

## Topic 025

### Topic for Practical exercises

One of the most rewarding professions today can be that of the lighting designer working in the arts. It can also be one of the most frustrating professions on the planet.

The lighting designer will never stop learning. Every production or project will present new challenges, new obstacles, new human dynamics and new problems to solve. There can and should be many failures along the way. This is part of the artistic process. The lighting designer shouldn't hesitate to make as many mistakes as possible - just don't make the same mistake twice. There is great satisfaction in designing the lighting for a production that fulfills the needs of the playwright and also meets the objectives of the director and other designers. There is however far greater satisfaction in knowing that you have succeeded in your goals and objectives and that you have emotionally 'moved' an entire audience through the controlled and planned use of light. Stage lighting is no longer a matter of simple illumination as it was less than 100 years ago. Today, the lighting designer is expected to be a master of art, science, history, psychology, communications, politics and sometimes even mind reading.

The stage designer quickly learns that things are not always what they appear to be. A director, who asks for 'more light' on an actor, probably doesn't mean that at all. Instead he really just wants 'to see the actor better'. The designer might chose to reduce the lighting contrast around the actor, or simply ask the actor to tip his head up a bit. Both solutions solve the problem without 'adding more light'. So the lighting designer also has to be a good listener, a careful interpreter and a skilled crafts person.

Ultimately the lighting designer must be an artist! He must understand style, composition, balance, esthetics and human emotions. He must also understand the science of light, optics, vision, the psychology of perception and lighting technology. Using these tools the lighting designer must learn to think, feel and create with his heart.