

The Theatre Lighting Archive

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South Africa is delighted to announce the launch of a brand new website, The Theatre Lighting Archive, which celebrates the pioneers of theatre lighting design in South Africa. The website, www.theatrearchive.co.za, went live on the 29th February 2012.

"I figured February 29th doesn't happen every year and neither does a project like this," said the man behind the enormous task, lighting designer Denis Hutchinson. "Unlike most archives with their reams of paper and dust, the idea here is much more personal with the primary focus being video interviews with the amazing people who laid the foundations of lighting design in South Africa."



Denis Hutchinson The idea came to Hutchinson after watching a panel

discussion moderated by Ken Billington which was filmed in New York. "Names that I'd seen in print – Abe Feder, Peggy Clark, Tharon Musser – suddenly became people, and that was really exciting. It also got me thinking about how little we do to preserve our history, and I decided that I should at least try to do something in my corner of the world."

To open the site, there are interviews with brothers Joe and Dave Freedman, both of whom represent the last of the traditional master electricians who lit shows with the director in the English tradition. Other interviews are in process, and Hutchinson hopes to release one every three months, "until we run out..." Qualification for inclusion in the archive is being over 60 years old and having earned a living in the field in South Africa for at least 20 years.