



Tony Hansen

Tony Hansen is the head lighting designer and systems sales consultant at Techni-Lux Lighting in Orlando, Florida. As a 25-year veteran of the lighting industry, he has worked at The Children's Theatre Company in Minneapolis, Universal Studios and Disney World in Orlando, and Vari-Lite Production Services. He specializes in lighting design for houses of worship and themed attractions.

Lighting&Sound America: What is unique about working for a company that offers both products and design services?

Tony Hansen: It's really nice for us because we're able to provide an outreach. When people come to us, we don't always get people who are well-versed in the latest technology for their use. If you go into a hardware store or retail, there's someone who can help you. In lighting design, that's not always the case. You need more than your average salesman. So it's nice that we're able to be that middle ground and help people make that connection.

LSA: You specialize in lighting for houses of worship. What is unique about these projects?

TH: The client is what's unique. They may or may not have experience in lighting, and this is a place they hold very special. You have to be very careful about it because they go there every Sunday, Wednesday, or whenever they worship.

LSA: You recently worked with Techni-Lux on the reeducation of houses of worship on the proper use and integration of lighting from an emotional and spiritual standpoint. Can you tell us about that?

TH: It goes a lot back to the unique ability of being able to offer both. The houses of worship have seen what they want, but they don't have a concept of what it's going to take to accomplish that. When they see something on TV, they're not as aware of the infrastructure. So it's not only education on the lighting itself but on the entire facility. A good lighting designer makes it look easy, but a lot of times it's not. So much of what we do goes back to education. People want to make so many assumptions that are simply not well-based.

LSA: What assumptions do people make?

TH: The huge one today is that LED is the be-all, end-all of

lighting. A lot of the calls I get are about LEDs; everyone is LED-crazy. Sometimes it's unfounded, and sometimes it's not. People want to put LEDs anywhere they see an existing light, and they believe an LED can replace any traditional light source. Every single fixture has developed over time, and every light has its unique purpose. Changing its source is not going to necessarily reinvent the light.

LSA: Education seems to play a large role in your career. What qualities make you a good educator?

TH: My wife says I talk a lot. It's strange because in high school, and as a youngster, I was a very shy person. Somewhere down the line, I developed the gift of gab. I have stored a whole lot of useful information, and sometimes people ask me about it. Somewhere I've learned how to share that information.

LSA: What has been your favorite themed attraction you've worked on?

TH: The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man [at Universal Orlando's Islands of Adventure] as the integration manager on the design team. Spider-Man in its day was, and still is, one of the most technologically skilled attractions ever invented. The team did some really amazing and cutting-edge things. It's a themed attraction that's going to be around for ten or 15 years and will have my name on it. In theatre, we're lucky if we run for 50 shows. Today, if I mention Spider-Man at Islands of Adventure, chances are someone will recognize it. It's one of the grounding rods of theme park attractions.

LSA: What projects do you have coming up?

TH: We're always working with theme parks in Orlando, and we're currently lighting a large condominium complex in Orlando. We also have an attraction that will open this fall at a theme park in the Northeast. 📶