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Continued from May 2011 CTI Newsletter

Tisch WNET Studios At Lincoln Center

TV Lighting Designer Bob Culley recently consulted and specified the lighting equipment for the new Tisch WNET Studios at Lincoln Center in the Alice Tully Hall building in Manhattan. Both the ground floor and second floor studios have large windows open to the street and a view looking out onto the bustling intersection of Broadway and West 66th Street. As it was a re-purposed space from its original intent, the ceilings were quite low which led to some dilemmas in mounting the lighting fixtures that were solved by using City Theatrical's [Track Tamers](#)™.

Power was limited which helped to direct the studio towards a predominantly LED fixture package supplied by [Barbizon Electric](#). The decision had been previously made to install a Unistrut grid in the fully DMX studio. The ceiling height was 10'-3" (3.11m) in the downstairs "sidewalk studio" and the larger, second floor studio ranged from 10'-0" (3.04m) to 10'-6" (3.18m) or more in places.

Unistrut is a common adaptable building material used by electrical and HVAC contractors for a variety of purposes. One purpose we've seen it used for is in lieu of a pipe grid in a low-ceilinged performance space or studio. On a pipe grid you would normally use a pipe clamp to hang lighting fixtures but it adds several inches of height and was not practical in this case. While Unistrut hangers exist going to a 1/2" bolt to hang a lighting fixture, they're not well-suited to the fast change-overs and re-hanging of a busy TV Studio.

Having selected his lighting fixtures but faced with such a tight ceiling height, Culley needed to research mounting the fixtures as tight to the ceiling as possible. A creative solution was needed that had to be safe, speedy to change, and versatile enough to fit a number of fixtures.

City Theatrical's Track Tamers are mounting devices that separate the lockdown of the track from the lockdown of the fixture. They come in a variety of forms, including hex nuts, star-knobs that can be turned without a wrench, 5/8" Baby Pins, and split couplers to carry pipe. They are easy and fast to hang equipment with and have a rated working load of 500lbs. (10-1 safety factor).

Culley researched various hangers and, working with Barbizon Project Manager Josh Baker, selected Track Tamers. Having used City Theatrical accessories in the past for top hats and Color Kinetics accessories, etc., Track Tamers stood out for their variety of configurations. The Track Tamers made it standard and easy to install and move the wide range of fixtures ranging from LEDs, Kino-Flo's, Chroma-key fluorescents and some conventional units from the 33rd Street Studio (controlled by local grid-mounted dimmers). The Track Tamers could also be used with City Theatrical [Vertical Extension Tubes](#) (VETs) to drop a Lite Panel down 18" or 24" from the grid to light seated talent.

Culley felt the Track Tamers were money well spent in the installation and that they worked out exceedingly well. When the time came to add more fixtures to shoot in some hallway and stair areas, the Track Tamers and DMX distribution made it easy to accommodate and lent to the "TV ready" environment.

The Tisch WNET Studios are connected by fiber optics to WNET's central control room in Midtown Manhattan. This allows for remote operation of robotic cameras, audio mixing, and two-way video feed transmission. The entire facility (including common areas) is equipped with pre-installed lighting positions that help make the whole space "TV ready." Built around LED and rear-projection technology, the set is easily transformed for individual programs and events. Inside, there are 14 televisions, including a 103" plasma visible from the street.

For further info on our Track Tamers, please see our [Training Videos](#).

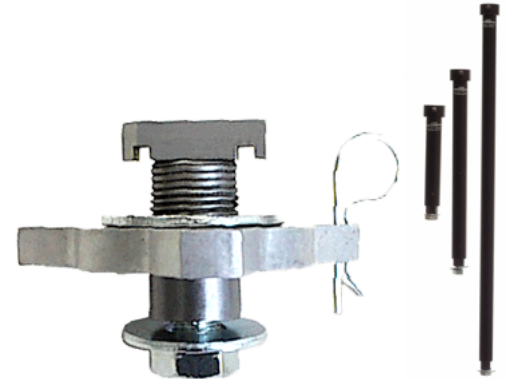
Studio photo credits: Tobin Neis of Barbizon



Downstairs studio



Upstairs studio (note the NYC subway entrance outside the window)



CTI # 521 Track Tamer with Knob

CTI Vertical Extension Tubes 6", 12", :