



PLAZA33



City Theatrical was able to sit down with Production Electrician on the Plaza33 project Christina See. Plaza 33 is a temporary pedestrian plaza set up for two months in New York City on 33rd st and 7th Ave. It was installed over two weeks at the end of July. check out the interview below.

CTI: How did Plaza 33 come about?

Christina: Plaza 33 was an idea by the real estate company Vornado, as a way to try improve the area around Penn Station. They had weekly events including music and movies.

CTI: This your first time working with wireless DMX?

Christina: I've worked with older versions of the Show DMX, but this was the first time I've used the Vero System.

CTI: How did you lay out the design for building the pedestrian plaza?

Christina: Cat Tate Starmer was the Lighting Designer. We ended up using all LED fixtures because of weight and power issues.

CTI: Were there specific design, budget or physical constraints that you had to work within for this project?

Christina: We were had certain constraints from the city for certain things like weight and design issues. All the plans had to be submitted to the city engineers for approval so there wasn't a lot of room for changing things as we went, since every change would need to be resubmitted. (continued next column)

As far as from a power and data layout standpoint, it was all about keeping the cabling and wiring out of view and safe for the pedestrians enjoying the plaza. Also, the cueing for the show was designed to change through out the night, so the lighting console was programmed to fire the cues at certain times throughout the night.

CTI: Why did you choose SHoW DMX Vero for your wireless DMX? Have you personally worked with our equipment before for any other previous projects?

Christina: I chose this system based on suggestions from other people that had worked with it. It needed to be weatherproof and not be susceptible to interference since we were in midtown Manhattan.

CTI: Did you do any preliminary testing of the wireless control?

Christina: There was not much time before receiving the Vero System to test it as we got it just the day before we started load in. It was pretty much wire it up, make sure it worked, then install it.

CTI: Were there other people on staff that used our equipment, was it easy for the whole team to use?

Christina: I set the units up and the local 1 stagehands installed and powered it most of which were installed high up on truss towers and buildings. Once it was hung, it worked first time around luckily, so there wasn't any trouble shooting involved.

CTI: What business processes does this solution enhance and how much does it reduce the cost to complete these particular processes? How much time does the solution save your employees?

Christina: I was a bit hesitant to use wireless DMX in the middle of midtown Manhattan because of all the possible interference we could have had, but this was one of the big specifications from the client...that they did not want to see cables running anywhere, which we were pretty successful in doing because of the wireless. Power was taken locally at each position, some of which was installed by the construction contractors who updated and rebuilt the plaza for this.

CTI: What was the most challenging part of this installation?

Christina: There were many moving parts on this show, and different from the ones we are used to. We were working with contractors basically building the plaza while we were trying to install the lights....laying cement, cranes installing 20' statues and contractors painting the asphalt of the street. We also had time constraints on when we were allowed to do certain parts of the installation because of pedestrian traffic and other issues. Lily Twining and Jon Ramage were the technical direction team, and they had a lot on their plate with all of these departments trying to work together. They were an integral part of this install going as smoothly as possible.

CTI: Did our technical/sales team help you with all your needs in making sure this project ran smoothly, where there any difficult challenges that they guided you through?

Christina: Erin and everyone else at City Theatrical was great and extremely helpful

CTI: What was your overall experience in working with City Theatrical equipment on this installation?

Christina: Great. Equipment and installation was extremely smooth. Actually one of the easiest parts of the entire project. We didn't have one problem with it.

CTI:This is a temporary experience that ends October 10th. Was this a very successful project that going to be continued next year?

Christina: If this goes well, I believe the plan is to make it a permanent pedestrian plaza, but I don't think that has been decided yet.

CTI: Would you have done anything differently in hindsight?

Christina: We did have some issues with some of the fixtures not being waterproof, so we ended up having to swap a majority of them out, but the manufacturer was quick to correct the situation. Other than that, from a technical standpoint of the lighting, everything went great.

