

ANDREW TINSEY— Cool Cat in a hot tin box . . .

ANDREW TINSEY has been a member of the Society for the past eleven years and has been handling the electrics for almost every production during this period. A qualified audio engineer he worked as a recording engineer during the Mersey Sound era and is at present employed as a senior representative with an aerial manufacturer. Other interests include hi-fi and cars.

After a play has been chosen it is the stage secretary's job to recruit a stage manager, lighting engineer, property mistress and any other odd bods that might be considered necessary for the smooth running of the show.

When this has been done a meeting is arranged between the aforementioned people and the producer. The purpose of this is to discuss the requirements of the play and sort out how we are going to fit the set on the stage.

Our stage is relatively small and most plays are written with a professional stage in mind and contain such items as spiral staircases, grand pianos and other such cumbersome and impractical properties which could be lost on a stage like the London Palladium—but which at the Carver would leave little room for a cast (not to mention an audience). We can, however, accommodate such items as telephone boxes and lifts merely through the sheer brilliance and ingenuity of the stage staff . . . pause for applause . . . as you will see in tonight's production.

I watch all the shows from a small platform above the right hand side of the stage, surrounded by switches, wires and dimmers. Dimmers are cunning gadgets that vary the brightness of the lights. They work rather like an electric fire but are not supposed to get as hot.

If, however, dimmers get overloaded life gets most exciting—during the last Christmas show the ambient temperature on the lighting bridge was over 100 degrees!

Hardly a show passes without incident—the operator drops a clanger and fuses blow. Members of the stage staff move or un-plug lights or one of those actor types forgets the cue line then wonders why the lights haven't changed—it can all be very disconcerting.

Between any productions a highly organised force (the stage staff) swings into action, brandishing hammers, saws, wallpaper and paint pots. After a few weeks work the result is the set you, the audience, see. It is great fun; if you can knock in nails or slap on paint, why not join the Carver and get in on the act?