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ON the COVER
12 JOHN MAYER
14 RENÉ MARTINEZ
19 FALL OUT BOY
24 DAVE RAT

BITS & PIECES
2 PUBLISHER’S NOTES
4 SOUND
Romeo & Juliet
Actors in Central Park
Rufus Wainwright ‘Releases The Stars’

6 HEAR & NOW
Revolabs
Hannah Montana

8 VIDEO
Sunrise Music Group
Sunrise on Faith Unscripted

32 FX
Hazer
Accompanies Dark Star Orchestra & Petula Clark Musikfest

34 HOTELS
Gaylord Entertainment Company
To move forward with major expansion

48 ADVERTISER’S INDEX

BREAKOUTS & EVENT PHOTOS
12 JOHN MAYER
14 René Martinez
Comes With String Attached

19 FALL OUT BOY

38 EAMC
Event & Arena Marketing Conference

crew breakout
FALL OUT BOY

Photo: Michael A. Beck
Our publication is noted
for its attention to people first and everything else second. In keeping with that direction, our front cover feature this month is on Dave Rat and Rat Sound. Dave is a gifted audio expert who has been able to expand his work in areas of research and development for manufacturers while maintaining a successful audio company. His gift is an ability to think outside the box and to use his insights to deliver high quality audio to his clients in unique ways. We think this will be a story you will appreciate.

The ability to visualize unique approaches to situations is a trait that has been a building block in our industry. Whether the trait was demonstrated on stage as a performer or a tech, a business operator or an employee, the entertainment industry has been synonymous with unorthodox thinking. In today’s environment, this trait is diminishing. Too often we meet people who are more disposed to traditionalist thinking. Maybe this is only a function of my age, but I believe we need a progressive forum where young people can find encouragement to think and act in a creative environment. Our goal is to help stimulate this type of thinking with our monthly Journals as well as our annual conference.

Now that summer is over and fall is approaching, we are turning our attention to the upcoming Tour Link Conference. Our annual event is evolving again, and we are planning a surprise or two for the attendees. Please believe me when I tell you that this will be an event to attend. In the meantime, enjoy the weather (while you can) and plan to be in Mesa, Arizona January 24-27, 2008.

LARRY SMITH
“The MJF-212A stage monitors are able to cut through and still sound full. I can hear and feel my voice above the wall of ‘Tallica. For some reason we like it loud! What?”

James Hetfield, vocalist
As anyone who works with electronic equipment knows all too well, moisture of any type can be the kiss of death. So you can imagine what must have run through the mind of Tom Clark of New York’s Acme Sound Partners, LLC, whose firm provides theatrical sound design services for plays and musicals, when he discovered he needed to find a way to keep the actors’ wireless gear working while being submerged in a pool of water during this summer’s rendition of Romeo and Juliet in Central Park.

Performances of Romeo and Juliet ran June 6th through July 8th at the Delacorte Theatre in Central Park and were free to the public. The set included a pool that, while only a few inches deep, was thirty feet in diameter. According to Clark, “With the frequent fighting and death that takes place during the performance, several of the principal actors found themselves on their backs or face-down in the water. For this reason, we needed to ensure that the wireless microphones were protected and capable of surviving this situation.”

The Lectrosonics MM400C Water-Resistant Digital Hybrid Wireless™ Miniature Transmitter turned out to be the perfect tool for this unique application. Housed in a water-resistant, rugged, machined aluminum housing with a noncorrosive, highly durable finish and incorporating a waterproof Power/Mute switch, these extremely capable and small transmitters were placed in Ziploc® plastic bags and attached to elastic belts, which were then placed around the actor’s ribcage with the transmitter on their back. For some of the actresses, the wardrobe department worked with Clark and the other audio professionals on site to ensure optimal performance while remaining hidden within the costumes.

All in all, there were twenty-two wireless channels, with ten channels being assigned to Lectrosonics gear and the remaining channels to a competing manufacturer. Since the principals in the play were the ones who found themselves “in deep water,” they were all equipped with the MM400C transmitters. Equipment for the production was supplied by Masque Sound.
Having already notched-up a hugely successful appearance at the UK’s Glastonbury Festival and a five-night sold-out run at London’s Old Vic Theatre this summer, Rufus Wainwright is now crisscrossing the States on the next leg of his ongoing tour. As on the first US leg, which began back in April and included a stop at the Coachella Valley Music & Arts Festival, FOH Engineer Matthew Manasse was again behind a Soundcraft Vi6™ digital live sound console provided by Oxnard, CA-based Rat Sound Systems.

Manasse, who has worked as front-of-house for Wainwright since 2003 – around the time that the singer-songwriter released his second album – reports that there was one overriding reason for choosing the Soundcraft Vi6 console for this tour: “The idea that I could get Studer quality engineering in a digital package at this sort of price was, I thought, great.”

The integration of the development and marketing teams of Soundcraft and sister company Studer combined with the porting over of technology, such as Studer’s Vistonics™ interface – which marries touchscreens and encoders in a ‘where you look is where you control’ design – has resulted in a digital live sound console that, Manasse believes, is truly easy to use. Having previously found only one other digital console with a workable user interface of an older generation of technology, he says, “I think this is only the second board I’ve found that you can walk right up to and mix a show.”

Manasse remained an analog fan until relatively recently as he was dissatisfied with the available console options. But the third-generation technology of the Vi6, he says, puts it leaps and bounds ahead of the earlier digital console competition in terms of functionality and sound. The Soundcraft Vi Series Processor Card integrated into the desk, which provides comprehensive onboard Lexicon and BSS processing, also makes the console an attractive proposition. “The stuff sounds great, it works, it does what it says on the knobs. I’m not using any external effects at all,” he says.

On the current tour, A Fine Frenzy opened for Wainwright, with Sean Lennon, Neko Case and Magic Numbers also appearing at various shows. “The opening act has no engineer so the house guy has to mix the first band onstage,” reports Manasse. “So far, they’ve all wanted to have a go on the board. I’ll say ‘do you want to mix the first band on the Soundcraft?’ and they all say ‘ooh, can I?’”

