



INTERVIEW WITH **TERRY COOK** PARTNER AT WOODROFFE BASSETT DESIGN

AC/DC **POWER UP TOUR 2024**

The background and introduction of WBD and ACDC tour:

The background and introduction of WBD and **AC/DC** tour: **Terry Cook**, a partner at Woodroffe Bassett Design (WBD), a UK-based lighting design company specializing in architectural, theatrical, immersive experiences, escape rooms, and concert touring in the music sector.

WBD, **Patrick Woodroffe**, Adam Bassett and **Terry Cook**, have worked on various prestigious projects such as Fortnum and Mason, The Shard, The London 2012 Olympics, The Rolling Stones, Elton John, Bat Out of Hell, Peaky Blinders, and Doctor Who to name a few of an incredible back catalogue of work.

Most recently, we were brought on board to manage creative direction and lighting design for **AC/DC's** Power Up tour in 2024 - their first tour in 8 years.

Prior to this, we worked on a one-off show in 2023 in America featuring Metallica, Iron Maiden, **AC/DC**, Guns & Roses, and more. Following the success of this show, **AC/DC** decided to tour and reached out to us, requesting the involvement of Patrick as the creative director and Terry as the lighting designer. This collaboration has been several years in the making and we are thrilled to be a part of it.

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The creative vision and fan interaction for the tour:

- **AC/DC** are an incredible band with an unmatched history.
- The top of that list was FAN interaction, the music and the interaction between the artists and the fans and never forgetting that. Making it about the music, making it about the fans.
- **AC/DC** planned their show with a focus on fan interaction, creativity, and pushing boundaries.
- They introduced new stage elements for Angus to engage with the audience up close. The show started with a montage video of the band arriving at the stage and transitioning into a live camera feed, creating a cool interaction with the fans.
- This emphasis on music and fan connection was a key priority throughout the planning process.

Interesting fact : We have given **AC/DC** a centre runway, two screamers and two further short screamers from the left and right. We call them screamers because when the artist walks out onto the stage it makes the crowd scream. I am not sure if that is an official word though.

The planning starts:

Step 1: Communication with Neg Earth is efficient due to our long history and familiarity with each other's preferences. A design brief from Patrick guided our lighting choices. With logistical factors dominating the discussions, highlighting the practical aspects of modern entertainment production in Europe.

Step 2: Neg Earth reviewed potential products needed for purchase based on specific interests, and together we reviewed a concept design in early December '23. This design determined the required equipment and pricing, as well as the amount of truck space needed for transport, which was crucial given limited truck availability.

Step 3: We completed the full drawing set and the testing stage began. Our initial test involved replacing traditional 8-light molefay units with LED alternatives to make our show completely LED. Aiming to make most of our products IP65 waterproof to accommodate challenging outdoor performances in Europe. This decision has improved the cleanliness and reliability of the show, as well as making it easier for our crew to set up and manage lighting equipment plus maintains our signature bright and impactful performances.

Interesting fact : AC/DC are known to having a bright show, they are known for one particular Line which is "let there be light" and we blind the audience, so having fire power and the right fire power is important for us.

Step 4: The most crucial test was the follow spot test, where we chose the Robe IForte LTX for its long throw. We decided to use Follow me, an automated tracking system, to eliminate the need for follow spot operators in the air, improving safety and creativity. Further tests included beam, wash light, and rigging tests, all aimed at creating a cohesive design with seamless integration of lighting and video elements.

Interesting fact:

AC/DC is immensely popular in Germany however their concert in Italy drew a crowd of 104,000 people. Green field locations are more suitable for accommodating such large audiences compared to stadiums with a capacity of 80,000. This setting allows for a special connection between the artist and fans, creating an unforgettable.



