



Pier59 Studios

PRODUCT

Planar CarbonLight CLI VX Series,
Planar CarbonLight CLI Series,
Planar TVF Series

LOCATION

New York, New York

INDUSTRY

Virtual Production

APPLICATION

Virtual Production Stage
Workplaces

PARTNERS

Disguise
Original Syndicate

Massive Virtual Production Stage at Pier59 Studios Features Flexible LED Video Walls from Planar

In 1995, Federico Pignatelli and his Art and Fashion Group Corporation founded Pier59 Studios located at Chelsea Piers in New York City. Featuring eleven column-free studios and 110,000 square feet of multimedia studio and live event space, Pier59 Studios today is a top destination for famed photographers, filmmakers, designers, brands, and advertising and production companies worldwide.

As the largest photography and multimedia complex for fashion and advertising in the world, Pier59 is equipped with the latest technology to accommodate the needs of the demanding clientele. With its latest venture, Pier59 is embracing the next era of content creation with the launch of an immense, state-of-the-art virtual production stage. The new virtual stage features a Disguise media server and a stunning array of LED display technologies from Planar. The Planar LED solutions include:

- A curved, 65-foot-wide by 18-foot-high (40x11) Planar® CarbonLight™ CLI VX-B Series LED video wall with a 2.6mm pixel pitch (CLI VX 2.6).
- A nearly 30-foot by 10-foot articulating LED ceiling comprised of an 18x6 Planar® CarbonLight™ CLI VX-B Series LED video wall with a 2.6mm pixel pitch (CLI VX 2.6).
- Four LED display moveable carts, each with a 5-foot-wide by 11.5-foot-high Planar CarbonLight CLI VX-B Series LED video wall with a 2.6mm pixel pitch (CLI VX 2.6).

“Federico Pignatelli has always embraced technology and its capacity to change the way content is captured,” said Steve Baum, Chief Innovation Officer for Pier59. “So, when he became aware of the concept of virtual production, he immediately recognized the opportunity to build a full-sized virtual stage at Pier59.”

Ultimate Creative Flexibility

Located in Stage C, a 6,500-square-foot space with 30-foot-plus ceilings, the new virtual production stage has been hailed as the world’s biggest and most advanced for fashion and advertising. Dubbed the “LED MegaWall,” the impressive virtual production stage is a studio for rent that provides fashion, beauty and luxury partners with a captivating backdrop for their photo and video productions, product launches, events and more. As part of its services, Pier59 provides its virtual production team as an extension to its client’s crew to operate the technology on their behalf.

“The LED video walls look great with the naked eye, but what’s most important for us is that they look great in-camera,” said Lorenzo Ferrante, virtual production manager at Pier59 Studios. “Production professionals like DPs [directors of photography] that use our stage have the guarantee that any color profile they want can be accomplished and that the representation of color is accurate. And obviously, virtual production provides the advantage of in-camera visual effects, which cuts the time and costs for post-production.”

Baum said, “By combining 3D virtual environments with the flexibility of the virtual production stage, we can conjure nearly any place, at any time of day during any season, precisely controlling the environmental conditions. We can even adjust them on the fly to get the perfect shot. And then, of course, the virtual stage can deliver cost savings by eliminating the time and cost of traveling with cast and crew to far-flung locations.”



A large-scale virtual production studio. In the foreground, a person is seated at a desk with multiple computer monitors. The central monitor displays a software interface with a central preview window showing a landscape scene, surrounded by various toolbars and panels. The background features massive LED video walls that wrap around the room, displaying a bright, outdoor scene with a blue sky and clouds. A complex network of metal trusses and rigging is suspended from the ceiling, supporting various pieces of equipment. Several people are visible in the background, some standing and others working at equipment, contributing to the busy studio environment.

“The LED video walls look great with the naked eye, but what’s most important for us is that they look great in camera.”

— Lorenzo Ferrante, Virtual Production Manager, Pier59 Studios



Working with Planar, Pier59 achieved its goal of building a large and immersive LED video wall and articulating LED ceiling, creating the largest LED volume that could fit in Studio C, according to Baum. He also emphasized the role of the four LED movable carts in their virtual production operations, which are “one of the more interesting and unique design components of the project,” Baum said. “They have very specific purposes. One is to create foreground lighting and reflection. So, if we have something shiny in a shot, like a car, we can move those walls behind the camera facing into the shot to generate reflections on the car, which would otherwise be extremely difficult to add in post-production.”

A second benefit is the ability to move the LED display carts to any of Pier59’s other stages for smaller production shoots. “Significant engineering went into those products,” Baum said. “We can not only move them, but we can also daisy chain them together. It was quite ingenious what Planar was able to build for us.”

Pier59 Studios Founder and President Federico Pignatelli said, “As a disruptive technology, virtual production is comparable to the digital photography revolution of the late 90s. By delivering significant cost savings and incomparable creative flexibility and quality control, virtual production is going to radically change the way fashion and advertising content is produced.”

Modernizing Pier59’s Lobby Venue

Pier59 also integrated three Planar® TVF Series LED video walls in a two-story lobby and café space located directly adjacent to Stage C. The new additions include a 6-foot-wide, 8-foot-high (3x7) installation with a 1.2mm pixel pitch as well as two nearly 12-foot-wide and 8-foot-high (6x6) arrays, one with a 1.2mm pixel pitch and the other with a 1.8mm pixel pitch.



“It’s an incredible open space with a beautiful deck and the video walls create a visual enhancement,” Baum said. “On most days we run promotional content or client work examples on the video walls, but we also have a fairly robust event business at Pier59 and now with the addition of the video walls, we are seeing a lot of interest in utilizing them as a presentation element for keynotes, screenings and other use cases. People are also interested in using the lobby space for brand takeovers with their events. It’s another great addition for us.”

About the Planar CarbonLight CLI VX Series

Planar CarbonLight CLI VX Series are carbon fiber-framed indoor LED video wall and flooring displays that feature exceptional on-camera visual properties and deployment versatility for a wide variety of installations, including virtual production and extended reality. With a wide color spectrum and narrow pixel pitches, including fast frame and refresh rates, the LED display solutions deliver excellent in-person and in-frame visual performance.

About the Planar CarbonLight CLI Series

Featuring patented carbon fiber frames and a modular design, Planar CarbonLight CLI Series LED video wall displays are uniquely lightweight, thin and strong. Refined mechanical construction gives the displays the versatility to fit a wide range of different applications, including free-standing, hanging, wall-mounted and ceiling-mounted installations. Front-side installation and service shrink the overall video wall footprint and servicing space needed behind the wall, making it simpler to fit in more spaces than other LED solutions.

About the Planar TVF Series

The Planar TVF Series is an award-winning family of fine pitch LED video wall displays that provide visual excellence for every application. Featuring a cableless and stackable design, Planar TVF Series video walls are assembled with a single-step process to connect embedded power and signal connectors from cabinet to cabinet, reducing the complexity of installation and vertical alignment. With front serviceability and a slim profile of less than three inches, the Planar TVF Series reduces the overall video wall footprint and servicing space required behind the wall—making it simpler to fit in more spaces compared to other video wall solutions.



“It was quite ingenious what Planar was able to build for us.”

— **Steve Baum**, Chief Innovation Officer for Pier59 Studios