Wainwright’s US tour, in support of his Release the Stars album, extended through the end of August, after which he returned to Europe for shows in Germany followed by a highly anticipated tour of the UK and Ireland.
REVOLABS ANNOUNCES NEW VICE PRESIDENT OF MARKETING

Revolabs, Inc., an innovator of collaborative wireless solutions, is pleased to announce that Susan Zaney will join the company as the Vice President of Marketing.

Zaney’s background is steeped in product marketing and management coupled with a wide range of experience in the high technology sector. Zaney has a proven track record in growing companies through strong marketing initiatives. She held the top marketing role at Monster.com and FairMarket, Inc., while both companies developed into successful entities. In these capacities, Zaney has spearheaded worldwide product marketing strategies, advertising, direct mail, collateral, and public relations. Revolabs Inc. is headquartered in Maynard, Massachusetts.

HANNAH MONTANA

Sales Provoke Ticketmaster Injunction

Ticketmaster has sought a preliminary injunction in Federal District Court in Los Angeles on October 18 to stop RMG Technologies from accessing the Ticketmaster system through automated programs. Ticketmaster believes RMG provides resellers repeated access to Ticketmaster.com via a proxy server that provides an unfair advantage to buyers by moving them directly to the front of the digital line.

The 54-date Hannah Montana tour scene has been filled with scalpers who use sophisticated software to scoop up thousands of seats in minutes, essentially “cutting the line” on ordinary fans trying to get a few tickets. TGJ will bring you more as this develops.

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IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE THAT ANYONE COULD WRAP HIS/HER ARMS AROUND SO MUCH ENERGY IN SUCH A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME, BUT THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT SUNRISE ENTERTAINMENT DID IN A MATTER OF JUST A FEW WEEKS WHEN IT RECORDED AND FILMED TWO HISTORIC MUSICAL EVENTS IN JULY OF THIS YEAR FOR IT'S NEW SISTER COMPANY SUNRISE MUSIC GROUP.

“Faith Unscripted” a CD/DVD package under the Sunrise Music Group banner, brings the top performers in black gospel music to Ocean Way Studios in Nashville, Tennessee which is housed in a Gothic Revival greystone church on famed Music Row; a perfect setting to pay tribute to Dr. Bobby Jones, the Ambassador of Gospel Music. This group of beyond-powerful singers rocked the room from the first note to the last and the goose-bump rendering moments were all captured in High Definition brilliance by the Sunrise Entertainment team for DVD and CD.

The voices of Karen Clark Sheard, Tye Tribbett, Micah Stampley, Vanessa Bell Armstrong, Joe Ligon and over 60 others joined together as the choir of your dreams, with no script at all, performed songs like “Holy, Holy, Holy,” “You Brought the Sunshine” and “I’m a Soldier in the Army of the Lord” as though they had been rehearsing together for years.

This once-in-a-lifetime compilation is amazing in its simplicity and awe-inspiring in its effect upon the human heart. Says Exec Producer/Director Robert Swope, “Dr. Jones and I decided to let the Spirit guide the show, to let entertainment be guided by Faith, not by a script. The result is truly blessed in it’s acoustic presence and visual excitement.”

“Sacred Journey,” to be released in the Fall, is the recording of history as it transpired this July when the Fisk University Jubilee Singers traveled to the nation of Ghana, formerly the Gold Coast of Africa for the first time in their 136-year existence, to perform for the 50th Jubilee Anniversary of Ghana’s independence.

It is remarkable to feel the reactions as the a cappella ensemble of 18 young men and women stood inside the Elmina Castle where millions of their ancestors were sold into slavery. The Negro spiritual, preserved and sung by the Jubilee Singers since 1871, originated on the plains of West Africa, was carried into the fields of the American South, and now has finally returned to Ghana on this historic visit.
With 5.1 Surround Sound audio and High Definition video recorded by Sunrise Entertainment, the project is as rich and intense as the African landscape itself. Sunrise Entertainment takes us on an emotional journey, and it soon becomes evident that these young American performers are not just touching the hearts of those gathered to hear them in Ghana, but they are delivering God’s blessings, through song, to the generations that passed along the same path long ago.

“To my knowledge, we are the first to film and record High Definition (5 camera) video and 5.1 Surround Sound audio on the continent of Africa,” says Exec Producer/Director Robert Swope. “Filming in a 1000 year old castle was extraordinary. The love in the Jubilee Singers voices performing within that space brought Gods’ forgiveness for well over 600 years of human degradation. It was the most emotional moment I have ever shared, and a day I will never forget.”

It’s not surprising to those familiar with Nashville’s Sunrise Entertainment that these two incredible endeavors are so artfully preserved on CD and DVD. The company has developed a reputation over the last 15 years for the finest in visual quality and audio production. Whether the project is in studio or on location, Sunrise Entertainment efficiently and effectively manages the staging, lighting, live sound, recorded audio and the very latest in High Definition visual production.

With Robert Swope at the helm as producer, director and editor, Sunrise Entertainment is garnering award nominations as quickly as it undertakes exciting projects.

Sunrise Music Group was formed earlier this year as a culmination of the many projects brought to fruition by Sunrise Entertainment. The artist driven record label spotlights the best performers in black gospel music as well as classical and jazz performances. Remaining true to the Sunrise Entertainment trademark of innovative video and audio projects that highlight special events, Sunrise Music Group will produce combination CD/DVD’s as a package for each project. Sunrise Music Group is distributed into every major store chain around the world.

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Just one look at the seemingly sparse set of *John Mayer 2007 Summer Tour* and there’s the feeling that this was another lesson in the ongoing story of “less is more.” Between the rich eyes of LD Michael Keller, the ever-creative Jim Lenahan designing the set and the talent of John Mayer, this wouldn’t have to be technically over the top to deliver the punch of a much larger show.

“It’s a pretty simple show,” said Keller. “There was no sense in putting more cack up there than we need. We get a lot of great looks out of it and it works.”

It is a fully automated rig giving a wide range of creative freedom to Keller. The center piece of the rig was one lone Syncrolite flown over Mayer’s head that worked as a great highlight for him when he was standing at his mic position.

The backdrop designed by Jim Lenahan added to the rich texture of the lighting rig. This backdrop was an image of the interior wall of a large industrial building. The only distinctive features were windows across the top. They were distinctive because they broke up the inordinate austerity of the block wall, which gave it character. Adding another distinction, the windows were hit from behind with shuttered VL3500’s to look like the light was outside.

