



ALD Awards for Excellence

2020 Launch Pack

Michael Northen Award for Lighting Design



The ALD Awards for Excellence – 2020!

This year, 3 awards are being presented as part of the “ALD Awards for Excellence” scheme.

These awards are presented to current students studying in the UK (not just those on vocational theatre courses), Affiliate members of the Association, and recent graduates (who graduated no earlier than 2018) even if they are not currently a member, who have demonstrated strong, imaginative and creative lighting and/or video designs. The three awards are as follows:

The Michael Northen Award for Lighting Design

This award is kindly sponsored by the Mousetrap Foundation and Vectorworks UK.

Michael Northen was the first credited Lighting Designer in the UK and his work on “The Mousetrap” can still be seen in the West End today.

The winner of this award will receive a £250 cash prize, a 1-year Vectorworks license alongside pairing with industry contacts to help answer your questions around the initial stages of your career.

The winner will also receive a copy of Michael's book – “Northen Lights”.

The Fred Foster Award for Production Electrics

This Award is dedicated to the late ETC CEO, Fred Foster.

The winner of this award will receive a £250 cash prize, a subscription to Moving Light Assistant, 1-year's subscription to the Association's PLI insurance and pairing with industry contacts to help answer your questions around the initial stages of your career.

The Blue-I Theatre Technology Award for Excellence in Video

This award is kindly sponsored by Blue-I Media.

The winner of this award will receive a £500 prize, a £1,250 hire credit towards their first commercial venture, and pairing with industry contacts to help answer your questions around the initial stages of your career.*

Winners will be announced later in the year and there will be a ceremony to present the prizes at the annual “Lighting Lunch” – a Christmas dinner for lighting and video professionals working within the live entertainment sector.

This is a fantastic opportunity to network with designers, chief and production electricians, engineers, programmers and of course suppliers such as Hawthorn, White Light, Blue-I Theatre Technology, AC-Entertainment, SLX Media and PRG XL Video.

By taking part in these awards, you are bringing both you and your work to the attention of experienced lighting and video practitioners, as well as other industry professionals who are all on the judging panel.

The work of the winners will be showcased through a series of press releases within industry media outlets including the ALD's bi-monthly journal; “FOCUS”.

Entries will open on Tuesday 26th May and all submissions MUST be received before the closing date – Friday 31st July at Midnight!

*subject to inventory availability-equipment and required connectivity. This does not include any “direct out-of-pocket costs” (e.g. Transportation, labour, consumables, insurance cover, etc.)



So, what are we looking for? (The Michael Northen Award for Lighting Design)

- **Process:** We're looking to see YOUR process from initial conception of ideas and how that did or didn't materialise in the final product. How you collaborated with your director / designer / rest of the team. How you communicated your ideas to them. Did you encounter any problems along the way? If so, how did you discuss them / solve them / get rid of them.
- **Research:** We understand not everybody researches their shows in the same way – and that's okay! Whether you do purely visual research or you like to visit a location, etc; we want to know about it!
- **Originality:** Whilst we appreciate that it's hard to find ideas that haven't been done before (knowingly or otherwise!), we are looking to see that what you use is appropriate to the piece and demonstrates your particular style and approach to work – not somebody else's from years gone by!
- **Overall Visual:** Nobody can argue that the best way to judge a lighting design is by the overall look! We're looking for high quality, appropriate choices of colour, angle, intensity, lantern choice, contrast and texture!

What should you include?

1) High Quality Portfolio

This should be the kind of document you'd be willing to take to a meeting with a director or producer to secure work. It should be based around two to four productions that were realised within the last 3 calendar years. You should include up to six images per production – no more! It goes without saying that this portfolio should demonstrate your imaginative and creative approach to lighting design. Note that all your photos should be in full colour and from an appropriate angle that the audience would have seen.

Ideally, you would have somebody else taking production shots for you – however, we understand this isn't always possible. Just make sure that the photos you submit accurately represent your work!

Some points of advice:

- o Make sure your photos aren't all close-ups
- o Be sure to make your portfolio easy to read
- o Clear and concise is the best way!
- o Remember to afford everyone the proper credits where appropriate
- o Think of this in the way you would a website – show us the work that you think best defines your style and process!



