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UCSD student designers illuminate Winter Works dance production with Elation

Lighting design students explore dynamic interplay of movement and light using Proteus Lucius and Fuze luminaires

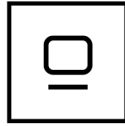
Three lighting design students from the University of California San Diego (UCSD) recently had the opportunity to work with Elation [Proteus Lucius](#) and Fuze Wash Z350 moving head luminaires on Winter Works, a dance production featuring three original works by three professional choreographers from the UCSD dance faculty.



Produced yearly by the school's Theatre & Dance Department, Winter Works specializes in dance repertory production. This year, Taylor Olson, Elba Emicente, and Vida Huang collaborated with choreographers Kara Mack, Ana María Álvarez, and Dr. grace shinhae jun, respectively, on the performances. The productions, which involved a large cast of student performers, were showcased from March 15-17 at the 400-seat Mandell Weiss Forum on the UCSD campus.

Taylor Olson, an MFA Lighting Designer at UCSD, who lit the Kara Mack piece "Open Your Eyes," contacted Elation Product Application and Customer Experience Specialist, Nick Saiki, to discuss the project and eventually decided that Proteus Lucius and Fuze Wash Z350 fixtures would provide the versatile lighting needed for the diverse performances showcased in Winter Works. Aspect Lighting supplied the lights for the performances.

"Open Your Eyes"



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Working with choreographer and creative director Kara Mack, “Open Your Eyes” explored themes of strength and resilience inspired by Martin Luther King, Jr.’s final speech, given just a day before his assassination. “For me, the piece was about exploring how I would have responded to the speech,” Taylor stated. “Through the dynamic interplay of bodies and light on stage, where each movement bends, adapts, and transforms under the subtle nuances of illumination, I sought to interpret through light this revolutionary moment in history.”

Proteus Lucius

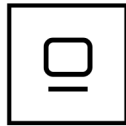
Taylor utilized the Proteus Lucius LED profile fixtures consistently throughout the performance as both a backlight and side light, experimenting with beam shaping and color to enhance the choreography, including one representing the historic Jericho Road. “I used the Lucius as a back diagonal light with a sharp shutter cut on the floor to create a rectangle path then used the Fuze Wash as front light to fill the space,” she explained. “I was interested in the warmer colors—ambers, yellows and reds—and was able to use all three colors in one by adjusting the iris and focus for a more diffused look.” She says it was an impactful scene and although she had never used a moving light with framing shutters before, having them in the Lucius proved to be very useful.



Working with other moving lights, the designer explored matching color tone across fixtures while experimenting with texture. In particular, she praises the versatility in the Lucius’s three sets of gobos and explains how she used the ‘dots’ gobo to great effect. “We were exploring in time with all the dancers moving and the idea of lighting within those liminal spaces,” she shares. “Bodies in dark would walk into the light and then back into darkness. It was a lot of playing with light, space and bodies, just exploring within darkness then coming into passages with light. With the zoom capabilities and the spread I was able to get texture on the floor and the upstage all with only a few lights.”

¡Azúcar!

For ¡Azúcar!, an immersive dance piece choreographed by Ana María Álvarez, MFA Lighting Designer Elba Emicente explored “the essence of this grain’s history and everything it represents



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in human culture, with the goal of carefully elevating each movement and moment through my lighting design.” One of the key elements of her design was the integration of three Proteus Lucius fixtures. “These versatile Elation LED profile fixtures played a role in transforming three blue tarp scenic elements into real moon rocks with eroded formations. By strategic placement and selecting the perfect gobo, I was able to permeate each rock with a texture that spoke volumes and boosted the visual narrative of the piece.”

Fuze Wash Z350

Elba also incorporated the Fuze Wash Z350 PAR moving heads into the piece as a main side light source, strategically placing them on either side of the vom. “This decision not only gave me extensive dynamic pan and tilt capabilities, but also allowed me to paint the artists with a rich color palette,” she said. One of the most memorable moments of the choreography, she expresses, was when the artists manipulated a blue tarp, from top to bottom, simulating the fluidity of water. “It was here that every Fuze Wash truly shined, fusing its lavender and cool white with the deep blue atmosphere coming from above, surrounding the performers in an aquatic environment but highlighting their white vaporous costumes.” As the piece came to an end, the designer isolated a single Fuze Wash as the sole light source for the cue before the blackout. She says the decision brought a sense of intimacy and warmth, bathing the artist's rested bodies in a comforting glow, symbolizing the culmination of their journey.



The Fuze Wash fixtures were also employed by Taylor in “Open Your Eyes” to provide front diagonal and front side light, with additional fixtures hung high on a catwalk. “With dance you need direct side light so you get more illumination on the body and bring more dimension to the space,” she said. “We used the Fuze as a diagonal light to give versatility within upstage to downstage and they worked out well.” Colorwise the designer used warmer colors, ambers and reds, and created sharp shadows to emphasize movement and space. She explains, “There is a moment where I wanted to emphasize the shadows of dancers on stage in order to convey more bodies in space and time and I used the Fuze to create those shadows.”



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“Open Your Eyes” was followed by “¡Azúcar!” with “Can We Kick It?” a high-energy hip hop performance with lighting design by Vida Huang, the final piece. All three incorporated the Elation lights. Taylor concludes, “With Winter Works, what really made the Elation lights so wonderful to have was how versatile the fixtures were in lighting three very diverse pieces.”

Lighting Designer, “Open Your Eyes”: Taylor Olson
Lighting Designer, “¡Azúcar!”: Elba Emicente Sanchez
Lighting Designer, “Can We Kick It?”: Vida Huang
Assistant Lighting Designer: Stephaney Knapp
Moving Lights Programmer: Alexander Deviataikin

Photos: Doug McMinimy, Erik Jepsen/ UC San Diego Communications, and Vida Huang

About Elation

At Elation, we represent the elite in the lighting industry. We design and manufacture a comprehensive range of best-in-class entertainment lighting products valued by production/rental houses and lighting designers the world over. Our dedication to extraordinary quality and creative solutions has established us as the go-to choice for professionals. With a storied legacy of brilliance, our influence extends from iconic stages to cutting-edge studios across the globe. We also offer an advanced line of lighting control products through Obsidian Control Systems, as well as a full range of dependable specialty effects called Magmatic. We invite you to take a closer look at www.elationlighting.com

For more information, contact:

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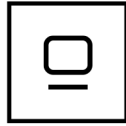
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