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IN ASSOCIATION WITH PHILIPS Entertainment

JUSTIN BIEBER

A PRODUCTION WITH PURPOSE

OKULUS DESIGN FOR YMAs • ZEDS DEAD REINVENT EDM SHOW DESIGN • ON TOUR WITH DAUGHTER
NICKELBACK HIT ARENAS • AVOLITES AT LDI • JAMES BLAKE • BACK CHAT: SCOTT APPLETON

DECEMBER 2016
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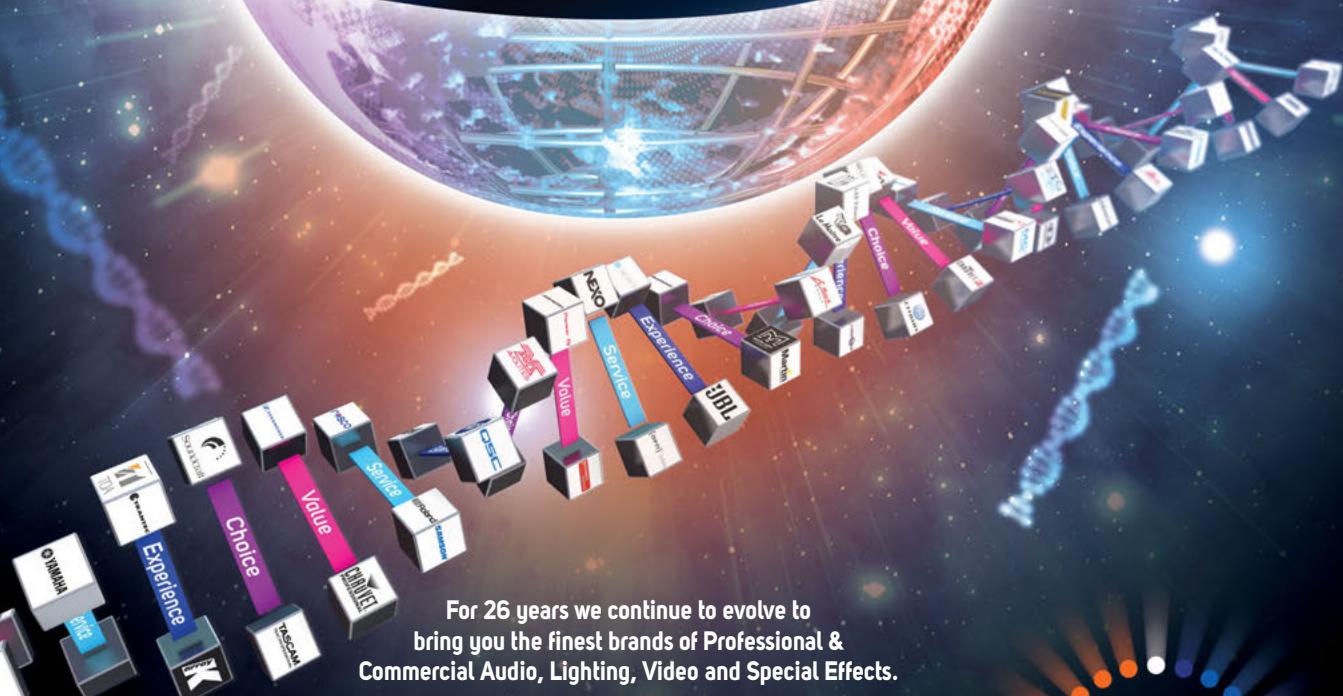
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Bon Voyage...

There seems to be an awful lot of 'life events' happening of late; our lovely Ste got married, Hannah's baby bump is growing rapidly, and I'm renovating a new home with the enthusiasm of Carol Smilie circa 1999. But perhaps the biggest upheaval is happening to my friend Laurie (pictured left with Philips Entertainment's Amber Etra), who I was lucky enough to become close to as a result of the social nature of our industry. As she prepares to undertake an adventure in architectural lighting and a move to an island at the bottom of the world, or Australia as a geographer might call it, we end what has been a monumentally emotional year globally; I couldn't begin to list the musical heroes who have passed away, nor do I need to remind you, but for me, some of the most devastating losses have been political.

As it's the (double) December issue, I think the most positive way to sum up our year here at TPi HQ is to focus on the fact that we've achieved a great deal as a brand, and we couldn't have done so without your support. From the success of our MEA title to the brilliant Production Futures / TPi Breakthrough Talent Awards, the launch of TPi Awards Daytime event & the fact that we've produced 17 magazines (so far!) this year is quite satisfying to say the least (and speaking of awards - do take the time to see who's made the shortlist for our 2017 event on Pg. 26).

Regardless of how some people on this planet enjoy the idea that segregation is powerful, our little industry is continually developing seamless integration in all departments. That's what makes us powerful and that's why we do form such close bonds.

Laurie, I'm so proud of you and I'll miss you terribly, but tell the koalas to get a Mancunian translator because our days of drinking and rock 'n' roll festivals are certainly not numbered. Good luck in whatever madness visual technology brings you next. I'm off to swap my brolly for a parasol...

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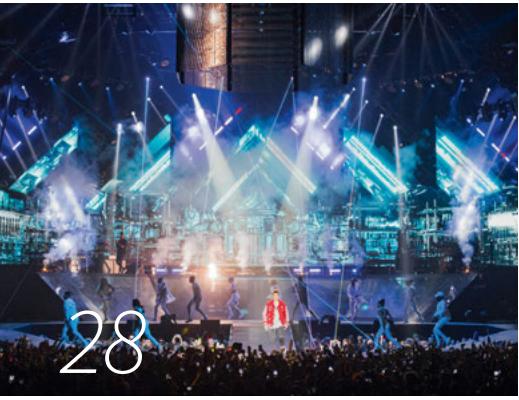
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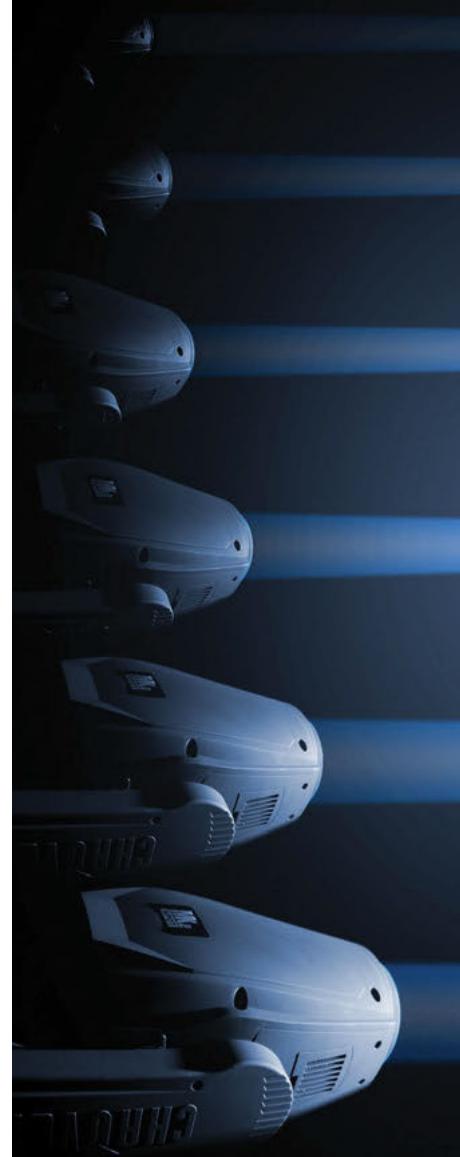
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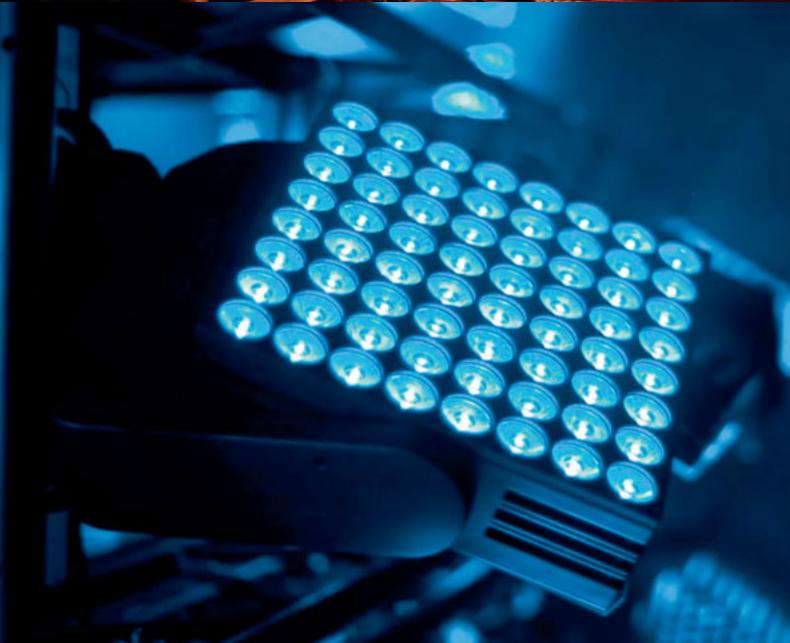
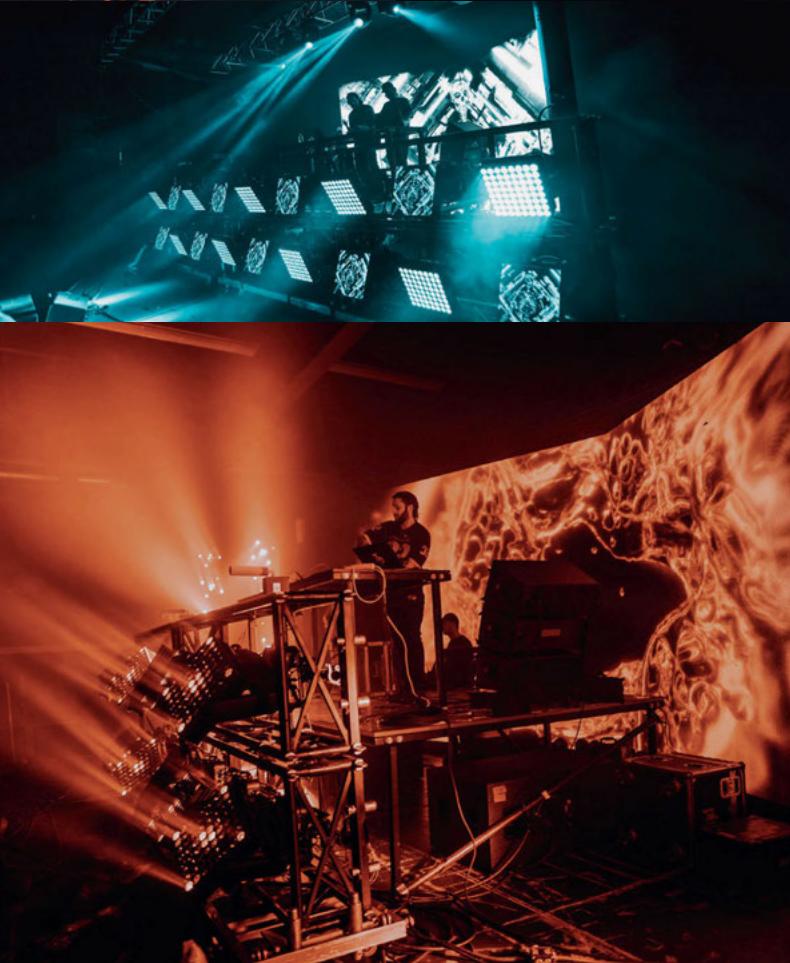
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Opposite: The team at Global Production Management created a show design that enabled the EDM duo's live shows to stand out on the scene.

ZEDS DEAD

When the Canadian EDM outfit set about creating their first full production tour in four years, they turned to transatlantic production house, Global Production Management, to bring their vision centre stage. TPi's Kelly Murray spoke to the company's Adam Bantz and Tom Campbell about designing a tourable yet impressive mid-size visual spectacular.

Tour and Production Manager Adam Bantz began working with Zeds Dead in May, undertaking a four month preproduction schedule that included some gruelling days of solo show advancing. Despite the heavy workload, this was an opportunity he couldn't turn down. The objective was to create a memorable production for the fans of the EDM stars, giving them something different to enjoy in an arguably over saturated US marketplace. He told TPi: "I started the company with my partners Andy Bernstein and Kizz Lewis in the UK and we've since grown to have bases in London, New York and Los Angeles. This was an exciting project to add to our international roster of crews and artists."

Taking on the role of both TM and PM is quite a task, but Bantz credits his assistants Theau Dufosse, Brogan Wilson and Jess Thayer with enabling this tour to be a successful one, realising that fundamental teamwork is a key part of what has made his company develop so quickly in the early stages. As part of the Global Production Management's expansion, LA-based Bantz asked UK-based Production and Lighting Designer, Tom Campbell to join the brand. Campbell joined the conversation: "I've known Adam for a long time, as both a friend and as a colleague so when he asked if I wanted to be involved with GPM, I was never going to say 'no'! However, the logistics can be challenging - this was the furthest away from the start of a production I had ever been; I was in South America during Zeds Dead's rehearsals in North America!"

Working as a unit but on different continents, the pair got stuck into creating a show design. Bantz continued: "There were many discussions and long conference calls but the primary idea was to steer clear of the standard LED DJ booth that we continue to see in dance music. When Tom suggested we use Ayrton DreamPanels, it really brought the idea to life. Together we drew the most intricate and original designs we could muster."

The concept for the deep house duo was heavily based around the band's stunning video content, described by Campbell as, "simply spectacular." The strength of the visuals afforded him the opportunity to light quite a unique scene. Bantz elaborated: "The content from our video producer, Strange Loop (The Weekend, Skrillex, Kendrick Lamar) is some of the best I've ever seen. It allows the design concept to truly be represented with each track. It really made the show stand out in the EDM world. The visuals ranged from skeletons looking like the Terminator to futuristic alien landscapes and views of the Northern Lights. We had it all!"

The bulk of the design from Campbell's POV was done on WYSIWYG, which was sent to touring lighting operator, Joshua Schultz. "Thankfully, Joshua fully understood the concept for the show and the vibe I was aiming to achieve within it. He wasn't phased by any of the design ideas and did a great job. There were a few long conference calls between myself, Adam, the band and their management in the run up to rehearsals where we got a strong feel for what the band wanted and perhaps more importantly, what



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SPECIAL EFFECTS

09

they didn't want to see," he explained.

To embody the show, Campbell opted to use LED fixtures mapped in with the visuals to 'push' the content through the band and into the auditorium in order to fully immerse the crowd. This is where the aforementioned Ayrton DreamPanel Twin product came into play. Explained Campbell: "With its 8 x 8 array, the Dream Panel was my first choice, however, due to budget constraints, the bulk of the rig was changed to Ayrton's MagicPanel 602's, which have a 6 x 6 array. Even in this bass-heavy show, they still worked a charm."

The final look boasted 36 MagicPanel 602's mounted vertically in six rows of six and 22 DreamPanel Twins mounted horizontally in two rows of 11. All 58 panels were rigged into a HUD truss for extremely quick load ins / outs. This was designed primality to ensure the band's festival shows would be tourable during quick change overs. The lighting fixtures comprised 12 Claypaky Stormy CC Strobes and four Chauvet Professional Strike 4's. For control, the desk of choice was an Avolites Sapphire Touch console, of which there were two; main and tracking backup. Avolites was also the choice for media servers, with an Ai being utilised to 'push' the content out through the band and into the crowd. Additional effects included Chauvet Professional's Nimbus dry ice machines.

The tour's equipment supplier in the US was PRG, which for Bantz was an easy decision. "It's interesting in this case actually, because what we wanted required these specific products and there are only two suppliers of Ayrton in North America. I went with PRG as my vendor because they delivered an amazing deal on

price and their service is really hands-on. Our Account Manager was the Senior VP, Nick Jackson. He's one of the nicest, smartest people I've met in a long time. Milton Brinkely brought it all together [and put up with my 50 phone calls a day for weeks on end!], and Jon Morell helped to put everything in place for the road. Jonathan Linden, Senior President at PRG, also made sure we were all happy and ready to go so it was like getting to use a family service within a big company."

The LED-dominant rig required a daily build by Brian Ledet and David Schmieder, more key crew whom Bantz is keen to show his appreciation. "Without those two guys, this tour could not have happened. For anyone wanting someone to run their LED and lighting department, I'd recommend Brian Ledet until the end of time! For me, David Schmieder is the best stage manager out there... he's worked with some brilliant artists such as

Marilyn Manson and Deftones so once I had the chance to have him on my crew, I took it without hesitation. Mike Delia ran our FOH sound and is demon behind the board - he really helped to bring the tracks to life with some truly heavy duty bass mixes!"