Three columns of plasma screens accessorized the stage. Each column presented its own image separate from the other two. Calling shots and switching video for one point of output is enough to keep someone on their toes. Doing it for three while also serving as the video engineer made for a fast moving night for director Phil Nudelman. Video images were gathered by one handheld camera in the pit, one on the stage and one camera on sticks at the mix position. There were also two lipstick cameras on the drums and keys and a robocam, which was operated by truck driver, Matt Chestnut.

Because Mayer’s music has so many different dimensions, his musicians are called to play with a broad dynamic scale. Of course, this presented a bit of a challenge for FOH engineer Chad Franzoviak for which he gives thanks and praise to the creators of the programmable console. Despite any challenges he might have had, Franzoviak made the show sound great.

CONTINUED ON page 40
Vocals, Guitar: JOHN MAYER
Guitars, Vocals: DAVID RYAN HARRIS
Drums: JJ JOHNSON
Bass: DAVID LABRUYERE
Guitar: ROBBIE MCINTOSH
Keys, Vocals: TIM BRADSHAW
Saxophone: BOB REYNOLDS
Trumpet: BRAD MASON

Scott Frey: System Engineer, Andy Hill Monitor: Tech, Chad Francoviak: FOH Engineer, Mike Adams Monitor Engineer, Rudy Paniagua: Audio Tech

Chris Gott: Stage Mgr, Drum Tech, Rene Martinez: JM Guitar Tech, Craig Baker: Bass Tech, Mark Scaggs: Guitar / Amp Tech

Michael Keller: Lighting Designer / Operator, Mario Marchio, Philip Schulte, Scott Wasson: Lighting Crew Chief, Audra Breyer

Tour Related Offices
Sponsor: Blackberry/MAC Presents / Niki Tyree
Reverb: Reverb / Lauren Sullivan
Agent: Creative Artists Agency / Ali McGregor
Legal: Serling, Rooks & Ferrara / Reid Hunter
Flights: ITC Traveltours / Joan Kearns
Hotels: Travel Like A Rock Star / Jeany Kim

Photos by Nate Dawkins
While covering the John Mayer 2007 Summer Tour, Tour Guide Journal caught up with Mayer’s guitar tech, Rene Martinez. While sitting down with Martinez and fellow Mayer guitar tech Mark Scaggs, we found out that Martinez has quite the pedigree. His first craft was car refinishing which he learned from his father.

Martinez was born and raised in Dallas, TX and was taking classical guitar lessons at a local music store. The in house luthier asked him if he’d like to refinish fiddles. Having a deep love for music, he was glad to take on the new craft. From refinishing and rebuilding violins it was a short jump to all fretted instruments.

This was a fortuitous move given that the man he was apprenticing under was world renowned violin maker David Canon, who serviced the Dallas Symphony. On one particular day Martinez actually saw an Amati, Guarnarius and Stradivarius all laying beside one another while their owners stood around and talked shop. This sight must have been breath taking. Martinez reflected, “...little was I to know then that I was a lucky witness.”

The name of the store was Charlie’s Guitar Shop owned by Charlie Whiz. In 1985, Whiz died unexpectedly, and Martinez took over the business. By now, he was an accomplished luthier and was playing in a hotel lounge at night. One night, Stevie Ray Vaughan came in to hear him play. Stevie was impressed, and after a post-gig conversation with Vaughan and his band, the offer was made to hit the road.

“I wasn’t real sure whether or not this was such a good idea,” recalled Martinez. “I had a business to run at home, but after a lot of thought I decided to follow my heart and go for it. I was on a quest to learn how my guitars behaved on the road and this gave me the opportunity to do it. Immediately after I repaired them, I could see any problems that resulted with my own eyes. What a repairman's dream!”

Fellow John Mayer guitar tech Mark Scaggs was quick to interject, “The move from being a shop tech and a tour backline guy is not easy. The fact that you are one does not mean you can be the other. But this guy pulled it off really well.”

Little did he know, this would lead to 15 years on the road. Throughout this time, Martinez has worked with Stevie Ray and Jimmy Vaughan, Prince, Billy Joel, Edie Brickell, Mick Jones of Foreigner, Clint Black, The Moody Blues, Steve Howe, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Carlos Santana and Live.
Over the years, Martinez has created his own polish, a splitter box for guitars and a lubricant called Graphitall® among many other products offered by his company called Texas Guitar Whiz. Most recently he has offered his own design to guitar strings called René Martinez Big Core strings. They are manufactured by GHS to Martinez’s specs. “I decided a long time ago that I wanted to make a string with a bigger core on the winding set and boost up the singles about half,” he explained. “So on a set that is normally .09 through .42, mine are .095 through .43.”

The bigger core means less winding on the wound strings, which means the string will take longer to go dead. The extra half size is for stretching. Martínez went on to explain, “When you have stretched out a new string, it’s not really a .09 anymore. With the bigger core, there is more of the string left to play once it has been properly stretched out.”

While on the road with Santana, Martínez put a set of his strings on Carlos’ guitar and the boss took to them. Not long after, Santana came to Martínez asking for another set. He said that he liked the tone and sustain of the strings. One thing led to another, and the suggestion was made by Santana that maybe it would help to promote the strings if his name was on them. Thus was born the Carlos Santana Signature Series Big Core Strings by Rene Martinez.

The strings play with great feel and this writer agrees with Santana that the tone and sustain are strong assets of the product. In addition to the way the strings sound, they were put on the guitar about six weeks ago and show no sign of losing their tone, which means a lot for people who can’t afford to change strings every day or even every week.

While the size of the strings was a question, it is not noticeable in any way. Granted, an LD/writer who plays guitar a good deal conducted this test, TGJ invites you to make your own decision.

For over 25 years, René Martinez has worked as a musician, entrepreneur, inventor and touring guitar tech for some of the biggest names in the world. He has put that experience to work in the products he sells. Find out more about Martínez and his products by going to texasguitarwhiz.com.
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Fall Out Boy was, to be sure, a big, loud, rock and roll show. While one couldn’t call it “gag city,” it had its moments where gags were concerned. The show opened with the three downstage players (Pete Wentz, bass, Joe Trohman, lead guitar and Patrick Stump, lead singer/guitar) entering through toasters that flung them about six feet above the top riser of the stage. This made for a fairly impressive kick-off to the show except for one particular night when, in the mother of all “Spinal Tap” moments, the toaster hydraulics malfunctioned and only lifted them about half way to stage level and they had to climb out of the holes to get the show started. They had been forewarned that this might happen and, to their immense credit, they took the whole thing in stride and even laughed about it later.

