ETC Element Guide

Contents

Introduction

This guide is not intended to replace an introduction to the Element lighting console, but to complement skills you have been demonstrated.

This guide has been written with the TFTS use of the console in mind and does not cover all functions that it can perform. Further information regarding the console may be sought from the theatre technical team, or from the ETC website.

The ETC Element is a simple desk once you understand the basics. It is primarily made for the control of generic lighting fixtures (lanterns that plug into a dimmer) but does have functionality to control lighting with multiple parameters.

Powering up the Desk

To power up the desk press the small power button in the top right corner of the desk, this will initiate the power up sequence. The desk will boot up and load the last show.

Starting a New Show File

When starting a new project starting a new show file will give you a clean slate to work with. To start a new show File, press the browser/displays button at the top of the desk, Navigate to file, and then select New. When prompted, if you want a 1-1 patch, simply press enter.

Channels Explained

Channels are the way in which we refer to the number assigned to each fixture on the desk. Each of our spaces has a different system.

Castle Theatre

The Castle's lighting rig has 72 sockets, split across three phases. Red: behind the proscenium arch, Yellow: in the centre of the space, and Blue: closest to the control room. Within each of these sections there are 24 sockets with a number on. Each of these correspond with a plug in the control room. This plug then has to be plugged into a dimmer, and this is where the fixture gets its channel number from.

E.g. We plug a lantern into socket 8 in the centre of the room, this is in the yellow phase. We then go to the yellow phase dimmers in the centre of the control room and find socket 8. Plugging this into the dimmer marked 13, makes this channel 13, so when we go to the desk if we tell it to turn channel 13 on, power is sent to socket 8 in the yellow phase.

Foundry Studio

The Foundry Studio is more simple than the Castle Theatre. By each socket in the room there is a number, this number corresponds to the dimmer. So if we plug a fixture into channel 12 in the room, it is channel 12 on the desk.

Emily Davies

In the Emily Davies studio there is a different system again. on the walls on the trampoline grid are 10 Lectriflex sockets. Lectriflex is a type of multicore cable that allows six lanterns to be plugged in without the need for 6 cables. The lectroflex attaches to the wall with two clips, and then a tail with 6 sockets is attached to the end.
On each socket on the wall, there is an indicator that tells you which channels of the dimmers the socket is connected to. Eg 1-6, 7-12, 13-18 etc. On each of the sockets on the tails there is a number between 1 and 6 which tells you which channel of those six it is.

E.g. We plug the Lectriflex into the socket marked 31-36, and then plug the lantern into the tail marked 4. This would be channel 34.
On the floor in the Emily Davies are 12 sockets marked 1-12, these plug directly into the dimmers, however are addressed from 61-72.
1=61, 2=62, 3=63... 12-72.
The information on this page may sound complicated, but once you have plugged a couple of things in, it will start to make more sense.

Turning Channels on and off

There are three different ways of turning channels on and off on the element.

Putting the Faders into Channel Mode
The faders to the left of the desk can be set up to act as submasters (explained later) or to have direct control over the channels individually.

To put the faders into channel mode, turn the small dial just to the right of the faders to 1-40, this will give you control over channels 1 to 40 by pushing the faders up and bringing them down.
You can see you're in this mode if the LED's below the faders are orange.

Using the Wheel
Type into the desk the number you wish to bring up, and then slowly push the wheel up to the desired level.

Using the Command Line

The Element is made to be flexible, but relies on a command line system to tell the desk what you want to do. To turn a channel on or off using the command line, type the following;

Channel Number [@] *Intensity* [Enter]

E.g. [1] [@] [5] [0] [Enter] puts channel 1 at 50 %

[2] [@] [@] puts channel 2 at 100%

[1] [thru] [5] [0] [@] [6] [6] [enter] puts channel 1 through 50 at 66 %

[1] [+] [3] [+] [2] [7] [@] [0] [enter] puts channels 1, 3 and 27 @ 0 %

[] - Physical Button
{} - Soft Key
No Brackets—Numerical Entry

Recording Submasters

A submaster is the way we refer to a fader that we can program to bring up a group of predetermined channels to desired intensities. This could be a single channel at full, or a group of channels all at different intensities. We call this a lighting state.
To record a submaster;
1. Make your desired lighting state using on of the methods on the previous page.
2. Type the following command line:
[Record] [Sub] *Number* [Enter]

E.g. [Record] [Sub] [1] [Enter] records the current state onto submaster 1.

3. Turn off the channels that are currently on
4. Press [Clear]
5. Push up the submaster that you have just recorded and your lighting state should come on.

Recording Cues

Cues are the sequence of lighting states used during the show in order. You can set times to each cue during the plot/tech and during the show press go and replicate the same show multiple times.
Recording a cue is very similar to recording a submaster, except you replace [Sub] with [Cue].
E.g. [Record] [Cue] [1] [Please/Enter] records the current lighting state as cue 1.
[Record] [Cue] [3] [.] [5] [Please/Enter] records the current lighting state as cue 3.5 between cues 3 and 4.