As our chat drew to a close, Campbell offered his final thoughts: "Although I wasn't touring with the crew in America, this has been one of my favourite projects to date. I know it's going to continue to evolve, and that's a very exciting prospect for me as a designer."

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Photos:Montana Martz

<http://zedsdead.net>

<http://globalproductionmgmt.com>

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"I know it's going to continue to evolve, and that's a very exciting prospect for me as a designer."

Tom Campbell, LD

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EAW ADAPTS FOR BLINK-182 NORTH AMERICAN TOUR

Pop punk veterans Blink-182 utilised an EAW Adaptive PA system for their North American tour, which played sold out shows nationwide to promote their latest album, California. Rat Sound provided sound reinforcement for the popular band, and have done so ever since their rise to fame in the early '90s.

"Because we played a variety of venues from large clubs like The Joint in Las Vegas to amphitheaters and arenas, we needed to travel with a PA that was versatile and easily configured to cover any venue size," said Jason Decter, who has manned FOH for Blink-182 since 2009. "I have been involved with EAW's Adaptive system since it was introduced and felt it not only provided the sonic quality the tour demanded, but was flexible enough to adapt to different venues."

The Blink-182 tour inventory consisted of 60 Anya and six Anna enclosures supported by 32 Otto subwoofers. Typically, a show would deploy a center cluster of six Anna modules flanked by Anya columns hung stage left and right. Because both Anya and Anna modules hang straight,

the system was easily scaled for venues that required wide horizontal coverage. Adding more loudspeaker columns to the main arrays resulted in a much smoother response throughout the horizontal plane than could be achieved from mechanically articulated arrays.

Decter pursued the idea of using the Anya system for the Blink-182 tour after mixing Bassnectar – with tremendous success – on an Anya system at Red Rocks and Alabama's BJCC Legacy Arena.

"I typically looking for clean, high SPL and good, fast, transient response," said Decter. "Pop punk music is very fast with a high beat count per minute. I needed a system that can take those hits and recover while maintaining fidelity. I'm very impressed with the tonality of the boxes, and

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First page: EAW Anya and Anna columns, backed up by Otto subwoofers, reinforced Blink-182s sold out North American tour.



the adaptability of the system was exactly what we needed for the tour."

By using EAW's Resolution software, the system can automatically define the coverage area after the arrays are hung or identify problem areas in real-time. Once the audience area is defined in the software, the DSP on board each loudspeaker adapts the array's response to precisely direct the energy of the array for coverage.

The sound reinforcement capabilities EAW's Adaptive system demonstrates made it an excellent choice for meeting the challenges that come from working with a three-piece band like Blink-182.

"It was very important that we reproduce the band in a way the fans expect - while still providing them with an experience they won't forget," said Decter. "The response from the band, crew, friends of the band, and fans, was overwhelmingly great. We accomplished what we set out to do."

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“From mix position to any position in the room, it’s hard to mentally process how consistent it is and how easily we achieved it. Anya has the purest impulse response I’ve ever gotten off of a PA system. The acoustic phase response is just breathtaking.”

Robert Scovill FOH Engineer, Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers

“Anya sounds more like a giant pair of nearfield monitors than a typical concert array, with a transient response that allows for an extremely dynamic show. In the Paramore show there are a lot of subtle elements that don’t always translate well into the mix. But with Anya, everything was immediately present”

Eddie Mapp FOH Engineer, Papa Roach, Paramore

“Anya is extremely musical, very powerful and can be customized to match any environment. What else can I ask for in a system? This system should be on every rider.”

Stanley Soares FOH Engineer, Juanes, Sepultura

“I have been in a lot of challenging venues. It is amazing to experience how easily Adaptive Systems can blanket the seating area and drop off everywhere else – and sound better than any other systems out there. Every show has sounded fantastic.”

Jason Deeter FOH Engineer, Blink 182, Bassnectar

“I was hearing a really clean, pure vocal and a very natural open sound. As I said, I really love it when you don’t hear the speakers. For me, that’s the mark of a great system! Thank you!”

Jerry Eade FOH Engineer, Placido Domingo

“I have to admit, I have never been that impressed with a loudspeaker in my life – it’s a game-changer listening to those loudspeakers.”

Joe Patten Project Design Manager, CDA

photo © Mark Hanna, FxN Productions



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OKULUS: A DECADE WITH YOU ME AT SIX

Lighting Designer Louis Oliver - one half of Okulus along with fellow designer James Scott - has been working with You Me At Six (YMAS) for 10 years, but the band's most recent tour, Night People, marked the first the production the LD wouldn't be present for. TPi talks to the creative duo about the importance of relationships with artists, the evolution of their lighting designs and retiring from touring to take on more work...

In 2007, a meeting at Reading Festival with their then tour manager would cement a working relationship - and subsequent friendship - between Louis Oliver and English rockers YMAS that to this day, clearly makes the LD proud. The summer festival season next summer will mark 10 years with the band. He told TPi: "The friendship between myself and the band has become more like family over the years. James and I are both very close to some of the artists we've toured with. With YMAS, we know each other so well that when we need to talk about work we can be very honest and no one's feelings get hurt. It's an open platform for discussion and that's how we get the best results."

Five albums and five show designs later, the two entities have established an enviable understanding of each other's work ethic. Oliver continued: "Back in 2007 they were teenagers and didn't really know what was possible with their productions, but at this point they've become a

lot more involved, especially Josh [Franceschi, frontman]. They want the industry to take them more seriously as a band as opposed to the teenage image they started out with."

Discussions with the band led to three key words: bold, moody and smoky. "They're fans of the big, traditional rock looks and flashy lights, which has been really good both for this campaign and as part of exploring what we want to do together in the future," he added. Since the LDs joined forces to form their design powerhouse, their approach to lighting design has altered somewhat. "Now that we design as a pair, everything has become a lot more refined. We tend to question everything that we do."

Scott agreed: "Even though this particular design is so simple, we still went through a few versions. Now that we always have each other to bounce ideas off, we never instantly agree; we question why something is

*Opposite: Okulus worked in unison to create a simple but powerful design.
Below: The tour saw the band become more involved with the production possibilities available to them.*



being done and if it's making the design better. We've grown up I think, and grown into the process of developing stronger designs. For example, with the Sharpy Washes we used on YMAS, we could have hung them all in the same orientation, but we wanted the ones we placed on the floor facing down with the lens up to get those aerial shots. We didn't want the hung fixtures outriggered because the pan / tilt would have been in the wrong

position for the Atomics to fit in between. I don't think either of us would have realised any of this until the fifth gig in a few years ago, but we're now able to think about everything technically from the very start rather than just in a visual design sense."

The design comes with three key plots; 10 upstage lighting towers that hold 20 Martin by Harman Atomic 3000's, 30 Claypaky Sharpy Wash 330's

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'Bold, moody and smoky' were the key words the band used for the design brief, ensuring a classic rock 'n' roll look was achieved.

and 12 Martin by Harman MAC Auras; a flown lighting rig comprising 24 Sharpy Wash 330's, 28 4-lite generic molefays and 10 Atomic 3000's. Oliver commented: "I love how bright the Aura is - it's brilliant as a wash or as punchy light. Because the band were going for an old school rock 'n' roll feel, we wanted to create tungsten looks, and I think we managed it." . The towers were custom built at lighting supplier Neg Earth. Scott explained the importance of the towers being sprayed black: "We hate seeing rigging when there's no need. If it's not part of the design, then it should always be black. Everyone has their own preference but I personally hate seeing distracting cables."

Visual effects comprised two Reel EFX DF-50 diffusion hazers and two Martin by Harman Jem ZR44 hi-mass smoke machines.

Oliver continued: "We designed the rig with the tour venues in mind [only three could accommodate the flown lights] - so the rig would roll on and off stage easily and stay fitted during transit. This was important because our operator, Nikita Jakovlev was solo lighting crew, so we had to design the tour with that in mind."

Handing a design over once it's completed is one thing, but handing over a decade of touring history must have been hard? Oliver continued: "We found Nikita through another one of our clients, Jack Garratt. He was teching at a festival and seemed like a really nice guy so we're very happy to be working with him."

Jakovlev stated: "It's been a pleasure taking over from Louis and joining the YMAS tour. There's a pressure of delivering quality in the show which their core fans in particular will expect after a decade of Louis operating their live shows, but that said, the YMAS family made it a really smooth transition. It's been a great to be a part of."

Oliver added: "This is the first time the band has toured without me ever since they've needed an LD because James and I both stopped touring in June in order for Okulus to take on more design work. We're sort of non-

touring touring crew now. It's been a big change, admittedly, but it's also been fantastic not getting tied up in daily touring life - four out of our five working days are creative now."

For control, team Okulus opted for their trusty MA Lighting grandMA2 Light desk, as Scott enthused: "We've been long time fans of the grandMA and we've never been let down by it yet. That desk is an extension of our brains. If you don't have to stop and think, it helps you flow better as a designer, and that goes for everything we use. It's the greatest feeling walking up to a problem at FOH when there's five or six techs stood around and they can't figure out what's wrong, only for the show designer to rock up and know how to fix it. We know our kit really well."

Oliver agreed: "People are always very shocked that we draw our designs too... but everything starts from a drawing. We do every bit of each design ourselves. That starts with a sketch and flows right through to knowing how to work with everything we specify."

As of 2017, fans of the band can expect their most sophisticated show design to date, as Oliver concluded: "We want to support them in everything we do. This is the strongest 10 tracks of music they've ever produced and we want their live shows to be able to reflect that. We want to entice people to come and see them live. I know people were going to see our Chvrches show because of the production, and we want to get to that point with this band. There's going to be a lot of exciting changes coming next year..."

On that note, we'll leave the non-touring touring duo to get their sketch pads out and no doubt fill you in when the next technical creation is stage ready.

TPI

Photos: Giles Smith
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REPURPOSING VISUAL CONTENT WITH REALLY CREATIVE MEDIA

The same, but different: using creative video production techniques to repurpose content for different setups and venues, TPi speaks to Really Creative Media about expert content delivery for all manner of live performances.

Coming up with engaging content for a live music tour is only half the battle, the other is making sure that content translates and is able to be repurposed for different venues and stage designs throughout.

Nick Dew of Really Creative Media explained: "We've seen a growing trend for touring shows looking to create content that is bespoke for each individual audience, meaning you don't create for a 'standard' tour setup, but you must also incorporate different options for smaller and shorter performances in all kinds of setting such as, festivals, TV appearances and gigs in unusual venues where we are essentially guest artists. This could be at corporate events where the band want to maintain the identity seen on their larger stage show. Corporate events can require quite a creative setup, but there's often next to no time to programme anything new."

British dance group Clean Bandit, for example launched a new staging concept for their performances in the lead up to the release of their upcoming Sophomore album, turning to Really Creative Media to lead the

design for content and delivery. The production was a bespoke mix of VJ and time-coded content which allows visuals to be varied for each set.

"The content creation approach was driven massively by the band and their vision for the new show," noted Jack James, Really Creative Media's Creative Director. We first used the content during their sold out headline performance at Roundhouse in October. The visuals embraced the band's eclectic blend of dance and pop that is known for its classical overtones.

To run the set, Really Creative Media specified two Resolume Arena 5 media servers to drive the content, and packaged and pre-programmed all of the content for existing both their hits and new tracks, including the new number one single, *Rockabye*. James continued: "We also took guidance from Lighting and Show Designer, Rob Sinclair, who allowed us to use some new creative techniques."

By timecoding some of the content, the team were able to have accurate references to what was happening on stage and what could

Really Creative Media adapted video content for Clean Bandit, including their headline performance at London's Roundhouse.



change, allowing for seamless transitions between pre-set and VJ'd content. Additionally, the timecoded set allowed for the show to be utilised at some gigs without an operator, such as Clean Bandit's Kiss FM Haunted House Party performance at Wembley Arena that was reduced from a full length concert to just a three-song set.

"We chose to use some video synthesisers that produce colourful oscilloscope-style patterns, which respond to the flow of the music during a performance," James explained. "This is achieved by reacting them to certain audio frequencies, and gave a really analogue feel to some songs.

"Everything gets more exciting when you have to plug in a certain piece of equipment to generate a piece of content. It feels a bit like being in a recording studio and using a certain instrument just because you can rather than letting the computer do all the work."

For other touring acts like Charli XCX the delivery is very different. He continued: "Charli XCX uses a totally VJ orientated set of live performance visuals. The VJ'd live output from the building blocks of video clips we made is essentially the show first and foremost. We also have content prepared that is set to timecode as a backup as well but often chose not to run it. This is like a base layer that we did ahead of time. Charli XCX is big on her logo inclusion and has some rules on how and when it's included in the visuals and displayed on side screens."

Often repurposing content can really be planned for ahead of time when you first design the show. "At this time of year there are a number of TV, event and corporate appearances for music artists which brings with it an amazing variety of projection and LED screen layouts to transpose live

performance visuals onto. Having building blocks of content that can grow with the set can make adapting to other rigs easier," he added.

"Music video footage can make its way into shows too. We use this a lot with Clean Bandit who collaborate with a number of different artists. It is a great way of including the featured guest artist in a show when they cannot be there in person. We've done two shoots recently to capture content with the artists retrospectively on green screen so that we can place them within the stage design of the show in a clean way - without any distracting background."

"We find that knowing what assets you have available from the artist is key in the planning stages of the content. It can be a mammoth task to collate them all and the differing video formats, especially if it is archive footage."

Dew concluded: "Creating a consistent experience across different stage designs that are not part of the tour dates - such as corporate events - really comes down to understanding what is important for each individual artist and, of course, making sure your equipment is flexible in its delivery."

"It's so important, for everybody involved, to create experiences that translate accurately, regardless of venue. For tours and repeat sets, how you plan in advance to repurpose content is perhaps as important as the content that you create in the first place."

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<http://reallycreativemedia.co.uk>
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ELATION ACL 360 BAR EFFECTS FOR DELAIN'S MOONBATHERS EUROPEAN TOUR

Given November's supermoon, which had celestial observers bathing in the moonlight of the largest full moon in years, it was fitting that Dutch symphonic metal band Delain also took their Moonbathers tour around Europe using the versatile effects of Elation Professional's ACL 360 Bar LED battens to complement the big-hook metallic rock show.



Lighting Designer Nick van Balen was looking for a powerful multi-effect light to project a variety of looks and support the band's grandiose sound. He said: "Dennis Bruynseels from Elation invited me to the Elation headquarters in Kerkrade, Netherlands, to check out the ACL 360 Bar and I liked what I saw. I liked the effects you could get out of the 360 Bars and it was there that the idea was born to use them for this tour."

Delain came to prominence in the early 2000s as a prime example of symphonic metal with its hard-driving guitars and impassioned classical-style vocals, expertly conveyed by Charlotte Wessels.

The lighting designer used 14 of the ACL 360 Bar effects in the design to create visual excitement and reinforce the power of the music. The look and positioning of the fixtures however has changed since the tour first hit the road in September. "First I had them on poles behind the band but it proved to be a bit much since most venues we were playing were a bit smaller than

I expected," stated van Balen, who also handles lighting operator duties on tour. "So now I have seven placed very low horizontally behind the band, which works better. They have been perfect and we've had no problems whatsoever."

The colour-changing ACL 360 Bar LED battens were supplied for the tour by Niclen Moving Lights System's Dutch office. Niclen added the fixtures to its inventory earlier in the year as part of a larger purchase of ACL Series fixtures. "Lighting fixture types like the Elation ACL Series are very popular at the moment," stated Niclen CEO, Bodo Valasik. "We were looking for a good series of effect lights with very good ROI but with no compromises in quality, also durable enough to withstand an often tough touring environment, and the ACL Series fulfilled those requirements."

The high-output, narrow-beam LED effects are seeing use in a wide variety of touring and special event applications, and are especially popular due to their versatility. With full 360° continuous rotation and a full palette of colours, a surprising variety of effects can be created from one light from continuously rotating effects and aerial looks to eye candy effects to dramatic backlighting. With seven individual 15W RGBW LEDs and a dense 4° beam from each lens, the ACL 360 Bar packs a lot of effect into a relatively small package.

"Another great feature of the 360 Bar is the individual use of the seven cells," van Balen said. "In combination with in-house beams or spots with a good iris effect you can easily create the illusion that there are multiple individual beams behind the band and fill the stage with beams."

van Balen has been associated with Delain for the last five years and says that working with Niclen on this current outing has been a positive experience. "The people at Niclen have been really great and Boudewijn Vossen has provided perfect service and help," he commented. He also acknowledges AED for its support, especially Frank Schotman, who provided him with a High End Systems Road Hog 4 lighting console and wing for the tour.

