

No Place Like Astera for MisterWives



Photos: Sarah Duffy

Hugely anticipated rising-star indie rockers MisterWives just finished a sold-out 'underplay' tour in the US promoting their just-dropped EP *mini bloom*, for which lighting designer Matt Guminski wanted to create something raw, fresh, different and stylish!

The goal was achieved with the help of 16 x Astera Titan Tube wireless pixel tubes supplied by 4Wall Nashville from lighting rep Tyler Bevel and VP of business development Al Ridella.

Matt initially met the band at the Boston Calling festival in 2015 and joined up for a run supporting their record *Our Own House*. Since then, they stayed in touch, waiting for all the stars to align so they could work together again.

The opportunity came up last fall when tour manager Alex Feld called and asked him to present some design concepts for the forthcoming string of US dates.

With lead singer Mandy Lee's enthusiasm for floral and outdoor elements, Matt hit on the notion of using the Astera Titan Tubes rigged at different heights to make a 'LED forest' look on stage and have the band live within the world of the tubes.



The depth and three-dimensionality that this would bring to the stage appealed to both him and Mandy. The design focal point quickly became the Astera Titan Tube.

Some of the tubes were positioned on the floor with the stock floor bases and others attached to the upstage trusses using a combination of their proprietary clamps and some modified film clips which allowed them to be hung vertically off the trusses.

The upstage Titan Tubes were attached to schedule 40 pipe and to four vertical truss towers to elevate them above the band, while others were positioned on flight cases, amps, and the drum riser to give assorted heights. “The Asteras filled up the space brilliantly!” stated Matt.

Well known as wireless battery powered fixtures, on this occasion Matt ran the Titan Tubes wired, which is also an option, to allow for maximum brightness.

One of the goals was to be flexible due to the varying stage sizes. “We needed to be able to open out or close down the space as effectively as possible without compromising the look,” he explained.

“Having this many Asteras allowed us to bring the space beyond its physical size and break the fourth ‘wall’ of the audience when needed. Finding the right fixture mode on a product with over 100 different options was key. Once set up, the tubes immediately gave a unique and dynamic visual impact that helped transfer all that energy onstage out into the audience.”



It was the first time Matt had used Titan Tubes on a design but other Astera products had been on his horizon and lighting plots for some time including the AX5s and AX10s which had been used on several corporate events.

The Astera fixtures offer “loads of wonderful features,” he states, “the user interface is clear and concise and all tools needed to mount and charge the tubes (if using the battery power) are located in the very well thought-out flight case.”

Having them on this run of shows was “Fantastic!” he says, adding that the colour mixing is “amazing” and that the CTOs are beautiful to work with, and “in fact the full CT ranges are great, from the warmest whites to the bluest daylight hues and all the colours in between – the calculations are all spot on.”

Matt also appreciates the straightforward control and pixel mapping possibilities via the lighting console, in this case a Hog 4, as well as the way the Titans are packaged with every conceivable rigging option.

Overall, he’s found Astera products “extremely easy” to use and deployment of the entire Titan Tube rig took only about a half-hour. “Besides the visual impact that the Titan Tubes offer, what was even more impressive was that half of my rig fitted into two cases about the size of a guitar flight case!”

He also comments that Astera’s US distributor, Florida-based Inner Circle Distribution, especially Owner Noel Duncan, have been invaluable in getting this project up and running.