There was another pretty cool gag. On either side of the stage were glass changing rooms. When the band members entered the rooms to change, the glass became opaque and made for interesting shadow play after which they re-entered the stage to resume the show. We’ll allow you to draw your own mental image about the Spinal Tap possibilities (which never came to pass).

There were significant challenges in this show. Among them was the schedule. This tour worked as hard as any show on the road all year. The number of back to back dates coupled with the fact that there were no multiple days off made for a very exhausting schedule. Added to that was the fact that the tour had five acts, which presented its own set of problems.

“There are a number of acts on the bill that had never toured at this level before,” said Production Manager/Tour Accountant, David Norman. “So we were faced with having to work an 11 truck tour around that lack of experience. And some of them never got that there are rules in place that are meant to protect them as well as the tour and they have to be followed.”

Another challenge was audio. A pop rock show of this nature is meant to be loud. But the crowds at this show were pushing 111 db on a regular basis. In order for the show to be heard, the FOH engineer Kyle Chirnside had to push the system up over the top of the crowd, which made for an insanely loud show.

Chirnside explained, “You reach a point where you can’t bring anymore gear in because of the weight factor. It’s just a constant struggle that’s hard to win. You’re fighting a house full of 14-year old girls.”

Lighting on this show was its own challenge. There were some interesting elements to the show, however, it was hard to escape the idea that the designer of the show wasn’t aware that it was actually going to play sheds and not full-blown arenas.

In the center of the rig was a truss array that spelled out “FOB.” These were filled with over 250 LED Color Blasters so that when the lights were on, the letters were clearly visible. At various times the upstage end of the letters would be flown down to reveal the display to the audience.

Among the many problems with this look was the fact that it was also used to wash the stage. And while it did a great job at doing so, whenever it was brought up as a wash, the effect of creating letters was given away. So by the time the rig was dipped down for the big look for the first time (of far too many) there was no ah-ha moment, no reveal.

Aside from that, it’s just a passé look. It’s something that was growing old by the mid-90’s. And with the stellar video look that was taking place upstage, one had to wonder why any designer would throw resources at a look that could be much better achieved by video.

All of that being said, Lighting Director Esteban Caracciolo did a great job of executing the show.

By the time TGJ caught up with the tour, Video Director Jon Beswick had left the tour to join up with Def Leppard and had been replaced with Deb Collins who was on break from Josh Groban.

Coming from Groban to this was a fun challenge for Collins who explained, “This is the first real rock show that I’ve been out with. The show just cruises by with four young guys running around all night. They have all of those ramps that they can run around and jump off of.”

CONTINUED ON page 21
Production Mgr. / Tour Accountant: David Norman
Stage Mgr.: Henry Bordeaux
Guitar Techs: Jim Bomann

Lighting (back) – Kile McClure, Bryan Tilke, Michael Ponsiglione, (front) Esteban Caracciolo, Josh “Scuz” Wagner, J. T. McDonald
Video – Mason Braislin, Thomas Braislin, Chris Kemp, Jason Lipton, Deb Collins, Troy Bacchechi

Kyle Chirnside & David Coyle
The camera crew had to really be on the ball due to the fact that there wasn’t a lot of time to camp out on a shot. The shots had to be acquired quickly so that Collins could move on to the next thing and keep pace with the show.

The show was pyro-heavy. There was a lot going on all night with a confetti blow that ended the night, which was so intense that it obscured the video wall that made up the majority of the upstage area.

When asked what he would change about this show in the future, Dave Norman said, “I would have fewer support acts where we could have more stage space and the bands could play a little bit longer.”

All in all, this was just what the poster advertised. It was a big rock show that did what big rock shows are supposed to do. As a result, several thousand 14-year old kids went home happy, hoarse and unable to hear for the next few days.

It must be said that David Norman ran his show with as much poise and professionalism as any production manager this writer has ever seen and the result of his skill was shown in how smooth the tour ran despite its rigorous schedule and numerous challenges.
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You can’t go more than 20 minutes on the USA Network without hearing its tag line, “Characters Welcome.” Long time Red Hot Chili Peppers FOH engineer would be most welcome there, as he is most certainly a character. This is the guy who auctioned off ad space on his console through eBay to offset the cost of having seasonal decorations at the mix position. So, when the assignment came to discuss his career and his company (Rat Sound) for the cover story of this issue, there was no argument from TGJ (as there sometimes can be). This proved to be fun!
TGJ: First of all, how did the auction go?

Dave Rat: The winning bid was $406.00, I think. But the comments were great. It ended up being bought by a guy named George Ravlich who owns a sound company up in Sault St. Marie, Canada. It turned out to be a great story. He had a friend who was a constable in the police department, Don Doucet. Don was killed by a drunk driver and rather than put his company’s name on the shirt, he put a eulogy to Don. Ravlich sent us some of the shirts, we wore them which got a write up in his hometown paper. You can see the whole thing on my blog site: ratsound.com/cblog

TGJ: So now that the Peppers are off the road, what’s going on?

D.R.: I don’t have any plans to go back out. They’re pretty much the only serious touring I do. I do substitute work when someone has a few overlapping gigs. I’m a great sub because I don’t want to steal the gig. Sometimes I will go out and cover a critical account for Rat Sound.

TGJ: What’s going on outside of the road?

D.R.: Other than that, I am into the designing stuff. I’ve got the Micro Wedge project that we’ve moved over from Radian to be manufactured by EAW.

TGJ: Talk a little about that project.

D.R.: I started working on it about a decade ago. I was out with Chili Peppers at the time and we were real frustrated because were going from club gigs and festivals and we were using a lot of different monitor cabinets. I wasn’t really impressed with any of them out there. There were wedges with cable connectors coming out of the back so they were in camera shots or they were coming out of the sides so you couldn’t put them side by side. So I made a list of all of the problems I had with the stuff and came up with what would be the perfect monitor. That list must have had about 30 items, and I weeded out the weaker ones. I then started drawing shapes and really spent a lot of time on what would be the perfect tour monitor.