TPI

Photos: PushingPixels.de

www.delain.nl

www.elationlighting.com

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TIM COLVARD FOH- MACKLEMORE & RYAN LEWIS, MADONNA, LIONEL RICHIE

"FOR THE NEXT TOUR WITH MR. BROWN I'M REQUESTING ADAMSON"

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"IT SOUNDS THE WAY
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FOH- ELLIE GOULDING

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**"IMPRESSIVELY SMOOTH
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HASSAN (HASS) SIAHI

FOH- DAVID GUETTA



"..ABOUT AS BIG AS I'VE EVER HEARD."

CHRIS RABOLD FOH- LADY GAGA

"PRODUCTS ONE STEP ABOVE EVERYONE ELSE - E15 IS NO EXCEPTION"

PATRICK DEMOUSTIER FOH- NIGHT OF THE PROMS



LIGHTING CHANNEL 4'S STAND UP TO CANCER FROM THE CENTRAL HALL TO THE CRYSTAL MAZE

Aurora Lighting are extremely proud to have supported Lighting Director Gurdip Mahal and Gaffer, James Tinsley on a brace of shows for Channel 4's Stand Up To Cancer live appeal.

Filmed in front of an audience at Central Hall, Westminster, the Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C) live event included appearances by Boy George, Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds and John Legend, for an evening of entertainment, all focussed on raising awareness of the fight against cancer.

The LD, Gaffer and crew made fantastic use of an array of fixtures including almost 100 GLP impression X4 Bar 20's and SGM P-5 LED to add deep, vibrant colour washes throughout the grandiose interior of the Central Hall. Using a mix of the ultra Versatile Claypaky Mythos, Vari-lite 1000TS and Martin by Harman MAC Viper Profile automated heads, the look was given a modern edge that contrasted perfectly against the majestic setting.

Shooting *The Crystal Maze* on location in London, the crew were challenged with recreating the look and feel of the '90s original for the Stephen Merchant hosted one-off SU2C special, whilst adding a few contemporary touches of their own.

Working within the confines of the location, the team specified a

selection of low energy products to help keep the power requirement to a minimum and assist in lowering the levels of heat being generated. Aurora supplied Chroma-Q Space Force LED fixtures, perfect for the provision of consistent, controllable lighting levels, to mimic the softly lit feel of the original show, along with SGM P-5 LED panels to help create the clearly defined colour coding assigned to the puzzle zones.

For additional colour and movement, a selection of Claypaky Mythos and Novalight Super Novas were included in the installation to allow the LD full control over the various moods designed to accompany each stage of the maze.

Working in non-conventional venues can raise both logistical and technical challenges. Aurora are extremely proud to be associated with the production teams, lighting crews and technicians whose diligent work helped make *The Crystal Maze* and SU2C live broadcast a success.

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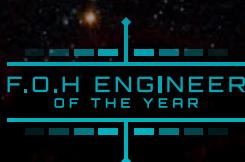
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JUSTIN BIEBER: THE PURPOSE TOUR

Well and truly shaking off his teen-pop label, the Canadian star, fresh from his latest album release, set out to show the world how he has matured as an artist. TPi's Stew Hume met the hard-working crew of this outrageous live show.





Creative Director, Nick Demoura and Production Manager, Chris Gratton; Timmy Doyle, Stage Manager; Head Rigger Ryan 'Rylo' Merfy; Jessica Sheehan, Gratton's Personal Assistant; Eric Johnson, Production Assistant; The Backline boys consisting of J.R Newkirk Drum Tech, Matt Hunter Keyboard tech, Stephen 'Ruff' Stewart Backline Crew Chief and Dylan Ely.

It is hard to imagine that an artist at the mere age of 22 could ever be classed as a 'seasoned professional', but after releasing his first single in 2009, Justin Bieber has become a touring machine. Playing to sold out crowds the world over, building a cult following and becoming one of the most well known names in pop music, the young star is certainly a name to reckon with.

After a turbulent few years and a famously contentious relationship with the press, the Canadian singer has been on something of a comeback-trip. Since the release of new material *Where Are Ü Now, What Do You Mean?* and his follow up album, *Purpose*, the singer has adopted a more mature voice in his music, shaking off the label of a teen star and no doubt leaving some of his former critics backtracking.

With the new record comes a more diverse fanbase and a relentless US tour - 64 dates all in all. Bieber and his whole crew travelled across the Atlantic with the same rig to give European fans a carbon-copy of the American leg.

THE TRIFECTA OF PRODUCTION

Leading the charge and overall design of this goliath production were three gentlemen; Bieber's Production Manager, Chris Gratton, Creative Director, Nick Demoura and Lighting Designer Cory Fitzgerald. TPi met two thirds of the trio (Gratton and Demoura) to get the inside story of the *Purpose* tour.

"From the outset, the goal was always was to bring forth Justin's vision of the album into the live arena," began Gratton. "In the earliest stages of this campaign we used the album's title as the starting block for the design for the tour. The title of the record always had a dual meaning. The first was that Justin wanted to show the world his purpose, which was to entertain while simultaneously giving a message of hope to his fans." Demoura added: "In many ways Justin's journey as an artist has been a real underdog story. For me the *Purpose* tour is really a revival for him. After the negative things people were saying, he has come back stronger than ever!"

Throughout the show there were some clear stand out moments from a giant trampoline being lowered over the crowd, Bieber performing a drum



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VER provided a triple threat of lighting, video and audio for the Purpose tour; Touring LD, Nick Van Nostrand; Video crew, Austin Wavra, Nate Fountain, David Vega, Colton Carroll, Matthias Felke, Kyle Brinkman, Jerry Rodgers, Sean 'Sharky' Harper, Mike Drew.

solo on an automated lift to the climax of the night with the full squad of dancers and the singer performing in a man-made rain shower! Many of these ideas were brought to the drawing board by Demoura, who has been involved with Bieber for over eight years, working his way up the ranks from dancer to head choreographer and finally Creative Director. He commented: "What has really helped me during this tour is the working relationship I have with Chris. Both he and I really like to push the limits of what is possible. Even though this is the first time he has worked with Justin we have really clicked. When I would present something from scratch he would find a way to improve it. In this business sometimes you get people who only think from the budget standpoint and often squash an idea before they even come to be. Thankfully Chris is not the guy!"

The crew was made up of newcomers and veterans, however, according to Gratton, the whole crew had become a tight family very quickly: "I have a long-standing relationship with Scooter Braun, Justin's Manager, and have worked with several other artists at his company SB Projects including Kanye West and Ariana Grande. When I got this gig I brought on a lot of people who had worked with those previous two artists which certainly helped."

Two returning members included Jessica Sheehan, the PM's Personal Assistant and Eric Johnson, Production Assistant who kept the production office ticking over. "This first year has been really good," commented Sheehan. "Everyone has meshed really well and the fact that many of us knew each other before hand really helped us get into our groove."

Another familiar face is Timmy Doyle, Stage Manager who discussed his experience on the road with Bieber: "My main role is to ensure that the 25 trucks worth of gear get to the right spot and in an efficient time. I am the guy who makes sure everything is kept to the tight time scale." Doyle explained that the success of the tour was thanks to their great crew chiefs. "A good stage manager is only as good as the crew chiefs; we are really good at utilising our labour. When one department finishes they turn their hands over to one another and keep the flow going. There are some tours where there is rivalry between departments but thankfully that is not the case here." He added: "What has really helped is just how many of us have worked together before."

As well as building a crew of many familiar faces, Gratton also compiled a list of suppliers he has worked with before including, VER who catered for all audio, lighting and video needs. "It has been an honour to work with Chris Gratton collaboratively across our sound, lights and video divisions as well as across our many global locations," said Susan Tesh, Executive

Director of VER's Global Lighting Division. "As one company providing multiple services on the same tour, we bring a cohesive team to the table while still proving the individual expertise of each department. We're the only global production equipment company that, with a single phone call, can bring together the best of all departments for the benefit of our clients, and ensure the same quality service and support wherever they go."

Also on the supply roster were Strictly FX providing lasers and pyrotechnics with The Power Shop delivering generators. Shockwave Cargo provided freighting and The Appointment Group worked as the tour's travel agent. Stage Truck and Beat The Street were on transport duty, while Eat Your Hearts Out kept everyone fed.

Gratton concluded by highlighting what he thought made this tour so successful. "First and foremost, you have to make sure everyone is taken care of. There is no hierarchy here."

I'LL SHOW YOU

While discussing the look of the show, Gratton described how he and Demoura took control of different areas. While Gratton oversaw the set building in Las Vegas with SGPS, Demoura along with Lighting Designer, Cory Fitzgerald oversaw the development of the content. The visuals were created by Possible Productions' LA office. The content played an integral role throughout the show with several video surfaces being situated around the stage. "One element I was always keen to introduce was having both Justin and the dancers interacting with the set," began Demoura. "Rather than having loads of stairs on the stage it is all one piece. We also have a ramp that leads to the higher tier which houses LED screens underneath. We were able to produce some really clever effects such as Justin using a trap door on the top level and then seeming to appear in to 'video world'."

Mike Drew took on the role of Video Director. "For anyone who has seen this show, one thing that will stand out is the sheer amount of video on the tour," he began. "But what is great is that, despite all the content, we are able to maintain a focus on Justin and the video simply complements the show and narrates each song." For the video ramp, VER supplied the crew with the WinVision Air 9mm LED tiles, whereas for the upstage wall, WinVision 9mm was used. "Although they are the regular square LED panels, the look of the upstage wall is actually triangulated. It's very much a twist on an existing product and the angular backwall has really become one of the dominant looks of the tour."

Driving video content was a d3 Technologies media server. "I am still shocked about just how powerful the d3 server is," expressed Drew. This

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show has so much content and yet we are able to produce it using just one box. We only have a spare with us for emergencies. A few years ago this would have been impossible, which is a testament to how far d3 have come."

The video department brought in PRG's unique V-Thru panel. Set out in an octagon formation, the panel cage was lowered over Bieber on the B-stage area before completely covering him. "When the screen lowers, the crowd can still see Justin through the gaps when there is no content, then when we stream content on the LED he is partially obscured from sight. From my position I am able to produce some great shots for the IMAG as I still have a camera on him and the look shown on the LED is projected onto his face," commented Drew.

All together, the tour deployed six Sony HXC-100 cameras with three robotic cams that were spread out across the stage to intersect some musician shots as well as images of Bieber. Drew directed the footage from a Ross Vision 3-ME HD with four Barco HDX-20 PJ's for the IMAG screens. "This has been my switcher of choice since 2008 and it works really well for me. I'm a big fan of the Ross equipment."

GOOD COMPANY

TPi met up with touring LD, Nick Van Nostrand. Working with Bieber on his last tour, *Believe*, Nostrand was more than familiar with the artist's work, but commented how the look of this show had a different feel to previous outing. "The whole show was designed by Cory Fitzgerald along with the help of associate programmer David Martinez," stated Nostrand. "This was the first time Cory had ever worked with Justin which was always going to separate this tour from previous shows. However, the real difference in the look of the show has been how much his music has changed since the *Believe* tour. From a lighting point of view the design has really reflected this change in style."

One of the biggest challenges that Fitzgerald's design had to overcome was to match-up with the incredibly bright video and laser elements. Despite the potentially competing worlds, Nostrand insisted that both video and lighting worked harmoniously: "I personally love the content that Possible created. There is a lot of negative space within the video which can easily be filled in by lighting. The creatives who designed the show have done a great job ensuring that one department doesn't take over or trump the other."

Nostrand talked TPi through some of the various workhorses that had to go toe-to-toe with the LED. "The main workhorses we use are the Claypaky A.Ieda B-EYE K20's for our main wash and for profiles we have utilised the Mythos. We also use the Philips Vari-Lite VL4000 beam washes on the underside of the trampoline, they have been very useful as they are able to fill the role of supplying a big wash as well as doing some interesting aerial looks when you switch them to beam mode and drop a gobo into them."

Nostrand stated that in many of Fitzgerald's designs, he is keen to implement some of the latest technology from the professional lighting world. The *Purpose* tour was no exception rolling out the Ayrton Versapix. "Essentially they are miniature bars placed at the front of the truss. They are a static LED but they can all be individually controlled so throughout the show we have

great chase effects where the light seems to travel across the rig. I believe this was one of the first ever tours to have them permanently on the rider." Another Ayrton product that was also rolled-out was the MagicBlade, which wrapped around the video wall. Fitzgerald also deployed several Ayrton MagicDots throughout the set including on the underside of the trampoline that continually rotated as the set piece descended to hover over the ground and Justin and the dancers performed the song *Company*.

For the octagon V-Thru Fitzgerald placed several GLP impression X4 Bar 20's, which worked both as a wash when it hung above the b-stage as well as worked as a key light when it descend to surround the singer. Several X4's were also placed on the water truss are hundreds of feet away and we really need the power the 4K provides. For this show today it's a slightly smaller so we have put on a neutral density in front of all of them and taken them down a notch - they are great in all size of venue." Finally for effects, the lighting department opted for the Tmb Solaris Flares.

Fitzgerald programmed the whole show on an MA Lighting grandMA2 console, which Nostrand then inherited for the live tour, although he was more than happy with the desk: "I am more than comfortable on the grandMA. Almost 99% of all shows I do these days use grandMA. They are just so powerful and to get around, they certainly make my life a lot easier."

KEEPING THE FIRE

With such an audacious lighting and video show, it stands to reason that Bieber's production also made a notable investment with its special effects department. The result - six committed special effects crewmembers manning a total of 485 effects throughout the two hour show. The sheer size of the special effects department has caught the attention of many in the industry and even saw Strictly FX walk away with Best Pyro Company accolade at this year Parnelli Awards.

Heading up the team was Rob Bleggi, Crew Chief. "I think that without question, this is one of the biggest tours in terms of its special effects set up. All together we have 60 Co2 jets, 18 laser system, a pyro waterfall and, for his last song, we have a big rain effect which dumps over 850 gallons of water over Justin and the dancers."

With so many elements to the show created quite the challenge for the team although Bleggi insisted his crew were more than adequately prepared: "There have been a few issues that we have had to overcome. For example the rain effect created was a bit of a headache when we came on the European run. During the states we played a lot of hockey arenas which had facilities to heat the water tank as well as areas where we could dispose of the water at the end of the night. We don't want to dump gallons of cold water over they guys on stage! Our solution for Europe is to heat up the tank throughout the day with external heaters. We also had to find a solution so the rain wouldn't flood the stage and potentially damage to electronics below deck. So we put a large blow-up pool to catch the water. Justin really fell in love with the look as the dance routine also produces loads of splash."

In charge of the intimidating arsenal of lasers was Nick Curry, who oversaw



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The crew from Strictly FX, Tony Alaimo, Alec Lopez, Ron Bleggi, Dave Yarbrough, Joey Atkinson, Nick Curry; Monitor Engineer Alex Macleod and FOH Engineer Ken 'Pooch' Vandruten.

the 18 various systems. "From the start, Chris told us that one of the main goals was to make the tour feel like a club show. For me, this means that for seven songs we have lasers going. It certainly creates a real EDM feel to the proceedings."

As is the case with all special effects departments, the safety and well-being of both the performers and crowd was of central importance to the SFX team. "We have a lot of performers up on stage through various parts of the shows which can obviously be a hazard," began Bleggi. "For every show we have Tony Alaimo, our Head Pyro Shooter, set up on stage right watching the whole show with two other guys watching from the back of the stage. Until he hears the all clear and he feels comfortable, the effect does not happen."

It was clear that the special effects team certainly had its work cut out on his tour but Bleggi put it best: "If we are going to be away from your loved ones for months on end, we had better make sure we are delivering a big show!"

MARK MY WORDS

As well as providing all the visual and lighting elements of the show, VER also delivered a complete audio package. TPi met FOH Engineer, Ken 'Pooch' Vandruten, and Monitor Engineer, Alex Macleod.

Both Pooch and Macleod used DiGiCo SD7's for audio control. "We choose DiGiCo for a few reasons, but the biggest one is sound quality," commented Pooch. "With the digital snakes running at 192kHz and downampling to 96kHz at the consoles, they are just phenomenal sounding digital desks. Beyond that though it is about flexibility. With the Optocore system we have the ability to run huge numbers of input and output channels and customise exactly what that means for a given show. We often say that the show has to sound like the record, but it has to feel like a live show. And to that end, the Bieber show has more than 120 inputs." The FOH Engineer was recording via a Waves MGB onto a Reaper DAW. "I have used many other pieces of recording software and I haven't found anything better than Reaper, which is amazing as it is so affordable," commented Pooch.

