



Image from the New York Experience: A Trans-Lux/Bing Cosby Presentation, *JSMPT*, January 1975, p. 25.

BY MICHAEL DOLAN



25 Years Ago in the Journal

The January 2000 *Journal* published in: “The 141st SMPTE Technical Conference and Exhibition,” “Over 2,000 industry professionals journeyed to New York City’s Marriott Marquis Hotel to attend the 141st Technical Conference and Exhibition held on November 19-22, 1999. The four-day event, which was as successful as predicted, explored various areas in the advancement of digital technology and ways in which the industry is currently handling the transition to high-definition production and transmission. The program, themed “Sprockets, Samples, and Satellites: Moving Imaging into the Third Millennium,” was chaired by *Birney Dayton*, NVision, and *Linda Young*, DuArt Film and Video, and included an all-day seminar and ten technical paper sessions. The all-day seminar, “Video By 1920/24P-A New Standard,” kicked off conference activities on Friday, November 19. The seminar, chaired by *Gavin Shutz*, Four Media Co., included nine paper presentations.”

50 Years Ago in the Journal

The January 1975 *Journal* published in: “The New York Experience: A Trans-Lux/Bing Crosby Presentation” by IATSE: “From the days of silent films to disc, then optical sound, to Cinema-Scope, stereo, 3-D, and Cinerama, the technology employed in screen entertainment has always reached out

In this column we provide interesting historical briefs from the Journal articles of days past. The purpose of this column is primarily entertainment, but we hope it will also stimulate your thinking and reflection on the Society’s history, how far we have come in the industry, and (sometimes) how some things never change.



to achieve total involvement of the audience. Now, with “The New York Experience,” stylized imagery on multiple screens combines with imaginative special effects, intricate lighting and quadraphonic sound to almost completely envelop and entertain the observer. Its contact with the audience is multisensory, even to a degree of tactility. The production itself and the innovative, new Trans-Lux Experience Theater in Rockefeller Center’s McGraw-Hill Building were designed specifically for each other...While the show takes place in a theater, the auditorium more aptly may be described as an “environment... In the futuristic-looking projection booth is equipment stacked high and wide-33 motion picture and slide projectors, plus 7 other special projection devices, all interacting with each other.”

75 Years Ago in the Journal

The January 1950 *Journal* published in: “Report of the President” by Earl I. Sponable: “I am glad to be able to report to you that the year 1949 has been filled with healthy activity on the part of the Society and has resulted in an even greater service to the motion picture industry than at any time in the past. The total membership at this time is over 3000. This number of new members has more than made up for an unusually high loss of previous members, due probably to the aftermath of the war and to changing business conditions. Among our membership are representatives from 48 foreign countries, including Canada and Mexico, and from each of our 48 states. I am proud of the work done by our 38 standing committees in which 471 members are giving their time to help improve the industry through standardization, and in other important ways...The general office is now well-established at 342 Madison Avenue in New York City...One highlight of the year was the joint meeting of the New York and Chicago Sections through the use of inter-city television, dealing with “A Study of Television Lighting.” The combined attendance at this one meeting exceeded 1000.”

WHILE THE SHOW TAKES PLACE IN A THEATER, THE AUDITORIUM MORE APTLY MAY BE DESCRIBED AS AN “ENVIRONMENT.”

100 Years Ago in the Journal

The May 1925 *Transactions* published in: “Radio Movies” by C. Francis Jenkins: “The year 1824 saw the beginnings of a photographic process for pictorially recording persons and places; to be visually exhibited later, and at a distance. But the persons and other animates in the picture were without movement, so later, when differentiation required it, we called these pictures “stills.”... In 1892 my work had so far progressed that I was able to project onto a silk handkerchief pictures with action depicted therein. I used an oil lantern, for illumination... The picture ribbon was made of kodak roll film, bought of E. J. Pullman, a pioneer Eastman photo supply dealer, and slit into narrow strips, and spliced into a single length, in the dark room. Photographer I. D. Boyce developed most of both the camera negatives and the prints therefrom. The first “motion picture artist” who performed before my camera was Arthur J. McElhone, athlete and stenographer. In 1894, with the assistance of electrician D. N. Washburn, an arc lamp was fitted to the machine and life-size pictures were projected before many friends, one report of which appears in the *Photographic Times*, July 6, 1894, copies of which can be found in most libraries. The next year I built a motion picture theatre in Atlanta, Ga., financed by Thomas Armat. The admission charged was twenty-five cents, the first sale of tickets, for a theatre built exclusively for pictures. To all my various machines I gave the fanciful name ‘Phantoscope.’”

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