.

The UK's Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the government department responsible for the Working Time Regulations, later announced an urgent consultation on regulations to amend those already in place and corresponding guidance.

The amended Regulations will not mean that workers will be able to take four weeks paid leave from their first day of employment, but if the employment ends during the first 13 weeks, they will be able to claim for leave which has been accrued, but not taken, during this period. The consultation will propose a system of accrual, providing one-twelfth of the annual entitlement in each month, rounded to the nearest full day. This would mean an entitlement to two days' paid leave after one month of employment.

## Clay Paky for Albert



The Royal Albert Hall has recently purchased eight Clay Paky Stage Zoom 1200s. Supplied by Clay Paky and Pulsar reseller AC Lighting, the units will be used to complement all visiting showcase events. Technical manager Mark Jones explained the choice: "Thanks to the diverse nature of the shows in the hall, and the varying distance that the units are from the stage, we were looking for a zoom profile with high light output. After a product comparison of all the 1200 moving head projectors on the market, we chose the Zoom because it is exceptionally bright with good colour mixing, the gobos can be changed easily, it is quiet and most importantly, reliable."

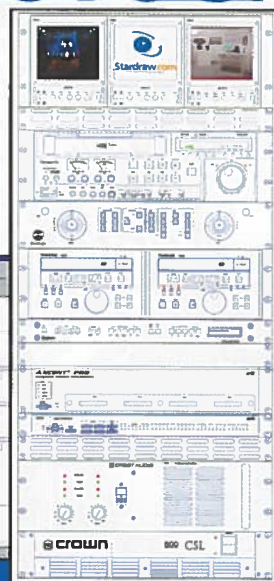
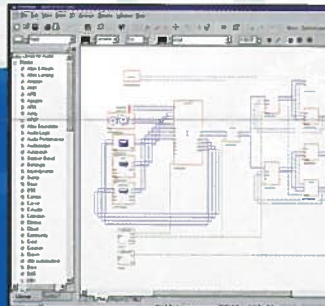
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## Stardraw Bucks the Trend

At a time when many high-tech companies are reporting lay-offs, closures and down-sizing, Stardraw is bucking the trend by expanding into America. US distributor R&S Solutions has been acquired and will continue operations under the name Stardraw.com Inc.

"This is an exciting step forward and forms a key part of our strategy for global expansion," David Snipp, Stardraw's founder and managing director told L&SI. "North America is a very important marketplace for us and already represents around 50% of our installed user base. With a direct presence in America, we will be able to build on the excellent foundation laid for us by R&S Solutions over the past three years."

Randell Green, founder of R&S Solutions, becomes President at Stardraw.com Inc. "This is a development that we have all wanted for quite some time now. It is a very logical step



Randy Green, David Snipp and Rob Robinson, happy to announce the news at InfoCOMM

and capitalizes on the best aspects of each of the separate companies. At R&S we focused on building the Stardraw brand for several years; by going forward under the Stardraw banner we are giving a very clear message that Stardraw is a global company operating successfully across many markets."

Stardraw.com Inc's New York offices officially opened on July 1, 2001.

## In The Shed . . .

Richard Willis of Showcom Audio has recently completed an installation at the West Midlands live venue, The Shed. The owner was looking for a complete upgrade to increase capacity of the venue, and Willis was given carte blanche to specify whatever he chose . . .

He opted for six stacks of Nexo's Alpha E speakers driven by Camco Vortex amplifiers with a Nexo NX241 digital processor for the main system. Eight Nexo PS-15 cabinets, with TD controllers, serve as monitors, driven by Camco DX Series amps. Running the system is an Allen & Heath GL4000, with signal processing provided by Klark Teknik throughout - a DN3600 on main system EQ with a DN514 quad gate and a DN504 compressor/limiter and cabling from Kelsey. But the best was yet to come, when Willis discovered the venue had inherited a KT DN780 that was gathering dust. "We refurbished it and we've reinstalled it for reverb on the main system with remote control. It's great! In fact, the whole system works superbly well. The owner is delighted, and so am I."

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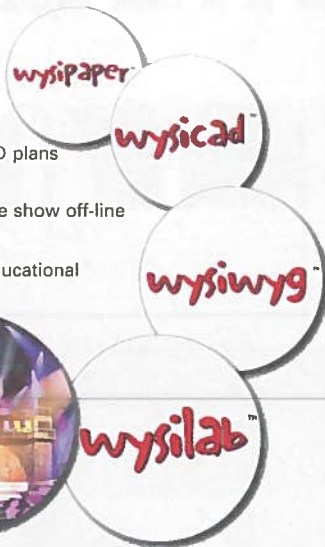
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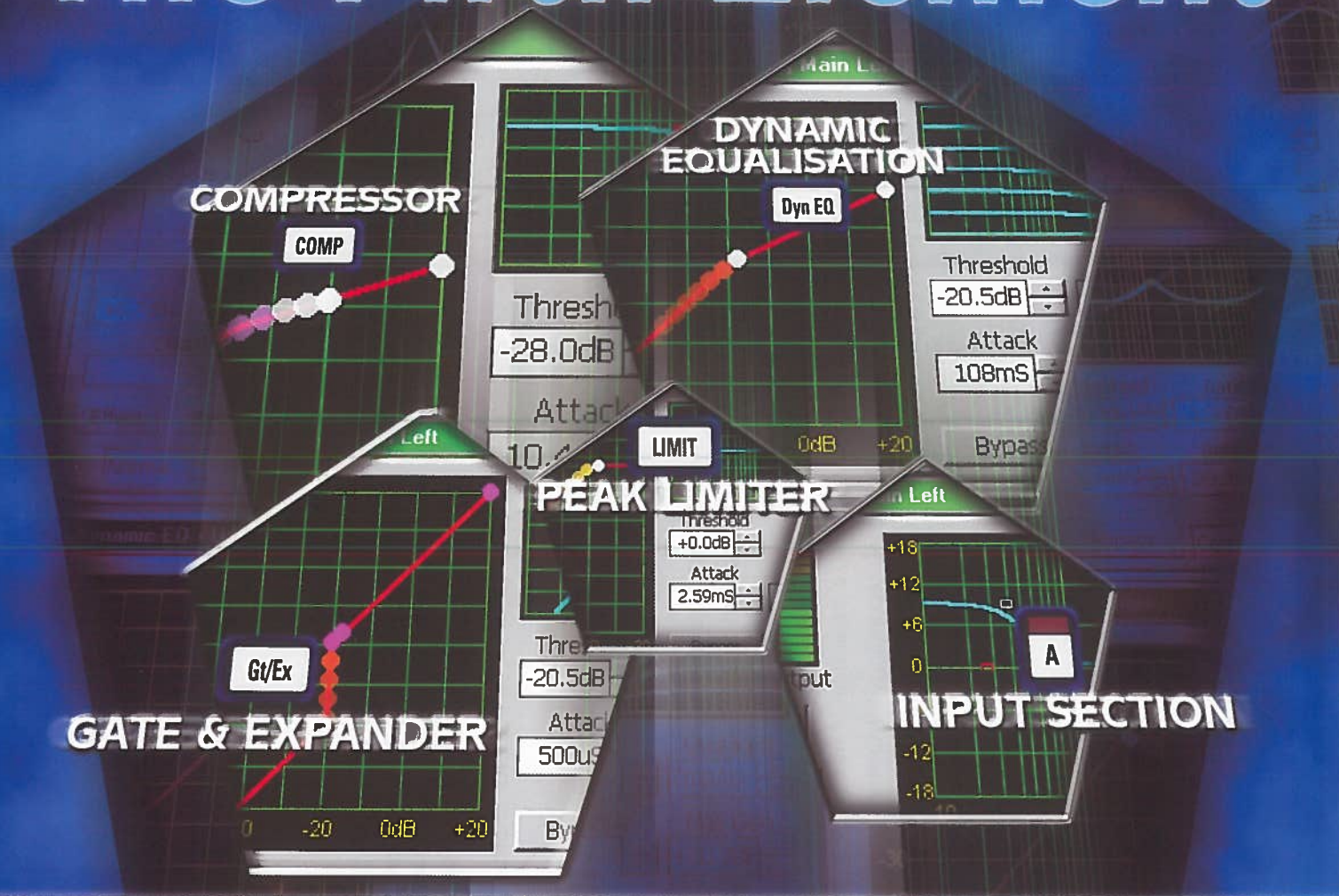
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### FEATURES

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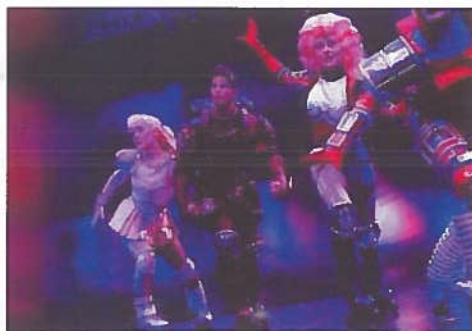
## Starlight Update . . .

**The team behind Starlight Express, now in its 17th year at London's Apollo Victoria Theatre, have recently updated the show's lighting rig.**

After adding High End Intellabeams back in 1993, lighting designer David Hersey and the show's original production electrician, Howard Eaton, returned this year to update the lighting rig once again.

This time they opted to replace the Intellabeams with equipment from Martin Professional, and so the Moving Light Company was called upon to supply the production with 24 Martin MAC 500s and three of the new MAC 2000 units. They also supplied two DHA Pitching Digital Light Curtains, which provide dramatic new lighting for the spectacular bridge which forms the centrepiece of John Napier's set design.

The changes to the rig were made in a tight 10-day period when the production closed temporarily to allow the auditorium to be



re-carpeted and re-seated, during which time Eaton and his team also took the opportunity to upgrade the dimmers and lighting control system, with the rig now controlled by the Rosco-ET Horizon lighting controller. This is the first West End installation of Horizon. Lighting Technology supplied a PC with two 19" monitors and a Horizon 1024 Node complete with Horizon Gold software for the main system - together with a back-up system of one 19" monitor plus Node and Gold Software. LT also undertook all data distribution for the project, whilst Rosco

supplied the FOC Wing Panel and a copy of the Gold software. For the system set-up on site, Howard Eaton linked with Andy Neaves, production electrician for Lighting Technology Projects and Robert Bell, creator of the WYSIWYG lighting visualisation software and now Horizon's product manager.

There are three critical automation components to the show - the upper circle safety barriers, the bridge, and the back lift. If any of these effects is inoperative, the skaters take an alternative route for the race. The operator must be able to respond to this so that un-used sections of track are not lit. In the case of automation failures, the operator can toggle the Re-Route buttons, and macros embedded in cues use that variable to branch the show and respond in other intelligent ways. This gives greater flexibility than building specific show files for each scenario, as the operator can change the sequence in the middle of the show.

**A performance of Starlight Express, along with a backstage tour, will form part of this year's Theatrical London programme in September: see the Show Preview or visit [www.plasa.org/show](http://www.plasa.org/show) for more details.**

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# PLASA AGM Breaks New Ground

**PLASA held its most successful AGM to date on Thursday 14 June in the stunning setting of Coombe Abbey, near Coventry. Just under 70 Members attended, including for the first time, a number of Associate Members. One Member even made the trip from Europe.**

During the AGM, both PLASA Chairman Mick Hannaford and Treasurer Sammy de Havilland reported a successful year for the Association, covering the wide range of initiatives that had been introduced in the past 12 months.

In his keynote speech, Chairman Mick Hannaford reflected on the changes taking place within the industry and the need for companies to equip themselves to cope with a rapidly changing world. He emphasized the role that PLASA had to play in this, and also stressed the need for more training, an ambition that the Association has given a further boost to with the recent establishment of its training and education steering group. In a reference to the increasing concern about copyright infringement, he also told Members of the Association's plans to introduce a low cost design registration scheme next year.

Treasurer Sammy de Havilland informed Members that 2000 had been PLASA's most financially successful year to date. Turnover was up 3% and this despite the



position, and as a result, now able to invest in a number of long-term projects.

Following the AGM, members were given a presentation on the future strategy of the Association by managing director Matthew Griffiths. He made reference to the recently completed Industry Research, commissioned

by PLASA to give its members immediate facts and figures about the size and potential growth of the industry, which had suggested that the entertainment and venue technology industry was worth £10billion worldwide. (That research will shortly be available to all PLASA Members who participated in the survey. Those who didn't can still get to see the research if they complete the 2001 questionnaire and give a commitment to contribute to the next round of research in early 2002).

Following the AGM, Members decamped to a number of break-out sessions covering the PLASA Show, Standards and Member Services, where they had the opportunity to discuss any issues with members of the PLASA committee and head office staff, Clarion Events, the Exhibitor Forum and

representatives of some of the PLASA's service providers. These sessions were particularly well received, proved extremely lively at times, and threw up some interesting ideas for the future.

The day concluded with the Industry Dinner, which took place in the Courthouse at the Abbey, during which Members and guests were entertained by after-dinner speaker John Cugley and magician Paul Zenon.

photos: Chris Toulmin



fact that neither the rates relating to the Show or the Publishing Division, nor membership fees, had been raised last year. He advised those present that the Association was now in a strong financial



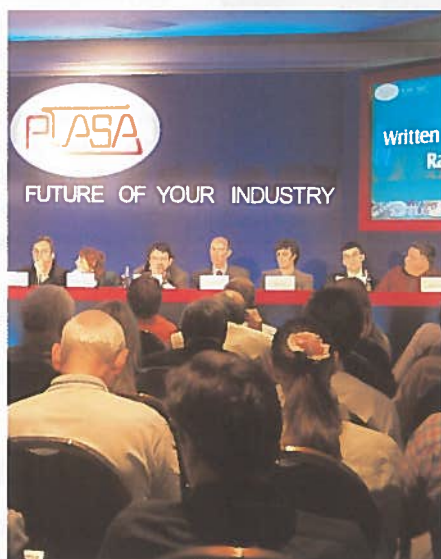
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# Association NEWS



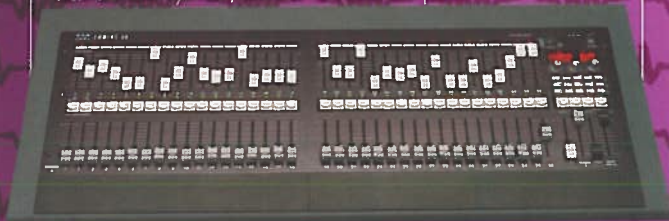


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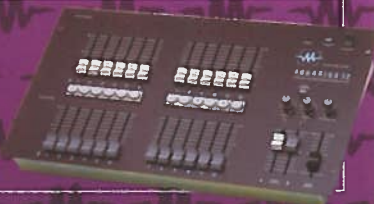


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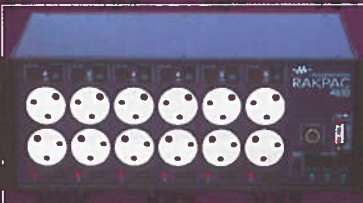
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## News Round-Up



## London Palladium Hosts Fred Bentham Memorial

*Fred Bentham's Memorial Service took place on the 28 June at the Palladium Theatre in London. Over 100 colleagues, friends and family members attended the Service, which was a celebration of the life of a man who many regard as the founding father of the lighting industry. Roger Fox introduced a number of tributes to Fred.*



Paul Western, who often did operating duties for Fred, with the Light Console from Drury Lane.

First came Francis Reid, who talked about Fred's insight into the art of theatre and its technical requirements. He was followed by Brian Legge and Alan Luxford of Strand, who recalled their time with Fred at the company and his early involvement with the ABTT. Bob Anderson spoke of Fred's impact on lighting at the BBC during the 1950s and his work on the Riverside Studios, whilst John Watt paid tribute to the man he felt had played a large part in designing the equipment most in the lighting industry grew up with. Richard Pilbrow reminded the audience of what a pivotal figure Fred had been and how he had sparked his own enthusiasm for this industry. The final word came from Ilse Bentham, Fred's wife, who talked about her marriage to Fred and his love of the industry.

The service finished with the dramatic appearance of one of Fred's original Light Consoles on stage and a recording of his final colour music performance at Strand's King Street offices. Fred Bentham died on 10 May following a protracted illness.

## New HQ for TeleStage

*TeleStage Associates held an official opening of their new office and workshops in Bury St Edmunds on the 13 June. The new premises comprise 350sq.m of office space and 520sq.m of fabrication and warehousing space.*

The expansion allows for future growth and provides room for the development of a fully-equipped electrical and electronic workshop which will facilitate the wiring of equipment racks for MCC's audio-visual equipment racks and custom panels. The workshop will be used for the prototyping and testing of control systems used in stage rigging, AV and show control. A dedicated QA area will ensure that equipment meets all necessary standards before dispatch.

To mark the opening, the company demonstrated a number of items of stage equipment, including two scissor lifts (one using Serapid link chains and the other a single spiral drive from GALA), two of the new super-silent stage winches, operating under load to demonstrate their integral overload and slack rope detection systems. Two other stage hoists were also on display, together with a Batik/Guddland CAT computer control system.

The company can now be found at 4 Kempson Way, Suffolk Business Park, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP32 7AR. Tel: +441284 755512.

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## Pearl Harbor's UK Premiere

*The stars (and stripes) were out in force for the party to celebrate the West End premiere of the much-talked about film, Pearl Harbor. AD Event Design and Production staged the eye-catching event held at the University of London's Senate House, bringing in Dobson Sound to cater for the audio requirements and Utopiam to handle the lighting.*

Amanda Davis is known for creating visually spectacular and innovative events, and this was no exception. The evening was themed as a US wartime party with several extras in 1940s US Army uniforms lounging around the balconies of the main hall (inset), drinking beer and whistling at the guests in typical army fashion as they came in.

Utopium Lighting designed and provided all the lighting for the launch party, with its team working 16 hour shifts through the scorching bank holiday weekend at their Bristol offices preparing equipment prior to installation on a tight time-frame. Over 240 lights were installed in little over eight hours into six themed areas and two reception areas, under the direction of the company's managing director Colin Bodenham who designed the whole show.

Greeting guests on their arrival, the outside façade was spectacularly lit with lighting and custom projection of the Stars & Stripes theme, whilst the skyline was pierced by two authentic Second World War searchlights. Having ensured that arriving guests knew they had come to the right place, they entered the cloisters that formed the main entrance into the venue. Here, two-metre chrome art deco silk flames in each of the alcoves hid an assortment of lights washing



the room in red, white and blue, with an array of ever-changing star-spangled banners projected onto the ceiling, setting the theme for the other zones.

Working closely with the venue, which had never hosted such an event, an elaborate system of vertical trusses was installed into the marbled Crush Hall, which formed the main area of the party.

This included the manufacture of custom 'camouflage' webbing slings to secure the towers to the building's listed marble pillars. The grand

room was filled with a montage of gobos, colour and movement. Beveridge Hall was themed on a 1940s dance hall, where the subtle selection of lighting included the forties 'must have' of a giant mirror ball. The Chancellors Hall housed the VIP area. This spectacular room was adorned with authentic art deco bronze and glass wall-mounted gas lights. These had been converted to sodium lighting in the 1990s, so Utopium Lighting produced a custom light fitting to sit inside the originals, giving the effect of several small flames flickering within. High End Systems Studio Spots provided the 'Pearl Harbour' branding, while immaculate chrome floor cans were deployed on the ornate stone columns as up-lighting.


For the event's audio requirements, Dobson Sound provided a distributed and delayed system of 34 d&b E3 cabinets which extended from the Cloisters through into the galleried 'Crush Hall' and the bar area beyond. This was effectively a DJ system for big-band music playback, with the DJ himself on a pair of Technics SL1210 turntables and a Denon DN2000 twin CD player.



Since Beveridge Hall was the main performance area, it featured a Jump Jive band (aka national Youth Jazz Orchestra) and the dancers, for which Dobsons provided four d&b C7 systems with d&b MAX

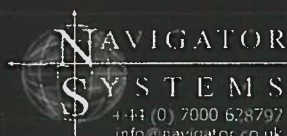
wedges and lots of microphones running from a Yamaha PM3500. The final system was for the VIP area in Chancellors Hall, where guests were serenaded from the luxury of their Chesterfield sofas and nodding palms by a Jazz quartet. For this hall, Dobons furnished a d&b E9 system with MAX wedges and a DDA S-Series console.

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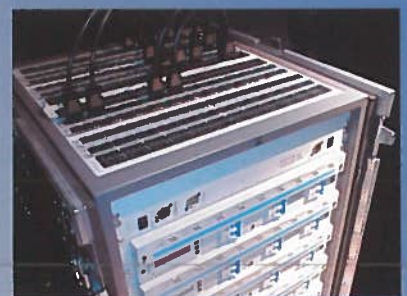
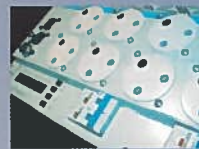
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## Launch of ADS Worldwide

*In an agreement signed in Shen Zhen, China, a joint venture company has been launched that will have access to the largest domestic loudspeaker market in the world.*



The new enterprise will see ADSworldwide's commercial product ranges being marketed under the ADS label. David Hopkins OBE, chairman and managing director of holding company Audio Design Services Ltd, has been working on the launch of ADSworldwide for a number of years, being a frequent visitor to the Far East. The company has appointed 40 Chinese distributors throughout China and plans for that figure to be 400 within the next four years.

To mark its launch, the company invited industry colleagues to join it for the official opening of its new building in Shen Zhen.

Among those present were representatives from Chinese television and press, as well as the newly-selected distributors. In a speech at the opening ceremony, Hopkins spoke of the need for a balanced relationship between Great Britain and China. "For too long," he said,

"China has been used as the Blacksmith's shop of the world, often exploited by countries that benefited from the low labour rates. The cost of buying household named products from the West is out of the reach of the majority. In a balanced relationship, it is now going to be possible to address the needs of the family in China by producing high quality products at affordable prices."

Our photograph shows David Hopkins signing the joint venture agreement with the managing director of the FBBC in the new company's offices.

## ARRI and Magic Eye Alliance

*Two of the UK's leading facilities houses recently announced the formalisation of a new exclusive hire agreement. The arrangement sees ARRI Lighting Rental become the sole supplier of lighting facilities to Magic Eye Studios, one of London's leading commercial TV studios.*

Wandsworth-based Magic Eye, recent home of 'The Weakest Link', had been seeking a prominent partner with which to develop business opportunities. This is the first time ARRI Lighting Rental has established links with a studio.

Managing director Tommy Moran explained: "We have had many opportunities in the past to link up with studios in the London area, but never one as exciting, nor quite as high profile as this."

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## Bounce @ the

**The opening of Bounce at the Roundhouse Theatre, by Nick Grace Management, brings a major international production of a highly-rated dance company's work to London.**

Lighting designer Patrick Woodroffe first visited the Bounce Streetdance Company in Sweden in 2000, with the troupe's management and producers, to gauge the potential for a major international production of the highly-rated company's work. Woodroffe recalls: "We saw that we could translate what they were doing into something even more exciting. Les Brotherston became involved as designer and came up with this wonderful set design for the Roundhouse, on the understanding that Bounce would first do production rehearsals in Ealing, then a six-week run of the show in Sweden before moving to London."

Brotherston's set has a wide central stage and two raised 'satellite' side stages are backed by a wire fence. There's a stark and decrepit inner city look, replete with rusty scaffolding and a mélange of gangways, ladders and the meshed back wall. "We aimed for the rawness and toughness of the street settings, combined with the smooth and textured theatrics of a proper musical," explains Woodroffe. "The scenery and netting backdrops were lit using Par cans with scrollers down below, and architectural floods made specially to top and front light it. Then we used 10 of the new VL2416 wash lights and 23 VL6B luminaires for the profiles, some of which were built into the scenery, and six VL5



*Above, Bounce in action*

*Left, controlling the XTA AudioCore software is sound engineer Steve Ellis*



luminaires. For the giant factory windows we installed doubled-up Par cans. A whole series of MR16s light specifics on the satellite stages, and MR16 battens produce

the back wall flood effect, along with an R&V projector and big fresnels to punch the light through the revolving fans." The whole show is run from a Wholehog desk, programmed by Dave Hill, with Vari-Lite crew chief Ian Bagshot. Vari-Lite also supplied hundreds of conventional lights, including ETC Source 4 Pars, HMI fresnels, tungsten fresnels and all of the rigging, the latter supervised by Mark Stitfall. A recurring lighting theme - revisited at various points in the show - is the set's own industrial look, in which tones of rust, a creamy ochre and a thick, buttery, gold texture pervade.

