

Astera Gets COLOSSAL

Posted on August 14, 2020



Photo by Elias Rodriguez

COLOSSAL is a lively, dynamic, and inventive street theatre and performing arts company based in Wellington, New Zealand, founded by three highly creative individuals, brothers Zane and Degge Jarvie and Imogen Stone, with backgrounds in circus, architecture, and design.

Over the last three years, COLOSSAL has started working light in various different forms into their pieces which have become popular at light festivals, a path that's highlighted their passion for detail and innovation combined with fun and audience connection that lies at the heart of all their performance concepts.

For the 2019 HighLight Carnival of Lights in Lower Hutt, the company purchased eight Astera Titan Tubes specifically to provide a solution for their invigorating "Metronomes" installation. Since then, they have found numerous ways to integrate the highly practical and portable Asters into other ideas and activities.

Developed for a large scale audience, "Metronomes" was based on the themes of

space and time, and juggling these in a massive physical work ... for which they needed lights to be rigged to the end of eight 4-metre metal tube metronomes. These were counterbalanced via pivoting axels and mounted in square steel bases – ballasted and secured – that, once manipulated manually, swung back and forth juggling the two dimensions and establishing a sense of rhythm.

When it came to finding an appropriate light source, they wanted something bright with beautiful colours and, obviously, anything with cables was completely out ... explained Zane.

The light source had to be light and strong enough to be attached to the end of the metal poles with their weight balanced correctly through the axel allowing the motion to create an inertia as Zane and Degge triggered the swinging manually, juggling them into different patterns.

Degge had first encountered Asteras while researching for a video project, and he approached Astera's Australian and New Zealand distributor – ULA Group, for more details and a demo after which they made the investment.

"They were a perfect solution," says Zane, "completely wireless, reliable, with a long and controllable battery life and lightweight enough to be used as the moving parts we wanted."

The Astera App allowed colours and patterns to change and shift fluidly with the pace and rhythm of the motions for a more exciting and fully choreographed show adjustable live and in real-time to respond to the juggling of the swinging metronomes.

Each single juggling performance lasted 8 minutes and these took place back-to-back during a three-hour window each night of the festival, which was a big hit with the public.



LOWER HUTT, NEW ZEALAND – Highlight Festival
October 26, 2019 in Lower Hutt, New Zealand.
(Photo by Elias Rodriguez)

Zane's favourite feature of the Titan Tubes is "just how adaptable and how quick and easy they are to use," and he was also impressed by the "outstanding" customer service received from ULA Group team.

Since this initial project, they have used them for several other works, most recently during their Covid-19 lockdown for lighting their streaming studio whilst performing a series of interactive live shows

With the lockdown and social distancing now lifted in New Zealand – applauded as one of the most effective coronavirus responses worldwide – COLOSSAL is now working on new shows and content.

Photos: Courtesy COLOSSAL

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