

At first glance, the performance "Noises Off" had a fairly standard display of lighting techniques, which is not too surprising being that the piece itself is relatively conventional. However, when looking at the details of the layout, it turns out that this is not the case. While the stage was lit with traditional methods, such as area lighting and specials in specific areas of the stage, many of the nuances required finer attention to detail. What was even more interesting about these specifics was seeing the process behind the set up.

First of all, there were a handful of issues that become present as a result of the set design. For example, there was a large problem with lighting angles as a result of the border which was added to the proscenium. Many of the fixtures that lighting designer Tony Shayne placed on the electrics in the house were obstructed and could not be used as originally designed. However, he was able to resort to other tactics in order to fix the issue. To solve the problem, a temporary balcony beam was placed at the very back of the house, with about 10 fixtures focused directly at the stage. While this solved the issue caused by the border, it also resulted in a few others. First of all, there were previously no circuits in the back of the house, but coincidental timing of the installation of a new lighting system easily fixed this problem. Secondly, the long throw of the fixtures caused some obvious spill of light onto the backs of folks sitting in the audience. This was solved with the shutters on the fixtures as well as just a little jury-rigged gaffers tape. While the lights did have their problems, they turned out to be the best possible solution for the situation and witnessing the process of fixing this issue was very interesting.

While some of the problems arose as a restriction of the set that could not be predicted before loading in, a few other issues had to be factored in during the design

process weeks before. The biggest of these challenges was the nature of the play and the fact that two sides of the set needed to be considered, rather than just one. As a result, Tony was basically required to design a light plot for two different sets, making sure that he had enough fixtures for the both of them in the hanging space that the theatre allowed. Fortunately, the set up was very well done and there was even a little bit of fun to be had. There were some fun footlights, placed at the very back of the stage to light the actors during the second act, which really gave the audience the feeling that they were backstage, watching the show from behind. The set backstage also had a handful of false running lights and other practicals which might have seemed relatively unimportant, but really helped to make the backstage scene more accurate. Also, getting lighting fixtures out onto a rotating set actually proved to be quite difficult, which shows how much effort went into the smallest details of the plot.

All of the small details that went into the lighting design really helped to bring "Noises Off" together as a performance. Despite the lighting looking quite generic and traditional at a first, a handful of small challenges had to be overcome in order to complete the design. During both the designing and the hanging of the plot, different issues arose and were fixed in order to get the finer parts of the lighting looking perfect. The final product resulted in a great looking piece which worked well as a part of the whole performance piece.