Providing the audio are Autograph Sound Recording, sound designer Nick Lidster, production sound engineer Ken Hampton and

sound engineer Steve Ellis. The sound system has to convey the sheer energy and muscle of the troupe using almost entirely CD-based source material - the only live components being Sennheiser radio vocal microphones and a tap dance platform fitted with four Barcus-Berry pickups. Lidster specified a combination of compact cabinets, with XTA digital loudspeaker processors used to fine-tune the combination's coherent sound. The main left and right flow system is a pair of six-speaker columns of dV-Dosc. Under the stage are two Meyer Sound DS-2 mid-bass and four Martin WSX subwoofers, with six Meyer UPM1s providing front-fill.

Loudspeaker EQ, delay and crossover facilities are provided by XTA DP226 processors for the sub bass and foldback, and XTA DP200 processors for the WSX and MSL2 cabinets. The set-up of the processors was carried out in the auditorium using a laptop running XTA's AudioCore software, controlled by stylus from a Fujitsu tablet via a WaveLan radio link. "The XTA units are very neutral-sounding," commented Lidster, "and have a vast EQ range, and you have delay, EQ and crossover functions in one unit, which is superb. The XTA technology provides a great deal of flexibility and control from just one unit.

"dV-Dosc is a very tight, directional line array source, but in order to achieve the required levels of low mid and bass, associated with dance and hip hop music, I chose a combination of subs, Meyer Sound DS-2s and USW-1s, together with Martin Audio WSXs, to generate sufficient power right up to the low end of the dV-Dosc." The whole system is powered by Lab Gruppen amplifiers with a Yamaha 03D and a Midas XL88 Matrix at FOH, with Denon CD players for the playback source. Sennheiser handheld radios are used for the rap scenes.

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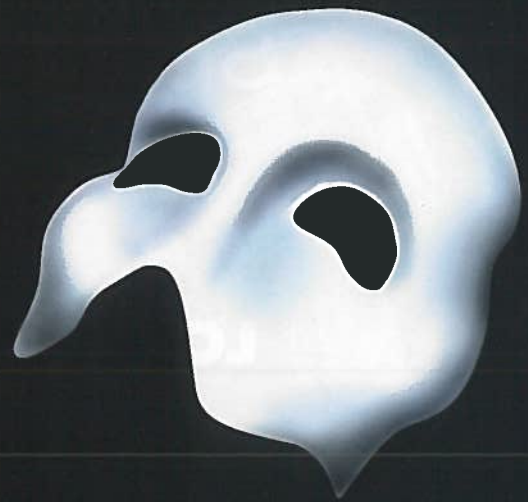
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## Strand's Major Breakthrough

*Strand Lighting has made a major breakthrough into the world of film and location lighting, following large orders for its QuartzColor lighting range from leading London rental houses.*

The company's exclusive location lighting distributor, LCA, has confirmed that the two largest specialist companies - Lee Lighting and AFM Film & TV - have placed significant orders with LCA for QC luminaires: 400 tungsten heads for Lee and 200 for AFM.



The LCA team, with stocks of Strand QuartzColor.

The Lee order is made up mostly of 10K, 1K and 650W luminaires, while AFM have purchased a complement of 1K, 2K and 5Ks. LCA director Graham Kerr believes the orders have much to do with Strand's improved support infrastructure. "We have put the spares situation in order, giving companies of the calibre of Lee and AFM the confidence to switch to Strand," he said.

The move provides ample justification for Strand Lighting's multi-million pound investment in R&D to bring the studio and location lighting range to market. Launched in 1998, QuartzColor - aimed at cameramen, directors of photography, gaffers and television studios - was designed from the bottom up.

**IN A SEPARATE ANNOUNCEMENT**, Strand has announced its London office has moved to a large studio facility in Hammersmith, bringing the operations of its UK Trading Division under one roof.

The result of recent expansion, the move comes after six productive months in temporary offices in Fulham, and mirrors events in the US, where after 20 years at its offices in Rancho Dominguez, CA, Strand Lighting has moved to premises in Cypress, California, also combining office, training and manufacturing facilities.

## Europe's Oldest Lightbulb?

A documentary team are planning to do a report on what they believe is Europe's oldest working lightbulb. The star subject has reportedly been working perfectly well in the garage of a family based in Cetinje, Yugoslavia, since it was first installed in 1910.

However, the Yugoslavian bulb has some way to go before it catches up with a feisty old lightbulb still serving duty in a fire station in the US city of Livermore. The 4W bulb recently celebrated its centenary.

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## Winwood & Neto

- Steve Moles

*On the day I visited the Cheltenham Jazz Festival, the sun came out. It blazed all day, the perfect start for a night of hot Brazilian jazz.*

Funny thing was, I was there to hear one of the classic voices of British r&b: from the early sixties with the Spencer Davis group, through Traffic and Blind Faith to a lengthy solo career, Stevie Winwood has never been less than a national treasure.

He's not toured since the mid-90s, so this appearance was all the more welcome. How he came to be performing on stage with Brazilian guitar genius Jose Neto is a lengthy story, suffice to say good musicians attract one another like magnets, and I know from speaking to Jose (a friend, as well as a star) that he'd always wanted to re-arrange some of the Winwood canon, so this was to be a special evening in every sense.

For supporting this fledgling festival, mention must be made of Richard Knowles PA, who supplied all front-of-house and monitor control; Annette Ekers who made a first class job of running house sound for most of the week; d&b audiotechnik for supplying the PA, and the theatre staff of the Everyman for lighting, running and generally making the whole thing work.

Lighting for Neto and Winwood turned out to be another revelation for me: Francis Coates is an LD I've known since the early 70s, but not seen since '82. "That's because I've got into films, dear boy," he says. "Same money, and you don't have to go away from home so much," he informed.

But it's as a lighting man and musician I know Coates: he started off as a mandolin and fiddle player in the Bonzo Dog Do-Dah Band, before moving on to light such luminaries as Thin Lizzy,



*Above, the show in progress. Right, in a pre-show conference at the Everyman, Simon Johnston (in specs) talks with members of the band.*



Elton John, 10cc, Smokie and Mike Oldfield, "and those are just the ones who fired me!" says Coates, who holds a healthy disregard for his contribution to the music business. However, his timing was appalling when I worked with him, and on tonight's showing, 20 years hasn't helped any.

His rig comprised mainly Patt 243s and 743s with about 10 Par 64s, all from the Everyman house rig, plus a collection of 500W quartz strip floods which Coates has carried around with him as long as I've known him. The control desk is a Strand 430: "Such desks didn't exist last time I operated," he said, "at least not where I was working."

For colour, Coates chose mainly saturated mauves, reds and blues, much like the r'n'r palette he used all those years ago. Considering he had just 45 minutes to set the house rig, and only ever lights the band when they make their singular annual pilgrimage to the Cotswolds, this was not a bad show.

Sound was exquisite, but there were factors in their favour. The d&b system of C7s tops and subs (two each a side) had been in all week and had been set and delayed by d&b themselves. Thus it only remained for Simon Johnston, an engineer who retired about the same time as Coates, to familiarise himself with Knowles' Midas Heritage 1000, "and these compressors that Wigwam has lent us."

Winwood, it seems, requires the earthy qualities of a Summit TLA100; the dbx 160SL had been sent as an extra by Wigwam, "in case I wanted to try something different," said Johnston. What did he think of them? "I couldn't really tell, but the flashing lights on the dbx are too bright - very distracting."

On the day, Frank Martin's insistence on using the house grand piano proved the biggest audio headache, but a lid lowered to mic-stand level, and a surreptitiously applied length of heavy carpet across the mouth, did much to keep out Celso Alberti's drumming, though his kit was barely two feet away. (This trick came courtesy of Annette's better half Chris Ekers, a regular name in the audio side of the opera world, who like many had dropped in for the chance to catch Winwood in action).

Winwood's Hammond B3, referred to as a "a JCB" by Neto and greeted with much mirth, also created problems, not least Winwood having a half-size Leslie cabinet onstage beside him for 'listen', which created a noticeable background swooshing when he was absent from the keyboards. But such was the level of musicianship that this could be ignored. Alan Burgess was on monitors, using a Crest Century board through d&b MAX cabinets: "They're a very easy band to work with," he said, though Burgess too only has the opportunity to operate their monitors once a year.

Johnston mixed the show direct to output, bypassing the sub-groups: "I didn't have time to learn how they work," underlining how long it's been since he's worked with a Midas desk: "This is the first time I've used one of their boards in years. For all the years I used them, the LED column sat immediately beside the relevant fader, now they've spread the channel module's layout and the LED column sits next to the fader adjacent. Probably looks great on the drawings, but was very confusing for me."

Aside from the Neto band output, we were treated to the Winwood classics 'The Low Spark of High Heeled Boys', and 'I'm a Man', each given an extended Brazilian make-over, and each greeted with rapturous approbation.

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## We Know Where You Live! Live

The 40th anniversary of Amnesty International was celebrated in style at Wembley Arena in a comic cavalcade starring Eddie Izzard, and featuring Paul Whitehouse, Harry Enfield, Phill Jupitus, Jeremy Hardy and many more. Alan Rickman also appeared on the bill, as did Badly Drawn Boy, the Stereophonics and Tom Jones - with a satellite-linked slot from U2 in Toronto.

Called *We Know Where You Live: Live!* the show was hosted by Eddie Izzard in the spirit of the classic *Secret Policeman's Balls* of the seventies, eighties and nineties. The role of production manager fell to John Farquar-Smith ably assisted by crew chief Nick Jones.

Izzard is known for his love of performing in an intimate club atmosphere, rather than on television, so a compromise had to be reached to ensure that the light levels were high enough for TV company Initial's cameras, but not too bright for Eddie's performance. "After chatting with Eddie we came to a reasonable compromise,"



Main picture, the Stereophonics. Facing page, a view of the set, and sound crew chief Ross Anderson

comments Dave Smith, one of the two lighting designers called in for the event. That compromise involved two separate rigs - one for the stage designed by Mark Henderson and programmed by Tellson James, and a second for the auditorium, designed by Smith and programmed by Mark (Hippo) Cuniffe.

100 VL5s provided the mainstay of the rig, supported by 24 VL5ARCs, 22 VL6Bs and 40 VL6Cs, with control provided by two Artisan consoles. VL5 wash luminaires were used for TV reinforcement, along with the VL6C spot luminaires.

"We tried to keep the rig as simple as possible," added Smith, "and to emulate the low canopy of a comedy club, whilst still giving the cameras enough to work with.

With the audience rig, we used less equipment than we would normally, and followed the lines of the basic rigging points at Wembley. We also didn't use much colour on the key lighting, except on the groups." To give the 11,000-

capacity audience a clear sight of the action, Screenco supplied a 10 x 9 15mm LED screen, measuring 9.6m x 6.48m in 14:9 aspect ratio.

Heading the audio production team was sound designer George Glossop from Dimension Audio, who supplied Trantec S5000 radio systems and in-ear monitors, as well as d&b E3 nearfield monitors, while Capital Sound Hire provided all other sound reinforcement. Glossop had asked Capital Sound Hire to repeat the Martin Audio Wavefront 8 Compact rig they had supplied for the comedian at a Princes Trust Wembley show in 1999. "It was the comfort factor," he reasons. "Why come up with a new formula?"

Capital Sound's Paul Timmins took over the project from colleague, Martin Connolly. The



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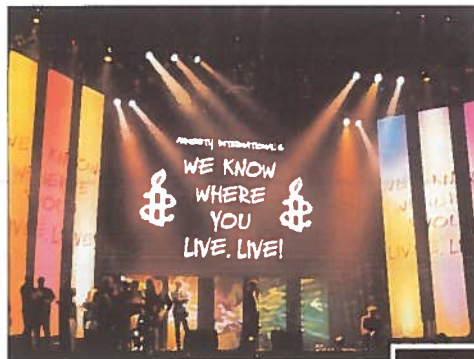


design was based around a main left and right stack, each with 18 Martin Audio Wavefront W8Cs (flown six wide, three deep using a MAN flying system on three points). Reproducing the sub frequencies were six WSX enclosures each side. Large by Wembley's rock and roll standards, there was solid reasoning and experience behind the speaker design. In particular, a good deal of thought had been given to the delay points running back through the auditorium and set in three blocks of three.

The same applied to the way in which the show was miked up, as George Glossop explained: "Having designed systems for Eddie over the past few years based on B&K lavaliers and Trantec S5000s, I know how much of the subtle throwaway adlibs can be lost unless the information can be delivered above the laughter. It is essential to create an accurate, high power system with generous headroom.

"However, again because of the particular circumstances of the hall and the sources, the energy delivered into the hall needed to be kept to a minimum in quiet sections to minimise reflections. Hence the dynamic range and distribution of the system had to be comprehensive."

"Between the cry of 'how much money?' from the promoter and 'you don't need all this equipment' (from sound engineering friends of the promoter) George was under huge pressure to deliver a flawless show," observed Colin Duncan from Dimension. "One newspaper [The Times] said it was like sitting in the Comedy Store." The classic Monty Python 'Four Yorkshiremen' sketch, performed on Lavaliers, was also hailed as one of the highlights of the



show. The comics, corpsing, adlibbing randomly, were nonetheless clearly heard, in luxury, by 23,000 unstraining ears. Adds Duncan: "I think those two aspects emphasise how intelligently the show had been designed." He also paid tribute to John Farquhar-Smith for his "impeccable handling" of the show given the scale of the production and the minimum time to prep it.

Aside from the performance of the wireless system much credit is also due to Capital Sound Hire's XTA-controlled delay system. "There were nine delay points because it was very much speech-oriented, so it was important we delivered it to all points in the room," stated Paul Timmins. "And so three blocks of three delays were placed down the auditorium facing the seats."

All the system management and delay times were consigned to an XTA network accessed by laptop - which is now Capital Sound's preferred means of control. A laptop is driven from XTA's

proprietary AudioCore system, running eight DP226 digital devices (two in, six out). "We could process each cab separately, enabling us to get a stereo pair out of each unit - all linked to the AudioCore on the laptop," said Timmins. "This ran the whole PA and was operated by Ross Anderson, who has done all the programming. We also used Klark Teknik DN360s - nine at front-of-house - but most of the EQ was done with the XTA because of the parametrics."



The entire system was powered by Crown Macro-Tech MA-2400s on the mid-highs and MA-3600s on the bass. At the stage end, Cap Sound providing a swathe of Martin Audio's classic LE700 floor monitors, driven from dedicated MX5 crossovers, and W2/W2S drum fills. In fact, to lend

the monitor mix much needed gravitas, Capital Sound drafted in at the eleventh hour the legendary John (JJ) James.

For Dimension, Pete McGlynn led their manically busy stage crew, who, in phase on a largely improvised evening, were patch perfect. Capital Sound Hire fielded a crew of seven under crew chief Ross Anderson. With Mick Perrin handling production, the event was promoted by Phil McIntyre, with Mark Henderson designing the lighting, and Unusual's Ollie Green in charge of the rigging. And as for George Glossop, he took up residence behind a 60-channel Yamaha PM4000 - mixing the sound for any act that didn't provide its own sound engineer.

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## People News

AC Lighting has expanded its international sales operation with the appointment of **Chris**

**Buckman**. Buckman is a well-known figure within the lighting industry, following three years with Opti, where he held the position of director of sales and marketing. He has enjoyed a distinguished career covering a wide range of industries,

including fibre optics, telecommunications, plastics and industrial plant.

The arrival of the new WORKS line at Fuzion coincides entirely by design with the appointment of **Linton Smeeton**, former sales director of RCF. Smeeton was specifically recruited to take on the position of brand manager for the WORKS line and will be responsible for specifying the new brand onto projects.

**Michael Tuck** has been appointed sales and marketing director of Celestion International. Tuck's arrival at Celestion is his first entry into the audio industry, but he brings with him a high level of managerial experience from the consumer goods and light industrial sectors. Tuck was previously Group marketing director of Avocet Hardware plc, an ironmongery and electronic security company, with sales in excess of £100m.

JBL has announced that veteran **Guy Hawley** has assumed the additional role of sales director, Asia. Based in London, Hawley will add the Asian territory to his current responsibilities as sales director - Middle East and Africa. Hawley has a long history with JBL: prior to his working as director of sales, Europe, he held several sales



Chris Buckman

positions for Harman UK, the company-owned European distributor. JBL has also announced the promotion of **Rick Kamlet** to the position of senior director, installed sound marketing. In this new capacity, Kamlet will handle the combined vertical market responsibilities for both the Engineered Sound and the Commercial Sound of the installed sound contracting market.

Birmingham-based Cloud One Group Ltd has appointed **Bill Jones** as business development manager. Jones is well known within the industry, having most recently been with Lightfactor Sales.

Adam Hall has announced that export sales manager **Sue Mistry** has left the company after 11 years to move to Austin, Texas, where she will join her husband and take up a new role which is yet to be announced, although it is understood she will be remaining within the entertainment technology industry.

DPA Microphones has appointed **Craig Parrish** as sales and marketing manager and **Henrik Bronner** as area manager (Americas). Both

Parrish and Bonner have a sales and marketing background, both having joined from a Danish manufacturer of large-format scanners.

**Albert Wong** has been appointed High End Systems' new regional sales manager for Singapore. He takes over the duties of **Jimmy 'JR' Chal**, who recently left to pursue other interests. Wong, an established industry player with over 12 years'

experience, will work on High End sales in North and Southeast Asia.

Expotus continues its current expansion programme with the appointment of **Luke Baldry** in the role of sales manager. With his first experience with the company at AES in Amsterdam, he's certainly hit the ground running. He brings to the company a wealth of

experience to complement the current Expotus team, ranging from running his own recording studio, to more recently representing Apogee in the UK and selected European markets.

**Karl Winkler**, brand manager for Neumann microphones, has been promoted to director of marketing communications for Sennheiser Electronics Corporation. In his new position, Winkler will oversee all advertising, public relations and field communications for the Sennheiser, Neumann, Innova-Son and DAS Audio brands.



Jon Stanley

**Jon Stanley** has joined beyerdynamic as product manager for XTA and for XTA and biamp. He will be responsible for systems integration, customer support and as a feedback portal for product development. He will also assist with technical

support for beyerdynamic's conference products, with particular emphasis on specialist software applications to configure systems to specific applications.

June saw the launch of a new promotions company specialising in the UK audio industry. Ideas Marketing has been set up by **Nick Powell**, known to many in the industry from his previous role as marketing manager for Audio-Technica, and will offer a range of marketing services, including PR, graphic design, media liaison and exhibition co-ordination. Powell is joined in the new company by his wife Stacey, who has a more general marketing background, having gained experience of national media through her role as PR Officer for the Environment Agency.

One final bit of in-house news. At the recent biennial congress of the International Association of Theatre Critics (IATC), which took place in Quebec, L&SI regular **Ian Herbert** was elected president. Congratulations Ian - when you wake up, the drinks are on you mate!



Michael Tuck

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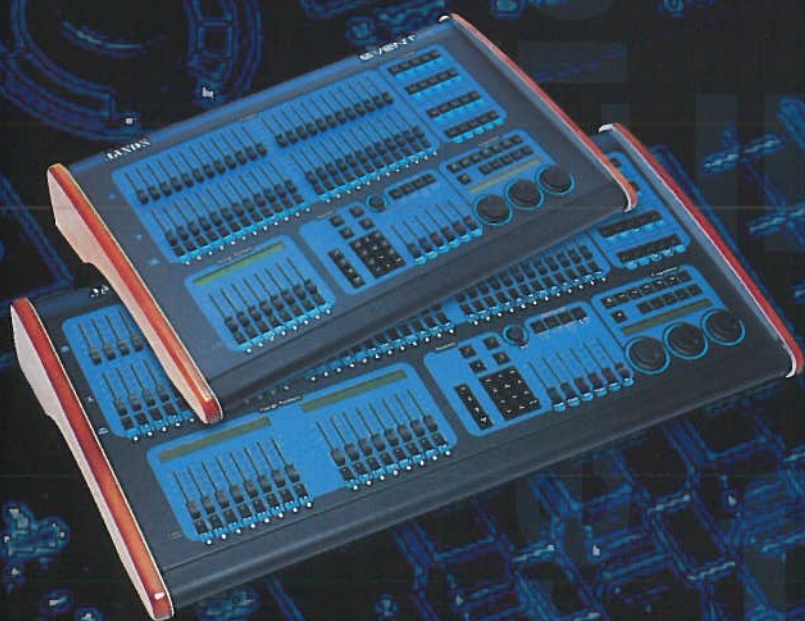
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## Industry Cricket Challenge

**The details have been confirmed of the third Hayden Laboratories Annual Cricket Cup Challenge.**

The date for this enjoyable and competitive event is Thursday 23rd August. The Audio and Lighting industry are invited to pull on their cricketing whites and challenge the current champions - Clarion Events Ltd (boo hiss) - in a triangular competition which culminates with a prize-giving and BBQ in the evening.

And if you don't play, you are very welcome to come and enjoy the atmosphere and cheer on your industry colleagues as they demonstrate their complete lack of sporting prowess in the idyllic setting of Littlewick Green Cricket Club, Berkshire.

This year's three teams will consist of Clarion Events captained by James Brooks-Ward, the PLASA Lighting side

captained by Paul De Ville of Lightfactor Sales, and the PLASA Audio side captained by Simon Curtis of Hayden Laboratories.

So if you are a budding young cricket star or a well-seasoned ringer and would like to register your interest in playing in one of the teams, please contact the relevant captain - whose numbers and e-mails are listed below.

If you would like to join the supporters on the sidelines and attend the BBQ in the evening, contact Nicky Rowland. To ensure we can cater for the right number of people, there will be a small contribution of £5.00 per person payable on the evening.

**Audio Team:** Simon Curtis  
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**Lighting Team:** Paul De Ville  
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**Spectators:** Nicky Rowland  
E-mail: nicky@circle8.co.uk



CP Sound has just completed the installation of an innovative new lighting rig, plus a re-invention and design of the sound system at The Core in Yeovil, Somerset. CP utilized as much as possible of the existing audio installation, adding four JBL MS125S cabinets to the room, complete with new RSE PFX 1200 clip control amplifiers. A DJ monitor was also spec'd, plus two JBL top cabinets for infill, and another two RSE amps, plus a Formula Sound AVC2 limiter. Over the bars are a series of fibreglass armadillos (for those Fear & Loathing in Las Vegas moments) and between each is a fibreglass pod, the pods carrying an Opti Solar 250 projector with oil wheel behind it. The pyramid shaped roof void above the dancefloor houses the main lighting rig. This consists of a range of Mad fixtures, together with Abstract VR8s and an Anytronics Megastrobe - all controlled by a Pulsar Masterpiece 216.

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## Orchestral Manoeuvres . . .

**Amsterdam's Museum Square provided the ideal setting for an audition of Meyer Sound's new M3D system. Mike Mann reports.**

The audition in question was a classical concert by the Royal Concert Orchestra of a range of classical music - the first performance of its kind to be streamed live on the Internet in The Netherlands.

