

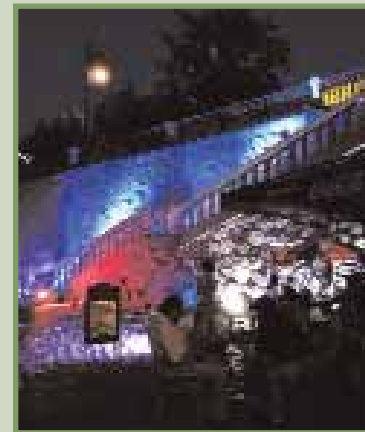
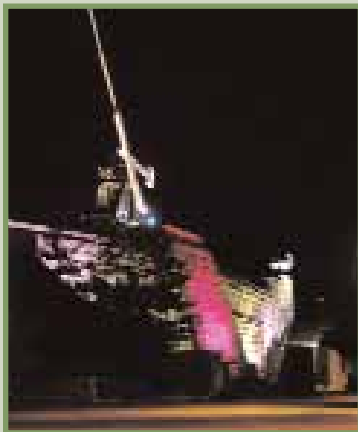
lighting the city: PRAGUE SHINES

By: Cindy Limauro

The Prague Quadrennial was started during the Cold War as a way for artists in countries around the world to transcend politics and to share their work. During PQ 2007, international teams of students from Belgium, Bosnia, Canada, France, Germany, Mexico, Montenegro, New Zealand, Norway, Serbia, Spain, Taiwan, and the United States were led by a pair of professional designers from the U.S., Cindy Limauro and Christopher Popowich of C & C Lighting, in lighting some of Prague's famous landmarks. Each group of students had four hours to analyze their space, experiment with light onsite, and then reveal their design to the public for one night only. Thorn Lighting in Prague generously provided a lighting package of wash

and spot fixtures with color filters, white and color-changing LEDs, and technical support. Students learned about the different types of architectural fixtures and the historical significance of each site. The groups were not only intercultural, but also interdisciplinary, including theatrical lighting designers, architectural lighting designers, scene designers, and architects.

was installed after the Velvet Revolution on the pedestal formerly occupied by a large stone statue of Stalin, which was blown up in 1962. The site can be viewed from many vantage points in Prague during the day, but at night it disappears. The students approached the design of the Metronome as a symbol of the end of Communism. They attached a white light on the bottom of the needle to create a moving beacon of light. The stone façade below was lit with a color-changing wash unit to create visual contrast and a festive atmosphere. The graffiti on the side walls was embraced by grazing the surface with white light. Uplights along the steps created a huge shadow play as people moved through the light.



Left: The Metronome. Center: The Industrial Palace. Right: The riverfront. Opposite page: The Cechuv Bridge.

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The Metronome

Across the river from the Jewish Quarter, on top of the hill in Letna Park, stands a giant metronome built in 1991. It

The Industrial Palace

Built in 1891, The Industrial Palace is the site of the Prague Quadrennial. The students were asked to create special lighting on the front façade of the building in honor of the design awards being presented. To emphasize the PQ's theatricality, the students wanted to create splashes of color to create a harmonious composition and also emphasize the beautiful architectural detail. The center tower arch below the clock was lit with a color-changing wash unit, as if to provide a dynamic changing of time.

THEATRE

The side columns were lit with a mixture of white, blue, and green wash units. The glass was backlit from the inside with moving lights.

Cechuv Bridge

The Cechuv Bridge is located at the bottom of the hill the Metronome sits on. Crossing the river, one can look up to see the Metronome, while those at the top can look down on the bridge and the riverfront. Limited, by access, to useful lighting positions, the students chose to place a simple green wash on the underside of the bridge. This created a contrast to the blue sky and water, and was viewed by the many boats on the river and people walking along the banks. The design was also meant to complement the work of the students designing the adjacent riverfront to the bridge.

Riverfront adjacent to the Cechuv Bridge

There is a café at the foot of the Cechuv Bridge, along with a docking area for the many tourist river boats. The students' approach to this site was to create something striking that could be seen on top of the hill at the Metronome. Using the natural texture of the stone walls and cobblestone pavement, the students used color to create an abstract painting when viewed from a distance.

All in all, it was a stimulating project. Speaking of the entire experience, Heather Starr, one of the American students, said, "I was forced to reconsider how color and

direction of a beam moved the eye to highlight different aspects of the building. None of us had ever used the instruments we were given, so the different beams and colors took some getting used to. Overall, I think the lighting workshop is the best experience a lighting student could ask for." 🌱

