

## Carriage Works, Leeds

**Specialist in Flame Retardant Fabrics. Manufacturer and Installer of all types of Theatrical Drapes and Stage Equipment**

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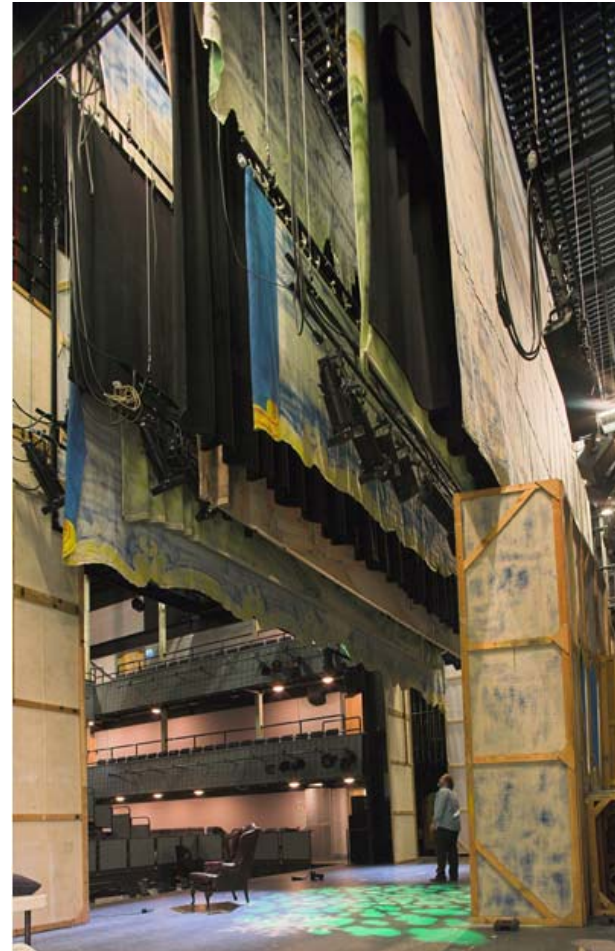
J&C Joel have supplied and installed a 27 way manual purchase counterweight system for the main stage at the new Leeds Carriage Works Theatre.

Incorporating the historic structure of an early Victorian carriage works and old Electric Press Building, the new venue is part of a £12 million commercial development of bars, cafés and restaurants grouped around a historic glass-roofed and heated courtyard.

portfolio



The brand new theatre is part of an ongoing cultural strategy undertaken by the local authority in consultation with the community. It's designed to widen the City's range of lively, accessible cultural and entertainment options.

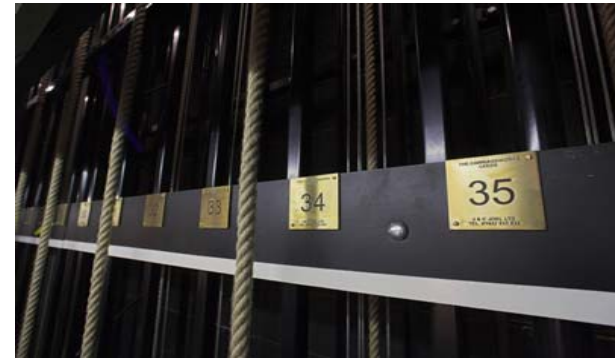
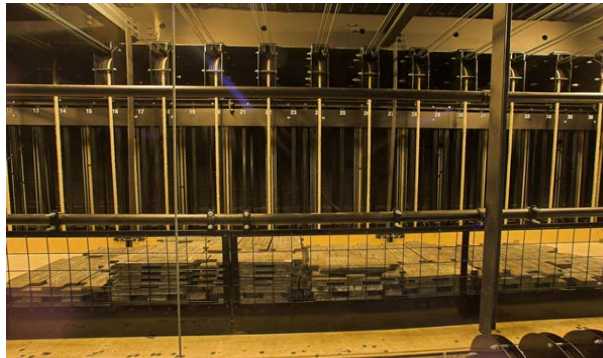


portfolio

The project was managed for J&C Joel by Tony Griffiths, who commented, “J&C Joel was proud to play an active role in such a prestigious city centre project.”

The theatre required a fully flexible rigging and performance solution. To accommodate this J&C Joel manufactured and installed a full stage depth counterweight wall frame to accommodate up to 37 counterweight sets. Initially 21 five line manual single purchased counterweight sets were installed, each with the added benefit of operation from the fly or stage levels. To further increase the stage flying flexibility the system also features two side masking counterweights (one each side). In addition, because of the theatres height restrictions the front 5 counterweights are double purchased to allow the suspension bars to pass through a grid opening – effectively allowing the convenience of the pros borders and house curtains to be fully flown out.

This unique flexible approach allows for the theatre to have a quick and practical conversion from a traditional proscenium set up with coloured front header and proscenium curtains, to a more contemporary ‘black box’ set up if required.



Suspended from the ball raced multi pulley and steel core suspension cables, each of the 11m long ladder frame suspension bars have telescopic ends to maximise the stage width between both galleries as each performance dictates.

To compliment the counterweight system, J&C Joel also supplied and installed twin hardwood cleat rails running the full stage depth, and belaying pins for the theatre’s spot line use.

In addition to these, when completing the contract, J&C Joel also supplied and installed side lighting ladders, portable lighting racks, vertical access ladder, grid access and lifting winch, full guards and guard rails to the counterweight system, fly and loading floors, cross over gallery and grid. Along with a full set of stage curtain blacks for performer and equipment masking, with coloured tabs for the proscenium and header and white gauze for the rear wall. Finally to compliment the rehearsal space J&C Joel installed a tubular steel lighting grid suspended from the main steels.

At the completion of the contract Technical Manager Peter Waddicor comments, “We were pleased with the performance of J&C Joel they completed the job extremely quickly and with absolutely no fuss. The new system (which replaced the hemp set era of the old Civic Theatre) is totally flexible and offers us all the options needed for a modern performance space and a busy producing and receiving house.”

J&C Joel were sub-contracted to principal building contractors Interior Exterior Ltd whose end client is Leeds City Council.

The main challenge, recalls Tony Griffiths, “Was the short period from receipt of order to completion on site. Within 11 weeks detailed drawings were submitted and approved, manufacturing completed and installation achieved all within programme and in house. Providing evidence of J&C Joel ability to produce high quality work as and when the client requires it.”

### Content

Stickland, L. (2006) J & C Joel Ltd Publications, ‘Loosplat’, +44 (0)1865 202 679 / +44 (0)7831 329 888, [louise@loosplat.com](mailto:louise@loosplat.com) [Accessed 23|01|2006]

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