



WHITE LIGHT

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FLUX – Case Study

A unique and immersive, hybrid performance space safely connecting artist, fan and host for an intimate live music experience



Project Summary

Location:
SmartStage, White Light HQ, London

Host:
Jimmy Blake

Artist:
Theo Polyzoides, King Nun

Core team:
White Light, Bug Productions,
MalfMedia, Chris Hollier

The Project

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, White Light (WL) and Bug Productions joined forces to create FLUX, a hybrid performance space safely connecting artist, fan and host for a live music experience. Following their first European headline tour and cancellation of the US leg due to lockdown, King Nun frontman Theo Polyzoides was the first artist to perform in this immersive environment.

Utilising technical solutions specialist WL's socially distanced SmartStage studio in London, Polyzoides was joined by music reporter Jimmy Blake, to deliver the intimate gig for an exclusive group of fans. By joining from home via a video conferencing platform, the fans took front row seats in the digital set, enabling Polyzoides to see and interact with them around him as if they were all at the gig together.





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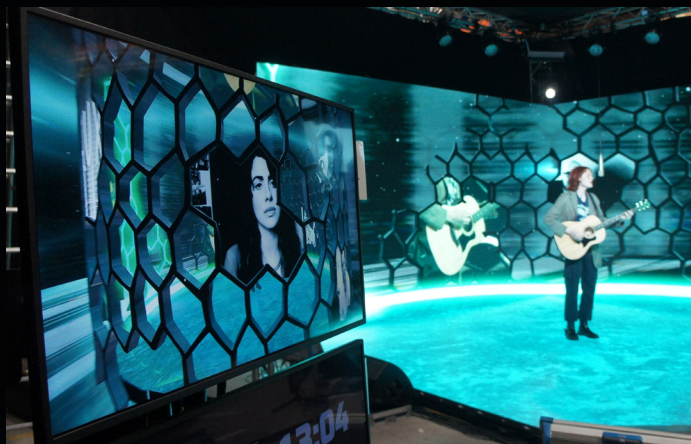
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The Brief

At this heightened time of uncertainty, bringing people together to experience the pure enjoyment and sense of escapism that live music provides seemed an impossibility. With social distancing measures in place and restrictions on meeting up with people from different households, creating a safe environment to connect artist, fan and host together for a shared experience posed a challenge.

Lee Dennison, WL's Head of Business Development explains: "As lockdown started, many artists started recording themselves singing or playing at home on their phones and streaming this out to the world, which fast became a very tired format. Speaking with our friends at Bug Productions, we agreed that this was down to a vital missing element - the sense of connection to a time and place in which to experience the music with others. We also knew that artists were really struggling with the lack of engagement with their fans during this surreal time. We wanted to create a solution to facilitate this and the technology behind our award-winning mixed reality presentation environment SmartStage, made it possible. SmartStage gave the artist a physical space and platform to perform, but we knew we needed a set that could evolve and change, in order to really immerse the audience and unite all participants."





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Key Components

- 5m x 5m SmartStage immersive LED environment
- Powered by disguise media servers
- ROE LED technology
- Notch real-time content
- Automated lighting tracking powered by BlackTrax
- Mo-Sys camera tracking
- Isolated studio environment with dedicated parking and access
- Remote production gallery
- Fully remote LD, DOP and Content Producer

The Delivery

The FLUX set featured real and virtual lighting, quality audio recording and xR content, all powered by disguise technology. MalfMedia Creative Director, Michael Al-Far and Director of Photography and Lighting Designer Chris Hollier both dialled in remotely for the entirety of the production process.

Al-Far comments: We were working in camera tracked environments, so following a different set of rules compared to traditional 3D rendering. A certain render speed must be achieved in order for the tracking to work seamlessly. The scenes must be dynamic, so using Notch as our render engine gave us flexibility to make instant changes and anticipate any live demands from the director or artist. It also allowed us to accommodate the remote viewers in a more stylised way than a traditional video conferencing view. With the artist at the centre of the geometry, using a combination of frontplate and backplate graphics and video content as an ambient or naturally reflective light source is much more effective than a green screen workflow. I am excited to shoot many more shows in this set and see what further heights we can take this to.”

Hollier adds: “All pre-production was conducted remotely and this was the first time that I have ever delivered a shoot for a client or artist I had not met in person. I worked closely with Michael Al-Far to ensure that the virtual world was proportioned correctly for the camera shots I was hoping to achieve. Elements that required interaction from the artist on stage to the fans were all positioned on the LED canvas rather than in the augmented set extensions that could only be seen on camera.”



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The Results

In order to successfully tie the content, lighting, artist, audio and fans all together, the central lynch pin was finding the right host. Someone who could engage naturally with everyone within this very different live environment. Bug Productions therefore called on long-time friend and music journalist Jimmy Blake.

Blake says: “FLUX feels like a perfect little slice of escapism for both artists and fans; the sort thing we all miss as music lovers. The acts genuinely seem to love being on a proper stage again and the fans are always in their element when they are in the front row, so being able to hand the show over to them feels pretty special. When I first saw the set it blew my mind, the team have created something incredible, which would have been impressive in a normal world, let alone doing so without ever being in the same room!”

FLUX is a unique live environment, which connects artists with an audience in real time, who can safely share in the experience via video conference stream. The viewer becomes immersed in a digital world that they can be a part of, with access to the analogue artist, who in turn can always see and interact with them. Broadcast quality content, lighting, cameras and audio, live arena-filling artists and on stage audiences who can be all part of the show all in the same place - this is FLUX.



Contact us for more information

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[FLUX highlights video](#)

