



PHANTOM AUTOMATION THEN AND NOW

The Phantom of the Opera opened at His Majesty's Theatre in October 1986 and this is the automation console that was used then.

Amazingly this console was still fully operational when the show was forced to close in 2020.

The console was kept alive by a dedicated team on the show including Vero (Veronica Soto Gonzalez-Fanjul) and supported by Nigel Robb from System Control.

A few adaptations were made over the years including the updated Chandelier control when the control for this element was upgraded from electric winch to hydraulic rams in the 90's and the inclusion of E-stops which indicated to the operator if one had been depressed and limit switches on the Candelabra traps that confirmed to the operator that these were open.

The system relied on encoders on the winches of the Travelator to provide a numerical position which the operator used to manually manipulate the control levers to drive it to certain positions. The Angel, House Tabs and Reverse Tabs all had a variable speed control. The console operated the Footlights, 3 sets of Candelabra (including 2 that tracked off) along with 7 sets of Candles.

By comparison, Phantom London now use an STS system including Composer 6J console which has 6 playbacks. There are now 68 axis and 95 auto cues in the show. At one point in the show there are 39 pieces moving at once. There are 6 safe edges in use for the Travellator alone and there are 10 traps in the show deck.

