

PROJECTION, LIGHTS & STAGING NEWS

Disney Castle Gets New Coat of Color



Rigorous testing proved that vivid, energy-efficient lighting wasn't just a fairy tale.

When *Walt Disney World's* Facility Asset Management (FAM) group came to Walt Disney World Entertainment's in-house lighting designer Charley Pogue with a query about replacing the lighting on Disney's iconic Cinderella Castle, he had little idea what might lie ahead. FAM wanted to see what it might take to replace the 700-watt arc source fixtures that have been lighting the Castle for 10 years. The fixtures had served their purpose and parts for the discontinued luminaires had become *continued on page 6*

Osram and Traxon/e:cue Form Joint Venture

NEW YORK — In a bid for a bigger piece of the growing global market for LED systems and solutions, Osram has forged a joint venture with Hong Kong-based Traxon Technologies Ltd.

Called Traxon Technologies — An Osram Company, the joint venture pools the resources of Osram with both former Traxon Technologies companies, Traxon and e:cue Lighting Controls.

The deal gives Osram a majority stake in the 135-employee company, but with Traxon retaining its branded identity under the Osram umbrella. The joint venture will continue operating primarily in Asia, Europe and North America.

Philips Adds Selecon to its Global Portfolio

AMSTERDAM — Royal Philips acquired New Zealand-based Selecon, a designer, manufacturer and distributor of professional theatrical and architectural lighting fixtures. Under the terms of the agreement, Philips will acquire the business assets of Selecon New Zealand Limited, Selecon UK Limited, Selecon North America LLC and Aureol Lighting Limited. No financial details on the transaction were disclosed.

"Selecon's highly acclaimed luminaires for the theatrical and architectural markets will further strengthen the breadth of solutions Philips can offer to important professional customers such as performing arts centers, churches, convention centers and hotels," said Rudy Provoost, chief *continued on page 7*

2009 Parnellis to Include "IT" Awards

New "Indispensable Touring" Products To Be Honored in Four Categories

LAS VEGAS — Want to know what this year's "IT" is? So do we.

The Parnelli Board of Advisor is announcing an important addition to the popular Parnelli Awards. This year, for the first time ever, four new products will receive a special Parnelli Award, the "IT Award" in recognition of their contribution to the live event industry.

The nomination process is open to all readers of *PLSN* and *FOH* magazines, live event professionals, and live event product manufacturers. The **nomination process will start July 15 and end August 31**. The Parnelli Board will tabulate the votes and then offer a total of 20 of the top nominees, five each in these four *continued on page 7*

Video Bathes Dirty Dancing



The dancing may be dirty, but video projections of rippling water and tall grass bathed the stage, immersing the characters in the projected surroundings for *Dirty Dancing: the Original Story on Stage*.

For the production's recent pre-Broadway run in Chicago, the crew helped bring the movie to the stage by bringing moving images to the set. Jon Driscoll, video and projection designer, used an LED screen, a projection wall and projected images on the stage floor as well.

With over 100 scenes in the fast-moving production, the audience was treated to a production that was faithful to the cinematic original. But if each show was like making a movie on stage, the director and crew faced one important difference: no opportunity to yell, "Cut!" until the final curtain made it a wrap.

For more, turn to page 16.

Buyers Guide

23 White LED luminaires add a new dimension to Hartz's law.

Focus on Fundamentals

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Giotto 1500

Rather than a range of products, the Giotto 1500 is an ingenious flexible modular system, which enables each individual fixture to be configured with the exclusive characteristics of different instruments.

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Disney Castle Gets New Coat of Color

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scarce, while the labor to keep them working had increased. And there were far more environmentally friendly options available.

So Pogue, with the aid of a local vendor, coordinated a "lighting challenge" following Super Bowl XLIII in Miami, where much of the gear from the football championship, from beam projectors to wash lights, came to the *Magic Kingdom*® Park to compete for a chance to permanently light the Castle. In all, eight manufacturers set up on the lawn adjacent to the Castle one night and demonstrated their wares after the park had closed for the evening.

