 Copyright Lighting&Sound America August 2012 http://www.lightingandsoundamerica.com/LSA.html

PLASA Focus: Nashville

By Richard Cadena and David Barbour

plasa focus NASHVILLE 2012

Before the exhibition floor even opened at PLASA Focus Nashville, some of the attendees already had a taste of what was to come, compliments of Tony Award-winning scenic designer Donyale Werle.

An hour before hundreds of attendees took to the exhibition floor, Werle led a free professional development seminar about her work creating sets with upcycled materials resurrected from dumpsters, recycling drives, and from organizations like Build it Green, Materials for the Arts, Film Biz Recycling, and the Salvation Army. She talked about how she designed and built greener sets for such shows as *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, and *Peter and the Starcatcher*, for which she won a Tony Award. Through pictures and words, she demonstrated that, with a little creativity, you can use all kinds of discarded or salvaged materials to create masterful set pieces while contributing to the greening of the environment.

Later that morning, the trade show floor opened with over 50 exhibitors before Jonathan Smeeton presented a seminar on creative design that was full of insight and packed with great stories. His presentation drew from 30 years of design experience working with Yes, Sammy Hagar, Miranda Lambert, Kelly Pickler, Journey, Keith Urban, George Michael, the Thompson Twins, Peter Gabriel, Taylor Swift, and more. He talked about taking a show from concept to design, with tips like using "ordinary stuff" to create extraordinary visuals, dealing with the budget ("The budget is how much people want to not spend"), and about how to present ideas ("Drawings are the way to go...Beats the heck out of CAD drawings.") He shared his ideas about how to win a project with good presentation. The trick to good design, he said, is to take a concept and turn it into an illusion. He stressed the importance of lighting the money, and talked about lighting the subject with quarter lighting, "never straight on," and how "nobody looks good in colored light."

The free professional development program targeted a range of attendees, from newbies to experienced design professionals, and included wide-ranging topics, from *Touring 101,* with lighting designer Chris Lisle, to *ROI on LEDs and other ALS (Alternative Light Sources),* with Tony Hansen and Tobin Neis. There were even seminars for the audio tech (*Trends in Sound Reinforcement,* with Eric Elwell; *Practical Applications for Digital Audio Networking,* with Bob Vanden Burgt; *Demystifying Audio,* with Christopher Kulesa) and video tech (*Trends in Video Design,* with Ken Gay and Mark Haney; *Video Mapping Techniques with Hippotizer Media Servers*), and more.

On the trade show floor, the atmosphere was at times frenzied but mostly relaxed, providing attendees with a unique opportunity to spend quality time learning about new products and catching up on the industry. News of new products was mixed with news of regional events, such as announcements from LMG, 4Wall, and Christie Lites that they would each open new facilities in Nashville, potentially changing the rental landscape there. But mostly, exhibitors welcomed the chance to show and tell about their latest and greatest products, some of which are highlighted below.

4Wall Entertainment (www.4wall.com, RS# 175) having purchased the assets of Huntsville,



All photos: Chris Toulmin

Alabama-based TLS, is opening a new Nashville office, right next door to the famous gear supplier/rehearsal studio Soundcheck. The members of the newly merged company are so energized that they have petitioned the city to change the name of their street from Cowan Street to Production Row, in recognition of the many production service companies located there.

ACT Lighting (www.actlighting.com, RS# 176) played host to **Clay Paky** (www.claypaky.it), **MA Lighting** (www.malighting.com), **LumenRadio** (www.lumenradio.com), and **GDS** (www.gds.uk.com), among other lines. Clay Paky brought a new line of A.LEDA fixtures, which further blur the line between color wash luminaires and video display fixtures. The series includes the K5, K10, and K20 LED luminaires, which have individual control of each 15W quad-color (RGBW) LED emitter. They have a library of pre-programmed graphic effects and an RJ45 connector on board to accept Art-Net directly, which comes in handy since the K20 can use up to 166 channels of DMX control in expanded mode. The K20 has 37 emitters, the K10 has 19, and the K5 has seven. The K20 and K10 also feature 14° - 17° zoom, while the K5 has a fixed 12° beam.