For PA, VER supplied Pooch and the audio team with a complete Meyer Sound system consisting of 32 Meyer LEO-M, 54 Lyon and 24 Meyer Sound 1100 SFCs low-frequency control element. "During this tour I can safely say that the Meyer system has become my favorite PA. For this show, it is perfect." He continued: "Many PAs have a crossover point that is right in the mid-range where guitars and vocals usually sit. This would be a problem for this show as those two elements are vital. This is not a problem with the Meyer system with its two-way box." Pooch also complemented the systems "flexibility" as it had a throw that had been able to deal with the wide variety of venue sizes they had gone through on the *Purpose* tour thus far.

Taking up the story, Monitor Engineer Macleod talked through the stage audio set up. In the age of the IEM it is not rare for monitor engineers to have to deal with a large number of mixes, but few have to deal with quite as many as Macleod who has over 40 individual channels to focus on. "The reason for such a high number of mixes is a result of a decision we made

early on this tour to put all the dancers on IEMs as well as Justin and the musicians. For the show we use Shure PSM1000 with Jerry Harvey Audio in-ears." The ultimate decision to make this investment in IEM was to make the routines as tight as possible. However, one of the first challenges that the audio team had to consider was to make the packs as sturdy as possible. "We had to get a little creative and find the right type of belts and pouches to hold the receivers. Once that was cracked we have found that the Shure moulds have been incredibly robust. The only thing we always have to watch out for is making sure the cables are continually in good condition."

Despite the abundance of IEMs the stage was far from silent with an array of wedges and side fills including d&b audiotechnik J8's with six boxes per side along with eight d&b M2's along with several V-Sub Bass mix sub. Also on deck was an L-Acoustics DV Sub from the drummer's mix. "That's what is great about using a company like VER," interjected Pooch. "They have such a wide variety of stock that you pretty much get your choice of audio gear. The fact that we have three different audio suppliers is only really possible after working with a company like VER." Macleod added: "It certainly is a massive benefit. You can pick the exact tool you need to complete the job."

With the legions of dedicated Beliebers all clamouring to hear the 22-year-old's voice, the choice of microphone was a decision the audio team did not take lightly. "We went through almost every microphone brand on the market before we eventually landed on the Telefunken M80 with a Shure Axient wireless transition system," explained Pooch. "When we first started we had Justin on a head-set but early on he decided he would rather have a hand held. This has created a few issues as he does so much more than sing in this show. It's a challenge for us to make his voice as consistent as possible. On my end I have a few tricks up my sleeve with various compression plugins. Both of us also have the issue of the thrust that he performs the majority of the set from, which has him right in front of the PA. I never want the microphone to pick up too much from the system as it would wash out my mix so I have to constantly keep and eye it. Also, due to the demands of his routine, he sometimes drops the mic. Through the show I keep and eye on him through a visual monitor, meaning I can try and mute the channel before it hits the ground.

"This show is certainly not for the faint hearted but I know for me, it's the challenges that makes this show so exciting!"

In charge of all backline requirements was Stephen 'Ruff' Stewart, Backline Crew Chief and Guitar Tech. "We have five musicians on stage not including Justin although he should be included in the list as it is not just singing and dancing. He does an acoustic set halfway through along with a drum solo." Along with Justin's musical additions the show also had a DJ, drummer, guitarist, bassist and keyboard player. "Every input is on Radial DI boxes. We are in a fortunate position to have all our own gear out with us with our backline flown over from the states run. It certainly creates less of a headache when you change continents to have all the same gear and not having to re-jig anything."

SET THE STAGE

It was not only VER that provided multiple departments for the *Purpose*



All the Carpenters: Corwin Scites, Ryan Snyder (standing behind the set cart), Dru Biba, Sammy Herrington, Trev Cromwell (laying in the hammock), Chase Paulino and Jared Letzt; The Automation department: Mike Williams, Stuart Hort, Andrew Johnstone, Jeremiah Anderson, Josh Brewer, Trey Welch.



tour. Las Vegas' Show Group Production Services' (SGPS) ShowRig provided the set, rigging and automation for the entire world tour. A long time supplier for many of Gratton's productions it was a natural fit for the PM's latest outing.

Heading up the rigging department was Ryan 'Rylo' Merfy. "What's really nice about this tour is that just like VER supplying lighting, video and audio, SGPS similarly is providing a services for three departments. The fact there are not too many 'bits' to the tour mean all departments co-exist nicely," jokingly adding that the only issue is that there is a need to clearly

mark all their boxes as they use the same flight cases.

"The show itself is large. We have scaled it back slightly from its first iteration but we are still working with 160,000lb (almost 72,600Kg)," continued Rylo. "In total we have 160 points. This show is slightly different from other tours as it has been designed not to have the B-rig set up. Most shows out there have the ability to scale back the production to fit into smaller venues but it's not possible for this one. Each department from automation to video are all co-dependant on one another and losing one would really effect the look of the tour. We also want to make sure that we

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There certainly were several challenges for the rigging departments and was not your standard rock 'n' roll show. Rylo discussed some of the challenges: "My mentality, no mater what show I work on is that I never want to sign off on anything were there is even a question of potential failure. It would kill me if someone who had saved their hard earned cash for a show and were expecting to have the best night of the year could be hurt if something had been overlooked. We do not cross our fingers out here." This mentality led the Head Rigger to make all the various elements full proof. "The trampoline is the best example of this. It required a fair bit of brainstorming to ensure it was safe. Once it descends from the roof and Justin and the dancers make their way on to it, you can't just take in consideration of their weight and that of the frame. You have to think about the shock-load when they are all bouncing on it. At the moment I have made it so it can handle three times the weight of all the dancers on there."

Jeremiah Anderson, Automation Crew Chief added: "We have several automation elements out on this show," he began. "We have a winch system that lifts dancers in front of the video screen for the songs *Where Are Ü Now* and *The Feeling*. We also have a glass box that we fly in with Justin inside for the opening track. We also have two catwalks that come in to get the dancers and Justin to the trampoline that descends from the roof. The final pieces we deal with is the octagon structure which holds the PRG V-Thru and descends to surround the singer during the song *I'll Show You*." For automation controls the department utilised Niscon's Raynok software.

Anderson agreed with the statement the Rylo made regarding the advantage of having all three departments utilising the same supplier. "It does make things much simpler. If any of the three departments has an issue we can always request help so we can more effectively jump on a problem. It's a common theme on this tour that everyone is a team play and always willing to help one another out."

Finally, responsible of putting the massive set together each day was Sammy Herrington, Head Carpenter. "We have six guys out on the road and then each day we have 14 local crew for load-in with 24 for the load-out," he commented. "We have really got into a groove on this tour and are loading out in about two and a half hours. Logistically it is a hard show to get everything in quickly to give all the other departments time to set up their words. The rolling stage has several elements of automation built into it making it rather difficult roll. I have to give credit to my number two carpenter, Ryan Snyder, who very much delicates jobs to the rest of the crew which gives me more time to deal with the logistical elements of the stage."

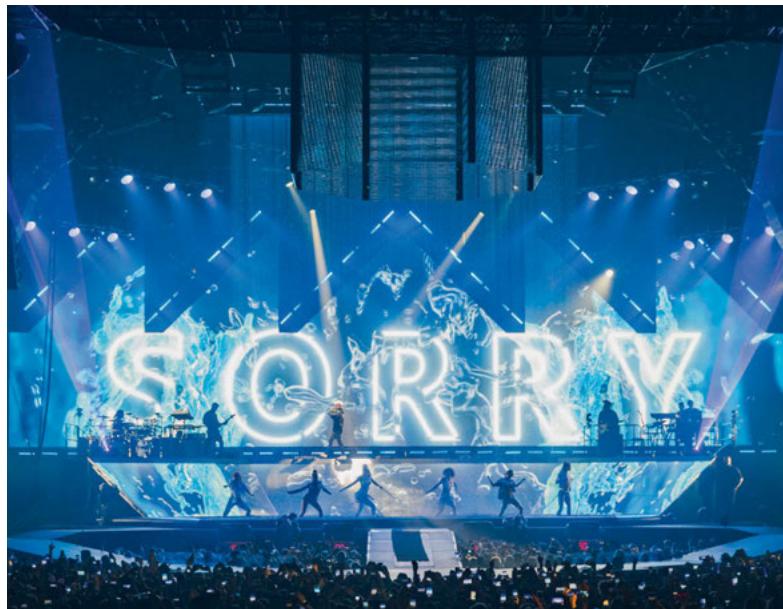
TRAVEL AND CATERING

The responsibility of moving crew and production from stop to stop fell to Beat The Street who provided 12 busses and Stagetruck moving the massive production with its convoy of 25 trucks. "We have worked on a few Bieber tours with different Production Manager over the last few years and have worked with the current Production Manager Chris Gratton since the late '90s when he worked with various rock and metal acts," commented Beat The Street's Jörg Philipp. "Since Chris took on the role of Director of Touring for all Scooter Braun we now supply all the acts on their European legs."

The real challenge for Beat The Streets on the *Purpose* tour came with a special request from the artist that there be a dedicated bus for his personal chef who would have the ability to cook any time. No a simple task while pelting down the various motorways of Europe! "To run a full stove and hot plate needed a stronger power supply that we usually supply on out busses," commented Philipp. "Our in-house electricians got to work straight away putting several gel batteries in any available locker room. The A party also wanted to have the ability to stop whenever they wanted. Many of the stops were unlikely to have a power supply so we needed to make sure all the busses could be self-sufficient." The solution Beat The Street came up with was to build a trailer with a purpose built generator that was towed by Justin's chef's bus. The generator had the ability to power all three vehicles for the A party providing each with 32amps. "The trailer also doubled up as extra kitchen space for Justin's chef," commented Philipp. "It's an extremely long tour, especially from a European standard. It was quite a logistical change and was only made possible with the great relationship and teamwork between our lead drivers and the production team."

The rest of the crew and performers on the *Purpose* tour were kept fed by the wonderful catering team from Eat Your Hearts Out throughout the European run.

During early stages of the *Purpose* tour, one of the goals was to make sure Bieber fans across the globe were treated to exactly the same show. To ensure this was possible Gratton brought in Shockwave Cargo, a company he has worked with on several other projects through the years. Catherine



Healy from Shockwave commented: "We have worked closely with Chris and crew throughout the 2016 International tour dates. Shockwave and its global network of agents have provided Cargo via Ocean Freight, Air Freight and Air Charter from the US to Japan, UK, Iceland and Germany to date. Team Bieber is an organised well oiled touring machine, a pleasure to work with all of them."

Handling all the travel for crew as well as dancers and musicians was The Appointment Group (TAG). Rachel Gosling discussed the services it provided for the last run: "We have worked with Chris previously when he was in the production manager's chair for Ariana Grande, and our Los Angeles office have looked after the Justin Bieber *Purpose* tour in North America also."

"Work began immediately to source the European hotel requirements, which we needed to focus on first and foremost due to the scale of the tour. There were 64 hotel bookings throughout the European leg of the tour and a total party of 104 on the road for us to take care of. We have also sourced and scheduled private air travel for both travelling parties throughout the length of the tour. Our ground-breaking Global Touring App software was made available to Chris and his Production Coordinator Jessica Sheehan, offering them a high-tech solution that is available at all hours of the day to keep close control over their travel arrangements. TAG Global Touring also provided an experienced team member, Tiffany Cathcart, to provide full-dedicated support to the party out on the road. Tiffany travelled ahead of the group to advance the hotels, liaise with on-site hotel contacts, handle any late changes and supervise the group check in process in all cities. This is all backed-up by our dedicated 24/7 emergency team who are always on hand for all of our clientele. It has been a privilege to work with Chris and Jessica and we are loving being a key part of such a fantastic tour production."

At the time this issue goes to print the European tour only has a few more dates left on the schedule, with Bieber and his crew now winding down after their intensive year on the road. But with plans to move into stadiums next year, it is clear the both the singer and the production are not quite ready to close the book on the *Purpose* campaign. With an already packed arena show it is yet to be seen what the Bieber machine will roll-out for the next leg...guess we will just have to wait and see.

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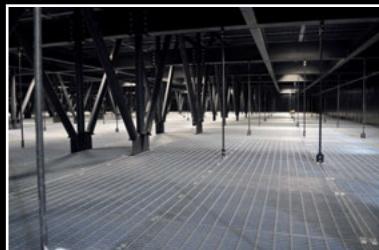
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THE TOURING FAMILY BEHIND DAUGHTER

I'm not entirely sure who coined the term neo folk rock, but it seems to fit well for London-based electronic trio, Daughter. Fronted by Briton Elena Tonra, alongside Swiss-born guitarist Igor Haefeli and French drummer Remi Aguiella, the band are developing a live show as enchanting as their ethereal sound. Kelly Murray speaks to the young crew helping Daughter deliver visual beauty and audio clarity on the road.

Having begun his relationship with the band six years ago, as FOH engineer and tour manager, Neil Dodd - who has since taken up the reins as FOH / PM - could often be found driving Daughter up and down the country the way most DIY-influenced bands start out, forming bonds that spawn a very personal and respectful way of working. "I was driving to every church they played in, in some very, very cold conditions!" he reminisced. "We love playing churches and older venues like that, because it's often such a beautiful setting with a different vibe than those found in modern venues. The acoustics you get in churches meant we could use the reverb of rooms, which helped out with their sound a lot."

Their sound is somewhat of a talking point; considering the modest budget the band has at this stage in their careers, their top class sound engineers have developed a technical feat that takes up little space yet delivers boldly. The band's increasing popularity has ensured they're now in demand at larger venues. This tour enjoyed a finale at Brixton Academy before venturing to the US, where its currently working its way through the theatre circuit.

Continued Dodd: "Over the years, it's gone from being just us in a van, to developing a sound that requires an extra session musician, a brass and percussion section, and for the first time ever, a truck for our PA. "It's quite



"The unity between visual and audible creativity excites me," LD Sam O'Riordan has enjoyed the challenge of designing his first electronic music tour.

intricate music. It's detailed across the board with lighting and sound, so it's a good challenge for all of us. To get that cross between a pop mix where the vocal is nice and loud, and also keep the ethereal nature of the music at the forefront is a hard balance to make, but we're achieving it. Everything they do is played live so there is no backing track at all, just samples on the keys. I mean, every production manager is budget conscious and we could have saved ourselves a fortune by buying a hard drive and pressing play, but where's the fun in that? There'd be more space on the bus for a start!" he laughed.

RENTAL RELIANCE

When it comes to his suppliers, Dodd knows what he wants in a vendor, and why those rental relationships are vital. "Because I came into a production role from an engineer's background, I know what it's like to work with suppliers that crew have an existing connection with. We've been using Adlib Audio since October 2015, and they've been cracking - the preparation of our gear is great, so we never have to worry about a single thing. All of their techs are really happy for you to plumb their knowledge and use them as a resource too, which is always a great bonus in a supplier. When you're going into new venues, you can always rely on Adlib to sound them out and work out exactly how you want something done.

"As for lighting, I chose to use the supplier Sam [O'Riordan, LD] trusts. He's got a long-standing relationship with TSL, and he's been very happy with them."

O'Riordan furthered: "I met Sam Tamplin, the director of TSL, a long time ago, when he started a small lighting company operated from his grandma's

garage and his dad's front room! I used to tag along to events at weekends, and after a few years, his company really took off. "Every time I walk into that warehouse, it amazes me how much they've grown - it's got a special place in my heart. I've watched it grow from being their first employee to it now employing over 40 people. In North America, we use Martin Kelley from Christie Lites, because they follow a similar ethos to TSL, in their immaculate prep, equipment and service."

Dodd continued: "Our freighting company, EFM have also been brilliant; we did a run of crazy festivals going from Milan to Lithuania in a couple of days and they didn't even break a sweat! They send a driver out and crack on - our gear always gets there and there's no fuss whatsoever."

Finishing the vendor jigsaw is Phoenix Bussing, which Dodd describes as being "very comfortable," and, for the first time, trucking duties came courtesy of Fly By Nite.

In case you hadn't gathered, the ambience on this tour is all very pleasant. We're currently sat on sofas while an open conversation ensues, making it obvious I'm in the presence of zero egos and multiple friendships. Tour Manager Cameron Stewart described the crew as really tight, stating: "We're honestly a happy little bunch. We all genuinely like each other, and we're pretty decent people... you have to be when you live on a bus together!"