TGJ: Where did it go from there?

D.R.: Well, it sat on my drawing pad for about a year, maybe two. And then Beck was about to go out and they were carrying our 15/10 2” tri-amp wedges, which were great for high volume but they were cumbersome. They were talking about switching to Clair 12-AM’s and going with us for everything else. I said, “You know, I’ve got a design for some monitors and I’ve been looking for a reason to build them.” So I had some prototypes built and had Beck’s monitor guy come over. We did a shootout with the 12-AM’s and he loved them. I built eight of them and we couldn’t keep them in the shop. Soon, I got a patent on the design. It had a trapezoidal box with a curved front. They were wedges with trapezoidal boxes and wedges with curved fronts. No one had ever put the two concepts together.

TGJ: You recently announced that you’re moving the manufacturing operation from Radian to EAW. Why the change?

D.R.: The goal of the whole Micro Wedge was not so much about financial gain as it was about designing the ultimate monitor rig. Shortly after the relationship with Radian got off the ground, they lost their chief engineer. While the manufacturing work got done, the project seemed to stall out.

It was like they saw the Micro Wedge as the end of the series instead of the beginning. It’s interesting, I don’t think Rat Sound has ever owned a single piece of EAW gear, but when the word got out that the contract with Radian was coming to an end, a lot of companies wanted in. Yet we’ve had a very positive relationship with EAW. It seems like the goal of EAW is to design and build unique and innovative products
that push the cutting edge of technology. In a way we are opposites. Where Rat Sound makes great sounding stuff then makes it loud, EAW builds stuff that is loud and makes it sound great.

TGJ: So how’s the marriage working so far?

D.R.: I love their research and design team. Because my perspective is so different from theirs, I kind of bring something unique to the table for them. They’ve got the knowledge, know-how and technology to take the designs and ideas for this project and refine them beyond what I could do myself.

TGJ: What’s on the horizon for Rat Sound? Do you have a point that you are aiming for?

D.R.: Rat Sound is not and never has been a company for which domination of the industry is a goal. We don’t care about that. The theory behind the company is based on the desire to populate the company with cool, intelligent people who have the common goal of doing what we love, which is to work in pro audio. So there is no real definitive direction that we have to or cannot go in. The primary motive of the company is not so much financial gain as much as long term stability and enjoying what we do a long time into the future.

TGJ: You say that financial gain isn’t the goal. Are you talking about financial gain or financial growth?

D.R.: Yeah, well I guess I should say that financial growth is not the goal. I mean we want to make a living, get paid for what we do and be comfortable. We’re not against making money, but we just don’t see that as the primary motivator. The underlying theory is that if you do what you love to and do it well, then people won’t mind having you around and giving you money.

TGJ: Then it almost sounds like Rat Sound is a manufacturing operation or at least an R&D lab and touring is a way to fund that.

D.R.: Well you can’t cross over my personal directions with Rat Sound’s direction as a company. Everyone in the company has a personal goal within the group goal. It’s kind of a “do what’s best for yourself while respecting the overall goals of the company.” My personal goal was to be a designer. I learned to be a mixer so that I could test the stuff I designed. I ended up being this world-class engineer traveling the world with huge rock shows and having a great time, but it was never my goal. Now Rat sound is sort of a malleable entity in that it’s the sum of a lot of individual goals. The company is run by the shareholders and managers. The managers are the ones who run the day-to-day stuff, but the big decisions are made in regular managers meetings. I don’t determine the sole direction of the business even though I have that ability should I choose to exercise it. If the general trend of the people involved is against the direction I want to take it, the company will not be optimized.

TGJ: Who are these fellow decision makers?

D.R.: Well, there’s John Monson, our systems coordinator, who builds the systems, negotiates the contracts and looks after all things in rental world. His goal is to get all these systems out on the road. Then there’s Daniella
Shepherd who’s in charge of sales and marketing. Because Daniella likes doing apparel she designs our ‘Rat Swag’ such as Rat Shoes, Rat Belt Buckles, shirts and all sorts of things. Danalle Potter is our financial person. She is really good with money and organization. That leaves me as the forth manager.

TGJ: How many R&D projects do you have ongoing right now?

D.R.: We only do a small amount of manufacturing. Most of the things that we design are for in-house use only, at least during the early stages of development. We have quite a bit of cable testing stuff like the Rat Sniffer, a device that I patented. Then there’s the rest of the Micro Wedge system of we’ve only built three of those models and there are another 10 left to go. I’m also working on speaker design, so at any given time there are probably 10 to 12 different projects in various states of development.

TGJ: How much of that stuff will see the light of day.

D.R.: A lot of it will never get out of the Rat world. Because of the way we do things, not much of what we do is off-the-shelf. We usually design things for our own purposes. Quite a bit of what we do relies on what we create in-house.

TGJ: If Chili Peppers went away tomorrow, would you be happy with the fact that your done touring?

D.R.: Yes, absolutely. I try not to take anything in the future for granted… not work, or relationships or anything else. That’s why I wrote the blog. I’m not sure if I’ll tour again, but if I don’t, that’s okay. The idea was to capture what it’s like to go from being at home for two years to going on the road for a year-and-half and the way it affected me.

TGJ: I can remember coming home and having trouble sleeping on something that didn’t rock and sway at night. There was a time when I was trying to figure out how to feed the sound of a diesel engine into the bottom of my bed. Are you saying you don’t get that?

D.R.: That’s pretty funny. You know, there is a band that has a complete replica of the inside of a tour bus set up in their basement so they can sleep in a bunk when they have friends over. Angels and Airwaves have bus bunks set up in their rehearsal studios. In answer to your question, no, but I know what you mean.

TGJ: What’s your favorite mic?


TGJ: Why

D.R.: Because it looks cool and I like the name.

TGJ: I should have seen that coming. How many tours do you have out now?

D.R.: [Laughing] I have no idea. I know we just got a bunch of gear back in.

This guy is cool and easy going like you read about. ☺
As EAW comes up on the celebration of its third
decade as a technological leader in professional
audio, its drive forward continues unabated.
Recent national and international concert tours
utilizing EAW loudspeaker systems include Iron
Maiden, Modest Mouse and Sugababes, with
upcoming tours by Harry Connick Jr., Gypsy
Kings, Joe Cocker and Foreigner committed to
EAW as well.