Also on the ACT Lighting stand was the GDS Arc System and LiteWare Satellite, and the MA Lighting grandMA Series 2 light, NPU, VPU, and onPC Command Wing

Applied Electronics (www.appliednn.com, RS # 177) showed its range of truss and hoist controllers, including the MC series portable motor controller. The company also displayed pictures of a recent project, the Red Bull Hot Wheels event, for which it built and supplied the structure The event included a double-loop track and jump for life-sized cars.



Barbizon Lighting (www.barbizon.com, RS# 178) had staff members there to discuss the company's comprehensive product line, which now includes the ETC Source Four LED. Also, the company's *Electrician's Handbook* can now be downloaded to your iOS or Android smartphone. Look for a new line of LED gobos in the near future.

Cast Group (www.cast-soft.com, RS# 179) had lots of new product news to talk about at the show. In addition to revealing the new features of the upcoming WYSIWYG Release 29 and Vivien 2012, it is anticipating the launch of BlackTrax in the fall. BlackTrax is a tracking system that uses small, wireless IR beacons to transmit the location of performers, moving set pieces, or other objects, and sends X, Y, Z, pitch, roll, and yaw information to a processor that can relay it to a controller. When BlackTrax hits the rails (probably by PLASA in September), it will feature power over Ethernet, wider coverage, a smaller, redesigned beacon, and other new features.

Meanwhile, the upcoming version of WYSIWYG will feature touch-screen interactivity, allowing you to assign fixtures to BlackTrax beacons, and 3D mouse control. Can voice recognition be far off? That's sheer speculation, but what's not speculation is that Vivien Online will feature new guest management and online interactivity, so that an end-user can go online, select a venue, design an event, and come away with all the paperwork they need for the finished product.

Chauvet (www.chauvetlighting.com, RS# 180), a company never short of new things to show, had the Legend 412; a pixel-mapping moving-yoke wash featuring 12 quad-colored RGBW LEDs controllable in quadrants; Legend 412 VW, which incorporates warm- and cool-white quad-colored LEDs for better, purer white; COLORado Zoom Tour, a static LED wash light with a variable zoom of 8 - 30°; Q-Spot 460-LED, with a patented optical system, 16° beam angle, easy-access gobo door, and shutter and strobe functions; Q-Wash 560Z-LED, which, the company says, produces massive flicker-free output, while maintaining quiet operation; WELL, which, the company says, is great for color mixing without any multi-colored shadows; and MVP modular video panels, which come with pixel pitches of 12, 18, and 37.5mm. Visitors to the stand saw a sneak preview of the COLORado Deco Quad 1, a single 10W quad-color LED accent light. The company also recently announced Trusst, its new line of

trussing product. (See page 34.)

Coolux (www.coolux.de, RS# 181) was in the house with updated Pandoras Box software version 5.1, which includes several improvements. Some of them include StreamiX, which allows you to stream content between computers; timeline key presets to store and recall timeline keys as presets; AES 256-bit encryption, which can be software-based, dongle-based, or time-based; an updated Aeon FX engine that supports multiple lights and real-time shadow projection onto 3D object layers; and support for ASIO audio tracks on video layers.

Creative Stage Lighting (www.creativestagelighting.com, RS# 182) brought out the **Avolites** (www.avolites.com) gear, including the Titan Mobile console and Avolites Media line of Ai media servers. The Ai Infinity media server, due out in September, will feature eight HD outputs, output preview for each DVI output, EDID management (EDID communicates information about your connected HDMI devices), longitudinal time code (LTC) and MIDI time code, genlock input, multi-server frame-sync, and master/slave remote control.

Staff members from **d&b audiotechnik** (www.dbaudio.com, RS# 183) were on hand to discuss the company's full line of products. Newest from the company is the V-Series, designed to complement the company's J-Series. It includes the V8 and V12 loudspeakers and the actively driven, high-performance cardioid V-SUB, which are all matched and constructed to be mechanically compatible, both in flown or ground-stacked arrays.