The Meyer System came courtesy of Hof Audio - The Netherlands' biggest Meyer Sound user, and owner Bart Hof regards himself as being part of a team - which means that he's not afraid to voice criticisms. "I'm a true Meyer fan," he explained, "which means that while I can be extremely critical, I can also understand where the product concepts are coming from." The decision to purchase an M3D line array system was, he added, based on a need for a system that would cope with outdoor events: "I knew that we needed a bigger system than the MSL-4. We provided the audio for last year's Museum Square concert using a system based on MSL-6, DS-2 and MSL-5 (Meyer's long-throw systems) but we ended up using cranes to fly nearly four tonnes of equipment per side!" The new M3D rig (eight self-powered cabinets per side, complete with their own flying/stacking gear) weighed in at less than half this figure, allowing simpler (and much more elegant) truss towers to be built.

The concert venue is one of the largest formal parks in Amsterdam; and with a distance of 250 metres between the stage and the Rijksmuseum at the far end of the square, Hof had to be certain the system would have sufficient throw. "The idea behind conventional Meyer designs is that they are 'point source' - each cabinet has to throw the entire distance on its own, and we only add boxes to increase the angles of coverage. With other systems, where arrays are built to add power, the result is less even. With a line array, we knew that the high frequencies would be clearly audible at this distance - and that we could use the same system components to cover the whole area."

The system was split into two sectors on each side; since line arrays work differently in the near and far fields, it was important to be able to deal with each zone individually. "In the far field, all the HF outputs couple smoothly, whereas in the nearfield they are not supposed to couple at all," Hof explained. "This means that the SPL calculations are not simple - in



This page, main picture - a spectacular view of the stage

Inset, Bart Hof

Facing page, SIM at the mix position, seen but not heard

Inset, a Meyer M3D array

theory, the level drops off by 3dB per doubling of distance, but in fact, the coupling effect changes this and means that we have to adjust the far field EQ separately from the near field."

The entire system was driven through a pair of XTA DP226 processors, which are used for EQ and level adjustment (the M3D cabinets are all treated as full-range). A SIM II measurement system was inserted into the drive chain, and kept an eye on the system response during rehearsals and the show itself. Finally, Meyer's RMS data system allowed system engineers to see the parameters of every driver and power amp in the system - even down to heatsink temperatures and fan speeds. "The tools that we have to adjust and monitor the system are a big advantage - for once we can see, as well as hear, what we are doing," said Hof.

Low-end response was a major consideration - especially with many open microphones on the orchestral stage. "The low-frequency steering that the M3D uses is impressive - especially for this kind of concert," reported Hof. "We have so much headroom before we get any trouble with feedback or colouration - it's great."

Unusually, the Royal Concert Orchestra (Koninklijk Concertgebouworkest) is accustomed to playing outdoors and requires no foldback. The acoustics of the transparent tensioned tent (provided by StageCo) were sufficiently good to allow musicians to hear themselves - though Hof did provide the conductor's podium with a simple foldback and reverse talkback system. Other speakers included single UPA-IP and 2Ps per side for front fills, and small MSL-4 delays - neither of

which were really necessary, according to Hof: "The M3D covers right down to the front row in this configuration, and we could skip the delays except for a shadow from some trees."

The final proof of the system came as the orchestra launched into Dutilleux' Fanfare for Slava,

under the baton of guest conductor Mstislav Rostropovich. Not only was every nuance of the music audible, but the throw of the main system would have been sufficient for a much larger audience, and provided the far end of the 250m coverage with perfectly acceptable, full-range audio.

Hof's miking technique has been honed over several years with this orchestra. DPA 4060 mini-capsules were clipped onto all higher strings (first and second violins and violas) while celli and double basses were picked up using Audio Technica AT-4041 boom-mounted mics. "This is not an expensive mic, but for this purpose it's really great," Hof commented. No expense had been spared for brass and woodwind, though; Neumann U87 and KM I40s were deployed around each section. Finally, percussion mics were an assortment of AKGs, relying heavily on the CK1 unit.

The Hof Audio system utilised a concept familiar to broadcasters, but little used in sound reinforcement. The entire string contingent was fed to a pre-mix position at the side of the stage, where they were sub-grouped to provide A/B feeds of every section to FOH. This reduced the number of channels used by the strings to 10, making the task of balancing the whole orchestra much simpler.

Signals from the understage XTA active mic splitters were fed not only to the FOH desk, but also to the nearby broadcast sound mixing truck, which was supplied by the Dutch state broadcaster NOB. The concert was recorded for broadcast on Channel 1, and was also beamed live by satellite by the event's producers, Avro. While the conventional television broadcast required the services of a full-size vision scanner, audio mixing mobile and two support vehicles, NOB was also providing webcasting facilities - in a tiny Volkswagen van.

## ... in the Park



In charge of Internet production was Peter Hazenberg, from NOB's business development department. "Last year we researched webcasting from the point of view of our core business, which is camera-based transmission. What we found was that the majority of webcasts used single, fixed cameras with no editing - it became obvious that the Internet's biggest problem is money. Producers just can't afford conventional broadcast equipment and big mobiles."



NOB's solution was to use Hazenberg's expertise with remote cameras (gleaned from working on Big Brother, The Bus and other fly-on-the-wall shows) to provide a better result without the expense associated with manual cameras and lengthy rigging times. "I searched the CCTV market for a reliable mechanic and replaced the internal optics and video electronics," Hazenberg explained. "The result is a camera that only requires one signal cable (control is multiplexed with the video feed), has 360 degrees of pan, is fitted with a 16x zoom lens and can be rigged less than an hour." Hazenberg admitted that the quality is not good enough for terrestrial broadcast, but is more than sufficient for Internet use. A major advantage of the cameras used is that they are very sensitive; no extra lighting is required, which, although irrelevant in this environment, is important when webcasting pop concerts, press conferences or other live audience-based events.

The Internet feed used a combination of the main broadcast truck output (mixed for television in 16:9 format) and three remote camera heads, which allowed participants views of the park, the backstage areas and the stage itself. Hazenberg explained that much of the extra footage was concerned with the technology behind the concert itself: "Most Internet users are more technical than TV viewers, so it's important for them to get more technical insight, as well as other 'privileged' views." Signals (which are transmitted in Windows and Real formats and at multiple bitrates) leave the webcast mobile in one of three ways; either as double or triple ISDN feeds (using Sisco routers), a satellite IP link, or as terrestrial point-to-point IP traffic. In this case, due to the lateness of the booking, no Telco cables were available, so a satellite feed to NOB's MediaPark, where the company's servers are located.

Hazenberg concluded by saying that it is bandwidth restrictions to private houses that are now limiting Internet webcasting. "At the moment, about 65% of users have standard 56k modems, and with slow take-up of ADSL and just one cable provider, coverage is not at all universal. Still, when the users' bandwidth is good enough, we'll already be there." In the meantime, a stroll down to Museum Square to hear the real thing played through a giant hi-fi doesn't seem like a great hardship.

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## Lighting Technology @ BDC

During our time at the recent TILE show at the Business Design Centre in Islington, we took time out to call in on Lighting Technology's newly established office on the second level of the Design Centre.

Dave Cartwright and Richard Reed, both on temporary secondment from the Group's Park Royal HQ, were more than happy to show us around. The new base, which features both a sales office and showroom area, is championing the promotion of Lighting Technology Projects' specialist architectural lighting products portfolio, which incorporates product lines from manufacturers around the world, including Color Kinetics, ETC Irideon, TIR LightPipe, Astralux, Derksen and Phoenix - as well as numerous other architectural lighting and control products. Graham White, recently recruited from Absolute Action, heads up the new office with Clive Tallent and Sarah Davis joining him from Park Royal.

Other news from the Group includes the recent relocation of both the Direct Lighting and



Dave Cartwright and Richard Reed of Lighting Technology flank L&S ad manager Barry Howse at LT's new London base at the Business Design Centre, Islington.

Valiant Lamps operations. These have now moved to Lighting Technology's New Malden, Surrey, location as part of an expansion and reorganisation programme. Both companies are already networked to take full advantage of the Group's new National Distribution Centre in Corby where a computerised internal order processing system has been installed to mastermind and speed up deliveries to its customers.

## UK Demo of Vertec

Arbiter and JBL recently took residence at the Hammersmith Apollo, to host the first UK demo of the Vertec Line Array system. The day was designed to give clients an opportunity to view the product up close and allow them some hands-on time with the system.

One of the issues JBL was most keen to emphasize was that of weight, or rather lack of it, for each Vertec VT4889 enclosure weighs only 69kg, including rigging hardware. Each enclosure includes two lightweight 15" low frequency loudspeakers, four powerful 2250H 8" midrange frequency loudspeakers, coupled to RBIs (Radiation Boundary Integrators), and three compact 2435 high frequency drivers fitted to WaveFormers.

The system is already establishing a strong following, both in the US and Europe, where some of the key touring supply companies have systems out with a number of headlining bands.

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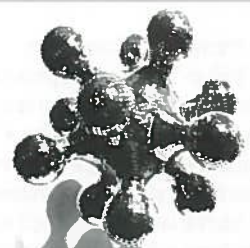


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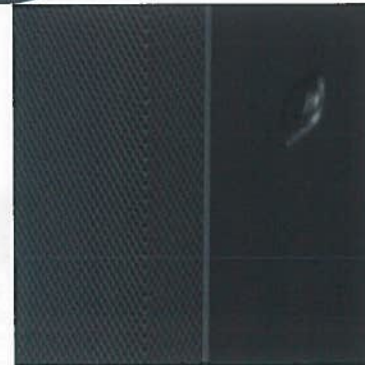
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## Harrogate International



Pictured at Harrogate - Andy Brooks, Andy Briggs, Bryan Waters  
Below, a receptionist uses the custom Audace control panel

**A joint project involving manufacturers Allen & Heath and Audace has provided a UK conference and exhibition venue with a unique paging system.**



Bryan Waters, MD and founder of Audace,

explained that the HIC system required a larger number of output zones than A&H's DR128 digital matrix could provide. "The first challenge was the need for a system of 16 zones. We wanted to provide the Centre with a single control system that would work with two of the Allen & Heath units." Waters, who professes a keen enthusiasm for the Cornish pro audio manufacturer's products, set up Audace specifically to provide one-off solutions and off-the-shelf support products for the blossoming digital market. "When the DR128 was launched, there was nothing like it on the market for anything like the price - and there still isn't," he enthused. "However, the software supplied with the DR128 is for set-up, rather than an operational programme. Our solution, which is part hardware, part custom software, allows non-technical operators (in this case the HIC's team of receptionists) to control paging levels and zoning from a simple control panel, while technical staff have full access to the two DR128s for the Centre's computer network."

The central paging panel, which was commissioned for this project, offers users a pre-selection of multiple paging zones, which combines with a push-to-talk microphone to provide access to the Centre's nine halls, the foyer, backstage and technical areas. Output level to each of these may be set within limits, which are preset by technical staff. "One of our biggest problems until now has been the need for different levels in each room," explained production manager Andy Briggs. "The Centre can host up to four or five different events at the same time, and organisers expect to be able to have control over their room."

The system was supplied by LMC via the company's Leeds branch. Andy Brooks oversaw the project: "I spoke to Allen & Heath about the concept, and they put us in touch with Bryan and Audace. The DR128 already has so many of the right features for installations, but for systems such as this there is an increasing need for non-technical operation." Bryan Waters added that this is only the tip of the iceberg: "One of the traditional boundaries has always been the number of outputs that a digital matrix can have. This removes that completely - the system is hugely scalable, and with custom or standard hardware can give the user an interface that they feel comfortable with."

Mike Mann



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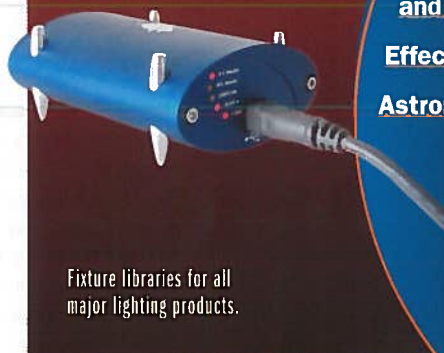
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## CT's iLITE 6 Showcase

Creative Technology hosted a major launch for the new Barco iLite 6 high resolution indoor product at Tiger Tiger in London's West End, in a showcase that saw many leading production companies and agencies throughout the UK having a chance to see the system for the first time.

Called 'the video plate' it is Barco's response to the growing market demand for indoor high-resolution daylight displays. The iLite 6 takes the achievements of SMD technology (three colours in one) and builds on them, offering a 6mm resolution with a high light output, colour uniformity, contrast, flexibility - and seamless pictures. Each panel weighs 28lbs, and with a depth of just 5inch, the iLite 6 is rated at a light output of over 2000 NIT.

Creative Technology has already debuted the modular system on both sides of the Atlantic - at ITN's purpose-built election studio in Holborn, and the E3 electronic games show Los Angeles - but this was the first opportunity for many prospective users to view it at close quarters.



Creative Technology chief executive, Graham Andrews (left) with technical director, Andy Hawker.

In CT's hire fleet, the Barco iLite 6 will complement Lighthouse Technologies' LVP-102D 10mm screen, ideal for larger conventions and exhibitions where audiences are viewing from a distance. While the i6's greatly increased resolution makes it ideal for smaller video screen sizes (down to 2.5sq.m) visitors were also able to witness the high quality graphics representation on the larger display at Tiger Tiger. The modular format also allows unusually-shaped screen displays to be integrated within the geometric of the overall design concept.

## Numark Buys Alesis

Numark Industries has received final court approval to acquire all the assets of Alesis Studio Electronics and its affiliates. Alesis, well-known as the manufacturer of products such as ADAT, had been undergoing reorganization, and had already had talks with a number of interested parties earlier in the year.

Once the purchase is complete, the two companies will function as separate business units, although O'Donnell and a newly-appointed transition team headed by Paul Antrop, CEO of Numark, will begin immediately looking for areas where the two companies can benefit.

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## Life in a Day

If you get dizzy watching Alfred Hitchcock's Vertigo or shudder when the window cleaner swings by then Andy Mitchell's chosen career path should be avoided. As a qualified rigger and rope access specialist Mitchell's varied career has taken him from high-rise industrial projects in Melbourne, Australia, to above height rescue specialist on the acclaimed Millennium Show at the Dome. Mitchell has now forsaken the rugged, industrial world for the entertainment industry and is currently show rigger for The Generating Company's debut production Storm (see feature this issue).



### What's a Typical Day for You?

I get into the space several hours before the performance to set-up. Because the venue gets used during the day for training classes we have a fair bit to do. We go through and set up each bit of kit - the

trapeze, cloud swings etc. The most important aspect of the job is for my colleague Steve and I to be safe and competent and for the performers to trust us - we work hard to establish this on a daily basis. We do pre-show safety checks before each performance and once a week we do a full rig check where we check every nut, bolt, caribiner and shackle. We're conscious that during a performance we have the safety of 20 performers literally in our hands. It's a busy show for us up in the grid as we're constantly carrying out cues, presetting for the next routine and monitoring safety.

### Why get out of bed?

The people. I work with some great performers and crew.

### What piece of kit would make a difference?

Jetpacks - the kind they use in science fiction movies. It would make my job so easy if I could jetpack up onto the rig and get stuff done. I'm sure it'll happen one day.

### Which moment would you consign to history?

As part of the promotion for the Dome show, I had to wear make-up and this hideous costume that showed my stomach. I then had to put my harness on and be flown into the air on this big piece of kit. It was a horrendous experience and I got heaps of stick for it. I prefer to be up in the roof, in the dark, out of the audience's view.

### What's the best advice you ever got?

Always tie a knot in the end of your rope - so you don't end up abseiling off the end of it.

### Where do you see yourself 10 years from now?

Teaching safe work practices for working at height.

### Have you ever used a piece of kit for something it wasn't designed for?

Well I've seen bits of kit that should only be used as lead weights, but I won't name them!

### Name the best 3 attributes in a client?

1. One that knows what they want. 2. One that understands how to get it. 3. One that helps me achieve it for them.

### Ever told a client where to stick it?

Not yet!!

### If you weren't a rigger/rope access specialist what would you be?

I'd be making movies!

If you fancy a career in rigging, you can find further information on rigging training and rope access training on the Irata websites at [www.irata.org](http://www.irata.org). Irata is the Industrial Rope Access Trade Association. The Association of British Theatre Technicians (ABTT) also offers courses in rigging and lifting, flying and ropework amongst others - more details at [www.abtt.org.uk](http://www.abtt.org.uk). Andrew Mitchell is IRATA qualified to Level 3 and also has specific rescue training and various first aid certificates.

A longer version of this interview can be found at [www.plasa.org/media/lifers](http://www.plasa.org/media/lifers)

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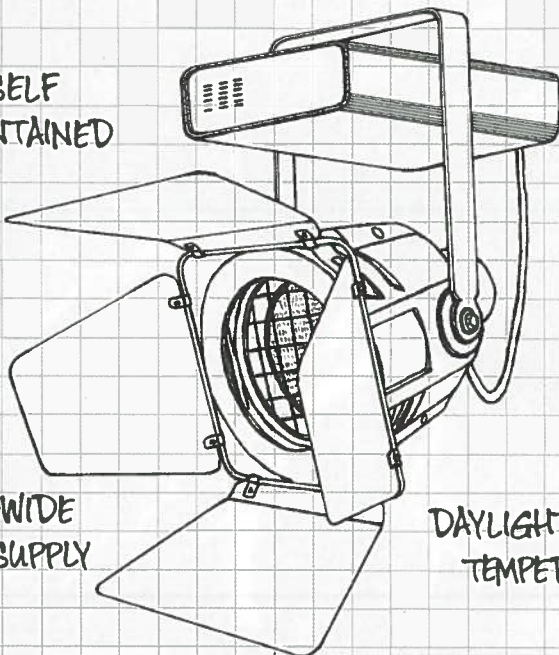
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## TiLE 2001, London

*The 10th Annual TiLE Conference was held for the third, but last, time (for a few years) at the Business Design Centre in Islington, London 12-14 June 2001.*

For those unfamiliar with the TiLE concept, it is not unlike Showlight in its make-up with a conference and exhibition running hand-in-hand, and an associated social programme gluing the two together. Certainly one of the most important conferences in Europe, perhaps in the world, TiLE is a key 'networking' event bringing together major developers, operators, designers and suppliers from the international leisure market. It attracts people from around the world because it is the one place to meet people of all levels and to listen to and debate about the real projects, techniques and problems facing this major industry.

Most of the major players can be found on the show floor - companies like Electrosonic, Farmer Studios, Jack Rouse Associates, LCI, Media Projects International, Sarner, Sennhesier, BRC Imagination Arts, Barco, DJ Willrich, Edwards Technologies, ECA2 and Landmark. The Show also saw the official launch of ThemeTech MDM - a new company which will build and project manage contracts for a variety of themed environments. It is born out of the long established model and sculpture manufacturer MDM Ltd.

One of the big draws of TiLE is its conference programme which addresses a different main theme for each of the three days. Day one was titled Shifting Sands - a reference to the uncertain climate of the times. There were



*Left, the main exhibition floor at TiLE.*

*Centre left, Yves Pepin, Sophie Poirier and Jean Michel Louis of ECA2.*

*Centre right, Ross Magri, Lee Appleton and Michael Bennett of Sarner.*

*Bottom, Steve Pearce, Yvonne Forbes and Nick Farmer of Farmer Studios.*



sessions on the Megatrends of the next ten years and the provocative opportunities released by more relaxed gaming restrictions in the UK. And on the subject of cities, how leisure projects have become social engineering that has stimulated their re-birth and renewal. There was talk too of museums renewing their relationship with visitors, exploiting the web, developing powerful brands and competing hard.

Day two - Paying the Rent - commenced with a review of new projects around the world, examining the issues of poor and even non-

existent project management on some notable Millennium projects such as the Dome and others still in construction. Day three was all about the customer - Fulfilling the Promise. As the nature and desires of the customer change, so too must the leisure industry. First to identify the changes, then evaluate and act. And to round off the sessions, there was Projects from Heaven and Hell - a title that requires no explanation. [ETC sponsored the conference room for the second time, supplying both luminaires and control equipment].

The TiLE Awards were presented at the final session of the show by the outgoing Conference Chairman,

Malcolm Lewis. The Award for Innovation went to Antenna Audio for its web-based downloadable audiovisual tour which provides virtual visits to a heritage site - either instead of going, or as a preparation for the real thing. Antenna also picked up a second award in the New Product or Service category for implementing the ability to collect visitor feedback in Real Time, crucial to the success of visitor attractions. Another winner in that same category was Cyber Actors, for their clever implementation of a live computer-generated character, so too Sennhesier for its Guide Port System. This latter in recognition that they had developed a uniquely flexible system for delivering programme audio while tracking visitor movement in an attraction or exhibit.

This year's event was held against the background of changes in the market, with leisure and themed venues not only encompassing theme parks and museums, but also facilities that project a brand or corporate image. Chairman Malcolm Lewis, creative director of Media Projects International, promised a conference with muscle, teeth and bite. The consensus amongst the delegates was that TiLE delivered just that!

TiLE 2002 will be held in Berlin, 11-13 June.

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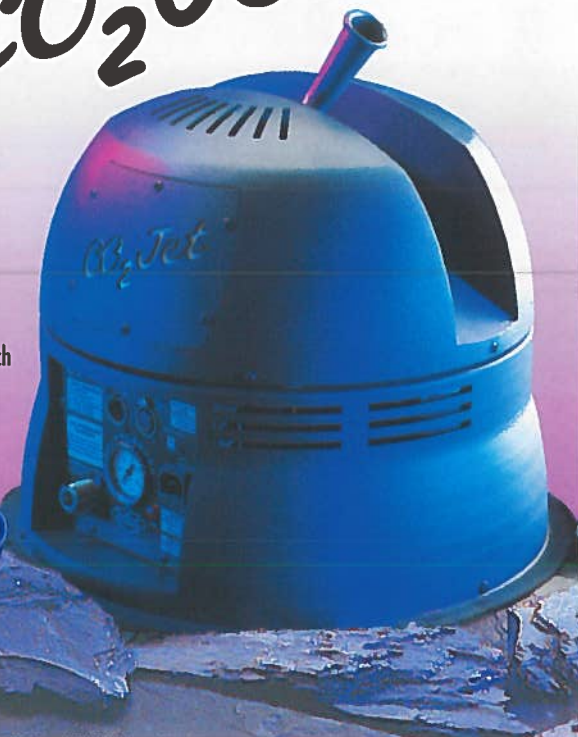
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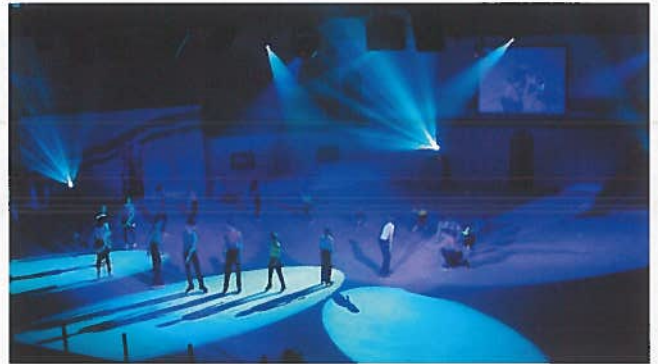
## Bytecraft Forces Caire into Liquidation

Bytecraft is to put Caire into liquidation. The move comes just months after it injected £60,000 into the company in a bid to develop the business. "Bytecraft feels that liquidation is the only responsible course of action," said general manager John Rowland in London. "Because of a long-standing relationship with the Caire parent company, and also because we had bid several projects with Caire Ltd, we felt we needed to help the company when it ran short of funds," Rowland added.

Bytecraft's earlier investment had been part of its intention to create a permanent presence in the UK. An investment position in Caire Ltd added value to the opening of a UK daughter company Bytecraft Europe with potential to deliver some inter-company business. "When analysing the sales opportunities and current

order book, an investment in Caire Ltd appeared sound. We could never have anticipated the recent turn of events," Rowland said. "The largest creditor and debtor to Caire Ltd is Caire SA and the directors were unable to agree on a payment schedule. We therefore had no alternative but to take the onerous, but responsible, decision to close the company."

