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The Buzz About Plasma Light Tech: Hive Lighting

By **Shane** • September 6, 2013

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Equipment
Lighting

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The Buzz About Plasma Light Tech: Hive Lighting



A few weeks ago, I shot a run and gun style web series and the generous team over at Hive Lighting gave me one of their units to demo. I knew that we would not have a generator; we would have to plug into wall sockets, light quickly and have limited space. Their unit fit all of the above!

"No Heat"

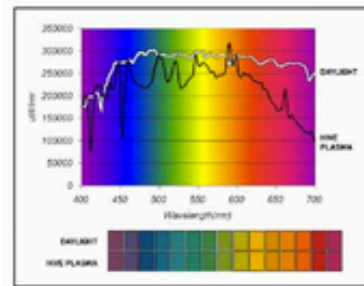
Plasma light technology is pretty incredible. Imagine a light source that equals the output of a 1.2kw HMI par light and only uses 540 watts of power. You could plug four of these units into one light socket and have four 1.2kw HMI pars blazing. Something that is simply incredible about this light is that the bulb is the size of a grain of wheat. They described it to me as 70 suns all blasting around in that little space while pushing minimal heat forward toward the talent. All the heat is directed back into the heat sinks that cool the plasma source. This was a very attractive point to me. Many of the private homes in which we were shooting did not have AC and it was the summer in Texas. Ouch!

"Last Forever"

When you are investing in a light, the first thing that I always consider is maintenance. How many hours does the bulb last? In this case, it is good for over 10,000 hours, still keeping its color temp, which is 30 times longer than a conventional tungsten globe.

"Flicker Free"

They are flicker free, which is huge for these new digital cameras. I am always running into lights that give me bars of light that slowly move up because they are not flicker free. Unless you are going to shoot over four million frames per second, you are good to go. All of the high speed work is safe without flicker.



"Color Accurate"

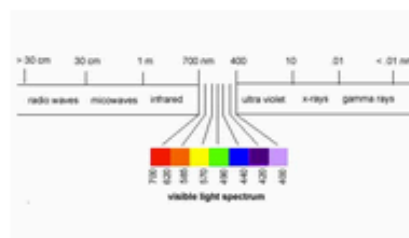
They also are color accurate. You know how LED lights have that weird color temp that is neither here nor there? They just feel false. This light delivers a CRI (Color Rendering Index) of 94.



Kino Flo 4-Bank DMX Hero with True Match Lamps have a CRI of 95

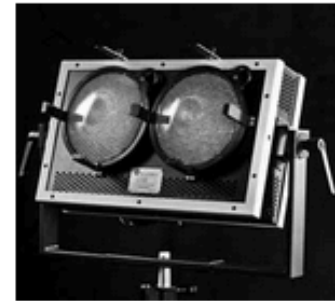


1x1 Lite Panel Daylight/Tungsten balanced have a CRI rating between 70-90+



Simply put, CRI is a scale from 1-100 that shows where in the light spectrum a specific light source falls and how much of the full color spectrum the light source renders. The lower the CRI rating, the less accurately colors will be reproduced.

"What Unit I Liked"



Out of all the units that Hive Lighting displayed, the one that grabbed me the most was the one that I have been describing above — the KILLER PLASMA MAXI. This unit packs a wallop. Not only does it deliver a perfect daylight balanced color temp of 5600K, it has lenses to spread your source out. Narrow, medium, wide and super wide are provided with each unit. The lenses are made of glass but the rings are made of plastic. What did you just say? Yes, I said plastic. The light pushes minimal heat so you don't need the clunkiness of metal or a glove. You can grab the glass directly with your bare hand and not get burned.

Another feature about this light is that you can pair Killer Plasma two light maxis together and create a four light, all only using 800 watts and creating a beautiful soft source, ready for a close up shot. Keep in mind, these units are not light, so you will need a supportive stand and some sand bags, especially when you pair them together.

SPECIFICATIONS

- 5600K CCT
- 94 CRI
- Flicker Free (450 MHz cycle/225 Million FPS)
- 10,000 Hour Hive Recommend Bulb Life (30,000 hours L70)
- 90 – 270V AC
- 540 Total System Watts
- 4.8 Amps (120VAC) / 2.5 Amps (220VAC)
- DMX512
- 32 lbs (14.5 kg)
- 20.5" x 12" x 10.5" (521mm x 305mm x 267mm)
- 17" (432mm) from pin receiver to yoke mount
- "Junior" 1 – 1/8" (28mm) pin
- 8" (203mm) par lenses
- Minimum Recommended Ambient Temp: - 31F (- 35C)
- Maximum Recommended Ambient Temp: 110F (43C)
- Max Operating Altitude 10,000 ft. (3,048 m)
- Max Non - Operating Altitude 30,000 ft. (9,144 m)



"Loving the Hard Source"

The bulb is the size of a grain of wheat, a pin source. These types of sizes create the best shadows, the hardest shadows. I want to play around with this even more when I go to create my next horror movie or film noir style lighting.



Hive plasma bulb

"How This Light Fit In"

On this project, we had very limited space. The homes were incredibly small, but I wanted a big soft source. This never would have been possible without the Killer Maxi. I took the light and aimed it at the wall to create a book light source. I added a 4 x 4 sheet of bead board and some flags to control it off the wall and I was good to go.



The light is so bright and efficient that I was able to use it to create a beautiful North light feel in the bedroom by placing the maxi outside of the window and sending it through a 4 x 4 frame of Lee 216.



"Hive Lighting's Other Arsenal of Units"



Hornet Fresnel

This light has a flood beam angle of 55 degrees and a spot beam angle of 8 degrees. It draws 276W but is as bright as 575W HMI. Its CRI rating is 94.



Wasp Plasma Par

Uses 50-90% less energy than most fixtures and lasts more than 10,000 hours. It also draws 276W and is the equivalent of a 400W HMI Par. Goes from Spot to Medium to Super Wide flood to suit your needs.



The Drone Kit

The Drone Kit enables any ETC Source Four® to be retrofitted with the latest Plasma technology to make a daylight "Leko."

"The Wrap Up"

These lights are very efficient and environmentally friendly. Promoting eco-friendly tools like this is a no brainer for me because it is the right thing to do, trying to use less energy and be green.