High-profile events around the world – the NHL All-Star Game,
an exclusive concert by the London Symphony Orchestra, Bum-
bbershoot Festival, to name but a few - are continuing along the
same path, relying on the company’s systems for high-quality, mis-
sion-critical sound reinforcement. Meanwhile, EAW loudspeakers
are also the recent choice at high-profile stadium/arena venues
such as Boston’s storied Fenway Park and Cameron Indoor Sta-
dium at Duke University, ranked by Sports Illustrated magazine
as fourth on its list of the world’s top 20 sporting venues.

The company's commitment to its growing customer base has
never been stronger, highlighted by the expansion of ELAN
(EAW Line Array Network), a convenient one-stop online shop
for members to promote the availability of their EAW inventory
- and - to secure additional EAW inventory from other members
when needed. The ongoing B4 Global Educational Initiative
has EAW’s renowned training and educational staff – offering
decades of collective real-world pro audio experience – traveling
the world, conducting in-depth (and hands-on) training sessions.
And, the Application Support Group (ASG), EAW’s multifaceted
technical assistance team offering a wide range of specialized
services to customers, continues to grow in size and scope.

Another EAW guidepost is con-
stant development of world-class
professional audio products, with
the company now expanding its
focus beyond loudspeakers to
fostering significant improvements
in the total audio system, a point
emphasized by the company’s
coming UMX.96 digital con-
sole environment. New Smaart
v.6, already the world’s most
popular audio tuning and analysis
platform, now boasts several
improvements, including signifi-
cantly modernized architecture to
unleash the potential of the latest
microprocessors and multitasking
operating systems, as well as the
ability to run natively under both
Mac OS X and Windows, and a highly lauded user interface.

Perhaps garnering the most attention at present is the new
UX8800 dual-mode digital processor. Not only does it provide
an exceptional degree of traditional DSP capability, but it also brings
EAW’s revolutionary Gunness Focusing technology to an ever-
increasing number of conventional EAW loudspeakers. Employ-
ing sophisticated, custom DSP algorithms designed specifically to
correct loudspeaker response anomalies, it substantially eliminates
the time smear, horn "honk" and low-frequency cone resonances
that plague conventional reinforcement system designs.

Audio Engineer Tim Mil-
likan of Production Audio
Services utilized the UX8800
processor with an EAW-
based system for two recent
sold-out shows featuring
Simply Red in Australia, and
he offered this evaluation.
“As I reflect on this new
EAW technology and what it
means, I’m struck by the fact
that not only will large pro-
duction companies benefit
from the UX8800, but so too
will smaller owner/operators who don’t have the clientele to war-
rant purchasing line arrays. Many of these companies might very
well have an EAW point-source system in their inventory that can
be easily outfitted with significantly upgraded audio performance
without spending hundreds of thousands of dollars.

“Literally, we’re talking about the same
level of quality that one would expect
from an entirely new system,” Millikan
continues. “In my world, it doesn’t get
much better than that.”

San Francisco-based
JK Sound provided
three large-scale con-
cert sound reinforce-
ment systems – all
featuring UX8800
digital processors – for
a recent sold-out con-
cert by top DJ Tiësto
at San Francisco’s Bill
Graham Civic Audito-
rium, with JK Sound
Owner Michael
Lacina noting, “In
the simplest terms, the UX8800 and Gunness Focusing allow the
audience and the performer to get far closer to what was created
in the recording studio. The result is that you hear the music, the
source – and not the loudspeaker box. And now, finally, it’s what
the audience hears as well.”

Most recently, EAW broke the news that it will be the exclusive
manufacturer and distributor of the renowned MicroWedge
Series of stage monitor products. Rat Sound Founder Dave
“Rat” Levine, creator of MicroWedge and other acclaimed sound
reinforcement designs, will be working closely with the EAW

CONTINUED ON PAGE 40
Audio for Pros

In 1978, EAW forever changed the concert loudspeaker market with a crystal-clear vision: create professionally integrated loudspeaker systems as opposed to amateur “homebrew” concoctions with compromised quality. This vision resulted in the paradigm-changing KF850 three-way system that is still the best-selling large-format loudspeaker in the history of professional audio.

Today EAW continues to create a vanguard collection of new loudspeaker designs, most recently evidenced by the widely lauded, and rider requested, KF760 Series and KF730 Series line arrays. Meanwhile, engineering focus has also extended to the total audio system, exemplified by the new UX8000 dual-mode digital processor with revolutionary Gunness Focusing technology, new Smaart v.6 measurement and analysis software, and the coming UMX.96 mix/control/measure/process digital console environment.

EAW has one overriding goal in pursuit of its vision, and that is to provide concert and performance audio users with the best tools to reach ever-higher benchmarks for quality and consistency, enhancing their craft both technically and creatively.
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February 9-15, 2008
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Steve Peters, CFE
IAAM President
President, VenuWorks
Ames, IA
Find a blissful backdrop at a Metropolitan Hotel - your ideal retreat pre- and post-show. Ultra-comfortable surroundings, luxurious amenities, celebrated cuisine and intimate service ensure your time off-stage is restfully spent.

Relaxation achieved.
HAZER ACCOMPANIES
DARK STAR ORCHESTRA AND PETULA CLARK MUSIKFEST

MusikFest, a non-stop, 10-day summer music festival, used Look Solutions Unique2 Hazer for performances by Dark Star Orchestra and Petula Clark at Lehigh University’s Zoellner Arts Center in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. The performing arts center serves as the home of Lehigh University’s music and theater departments as well as a road house for outside productions and a rental venue for shows like MusikFest which played four nights this August.

Zoellner Arts Center acquired the Unique2 Hazer for its equipment inventory after lighting coordinator Liz Lammer saw it at the LDI trade show last October. The Unique2 was deployed in applications for both Dark Star Orchestra, a cover band for The Grateful Dead, and pop icon Petula Clark. The system was used as a hazer to accent light-beam effects from VARI*LITE 1000s, ETC spots and PAR cans, so it was constantly on during the concerts. The VARI*LITEs were used as moving heads for the Dark Star show.
THE ROGERS CUP SERVES IT UP

One of tennis’s top international tournaments, The Rogers Cup, which is recognized as one of 10 Tier I tournaments on the WTA Tour, offers US $1.325 million in prize money and attracted the stars and fans of tennis worldwide.