Rehearsal: LH2 Studio – Credit Terry Cook

The stand-out moments of the tour:

- Working with my business partner, Patrick, has been an amazing experience. The trust he gives me and the years I have spent learning from him have allowed me lead on this project while he took care of one of our other concerts, its this element that makes WBD so unique.
- Working with Neg Earth has been rewarding, particularly building a relationship with **Sam Ridgway**. When it comes to the show, I find satisfaction in troubleshooting and resolving any issues during the rigging process, I have a production background so love the blend of lighting and production
- Setting up the lighting rig and video system at the LH2 rehearsal facility was a highlight, as it allowed me to see the show come to life in a space that could not accommodate its full scale. It was a reminder of the immense size and complexity of the production.
- I love the opening of the show, especially when the town name appears on screen and the fans go wild. The highlight for me is when the canons are fired, a spectacular moment that has been a part of **AC/DC's** world for years.
- The show is bright, loud, and full of energy, with phenomenal performances from the artists. The canons at the end always amaze me with their power and intensity.
- Rosie , **AC/DC's** signature inflatable is a finale of the show, recently revamped into a digital video format to add a new dimension. The response from fans has been positive, with the song featuring bold shapes and movements.

Interesting fact : Rosie has always been an inflatable but we have digitalised her and given Rosie a bit of a makeover and Rosie appears in a video format.

Our lighting director, **Charlie Cosmo Wilson**, has been with the band forever and operates a manual show with over 100 cues per song. This unique setup allows for live adaptability and flexibility, as opposed to the common use of time codes in shows today. Cosmo's deep understanding of **AC/DC's** music adds to the special experience of watching him run the lights at front of house.



Interesting fact : This show is 100% Manual Operated show – Not a single time code cue.



Credit - Terry Cook

The sustainability and social responsibility of the tour:

The art of making events safe, efficient, and sustainable is important.

- Utilizing recycled materials from workshops and reusing equipment helps cut costs and promotes responsible practices.
- Regardless of the size of the show, challenges like time, money, and equipment shortage are always present.
- The entertainment industry is becoming more aware of sustainability and environmental impact, with some artists leading the way in promoting cleaner practices.
- Implementing LED lights can reduce power usage and extend the life of equipment, benefiting both the environment and future shows.
- Entertainment is a significant part of daily life and has a big impact on the world. During times of recession, entertainment is often the first industry to suffer, but it is also the first to bounce back when things improve.
- The industry is adapting to be more sustainable and environmentally friendly, with advancements like LED and laser sourced lighting making a positive impact.
- We still have a long way to go in this journey, but everyone is pitching in to make a difference.



Overcoming the tour challenges:

- We have large vertical video and light pods on the sides of the stage, hung with custom bracketry designed by Neg and Wonder Works, to optimize the positioning of the lights. This required close collaboration between us, the CAD team, and the project management team at Neg to ensure that our creative vision was executed effectively.
- The hidden brilliance of the lighting rig is that large elements of it remain in place during transitions between concerts, without needing to be dismantled. It seamlessly moves from one venue to the next, ready for the next show.

Neg and the team consistently provide solutions for complex lighting setups, ensuring safety and efficiency for the crew. They work tirelessly to adapt to different situations, languages, and crews, making the process seamless and successful.

The Feedback:

The band is thrilled with the success of their tour in Europe after only a week. They are grateful to their team, and everyone involved in making it happen. It has been a unique and special experience, and they appreciate the opportunity to perform again in Europe.

Next Gen Crew:

The young and fresh crew on the road for **AC/DC**, led by crew chief **Alan Fotheringham**, sets a high standard for load-ins and load-outs.

Every member of the team, from the youngest crew member to the dimmer man, shows care and dedication in their work, making each show unique and special. Their hard work and creative input are what truly make the concerts successful.

Trust in the production director, Neg Earth, crew chief Alan, and the young, diverse lighting department team.



The Crew Credit - Alan Fotheringham





Thank you!

Neg Earth Lights would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to **Woodroffe Bassett Design** for their invaluable contribution to this interview. As lighting designers whose work beautifully intersects the realms of music, dance, fashion, art, and architecture, their expertise has enriched our understanding.

A huge thanks to **Terry Cook** for providing his insightful perspectives on the **AC/DC** Power Up Tour!

Thank you for sharing your time and knowledge with us.

“An Incredible Band with an
Unmatched History”

TERRY COOK

📷 ACDC Photography - STUFISH Entertainment Architects
🌐 <https://www.woodroffebassett.com/>



Neg Earth Lights would like to take this opportunity to thank the stand out team who were involved with the **AC/DC** tour , with special thanks to **Henry Gardner, Joao Magalhaes, Jack Prior, Steve Hornsey and Greg Gadomski.**

