

Take to the streets

Different times call for different measures, and there's been no time quite like this one, that's for sure. I've never had so many people taking an interest in my life and doings; every one of them concerned for my welfare and ensuring me that I can benefit greatly by linking up with them, either by them guaranteeing more visibility of my website across the e-universe or – bizarrely – by me promoting their particular widget on my site. And all to our mutual advantage and profit, of course.

Just today, I've been informed that my life will be infinitely improved if I open my website to advertise an underfloor heating system – a product that's wholly unrelated to lighting except for those occasions when I specify an in-floor fitting – and then it's a pain in the arse. I don't think I'll be taking up their kind offer, though I wish them well. Really.

But then I got to thinking; as these times they surely are a-changin', maybe we should be looking at how we promote our wares to the wild and woolly world out there. And then two independent Motes of Think came

LET'S HAVE LIGHTING DESIGNERS TAKE TO THE STREETS WITH MARKET BARROWS AND THEIR VERY OWN STREET SONGS"

crashing together in my mind – like my very own Hadron Collidoscope. Stars and flashing lights, everything.

Think number one was a recent memory of our dear editor's home video show at the Lighting Design Awards of hilarious early advertisements from the lamp industry. How good it was in those days to be alive.

Think number two needs a bit more explanation. My band has been looking at song material beyond the usual trad folk riff – again, anything to get a gig that might throw a few quid in our direction – and we turned up stuff written by a geezer by the name of Thomas Ravenscroft. He was kicking around in the first years of the 17th century and, among other stuff, he made collections of street cries and 'vendor songs'. (He was also the first to publish the tune of *Three Blind Mice* – just thought you'd like to know that.)

Anyway, stuff like: Give care to the clocke, beware your locke, your fire and your light, and God give you good night, one a clocke! Probably one of the earliest songs to mention our burden of choice.

And it's so obvious! What if we put together the idea of early 17th century street cries with our current scrabblings to bring in new business? Let's have lighting designers take to the streets with market barrows and their very own street songs.

Picture the scene: along the tree-lined avenues of Chelsea and Bath, of Harrogate and Edinburgh, the cry goes up: Give care to your light, your high-contrast scenesets; and banish the night, with LED-powered gussets.

Give it a bit of time, you'll see.

John Bullock

Read John's regular blog at
www.lighting.co.uk