The folks at **Doughty Engineering** (www.doughty-usa.com, RS# 184) were especially well-positioned to enjoy PLASA Focus, having moved to Nashville in 2010. "It's a great place to do business," a company rep noted. Doughty staff was on hand to discuss the company's full line of rigging, lighting, and suspension equipment.



At **Doug Fleenor Design** (www.dfd.com, RS# 185), the news was that the Node 4, an Ethernet-to-DMX bridging device, is now shipping. It accepts either Artistic License's Art-Net (Version 3) or PLASA's Streaming ACN (ANSI E1.31) protocol. There are four fully isolated DMX ports. Each port can be configured as either an input or as an output. All of the data connectors can be mounted on either the front or rear panel. Their location can be changed in the field to accommodate fixed or touring installations. Optional terminal block connections are available for the DMX ports. In other news, a group of Fleenor's Edison fixtures (each with 25 lamps and 25 built-in dimmers) made a spectacular display on the show floor, engaging in the world's largest game of pong.

Drape Kings (www.drapekings.com, RS# 186) showed a new base plate, with rounded corners and eight holes as standard, for pipe-and-drape assemblies. In other news, the company is opening a new office in Chicago in August.

Elation (www.elationlighting.com, RS# 187) brought a cross-section of its latest products, including four variations of the ELAR Quad Series of LED luminaires—the Panel, Strip, Bar, and PAR. Each sports multiple quad-color (RGBW),10W Cree LED chips with individual control of each pixel. The Quad Panel has a 4 x 4 array of LED emitters in a 19.75" x 19.75" die-cast aluminum housing, and the Quad Strip and Bar have a linear array of eight or four emitters, respectively. The Quad PAR has a 3 x 3 array of emitters. All are IP65-rated and feature flicker-free operation, color LCD menu display, built-in color macros, auto and manual control, 0-100% dimming, 1-15 FPS strobing, powerCon in and out connectors for daisy-chaining power, an electronic power supply, integrated rigging, and more.

Also on the Elation booth was the MIDICON MIDI controller, the Event Cylinder (a battery-operated, wireless DMX LED color changing lamp), and the Platinum Beam 15R Pro, with a Philips Platinum 15R lamp. The Beam has eight static and eight rotating gobos, color wheel, a rotating prism, and built-in wireless DMX, among other features. According to the manufacturer, the lamp maintains its color temperature throughout its life.

High End Systems (www.highend.com, RS# 188) occupied a corner of the exhibit space with an array of automated and digital lights, including TechnoArc, a compact, soft-edge luminaire with its distinctive indigo highlighter—four 1W

indigo LEDs—plus a large 6.5" exit lens. It features a 575W Philips Fast-Fit lamp with CMY color mixing, a fixed color wheel, 8° - 32° zoom, a radial lenticular homogenizing lens system, a tightly collimated 5° hard-edge beam, and a mechanical iris. High End also previewed a new fixture, the Sola Spot, which will start shipping in a few weeks, as well as the new DLV Digital Light with built-in Axon media server. The newest member of the High End sales team, Jean Lariviere, was making his debut on the stand.

Interspace Industries (www.i2llc.us, RS# 189) launched CountDown Touch, a device that keeps presentations running on time. A particularly useful product for the rental and staging industry, it can count down, count up, and show the time of day; each of the three-color time change periods can be reset while running. The total time can also be reduced or increased as the show takes shape. The unit is AC-powered with two XLR connectors for the company's big, standard, and mini displays.

The Light Source (www.thelightsource.com, RS# 190) showed its new DMX-dimming 100W LED house light, a pendant downlight unit with a 6" tempered borosilicate Fresnel lens that produces a wide, even field, the company says. Brighter than a 500W quartz light, it is engineered to completely duplicate the dimming response curve of an incandescent light.