This year at the Rexall Centre in Toronto Canada, today’s top women’s tennis players showcased their skills on the Canadian courts. The tournament alternates the men’s and women’s competition annually between Toronto and Montreal. Wimbledon and the U.S. Open are the only two tournaments that have longer histories than the major Canadian stop.

The nine day event showcased three prime time matches in which Pyrotek provided an outdoor fireworks display celebrating the match successor.

The effects consisted of:

- (102) Red comets with tail chase
- (27) Multi-shot comet boards
- (54) Silver comets with tails.
Gaylord Entertainment Company (NYSE: GET) has announced that it is moving forward with plans for a major expansion of its Opryland Resort and Convention Center in Nashville, Tenn. The expansion will add more than 400,000 square feet of convention and meeting space and a new 400-room, luxury all-suites hotel adjacent to Gaylord Opryland’s current facility. The expansion is expected to create 1,300 new jobs, bring an added 400,000 visitors to the Nashville metro area each year and generate $165 million in additional economic capital for the region.

Nashville Mayor Bill Purcell signed legislation paving the way for Gaylord to move ahead with its planned $400-million expansion at Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center. Gaylord will begin construction in 2008 with intended completion in 2011.

“Today’s announcement marks an important milestone in our ongoing strategy to strengthen the Gaylord brand through targeted expansion of our existing properties,” said Colin V. Reed, Gaylord Entertainment chairman and chief executive officer. “The Opryland expansion, which was driven by the incredible demand we continue to see for this property as well as the others across our network, will create new jobs and generate additional tourism for the area. We applaud the efforts of the Metro Council and the Tennessee General Assembly and their recognition of the benefits of this expansion to the city of Nashville.”

Upon completion of the expansion, Gaylord Opryland will offer convention customers and meeting planners 3,281 hotel rooms and more than one million square feet of convention and meeting space.

The expansion comes on the heels of a three-year $125-million effort to improve the property’s leisure and outside-the-room offerings. The upgrade includes the renovation of 2,297 rooms, the addition of Relâche Spa, an indoor pool and exercise facility as well as new entertainment and dining venues.

The high occupancy levels and excess demand at Gaylord Opryland drove the Company to turn down an estimated two million room nights in 2006. In July, the Company announced that second quarter 2007 occupancy had exceeded 80 percent across its network of hotels for the first time in its history, and delivered strong advanced bookings at Gaylord Opryland, further underscoring the need for expansion.

The Gaylord Opryland® Resort and Convention Center is undergoing a $30 million food and beverage transformation as part of Gaylord Hotels’ latest major investment in the hotel brand’s landmark facility. The enhancements and the expansion of the resort’s dining and entertainment outlets include preserving the best of the classic establishments, and adding new ones that will showcase the world-class talents of the award-winning Gaylord Opryland culinary teams combined with the property’s more contemporary attitude.

On the heels of a $45 million room renovation that is transforming thousands of guest-rooms and suites from displays of the Deep South to comfortable, modern showrooms, the resort is now in the midst of the major food and beverage makeover. Water’s Edge Marketplace is being created in the Delta Atrium and the old food court there is gone, as the resort’s new vision evolves to create more modern, upbeat food and beverage settings combined with the unforgettable tastes, entertainment and fine service for which Gaylord Opryland is widely known.

“Gaylord Opryland’s commitment to world-class amenities and a desire to bring passion into all that we do have spurred the decision to revolutionize many of our dining venues and create new ones, combining fun, entertainment and creative ingenuity with our already high culinary standards,” said Arthur Keith, senior vice president and general manager of Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center. “We will be on the cutting-edge, providing outstanding selections for our guests, leading to experiences they won’t find anywhere else.”

According to Keith, four new “upscale casual” dining options are being constructed along with an entertainment complex that will include what he believes will become the hottest nightclub in Nashville. “It’s time for a change at Gaylord Opryland. We have been ranked as one of the top five convention resorts in the world for five years in a row. We have deconstructed and then revolutionized the banquet culinary process. Now we are focused on refreshing the classic dining establishments that we are keeping, and energizing our resort by evolving to the next level with our new rooms, restaurants and entertainment.”
Contemporary 4* deluxe K West Hotel and Spa in West London is just 20 minutes from Heathrow Airport, and with venues such as Earls Court and Olympia Exhibition Halls, Shepherd’s Bush Empire and Hammersmith Apollo on the doorstep, there is always something happening in this part of the city!

Relaxation is key - guests can enjoy K Spa’s Jacuzzi, sauna, steam rooms and fitness zones. Bedrooms are bright, large, and comfortably furnished; subtly designed with a soft yet dramatic colour scheme featuring expensive leather, dark wood and suede alongside stainless steel and sandblasted glass.

Popular with the music & entertainment industry, K West always has a laid-back and friendly vibe. K Lounge is the place for an informal bite to eat while relaxing and people-watching or enjoying the late-night buzz... as the bar is open late every night!
NOTHING PROVIDES A BETTER FOCUS FOR AN URBAN POPULATION THAN A FREE SUMMER CONCERT SERIES, A FACT THAT IS BEING BEAUTIFULLY ILLUSTRATED BY MACARTHUR PARK’S HISTORIC LEVITT PAVILION FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS.

Located just west of downtown Los Angeles, the park’s outdoor bandshell is hosting a lineup of widely eclectic entertainment – from international and roots music concerts to dance performances to children’s productions – five evenings a week as the sun sets and stars come out. To properly accommodate sound reinforcement duties for a highly diverse roster of acts, LA Sound Company, in conjunction with Brian Riordan of Levels Audio, has elected to use Crown I-Tech and XTi Series power amplifiers driving a fully JBL loudspeaker setup.

“We have had good experience in the past with Crown I-Tech and XTi systems,” confides LA Sound Co. Owner Richard Ralke, “so they were a natural choice for us to use at Levitt Pavilion. Aside from sounding excellent, which is our number one criterion, the Crowns are easy to program, incorporate a lot of powerful DSP, and are very efficient with low power consumption. The I-Tech Series, in particular, is also extremely versatile in handling a wide range of speaker impedances and outputs.”

