

NEWS RELEASE

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ELS Lights a New Development in Historic Pasadena Playhouse District

Public Art Lighting Project Features Programmable LEDs from Color Kinetics

Pasadena, CA -- Trio, an innovative mixed-use development project in the heart of Pasadena, California's historic Playhouse District, takes public art to a new intensity. The development features a multimedia art installation with an intelligent LED lighting system provided by Entertainment Lighting Services, one of the nation's leading architectural, entertainment, exhibit and event lighting suppliers and production services companies.

Covering an entire city block in the center of one of Pasadena's prime retail and entertainment areas, the four-building Trio complex includes more than 13,000 square feet of retail space, 304 residential units and parking for residents and the public. To highlight the buildings (and comply with the city's 1% for art requirement for new developments) Shea Properties, developers of the Trio mixed-use project, turned to light and motion to express the theme of "Culture, Commerce and Community". How appropriate that, in the heart of a historic theater district, developers selected a dramatically lit kinetic sculpture to define their project.

The artwork concept resulted from close collaboration among artist Peter Fink of London, England-based Art2Architecture, Thomas P. Cox Architects, and the art fabricator, Peter Carlson & Co. Inc.

Specializing in the fusion of architecture, art, landscaping and lighting for urban design, Fink and Art2Architecture were awarded the commission following a definition and selection process overseen by Beatrix Barker of Barker & Associates Public Art Advisory. Art2architecture is renowned for award-winning projects worldwide and has recently completed a major lighting strategy for Three Rivers Park and Downtown Pittsburgh, while Barker's public art projects include Staples Center, the sports and entertainment complex in downtown Los Angeles.

As Fink explains it, “My inspiration for Trio was the theme of Three Graces, which through the centuries have represented Beauty, Gentleness and Friendship. I wanted to do a contemporary interpretation through light and movement and architecture, blending traditional ideals with the Playhouse District’s flare, to create a contemporary Three Graces sculpture that represents Culture, Commerce and Community.”

The winning design incorporates a group of three, color-changing sculptural spires each terminating in a kinetic element driven by the wind. The surface finish of the artwork varies from satin to mirror-polished, enhancing the vertical presence of the spires by the play of natural light, thus complementing the gentle pivoting dance movement of the three colorful wind vanes above the Trio building. The effect is indeed dramatic and viewable across the skyline from all approaches.

The kinetic sculptures are designed to move freely with the wind. During nighttime the artwork is animated by a sophisticated, color-changing illumination of the three main sculptural elements. To accomplish this, Fink turned to programmable LED lights from Color Kinetics, chosen because of their low power consumption, ease of programming and the pure color spectrum they offer.

“I purposely used a particularly soft pallet of colors, in part to accommodate stringent controls on non-white lighting and cold cathode advertising,” Fink says.

“The design of the luminaries and their casings was another factor. Color Kinetics understands heat issues, both ambient heat and that generated by the LEDs.”

With energy conservation now such a critical issue, it is worth noting that the exceptional efficiency of the intelligent color-changing LED system consumes only about 10% of the power that would have been necessary to achieve similar results with conventional light sources. In fact, the energy usage is less than it would have taken to simply illuminate the sculptures if the color-changing LED system was not an integral part of their design. This will result in significant operational savings over the lifetime of the system.

Entertainment Lighting Services (ELS) of Sun Valley, CA, provided the lighting and control equipment, and programmed the Color Kinetics LEDs.

According to ELS Project Manager Steve Prado, “Each Color Kinetics fixture has its own unique address number. These numbers are used to map the physical location of each individual fixture and program its activation.”

In the Trio building installation, the LED luminaries are mounted out of sight within the cavities of the artwork. The light is emitted via a polycarbonate diffuser through perforations in the stainless steel outer skin of the sculptures. Another set of rooftop-mounted LED luminaries is used to up-light the reflective undersides of the three, large kinetic elements.

“For us, it was a matter of mapping the location of each of the LED fixtures and programming the lighting cycle to implement the designer’s vision of the project,” says Prado.

Each individual fixture can be programmed together or separately to produce subtle cross-fades between individual colors as well as many different special effects. This was used to full effect in a programming loop lasting 10-15 minutes. The control system for this LED installation can be easily re-programmed at a future date.

Notes Barker, “The future of public art will be light as it becomes more and more difficult to satisfy the public art requirement with traditional sculptures, pools, murals or other physical structures. Light is an ideal solution, not to mention an enchanting medium.”

And in the case of LEDs, it is an efficient one as well.

Trio Project, 621 East Colorado Blvd., Pasadena, CA

Developer:

Shea Properties, Aliso Viejo, CA

Architects:

Thomas P. Cox Architects, Inc., Irvine, CA

Public Art Advisor:

Barker & Associates

Lighting Designer:

Art2Architecture, London, England

Lighting Equipment and LED System Programming:

Entertainment Lighting Services, Sun Valley, CA

About Entertainment Lighting Services

Entertainment Lighting Services has been providing quality entertainment lighting products and design services since 1991. A licensed electrical contractor in the state of California, ELS provides turn-key lighting systems throughout the country. ELS offers products and services with custom and packaged solutions to a wide range of industries including hospitality, contractors, real estate developers, film and television, corporate exhibits, themed entertainment environments, retail, educational institutions, houses of worship, party planners and event producers.

For more information visit the Entertainment Lighting Services Web site at www.elslights.com, or contact the company at (818) 769-9800 or toll free at (800) ELS-LIGHTS.

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