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Electronic Glass: A New Tool for Stage Lighting

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SPRINGFIELD, MO - Imagine Sunday morning worship or an elegant Easter sunrise service with the feeling of outdoors, sunrises and sunsets -- all indoors. Brawner & Associates has received a contract for high-tech lighting design for a \$30 million state-of-the-art facility for The Church at Pinnacle Hills in Rogers, Arkansas. This unique building, to be completed in 2006, will have a 100' x 60' glass wall with a daylight view behind the pulpit.

Light flooding from a glass wall creates immense challenges when projecting images on a video screen, telecasting, or lighting a worship service. To control the light levels consistently, the wall will be constructed of electronic glass that sandwiches a liquid crystal film between two layers of special glass. The window consists of 144 panes of 6' x 6' glass. Brawner & Associates is working with the manufacturer to control the opacity of individual panes. The largest installation of electronic glass anywhere in the world, this project has implications for broadcast productions and theater lighting in a daylight environment.

Using its sophisticated, high-tech virtual lighting studio, Brawner & Associates will predict the effect of the sun coming through the wall at various times of the year. This process requires "building" the venue in a 3D environment, simulating textures of the walls, and emulating the performance of the "smart glass."

Donnie Brawner, president of Brawner & Associates, says, "This project is full of many first-time technological advances. We are breaking a lot of new ground." Brawner also plans to use custom light-emitting diodes within the glass to control color and mood in the naturally-lit room.

Brawner & Associates will develop three different lighting systems for the Church, including the main worship center, a gatharia for pastoral summits and a special event space for the children's ministry. All the spaces will utilize high definition television broadcast, large-screen video projection and live performance.

Like all the company's clients, The Church at Pinnacle Hills can utilize an innovative, two-way, online exchange of design documents on Brawner's newly re-designed Web site.

Brawner & Associates is a live event production and technical consultation company. They offer design services to a wide range of clients nationwide, from Fortune 500 companies and large-scale theatrical productions to high school, church, and attraction development projects. Currently, Brawner has six projects under construction and is designing the lighting for a multi-million dollar corporate meeting.

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