2) Research

Alongside images of the finished work, you should include your visual inspiration: e.g. images, mood boards, excerpts from poems & novels, story boards, art and/or any web links you found useful. These are the kind of things you used to explain your design concept to the director and other collaborators.

3) Cue Synopsis

We're looking for a clear, well laid out cue sheet that depicts your thoughts and ideas. Something you would use to plot your show from. You might also include extracts showing the development of your cue structure. Again, we want quality over quantity. We're particularly interested in the progression and development from your initial pre-plot cue sheet to the finished sheet at the end of the production period.

4) Plans & Paperwork

You should include a rig plan for each production – clearly labelled with a legend. It is important that these plans, where appropriate, are drawn to scale and conform to standard industry drafting practices. It is acceptable to submit these as individual PDF documents with your main portfolio document providing they are clearly labelled with the show and are referenced where appropriate. Consider providing additional schematics (sections, front elevations, etc) or paperwork you produced during your process (followspot cue sheets, etc). All of which must be referred to where appropriate.

5) Process Explanation

You will also need to include a page of writing or audio commentary, of no more than 1000 words or no longer than 2 minutes, outlining your approach to design decisions. This should be a summary of the main challenges from each production, however, you should aim to let your pictures do most of the work – lighting design is, of course, a visual art form. Perhaps consider splitting up your word count in order to surround your production images / research with the appropriate text telling us what we're looking at and why it's relevant.

6) Video Footage (Optional)

Video footage of the productions submitted, specific moments within the production, or inspirational footage may also be submitted, to refer to and discuss in order to support your entry. Perhaps you have a very tricky-to-cue musical number which would be well reflected in a short video – or maybe you have a brief moment filmed that the photographer missed.

7) CV (Essential)

Please include an up-to-date copy of your CV. Be sure that you include the following items as part of the document:

- Your full name
- Your education establishment (current or past)
- The date you graduated (if applicable)
- Your contact details (including personal email address and phone number to a number with a voicemail service)
- Appropriate credits (producers/venues/directors/designers)



THINGS TO NOTE:

- *It's about ease of reading. Please remember that we receive a high level of submissions every year and you want your judges to enjoy looking at your work – not spend hours clicking on lots of different documents. Perhaps consider your portfolio and research as one document, plans as another, etc.*
- *Anyone found to be flouting the word counts or other parameters of the entry, will be penalised.*

Housekeeping...

We suggest submitting your portfolio as a single PDF document. This single document may include the required supporting documents within the portfolio or may reference the required additional documents which have been submitted as separate files.

Only PDF, JPEG, MPEG Files will be considered for supporting documents.

Alternatively, you may wish to submit your entry in a different format, such as a video portfolio with a voice over discussing your work.

Your entry can be compressed into any recognised file format, but must be stored online utilising your own storage (via Dropbox, WeTransfer, etc), and must be made accessible via an email link which will not expire.

Please save all your documents with the following formats:

Documents: Your Name – Document Title – ALD Award 2020
(e.g John Smith – LX Plan – The Cherry Orchard – ALD Awards 2020).

Email Subject: Your Name – ALD Awards Submission 2020 – Chosen Award (e.g. John Smith – ALD Awards Submission 2020 – Production Electrician).

Within your email, please include your name and contact details as well as the above link to your items. This should be sent to: awards@ald.org.uk

Confirmation of your submission will be made when all the documents have been accessed and downloaded successfully prior to the deadline.

Finally, remember to credit the appropriate members of the team on the shows within your documents (Production Photographer, Director, Designers, Choreographers, Sound Designers, Etc).

Final Advice:

If you have any further questions or require any help and/or advice creating your digital portfolio, please don't hesitate to get in contact via the awards@ald.org.uk email address.

There is also both the "Student ALD" and "Association of Lighting Designers" Facebook pages which are filled with both young and long-established professionals who will all be able to help with ideas and/or suggestions for your entry.

It is imperative that all submissions strictly conform to the regulations set out above. The judging panel aim to provide feedback on all submissions where possible with a view for unsuccessful applicants to develop your portfolios for future professional use, as well as re-submitting the following year.

ALD#

Please note that by submitting to the competition, you accept that all relevant personal and contact information may be made accessible to the organisers, Association of Lighting Designers executive and where applicable, the judging panel. This extends to all future press releases and media produced in response to the ALD Awards for Excellence.

Good Luck!