



## Designer Q&A: Marcus Doshi on *PASS OVER* on Broadway

Ever wonder what it would be like to design the first Broadway show to open since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic? We talked to lighting designer [Marcus Doshi](#) to learn more about his work on *PASS OVER*, which opened at the August Wilson Theatre in New York on August 22, 2021. Here's what we learned about his experience.

**City Theatrical (CTI): What was your design process like for *PASS OVER*?**

**Marcus Doshi (MD):** We'd done versions of the show three times before (Steppenwolf, again at Steppenwolf for when Spike Lee filmed it for Amazon, and LCT3) so we already knew what worked and what didn't. One of the things that didn't was the plagues sequence. They were rewritten a bit and there is an entirely new ending to the show, so there was a non-trivial chunk of the show that was redesigned and went through the usual conceptual, iterative, and adjustment phases, albeit on a compressed timeline.

**CTI: What was your timeline like, from design concepts to opening night?**

**MD:** The initial rumblings that it might happen were in late April 2021, with things speeding up quickly thereafter. I think the plot was due at the end of June, so it was hurry up and design from the get-go

**CTI: Was it different than other shows you've worked on?**

**MD:** Yes, because it was the first plot in 18 months! No, because the process was largely typical (albeit with no 10 out of 12s, thankfully!).

**CTI: Did the COVID-19 situation affect your process?**

**MD:** Only insofar as there were restrictions in terms of masking and testing for the theatre team. We had an excellent COVID Management team, so I felt safer in the theatre than anywhere else!

**CTI: How does it feel to be part the first show to open on Broadway since COVID began?**

**MD:** I don't think that I realized the historic nature of the event really until the first preview when I was in the auditorium seeing the audience go nuts for the pre show announcement. Up until that, we were quite intently focused on doing the hard work of lighting the show. But when it hit, it hit hard. That we were doing it with this show, that we were doing it with such a diverse team, and that we were the first new play to welcome audiences, well, that really floored me. It is a career highlight.

**CTI: What was it like to watch the show from the audience?**

**MD:** Like it always is! I squirm and only see the mistakes. I'm a terrible audience member.

**CTI: Do you have a favorite lighting moment in the show?**

**MD:** I'm particularly fond of the moment that the upstage forest is revealed just after the plagues sequence. It is a beautiful image in its simplicity. And also a wonderful example of the kind of collaboration it takes to make a moment really land. Light is nothing without that which it reveals, so it was really about all of the design elements - set, costumes, sound, lighting - coming together to support the staging and text in a moment of magic.

**CTI: Any shout outs to team members who helped make it all happen?**

**MD:** This design was a team effort: Associate LD Elizabeth Mak and Assistant LD Erin Fleming were essential and their work really shows up on stage. I couldn't have asked for a more dedicated electrics team in Production Electrician Randy Zaibek, Assistant Production Electrician Michael "Brownie" Brown, and Programmer Kevin Wilson, all of whose investment was critical to the work on stage.