None of the gear was the clear winner due to either output, beam pattern or color palette. Walt Disney World Entertainment had been successful using energy-saving LEDs for a number of other lighting treatments around the property, so the team decided to take a look at a local distributor's LED fixtures for the Castle as well. Since the throw distances involved were as long as 126 feet, Pogue was concerned about using LEDs in this type of application. So once again, a test on the Castle was arranged.

The test proved surprising. The fixture worked from the standpoint of both inten-

sity and color, so they expanded the test and brought out a total of four fixtures to compare them side-by-side with a few of the original fixtures. "We were getting more light out of four lights than from 14 of the arc-source lights," Pogue said.

LED Concerns

It was an interesting turn of events. While LEDs were certainly the first choice from an energy saving and maintenance standpoint, there had been reservations about using LEDs at the onset of the project due to concerns about lighting output. "Based on my past experience, I didn't think the amber and blue colors in the LEDs were going to be bright enough for what we wanted," Pogue said.

There were other concerns as well, including the color rendering and flickering. How video rendered the lighting was "really important," according to Pogue. "The week before the test, a Disney community outreach group did a show at *Epcot*® to benefit local arts organizations. I could see that the cameras weren't balanced correctly. As I was sitting in the audience observing, I saw the LED fixtures in use there surge in intensity on screen and it rendered color differently than it was in

actuality." So Pogue asked the Disney broadcast group to shoot a test in hi-definition and standard definition, and then compared the playback for color matching, among other criteria. Pogue was happy to find "the result was spot on."

In the end, Walt Disney World Entertainment replaced a total of 34 arc-source fixtures with 74 five-watt LED fixtures, cutting the total power requirements by at least 40 percent (in white light) and by as much as 90 percent or more in a primary color.

In the case of the arc-source lights, dichroic flags are put in front of white light, but LEDs only generate the colors needed. So for colored light, the entire system draws less power than a standard 20-amp household outlet at 230 volts. The new installation also eliminates the lamp replacement costs and vastly cuts down on maintenance.

If there was any lingering doubt about the effectiveness of the new lighting, it evaporated when the kudos started coming in.

Pogue is quick to point out that his tech director, Ken Ash, helped with the project and the local vendor did the installation. The installation couldn't have gone any smoother, taking only four of the six allotted days to

complete. They were able to use the same bolt pattern as the arc sources by fabricating a unique lighting stand for the LEDs. By using the clone feature on the PC-based control software, Pogue and company were able to get the fixtures up and running in about an hour.

Cinderella Castle now changes looks every three-and-a-half minutes from dusk to an hour after the park closes, running separate cue lists for the *SpectroMagic* parade and the *Wishes*™ nighttime fireworks show. All of this is done with the lighting console software using a SMPTE master fader and programming every show to fit within the 24 hours in SMPTE time code.

The transition to LED fixtures has been a major success in relighting Cinderella Castle. Not only does the new technology provide a pleasing visual for guests, it is also a "win" for Walt Disney World Entertainment. Maintenance hours are decreased, power consumption is reduced and costs are more effectively managed. The installation is a perfect example of how new ideas can meet the challenges of working "smart" and working "green" while still delivering a stunning final product.



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Bill Sapsis Named USITT Fellow

CINCINNATI — Sapsis Rigging, Inc. founder and president, Bill Sapsis, has been named a Fellow of the USITT. The presentation was made during the Fellows address and award ceremony on at the USITT's annual conference.



Bill Sapsis president, Sapsis Rigging

In his introduction, Joe Aldridge, Vice President for Conferences for USITT and a Fellow in his own right, noted that Bill "is an inspiration to young technicians entering the industry."

The honorary designation of Fellow of the Institute is bestowed for life upon those members who have made a significant contribution to the theatre and the work of the Institute.

"The Fellows are well known for their commitment to the members of the Institute, especially the students, and I am deeply honored to now be part of their company," Sapsis said.