CREATIVE CONSOLES

Perhaps the glue to these friendships is the level of excitement and appreciation felt within their jobs; they light up with child-like excitement when discussing gear, and seem pretty happy to have ended up with



FOH Engineer and Production Manager Neil Dodd; Backline Tech Toby O'Pray; Lighting Designer Sam O'Riordan, Tour Manager Cameron Stewart, Monitor Engineer Jamie Hickey and TSL Lighting Tech George Doherty; Drummer, Remi Aguilera; Dodd with his DiGiCo SD11i at FOH.



touring careers. For both Dodd and Monitor Engineer Jamie Hickey, DiGiCo is their think pad, at FOH, Neil is using an SD11i. Monitor mixes benefit from a DiGiCo SD10 for the larger, more complex shows, and an SD11i for the regular touring schedule. Dodd's SD11i currently has 52 inputs, eight FX, four Stereo Groups and four Mono outputs. He uses a Waves Extreme server for most of his dynamics and effects, using the on-board Dynamic EQs for a few select things.

Dodd commented: "For the European leg of the tour we dropped both of our consoles down to SD11i's because when we go to the US, we have to downsize from a truck to a trailer. The addition of the wind ensemble for the UK shows necessitated the move to an SD10 at monitors."

Hickey explained: "I'm already using every input and bus on the SD11i for the regular Daughter show. Adding 4 extra musicians and 16 extra inputs requires something with a bit more grunt! By using DiGiCo's SD Convert software, I'm able to switch my SD11i show file over to an SD10, loop in the extra SD Mini Rack and simply add the new inputs and outputs to my existing show. My Waves Multirack session is fully compatible too, so once we get to the US, it's an easy switch back to the SD11i."

Dodd agreed: "The transition between using an SD10 and SD11i is actually really easy because the Stealth Core 2 engine software allows you to do so much in a small unit. That's the thing about using DiGiCo, every time you come up against something and ask the question 'can it do this?', the answer is always 'yes!'

Hickey continued: "To aid the change

of consoles we're both using Pi Engineering X-Keys and an app called ControllerMate which allows us to add extra macro keys to the SD11i, using a simple 1in-1out MIDI interface. I've currently got 28 macro keys to play with instead of the built in eight. By adding these extra keys, it means work flow is as quick as on the bigger SD10.

"With DiGiCo, I find that it offers a very easy way of working - the desks have been well thought out so it feels easy and natural to mix on, and, of course, they sound great. I'm happy to try out new desks, but every time I've gone to use different ones, they never match the clarity and user friendly customisation of a DiGiCo. I think they've set the benchmark for digital consoles," he added.

Having honed his skills over the years, there is no one better to understand the band's FOH mix than Dodd, but what has been slightly more challenging is the right person to mix monitors, as he explained: "It's not difficult to mix necessarily, it's more that engineers will often try to layer a bit of rock 'n' roll style into it, but this music is so very subtle, it needs attention to detail, and Jamie has that in spades. He's very talented at what he does, and since he came along, we've never looked back."

Hickey has 52 input channels from stage, 16 wedge splits, 10 stereo FX returns, plus 12 channels of comms/talkback. For outputs, he has eight stereo IEM mixes for the band and ensemble, three wedge mixes, a P&D BC2, three stereo mixes for the techs and TM, and a stereo Matrix as a spare.

He said: "They want a full-on, immersive experience on stage. They want it record quality and that's the benchmark - it needs to sound

"DiGiCo have set the benchmark for digital consoles."
Jamie Hickey, Monitor Engineer

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Guitarist Igor Haefeli was hands-on with the show design.

Monitor Engineer Jamie Hickey with his DiGiCo SD10 console; Lighting Tech George Doherty with LD Sam O'Riordan and his grandMA set up.

amazing from start to finish and with DPA, DiGiCo and Waves that's all possible! I have a bunch of go-to Waves plugins that never fail to hit the mark: SSL G-Master Buss Compressor, C6 Multiband, H-Reverb and Vitamin are all used to great effect."

AUDIO APPROVAL

Hickey and Dodd have put a lot of thought in to the microphone choices for the Daughter setup. Each of the three guitar cabs are stereo mic'd, using pairs of AKG 414XLS, AKG 414 XlII and Audio-Technica 4040's. There are DPA 4099's on the toms, brass and percussion; DPA 2011's on the snares, vibes and ride cymbal; and perhaps most importantly, no less than six DPA d:facto's for vocals.

Dodd describes the d:facto as: "Totally game changing. We went over to Copenhagen to see their factory, and what they create there is nothing short of genius. There are parts that go into those microphones that are microscopic. Honestly, the components are so intricate, it blew my mind. Over the years I've gone through just about every vocal mic going to try and get the right kind of sound for Elena. As soon as we switched to DPA, we knew we'd found it."

The band is all on IEMs, using Sennheiser SR300 G3 transmitters with Jerry Harvey Audio JH16's and Rev33 Reds, the choice of Hickey's. "If you're going to be listening through something that sounds rubbish, there's no point in having in-ears, is there? The detail in the top end is fantastic with JH Audio; I won't use anything else."

Hickey continued: "There was a moment in the show recently where the guitarist got on the talkback and was like "it sounds fucking brilliant!" and I thought "great!", because when you spend so much time arranging all the little details such as panning, compression, reverb times etc, it's great that someone that is so close to the music notices a change for the better."

NO SETTLING

When required for the larger shows, Adlib supplied a PA and sound design (by Ian Nelson) who opted for a dual hang system. Two hangs per side consisting of two L-Acoustics K1 above six K2 which covered stalls and two hangs aside consisting of two K1-SB above six K2 flown above the balcony to cover the circle area. "Utilising the dual hang reduced slapback from the balcony, while the choice of K2 allowed for greater horizontal directivity and being able to use an 800KG point for an entire hang of PA including subs," said Dodd.

ARCs were used for both in and out fill, and KARA lip fills were deployed to cover the downstage edge. "Having such a high gain on my vocal mic makes a zonal PA a must. The more control of boxes further away from the mic means that I can really add impact to the show without drastically affecting in-ear mixes, and keeping that vocal prominent in a loud mix. When you're touring at this sort of level, there are so many variables. We do arena tours and whether you have to load in and out of a lift, if you're angsting about it all it's not going to work. It takes a bit of planning and organisation and a level head of thinking how everything is going to fit in," he added.

"To work in our camp, you need to keep a level head, and a view of the bigger picture. This show is totally scalable going from one venue to the next, so everybody here is trying to look at the final result and realise that sometimes they might have to compromise. But I feel like with this set up, nobody settles for anything at the same time. It has to be close to perfect, no matter how we get there."

FULL FUNCTIONALITY IN SMALL SPACES

LD O'Riordan came into the fold at the end of the last album campaign. "I've really enjoyed the challenge," he smiled. "Because my background was in pop and rock and this was the first time I'd worked with folk and electronic

music. You could say their sound is quite gentle, but there are tunes that are heavy too and that makes for an excellent dynamic when you're designing lighting.

"Igor [Haefeli, guitarist] is a very creative guy, not just audibly, but visually too, so we worked on the look of the show together. The band is a three piece, predominantly, although we have the extra musicians on this UK run. When we were thinking about the design in terms of shapes, the most obvious for a three piece on stage for the majority of shows was a triangle. We quickly decided on a very clean look allowing for big open spaces, yet utilising and emphasising depth effectively. In doing this we flew five 1.5m wide grey sails, arranged in a 'V' formation, one sat centre and four at a 35° angle heading down stage. The original plan was to project onto these sails with video, but reflecting on cost, we quickly realised this wouldn't be a viable option within our budgetary restraints.

"As an alternative option, we decided to use spot lights, with good old fashion theatre tricks - focussing between gobo and animation wheels - creating texture and movement, and

using blades to shutter into the sail.

"We also had a mirror image of fixtures, from rig to floor. The full rig comprised five Martin by Harman MAC Viper Performances, four Martin by Harman MAC Viper Profiles, six Martin by Harman Aura XB's, nine Robe Robin 600 Spots, 54 Robe Robin 100 Beams, 14 SGM P-5's, 14 GLP impression X4 Bar 20's, 20 2-Cell generic molefays and four ShowTec Sunstrip Active DMX strips, all of which had to cater for the absence of video elements.

"When it became apparent that video wasn't a feasible option, I

immediately knew that I wanted to use the Vipers as a spot. For me, the spot is all about optics, and clarity is key. The Vipers have mastered it. I've used the Vipers for projecting on to the sails because when you don't have projection tools but you still want texture, and animated texture at that, it's perfect. In terms of upstage backlight spots, we're using the Viper Profiles, which again for the same reasons, I love the optics and the clarity of the beam." O'Riordan also utilised Robe 100 Beams. "They're not the newest of fixtures, but they're great - lightweight, tiny, and energy efficient. You can throw them around the stage and still have a really big look on a budget."

"The XB's are excellent wash lights, they've got a great zoom, a great colour mixing palette. The two GLP X4's deliver bold colours. I didn't want

"I think the day I say a design is entirely my own is the day I should consider a new career, because for me personally, that would be ego getting in the way of a process that's best enjoyed with others."

Sam O'Riordan, LD

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The implementation of DPA's d:facto range was described as "totally game changing" by FOH Engineer Neil Dodd.

something that we were going to rig and just light the sails, and this fixture has the ability to tilt and the zoom amazingly well. I first noticed it at a festival, and I couldn't wait to be able to use it on this tour. I really like what GLP are doing in general at the moment, their X4 wash lights are a really good design," he noted.

For control, O'Riordan uses his trusty MA Lighting setup; a grandMA OnPC Command Wing and a grandMA Fader Wing. "The great thing about this MA setup, is that I have the full functionality in terms of parameter count of an MA Light, with a tracking back-up, that fits into a 1610 Peli, I can fly it everywhere - pretty revolutionary!"

With the band's finale taking place in their homebase of London, the show had to be spectacular. And O'Riordan relished the opportunity: "Brixton was a great show. The intricacy of their music makes this a really exciting tour to work on, yet a challenging show to light. There's so much detail to pick out and highlight, even more challenging sometimes is to leave it alone and allow the music room to resonate with the audience without distraction. Yet framing a song with a visual representation, an environment in which to effectively deliver the message behind its origin is important. Elena, and the band are such beautiful songwriters, that less is so often more within a large portion of their set.

"I can't take full credit for the complete design, as a lot of the concepts we worked through and developed backstage at festivals with a pen, a napkin and some Spinal Tap dimensions moments! I love that way of working, it's organic and really enjoyable - some ideas literally had us crying with laughter - but that's the beauty of a creative process. I think the day I say a design

is entirely my own is the day I should consider a new career, because for me personally, that would be ego getting in the way of a process that's best enjoyed with others."

After watching the show, there's no doubt of the talent on offer in camp Daughter, both on and off stage. "The set often feels like I'm walking around a gallery, with each song being a different canvas, captivating a different emotion. The unity between visual and audible creativity excites me," O'Riordan said.

Drawn in delicately by the unorthodox and dark love songs, and enchanted by an otherworldly and ambient stage setting, the production shows a well thought-out glimpse of something bound to develop further with unique ideas and technical expertise. Dodd concluded: "We encourage and support each other's ideas, and I think that's why we can hang out together on our days off too, believe it or not! We spend 15 hours a day, seven days a week together

and still want to go for a beer and talk absolute nonsense! When you have a trusting relationship with everybody you work with, that's how you become a proper team."

TPi

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"We encourage and support each other's ideas, and I think that's why we can hang out together on our days off too."
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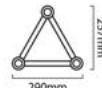
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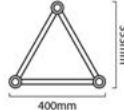
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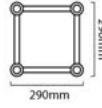
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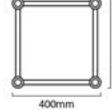
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NICKELBACK LIVE IN CONCERT

Following a premature end to the band's previous world tour, crowds gathered at Manchester Arena to see Nickelback return to the stage with a point to prove. TPI's Ste Durham was in attendance to see how the Canadian rockers and their crew are making up for lost time.

Although Nickelback's *No Fixed Address* tour was set to grace the world's arenas uninterrupted in the same vein as its predecessors, the music gods had other plans. In June 2015, with almost 40 dates still left to play, the band's frontman Chad Kroeger was diagnosed with an intracordal cyst on his voice box, which required immediate surgery followed by a period of vocal rest. As a result, the remainder of the tour was cancelled, leaving many a loyal fan with their Nickelback itch unscratched.

Production Manager / Rigger Mike Farese brought invaluable experience to the Nickelback crew when he joined in 2012, having earned his arena rock credentials with the likes of Bon Jovi. For the 2016 run he again enlisted his preferred vendors, all of which have been involved in the last few Nickelback tours. These included audio from Clair Global, lighting, rigging and video from PRG XL Video / Nocturne and trucking and bussing from EST and Coach Service, respectively.

CHAINSAW? CHECK...

With their singer's vocal chords stronger than ever after an intensive rehabilitation process, the band decided to hit the road straight away with the sole intention of repaying their fans' patience. Rather than being

lumbered with the aesthetic or setlist of a particular album, the band were free to head out on an old-fashioned rock tour and simply 'be Nickelback' in front of an eager audience.

One of the main components of being Nickelback in a live setting rests with the quality of the band's audio. Although he has mixed for them on a number of occasions in recent years, FOH Engineer Joe Keiser only officially came on board with Nickelback a few months before our conversation at Manchester Arena.

He said: "I've always wanted to mix for these guys. To be completely honest, the band are so good I could use any gear. It's every sound guy's dream to work with consistent, powerful rock musicians. Guitarists Chad and Ryan sing really well, as does the drummer Daniel. If we put a couple of room mics in front of that stage it would still probably sound pretty good!"

Despite the strength of the raw materials at Keiser's disposal, he selected an I-Series system from Clair Global to ensure that this power was not lost in the cavernous arenas that would house the band during its European run. He chose 14 boxes of I-5 per side, with additional I-3 boxes as side hangs to fill out the seated areas of the venue.

Keiser enthused: "The system's mass is amazing and I'm not talking

Below: Brothers Chad and Mike Kroeger make up half of Nickelback's powerful audio assault.



volume, I'm talking girth! The guitars, bass, and kick drum in particular have to sound big, and they do, plus I know the I-Series really well so I don't have to go searching for frequencies. The I-3 on the sides are just to give us something a little different, as well as a wider dispersion. If I were mixing Michael Bublé in here I could do it all with I-3 but Nickelback need that little bit extra."

The low end was reinforced by a flown, three per side sub array as well as an additional 16 Clair BT-218's along the ground. Keiser continued: "We wanted something in the air just in case it was a bit thin but, honestly, we don't really need them. The new double 18-inch subs are insanely powerful - even with the way this band plays the amps are bored! I could probably ditch four of the BT-218's and you wouldn't notice. The same can be said for the Lab.gruppen amps that drive the PA."

He added: "This system is never near its limit, and this is a loud, powerful band. You can feel when you're mixing if you're getting close to the limit as the speakers tend to go into protection mode and don't react very well. The mix starts to break up. This Clair system feels wide open, like it should, and I'm really happy with how it's running. There is a sweet spot well below the limit so I've still got plenty of breathing room."

To stay on top of this formidable system, Keiser selected a DiGiCo SD5 along with an impressive outboard rack that included Midas XL42 channel strips, a pair of Avalon VT-737SPs, a Bricasti M7 reverb and a dbx 160A Compressor. He explained: "There's definitely something to be said for being able to look over, check a meter and turn a knob without having to scroll through a bunch of scenes. That said, I would have no problem doing this show if you took the rack away from me right now. I'd still get to where I'm going, this is just the way I like to drive."

One of Keiser's main duties from FOH was to get the most out of the three vocalists on stage, with Chad Kroeger's voice in particular having its own idiosyncrasies, though perhaps not those associated with your typical frontman. "That guy's voice is like a freaking chainsaw, it's so powerful," Keiser laughed. "With most vocalists you have to add a little preamp as the show progresses to make up for fatigue but I have been backing off - somehow he gets louder!"

"The Avalon unit has been wonderful for taking care of his voice and I don't have to babysit a fader or compressor. I'll be hitting 5-7db of gain compression when he really lays into something hard and the high end is

still as bright and crisp as it should be."

Even with his hand-picked rack, Keiser has begun to go back to the DiGiCo for some effects. One such case is when the band uses separate 'bullet mics' for certain sections, to saturate the vocal to the point where it sounds something like an old Second World War-era radio. Although he was using an outboard vocal distortion for this, Keiser returned to the console in order to make use of the tube saturation available at the preamp.

When it came to selecting the main microphones, three quarters of Nickelback opted for the latest for the latest SM58 capsules from Shure, though the frontman prefers an older version. Keiser explained: "We tried to get them all on the new mics as soon as we could but Chad thought it was giving him too much help. Anyone else's voice through the older model he likes sounds a little dull but he's got the chainsaw so it sounds great."

Clean guitar cabs are mic'd with Audio-Technica AT4060's and there are Shure SM57's on the dirty guitars, both of which are kept in isolation boxes to keep audio interference down. Keiser chose to forgo amps altogether to achieve Mike Kroeger's dense bass tones, instead opting for Avalon and Tech 21 Sansamp DIs. Drums were mic'd with a combination of AKG, Sennheiser and Shure capsules, as well as a more unorthodox method to add another dimension to the cymbal sound.