Bytecraft Automation has been negotiating several contracts separately from Caire Ltd. These contracts are being put together by the company's UK staff, but are contracted and funded by Bytecraft HQ in Melbourne, Australia. These unfortunate events will have no bearing on the continuation and bringing to fruition of these contracts. A creditors meeting has been called for this month.



## SGM Giottos on Ice

The annual Canadian-based Preston Figure Skating Show is considered to be one of the best amateur figure skating shows in North America. Involving over 170 amateur skaters, this show is rehearsed for over a month and runs four shows during the three day festival. The lighting designer for the event, Carl Lukings of Concord Production Services, specified 12 SGM Giotto Spot 250s for his rig. (The fixtures were supplied by Little Electric Inc of Cambridge, Ontario). "I used the Giotto 250s for both frontal and back lighting for each number, as well as to create an ice 'wash' effect. The Prism and Gobo effects coupled with the Linear Zoom made it possible to create great static and moving projections on the ice surface."

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## Pulsar Introduces ChromaRange

Pulsar is to launch ChromaRange - a new state-of-the-art family of LED technology lighting fixtures.

Each fixture houses 80 powerful, high efficiency LEDs. These comprise a mixture of Red, Green and Blue types to allow endless RGB colour mixing - making 16.7 million colours possible. The LEDs have a rated life of 25,000 hours at full power white, but this increases many fold if the fixture is dimmed or producing coloured light as in normal use. The units can crossfade slowly from any colour to another, or strobe if required, as they feature fast response electronics. Alternative clip-in diffusers will be available for different beam angles and shapes allowing various effects to be achieved.

The introductory product range includes the ChromaLight Downlighter that can be ceiling- or panel-mounted and adjusted to various angles, and the ChromaDome Spotlight which can be hung and adjusted to any angle. Both units are available in white as standard, but can be manufactured in any case colour to suit the demands of a particular installation. The units can also be ordered housing all the same colour LEDs, which result in the light output being three times as powerful as the RGB model.

Completing the range, the ChromaZone controller provides power and control for up to 12 ChromaRange luminaires. It offers built-in chases, various speeds and individually selectable colours when used in stand alone mode. For use with an external controller, the PMX/DMX digital input allows access to each luminaire and the pre-programmed internal effects.

The ChromaRange will make its exhibition debut at this year's PLASA show - see it on stand G46.

Pulsar +44 (0)1223 366798

## First Ever Digital Tourguide System



GuidePort is a unique 'intelligent' visitor audio guide system from Sennheiser. It employs the very latest multiple channel, digital wireless transmission technology to provide an almost limitless degree of functionality, in providing a soundtrack to any visitor attraction.

By the use of digital sound transmission techniques and cellular-based computer network control, a virtually unique visitor experience can be provided, incorporating multiple languages, any number of different levels of description - with each visitor experiencing a soundtrack specific to their chosen route through the attraction. Thus any number of 'different' tours can occur continuously and simultaneously.

Additionally multi-lingual film or video soundtrack can be effectively incorporated. If a personal guided tour is required, a handheld guide transmitter is available, with only those members of the particular tour group able to receive the guide's transmission. GuidePort also plays an active part in the continued development of an attraction, recording visitor activity in relation to specific areas and exhibits, showing those areas most and least popular, and recording visitor flow throughout the site.

Sennheiser +44 (0)1494 551551

## Fuzion Adds WORKS

UK distributor Fuzion has added the WORKS range of loudspeakers and signal processing equipment from Spanish company Equipson, to its portfolio.

According to Fuzion sales director Paul Ward, Fuzion has been looking for a product to address this area of the market for some time. "We are recognised for supplying high quality, high end equipment and for being a company that provides solutions for its customers. Having WORKS on board means that we can at last offer customers a cost-effective, aesthetically pleasing and, most importantly, reliable solution for the mid-range market as part of a complete package."

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## Crest Audio Sets the Benchmark

Crest Audio has announced the latest introduction to its 'Crest Performance' product range - the new CPX Series power amplifiers, available from exclusive UK distributors, Sound Department.

Designed for a wide variety of audio applications, the CPX Series includes three models - the CPX900, CPX1500 and CPX2600. Each has a comprehensive feature set that includes built-in defeatable GCL clip limiting, low pass filters (18dB per octave at 80 Hz), and electronic crossovers with direct outputs. In addition, all the amplifiers feature extensive protection circuitry, including GCL gain comparator (monitors input/output gain), thermal protection, DC Triac Crowbar (prevents DC in/out), and turn on/off muting. The CPX Series also utilizes a unique (patent applied for) heatsink configuration which greatly enhances the cooling capabilities of these amplifiers. The CPX900 produces 450W per channel (20Hz to 20kHz) at 2 ohms (900 watts at 4 ohms, bridged mono), the CPX1500 produces 750W per channel (20Hz to 20kHz) at 2 ohms (1500 watts at 4 ohms, bridged mono), and the CPX2600 produces 1300W per channel (20Hz to 20kHz) at 2 ohms (2600 watts at 4 ohms, bridged mono). THD is less than 0.1% at rated power for all models.

Sound Dept +44 (0)1295 817 625

## MA Lighting Software V2.60

German lighting control manufacturer MA Lighting has released V2.60 software for its GrandMA, GrandMA Light and GrandMA Replay Unit.

The updated software includes a new time code function with up to 100 individual time code settings and individual sequencers, with editing choices in graphic- or list-mode. Its command line history offers the possibility of repeating and editing all commands by scrolling through a log of all commands that have been entered since console power-up. The software is fully equipped with astronomical real-time clock 'Agenda' with scheduling functions which will be useful in theme parks or architectural lighting applications.

A new 'move in black' function gives automatic repositioning of any feature, whilst the shutter is closed or the light is dimmed - selectable per sequence or single cue. There are also a whole host of new editing and storing functions for cues, groups and presets.

MA Lighting +49 9314 979414

## Innovative Design from Electro-Voice



EVID is a brand new range of loudspeakers from Electro-Voice, designed specifically for installations such as bars, restaurants, hotels, leisure and retail complexes.

Designed with versatility in mind, these ellipsoid cabinets offer over 100° of swing and 45° of rotation, which, combined with the flexible Strong-Arm-Mount (SAM) system, enables installers to cope with even the most challenging of spaces. EVID is available in three models, plus a subwoofer, and is also designed to integrate with the EP Series of ceiling speakers should further choice be required. The baby of the range is the compact 3.2 full range followed by the 4.2 compact full-range loudspeaker system.

The largest and most powerful EVID enclosure is the 6.2 extended range high output loudspeaker system, although at only 16.5" high it is still compact for what it can produce. With dual 6" woofers and a 1" titanium tweeter, the 6.2 is best suited for larger areas that demand higher SPL levels. Any of the three models may be combined with the 12.1 dual input sub for system enhancement.

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## Optex Launches Auraflash

UK-based video, film and broadcast group, OpTex, has launched the Auraflash softlight range.

A sister product to the award-winning Aurasoft, the only luminaire to have received the accolades of both an Academy and an Emmy Award for lighting technology, Auraflash is available as a dedicated softlight with an integrated 700mm reflector, as well as in specific lampheads to fit existing Aurasoft 600 and 800 housings.

Both the dedicated Auraflash 700 softlight and the Auraflash 600 and 800 lampheads are compatible with most popular flash generator packs via an interchangeable pack-to-head cable. All models feature a purpose-built, fan-cooled 3000Ws flash head with 650W modelling lamp.

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Above, Showlight delegates on the steps of Hopetoun House. Inset, chairman John Watt, the red-shirted speck in the distance, welcomes delegates to the event.

# Sweet Talking...

**Showlight 2001 shall never be forgot - Tony Gottelier walks us through the highlights**

After having spent the weekend in Helensborough with friends, and undertaking several outdoor excursions immersed in Scottish mist, as opposed to Scotch mist which is something else entirely (and of which more later), it was quite a shock to wake up to unexpected and blazing heat for the first day of Showlight 2001. However, this weather was certainly appropriate as, in a very literal sense, the sun seemingly bathed this fourth quadrennial colloquium on entertainment lighting, in a golden glow throughout.

Huge credit has to go to the committee for the success that Showlight was once again. Some of the members of this panel will be mentioned in this article, some will not, if only because their roles were more behind the scenes, as it were, but all deserve fulsome praise for their contribution to a thoroughly rewarding and convivial event. None more so than long-suffering chairperson, and fellow L&SI columnist, John Watt. For, Watty's affable charm and wit was a thread that ran throughout. By the end, he was no doubt wishing that he had been born with a different surname, so that an alternative career might have presented itself. But then, I suppose the obvious option of heating engineer isn't quite as glamorous either, despite the fact that John's skills in the hot air department are second to none.

The first surprise, on entering the Festival Theatre in Edinburgh, was to discover that the exhibition had been set out on the stage (if only someone had told me that beforehand, it would have saved me a lot of grief, as it happens), but never mind, this novel idea had a lot going for it. Each booth, and in this case I do mean booth, not stand, was divided by a sail-like divider. The consequence was, that from the auditorium, the stage took on the appearance of a marina for

small boats, all bobbing around together. Providing the lighting for this collection was ETC. It was quite a design achievement to cram some 40 exhibitors, together with catering facilities for coffee, tea and lunch, plus room for the delegates to meander between the stalls during refreshment breaks, all on a single stage - even one as large as the Festival's. It made for a unique experience and, I am sure, was appreciated by all concerned.

As is well-known, the main attraction of Showlight has always been the facility it provides in relaxed surroundings, for an interchange of ideas among friends whose common denominator is this strange industry in which we all find ourselves. Aside from what goes on in the 'corridors and tearooms', and at the various social events, this is largely achieved through the platform speakers and the iterative sessions afterwards. So, three times daily the curtain closed on the Showlight exhibition, the delegates returned to their seats in the auditorium, and the serious matter of information exchange began.

For the first time at this conference, serious presentation technology was used so that a giant image of each speaker was displayed on a screen simultaneously with each paper. So, we finally caught up with the real world of commercial product launches and corporate ballyhoos, thanks in part to the loan of a DLP (Digital Light Projector) from DPL (Digital Projection Ltd) - steady on the acronyms! The AV and audio was run from the front of balcony through the stalwart work of Bernie Davis and Rick Dines and the team from Northern Light who had marshalled and installed all the gear.

This year we were treated to a wide range of topics from the Opera House, courtesy of Mark White, to





Left, one of the key Showlight moments - the Beating of the Retreat in front of Hopetoun House.

Below, delegates enjoy a drink on the roof terrace of Hopetoun.

Bottom, delegates take a break at the Firth of Forth as part of the Tuesday afternoon backstage visits.



Showlight over the years - in fact, since day one. So, John Watt made a presentation to him to mark the occasion.

Later, David Taylor made an amusing speech of thanks to our host on behalf of the guests. When the coffee arrived we thought it was all over, although the fat lady was not in evidence, nor in full voice, but how wrong we were. Summoned to the steps for what we thought might be a fireworks display, we were treated to some fireworks of a completely unexpected kind, and one which must have given even Robert Ormbo pause. With all 300 guests assembled, facing the long view to the Forth Bridge, suddenly a perfect square of white light appeared, as if from nowhere, on the lawn some two or three hundred metres in front of us to reveal a piped band beating the retreat. It was one of those hair-bristling (if I had any) moments.



Imperceptibly, they strode towards us in the misty light until, facing the stairs, the pipe major requested, "permission to retire, sir" of temporary Colonel Watt, he of the 'light' infantry. "Permission granted" quoth he, and after a stiff salute, the band smartly wheeled away and disappeared to the sounds of the Last Post. However sophisticated we may be, one can't help falling for this stuff! This magical moment came courtesy of John Allen's Northern Light.

On the final day, following the afternoon session, by now plain Mister, John Watt

deferred to Francis Reid, opera lover, theatre lover, plenipotentiary lighting technology enthusiast and general bon viveur, to give the valedictory speech. Now the fat lady was close at hand, but not before a reprise of the previous night's 'retreat' on the big screens.

In closing, I must add a vote of thanks to Allen Campbell and his team of unflappable technicians at the Festival Theatre, whose solid support to the organisers cannot be underestimated.

The success of Showlight 2001 was, as always, in the mix of its delegates, and this year the more so, because of the welcome addition of many friends from the United States. We will see you all again in four years time, for Auld Lang Syne.

We're now looking for venues for the 2005 event and any suggestions are welcome. Please e-mail [ruth@plasa.org](mailto:ruth@plasa.org)

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# Phil Ward.

# ... Audio File

If you work with sound, you are working with the force that shaped the universe. Lighting is all well and good, but you don't get the same sense of elemental power.

**I SHOULD EXPLAIN.** Recent scientific research has provided some evidence to support the idea

that the layout of the universe - galaxy, star, nothing, etc - was caused by the giant acoustic waves generated by the big bang. Allegedly, these waves surged through the pristine plasma gases and piled up matter into galaxies, leaving whatever a vacuum is everywhere else.

**ECHOES OF THE WAVES** are still detectable 12-14 billion years on, which is precisely the evidence that Antarctic research has just found. The scientists involved are calling it "the sound of

creation." What they did was float a balloon about 37km over the Antarctic for 10 days, with a 3,500lb telescope suspended from it. The telescope measured fluctuations in the microwave radiation left behind by the acoustic waves, which

Dr Phil Mausekopf of Cardiff University calls "the ripples of the sounds of the big bang."

**IF THE WAVES** were really caused by end of the big bang, their existence supports the theory that the big bang was indeed the start of a huge and accelerated expansion of a dense, broiling universe, which made an almighty noise when it suddenly stopped. If this hadn't happened, expansion would have been slow and steady, creating no noise and resulting in nothing more than evenly distributed dilute gas - no galaxies, no stars, no us.

**DON'T EVER COMPLAIN** about noise again. It's as though God was this unimaginable JBL compression driver, and our solar system is a small group submix on a lonely fader in space. I use JBL as an example, by the way, as it's the oldest industry-standard type I can think of off the top of my head, giving it the right preternatural air. Don't be drawn into any association between deity and Harman Pro.

**THE LATE DOUGLAS ADAMS**, visionary that he was, recognised the potential of cataclysmic cosmic events for professional sound and lighting. The Restaurant at the End of the Universe, you will recall, features an eternal cabaret in which the rock band Disaster Area concludes its set with everything going supernova - quite literally. Not even Pink Floyd's budget would stretch that far.

**IF ANYTHING ELSE** out there is going to, or has already made, another stupendous racket, it's going to take a long time for it to reach us. Not even all the light from every star has reached us yet, and that's going at 186,000mph. At a mere 750mph, the music of the spheres is definitely walking along the hard shoulder of the cosmos with its thumb out.

**OLBERS' PARADOX** asks why the sky is dark at night when, if the Universe is infinite, a star would be shining down upon us from every point. The answer, of course, is that the light hasn't arrived yet, showing that the Universe hasn't existed forever and must have had a beginning.

**CLEARLY THE SOUNDS YET TO ARRIVE**, aeons behind what light there is, need some help. I think it's time Douglas Adams' vision became a reality, so over now to the PA Crew at the Beginning of the Universe, where 'Hog' the unkempt roadie is attempting to mic up a neutron.

"Two; two; two. OK for line; can I have just a quick burst of plasma - about as loud as you get?"

This is the voice of Jim Beam, FOU (Front Of Universe) engineer. "OK Hog, hurry up with the neutron section. The backing protons will be here any minute. And don't worry about the electron guitar amp - we're DI'ing it."

"Should I use figure-of-8 polarity on these guys?"

"I don't know. How do they line up?"

"Well, there's one in the middle and the others just sort of cluster around . . ."

"What? How are we going to monitor that?"

"Er, they've asked to use the new In-Particle system, so it should be OK."

"All right, figure-of-8, but hurry up. The venue's expanding so fast I'm already six light years further away from the stage than when we loaded in. It's mucking up my TiMax settings, I can tell you. Worse than Sheffield."

"Hang on a minute, Jim."

"What is it?"

"Apparently 55% of the mass of the universe is still unaccounted for, and we haven't got enough cable. Not only that, the promoter's been on the blower and says advanced ticket sales have gone through the roof and seven nights isn't going to be enough. He wants to blow out Nebuchadnezzar Bowl. Oh, and the local support band's pulled out."

"That's the last time I work with Genesis. OK, lunch. Hog, get me a primordial soup and a roll."

Anyway, you can't rely on light. It bends.

"Not even all the light from every star has reached us yet, and that's going at 186,000mph. At a mere 750mph, the music of the spheres is definitely walking along the hard shoulder of the cosmos with its thumb out."

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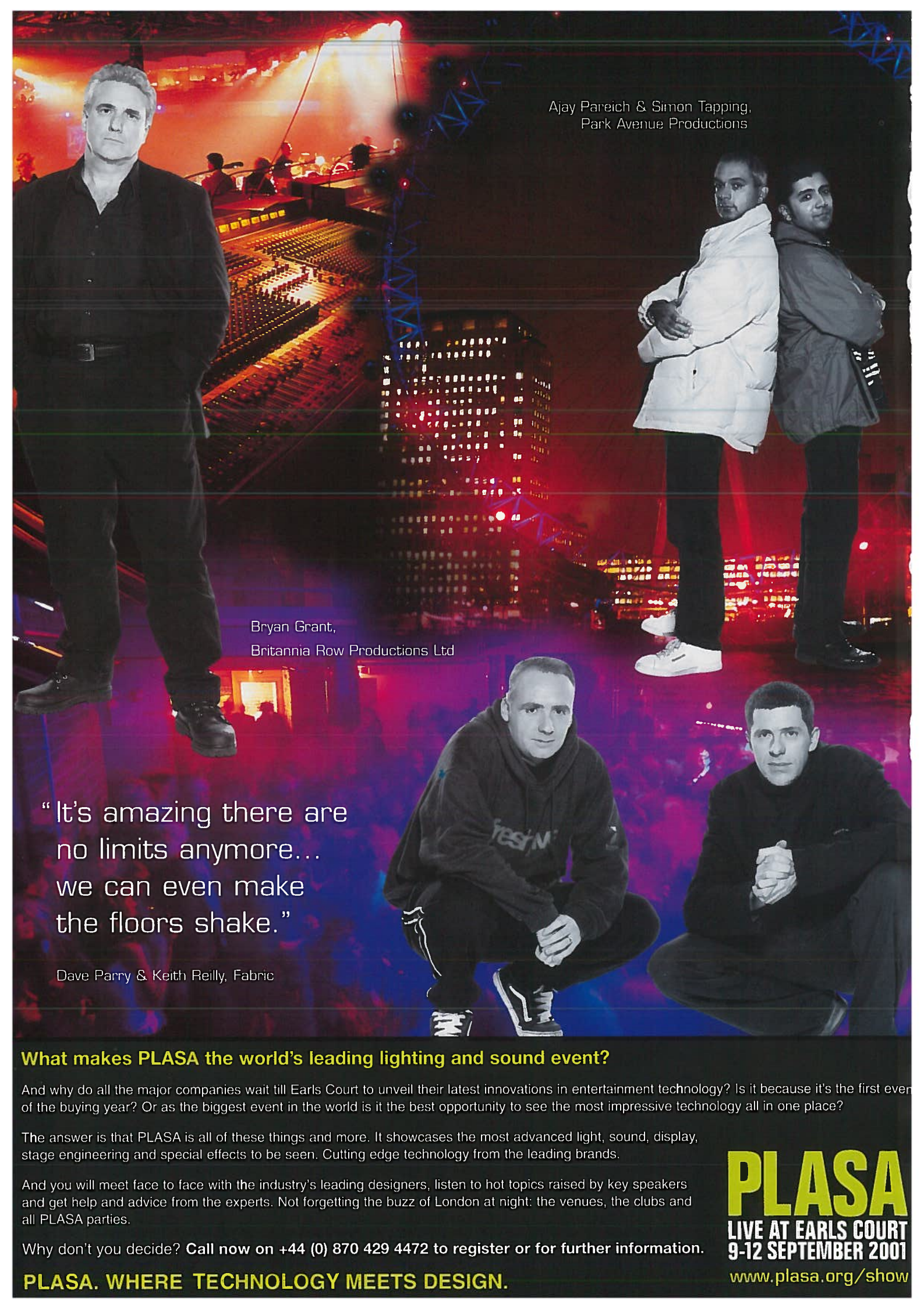
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Steve Moles at Sheffield Arena

Finally, here we have something different to break the hegemony of formulaic boy/girl'ism. Following my visit to Westlife a couple of months ago (see L&SI April issue) I'd come to the conclusion that the 'construction' approach to this idiom was played out. Readers may recall that the vocal quintet had all the right production ingredients, could sing very well (as I heard in the afternoon as they each rehearsed their solo spots) but lacked a certain something.

On first examination, the recipe for S Club is little different; but where Westlife ultimately fell down was through lack of presence - they were dull and lacklustre in its true meaning. S Club, by comparison, nimbly bridge the gap 'twixt themselves and the audience. For them it's been achieved through long-term preparation in the hot kitchen of celebrity, and some comprehensive planning. Three years building an identity and fan base through a well-crafted TV show has honed their skills in audience communication, whilst, either by intention or serendipity, leaving the sub-teeny hordes hungry for a taste of the real thing - a live show. No one should be surprised that this recipe comes from the Svengali who wrote the cookbook, Simon Fuller.

I began researching this tour a month before it started, and a measure of Fuller's investment became apparent immediately: "Seven days technical rehearsal at Bray Studios," began production manager Chris Vaughan, "then to the NEC for two days production honing, followed by three days of full dress rehearsal." Now Vaughan is a quiet persuader, and his arguments for such a schedule are compelling, but Fuller's name was on the cheques, so he must have had a reason to spend the cash. Bar a big stadium extravaganza like the Stones, when was the last time anyone on the service side of the industry saw more than a week's rehearsals?

"In order to block this type of show properly, you need to allocate the time," began Vaughan sensibly enough. "The rehearsal period has lots of input, there's costume, choreographers, designers; you need all your production, video, set, sound and lights sorted out before they arrive. You can't have people cutting the set to fit when the performance part of the process is supposed to be happening."

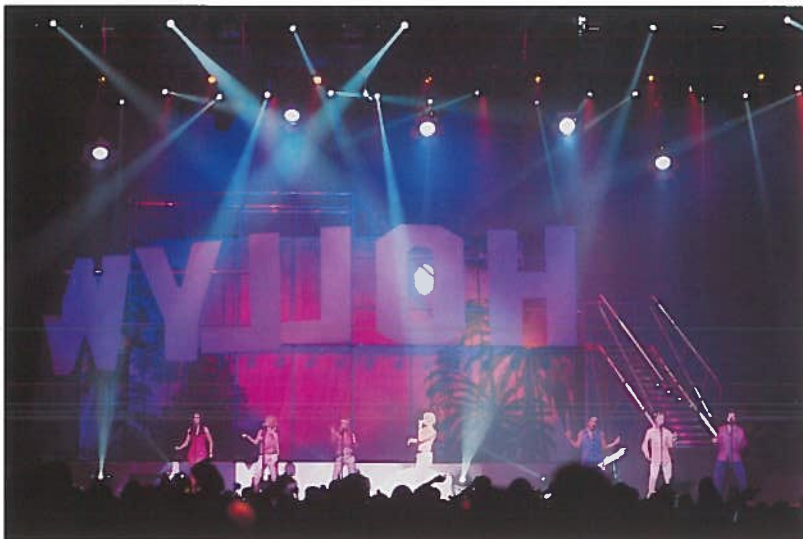
Vaughan deliberately scheduled the tech' session at Bray to force suppliers into having all their bricks in place before the move to the NEC: despite this largesse, one supplier at least was short on delivery. It serves no purpose to name and shame, but considering how many companies wring their hands in woe at the lack of proper rehearsal time, they'd do well not to take advantage when such fortune comes their way.

