

i-D

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AND INTERVIEW WITH CHRIS ALLEN

projector selector

Rewind four years. Apart from the occasional 'light show' (usually nothing more than a load of disco lights flashing on and off) and the odd over-excited DJ, clubland rarely offered much in the way of visual stimuli. Ironically, the equipment that was soon to transform clubs into futuristic environments bathed in technicolour was the stuff you'd pick up at car boot sales - slide projectors, old super-8 films and 16mm loops. And one of the first collectives pioneering this movement was The Light Surgeons. Today, having provided visuals for everything from the Propellerheads live show to Mo'Wax club nights, FilmFour parties to Tokyo fashion shows, the Surgeons - consisting of key members

Chris Allen and Andy Flywheel - are moving onto different things. "We want to do more of our own events," explains Chris. "We want to integrate the sound and image better - we want things to have a start and finish." Adds Andy: "We're starting a project called ELO, The Electric Loop Orchestra, and we're going to generate all the sound bites and effects from 16mm film. It's important we get seen while performing so people can understand what goes on." Despite using their layering and visual sampling techniques to create videos and artwork for bands like Cornershop,, it's only in the wake of recent gallery exhibitions (like *Stealing Beauty* at the ICA) that the collective's design skills are

finally being recognised. The culmination of this will be their participation later this year in *Exhibit B*, part of the B programme which Budweiser has created to celebrate/paralell UK and US urban culture, including film (B Reel) and music (B Side). "We find middle America interesting because it's more extreme; things like road signs, gas stations, motels and camper vans," says Chris of the project. "Also, it's interesting working with other designers who are actually manufacturing and making products because our stuff is almost the opposite - it's so ephemeral. It's a lightshow - it exists within its element but at the end of the day you can't take it home." DANIEL PEMBERTON

