



## Light shows at the Youth Centre

Transcription of excerpts from interviews with Stuart Davis and Richard Jones

**Stuart:**

I went to what was then Malvern School of Art, but at the time the Youth Centre, which was next door, now Malvern Cube, we used to go there in lunch times. And we got friendly with all the people that were the youth, what do they call them, the youth--, the person that was in charge of the youth centre anyway. And they started putting on bands in the evenings, and we started this light show. A light show then was what they used to call a psychedelic light show, it was projections basically. We got a load of bed sheets, which we got sewn together by someone, we used to hang that up at the back of the stage. We would set up on tables at the back of the hall, and we'd have what were called Aldis Projectors, and they were a slide projector with a bowl. And we used to muck around, we'd upgrade them and put Meccano motors on the lenses with flicker wheels. And then in between the lens and the lamp house you would have various effects you could project, whether they were liquid or oils, so you get all these moving effects on the band and on the back.

And when I think back it's quite amazing 'cause you had the likes of Jethro Tull, Family, Chicken Shack, who was a very small band with a singer called Christine Perfect, who actually became Christine McVie of Fleetwood Mac, you know, one of the biggest bands in the world really. But I remember her arriving in this little beat up old transit van, and she was sat there with her feet in a cardboard box because it was the only way she could keep her feet warm, it was the middle of winter [laughs], this draughty old van. But, yeah that was my first introduction of seeing live bands I suppose.

**Richard:** I don't think we did too many there before we sort of moved on and got a regular slot at Malvern Winter Gardens. I do remember, I think it was August Bank Holiday Monday when Bonzo Dog Doo Dah Band were due to play, and we'd set up our light show, and it was on, really it was on tables raised above the ground, which I guess, you know, was pretty unsafe. I think on one occasion I did actually fall off one of those tables. But anyway, with the Bonzo Dog Band they didn't want a light show, so we were able to sit and have a bird's eye view, above everybody else, of the Bonzo Dog performance, so that was a bit of a bonus.

**Stuart:** We liked to say we were possibly the, one of the first outside London that were doing this. It was a big thing in London to do these, erm, I suppose it started with bands like Pink Floyd, and all that sort of thing were doing it. And we started it in Malvern. And, I don't know, it was a creative thing I suppose, with all these different effects. I remember one of the most brilliant ones we had was, we used to make everything ourselves, and you had like a Perspex slide, which was like two bits of Perspex with a gap in the middle, and you'd put in the bottom what used to be called Andrew's Liver Salts, which was like a thing for stomach upsets and that. And it was an effervescent, and you added water to it, and of course it, you got bubbles rising up. You put that in a projector, of course, the projector reverses it, so you've got bubbles coming down on the back of the band. It was a fantastic effect. And you would colour it, you could do all sorts of things on top of it. And that was the sort of thing we did, plus, as I say, moving, you could mix oils and water, and they wouldn't mix, but they would move around if you squeezed them between two bits of glass to get that sort of effect. And that was basically how we started, we'd do it on all these bands. Eventually we moved up to the Winter Gardens, as it was then.

*Transcripts of full interviews with Stuart Davis and Richard Jones are available from  
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