

# Ross Learmonth is Wild About Astera

Posted on June 30, 2023



Ross Learmonth, well known as frontman of popular South African rock band Prime Circle, recently delighted fans with his “Wild Summer” solo tour, his first as a solo artist, complete with an exciting brand-new solo album, *Carousel*. Both tour and album campaigns have been a great success and were assisted by some Astera Titan Tube wireless LED lighting products!

When all the planning for the tour started to fall into place, Ross knew he would be playing a mix of own headliner shows and festival slots, so he wanted a specials package that could be used for both scenarios that would make his set unique and stand out.

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The conversation started with his producer, Denholm Harding, referencing the new songs and how to communicate these to the world, creating a show to match the feeling of the music and lyrics and how to find an aesthetic that was crafted especially for this project. In these discussions, Ross reveals they “literally described” having a set of tube-shaped lights on stands.



“I needed something light, portable and different for this new endeavour,” he explained. “I wanted to create a distinctive mood and atmosphere in the room as people would be hearing this music for the first time.”

He considered a few options, and one of the people he consulted in this quest was Duncan Riley of DWR Distribution which is also Astera’s South African distributor.

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Duncan immediately thought of Titans! Their wireless capability was exactly what Ross needed – quick and simple to rig and de-rig, etc., and he invited Ross to a demo at DWR’s showroom in Johannesburg.

“It was exactly what I was looking for,” declared Ross, who immediately purchased a set of Titan Tubes to take on the tour.

For most of the shows, Ross would have six Titan Tubes on stands placed around the stage at the back, plus two fixtures for up lighting himself and drummer Denholm Harding with whom he played as a duo. Some shows also featured special guest musicians who could also be easily and effectively lit by moving a Titan Tube from the main rig!

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As each fixture can be controlled individually - in this case by guitar tech Scott Coetzer using the AsteraApp on his smartphone - allowing warm lighting on the band and a neon hue surrounding the stage and other cool combinations that added depth, dimension, and a sense of drama to the stage.

Ross was very happy with the results. Having the Asters on the road with them made "a huge difference," he stated, including transforming some potentially drab looking stages into bright, positive spaces, adding greatly to the style and emotive feelings of the performance, "helping take an audience on a journey and connect more with the songs!"

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Some shows they played were in daylight, and the Titan Tubes were well bright enough to make a difference then as well, adding texture and interest to the overall picture.

The Titan Tubes were such a success on the tour that Ross used them for the album photo shoot as well.

“They made both the show and album studio shots look incredible, I had a photographer travel with us on the last gigs and it was a lot of fun working out how to approach staging and photo shoots with the lights in mind, we wouldn’t have achieved such a high level of visuality in the touring work without them,” he enthused, “it’s an amazing system!”



Talking more generally, Ross feels that good lighting is essential for offering a full live performance experience to any audience. On one hand, it helps the artist connect, while on the other it assists fans on their journey and in feeling the power and emotion of the music.

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“Lighting makes shows elevated and interesting, and while it’s sometimes the last thing on creators’ or promoters’ minds, it is an aspect of any show that can make a world of difference,” he concludes.

The Titan Tubes are currently on tour with Ross in Europe, so he also appreciates them being light, mobile and versatile enough to go on the plane with him!

***Photos by Jerome Van Zyl***