There are other elements to Vaughan's plans for this tour. "We're taking a large number of riggers," adds Jon Bray of Summit Steel, who are providing four touring riggers and sourcing nine house riggers at every venue, no small number for a 66-point arena rig. "It's about timing," explained Vaughan. "In this day and age, everything is cut to the bone, and one element of that which concerns me is safety," whereupon Vaughan drew out a tome the size of a Central London Telephone directory: "This is my risk assessment for the tour. The thing is, if the rigging is done quickly, then we don't have to have an early rigging call, and subsequently all the other departments - sound, lights and set - can sleep in later."

But isn't that all rather expensive? "I formulated the plan touring the US. Over there, the AITSE (US stage hands union) have a five-hour minimum call, and they're not cheap, especially when you go into overtime. If you have a fast rig, and then a well-rested production crew comes in at 10.00, you can easily be up and running and break the Union at five hours, just keeping a minimum for followspot operators and the like. The savings easily outweigh the costs of the extra riggers. Obviously, the savings are not so great in Europe, but it still compresses the load-in, and makes good sense in terms of everyone's health. The alternative to large rigging calls is pre-rigging, and that costs: double motors, double steels, two rigging calls, and if the hall isn't available you just can't run such a tight schedule."

S Club are doing an intensive 35-date tour, so by running a 10-truck production on a fair number of back-to-backs, without any pre-rig, Vaughan calculates the relative costs as about evens. And just for information, Vaughan has also put other, more conventional tricks into his plan: "We've brought over a full 60ft by 45ft





## TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Chris Vaughan supplies large, coloured, adhesive labels for every flight-case on the tour. Each truck has an assigned colour to match the labels of its content. The crew/truck driver numbers each label as it's packed so that any stagehand, so long as they can count, can line up cases in order at the right truck. Each label has two plan elevation graphics, one of the stage proper, one of the rolling stage out on the arena floor in fit-up position. The crewman responsible for each box merely has to draw on the required position for each box at load-in.

Pete Barnes had LSD purchase a DHA Yoyo, which he put into a 2kW Sil for the 'rising sun' effect: "When the yoyo reaches the top of its run, I bleed a beam from an Icon over the top, cross-fade between the two, then the Icon goes on a 60-second timed tilt to complete the full sunrise.

Blue Leach sustains his busy and effective level of live cutting with two ingredients: "Coffee - I don't drink it or other stimulants, like tea, all day, then I have a strong cup just before the show." The other is his beloved Grass Valley 1200, "just perfect for the way I work, I could run all three screens off it."

Ebdon uses another studio toy, an SPL Tube Vitaliser, "on all the Keys. Like the Finalyser, it adds presence, the valve sound makes it really well suited to Keyboards."

rolling stage from Tait Towers - amazingly there wasn't one available in the UK. So while the lighting and flown stage-set is assembled under the rigging, the stage, static set, and back-line is all set up on the rolling stage out in the hall."

One little embellishment to this well-trying and tested regime that I'd not seen before was a similar 'rolling monitor system'. "I talked SSE, the audio suppliers, into providing some of their low-level rolling risers for Blakey's two Heritage boards," says Vaughan, referring to monitor engineer Graham Blake, "and they've assembled a system to make it work. Just four multi-core connections are needed when his riser is rolled into the side of stage."

The stage set is designed by Mark Fisher and built by Brilliant, and LD Pete Barnes, unusually for him, was brought in after all this was decided. "In fact, the set and basic script had also been decided," said Barnes, "so I had a very specific brief to light to." A departure for Barnes, who increasingly has lit, set designed, and produced shows for his artists of late. You sense that Barnes really does enjoy the lessening of his 'production' responsibilities, but then he pulls out his laptop and shows you full animated renderings of three shows he's already working on, and you realise that, break or not, he's a workaholic who is in the midst of a very fertile period. Grab him while he's hot.

Fisher's set also lends another clue to the large rigging call: aside from the usual lighting trusses, and extensive drapery, there's a grid some 40ft by 15ft set diagonally above centre stage, upon which sit a small herd of wire winches. "That's been very unusual for us," said Bray. "For the first time in a long time we are supplying large amounts of truss for a tour. Normally it only goes on trade and theatre shows these days." The wire winches and a Q Motion control system have been sub-hired in from Stage One in Yorkshire. Accuracy is essential - some of the tolerances between flying scenery, and the parts of the stage-bound set upon which they have to land, is less than an inch."

Barnes' lighting, supplied by LSD/Fourth Phase, is composed of a nice mixture of conventional and intelligent lighting - LSD Icons, PC Beams, Mini MAC 250s and Studio Colors. I say nice mixture because Barnes relishes the use of conventional lighting: "I'm still a fan of Pars, none of the moving lights yet do a

really nice red, and you just don't seem to be able to get it out of an arc lamp. Plus you can't get quite the same 'bump' to a colour change out of a CYM lamp. I really like that look from Pars, I use it here as a blanket on which to overlay everything else."

Barnes also has three of the old Mega-Mags, originally built by LSD for the Rolling Stones Steel Wheels tour in 1990, "but they were Chris Vaughan's idea." Not that he doesn't like them, "in fact they're perfect for the stripped-down look at the end." S Club's show goes very rock and roll for the finale - most set elements are removed, the band (as in musicians) are exposed to the audience for the first and only time, with the Mega-Mags blasting through behind them. It's a blessed relief for all the mums and dads in the audience as they get to have a bop, and all the kids get to understand what it is that gets their folks all excited - 'at their age!' At which point, and dealing with such a similar age group, it's appropriate to say hats-off to Steve Arch and the rest of his lighting crew for doing such a sterling job in restoring a bit of - let's face it - rather awkward Rolling Stones kit to its former glory.

George Osbourne and a team of three other carpenters, which Vaughan had previously employed for Sarah Brightman's tour last year, assemble the set. "The set that Brilliant have built is pretty good," said Osbourne. "There are a lot of tricks in it - trap-doors and the like - but it all works, and has done since it arrived at rehearsals. But parts are hard as hell to put up." A reference to the height of Fisher's design, the uppermost level of which is decked out at 18ft above the stage floor.

Mention should also go to Dave Clark's Prop-Shop, who supplied the gutted fifties Ford Thunderbird, fitted with 12v motors to allow the S Clubs to drive across stage for a Miami to Hollywood sequence. Which brings us neatly to video, supplied by XL Video UK: two Barco ELMs piggy-backed out front stage centre project a classic 'moving background' video clip onto a gauze for the 'driving' sequence.

On a purely social note, video director Blue Leach was busy becoming a father to Lola (24th April - congrats from all at L&S!) when the video clip needed shooting, so the ever-versatile Pete Barnes took a two-day jaunt to Cannes and shot suitable, palm-lined avenue footage. Some people get all the tough jobs.

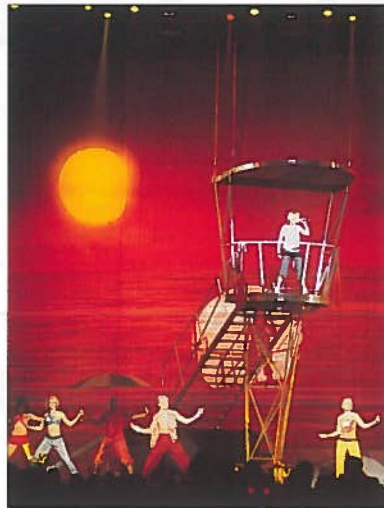
Aside from the moving road background, all other video is to side-screens, again with Barco ELMs, fed image from a five-camera system, all Sony D35s, except a single minicam, "which I've yet to place," says Leach. He applies his usual frenetic cutting to the show, carefully weaving between lots of close-ups, his cameramen doing the pop promo thingy of concentrating the camera's eye on either faces or a particular part of the group's clothing. "This audience has a short attention span, so it needs to move quickly. There are no long, lingering romantic shots."

There were actually, but not many, and when there were, Leach generally had something zippy on the opposite screen: this was rarely stereo imaging. As such, with the demand for high visual activity, here at just the second show, Leach was already working on building up a library of stills to inter-cut with. "I've tried some freeze frames of the boys and girls on the beach, some logos, and I'm inserting Polaroids

of the band (musicians) for the intros in the r'n'r section. I'll carry-on doing it till they stop me." Like Barnes, Leach is never to be found wanting in the ideas department.

As mentioned at the beginning, audio is from SSE, though like so many these days, it's not actually their PA, rather a V-dosc system sub'd in from Delta Sound. "To be honest, I'm happy to be able to give Jim [Ebdon, FOH engineer] what he wanted," said a phlegmatic Chris Beale of SSE. "And I do think it's an appropriate system for the tour; besides which, we're sold out, don't have any plant in the shop at the moment." That business marriage between SSE and Melpomen in France to form SSE Audio Group (see L&SI March 2001) must be paying off already. This is purely a personal observation, but whatever the politicians may say, there's a great deal of common sense to forming European alliances. It certainly hasn't done Clair Brothers any harm, and I'm sure it'll be good for Chris Beale and John Penn.

Ebdon uses a fully automated Midas XL4, and lurking beside it is a pair of Tascam 24/24s. "I've got a full 48-track recording of all the musicians as a time coded back-up," he says, not that this band look likely to ever fail, shit-hot is the adjective that springs to mind. "Well, we did nearly lose the drummer in rehearsals when it looked like he might have tonsillitis." Not to labour a point, every eventuality has been catered for on this tour.



"The group all sing live - Beta 87s and AKG headset systems - there are no backing vocalists at all." Ebdon has it cushy: not only are there just a couple of wedges on stage, something for the dancers to use for time information, the muso's are all safely ensconced behind the stage set for most of the night, and even when exposed, the keys, kit and percussion are all enclosed by plexi-glass. "Even the roof of the set is padded."

Mix-wise, the vocals have a funny sparkle to them which may be the enhanced brightness of the PA, or the tools Ebdon applies to the vocals: "I use a pair of Lexicon 480Is, short

reverbs for the band, something to add a bit of space for the vocals. I have a Behringer Composer Pros for individual vocal compression, then I run them all through a sub-group into a TC Finalyser." This is a tool Steve Levitt is fond of for the myriad of boy/girl bands he looks after. "I'm using it to expand and compress in certain places," continues Ebdon. "I don't really know what goes on inside there, it's a studio piece of kit really, but it normalises and soft clips. The three-band EQ can add a bit of sparkle, it just keeps the whole thing in line with the general tonal range. It adds presence to the vocals." Which at times left the band sounding a little bit like cartoon versions of themselves, though like I say, that could just be the PA, rather than the treatment.

With the band mix pretty much set in concrete, Ebdon is free to concentrate on the voices, which is just as well, with seven of them all following the tradition of taking alternate lines on many of the songs. "So I spend most of my time balancing the voices. I actually like most of the songs: that, and working with a real 'live' band, makes this more of a challenge."

And while still in fully enthusiastic flow, Ebdon produced the perfect sign-off. "Chris Vaughan has put a great production together, this is probably the best crew in Europe right now, everything about it works well."

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# John Watt

## Second Take...

John Watt's view from beside the camera

**T**here is quite a lot to be said for being on holiday for a month - a change of emphasis for me as I'm normally on about being unemployed! There are a few subtle differences brought about by being away from home, and therefore, as we are all self-employed, being away from the office too.

Going in to the computer age (and I know it's only my generation that even considers it still an option), is like owning a boat i.e. creating a hole in water in to which you constantly throw ten pound notes.

**FIRSTLY**, it's an absolute guarantee that the mobile, silent for weeks, will ring as soon as you hit foreign shores. This never fails, though usually the job on offer hardly ever justifies leaping on a plane, even though I've done just that on more than one occasion.

One of the problems with mobiles is that the caller has no idea where you are. I remember working at Wimbledon one year (not this one you will note, so you are

spared all that at least). I was assured that John King had a secret cupboard full of the very scaffold fittings I needed. So I gave him a call and he did, but seemed reluctant to drop one down to me. Only after chiding him for being a miserable old \*\*\* did I discover he was speaking from Hong Kong!

**ANYWAY**, the owner of the mobile pays for the leg of the call outside of the UK, so casual enquiries can get short shrift from me even if John King can afford it. Incidentally, I have an image of 'short shrift' being a wrap-round mini-skirt. Disappointingly, I've been using it correctly, according to the concise Oxford, so another 'first'. Once away, you also end up e-mail-less,

which means you have dropped completely out of sight to at least three quarters of the world. Not before they have tried to get through to you at least four times though, resulting, on your return, in a message popping up as soon as you log on saying "receiving 1 of 280 messages". A few 'attachments' and you are facing a bill that has you wondering whether a laptop is a sensible investment after all, but via a mobile? Yes, going in to the computer age (and I know it's only my generation that even considers it still an option), is like owning a boat i.e. creating a hole in water in to which you constantly throw £10 notes. Only the surrounding medium is different; generally speaking I find the boat the lesser of the two evils.

**IF ONLY** I could think of an angle, I would now go in to 1000 words about boats and you might think you'd accidentally picked up Yachting Monthly. I can't, but there are a disproportionate number of lighting people to be found floundering about (I'll give you the feed line, you do the jokes) - maybe the next column could be in semaphore if my inspiration starts to flag.

**SO WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING** in the real world while I've been away? Have the TV networks suddenly realised what a dynamic, and largely untapped force, lighting is? Well, not quite. How does he know if he's not been here? Well, a crash research programme, that's how, dear reader. If you have the stamina and the dog can forego his walk just once, you could spend a couple of hours channel-hopping like I did this morning. Hardly a scientific sample, I know, especially as it only embraces the terrestrial channels while I make my fruitless protest to Mr Murdoch over not allowing him to connect his blasted box to my phone. I'm sure I'm missing a lot, but since I would be more than happy to see all sportsmen (and women) expending their energies more usefully, maybe I'm not a typical customer.

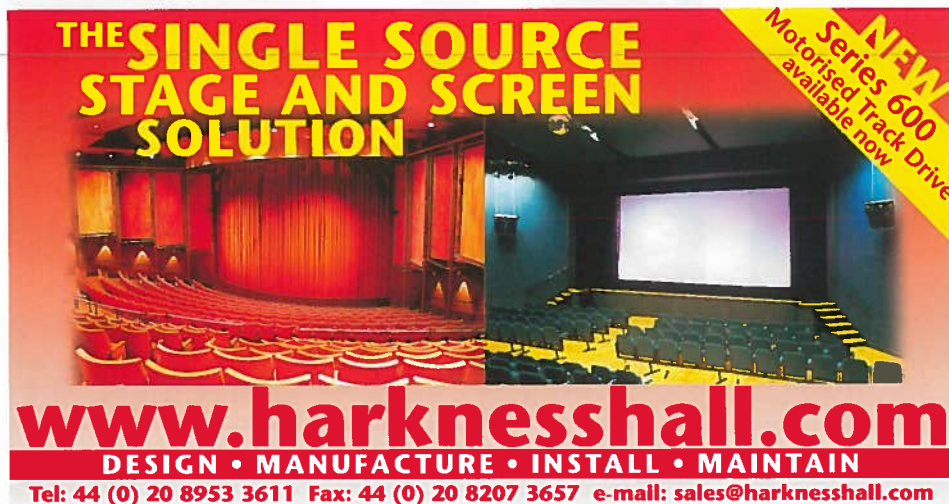
**WHERE WAS I?** Oh yes, this morning on the box. You've heard before of what I think of BBC One's news - sadly, they don't seem inclined to

take my advice, surprise, surprise. Same slatty blinds, same awkward angles, same sting which just can't be timed right. Kilroy follows. There was I, with the paragraph already half written, when up comes the old whatsit not looking half bad. A few years back I had a go at this show in its Teddington incarnation, but I imagine several others have made their mark since. In those days Neil Telford used to reproduce the plot rather well on a weekly basis, but maybe it stays up now that it's moved to Kilroy's base. Anyway, I thought there wasn't much for Mr K to moan about, though that won't stop him.

**WATCHING REMINDED ME** of the way the brief went, which will be of interest to all you students - for the rest it will be familiar territory. Whatever you do, they said, avoid blues and greens, Mrs K doesn't like either! Well green has a bit of a reputation in some circles, undeserved in my view, but you try arguing with John Scoffield (who's he? Well, just about the most creative LE director currently tending his garden, that's who). As for blue, well Alan Boyd (you must know him) needs a fix of blue before opening the curtains in the morning, and so would you if you lived next door to Des O'Connor. So in a fit of pique I used some blue/green, Lee 115 to accent small parts of the set to see if I could get away with it. The backings were all lit conventionally with ground rows so it was easy to slip in a blue circuit, 'just in case'. To not have a circuit of blue up your sleeve is like driving a car without a spare wheel or not having any milk - you never know who might drop in. Needless to say the blue got used (it always does sooner or later) and the 115 too.

**ON THE OTHER SIDE**, Lorraine Kelly merged into the busy bamboo set under the influence of someone's fluorescent kit I imagine, or a damn good imitation of one. Flat as a pancake and half as tasty. I thought perhaps they were stuck in a corner to leave space for the Dream Boys, who sort of danced and showed their muscles, but no such luck, still all flat as a pudd'n. The Wright Stuff on Channel Five must have put the set out to tender and decided to use three separate bits from three designers. The good main set I'll bet was Simon Jago, the control room all Dixons and chipboard, with the audience section designed and lit by a passing plumber, no doubt. Bet the lighting man didn't get much say in the way it was shot - that old chestnut of what to do with the middle person in a three-hander remains unresolved. The pictures were pin sharp and Campbell's tomato soup-coloured (not as orange as Heinz).

**'TRICIA'** from Anglia had some faces that looked good - I can't help but think kindly of the crews in Norwich. They are like those Japanese soldiers that occasionally come to light who've been hiding in the jungle for 50 years because they think the war is still on. I'm sorry chaps, the world has moved on, stop caring.



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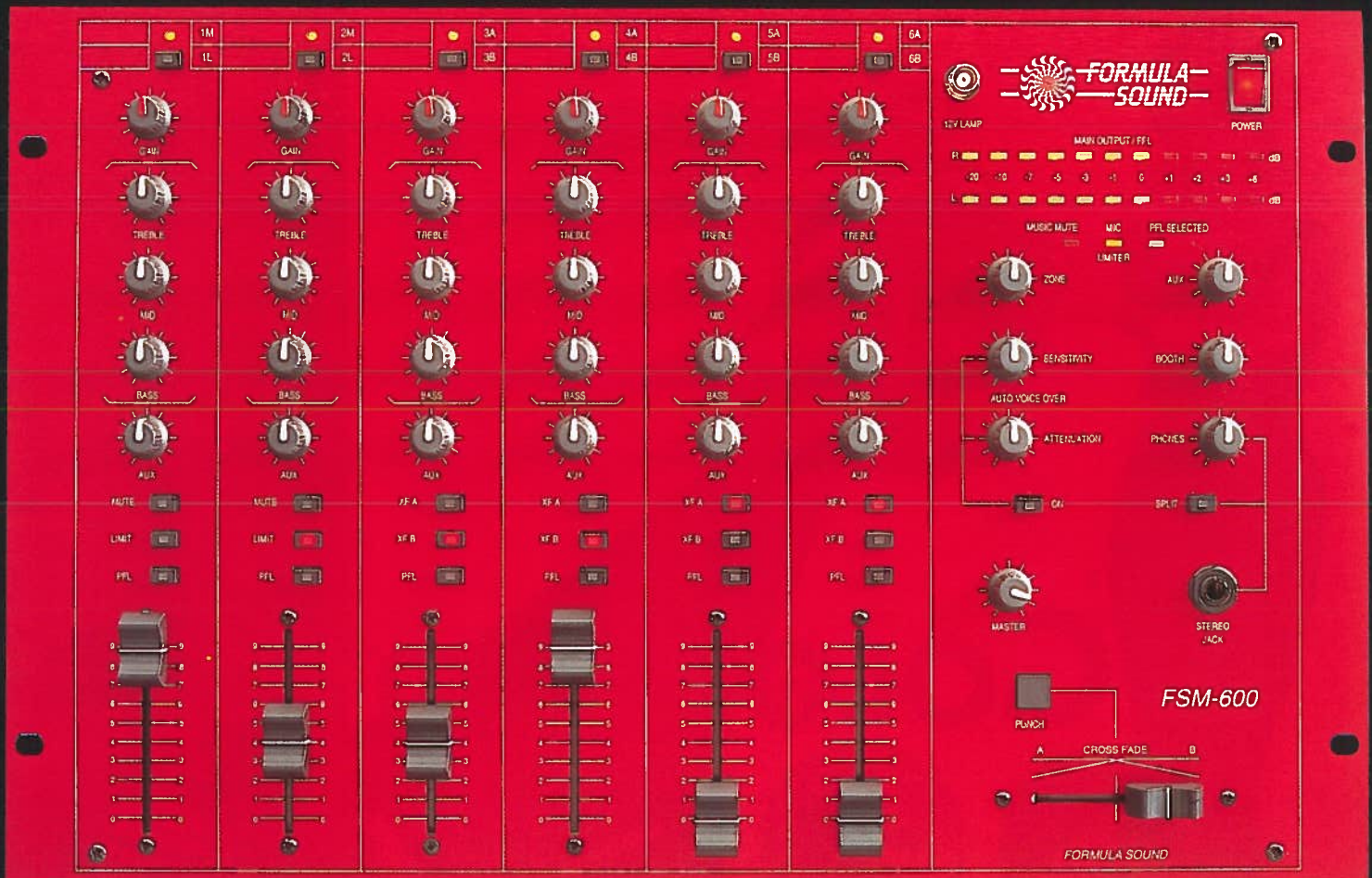
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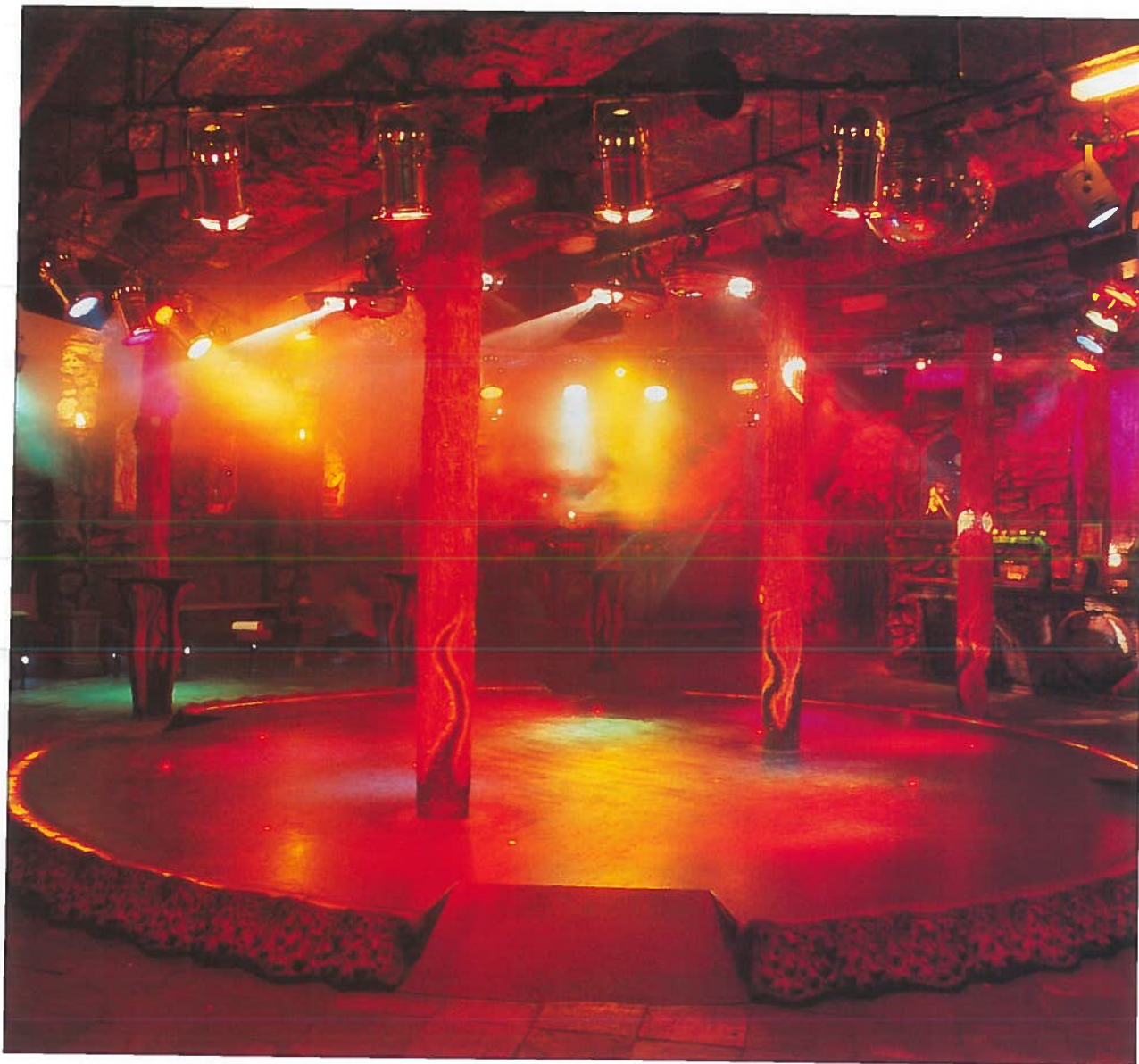
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# FRIENDS --- IN LOW PLACES

When does a theme become an obsession? Mike Mann visited the darker regions to find a club that goes further than most . . .