Setting times to cues

When you record a cue it defaults to a 5 second fade between lighting states. So if you had channel 1 at 100% in cue 1 and channel 2 at 0%, and in cue 2 had channel 1 at 0% and channel 2 at 100%, when you press the go button channel 1 will take 5 seconds to turn off, and channel 2 will take 5 seconds to turn on.
We can change these times in multiple ways

While recording the cue:
Adding the time to the end of the command line will alter the default time
E.g. [Record] [Cue] [1] [Time] [1] [0] [Please/Enter] will change the times on the cue to 10 seconds

After recording the cue:
After recording the cue, type the following
[Cue] *Cue number* [time] *number of seconds* [Enter]
E.g. [Cue] [1] [Time] [1] [5] [Please/Enter] sets the time of cue 1 to 15 seconds.

Setting up and down times

When we press [go] we can set various different parameters that the desk will follow. One of these is having a different up-time and down-time.

The up-time is the amount of time any channels getting brighter take to get brighter, and the down time is how long any channels getting take to get dimmer.

As we have already covered, setting a single time against a cue affects both the up and down times.

To change this we need to give different values, pressing the time button twice gives us the ability to do this.
E.g.

[Cue] *number* [time] [time] *number* [enter]
When you press time twice, down time should appear in the command line at the bottom of the screen. The command line above will only alter the down time, and leave the up time at the previously set duration.

E.g. Cue 2 has an up time of 5 seconds
We type into the desk [cue] [2] [time] [time] [1] [0] [enter]
Cue two will still have an up time of 5 seconds, but the down time will now be 10 seconds.
We can also alter both durations at the same time by doing the following command, either at the time of recording a cue, or after.
Eg [cue] [1] [2] [time] [1] [0] [time] [time] [7] [enter]
This would set cue 12 to an up time of 10 and a down time of 7.

Follow-on cues

Follow-on cues automatically trigger after a predetermined amount of time after the previous cue.
We can set a cue to be a follow on by typing this command line.
[cue] *cue number* [shift][delay] *time* [enter]

E.g. [cue] [2] [shift][delay][5][enter]
this will trigger cue 2 5 seconds after you trigger cue 1.

Updating Cues

Updating a cue is changing what you have previously recorded. It can be done it two ways, but the initial steps are still the same. Go into the cue you wish to change, and make any required changes.
Then type one of the following;
[Update] [Cue] Cue number [Enter]
Or
[Record] [Cue] *Cue number* [Enter] [Enter]
You will have to confirm that you wish to make the changes if recording over a cue by pressing [Enter] twice.

Deleting Cues and Submasters

As previously mentioned, if you tell the Element what you want it to do and be polite it will generally do what you want it to do.

To delete a cue:
[Delete] [Cue] *Cue number* [Enter] [Enter] (the second enter is to confirm)
To delete a submaster
[Delete] [Sub] *Sub number* [Enter] [Enter]
To delete a number of subs or cues:
[Delete] [Sub] **or** [Cue] *Number* [Thru] *number* [Enter] [Enter]
E.g.
[Delete] [Sub] [1] [thru] [5] [Enter] [Enter]
Deletes subs 1 through 5.

Loading and saving show files

Although the desk will remember what was previously programmed if the desk is switched on and off properly, it is good practice to save your show often. By saving often, if the desk crashes or won't start up, you have a copy of the show that can be transferred to another desk.

To save the show;
Press the [Browser]/[Displays] button at the top of the screen.
Navigate to File > Save As > Show File Archive
Clicking show file archive will open a new section of the screen to allow you to input a show name, the Element will default to calling the show "Show File" _
Pressing the [Label] Button will clear this and allow you to enter your own name.
Be sure to label it with 'V1' _V2' etc so you know which version of the show it is.

Once you have saved the show once, you can select File > Save to save the revision if you don't wish to update the version number.
Holding down [Shift] then pressing [Update] will also save the show file.
Inserting a USB stick into the desk will give the option to save to an external device.

Loading a show file:
Press the [Browser]/[Display] button at the top of the screen.
Navigate to File > Open > Show file archive
Select the show you wish to open.
The show should now load.

Operating Cues

Once you have programmed your cues, pressing the [Go] Button will go through them sequentially.
To pause a cue once it is running press the [Stop/Back] Button.
To go back to the previous cue press the [Stop/Back] Button.
To jump to a cue out of sequence, or to skip through a cue that has a long duration follow this command line:
[Go to Cue] *cue number* [Enter]

General Hints

Auto playback—Auto playback is a feature on the desk that plays a cue once you hit record, this means that once you have recorded a cue you can no longer alter the lighting state with the submasters.

To turn off auto playback press the [setup] button, navigate to desk settings, and click on Auto-playback. This should now read disabled. Then press [live] to return to the main screen

Selecting all active channels– At the top of the desk is a row of soft keys, these are multifunction keys whose action changes based on the situation. You can see what they are going to do at the bottom of the screen.
Pressing the softkey marked {Select Active} will select all channels that are active and enable you to use the wheel to being them up and down, or use the command line to turn them off.