Drummer Daniel Adair takes care of all the high vocal harmonies and wears a headset mic to achieve this. However, as well as being open to pick up the necessary parts of the song, Keiser realised he could also use the input to get a bit of extra colour from his cymbals. He said: "Originally I tried to fight the bleed but it was impossible, so now I embrace it. We have overheads as well, but the mix really comes together with that extra mic. Every now and then I hear panting in the PA and I have to remember to turn him down!"

Monitor Engineer Glen Collett has become accustomed to the requirements of such a solid musical unit. He said: "Although I have to give each band member their own tailored mix, they still have to enjoy it every night so I need every one of them to sound alive and big."

Surprisingly for such a no-frills rock band, every one of the members has opted to rely on in-ear monitoring. Collett decided that Shure was the only way to go, and chose a DiGiCo SD5 to create and manage his various mixes. He said: "Shure has knocked it out of the park in recent years and didn't hesitate in the face of advancing technology. With frequency



Above: Red, so much red.

bands shrinking and digital TV on the rise, companies have to be really smart about squeezing what they can out of the little bandwidth we have, especially with a stereo mix."

"The guys are used to using IEM now, as well as digital consoles. They are fully aware that each song has its snapshots and so on, so they can ask for more on one song or more BVs on another. All of the gear is leased from Clair as well, but we brought the consoles and so on from the US branch to maintain a little stability," Collett explained.

Monitor world was tucked behind the stage at Manchester Arena, so Collett had to be on the ball and listening intently for any issues during the show. He continued: "Chad in particular can have changes throughout the show, but even that is quite rare by this point. They all have talk back mics and the techs can tell me about any tweaks, then I have VCAs for selected inputs for Chad."

As the band doesn't often soundcheck unless there is something in particular to rehearse, Keiser often has to get two or three songs in before he can start to breathe a little easier. He said: "By this point I quite often glance around the arena and notice that everyone is singing every word. They're so loud and so in unison that I could sometimes swear it's coming through the PA!"

RETURN OF THE MAC

The lighting design for the *No Fixed Address* tour was originally based around a circular motif, though the streamlined rig meant that a few changes had to be made, namely morphing the circle into an arch and scaling back the amount of video being framed.

LD Justin Collie expanded: "When it came to the redesign, a lot of the process was pragmatic as we didn't want to destroy the show completely. The arch shape of the lighting trusses was a gentle compromise between the circle and a straight truss - we were able to keep some of that shape and keep the content with circles relevant."

While the original idea had resonated with the band, Collie's preferred creative process meant that they were with him every step of the way to ensure the design still communicated their original ideas. Collie continued: "We often sit with the client and find out what they want to do, what the tour means to them, what they want to say to people. Then we go away and brainstorm on the initial thoughts and keywords and come back to them with a concept. It's our ideal process and not every client wants to do it that

way but Nickelback were very involved throughout and it's always a much more pleasant and successful experience when that is the case.

"The next step was getting them on board with the video concepts that our partners at 4U2C had formulated. Every so often we pull them in to say 'yay or nay' on any new visual aspects of the production. It's a very long meticulous process but by the time we got to rehearsals they knew what to expect, making the period very productive. We had guys on site to adjust as we went so it was a fluid, seamless process."

The decision was eventually made to refocus on lighting and IMAG effects over content, though Collie felt it important to keep the fixture types themselves more consistent because of the programming issues that would occur.

While Collie was only involved during the initial design period, trusted Lighting Director Mac Mosier was eager to take his chance to operate for the band when the call arrived. He remembered: "We loaded into Helsinki in one day for the first show, which meant we had the best part of two days to rehearse for the European/UK leg. We had been away from this show after the tour was cancelled in 2015. Everyone picked right up where we left off in 2015, seemed like we were on a two week break instead of a year!"

The rig was based on a series of arched trusses, designed to accommodate a great deal of movement and creating the illusion of a much larger setup. The very upstage truss housed Claypaky Sharpys, Martin by Harman MAC Vipers and GLP impression X4 Bar 20's, which were also punctuated by strategically placed Claypaky A.Ieda B-EYE K10's and Showtec Sunstrips.

Mosier commented: "For the size of the trusses it's not really a lot of fixtures but the way Justin designed it makes it look massive. We also had Kirk Miller on site in Rock Litiz in 2015 to help programme the video content, while Felix Peralta served as the lighting programmer. Justin and I had ideas, as did these guys, so it was a really laid back and creative collaboration."

He continued: "The Vipers are really effective as hard edge spots and they have great colours, gobos and optics. The X4's are also really important to the look, as are the Tmb Solaris Flares we have dotted around. The looks you can get out of the Sharpys are amazing but still really simple. Even a pan effect looks great and that movement really helps to make the rig look bigger in these huge venues. once there's movement."

As well as the setlist that served as the basis for the original design,

the band also introduced five new songs that Mosier had to programme overnight in Helsinki.

He laughed: "I was still on west coast time so it was ok! We are using the MA Lighting grandMA2 consoles, which always makes it easier when you already have a full show programmed. I didn't punch in timecode for the new songs, simply because I like running the console - you know, like LDs used to do it!

"I did use time code for the start of some songs. I intentionally didn't bring spots in until they started singing the first verse and timecode allowed me to start a few songs in total darkness. The band could see each other with a low level UV light, so it was dramatic coming from black to full on CTO chases, throwing shapes around."

Mosier continued: "We carry our own spots and I balance them every day to make sure it looks right for the cameras and the artists themselves, not to mention everyone in the audience filming on their phones. We have the PRG Lycian M2 followspots and they're working well, particularly considering the size."

Collie was also pleased with the fixtures as well his choice of LD. He added: "The Sunstrips were simple but super effective and the Solaris Flares really are one of favourite fixtures at the moment. Mac is the most competent LDs you could ever wish to have on your crew. We worked on the policy that no news is good news and I didn't hear anything!"

As was the case with Nickelback's audio crew, the lighting department had also got into the groove by the time TPi met them in Manchester. Mosier said: "The lighting crew had an 11am load-in today so they're happy! The ethos really does come down from the band and I've got nothing but good things to say about working with them.

"The other day we introduced a new song and I only had an afternoon to put it together. The band cut their own rehearsal time short so I could programme - Chad even got his food and came to sit with me while I did it. That kind of direct input is great for us in these situations."

Collie concurred: "You come into these situations with a lot of

preconceived notions based on the band's media persona but I quickly discovered that they were very talented musicians who were very engaged with the show. They're very self-deprecating and aware of where they fit in the pantheon of rock and roll. They're super nice guys, they're very creative and it was a pleasant experience all round."

PRG XL Video also supplied three projection screens for the show as well as three manned cameras and one locked off drum cam, all four of which were manufactured by Sony. Video Director Jonathan Beswick chose a Panasonic AV-HS400 switcher to cut the show and an Apple MacBook to run content that was primarily driven on the largest projection screen, situated upstage behind the band.

The remaining two screens, rigged at stage left and right, were primarily used for IMAG, though some effects and content were overlayed as the show progressed. Beswick, something of a Nickelback veteran having joined the crew in 2010, explained: "The original *No Fixed Address* content was reformatted for a much wider LED wall. We reformatted and redesigned some of it but I keep it quite simple on the night."

"The only effects I use on the IMAG screens, other than cuts and dissolves, are feedback and blending the last few songs - namely a flame effect for *Burn It To The Ground* and red tint for the Foo Fighters cover, *Everlong*. The rest of the content is mostly reserved for the upstage screen."

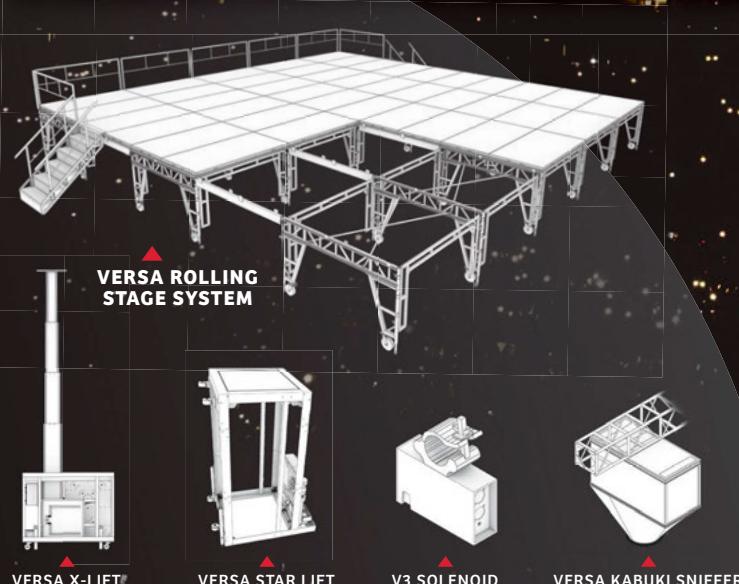
He continued: "Usually we have a substantial amount of LED and more complex content but this show is more of a straightforward rock show that's not promoting anything specific."

"It's more about driving home the imagery of the song. Social media has been driving the setlist on this tour as the band has a 36-song catalogue to choose from. It changes regularly and both the fans and the band have been getting a kick out of it."

FULL RIGS, EMPTY TRUCKS

All Access Staging and Productions supplied on stage risers for the band, as well as extensions to the house stages at the front and back. UK Marketing

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Above: Touring LD Mac Mosier prepares for show time; The new boy at FOH, Joe Keiser.

and Sales Manager for All Access, Matt Bull commented: "This included an upstage runway, a four ft extension out to two 16ft ego risers at the front, and more decking to make it 4ft deeper at the back. The band had some custom decks made in the US and shipped them over for the European leg."

In addition to lighting and video, PRG XL Video also supplied rigging for the European leg of Nickelback's tour. As well as acting as Production Manager for the majority of the day, Farese also had to make sure he was first in the venue each morning to help mark the floor.

Farese, Tour Rigger Danny Machado, and a host of local crew used a mixture of CM Lonestar and Area Four Industries EXE Rise chain hoists to fly the PA, screens and lighting rig. The PM explained: "This show is quite light, weighing in at about 30 tonnes, but we've had to account for the fact that the venue sizes and shapes in Europe are so varied. You style your show so any of these places can accommodate you, otherwise you end up basically leaving money in the truck."

The gear was weighed during the rehearsal period in Helsinki, with the crew making sure that everything was as safe and easy to rig as possible. Farese continued: "If you get the right guys and everyone knows what they're doing then it's really easy. Once we got through Helsinki and the first couple of shows then everyone knew where their place was in the full production. It shouldn't be a mad dash for real estate every day, that's why we work the way we do."

After Farese and the riggers have made their markings, video is flown, closely followed by audio. The rest of the crew can then fill in behind with the lighting rig, monitor world and the backline. He continued: "If you layer it there's no fighting - it's human nature to want to look after yourself but it doesn't need to be like that. It doesn't get done any faster. I'm used to being out there and you're always a neutral liaison out there as a rigger anyway so it does help me as a PM. I've been out there for 30 years and I've seen it all but that still doesn't mean I know it, because I don't. It just helps with the physical building of a show."

Machado added: "Thankfully in Europe a lot of people have an understanding of English, though some of us have other languages like Spanish that make some things easier."

However obvious it was, the question had to be asked; does the PM being a rigger help when it comes to working in a department that is typically lower on the pecking order? Machado answered wryly: "Mike's experience certainly is very helpful, particularly when we're marking the floor in the morning. He knows we can't have people on top of us when we are working and it's much easier to have that buffer of being in first. Essentially we're able to work uninterrupted and that also means we're not getting in everybody's way."

Stage Manager John F. Williamson, another of the tour's early risers, was also supportive of Farese's methods: "I arrive first thing with Danny and Mike to do a walkaround and take care of fire lanes, storage areas, pathways for gear and so on. Then I'm there to organise hands - I'll jump in and help to get the screen up and trimmed before lighting arrives, then I'll do the same for them and the audio guys. It's all about the out after that."

Much like his PM, Williamson also comes from a rigging background, so is



happy to get stuck in and help whichever department encounters an obstacle. He added: "The load-out can take up to two hours, though that can run longer if something went wrong. If it's organised correctly then it should be stress-free and no one has to start yelling! Sometimes I have to act like the tour traffic cop and make sure all the departments work together but generally they look out for each other. A lot of us knew each other from the road before we got together on this so it's worked out well."

SUNNY SIDE UP

After leaving the world of rock 'n' roll catering for 25 years to work in an 'alternative school' in Kissimmee, Popcorn's Jane Funk thought it was time to make her full return with the Canadian four-piece. Although the days of being a teaching assistant to murderous gang members (seriously) are a thing of the past, Funk and the rest of the Popcorn crew still had their work cut out at Manchester Arena.

She commented: "Unless we do back-to-back gigs it's only the drivers in for breakfast, but that soon turns into 60 for lunch and 80 for dinner. As well as that we have to make sure we are accommodating to any allergies, preferences or objections."

"We are always happy to make individual dishes to go alongside the buffet that we serve, regardless of whether that person is crew or Chad Kroeger."

Funk continued: "Dinner will be a couple of meat options, possibly a fish and then one veggie and one vegan, if necessary. We are definitely doing more gluten free dishes than ever and that is just as true for the veggie and vegan options. We're happy to do it."

Popcorn were only on board for the two weeks of UK dates, but that was still long enough to jump on board the Team Nickelback positivity wagon. She concluded: "They're certainly not a demanding band but they are very nice guys. Obviously they're Canadian and there's a lot of US crew so we'll throw in some home comforts now and again. Everybody has been happy with what they're given and the same goes for the support band, Monster Truck, who are great lads too."

EST provided a total of seven tractor/trailers to transport the gear, using 28 extra drivers for the 86,000 miles clocked up across Europe, while Coach Service took care of the band and crew.

The simple fact that this group of people can spend that much together on the road and still manage to cultivate the kind of working atmosphere I experienced in Manchester is a testament to their extreme professionalism as well as their sunny disposition. Whether this comes from production, the crew or the band themselves is irrelevant - I'm just looking forward to the next time.

TPI

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JAMES BLAKE

TPI's Stew Hume joins the singer-songwriter's crew who, like the artist, have bucked the trends of other electronic acts, creating a stage show that has entertained audiences on both sides of the Atlantic.



Opposite: James Blake performed his unique blend of electro-soul without a MacBook in sight. Below: For this run, Blake and his production team at UVA opted to bring in an LED backdrop to integrate into the artist's signature minimalist look; Monitor Engineer, Francoise Le Moignan; Tour Director, David Lawrence of DNG Production.



In the last few years, we have witnessed an undeniable proliferation of electronic music into the mainstream. Greater accessibility to software and MIDI enabled interfaces has ushered in a musical milieu in which you are just as likely to see MacBooks on stage as you are guitar cabs. However, if you want to experience an artist pushing the boundaries of electronic music, then look no further than James Blake. The young British singer / songwriter-come-producer has thrown electronic music the rulebook out of the window, opting instead to turn away from the laptop-driven live show. Aided by a virtuoso drummer and guitarist, classically trained Blake produces electronic tracks with just a piano. The release of his third album, *The Colour in Anything*, suggests the singer has no plans to change his ways. After a successful US run, the tour returned to UK shores. TPi checked in with the creative crew responsible for producing the visual and audio.

PRODUCTION

Commanding Blake's production was Tour Director and proud Mancunian David Lawrence of DNG Production. After dragging him away from the United game [sorry again, Dave] we discussed *The Colour in Anything* tour and its development. "The idea behind this tour emerged over a period of 12 months. It all began during a conversation with United Visual Artists (UVA), who worked on the design of the tour. Throughout the summer we did several festival dates on which we trialled different elements, which we then took indoors on the US run."

Here, Blake and UVA were keen to push their stage show further than ever before. This included a gigantic video back wall that blended seamlessly into the lighting and set design, courtesy of long-time collaborator Christopher Bushell.

"One of the biggest considerations we took into account was the scalability of this show," said Lawrence. "In the States we played 1,800 capacity venues, all the way up to 5,000 and it has been a similar story in the UK. But the goal from the beginning was not to compromise the look of each show, meaning each department needed an A and B option while still

staying true to the original design." Lawrence went onto explain the team that amassed around Blake is composed of the perfect men and women for the job; able to adapt no matter the size of venue.

As well as showcasing their malleability, this crew also had to adapt to the unpredictable and organic nature of Blake's live show. "James has always been proud of the lack of laptops and timecode," commented Lawrence. "In an age of electronic heavy bands all using a variety of computer systems, it's nice to have a 'live' band doing this style of music. That's what makes this show so special; the whole audience can see exactly what is going on." Bushell finished the thought: "There really is no safety-net when you work this way. The reason this show is so impactful is that our audio, lighting and video departments sync up seamlessly. It's down to everyone working on the show to throw themselves into the performance."

