



Turning Necessity Into Artistry “Cabaret” Pre-Show Lighting With Fluorescent Bulbs

Boston University is currently building out a new performance space. The Joan & Edgar Booth Theatre and College of Fine Arts Production Center should be ready for performances in January, 2018 – until then, however, the campus was short one performance space. When Boston University’s School of Theatre recently mounted a production of *Cabaret*, they produced it inside a rehearsal room inside BU’s College of Fine Arts building.



An X-shaped fluorescent fixture hanging inside the BU rehearsal-turned-performance space

Considering the intimacy of the show – this concept really worked. There was one element, however, that Lighting Designer, Marcella Barbeau, would have to deal with – the large “X-shaped,” fluorescent apparatuses hanging in the room. Barbeau and the production crew knew that they had two choices: 1.) ignore the fluorescents in the space, or 2.) embrace them and find a way to work them into the show. Needless to say, they selected option two and went looking for a way to work the fluorescent lights into the pre-show, house lighting.



One of the Budapest ruin bar photos that inspired Marcella Barbeau's lighting design

Marcella was inspired by the ruin bars in Budapest. "They're beautiful spaces with found lighting equipment from around the country," she said. "Some bars have stop lights in them, string lights of different colors, and different gelled fluorescents that somehow all come together harmoniously."

Roscolux Colors Used:



ROSCOLUX #26
LIGHT RED



ROSCOLUX #318
MAYAN SUN



ROSCOLUX #94
KELLY GREEN



ROSCOLUX #85
DEEP BLUE



ROSCOLUX #39
SKELTON EXOTIC SANGRIA

In order to add color to her fluorescents, Marcella ordered a selection of 48" RoscoSleeves to cover her T8 bulbs. Her Roscolux color palette for the sleeves included: R26 Light Red, R318 Mayan Sun, R94 Kelly Green, R85 Deep Blue, and R39 Skelton Exotic Sangria.



Photo Credit: Matthew Rogers

The colored fluorescents are designed to welcome the audience into “this beautiful, mesmerizing, heightened world,” Barbeau describes, so that “the post-show wash of no-color PAR 64’s completely contrasts with the bright, saturated colors of the fluorescents in the beginning.”



To learn more about the product that Lighting Designer, Marcella Barbeau used to color the fluorescent bulbs in Boston University On Broadway’s production of Cabaret, visit the RoscoSleeves product page on our website: www.rosco.com. To see our complete range of Rosco Color Filters and build your own color palettes, explore the Rosco myColor web app: www.rosco.com/mycolor.



Marcella Barbeau is a lighting designer with professional design credits in St. Louis, Chicago, Seattle, Boston, and in 2015 she was the lighting design fellow at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, OR. Currently, she resides in Boston, Massachusetts where she is working on her MFA at Boston University. To see more of Marcella’s work, visit her website: www.barbeaudeign.com.

Photo Credit: Roger Schreiber Photography