Mike Royce, Steve Petricco and his twin bother Paul are into theming - big time. The Petricco brothers opened FAB in central Manchester in 1998 as a cult movie/TV bar and café, adorning its walls and ceiling with an incredible variety of objets from Doctor Who, Blake's 7, Star Wars and of course Thunderbirds. Their new venture, Satan's Hollow, goes one step beyond, as Steve Petricco revealed. "This is the FAB Café with horns - it's an extension of everything that we have done so far," he claims. "The brief that we gave everyone was that this should be a place where it is possible to escape the outside world - an adult Disney, if you like."

Certainly the theatrical element of the 400-capacity club is immersive - from the main door (a converted loading dock made to resemble the entrance to a spooky funfair ride) to the plush lobby which, as Petricco puts it, "is intended to look like a Victorian brothel." Once inside the club itself, though, the visitor is completely immersed in what appears to be a cross between a Technicolor Hammer Horror film set and a Bacchanalian drinking den. The

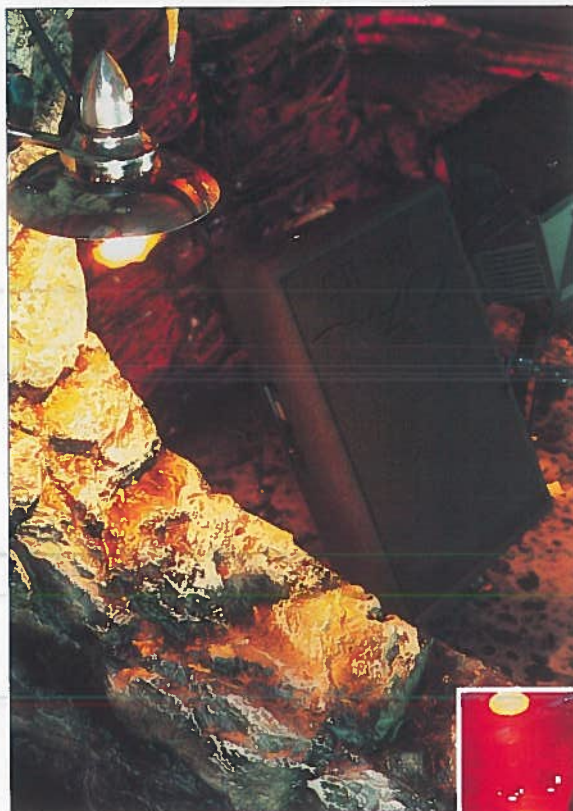
central, circular dance floor resembles a lava pit, while supporting columns seem to ooze blood, and the DJ booth itself is overshadowed by a monstrous (and very devilish) figure.

The filmic feel to the place is not a coincidence, but is a result of an unusual partnership between the club's owners and nearby Granada Television. A group of prosthetic artists, who are normally to be found creating ghastly visual effects for medical drama programmes, were conscripted into the project to realise the trio's designs. Operating under the name Alcohol, Lights and Magic, the crew spent a total of seven weeks creating the incredible detailing around the room.

The main material used - dental cement - is not often found in the club industry. "Our biggest problem was that, in effect, we were building a set," recalled Petricco, "but TV designs don't normally have to last. Luckily, this type of prosthetic cement is very easy to work with, dries rock hard and is completely fireproof." Its only drawback, he added, is that when hardened it is very, very permanent. "It's a good job we're not planning to re-theme the club every year!"



This is a bold statement, given the industry's obsession with re-inventing itself at ever-decreasing intervals. "We're not interested in transient business," explained Petricco. What we want to capture is an audience who can grow up with us.



should be relocated to the floor, where their effectiveness will be greatly increased. "The ceiling height in the club is so limited that there's no way a low-frequency wave can build up before it hits the floor. At the moment almost all the sub-bass is coming from the groundstacked pair because they can couple properly with the room."

Listening to the acoustic power that the floor-mounted dual 18" units achieve certainly bears this out - and

Above, Ohm speakers amidst the incredible detailing. Right, owners Mike Royce (left) and Steve Petricco. Far right, guest DJ Dawn Acton



The Granada connection has led to several spin-offs - media companies use the club regularly for corporate parties and the suggestion has even been made that Satan's Hollow could be used as - of all things - a film set. In addition, live bands make regular appearances in the 'Lava Pit'.

Lighting at Satan's Hollow is homegrown, designed by brother Paul. "The intention was to create mood lighting, not the traditional in-your-face look of most clubs," explained Petricco. "Our only extravagance has been the laser - a Laser Techniques DMX Graphic Scan."

Elsewhere, basic silver Par cans are interspersed with architectural pinspots, while scanners from the Abstract range provide some movement. The 'Garden of Temptation' is surrounded by a huge custom optical fibre installation fitted with a colour changer, whilst Christopher Wray Lighting furnished the club with silk flames for the suitably gothic wall torches. Lighting control is distributed between an Abstract Compact controller for the moving lights and a pair of Ryger Electronics' 403-PROs for everything else.

Petricco's design ideas were not limited to the interior of the club. Despite being located on the ground floor of a particularly anonymous city-centre office block, he decided to offer queuing punters a glimpse of the club from outside, by devising a set of giant silk flames for the otherwise blank exterior windows. Using a simple triangle of material supported on a scaffolding frame, a

powerful fan was set up between a pair of deep orange-filtered Pars and - hey presto - instant, and very realistic, flames. So realistic, in fact, that during its opening week the club was dogged by repeated appearances from the local fire brigade, alerted by concerned passers-by!

Audio, like much of the installation, was provided locally - though when Steve Petricco realised that the system was not performing in the way he expected, he called upon the services of Wigwam Acoustics. Though primarily known for installations in houses of worship and large-scale events for the Christian market, the company has installed several club systems, and Petricco does not see his choice as unusual. "I knew Wigwam's hire department through my band, and as they had always provided an incredible level of service, I asked them to come in and appraise the system. They analysed the room and came up with the system that we now have. The difference is amazing - and this is without drastically changing the main speakers."

The revised system incorporates four OHM TRS115 cabinets facing into the dancefloor, while a further eight TRS115 and TRS112 enclosures are used to fill outer corners and edges. Two pairs of sub-bass units are in use; though split between the floor and the ceiling, Dave Hopkinson of Wigwam Acoustics explained that he has suggested that the remaining vertically-pointing bins

Steve Petricco has noticed that some clubbers seem to enjoy the mechanical vibrations emitted from these speakers . . .

Source machines cater for the widening tastes of the DJ market - alongside the ubiquitous Technics SL1210 decks are a Tascam DC302 dual CD player and a Denon DNM2300R twin MD unit. Sennheiser radio mics are available for roving hosts (a smart move for the party market) and the whole lot is mixed using a Formula Sound FSM600 mixer. QSC PL2402 and 3402 power amps are fed via an OHM CRED processor, with a set of Yamaha graphic EQs across the stereo main feed and mono DJ monitor. Although the system is fed in stereo, Hopkinson took care to ensure that it is, in fact, completely zoned, allowing further tweaks to specific areas of the room should it prove necessary.

Rather than compromising on the main system, Petricco decided that peripherals could wait until the club was more firmly established - and imported some of his own audio gear to serve the entrance lobby area. "Maybe you shouldn't print the fact that the first thing the clubbers hear comes from a domestic Technics hi-fi, circa 1982!" he laughed. Most club management would have

been content to see the main room so well decked out - but not this trio.

"Even the toilets received the treatment," commented Petricco. "I thought that the usual white toilets and urinals would destroy the atmosphere, so I asked our plumber to look into getting hold of black ones." Petricco eventually tracked down a manufacturer who was prepared to glaze a set of sanitary ware to his specification (which also included blood-red washbasins), and another problem was solved.

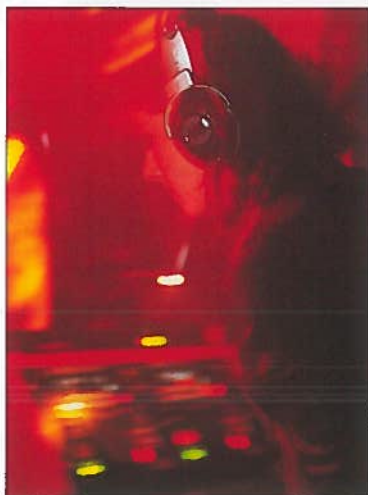
Similarly, beer taps were specially commissioned as the usual brewery-supplied type looked completely incongruous. "Breweries only really understand clubs in terms of the number of barrels they get through each year," Petricco complained. "We felt that creating something this special would enable us to build up a loyal customer base that will last 10 years."

This is a bold statement, given the industry's obsession with re-inventing itself at ever-decreasing intervals. "We're not interested in transient business," explained Petricco. What we want to capture is an audience who can grow up with us. Our door policy is not ageist or based on the clothes people wear - but we feel that we've been very successful at locking in to what our market wants on their night out."

The role of personnel is, says Petricco, key to the enveloping nature of the club - but this does not mean he's prepared to fork out for big names. "I'm not into high-priced DJs. To pay someone £5,000-plus to play records spits in the eye of the rest of our staff - and since at least 50% of the reason for coming here is the venue itself, we don't need superstars to attract customers. In any case, if a DJ walks out, we can do it ourselves!" Petricco's attitude to his staff is refreshingly respectful - and is repaid in kind by a level of loyalty and involvement not seen elsewhere. "They are the stars of the show, and you'll see them dancing on the bars before the end of the night. We aim to pay well and not to overwork our staff, which in turn attracts a better type of person." Astonishingly, between the two venues Petricco has an employee waiting list of anything up to 500 names, all anxious to be a part of this unique atmosphere.

Satan's Hollow has immediately found a place at the heart of Manchester's enormous student community, which Petricco and his team believes is largely due to the passion and attention to detail that they have lavished on the venue. "We have gone for the jaw-drop factor," he admitted, "but it's fantastic when people's expectations are exceeded."

Although the club's success is ultimately measured in bar takings and door receipts, Petricco believes that there is more to running a club than the bottom line - even if it means a little more hard work. "The rewards of a personal passion like this are incredible when it succeeds," he says, "but this certainly was one hell of a job!"



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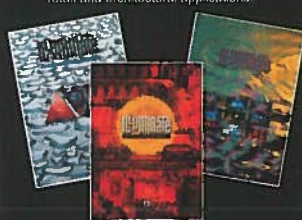
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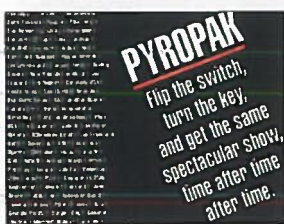
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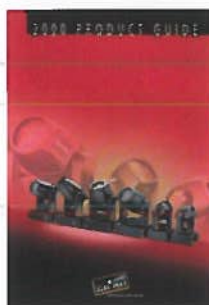
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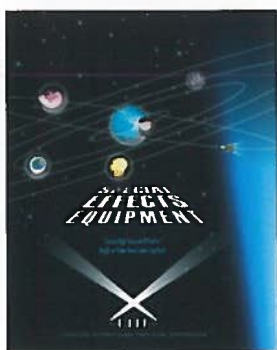
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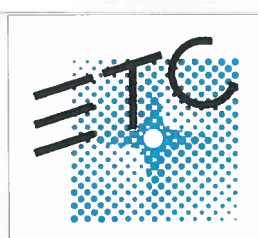
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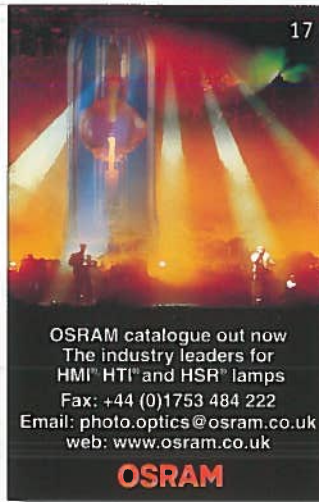
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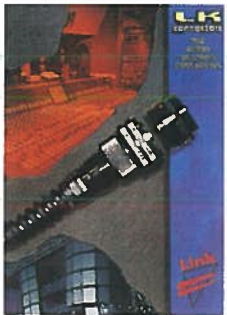
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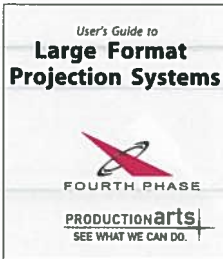
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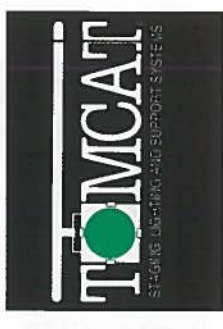
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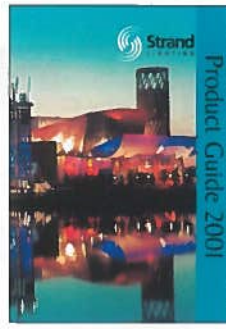
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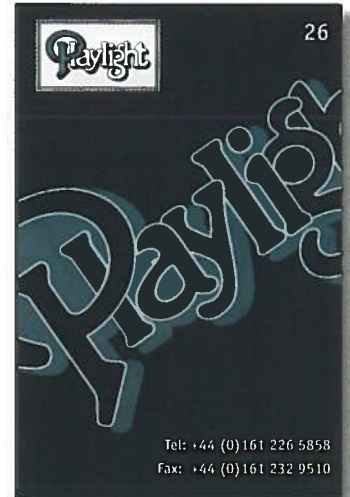
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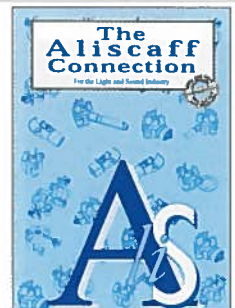
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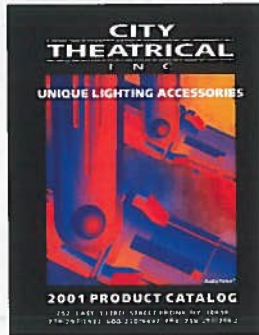
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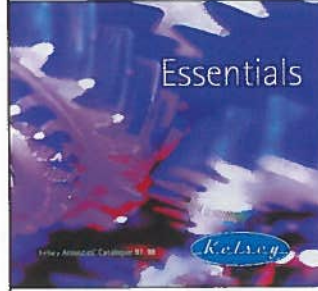
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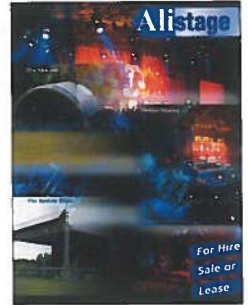
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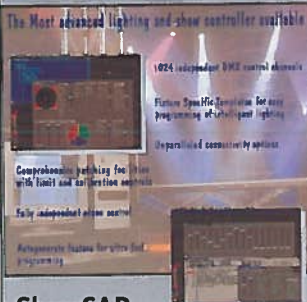
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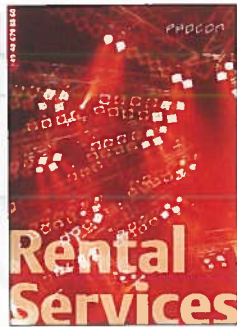
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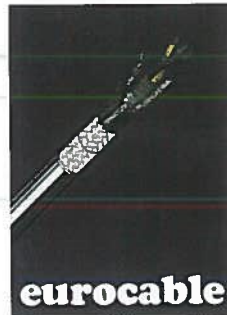
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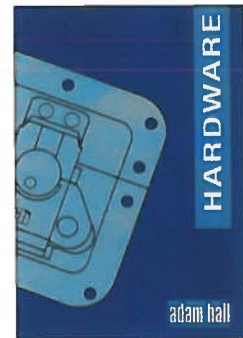
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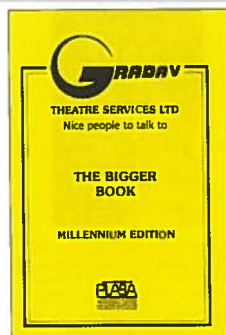
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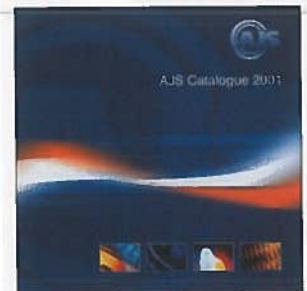
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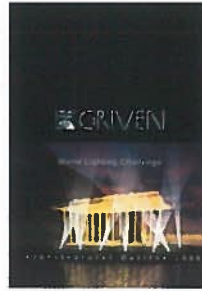
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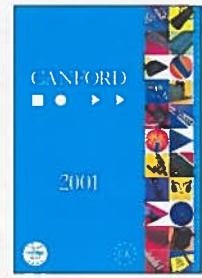
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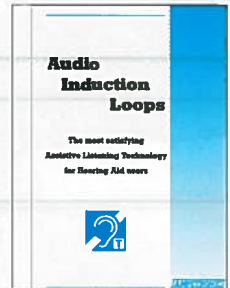
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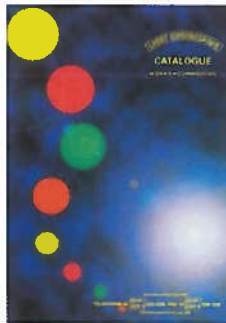
Brochure Line: 0800 652 5002  
 Fax: 01494 551550 Web: www.sennheiser.co.uk

**56. High End Systems**



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 Fax: +1 512 837 5290  
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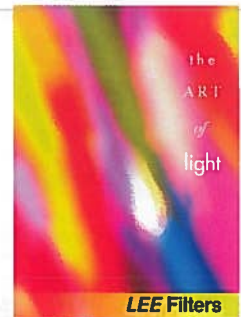
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 Fax: +44 (0)1264 355058  
 Website: www.leefilters.com

**63**  
Stage and Studio Lighting

July 2001 Product Catalogue

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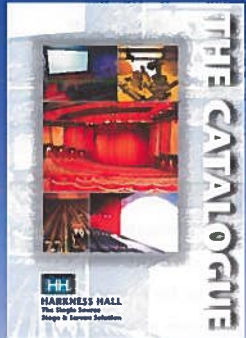
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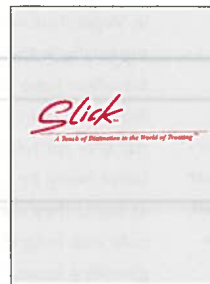
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tel: 44 20 8953 3611 fax: 44 20 8203 3657  
e-mail: sales@harknesshall.com

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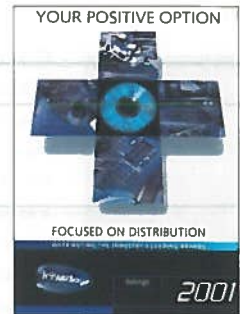
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July 2001

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# Tony Gattelhor

## No Comment...

So, we are a £10 billion industry! Well, that explains it. Now I can stop pinching myself every time I go to PLASA and LDI and wonder where on earth all the money comes from to invest in all those monuments to marketing, otherwise called exhibition stands or (in even more of an understatement) show booths.

**IT TRULY IS STAGGERING** how far things have come since the genesis in the sixties - it makes one realise what a serious matter it has all become, and why there are still takeovers and mergers and MBOs. Things may be considered tough by the players themselves, even with such figures in mind, but we have outpaced the South Sea dotcom Bubble fiasco, and the good operators will surely find a way to make money out of a market of this size. I look forward to seeing the breakdown of this figure when applied to the market sectors.

**A SALUTARY LESSON** has just come my way, courtesy of the corporate charge card. Without even losing his wallet, one of my colleagues has had both his cards duplicated, so far to the tune of £4000 and counting. (At least, that's his story, and since it includes several hundreds expended in lap-dancing joints, I had my doubts

at first. However, since said clubs are in Poland, I am forced to believe him). Fortunately, the bank's insurer will be picking up the tab for this, but it does show you what goes on these days. You can't be too careful when proffering your plastic.

**ON THE SUBJECT OF RIP-OFFS**, I have just come back from visiting the Infocomm show in Las Vegas. OK, I know you expect to be robbed in Vegas, but normally you can see it coming, especially in the casinos. What business travellers have to be careful of is the absolutely ludicrous and concealed charges which hotels still levy for telephone calls and e-mail - the latter being by far the worst. I suppose, in Vegas at least, they are assuming that such costs will pale into insignificance in comparison with gambling losses, but Vegas is also a convention city, and such visitors need to keep in touch when they are away from base.

**I REALISE**, of course, that sophisticated travellers, like most American business people, come armed with 0800 numbers, not always so easy for the unsuspecting foreigner, for whom these hotel hijackers are lying in wait. It really is scandalous in these days of cheap telecoms that this practice is allowed to continue, especially when the real charges are obscured behind the guest charges B\*S, and it's extremely poor customer relations. I now intend to adopt the practice of naming and shaming in this column each time this happens. So Hilton Hotels, watch out.

**THE NEWS THAT** McDonalds has registered trademarks in the USA, not just on their unique product names, but also on everyday phrases such as 'changing the face of the world' and 'hey, it could happen' and even 'have you had your break today?' rings a loud bell with me.

When my own company started work on a system to convert standard digital video projectors into video powered automated lights, we called the project, internally, Vertigo, for obvious reasons. When it came to the point that our licensee, High End Systems, wanted to register the name, because they thought it was appropriate too, they found that they couldn't use it because somebody else had beaten them to the draw. It took weeks of agonising before we came up with Catalyst as the available alternative.

**THIS AGAIN POINTS** up another difference in commercial practice between ourselves and our American cousins. In the UK, trademarks are very expensive and tedious to achieve - I know, I've done it - and are often dedicated both to the typestyle used, as well as to the moniker itself. In the USA, it seems to be a great deal simpler, which is why when one reads American advertisements they are positively bristling with TMs. I guess that it won't be too long before the editorial pages will be the same, as in 'and they all lived happily ever after™'.

**IMMEDIATELY** after our presentation of Catalyst at Showlight, I was approached by dear Ken Ackerman, founding light of the colloquium, who said to me: "I was fascinated by your presentation. It reminds me of the first tape recorder I ever saw when I was running the BBC sound department. It was enormous and cost £50,000, even all those years ago!"

**"AH, BUT I BET** the Beeb bought one?" I asked. "Of course we did!" he replied, with a twinkle in his eye. So, there you are, there's hope for all of us.

A full review of Showlight appears on pages 53-56.

