3-LIGHTING & ELECTRICAL SERVICES

AUDITORIUM LIGHTING

SOME OF US MAY STILL THINK OF INDOOR GALA OCCASIONS GENERALLY IN terms of blazing chandeliers, still feel that the sparkle of light from great crystal sprays and fountains are an essential part of any festival’s décor. Though several centuries of ‘cluster lighting’, through the ages of tallow, wax, colza oil, gas and electricity, have conditioned us to expect such concentrations, the architects here have virtually cut out visible ‘fittings’ and relied entirely on the effect of the quantity, quality, disposition and direction of the actual light itself.

Some, to begin with, may find this centrally controlled, dispersed, pervasive and fragmented lighting a little too aloof and unassertive—as impersonal as sunshine—but they may yet come to think it right for this particular hall and its particular

A horizontal fluorescent light illuminates the ceiling before the concert begins.
When the orchestra plays, the main ceiling lighting is dimmed and the chief source comes from the canopy over the orchestra itself.
aspirations. The architects and their lighting experts have anyway given immense thought to this vital question and if experience suggests that modifications should be made, made they will surely be.

They realized that concealed indirect lighting alone, though pleasantly soothing, can sometimes be a little lifeless, even a trifle triste, and to counteract that they have studded their ceilings with brilliant little lamps—a constellation of shining stars—which like the diffused lighting are under precise and watchful control.

The whole art of lighting is of course to suit it exactly to the occasion, and here, when the music is due to begin, the general glow and sparkle that has welcomed the audience to the auditorium is gently subdued until only enough light remains in the body of the hall for the easy following of scores. Then the orchestra alone is left bathed in brilliance, so holding our eyes as its music does our ears. At the interval out come the twinkling stars again, back floods the diffused light—tension is relaxed, we return from wherever the music may have carried us, conversation surges up once more and we file out into the bright-lit galleries until the gently insistent ‘A’ tuning note broadcast from concealed amplifiers tells us that the interval is ending.
Indirect lighting in the foyer ceiling

View of the Concert Hall from the Terrace Stalls showing Boxes and the Ceremonial Box
THE ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL

Lighting

by

G.E.C.

The lighting of the Auditorium was carried out by the G.E.C. in collaboration with the Chief Engineer’s Department of the London County Council. This interesting installation is an outstanding example of how indirect fluorescent lighting can be combined successfully with direct tungsten filament lamp lighting, both systems being built into the architecture of the ceiling.

Nearly 3,000 feet of OSRAM cold cathode lamps are concealed in cornices running across the Hall, the filament lamps being housed in G.E.C. louvred fittings recessed into the ceiling. The whole installation is dimmer controlled.

OSRAM fluorescent lamps are used for the lighting in other parts of the building. Electrical contractors: Berkeley Electrical Engineering Co. Ltd.

Lamps were supplied by the General Electric Co Ltd.
The electrical installation was carried out by Berkeley Electrical Engineering Co Ltd

The electric clock system was provided by Gent & Co Ltd.
Lightning protection was provided by WJ Furse & Co Ltd