VISUAL CUES

"James and his Manager, Dan Foad, were hesitant about the idea of having video within the live show," said Bushell, while discussing the visual elements of this spectacular display of audiovisual teamwork. "The sudden U-turn came about when Blake and his production saw Kate Bush's latest show. Their wheels started turning. They realised that you didn't necessarily have to use a huge video screen throughout the whole show. Instead, we use the LED screen as a giant canvas, only picking bits out of it when necessary."

From the outset, the integration of the lighting and video departments has been a keystone of this live show. However, to succeed UVA needed to fit one vital piece of the jigsaw as Bushell explained: "It was necessary to find a fantastic operator who could drive the d3 server. Thankfully we found one..."

Enter Icarus Wilson-Wright. The last time TPi met Wilson-Wright he was manning the video screens for UK electro duo, Disclosure. But this time, we encountered the Content Operator tackling a different beast: producing video content rendered live on the spot. "This show has been incredibly interesting to work on. I was brought on board in September and

immediately realised the challenge it represented," said Wilson-Wright, adding: "There is no timecode on the show so I have to follow along with the arrangements live, which means manually moving the elements in and out."

For *The Colour in Anything*, Wilson-Wright was running 2x2plus d3 Technologies servers with the Notch system piggybacking on the media server. "This set up means I am able to work within a 3D environment in the server. All the content is rendered live rather than simply playing back pre-rendered content. This gives me the ability to change the parameters of my screen depending on the size of venue we are working with and how big the LED screen is for each show. No matter the size of screen, it looks as though the content has been generated for this specific canvas."

Wilson-Wright has worked with d3 media servers for several years even before it was a commercial product and still a project run by UVA. "d3 has been ideal for this project as it has some really useful functions," Wilson-Wright explained. "The server has an element called universal cross fade whereby you can set the transition between the elements. So if I'm jumping on a timeline and it's not a hard cut, I can get a soft transition from one element to another. This has been vital as sometimes there is a change in tempo and I might be slightly out of sync, but with this function I am able to catch up with the music without the visuals changing and jarring the audience."

For the LED screens the production deployed Winvision Air 9mm. Video Supplier and Rigger, Carl Martin of Digital Vision, talked through the decision to deploy the screen. "The brief dictated it would be lightweight and incredibly bright. There was also a need for an LED solution that could be both ground supported and flown. The screen is designed for the outdoor environment so it is very bright. It's perfect for this tour as some of the content is quite strobe-heavy and blinding."

TPI asked Bushell about the overall look of the show. "I suppose you could say it's quite minimalist. It's about lighting a source rather than showing off the latest moving fixture. Both the video department and I focus on experimentation with shadow and negative space."

"*The Colour in Anything* is a really fun show to work on. I am always



Visual dream-team, Content Operator Icarus Wilson-Wright and LD Chris Bushell; FOH Engineer, Jamie Harley with the Midas Heritage 3000.



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passionate about lighting live and - although I do have a few cues in place just to make sure I lock on with the video - the majority of the show relies on the unique atmosphere of each day and I light the room accordingly."

The shows' lighting was supplied by Lights Control Rigging, the new live events specialist owned by veteran of the lighting industry, Mike Oates. "We have worked successfully with Blake's Tour Director, Dave Lawrence, who brought us on for this UK run," explained Oates. "For the tour, LD Chris was very specific with his fixture list because of the unique design of the show and how it would stand out. We really enjoyed working Dave and the whole touring team. They have produced an exceptionally vibrant and beautiful looking show where video and lighting really worked well together."

Stated Bushell: "Lights Control Rigging have provided us with a large array of Martin by Harman products including 10 Martin Viper Profiles and 10 Martin MAC Quantum and 20 Martin MAC Auras. For the entire performance Blake and the other two musicians played from individual square risers. "This stage set up makes it a dream to light," Bushell enthused. "They don't move around and it's a great starting point to start developing looks. It eliminates tricky variables throughout the set."

Illuminating the three structures from above were the GLP impression X4 Bar 20's. "They are pretty much the only fixtures which define the square risers along with the Martin Aura XB's which we clustered inside the squares to light the subjects within." Also present on the rig were seven SGM Q-7 and 12 ETC Source4 PARs.

For control Bushell opted to use an Avolites Quartz Lighting Console. "I personally own a Quartz console with a Titan Mobile Wing, all nicely packaged up in the custom Avolites wheelie case," he said. "Together, they give me enough control options to tweak, fuss and hit stuff moment by moment - all whilst still packing down nice and tight for air travel and dragging through festivals."

The compact Quartz console is the latest and smallest addition to the Avolites Titan Mobile family coming complete with on-board processing and a bright 12.1 inch screen, yet small enough to be taken as hold luggage. For the tour Bushell combined the Quartz with the Titan Mobile Wing giving him direct access to a range of powerful features. "I love an Avolites desk because it's an art desk, not a maths desk," concluded Bushell. "I can mix

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A family photo of the James Blake crew on their last night of the tour in London.

stuff around, manipulate and tweak - and everything stays where I left it. I tend to set up a series of elements track by track - from simple cues to convoluted nonsense - rather than stack them on one big red button. This keeps it all live and adjustable giving me the ability to reflect the changing venue atmosphere, and reflect the vibe of the band and even the audience."

AUDIO

Those who revel in pigeonholing artists might struggle with Blake who has refused to be constricted by one specific genre throughout his career. From neo-soul material to dubstep by way of dream-electronica, Blake is a rare breed of musician who can entertain a broad spectrum of fans.

Responsible for recreating the soundscapes synonymous with the singer's back catalogue was FOH Engineer, Jamie Harley and Monitor Engineer, Francoise Le Moignan. Their equipment was supplied by Skan PA. From FOH Harley walked us through his analogue set-up, starting with a Midas Heritage 3000. "I actually inherited this audio setup from the previous FOH engineer," began Harley. "As a producer James has a real love for analogue gear and I was more than happy to take on the mantle of a full analogue FOH set up. It sounds fantastic and it's really refreshing not to be staring at screens and to just mix freely. I have really enjoyed the fidelity of the whole experience."

If his large analogue desk was not enough, Harley also had a whole array of outboard gear to ensure he was able to recreate the signature Blake sounds. Some rack highlights, which Harley directed to Blake's vocals, included the Empirical Labs Lil Freq and the Empirical Labs Distressor EL8-X Compressor. "The Lil Freq is great," announced Harley. "It's a hyper acute piece of kit and you can get it down to do some really fine cues. The Distressor, in my opinion, is one of the finest compressors on the market. I have also deployed the Mercury7 Reverb, which has been really great for the vocals. Another bit of outboard is the Elysia Mpressor in the 500 unit, which is great. It's a very transparent compressor that keeps everything under control. It also deals with the low end really well. I used it throughout the summer and have adopted it for the drums."

As expected of a musician / producer, Blake had clear instruction for the man at the helm of the FOH console. "The main goal is to recreate the songs

from the album as true to form as possible. During production in the States we honed these sounds. With that being said, they are a live band and they do vary from night to night. I am certainly not mixing a playback track and have to be adaptable. This is across the board for all departments; we must expect the unexpected." Embracing the versatility and variable venue sizes, Harley explained that he had to think on his feet about what mix would resonate with which audience. "For this run we have played everything from clubs to amphitheatres. I always pride myself on mixing from a very emotional point of view and you have to really take notice of what environment you are in."

Harley concluded by hailing Skan PA: "I have worked with the company a few time before this - including a run with Hot Chip. For this tour their service has been fantastic! A few members of their team turned up to my house when we returned from the US leg of the tour and within a few days had produced an incredibly tactile FOH rack system. Everything is right in front of me and it's been nice to build up a muscle memory of where all my various elements are, compared to the alternative of flicking through several pages on a digital console."

As well as an audio control package, Skan also provided the Brixton Academy show with a d&b audioteknich J-series PA system.

Controlling mix stage side was Monitor Engineer Francoise Le Moignan. For the tour Skan provided the engineer with a DiGiCo SD10-24. She filled in the gaps: "I have worked with Skan for over 15 years and have a fantastic relationship with the guys over there. For this tour they provided me with a really nice, slimmed down control package - which is precisely what I need. One thing I really respect about the company is the effort they put into make sure they provide you with a really tidy set up." With three musicians on stage, Le Moignan was only juggling 23 inputs, all of which were transmitted from a rack of Radial DI boxes at the centre of the stage. "This really is not a big show in terms of channel count, so the set up I have here is perfect for what I am trying to achieve. I have used DiGiCo desks for over four years now and have become incredibly comfortable with them. I love the onboard reverb so there is no need for me to cart around any outboard gear - leave that to Harley!"

Blake's studio background no doubt sees him regularly donning a pair of headphones, so it might surprise readers to know that the musician



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Capturing Blake's soulful voice was the DPA d:facto vocal microphone.

does not use IEM. "It simply does not interest him. He always says that he likes to hear the room when he performs," explained Le Moignan. "To be perfectly honest, I only stated mixing with in-ears this year so to be given a rider without them spec'd was not a worry for me." For stage sound, Skan provided a wedge package of d&b audiotechnik M2's with a V-Sub for the drummer. "We are running all the M2's in stereo as all the samples that are triggered live have been recorded in stereo. Playing them in mono would really lose the quality. James' various keyboards also sound much nicer with a stereo mix."

Capturing Blake's soulful voice was the DPA d:facto vocal microphone. The decision to use the d:facto originally came from FOH Engineer, Harley, who said: "We needed a great live microphone that could clearly deliver James' sound without unwanted ambience, especially as he does a lot of vocal looping on the fly. The d:facto is solid as a rock with a tight polar pattern for on stage vocals. It allows our monitor engineer to achieve a fantastic, clean vocal sound for James and a superb sound all round. It is the perfect microphone for this kind of music, which has a lot of space around it for the vocal to sit in. It's also very solid and you really notice the difference between d:facto and some of the 'old faithful' that we used to use." Le Moignan echoed the sentiment, adding: "The d:facto has been great. Even though it's a condenser microphone, it has a really tight pickup."

KEEPING IT MOVING

Ensuring the safe and timely arrival of Blake and crew to each venue was coach specialist, Jumbocruiser and trucking kings, Fly By Nite.

Owner of Jumbocruiser, Steve Lee, commented the company's

involvement with the tour: "We always consider a successful tour to be one where the crew can't remember either the bus or the driver meaning we just get on with the tour and it goes like clockwork. We have worked with Dave for a number of years with Massive Attack, Bloc Party, and Billy Ocean. As long as his people do not have cause to remember our coaches, hopefully we will do many more year's work for him!"

Fly By Nite have also had a long-standing relationship with Lawrence and Blake himself: "We go way back with Dave and we've worked with James Blake since he started production touring in 2013," commented Fly By Nite's Matt Jackson. "His first full production run was in 2014 and we've built our relationship throughout his career, as and when he's needed trucking, including festival dates. For this tour we supplied two artic trucks with Dave Coon handling the account."

With *The Colour in Anything* tour fast-approaching its end and 2016 pretty much wrapped up for James Blake, the question remains: When will we next experience the talented musician and his creative crew back in action? Although Lawrence remained tight-lipped regarding future dates, the response this live show received on both sides of the Atlantic has been glowing. There's no doubt that the audio-visual feast will be back on the menu again soon.

TPi

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BRYONY OCTOBER

Audio Engineer, Keaton Henson

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Today is the culmination of a run of shows for rarely seen singer-songwriter, poet, artist and composer, Keaton Henson. Keaton - and Ren who plays cello at every show - are two of my absolutely favourite artists to work with - their music is an absolute joy to mix. Today is going to be extra special with the addition of a four-piece string section comprising double bass, viola and two violins.

London Palladium, in the heart of Soho, is an absolutely beautiful, Grade II listed theatre that is more commonly home to musicals and theatre productions but has a long history of special rock 'n' pop performances too; Coldplay and Bon Jovi recently performed here. I've never mixed here but the recent run of Keaton shows have been in some pretty special places, including the similar size Royal Theatre Carre in Amsterdam, so I'm well primed for today's show.

The PA system is an immaculately installed L-Acoustics KARA rig with SB28's on the floor and a flown SB18 centre hang. We have an Avid Venue console at FOH and an Avid SC48 on monitors, manned by my trusted friend and colleague, Matt Kanaris with whom I last worked on Laura Marling.

As I have a file from the recent duo shows Keaton and Ren have been performing (with just cello, piano and vocal) I have a head start on the soundcheck which is good, because the second the last line is plugged in the guys are chomping at the bit to get started with a full string section rehearsal!

I only get a short time to play some music through the PA, but as one would expect in such a high profile venue, it's a very well installed system and only needs very minor tweaking in the low end so I can keep the double bass and cello unbridled and rumbling gently through the SB28's.

DPA have been especially kind and lent me a full set of 4099 microphones for the strings and piano, complemented by Schertler pickups for the double bass and cello. I am using DPA d:facto vocal mics alongside another generous loan from Shure of a KSM313 ribbon mic for the guitar amp.

The DPA 4099's need very little work on the fiddles that shimmer, especially on the highest notes and whilst the viola, and cello need a little more attention to iron out their tricky mid range, the 4099's and their extremely convenient mounting systems for each specific instrument make life very easy.

I take real time listening to each of the string players individually, both acoustically off the stage and through the PA, comparing and tweaking my amplified version to match the natural sounds as much as possible. It's a delicate process but the combined sound of all the string players together once this is achieved is just spine tingling. I sit for a good 10 minutes in the middle of the venue just taking in the music, feeling incredibly honoured to say I get paid to do this. It's a great thing to be able to still say that after almost 20 years on the road!

I take care to work just as attentively on my reverbs as well: four separate ones for vocals, piano, cello and strings so that they enhance and compliment rather than overwhelm and destroy the natural sound in what is a lovely but very 'dead' sounding room.

The show itself turns out to be one of those incredibly special occasions where the audience almost resonate with anticipation and remain pin-drop silent, seemingly with their collective breaths held throughout each song. Keaton is masterful and sometimes hilarious in breaking this tension by making a random joke (usually at the expense of Ren!) only to immediately re-build tension the second his lonely piano / guitar notes and the melancholy cello lines begin again. This kind of atmosphere is exactly what makes mixing live sound my absolute joy. What can often feel like an exercise in damage limitation suddenly feels like a real art form when the music allows it to be about delicacy, subtlety and most of all, just letting really talented musicians do their thing.

Bryony October



Daniel Lamarre, CEO and president of Cirque du Soleil, live on-stage

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AVOLITES AT LDI LAS VEGAS

TPi tracked down Avolites' Sales Director, Koy Neminathan, to check in with the company regarding its ongoing American adventure - where better to do so than at LDI in Las Vegas?

What did Avolites have on display at the the LDI show?

We showed a preview of our latest version of Ai, v10, which will include Notch, a real-time effects generator, and Spout, a realtime video sharing framework for Windows. The v10 will also include BPM Sync, allowing you to assign a number of beats to your video clip, and have it always play in sync with the music.

The software will also include new effects developed for Coldplay's *A Head Full of Dreams* Tour. Taking into account visual aesthetics of the band's colourful theme, these effects were developed in conjunction with Ben Miles and Leo Flint, to provide a dynamic and visual sensation to be applied directly to the live camera inputs.

Other additions include new projector mapping tools (Projective Keystone and Grid Warp); our timecode control feature, Timeline; and a more intuitive update for Ai's interface.

We also presented Titan v10's new feature, Web API. This feature enables users to control Titan via simple HTTP commands, which could be very beneficial for any number of reasons in an install.

How were the products presented - were you highlighting anything specifically?

We presented the products on our brand new US-based show stand, which has been custom built to be used by Group One in sections for different shows around the US. This represents another significant investment in the American market place and another push to change the perception of Avolites in the market, to fit with our new vision statement - 'Creative Visual Control, Trusted by Professionals'.

We were pushing our new version of Ai and Titan, and the significant steps we've taken towards true synergy between lighting and video.

Opposite: Avolites' Steve Warren and Rebecca Harding catching up with the one and only Jack Kelly, President of US distributor, Group One. Below: The Avolites Arena was used by Andy Liddle on New Order's tour, which was one of its first international tours; Sales Director Koi Neminathan.



What was the feedback like from LDs who visited your stand and got hands on with your consoles?

The feedback was fantastic. We had many big name lighting and video designers visiting our stand throughout the show who are now being tempted to move to Avolites for not just Titan but Ai as well.

We gave demos all weekend on both systems, but Ai is still a relatively new product in the US market so there were a lot of very positive first impressions about the product.