New from **Link USA** (www.linkusa-inc.com, RS# 191) was the company's DGlink line of gigabit switches. DGlink is a modular hybrid audio distribution system designed to address the unique challenge of distributing audio in the digital world.

LSC Lighting Systems (www.lsclighting.com, RS# 192) showed the production version of the Clarity LX console, which runs the company's Clarity software; features include full drag-and-drop patching with intelligent fixture cloning, rig view with 2D simulation and easy fixture selection, and media server integration with thumbnails (supporting ArKaos, Catalyst, Hippotizer, and Pandora's Box). The console can accommodate multiple programmers with independent unlimited undo/redo. (See interview with LSC's Rob Steel in page 96.)

LynTec (www.lyntec.com, RS# 193), the maker of customized electrical power control for installed audio, video, and lighting systems, showed RPC Series panels, billed as the ideal electrical platform for managing installed audio and lighting systems, offering web-enabled circuit control and electrical protection. The product utilizes Square D's latest generation of motorized breaker technology. Each breaker is rated for 200,000 on/off cycles and has a mean time to failure of 900,000 on/off cycles. The production combines electrical circuit on/off control and protection in a single panel.

Mainstage Theatrical Supply (www.mainstage.com, RS# 194) had many products to discuss, including the ETC Desire line of LED units, as well ETC's Source Four LED (the company donated one unit to be raffled off for Behind the Scenes); Altman's Chalice downlight and Spectra-Cyc cyc light, Philips Strand's PL House LED unit, Lumenpulse's Lumenbeam IP66-rated floodlight, and the Prodigy winch, part of ETC's truss line. Also shown were products from **Mega Systems** (www.mega-lite.com); among the company's new products is the N-E Color FX9, a powerful LED strip fixture with matrix capabilities. The N-E Color FX9 makes an impact with nine 3W tri-color LEDs that display powerful and smooth color mixing. The fixture is controlled via DMX and has five-pin and three-pin DMX inputs. Mega-Lite also distributes **PR Lighting** (www.pr-lighting.com), which has such products as the XLED 336. (See page 32.)

Martin Professional (www.martinpro.com, RS# 195) camped out in front of the exhibition hall with a range of products, including the JEM Compact Hazer with RDM, th VC Grid 25 video display, and the first production line M2GO lighting console, which is now in stock and shipping (See page 32.) Although the MAC Viper Profile isn't yet shipping, the unit was on hand for the event. It sports a 1,000W HID lamp and CMY color mixing, plus an eight-slot color wheel, linear CTO, zoom, focus, two 5-slot rotating gobos wheels, and an effects wheel with four fixed gobos and an animation effect.

Navigator Systems (www.hiretrack.com, RS# 196) filled in attendees on the details of Hire Track Eclipse, the latest version of Hire Rack software. The company says it allows for any eventuality faced by a rental company, including job quotes, equipment crew and transport scheduling, sub-hires, equipment testing, customized reports, translation facility, and invoicing. A free trial version is available on the company's website.

The **Nicolaudie** (www.nicolaudie.com, RS# 197) stand was filled with products, including the new Stick 3, a two-universe touch-sensitive wall-mount controller. Like previous versions, Stick 3 features USB connectivity to your computer and DMX control via touch-sensitive buttons; new to this version is Wi-Fi connectivity as well as other new features. It runs Easy Stand Alone software (ESA); a new version, ESA2, can run on a Mac computer. The software is free to download from the Nicolaudie website, although you need some of the company's hardware to output DMX. In addition to Easy Stand Alone software, which is primarily for architectural lighting applications, there is also a complete range of entertainment products including Daslight, for small shows; Sunlite Suite2, for big shows like concerts; and Lumidesk, for DJs and small clubs.

PixelRange (www.pixelrangeinc.com, RS# 198)

was spreading pixels like pixie dust with a wide range of products, including the QPAR, QLite, Smartline, and Skyline. Business has been brisk, according to the company, with its Retrofit Insert, a line-voltage, dimmable LED direct replacement for PAR 46, 56, and 64 lamps. The inserts are 25W, 50W, and 100W, respectively, and in Tennessee they are eligible for the TVA energy rebate of $0.10 per kWh for the first year of operation. There is also a pendant fitting, as well.