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## LIGHT RELIEF

Light Relief is a fund set up by, and for, the lighting industry, to offer assistance and

support with life's catastrophes. We are appealing to companies and individuals to come up with creative ideas to raise money. If you would like to help, or simply make a donation direct, please e-mail [lightrelief@wwg.co.uk](mailto:lightrelief@wwg.co.uk)

# W

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In 1976 it became apparent that the music business was soon to radically change to **DISCO!** and so has our client base. We now offer a full repair service to all the **major leisure plc's, sound systems** and the cream of the world's **touring P.A. companies**. Already designing and manufacturing our own systems in 1988 we decided to overhaul our original designs and came up with the concept of the **B Line Chassis**. From this we developed other chassis units to complement this now well established design.

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Announcing the launch of  
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Version 4



# Artistic Licence

Grand-Master Flash! is a  
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**Total Control:** Lamp channels can be controlled individually via the fader control panel, or by colour, beam and position category using the palette system.

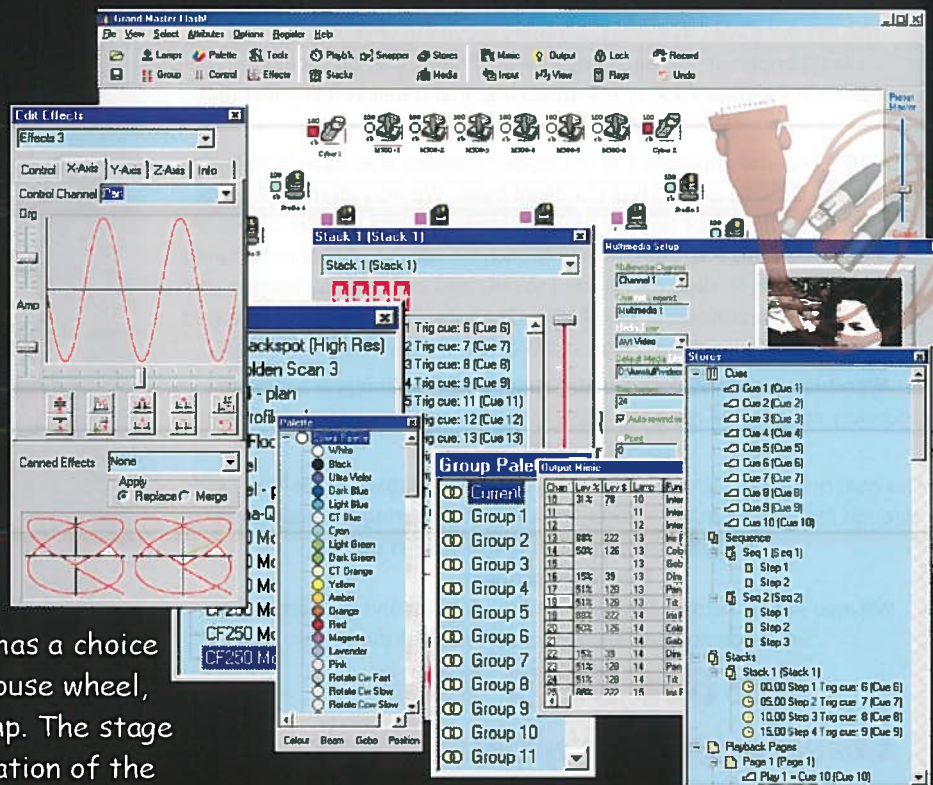
**Slick User Interface:** The operator has a choice of numeric entry, mouse dragging, mouse wheel, joystick and MIDI to control any lamp. The stage display provides a graphic representation of the current lamp settings.

**Dynamic Playback:** Playback can be tuned to the show type. The submaster panel is optimised for live shows, whilst the stack playback provides the features needed for theatrical and commercial work.

**Extensive Lamp Library:** The lamp library contains fixtures from all the key manufacturers including: High End, Martin, Vari\*Lite, Clay Paky and many more. A sophisticated lamp editor allows existing lamps to be modified or new lamps created.

**Turbo Charged Effects Engine:** The Effects engine rivals those provided by top of the range consoles. Over sixty templates including Ballyhoo's, Kicks and Mexican Waves are provided. Effects can be modified or created using an on screen graphic editor. Effects playback is superimposed on all other playback allowing move fades that include effects.

**Progressive Upgrade Policy:** Version 4 is available free of charge to existing Grand-Master Flash! users. See [www.ArtisticLicence.com](http://www.ArtisticLicence.com)



## Red Hot Ethernet Technology

Down-Link is just one of the output devices that can be used with Grand-Master Flash!

Down-Link is the latest Ethernet product from Artistic Licence. It mounts to a standard 'MK' wall box and converts Art-Net into two universes of DMX512.

Down-Link is powered via the Cat5 cable using the IEEE 802.3 standard.

Down-Link also provides remote firmware upgrade and is ACN ready to protect your investment.



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# Taking the World by Storm

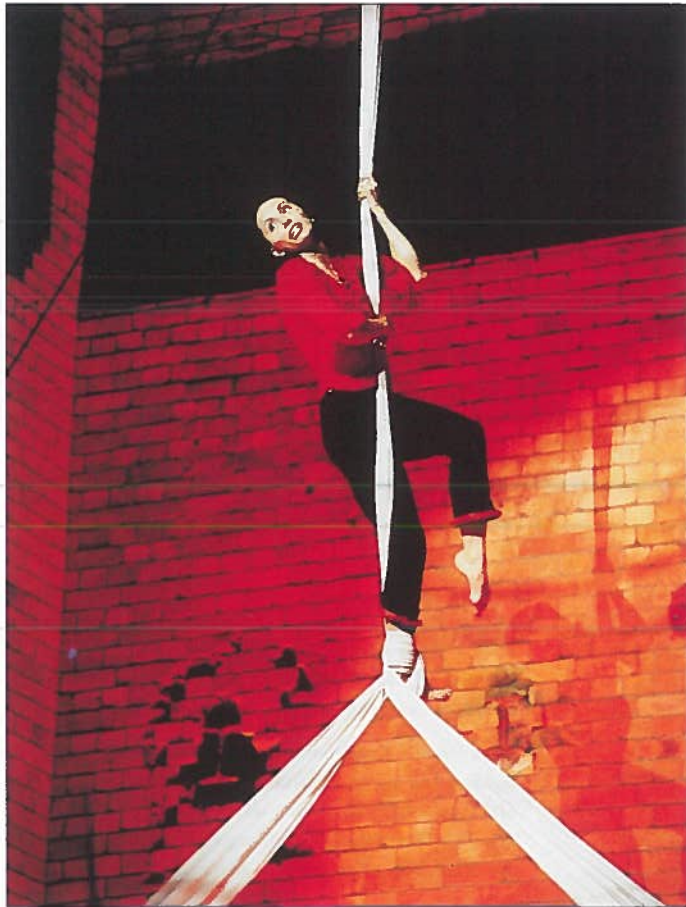


photo: Eric Richmond

***Born out of the ashes of the acclaimed Millennium Show at the Dome, The Generating Company have just premiered their first production – Storm. Jacqueline Molloy gets blown away . . .***

It takes a fierce determination to transform an abandoned electricity generating station into one of Europe's premier training grounds for contemporary circus. This tenacity reflects the apparent seventh sense the performing arts have for sniffing out disused buildings and reinventing them as hothouses for eclectic, artistic endeavours.

The Circus Space came to inhabit the former power station in Hoxton, East London, in 1994 after it had sat idle for over 30 years. The amount of physical energy generated there in the last seven years by its new inhabitants and their philosophy of perpetual motion, more than compensates for its previous inert state.

In addition to its much respected training programmes, The Circus Space has also created the largest contemporary circus company in the UK. If you've ever seen Cirque du Soleil, De La Guarda or Circus Oz in action, you'll know that contemporary circus can be a spectacular fusion of physical theatre and traditional circus skills that bursts into the audience's consciousness like a nuclear explosion at close range. The performer's routines are so raw and dangerous-looking that it can make a night of traditional theatre feel like a slow-releasing anaesthetic.

The Generating Company is made up of 25 aerial/acrobatic performers who trained at The Circus Space in the two years leading up to the Millennium Show. The artistic/production team has also been recruited from the Dome show with Mark Fisher, the creative director of the Millennium Show, lending his considerable artistic weight as production designer for Storm.

Fisher's contribution extended far beyond his design skills though, with both he and Paul Cockle (production manager on the Millennium Show and now the general manager of The Generating Company), believing that the legacy of the Dome show should not be lost. This belief contributed directly to the establishment of The Generating Company. Fisher, now a company director, views his early role "as a lot of pushing from behind."

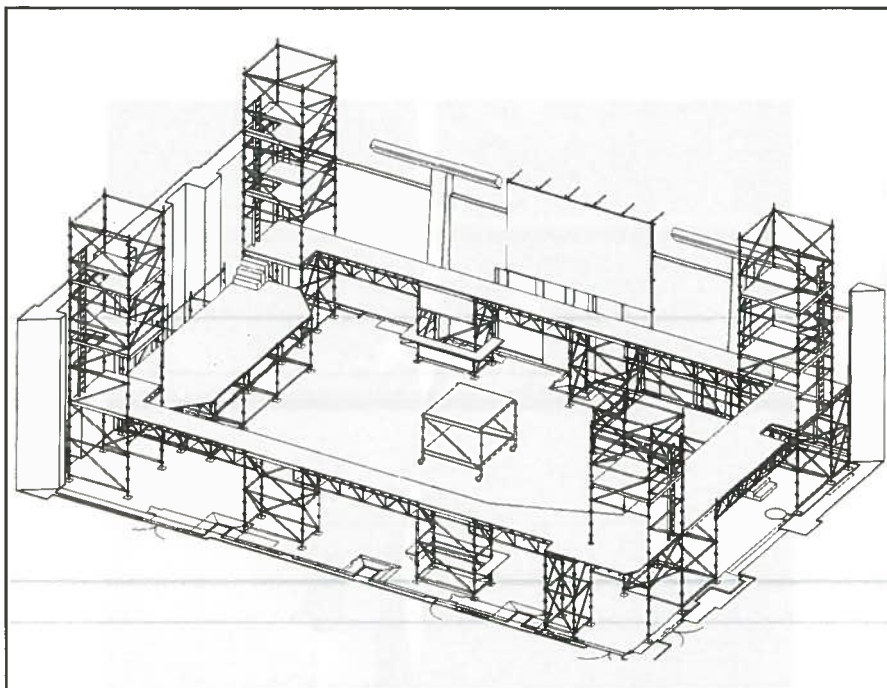
Paul Hennessy, the production and technical manager for Storm, describes the process of creating the show as quite "amazing" and it's clear that there exists an enormous amount of pride in what the fledgling company have accomplished with their first production. Storm follows the activities of a diverse group of characters across a period of 24 hours as they go about daily life.

The production was performed in the larger of the two venues at the site, appropriately named The Combustion Chamber, a venue refurbished in 1998 to accommodate the training of the performers for the Dome. It's a huge, rectangular, red-brick building with floor space of approximately 65 x 45ft and a working grid height of 30ft. A permanent grid system is in place for aerial training purposes and this was integrated into the scaffold and truss installation that Fisher created for the production.

Storm is a promenade production with nearly all the action taking place overhead, either on a continuous platform roughly 10ft high and 10ft deep which follows the walls of the space, or on the various aerial devices which include ropes, trapezes, tightsropes and cloud swings (rope swings). The platform serves as a variety of performance areas and also enables performers to move easily to the end stage area where the high-octane, ensemble routines hold court. Four corner scaffold towers serve as performance areas for the two musicians, DJ and performers.

Three 60ft runs of aluminium truss, generously donated by Tomcat UK, are suspended across the length of the space.





the guys arranged for me made all this possible." 'All this' includes a Soundcraft K3 desk for FOH mixing, QSC amplification, a loudspeaker combination of Nexo PS15s and PS10s (flown on the truss), and Thunder Ridge high packs (XP112s) and bass bins (SB1000s) placed on the floor to service the end stage.

Valentine wanted the audience, who move freely around in the space beneath the performers, to believe that what they were hearing was coming from the various action areas overhead, rather than from the floor, which he achieved with the positioning of the truss-hung speakers. This also allowed him to give the performance a surround-sound feel and to move the audio around the space in support of the action.

Valentine's greatest challenge was mixing an evenly balanced sound within the space, without incurring the wrath of the endless

brick surfaces. One of the more complex elements was that he had one set of bass bins effectively feeding two different PAs: "I fed the signal to the PS15s out of the matrix outputs - there's an extra bank of matrix outputs on the desk which gives me eight fed off the groups. The group outputs are then fed into a Yamaha HR802 rack-mount mixer, which sums the signals together. This then goes into the third input on the BSS Omnidrive (controlling the Thunder Ridge concert series stacks) and is crossed over. Output 6 is then Y-split together with the bass output for the stacks so that you get bass when you push up the faders on the PS15s and bass when you push the faders up on the concert stacks."

The result is a well-modulated mix with a hefty helping of bottom-end that fills the space and keeps the punters gyrating throughout the performance. The black drapes stretched over the roof space above the grid and down the tops of the walls provide adequate baffling to allow Valentine to get on with the job of coaxing an inspiring mix out of the system.

The two musicians use a large number of instruments including percussion, clarinet and both acoustic and bass guitar. As a result, they require 20 channels of DI and utilise a combination of Sennheiser and Shure mics. The singers use two Sony UHF radio mics but switch to a lavalier and Shure Beta 58, during aerial routines. Valentine also uses a BSS DPR402 for compression and a BSS FCS960 graphic equaliser with a Soundweb 9088, generously loaned by BSS, for the EQ on the PS15s.

Lighting designer Jack Thompson loves the challenge of working on non-conventional productions and though he describes himself as "too old and sensible for touring," he still enjoys a freelance design career in addition to his 'day' job as project manager at White Light North. Thompson has a long history of working with physical theatre companies - including spells with DV8 and Circus Oz - and was attracted to the unconventional style of Storm and the beauty of The Combustion Chamber as a performance space.

His brief was for the lighting to reflect and create the transitions for the 24-hour period Storm is set in. Thompson found that his design had a mind of its own and began to wander outside the boundaries set by time and

"The lighting developed into something beyond just establishing the time of day and the performers were happy to work with me. Circus is a very specialised field of lighting - one wrong lighting cue and a performer ends up on the floor, so there are certain guidelines that you need to work within, so people don't end up blinded."

The central truss provides rigging points for the aerial equipment, with two others running either side of the space for sound, lighting and aerial equipment.

Mark Fisher's design enhances the raw, exposed feel of the building and inspires a sense of urban mayhem. An entire office set is hanging on one wall, whilst a vision of domestic bliss, complete with washing machine, decorates the other. The performers, on harnesses, move around



these areas with great agility, creating for the audience humorous and colourful interpretations of the unorthodox characters' daily lives. Fisher, never a man to miss his chance, claims the greatest thing about the set is how economic it was to create, it being the result of "begging, borrowing and calling in favours." The minimalist style suits the production and also Fisher's intention that it be "a very abstract version of what it needs to be, to relate the main themes."

The unfolding story is greatly enhanced by the audio design for the show - a mixture of live music (performed by two musicians), recorded sound effects and the antics of the DJ who resides in a lofty position on top of one of the scaffolding towers. Matt Valentine, another of the company's Dome collaborators, designed and operated the sound, whilst composer Akintayo Akinbode was responsible for the highly evocative music.

Since the budget was limited, Valentine had to think on his feet to achieve the system he wanted, so he struck a deal with Bristol-based Sonix Audio: "The amazing deal

place: "The lighting developed into something beyond just establishing the time of day and the performers were happy to work with me. Circus is a very specialised field of lighting - one wrong lighting cue and a performer ends up on the floor, so there are certain guidelines that you need to work within, so people don't end up blinded."

Challenges arise in every area and a major one for Thompson was the lack of sufficient power - the venue only having two 63 Amp three-phase connections available. This imposed limitations on how much light he could fill the space with at any one time.

As with the rest of the show, the lighting budget was modest and Thompson was grateful for White Light North's generosity when it came to equipment. The workhorses of his rig are ETC Source Four pars rigged with Chroma-Q scrollers positioned along the two outside truss lengths. These provide cross-light and give the aerial work a certain depth and edge. Thompson had to pair the Pars across the space, as there weren't enough dimmers, but if he particularly wanted to light just from one side, the partner was put into a deep blue to minimise its impact.

Six of Martin Professional's MAC 500s were rigged overhead and provided the space with



Sound desk operator Matt Valentine

colour and fill light, as well as defining the floor area. Thompson created a stunning visual opening to the show when he lit the walls with the MACs in open white and rotating wheel gobos: "I was trying to get across the metaphor of living in this industrial age: always on a treadmill - and needed to do it quickly and cheaply!" Whereas Valentine found the red-brick walls unforgiving, in contrast Thompson found them "a joy to light".

Control for the lighting came from a Strand 520i desk and a pair of 36-way Ginger Green (old but reliable!) DMX racks, plus two Strand Act 3+ DMX 5kW racks.

One of the trickiest aspects of the show for Thompson was to light the action without revealing the constant activities of those who were setting up the various aerial routines. His use of sidelight meant the grid area

stayed fairly dark, enabling the two riggers (Andy Mitchell and Steve Robinson) to carry out their continuous setting of ropes, trapezes, lanyards, etc, out of the limelight. For the finale, however, which was a stunning routine involving two cloud swings and a trapeze, Thompson

decided to illuminate everything that was happening: "I was going to try and isolate the trapeze and cloud swings, but just didn't have the kit, so went in the other direction." Fortunately, this change of direction worked beautifully and the finale was a stunning visual treat for the audience.

By the end of the performance, the audience were reluctant to leave, resembling a sweaty throng on a dance floor hyped up for more action. The Generating Company have clearly struck a nerve with audiences who delight in their raw, energetic style of production. Contemporary circus is now an integral part of Britain's cultural scene and set to attract a growing band of followers as word gets round. If you get the chance to see The Generating Company on their forthcoming UK tour, take it - you won't be disappointed.



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## REMEMBER WHERE YOU HEARD IT FIRST



# The Fred Principle

*Ruth Rossington talks to ETC founder Fred Foster about his rather idiosyncratic approach to business*

**T**o those of us who sit and watch from the sidelines, the recent will-they, won't-they rumours circulating about an impending tie up between ETC and High End Systems, have been the lifeblood of many a backstage conversation. Check into any of the industry online chatrooms and you can guarantee that ETC's name will cross your screen before too long. For Fred Foster, the man behind ETC, it's all simply par for the course in an industry that just loves to speculate about what's going on behind closed doors at the Middleton HQ.

So it was great to be invited to talk to him at length about his own personal recollections of the company which, in 1992, launched the three products that were to set it on course for its present success: the Source Four profile spot, the Obsession console and the Sensor dimmer. Now it is one of America's most successful entertainment lighting manufacturers, with offices worldwide and a staff of around 600.

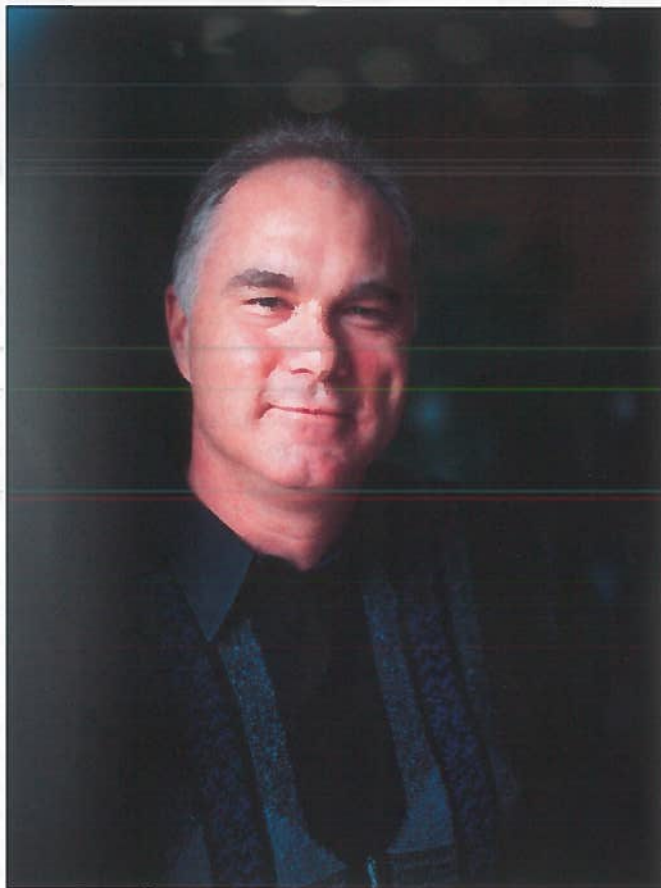
We are in the offices of ETC Europe and Foster, casual as ever, is attempting to play down his own part in the success of ETC. He starts as he means to go on and is happy to admit that the driving force for ETC was youthful arrogance - the sort that has you believing at age 19 that you can be the world's greatest lighting designer and that the New York Metropolitan Opera needs you more than you need it.

And the admission isn't too far from the truth, for the genesis of ETC came in a challenge laid down by Foster's mentor and tutor Gilbert Hemsley (then a lighting designer at the Metropolitan Opera, in New York, but also teaching Foster at the University of Madison), who told Fred, on Christmas Eve 1975, that his ambition to build a computerised lighting control system for the Met could not be done. A year and a day later, ETC and the Mega Cue were born.

Another 366 days later and Foster, his brother Bill, and two college friends are running a business, despite having precious little experience of such matters. The challenges, Foster acknowledges, were mostly financial in those early days - the type that see you writing to your mother for a \$50 loan when you can't balance the books, or the continuing cash flow problems that lead you to feel that someone, somewhere, is looking out for you when you write off your car and the \$300 insurance bails the company out.

He's not afraid to admit that he didn't have all the answers back then (and he's not even sure he's got them all now), and he often had to look to others to help him through those early years - particularly Mrs Foster senior, who must have cussed every time her son's handwriting landed on the doormat.

He mentions that he recently sat down and compiled a graph charting the company's turnover since it started (the entry for 1977 is all too typical: Revenue: \$754. Cash in Hand: minus \$8.31. Payroll: \$0. Net



Loss \$4,000). That graph, of course, is a perfect illustration of the challenges of building a business (which is probably why Foster was drawn to compile it). By 1989, the script had been flipped and the challenges were no longer about keeping the wolf from the door, they were about coping with the company's growth, a problem that he has been variously trying to deal with ever since. Turnover grew to \$2million, then \$5.5m, then \$9m and in '92, the launch year of Source Four, it hit \$16m. It's been on vertical take-off ever since, and last year the company recorded a turnover exceeding \$110m.

And whilst Foster is extremely proud of that figure, he claims it's not of significant value in itself - and that's not arrogance speaking - that's another graph, this time one which he drew to chart the cumulative payroll from 1977 to the present day. The figure he arrived at was \$122m. In some ways, this figure was more important to him than all the rest, for it flagged him back to 1990 when, walking through the company car park one day, he suddenly realised that ETC was no longer about a handful of people - it was about lots of people, all of whom had cars and therefore car repayments to make. and all of whom depended on ETC to help them meet them.

I couldn't help asking whether, during the pivotal years of the mid-nineties, when the company opened offices in Europe and Hong Kong, he had found it easy to watch the company develop and his role in it become less significant. His reply was simple. "If a job needs doing, and you still haven't done it, then you have to hand it over to someone who will. It may not get done your way, but it will get done. And who knows - maybe their way is better." But despite this remark, even Foster knows it's not always that easy, and he, more than most, struggled to come to terms with the fact that his management style didn't suit a rapidly



expanding company - one which by 1996 had grown to over 400 people.

Despite his best efforts, he couldn't ignore the signs around him - none more graphic than a climate study the company conducted with members of the R&D team. Each person was asked to list the top five impediments to the company's success. "I was number 1 or 2 on everybody's list," he says without hint of bitterness. The issue was forced at a rather cataclysmic company meeting about internal reorganization when the only item on the agenda was bringing in an operations manager to allow Foster to direct his talents elsewhere.

