

Contents

Foreword v
Introduction vii

PART I

**Lighting Specific Places
and Programs** 1

CHAPTER 1

The Art of Stage Lighting 3

CHAPTER 2

Lighting the High School Auditorium 11

CHAPTER 3

Lighting Little Theatres and Civic Theatres 15

CHAPTER 4

Lighting Arenas and Thrust Stages 21

CHAPTER 5

Lighting Chancel Drama 27

PART II

**Lighting Devices
and Their Uses** 35

CHAPTER 6

How Much Light Do I Need? 37

CHAPTER 7

Stage Lights and Accessories 43

CHAPTER 8

Dimmers and Cues 59

CHAPTER 9	
The Nature of Power Hookups	71
CHAPTER 10	
Reading Catalogs and “Spec” Sheets	81
CHAPTER 11	
Homemade Equipment	87
CHAPTER 12	
Projected Scenery	103
About the Author	125

FOREWORD

The fact that you have picked up this book and are reading it indicates that you are probably facing some sort of crisis in lighting a play. You feel beleaguered and are seeking help. Now there are four entirely different situations in which you may find yourself, and as you read through this book it is important to identify the situation you are in.

1.

You have been asked to light a play which is being done in a church or an assembly hall of some sort, possibly with a small concert platform. You will have to use whatever current supply exists and you will be bringing your own equipment. Perhaps you have made some yourself.

2.

You have been asked to light a more ambitious project such as a musical comedy or an opera to be staged in some school auditorium that is woefully underequipped. For this operation you will probably rent or purchase some sort of dimmer board for which you will need an electrical connection. You will also need lots of electrical cable for the lights you bring. When you depart, all this equipment will go with you. This is somewhat akin to a professional road show playing in a rented commercial theatre although not of the same scale. Aside from the electrical connection made by a licensed contractor, you are dealing with items "off the shelf," that is, stock units that are easily purchased.

3.

You are involved with remodeling an old building such as a chapel or meeting hall. In this case, you will be making a permanent installation and the wiring must conform to local electrical codes, and the circuits for the stage lighting will have to terminate in a cross-connecting panel leading to the dimmers. For this project you will need help, either assistance from equipment manufacturers or from independent theatre consultation.

4.

You find yourself in the planning of a future project that will be built from scratch. For this you will definitely need independent theatre consultation for you are now involved with owners, architects and engineers, not to mention the staff, both present and future! In other words, a lot of money is going to be spent and there must be adequate planning. There will also be a considerable current supply to be reckoned with. You are no longer in the boondocks.

For the first three situations you should acquire the trade directories which list manufacturers and suppliers of theatrical products geographically. Currently these are:

Lighting Dimensions Buyers Guide

Lighting Dimensions Industry Resources

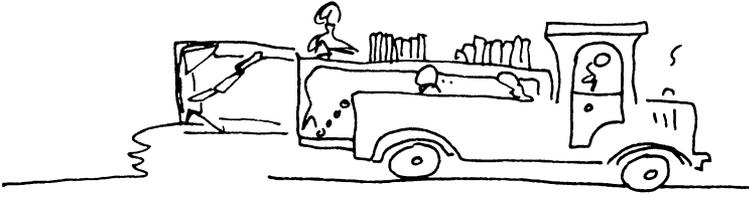
**Entertainment Design Directory of
Manufacturers, Suppliers & Consultants**

All are available from:

**Entertainment Design
32 West 18th Street
New York, NY 10011**

For all situations I suggest membership in the **U.S. Institute for Theatre Technology, 6443 Ridings Road, Suite 134, Syracuse, NY 13206**. The Institute holds an annual conference and an industry-wide trade show, usually in the spring.

INTRODUCTION

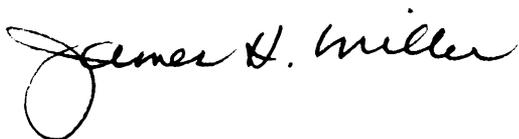


*I “fell” into theatre quite by accident in 1934 when, as a freshman at Princeton, I needed to earn some money to “make ends meet,” it being the aftermath of Black Friday and the Great Depression. The job I had involved the Student Express — we moved anything and everything we could get our hands on. So early one rainy autumn morning I found myself by a railroad siding, unloading sets for **Ethan Frome**, a Broadway show on tour. That was the beginning of it and I have been backstage ever since. In the early years I built just about anything that came along, but in later years I specialized in low-cost scenery and lighting systems that would be useful in any sort of space where a performance might take place. I did so because I did not observe many others doing much about such situations — and I felt I had some ideas that would be useful.*

This book deals with down-to-earth methods of lighting theatricals for live audiences. It is written for the beginner who has limited resources and little experience. The book is in two parts: the first gives some basic solutions for a number of specific spaces and programs; the second contains information on a series of related subjects such as spotlight types, dimmers, lamps, filters, connectors, etc., and includes a section on homemade equipment.

The main purpose of this book is to “bring light to bear” primarily upon the actor and the scenery and props in a reasonable and inexpensive manner. The important thing to realize, though, is that all contemporary lighting effects, to some degree, are within reach of the amateur’s pocketbook, with the payoff through artful use rather than by means of sophisticated equipment.

Thus, *Stage Lighting in the Boondocks* is addressed to the technician whose “back is to the wall,” so to speak, and whose resources are largely matters of his own inventive spirit — helped, I hope, by the contents of this book.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James H. Miller". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J" that extends downwards and to the left.