



Adam Kantor, Bill Army, and Sharone Sayegh in *The Band's Visit*
Lighting Design: Tyler Micoleau
Set Design: Scott Pask
Photo: Matthew Murphy
Lighting features ColorFLEX® LED Tape and Dimmers

BACKGROUND

LED tape is a unique lighting product in today's entertainment world. Many disciplines of design interact with it - especially lighting and scenic designers. City Theatrical asked Tony Award winning lighting and scenic designers, **Tyler Micoleau** and **Scott Pask**, from 10 time Tony Award winning Broadway show *The Band's Visit* for their unique perspectives on LED tape, and how they use it in this show and other projects.

Q&A

City Theatrical: How has the use of LED tape changed the way shows are designed?

TM: LED tape has opened a world of architectural accent to stage design, making it easier to achieve than it used to be. LED tape has changed the way we approach the lighting of scenery in that we can now change colors, and achieve brighter intensities, in much tighter more restrictive spaces. And it requires very little maintenance.

SP: Yes, LED tape is great because it needs so little space, we can tuck

it into the set almost anywhere. With LED tape, the architecture of a set doesn't need to be exaggerated to accommodate internal lighting. As an example, our window light boxes at *The Band's Visit* are 3" deep panels lined with LED tape. Even at that shallow depth, they behave like light sources, with the additional benefit of color temperature adjustability.

TM: LED tape really has become a game changer.

City Theatrical: How do the scenic designer and lighting designer divide the design and technical responsibilities for the LED set lighting?

SP: We discuss the design and work together. We're always collaborating on any illuminated areas of the scenery.

TM: I agree – it's a back and forth. It also involves electricians and those doing the installation in the shop. At this point in time most set designers have a good sense of LED tape dimensions, and can understand spatially what we'll need to sustain the integrity of the design, and hide any extra materials needed to make the tape function.

For *The Band's Visit*, Scott and I spoke mostly about color temperature, from warm to fluorescent tones, and



TYLER MICOLEAU, LIGHTING DESIGNER

Recent Work -
Broadway:
Off-Broadway:

The Band's Visit
Be More Chill
Days of Rage
Mary Page Marlowe
Peace For Mary Frances
Miss You Like Hell

Tyler has designed the lighting for hundreds of live productions. He is the recipient of the 2018 Tony Award and American Theatre Wing Henry Hewes Design Award for his design in The Band's Visit on Broadway.



SCOTT PASK, SCENIC & COSTUME DESIGNER

Recent Work -
Broadway/Tours:

Pre-Broadway:
West End:

The Band's Visit
The Prom
Mean Girls
August Rush
Local Hero
Waitress

Scott has designed scenery for over 50 Broadway productions. He has been awarded three Tony Awards for his designs of The Book of Mormon, The Coast of Utopia, and The Pillowman on Broadway.

(Continued)

uniformity, which we need as much as possible to make LED tape look like realistic interior lighting – like you’re looking into someone’s home.

SP: Yes, we tried to use LED tape to its great merits – as an unspecific light source with a broad spread. Uplighters couldn’t do what LED tape does. It’s a very flexible, adaptable product for a set, but it doesn’t solve everything.

TM: True. With each day, technology changes, and more accessories become available. Lenses and diffusers are providing more control options. LED tape has opened a lot of doors.

For *The Band’s Visit* in particular, our center rotating wall is a self-contained piece with LED tape embedded in it, with RGB or White mixed, provided us with many color choices, including a unique orange color for one number

“For *The Band’s Visit*, [we discussed] color temperature and uniformity, which we need as much as possible to make LED tape look like realistic interior lighting.” - Tyler Micoleau

that helped focus the audience’s eyes to the lower portion of the set.

City Theatrical: Has LED set lighting made the jobs of the lighting and scenic designer harder or easier?

TM: Like any product or design element like this, it’s a double-edged sword – it can make things possible or create problems.

SP: Agreed. For me, it’s all about scale. LED tape makes an aspect of my job more accessible. It facilitates a lot of flexibility in a limited space.

City Theatrical: Has LED set lighting improved the experience of the audience?

SP: I’ve often wondered about the audience’s perception of color temperatures and the tone of LED fixtures compared to those of more traditional sources. If we did *The Band’s Visit* without LED tape, perhaps we would search for other ways to accomplish what we’ve done with LED tape. It has made our job more possible in tricky situations, like how we now use 4-5” deep light boxes. We illuminated *The Band’s Visit* in a way that couldn’t have been



The company of *The Band’s Visit* (Matthew Murphy)

“For me, it’s all about scale. LED tape makes an aspect of my job more accessible. It facilitates a lot of flexibility in a limited space.” - Scott Pask



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www.citytheatrical.com/products/led-tape-qolorflex

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Sharone Sayegh, Katrina Lenk, Jonathan Raviv, Tony Shalhoub, and Andrew Polk in *The Band's Visit* (Matthew Murphy)



“[With LED tape,] we illuminated *The Band's Visit* in a way that couldn't have been done six years ago.”

- Scott Pask

(Continued)

done six years ago, with how we've been able to adjust color temperature and avoid flickering.

TM: I think LED lighting can improve the audience's experience when it's not an overt use of LED tape.

SP: Better answer.

TM: Because LED technology is more accessible, even on the consumer level, I think audiences are more likely to recognize something as an

LED source. So maybe it's affected their expectations. They know we can change color in an instant, create more vibrant colors and intensities of illumination.

City Theatrical: Do you think there are any opportunities to improve LED tape?

TM: I think there's an opportunity to make LED tape even smaller in size, with the same light output, like a line of LEDs that can create a full illumination from a 1/2" deep light box, giving a flat field of illumination. We

also have a hard time with creating right angles using LED tape. And the holy grail of course would be for an LED to "feel" like an incandescent source.

SP: Yes! I'm waiting for a color temperature that can be adjusted to candle light, to get those pleasant tones. It's getting better each year; LED tape is losing its chill. Some LEDs are still too crisp, though, so our scenic trick is to warm up the background, with color or texture, so the bounce off the surface will appear more natural.



Rachel Prather, Etai Benson, Ariel Stachel in *The Band's Visit* (Matthew Murphy)

LEARN MORE

Find out more about **Tyler Micoleau** at www.tylermicoleau.com. Find out more about **Scott Pask** at www.scottpask.com, or follow him on Instagram @ScottPaskStudio. Find out more about *The Band's Visit* at www.thebandsvisitmusical.com.



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