Like all who are dealt a shock to the system, it took a while to assimilate, and he admits that he went through the five recognized stages of grieving. To focus his thinking, he set himself some homework - to make a list of the five things he did well. In drawing up the list, he realized that he could define his role however he wanted, so he returned to his first love - product development - and let others take the company strain.

Then Bill Gallinghouse (earlier despatched from the US to manage the fledgling European operation), announced his departure from ETC Europe. "Looking round, we realized that I was the most superfluous person in Middleton, so I was sent off to Europe." It's clear by the way he tells it, that this was one of the best decisions he ever took, presenting him with a whole new set of challenges to rise to. His learning curve was vertical, and he admits that it was whilst in London that he came to see Europe not as one market, but as many markets, all requiring a unique approach.

He reveals that one of the first things he did was change everything, mix all the levels, remove all that English formality. This is typical Fred by all accounts and there's a running company joke that the one thing



*Fred and brother Bill in their parents' garage. We think Fred is somewhere under that beard, bottom right!*

people can be certain of at ETC is change - in fact, to the point where his strategies have become known as Fred's organisational 'plan du jour'.

By the time it came for him to return to the US, ETC Europe was in good shape and to his surprise he received a warm welcome from the R&D team in Madison, who, in his absence, had come to realise that he was somehow integral to the process.

The product range hasn't particularly featured in the conversation up to now, so I decide to see if I can get him to reveal anything about ETC's future plans. "Do you think you will ever make another product as successful as the Source Four? "The home runs are hard to hit. It's a big challenge but we'll concentrate on control desks and luminaire development and try and exploit the shift in the marketplace to automation." He feels that currently the control of moving lights is far too complicated and wishes to take the quantum leap of making the whole process significantly easier. He's a big fan of the developing virtual arena that programs like WYSIWYG (hence ETC's tie-up with Cast Lighting just prior to PLASA last year) have created. His product ethos distils to one thing - optimising everything for that very precious time with real lights.

Does he ever anticipate a truly global product? "It's really a challenge to try and do it for the whole world, when the whole world does it differently. To develop a

product for the global market would put so many burdens on it that it simply wouldn't fly." Talk of playing on the world stage leads us to reflect on the current company structure: with offices worldwide, products that are all but industry standards, and the lighting world at his feet, I ask him whether he has set himself any goals for the future? "I don't like to do that, you get

there and find it means nothing."

But it's futile for him to pretend otherwise - it's written all over his face that he has plans for the company on a global level. "There are huge parts of the world we don't know about and I want ETC to learn about those markets and be a global player." He anticipates my next question. "I know going global can be a risk, lots of companies fail, but you can't apply one formula across the board. You have to develop a different sales structure for each market, relevant to the market, and I'm very determined that the company structure should support that aim." He is the first to admit that the ivory tower ain't so tall in Middleton that they can see what's going on in the rest of the world.

His strategy is already well underway. Earlier in the year, Bill Gallinghouse returned to the company as VP of business development to coordinate international sales, and more recently Steve Terry joined ETC as VP of Professional Services. Foster has no illusions about the problems associated with building a big company. "People don't like big companies - but they will tolerate them if they bring something significantly better to the game." He's also well aware that companies who have their eye on the bigger picture often miss the details closer to home and he has no intention of letting that happen to ETC.

We finish by returning to those rumours about ETC and High End which (take it from me and my unimpeachable sources) are no longer rumours. He refuses to be drawn on the matter, but is willing to offer his views on the market as a whole. He talks of an impending shake-up (or maybe that should be shake-down) in automated lighting and believes that there is so little product differentiation these days, that he questions whether the market can really sustain all the manufacturers vying for a piece of it. He claims to have no interest in developing products for the professional 'whoopie' light market - too many people doing it too well, in his opinion. Since this is a man who always has something up his sleeve, I might remind him of those words sometime soon.

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# Election Fever



*The 'V'-shaped set for the BBC coverage*

***All the major broadcasters geared themselves up for the big event. L&S picks out some of the technical highlights***

When the main broadcasters lined up against each other in their coverage of the election, it was new technology that they turned to give them an edge over the competition.

The BBC's elaborate set for this year's General Election special, was a sophisticated control room operation, with a giant screen display as the centrepiece. Conceived by chief designer Christopher George, the show's director Rob Hopkin reveals that while he and George have collaborated on a number of programmes in the past, this was by far the biggest and most sophisticated.

"The design had to be attractive, inviting, flexible, practical and NEW," he explained. "We had to be able to allow all our presenters - David Dimbleby, Peter Snow, Jeremy Paxman and Fiona Bruce - to stay in touch with the story as it developed, talk to the guests in the studio or 'down the line' from any of our 132 OB Counts."

In addition, Peter Snow had to be able to operate his computer-driven GFX on the giant screen display. The studio also had to accommodate an army of researchers, producers and operators who fed data into the results system, which in turn drove the dynamic GFX.

The choice of screen was critical and Screenco was introduced into the mix at an early stage. "Christopher George recommended the company and I talked things over with Screenco's Mike Walker; we did tests and observed demos in order to settle on the right system for us," Rob Hopkin explains.

The result was the provision of four wide landscape screens. The feeds included politicians in slo-mo, live scenes from constituencies around the country and library footage - as well as a live remote controlled camera on the roof of the Houses of Parliament. The BBC drove the four Screenco displays via a purpose built big-screen control area, operated by two directors and two vision mixers. "We employed GFX/DVEs and digital recorders - amongst other toys," reports Hopkin. "The whole thing was designed around the colour palette of the GFX and the programme's 'V' logo shape was echoed in the desks, panels and flying pieces.

Rob Hopkin says that lux levels and light compensation were never an issue in view of the brightness of Screenco's daylight screens. "We tried to keep the overall levels down however, to assist the back projection system that Peter Snow used for his 2D routines."

While the set was 'real', the BBC created a VR device which lived within it. Rob Hopkin explains: "The truly unique aspect of what we were doing was that we provided Peter Snow with a 'point of view' projector that allowed him to point accurately at the VR objects rather than the usual non-specific 'waft' of the hand that is more usual in VR presentations."

Over at ITN, the producers commissioned a two-storey set in the building's atrium especially for the election broadcast, encompassing

ITN's new purpose-designed studio in the atrium of the TV station's Sir Norman Foster-designed headquarters in Grays Inn Road, Holborn

its basement and lower ground floor levels, designed by Simon Jago of Jago Designs. Central to the set at ITN was the new Barco iLite 6 LED display system, supplied by Screenco sister company Creative Technology. In fact, CT had only just made the purchase, and the 40 square metres (120 modules) of 6mm pixel pitch screen (i6) with which they have opened their account, could scarcely have been given a higher profile debut. 12 modules were central to Jago's design and the 4x3 display formed the backdrop behind the presenters and remained in situ for almost a month.



The set was lit by ITN lighting designer Hugh French, using an automated lighting system supplied by Vari-Lite London.

The upper level formed the main presentation area for presenters Jonathan Dimbleby and John Sargeant, while the lower level hosted the work area where the statistics were analysed by specialists and presented by Mary Nightingale. A third component was an array of virtual reality graphics which were created in a separate studio - lit by Roy Newman - and fed into the main set, with everything broadcast live to air.

Explains Hugh French: "The show had to run both at night time and during the following day, so we decided early on to balance the cameras for 'half daylight', so that we could run mainly tungsten lighting on the presenters."

The Vari-Lite rig comprised a 72-way Avolites dimmer rack and some 26 automated luminaires - a mixture of VL6Bs and VL5Arcs luminaires, and a pair of 2416 spot luminaires.

Adds French: "The set structure was finished in brushed metalwork and we glinted the VL6Bs across it. Most of the remainder of the luminaires were placed around the atrium on either side of the set, which was treated with various grades of sticky-backed frost, some of which were reflective and some not. Everything was lit either from the floor or from lighting bars built into the set itself - there were no lighting trusses as we had a very long camera jib covering both floors of the set."

Key lighting was provided by 750W Source Fours, colour corrected to 4200K to maintain the set's neat appearance,

while elements around the edges were lit with a variety of long and short nosed Par cans, also supplied by Vari-Lite.

Adds French: "It was the first time that moving heads had been used at ITN. The producers didn't want lots of effects, just subtle glints across the metalwork and defocused prismatic moves on the walls and background. We wanted to match the graphics and the moving images, and there was one custom gobo with a 'vote cross' image."

Marcus Robbins operated the Artisan console with a mini Artisan as back-up desk and also acted as gaffer. The studio's Strand Galaxy desk and separate dimmers were kept on-line, to ensure that presenter lighting could be maintained in case of power failure.

Meanwhile, away from TV-land and in the domain of the radio airwaves, new technology was also being put through its paces. Telford-based broadcast sound equipment supplier Soundsense supplied over 30 ISDN outside broadcast kits to radio stations around the country, including BBC Radio 5 Live, who were supplied with over 20 units for their election night coverage.

Soundsense supplied a combination of AEQ and Glensound codecs; the AEQ units being flown in from the factory in Madrid especially for use on the election campaign. "We're deeply indebted to our colleagues at AEQ who moved heaven and earth to ensure we had adequate units in the right place at the right time," said Soundsense's Derek Tallent.



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# Ian Herbert, Asleep in the Stalls...

**N**ot a lot of you will know that it's partly Fred Bentham's fault that I'm on this page. Years ago, when I was a fairly respectable book publisher, one of the volumes under my supervision was his *Stage Lighting*. Actually it was *The Art of Stage Lighting* by the time I got to it, and I'm not sure he ever forgave me for changing its format from a handy Tabs size to a bigger, almost coffee-table volume that could be properly illustrated. 'Looks too much like Pilbrow's,' he growled.

"I'm not sure he ever forgave me for changing its format from a handy Tabs size to a bigger, almost coffee-table volume... 'Looks too much like Pilbrow's,' he growled."

**MY ACQUAINTANCE** with Fred gave me the privilege of the occasional gourmet lunch in Strand's Blue Room - I was going to call them unforgettable, but so much wine went down in the Blue Room that remembering the lunch was always quite a struggle. When I took over the editorship of *Sightline* from Fred there were more growls when I changed its format from Tabs size, in this case to A4, but I had the benefit of his wisdom on the *Sightline* board

throughout my editorship, a time in which he was always ready with a sage comment, but never sought to impose his views.

**THE MOST VALUABLE** gift I ever had from Fred was a little book, Tabs size of course, since it was indeed a spin-off from that journal. *New Theatres in Britain (1970)* is a collection of plans of the new theatres built in the sixties' boom years. This volume, with Fred's own inimitable articles in Tabs

and elsewhere, stimulated my own interest in theatre buildings and encouraged me to be as cussed and opinionated as Fred in my own subsequent articles on them, even if I couldn't claim a hundredth of his technical knowledge.

**SO DEAR FRED** has been much in my mind in the month between his funeral and his memorial celebration at the Palladium. What did he think, I wonder, of the new Glyndebourne, which I finally got to see? Would he have been as aghast as I was at the ugly black lump that frowns above the stage where a proscenium ought to be? Would he have longed for some Matcham stucco over those cool, but impersonal, wooden balcony fronts that make the auditorium look like a well-built modelbox? At least he would have had no worries about the recreation of John Bury's lighting for the magical revival of Britten's *Midsummer Night's Dream* that was the object of my visit.

**I SUSPECT** he would have been more at home in Wilton's Music Hall, which I also saw for the first time this month. Tucked away in an alley underneath the Docklands Light Railway, it's hardly noticeable from outside, but when you make your way into its narrow paperclip of an auditorium, its atmosphere grabs you straight away. It, too, has an unfinished feeling, since its papier-mâché balconies are covered in simple undercoat, or maybe Unibond, but it remains very much a live theatre - especially if you have the good luck to catch Mark Dornford-May's amazing South African version of the *Mysteries* there, complete with lighting from that country's greatest designer, Mannie Manim. The parallel production, *Carmen*, uses many of the same three dozen wonderful singer-actors and adds a 20-piece orchestra, which puts the performing company in a three-to-one relationship with the audience in Wilton's tiny space. Such luxury.

**THERE WAS LUXURY** of a different kind in the newly refurbished Shaw, now part of a rather grand hotel. You are greeted by courteous hotel staff in a roomy foyer dominated by its bar, and

the feeling of service extends into the auditorium. The Shaw was always a bit of a barn, and the removal of some seating has done it no harm at all. What doesn't make sense about the new Shaw set-up is its programming, which has Fringe written all over it when the venue is ready for sophisticated entertainment. If they have any gumption, the Shaw's owners will keep a close eye on what is happening at the May Fair hotel, where its cosy little theatre is coming back into use with the arrival this month of the Chichester hit *Song of Singapore*.

**THE SHAW RISKS** becoming another Westminster, a usefully-sized hall with no visibility. A good management could make a small mint out of a well-programmed Shaw. Could the same be done with the Westminster? It, too, has been housing some very unlikely shows recently which will not have increased its profile - there was a time, which Fred would recall, when the 600-seater Westminster was the West End house for thrillers. There's an argument for pulling it down now, as my good friend Yvonne Brewster and her Talawa company plan, but in spite of a generous Arts Council offer of £1.8 million, 40% of the Talawa cost for a 200-seater, even before any plans have been finalised, I'm not completely certain that this project can ever see the light of day. What nobody seems to have noticed when the site was sold to developers, is that a river runs under it, and whatever goes up there is likely to cost a lot more than is being estimated at present. The existing theatre area includes a second, hundred-seater studio space and useful offices. Westminster Council is far from being a charitable institution, but it is already exercising influence over the new owners by demanding a theatre in any replacement.

**I SUSPECT** that a Westminster-backed offer to take the building back off the developers, followed by some clever application of the promised Arts Council money, might be more likely to produce an actual result. Otherwise, we could have 10 years of property blight and nothing for Talawa or anyone else. That Yvonne is a board member of the Theatres' Trust may help push things along, but it's unlikely.

**MEANWHILE**, as the Arts Council's £1.8 million looks to be earning interest for some time to come, the same tranche of lottery money includes £250,000, or just over 4%, of the £6 million the Young Vic needs towards its refurbishment. The Westminster hasn't had the go-ahead for rebuilding, where the Young Vic, built for a five-year life, is actually falling down. This suggests a strange sense of priorities in Great Peter Street. It can't be a question of ethnicity, because the Young Vic's South African director, David Lan, is at present staging the best production with a black cast London has seen for a very long time, in *A Raisin in the Sun*. I think Fred would have been as puzzled at this as I am.



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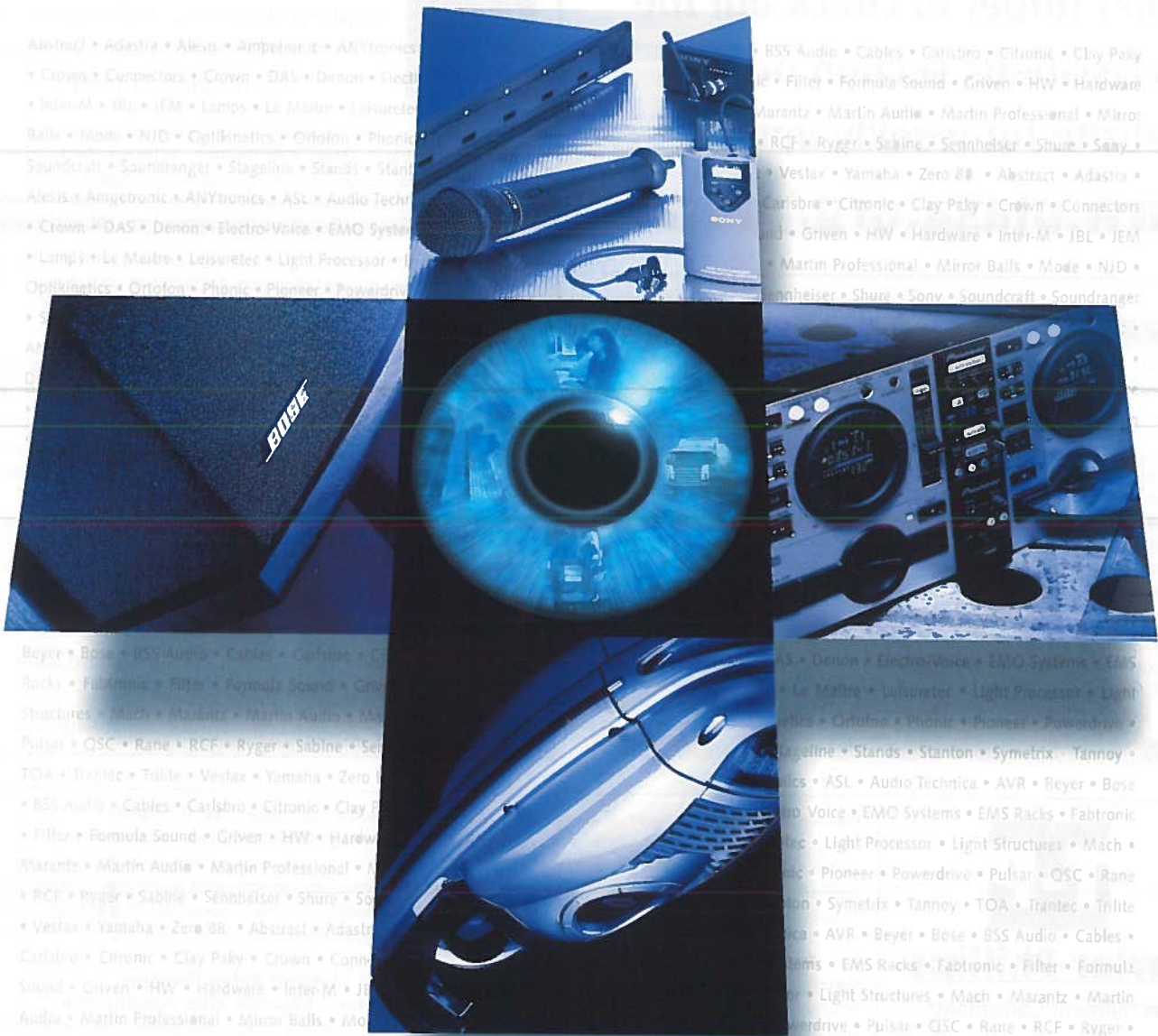
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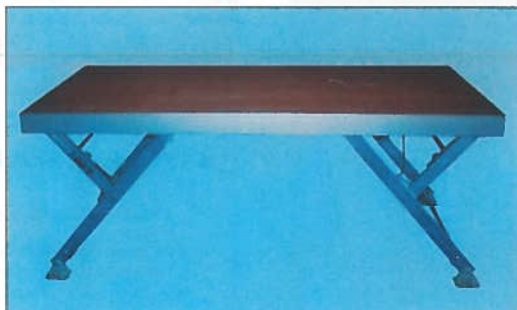
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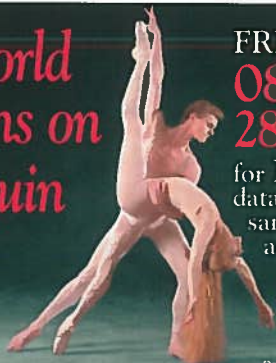
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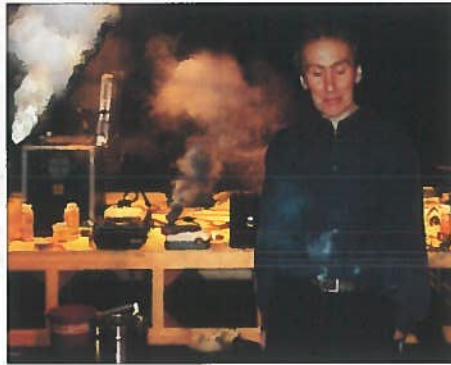
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# In Profile...

## L&SI Talks to the Industry Trend-setters

**T**here's been few dull moments in the life and career of Dorian Kelly. Born into a theatrical family, Kelly's father was an actor at Colchester Repertory Theatre in Essex. Technology was present in the bloodstream from early on, and he lit his first performance at 13.

His inaugural professional techie job was as LX at Colchester rep, by luck rather than design, following the sudden disappearance of the incumbent electrician into the great blue yonder on a bender. Sixteen-year-old Dorian Kelly stepped into the role for nine months before moving on to drama school.



Kelly at a seminar held last year in Oslo for the Norwegian Society of Lighting Designers. The smoke issuing from his stomach is a demonstration of someone 'about to catch fire'

**Louise Stickland**  
profiles Dorian  
Kelly, founder  
of Illuminati

For over 30 years, Kelly has been an inventive ideas deviser, theatrical and artistic polymath (not his description, but one he's proud to adopt) and eccentric. He delights at spinning all his plates in the air at once - producer, director, designer, consultant, lighting and special effects expert, writer and lecturer. However, his first love will always be lighting.

He cut his technical incisors on the 'new' technology that started to appear in the late fifties and early sixties - when the then revolutionary Pattern 23 lanterns blazed onto the scene. Despite countless ram-raids on the frontiers of innovation, Kelly still enjoys creating stunning effects from old equipment. He also loves all aspect of the arts, commenting that there's never "any substitute for genuine quality and originality".

Kelly joined the ABTT in 1964 and for the next 15 years worked continuously at practically every theatre in the country, sometimes as chief electrician, sometimes as stage management - and even as scenic artist! He founded his company, Illuminati Creative Technology in 1979. The unspecific name has seen Kelly proactive in a mind-boggling array of interesting and

idiosyncratic projects - ranging from lighting and sound design to the conception and construction of fountains, fireworks, bangs, flashes, torrents and tempests, as well as engaging in design and consultancy capacities on high-spec theatre systems and a miscellany of theme park effects.

More recently, as a guest of various Scandinavian professional organisations, Kelly has lectured and held Masterclasses in one of his many areas of technical expertise - fog, smoke and assorted other atmospheric effects. He's also taught lighting design at Rose Bruford College and Middlesex University in the UK, and acted as technical theatre consultant for Rose Bruford's new purpose-built 300 seat Theatre-In-The-Round.

Illuminati claims to be the first to show fibre optics as a starcloth tool - during an early ABTT Show at Riverside in Hammersmith, and the company is a pioneering force in the use of electro-luminescence in the theatre. Kelly relishes seeking out new technologies that are potentially interesting and useful for theatrical applications, and is always keen to promote their new and experimental use. Another of his leftfield projects is running a service for the growing number of creative artists who work with various technologies, helping them to realise their ideas and installations. His work in this context has been seen (by proxy) at the Hayward Gallery, the Tate, Oxford MOMA, Cornerhouse in Manchester, Firstsite in Colchester and many other high profile galleries and art spaces.

With his brother Simon, Kelly is associated with Pixii Electronics Ltd - a company specialising in

marketing new ideas and inventions. Current projects include a remote-sensing full motion video cellular alarm system, and a way of halving bandwidth on video transmission. The latter is currently being developed for them at Imperial College and a German University. Past ideas include improvements in radio mic technology.

Last year, his eclectic portfolio took another tangential swerve as he became a festival organiser for the first time! Unimpressed by his local council's reluctance to celebrate the Millennium, Kelly and a group of friends seized the initiative, started an association, collected a small amount of sponsorship money and put on a manic and stimulating day of 35 diverse events in 13 locations.

This year, the Colchester Festival has grown to a four-day official international event encompassing the full arts spectrum including literature, theatre, a specially-commissioned 90-minute fantasia, site-specific artworks and massive street entertainments. The Festival takes place the first week of September, and is expected to bring a large boost to tourism and the local economy.

Looking back, it's hard for him to pick a favourite project, but one of Kelly's best ever production and showbiz experiences was touring with the legendary Marlene Deitrich in 1964, as assistant to lighting designer Joe Davies. He describes this as simply "unforgettable".

Always looking for new and idiosyncratic avenues in creative lighting, this year Kelly is designing his hometown of Colchester's High Street Christmas illuminations - for the council! Naturally, he's not short on new and original ideas and technologies, and is currently seeking a manufacturer who will build the custom fixtures and fittings he has in mind. ■

**Lighting & Sound**

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