Which Avolites / Ai product has been used the most for concert touring this year?

The Arena has proven very popular this year. Our customers find that it gives them a large enough surface and enough faders for any size show, and the built-in Titan Network Switch enables the simplified use of fibre on festivals and other times when FOH is a long distance from the stage.

The Arena was particularly popular at Glastonbury and Boomtown festivals, where they used the Arena on many stages. It was used by Andy Liddle on New Order's tour, which was one of its first international tours.

The Quartz has also been incredibly popular, especially for touring LDs because they can buy a Quartz console and the Titan Mobile Fader Wing, both of which they can put into the same travel case (with a handle and wheels) and go anywhere. It's a great size so it easily fits into a car boot or hold luggage, but provides a large touch screen, 30 precision playback faders and 50 executor buttons when the Quartz is combined with the Mobile Fader Wing.

Why is LDI an important date in the tradeshow calendar for lighting manufacturers?

It is a fantastic opportunity to showcase our products and spend time with key lighting and video designers. Not only do we get the opportunity to demonstrate our strengths but it gives us the chance to show our clients the full capabilities of Titan and Ai. It also allows us to meet many customers from Latin America too.

Your distributor in North America is Group One, what kind of success have you had in the region since developing this relationship? Group One have been fantastic in working

"The Arena has proven very popular this year. Our customers find that it gives them a large enough surface and enough faders for any size show."
Koy Neminathan

closely with us to market our range of products clearly in the US. With Brad White and Jim Hutchinson on the road conducting regular visits and training sessions, we are also getting in front of clients who do not use or stock Avolites. We are in the process of expanding the team to give improved technical support to all US-based customers.

Hakkasan's Jewel nightclub in Las Vegas was a pioneering project for us, which led to the development of new features in both our version 10 Ai and Titan software. We are also in the process of upgrading the classic Avolites consoles in all prestigious House of Blues venues, working closely with Bandit Lites.

The American market will therefore remain a priority market for us and we will continue to invest heavily and Group One will play an important role in the future development and expansion of Avolites in the US.

What can we expect from Avolites innovations in 2017?

Avolites is more driven and unified now than ever before in our aim to design and manufacture inspirational functional tools for the entertainment, lighting and video markets to the highest quality and best value.

We will be making further steps towards the full unification of lighting and video and continuing to work with lighting / video designers and users to develop our products further towards aiding them to create their full creative visions.

TPI

Photos: Dom Hardy
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INDUSTRY APPOINTMENTS



Hans Stucken has joined Austria's **AV Stumpfl** in the newly created position of Global Marketing Manager. He will be responsible for campaigns, brand partnerships, communication strategy, product marketing and events.

"As a brand, AV Stumpfl is rather unique in how traditional values are combined with cutting edge innovation. As their growing global outreach and product portfolio diversifies, there's a need for more coordinated marketing to shape its future development to further drive user engagement. The people who use our technology are true innovators as are the people who design and create it," said Stucken.

Fabian Stumpfl, Business Development Manager / HR, added: "Hans has brilliant marketing and digital technology expertise that will really help us continue to drive forward our ambitious global growth plans, serving customers in various markets."

Al Mouat or 'Big Al' - as he is known - has joined the **Adlib** Sales team in the company's Liverpool HQ. Big Al is from Edinburgh brings a wealth of practical and political experience as a Production, Tour and Stage Manager, which includes extensive knowledge in the minefield of radio frequencies, touring packages and the administration required to co-ordinate these for bands and touring artists.

He originally met Adlib Director Dave Kay while working on the road for the Scissor Sisters and has also worked with MD Andy Dockerty and Graham Cochrane, who heads up Adlib's Scottish office, on their work with Texas among other acts. Having known the company and key people for some time, he always appreciated their people-focussed approach.

He also observed that Adlib is universally popular and well-respected with a reputation for excellent kit and crew, and this was a fundamental reason to join the team. "It's all about personal relationships, connecting with people and assisting them with challenges and interesting scenarios in a context they understand and feel comfortable with," he said.

Arena Group has acquired the event equipment, management and

operational teams of Leeds-based **RIM Scaffolding**, extending its global event infrastructure offering to a wealth of sporting and live event clients, October 2016.

RIM Scaffolding, with a 25-year history in the live events industry, is renowned for its expertise in designing and building structures for prestigious dates such as the Ryder Cup, Wimbledon, the Cheltenham Gold Cup and the Henley Regatta. In 2008, the business expanded into the UAE, China and India and subsequently supplied the Omega World Cup, the Dubai World Championships and the HSBC Men's Championship in Shanghai.

As a result of the acquisition, Arena Group has added significant amounts of scaffold systems, glass handrails, viewing decks, sub platforms for temporary structures and ice rinks, camera platforms and carpentry services.

Willy Irish, Managing Director of Arena RIM Scaffolding, added: "I am excited to join the Arena team at this progressive time of expansion and Arena RIM Scaffolding will help deliver additional services to a prestigious roster of clients on a global platform."

Chauvet Professional has named Carlos Zamora de Martino as the General Manager of Chauvet Mexico. Prior to joining Chauvet's rapidly growing Mexican operation, Zamora held senior executive positions at a number of global companies. He was also the Co-Founder and CEO of Geo Lite LED Lighting. In his new position, he will be responsible for managing all facets of the Chauvet Professional, Chauvet DJ, ILUMINARC and Trusst business in Mexico.

Eastern Acoustic Works (EAW) has announced the addition of Bryan DiFabio to the Application Engineering team at the company's Whitinsville headquarters. The announcement was made by Adam Shulman, Director of Marketing and Application Engineering for EAW.

As an applications specialist, DiFabio will provide technical expertise to

Opposite, clockwise from top: Hans Stucken, AV Stumpfl; Willy Irish, Arena Group; Martin Audio's Dan Orton; PRG's Simon Kayser; Carlos Zamora, Chauvet Mexico; Bryan DiFabio, Eastern Acoustic Works EAW; Al 'Big Al' Mouat is now Adlib UK Sales.

EAW customers worldwide. The Application Engineering team can provide services ranging from simple product selection and appropriate product usage to assisting with the development of a more comprehensive system solution, including acoustic modelling and design proposal development. DiFabio received an associates degree in audio production from AI New England and cut his teeth in the industry providing tech support to MOTU customers. Most recently he owned and operated a recording studio.

"I like working with a tight-knit group of people focussed on producing the best products / services possible," DiFabio concluded. "That is exactly what I have found with the EAW team. I'm excited to add my contributions to the group."

Wilfred Hovinga has joined the **Eurotruss** Sales team at the Eurotruss Headquarters. Hovinga will be responsible for Direct Sales in Russia, the Baltic States and Eastern Europe. He can be seen as a high achieving professional who has over 10 years of experience in the entertainment industry. Hovinga is known for his expertise, his wide reaching network and carries an up to date product knowledge / understanding.

J&C Joel, manufacturer of flame retardant fabrics, drapery and stage engineering solutions, has announced the appointment of Matt Corbett as Operations Director, overseeing manufacturing, projects, warehouse, purchasing and logistics.

Corbett brings more than 13 years' experience in leading manufacturing and projects and has previously worked in retail and commercial shopfitting, brands, POS, signage, main contracting and hotels.

James Wheelwright, CEO at J&C Joel, said: "We have made some significant investments recently to ensure we are in the best position for future growth and I am confident that we have the right leadership team in place to help achieve our plans and support all our customers' needs."

Martin Audio has appointed Dan Orton to the newly created position of Product Group Manager, with immediate effect. His duties will include management of both the product portfolio and product support team to ensure Martin Audio's catalogue remains strong and relevant to market

dynamics. At the same time he will be tasked with delivering improved territory application support and monitoring.

With extensive pro audio experience in both the live sound and installation markets, Orton has worked in a variety of engineering development and application engineer roles with both Turbosound and L-Acoustics.

Asked about his new appointment, Orton enthused: "When the opportunity presented itself to take on a role of greater responsibility and impact I couldn't refuse. Martin Audio's products have an excellent reputation for engineering excellence and the future roll-out of products is very compelling."

PRG has announced the appointment of Simon Kayser as General Manager for its Sourcing & Projects Centre based in Shenzhen, China. Kayser will report to Gary Boyd, Executive Vice President and COO, EMEA.

A Chinese-speaker, Kayser already has extensive knowledge of the Chinese market from his role as Technical Director at PRG in China, where he has been the project manager for key inbound corporate and large automotive sector projects.

His first PRG project in China was the Beijing New Year Lighting Show in 2000/1. In 2007 he returned to Shanghai for the World Summer Games, and in 2008 for the Beijing Games. In 2009 Kayser moved to Shanghai for the World EXPO 2010 in Shanghai, and he has been based there since. Kayser's appointment will enable PRG to expand its offshore sourcing projects, reinforcing its commitment to innovation and new technology.

He commented: "Developing, sourcing and especially customising lighting and video gear for our customers and projects, is where I see great potential for PRG and our team in Shenzhen to deliver enhanced services to our customers." Kayser will work closely with Frederic Opsomer and the team at PRG Projects, which specialise in the development of custom LED for special events, touring projects and installations.

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ENHANCED BUSINESS SUPPORT FOR MEMBERS

You focus on the things that directly affect your business, we keep an eye out on the things that indirectly affect your business – that's been the way we see things for a good while now. It would be lovely to be able to see things on the horizon that might make things a little difficult for our sector and simply head them off at the pass. It has happened; we have had a direct effect on some silly decisions that, eventually, weren't made. The majority of changes however, are made with all businesses in mind or they're designed to eradicate a particularly nefarious practice that has some kind of unintended consequence for us. In those cases, developing guidance for us and regulators is key. We constantly remind ourselves that no external influences are designed to make legitimate business more difficult.

For many years now, as part of the help we give to cope with rules and regulations that affect the running of a business rather than the day to day business you carry out, the PSA has provided a business support line for our members. It's been quite a useful benefit for many, delivering expert advice on all manner of day to day business matters. Of course, we're always looking for effective ways to improve the services that we offer to our members, many of which are provided by third party suppliers - we buy in services that are cost effective due to economies of scale. This month, we will begin the migration of our business support line to a new provider, Qdos, who, in addition to the usual phone-based service, will maintain an online library of business document templates that will be free for members to download.

Our membership cover a fairly wide spectrum of business types, from large corporates with in-house lawyers to sole traders whose main priority is finding work, doing work and getting paid. Of course, businesses can change, they grow, they take on staff, they take on premises and the nature of the business they carry out changes. We're keen to provide a service that can help all of our members as their businesses grow or as the business climate they operate in changes.

Take the hardy perennial, credit control. We're currently working with a member who is stuck in a chain of non-paying clients and contractors stretching back three years. When chasing money, there's a process to go through, and an expert on the end of the phone can explain the stages. Now, to back up that advice, members will be able to use a properly worded template when writing to creditors. Of course, credit control starts before the invoice is sent, with the exchange of terms and conditions, a quote for work and agreement of payment terms. Again, templates are far better than blank sheets of paper.

Another area that still confuses is tax and employment status. With upcoming wholesale reforms in the way individuals and small businesses report to HMRC, an effective advice service backing up our efforts to keep members up to date with changes is crucial. The reason for tax reporting reforms is, according to Government, to make reporting easier for business, but with more information being given online at more regular intervals, there may well be greater opportunity for questions about employment status to arise. We've already seen drivers and local crew being drawn into the PAYE regime. Our online resource centre already points to HMRC information, regulation and guidance on maintaining self-employed status.

Employment law can seem like a minefield, perhaps acting as a barrier to the growth of a business with great potential. No surprise really, as breaches of some employment legislation can attract fines of up to £20,000 as well as a lot of negative publicity. Looking at call statistics from our current provider, human resource management is the number one reason for calls. Many of the issues raised can be avoided in advance, with correct procedures and policies. With a suite of hundreds of HR-related document templates, that work becomes a lot easier for members. Having a library for members to browse, backed up with a phone line service where they can check what policies they need to have in place is a far less complex solution than reacting after a problem arises. With a reliance on self-employed subcontractors and overseas workers, our sector may well be affected by potential future changes in eligibility to work legislation. Like we said at the start, it's an issue that may appear on the horizon and we're already working with industry groups to highlight potential issues. A support service that will develop alongside that work will be a crucial part of coping with any change. From recruitment and selection, through



contracts of employment and employee handbooks, right through to exit planning, there is a valuable resource for those companies without a dedicated in-house HR professional.

A key part of our work has always been safety; working closely with the HSE to help them understand the environments in which our members work, helping with the development of tools such as the Purple Guide, the Safety Passport and guidance on building and using temporary structures is a result of consultation between members, policy makers and enforcers. To back up that industry-specific work, our new business support service will help members from business start-up, through employee safety on premises through elements such as fire safety, accident reporting, training and gap analysis and onwards towards on site requirements. Although there are reservations about providing pre-prepared health and safety documentation, a template approach still requires people to go through the structured thought process that assesses risks and required control measures.

Without doubt, as we go through the process of exiting the European Union, changes in regulation and requirements will affect our members. One key area may be VAT, where the place of supply of services rules that have, at last, been simplified, may change; with everything up for negotiation, the EU reverse charge mechanism may disappear. Of course, we will keep an eye on potential changes, but to have the back up of experts at the end of the phone, as well as the potential for developing written guidance and template documents will certainly help the management of any necessary changes.

Employment and health and safety is further enhanced by the suite of templates on matters such as debt recovery, property, intellectual property, online trading, suppliers and contracts, data protection, landlord and tenant and partnerships as well as check lists to ensure your company is compliant.

Investing your membership fees in this service means that the advice and documentation available is generated and constantly updated by experts in the related fields. Of course, there may be gaps that need filling, documents relating to our members' activities that aren't in the library. Qdos are keen for us to let them know which documents they need to research and add to the library. Let us know and we'll pass on the message.

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THE PRODUCTION GUIDE

The TPi Production Guide is kindly sponsored by
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A black and white photograph of a man singing into a microphone, overlaid with a grid of colorful laser beams.

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The background of the advertisement features a vibrant display of fireworks and pyrotechnics against a dark sky. In the upper center, there is a logo for "Le Maitre" which includes a stylized bird or dragon illustration above the text "Le Maitre®" and "PYROTECHNICS & SPECIAL EFFECTS". The main headline reads "Le Maitre Events - setting the benchmark for designing and firing pyrotechnics and special effects for over 30 years." Below this, two columns of text are presented: "PROVIDING:" on the left and "FOR:" on the right, each followed by a list of services. The "PROVIDING:" list includes PYROTECHNICS, SMOKE & HAZE, WATER CURTAIN, FLAMES, and SPECIAL EFFECTS. The "FOR:" list includes TOURS, EVENTS, THEATRE, TELEVISION, and CORPORATE.

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SCOTT APPLETON

*Senior Executive of Business Development
& Head of Connectivity and Data Services, Clair Global*



How did you initially get into the industry - did you take the educational route?

“I did not; I started at Clair in May 1987, during their extremely busy summer schedule. I really wanted to work at the company and was actually hired because I lied about having wood shop experience! After two weeks it became clear that I did not, and they moved me to the painting room. A year later I started doing small local one-off shows and I’ve been here ever since!”

How has the connectivity and data department expanded its legacy of tech services for the wider live event production world?

“Building on over 50 years of extensive live event experience, we pride ourselves on being at the forefront of new technology that advances the industry. We have witnessed a major shift in experiential design for live events with the cornerstone being highly reliable networks. With our foundation in place, event promoters are able to offer advanced attendee experiences

such as RFID entry, cashless payment systems, sponsor-activated event applications as well as productions needs such as VoIP phones, printers and internet access.

Our experiences provide us with the understanding of how to reliably package and deploy highly-technical equipment quickly for live events. We know that with live events, you have to do it fast.”

Are people often surprised to discover that an sound rental company also specialises in this area?

“I don’t think so... What I actually find funny is that some of our connectivity and data services clients are really surprised to find out that we are a pro audio company!”

You and your team recently worked on the prestigious Desert Trip Festival in California. How did you contribute to the smooth running of the event?

“Clair Global served thousands of clients and ensured unparalleled connectivity throughout the Desert Trip Festival. A team of six network engineers and 10 techs from the US and Europe worked for three weeks on site to make production

IT the kind of seamless experience never seen before. Clair’s engineers delivered a design for the network topology without a single point of failure.

This was all monitored and supported 24/7.

The team provided full connectivity (wired and wireless) to ticketing / RFID portals & point of sales,

Wi-Fi access for VIP areas, production IT in the artist compounds, IP phones for artist production offices and medical care across the one square mile of festival grounds.

Clair deployed 20,000ft of 12-strand fibre throughout the huge festival site, backed up with what seemed like endless point-to-point links for remote locations and backup.”



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