

Case Study: Wireless Dimming

Our favorite summer intern, Elizabeth Stewart, is now back at NYU, where she is an undergraduate, studying theatre lighting. While at City Theatrical, Elizabeth expressed interest in using some of City Theatrical's products for a student show at NYU. Of course we were excited to help her achieve some of the effects she was going for so we supplied her with several D2 SHoW DMX wireless dimmers, a SHoW Baby 5, and some flicker candles. We recently asked Elizabeth how she used our products in her show and what kind of results she got.



Monstrous:

Writer: Josh Brown
 Producer: Ryan Meyer
 Director: Lindsay Wolff
 Scenic Design: Skylar Gallun and Lauren Barber
 Costume Design: Taylor Moury
 Lighting Design: Elizabeth Stewart and Stephanie Garcia
 Sound Design: Matt Kerslake
 Composer: Jorge Morales
 Property and Puppetry Design: Allison Frasca
 Stage Manager: Rachel Epstein
 Installation Crew: Elizabeth Stewart
 System Design: Elizabeth Stewart and Stephanie Garcia
 Photos Courtesy Of: Allison Frasca

Equipment List:

1 - SHoW Baby 5
 2 - 12V Battery
 2 - SHoW DMX Autocharger 12V
 2 - 12" CandleLite Candles
 2 - 6" CandleLite Candles
 2 - D2 SHoW DMX Neo Dimmer
 2 - 3' of QolorFLEX Natural White LED Strip

Give an overview of this project:

This project was a GAP Show at NYU, titled Monstrous. A GAP Show is a completely student run show that must be approved by a board of fellow drama students in order to be produced. These shows take place in the Shop Theatre, a blackbox in the Tisch School of the Arts building. The show took place in late October. Monstrous is an original play, written by Josh Brown of the Tisch Dramatic Writing program.

How did this project come about?

In the Fall of 2012, Josh Brown approached Stephanie Garcia and I to be his lighting designers – the production was originally proposed for the Spring 2013 season. Our proposal was not approved, but the GAP board encouraged us to reapply for Fall 2013. This time, we made it!

What were the general parameters and design needs for this project?

The script calls for the pillow to light up and move around the stage, as the main character carries the pillow on his back. It's a magical pillow, and was voiced by an actor on a microphone who sat in the booth. The

Why did you choose City Theatrical's D2 SHoW DMX Dimmer for your wireless DMX needs?

We really needed something small and lightweight, and the D2 is just that – it's only slightly larger than a credit card! I had heard good things about the range, as well, and we wanted to guarantee the pillow wouldn't be flickering in and out during the show.

script also calls for candles that can go out and come back on, untouched.



The pillow lit up! The tail of the QolorFLEX LED Tape ran through a hole in the pillow to the base of the side that had the D2.



The candles had their wires – and battery – cleverly covered in fireproofed linen.

Where there specific design, budget, or physical constraints that you had to work within?

The thing about the Shop Theatre is that it has to be restored every night because there are classes during the day. You are allowed to paint and leave the paint job in place, obviously, but the set must be stored in a corner each night. Any cable drops from the grid, then, have to be tied up at the end of the night, and brought back down the next evening. This was something Stephanie and I were hoping to avoid.

What drove your choice to use wireless DMX on this project?

We really did not want to have to restore cable to the grid every night, especially during the run.



The location of the SHoW Baby – the booth window.

How did you lay out the design?

The system design was fairly simple – two D2 dimmers, one with two



Blake Sugarman and Samantha Clark

Did you do any preliminary testing of the wireless control?

Stephanie and I set up the D2 and LED tape as soon as we received the equipment, just to make sure we knew how to do it. Once we were in the space and had everything in place, I carried the pillow around the building with me to make sure it wouldn't go out – it didn't!

What setting did you use on the equipment?

We used the linear dimming curves.

Did you use RDM on the project?

No – we didn't have the capabilities.

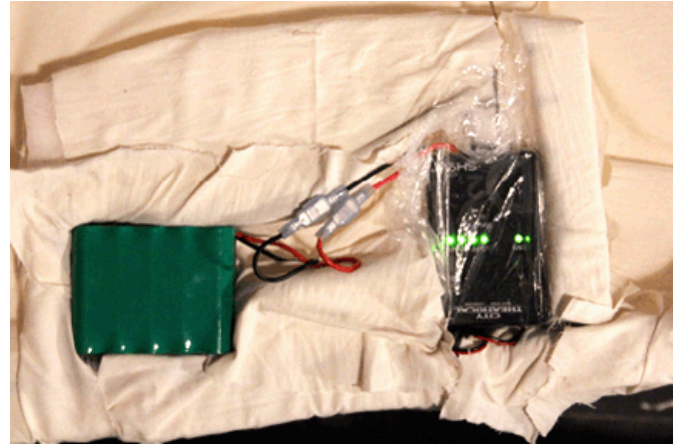
What was the most challenging part of this installation?

The most challenging part of the installation was not equipment related, actually. It was meeting fire code requirements! The foam of the pillow was not something we could fireproof, and it failed the test almost instantly. We then had to redesign our initial layout of the pillow to allow for the fireproofed linen lining.

strips of LED tape and the other with 4 CandleLite candles. The complex part of the design was how the pillow should be laid out, as it needed to be able to be "destroyed" by the actor without damaging any equipment.



The pillow had to be "destroyed" towards the end of the show, so the outer pocket was filled with pieces of fabric. The secondary layer was to protect the equipment from the actor.



To protect the D2 from the fireproofing, we placed it in a plastic bag. See how the antenna fits under the foam, to protect it and hold it in place?

What was your overall experience working with City Theatrical's equipment on this project?

They were wonderful! Any question we had was answered quickly and clearly.

What was your overall experience working with City Theatrical's equipment on this project?

Overall, this was an excellent experience.



Teo Rapp-Olsson, Samantha Clark, and Blake Sugarman