



International Television, Theatre and Film Lighting Colloquium

July 6 and 7 1981

It could be claimed that there has never been anything like Showlight 81 before, at least in Britain. Certainly, there have been lighting conferences before, but never one devoted solely to lighting for entertainment. There were, of course, the many and famous Strand Electric lectures and 'gatherings' held on practically any pretext to get lighting people together in the late lamented King Street demonstration theatre and, for the international set, there was 'Lighting 2000' held in New York in 1970 and also devoted exclusively to the type of lighting familiar to readers of 'Cue'. But how many delegates actually attended from London? Lighting 2000 was nevertheless the progenitor of 'Showlight 81' because one of its New York organisers, Phil Rose, and two of the contributors, Ken Ackerman and Fred Bentham, decided that the wealth of lighting expertise in London could also justify organising a special conference or colloquium.

So what is 'Showlight 81' really trying to be? First, it is about the art of lighting the actor, dancer or musician and secondly about the equipment specially evolved to assist this art. The four keynote speakers are leading lighting artists with international reputations and the distinction of being acknowledged by their peers as great lighting designers. Richard Pilbrow, speaking on theatre lighting, has lit over 200 productions in theatres in London, New York, Paris and Moscow. Recent London productions lit by Richard include 'Annie', 'Oklahoma' and 'Joking Apart' in which he pioneered the use of fibre optics for lighting effects on stage. Denys Coop will speak about film lighting. Denys is an outstanding Director of Photography and was responsible for the spectacular flying photography for 'Superman I' for which he received an Oscar. John Treays is the television lighting specialist and is one of the best of the internationally admired BBC Television Lighting Directors. John is best known for his lighting for many BBC Shakespeare productions and drama series. He is a BAFTA award winner and was the first Chairman of the Society of Television

Lighting Directors. Richard Dale speaking about Pop and Roadshow lighting completes the team. Richard and the company he runs have been responsible for the total production organisation of countless Pop Roadshows including The New Seekers; Marti Caine; Neil Sedaka; Gladys Knight and Hot Chocolate. All four are using colour slides, film or Video to explain what they think lighting in their medium is about and to illustrate the artistic achievements of the recent past and their hopes for the future.

The technical papers, on the other hand, are about solid fact. The technical session begins, logically, with a session on modern light sources with contributions from Thorn, G.E.C., and a Californian firm, I.L.C. describing recent lamp developments for stage and studio use. I.L.C. promise details of a new discharge lamp suitable for indoor use at 3200K. After lamps comes the luminaire design session opened by a contribution from Mario de Sisti, the Italian designer responsible for the Rank Ianiro lighting equipment whose attention to quality and innovation have secured them a worldwide market in TV, Film and, increasingly, in Theatre. America then contributes a paper from Kliegl on the contentious question of the place of efficiency in luminaire design and then the London manufacturer CCT offer a paper on their new digitally controlled remote colour change system. Colour is also the subject of a paper from Rosco and a description of a new cyclorama system by a leading US consultant, Dick Glickman. To round off this section Telegage describe their latest moves in development of grids and suspension systems.

The second day begins with a session on temporary power distribution systems reporting the far reaching effect that Health and Safety legislation is having on the Film and Television industry location wiring systems and which might yet spread to disturb the 'custom and practice' of the theatre and pop scene. Inevitably, lighting control systems are a major topic in this

sort of discussion and Rank Strand, Electrosonic and Zero 88 describe their latest approach to harness computers to the service of art and effect. Finally, the prepared papers end with contributions from Australia, Canada and elsewhere describing how lighting practices differ in other parts of the world.

The last half day is devoted to 'structured discussion' which the organisers hope will allow topics triggered off by the earlier sessions to be fully explored by the delegates.

During the conference there will be a small exhibition by leading equipment manufacturers.

'Showlight 81' despite the implication of its name, will not, repeat not, become a regular event. Monday and Tuesday 6th and 7th July 1981 will be positively the only performance. Showlight is being held at the Barbican and will be among the first to use the long awaited extensive conference and entertainment complex designed for the City of London. The Lord Mayor of the City of London will open the proceedings with proper ceremony. Registration at £60 including VAT will include lunch on both days and a reception in the Overlord Embroidery room followed by dinner in the Porter Tun room at the converted Whitbread Brewery close by the Barbican site. A tour of the nearly completed Royal Shakespeare Company theatre and other areas of technical interest is promised. Reduced rates are offered for young people and pensioners. The event is organised by a joint committee of the National Illumination Committee, The Chartered Institution of Buiding Services Lighting Division, The Royal Television Society, The British Kinematograph, Sound and Television Society, the Association of British Theatre Technicians, The British Society of Cameramen and the Society of Television Lighting Directors.

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