Robe (www.robe.cz) showed plenty of products, including the ROBIN DLX spot, which uses a new RGBW LED light source, giving, the company says, color outputs brighter than a 575/700W discharge unit, but with an average power consumption of 250W. The optical system is billed as producing a smooth, high quality of light, offering rich colors with no shadows. It utilizes a zoom or 10 - 45°. Effects features consist of a combination of static and rotating gobo wheels with custom replaceable positions, variable frost, three-faceted prism, fast iris, and more. Also featured are full-range dimming and variable strobe effects. The DLF Wash makes use of the same RGBW LED module; with, the company says, a perfectly smooth output via the front Fresnel lens, it has been optimized for those wanting an even light output with no shadows. Mechanical features include a newly designed linear motorized zoom of 5.5° - 60° and a diffusion filter for extension of the zoom up to 75°. Robin Actor 6, based on the Robin LEDWash Series, is aimed at the theatrical and television markets. It is a lighweight static head with manual pan/tilt, using 37 RGBW multichip LEDs with a linear motorized zoom of 8 – 63°. The MMX Spot is a new-technology discharge fixture that has similar light output to most existing 1,200W luminaires. Other products on display included the Robin LEDWash 300, 600, and 1200 and Robin LEDBeam. The company also hosted a lively, party for a guest list of 200 at the Hard Rock Café.

Rosco (www.rosco.com, RS # 199) was on hand to promote its plastic gobos. They are not a new product for the company, but have become highly relevant in the age of LED units, with their cooler temperatures. The company uses an ink process to make these gobos. Also shown was LitePad Loop; powered by the company's LitePad light engine, it is a soft, lightweight, and powerful ring light that can work with virtually any camera-and-lens system.

Show Sage (www.showsage.com, RS# 200), the U.S. distributor for **Dataton Watchout** (www.dataton.com), was showing Version 5 of the multi-display production and playback video tool. New features include a dynamic image server, which allows you to stream content into your presentation; support for stereoscopic video (3D with glasses); live interaction using external sensors, touch panels, or tablets; real-time compositing; a text editor directly in Watchout; and a DMX learn mode.

Techni-Lux (www.techni-lux.com, RS# 201) went micro with the new line of **Darklight** (www.darklightsystem.com) Precision LEDs, the "world's smallest DMX512-controllable theatrical wash light." The Precision DMX is a very compact 2"-long, 3W RGB color wash light that runs on 12VDC. It has a beam angle of 45° and it can strobe, fade between colors, dim, and has built-in macros. The entire range of Precision lights includes the Precision X micro spotlight, Precision Y micro floodlight, Precision Z spotlight, Precisions Z Pro submersible spotlight, Precision Z floodlight, Precision Alpha micro theatrical pinspot, and Precision DMX.

On the other end of the spectrum, Techni-Lux brought the new **SGM** (www.sgm.it) X-5 LED strobe. The unit has 3,000 LED emitters in three segments of 1,000 LEDs each. The cells can be fired individually or all at once. If you think an LED can't be too bright, you haven't seen the X-5.

Thern (www.thernstage.com, RS# 202) was on hand to discuss how it is building a following for the Brickhouse arbor, with its unique front-loading design for faster, easier, more convenient loading.

ZFX (www.zfxflying.com, RS# 203) the provider of flying effects for Broadway, the event industry, and more, was on hand to discuss its participation in this year's Eurovision Song Contest. (See page 44.) Other recent projects for the company include the Expo 2012 in South Korea, Zac Brown Band's most recent tour, and *Arab Idol*, the Middle Eastern edition of the popular television franchise.

plasafocus

STAMFORD | NOV 12-13, 2012

Connecting the industry



Stamford

There's no better place to be this November!

60+ exhibitors •

Free two-day seminar program •

Bringing the world's latest entertainment technology to you!

www.plasafocus.com

plasaevents