Because of scheduling changes, the pavilion’s sound system was specified, designed and assembled in just three weeks. To streamline system adjustment, all Crown power amplifiers are networked via Ethernet using Harman Pro’s HiQnet™ communications and control protocol.

“We can set up crossover filter parameters and delay from a PC and load them into each amplifier,” explains Ralke. “In fact, JBL supplied us with new systems settings for the loudspeakers, which we used to reprogram each amplifier; it only took us a couple of minutes. We also had to ensure that the entire PA system could be taken down in just 45 minutes, since the owners strike the venue at the end of each evening performance. We designed the custom amp racks with multi-pin connectors so that the system can be rolled out, powered, and ready to go in a very short time.”

Levitt Pavilion’s sound system currently comprises four JBL VerTec VT4887A line array cabinets flown per side powered by four Crown I-T4000 amplifiers, two JBL ASB6128V subs stacked per side powered by a pair of Crown I-T6000s, plus eight JBL SRX712M stage monitor cabinets driven by a rack full of eight Crown XTi 4000s. “We are very happy with the coverage, sound quality and output of the Crown-powered rig,” says Ralke.

The park’s vintage bandstand and acoustic shell were built 50 years ago but recently underwent a $2M renovation and modernization to accommodate this year’s concert itinerary, which is produced by The Friends of the Levitt Pavilion - MacArthur Park, a non-profit organization.

Immortalized in 1968 by Richard Harris’ recording of Jimmy Webb’s epic tune, which was further popularized by Donna Summer a decade later, MacArthur Park is one of the oldest and most significant parks in LA and boasts a colorful history as the centerpiece of the Westlake district. In recent years, the combined efforts of neighborhood groups, community entities, and public agencies have created significant change in the park via improvements to return it to its former beauty. Today, the park is once again a destination for recreation, relaxation and entertainment, making it one of the most used areas in Los Angeles. ☞
Twenty-five years ago, ICMC began in response to the December 1979 "The Who" concert tragedy in Cincinnati, OH. The IAAM Foundation was established to help raise funds to research Crowd Management and help venue managers avoid future incidents. From those efforts, the Crowd Management Conference was born. Since then, ICMC and the Foundation have become key components to today’s venue management industry.

2007 ICMC Highlights include:

- Crowd Management Boot Camp, featuring industry expert Larry B. Perkins, CFE
- Enhanced networking opportunities
- Concurrent workshops for both the veteran and first-timers
- AVSS course for the Crowd Management Track
- Hands-on training techniques to take home and apply in your facility
- Crowd Management Technology Expo

Where will our industry be 25 years from now in 2032? Interact with fellow professionals currently impacting the Crowd Management industry. Don’t be satisfied with the status quo. Experience tells us that we need to keep reaching for higher standards in order to be prepared for the future.

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Tour Guide’s Jessi Wallace with a MEDIA SPONSOR THANK YOU AWARD

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Marketing Managers taking notes during presentations

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LIONS, TIGERS AND BLOGS, OH MY!

Steve Lee, Quick Silver Interactive Group, presents the future of blogging.

Jessi Wallace & Vicki Baptista - Charlotte Bobcats Arena enjoy the hats the VEE Corp. provided during lunch

Karen Davis - Columbus Blue Jackets & Kelsey Booth - Spokane Arena enjoying the OPENING NIGHT RECEPTION at The House of Blues

Steve Lee giving everyone a “Blog-ucation”
The 27th annual Event and Arena Marketing Conference (EAMC) brought over 300 venues from all over the United States and Canada to the Lone Star State. The event occurred June 6-9, 2007, at the Hilton Anatole Hotel and Convention Center in downtown Dallas, TX. The purpose of the event is to allow arenas to come together and share new ideas, talk about problems in the industry and have as much fun as possible while networking and making new friends. The event planners make a point to help the first time attendees get acquainted quickly. At the start of the conference, there is a First Timers Orientation, where new attendees pair up. This helps the new people feel less like a small fish in a big pond, and it gives the networking process a kick-start.

The board of directors for EAMC nominates someone for the Gigi (Golly I Get It!) Award of Excellence. The EAMC website describes the award as one that is designed to “honor a former or current marketing professional for significant contributions made to professionalize and educate event marketers within the live entertainment industry.” This year’s surprised winner was Tammy Koolbeck, National Director of Marketing for Compass Facility Management, Inc in Cedar Rapids, IA. The award doubled as a birthday gift, and Tammy was showered with praises from those who have worked with her over the years.

The opening night reception was at the brand new House of Blues in downtown Dallas. Attendees enjoyed dinner and cocktails while taking turns on the karaoke machine and catching up with old friends. Catch The Moment set up a blue screen and camera so the attendees could take their very own “Rock Star” photos, complete with electric guitar and feather boa as props.

The event hosts a Swag Swap that allows the venues to learn how creative the competition is being with its swag. Each venue brought a piece of swag to submit with two business cards, and at the end of the conference they picked up a bag at the registration table that had their name on it and two pieces of swag from other venues. The silent auction and raffle provide funding for the EAMC Internship Program. Based on last year’s raffle sales, several interns received all-expense paid trips to the conference this year.

The 2008 conference is in the works and the location will be announced in upcoming months at EventArenaMarketing.com.

pictured above: Andrea Dabbs - Pacific National Exhibition, Canada, Jessi Wallace and Jennifer J. Champagne - Pacific National Exhibition in their Rock Star Moment, provided by Catch the Moment.


Cliff Clinger presenting Tammy Koolbeck with the 2006 Gigi Award.
Tour Guide Magazine’s Top Dog Award winner Mike Adams, who left the Stones to do this gig, mixed monitors. Adams told Tour Guide Journal, “I loved being out there with Opie and that whole crew, but I am really glad to be here. I’ll stay here as long as I can.”

There was an interesting twist on the backline crew. Given that Mayer is a fantastic guitar player, one would expect to see the likes of Mark Scaggs on the team, but Scaggs wasn’t the only heavy hitter on the backline. Mayer’s personal tech was Rene Martinez who worked for Stevie Ray Vaughan (among many others).

“The last artist I toured with was Carlos Santana,” said the soft-spoken Martinez. “I had decided to come off the road, when I got a call from Ken Helie, the Tour Manager for John Mayer, asking if I’d come and do a couple of shows. I said no, I’m getting off the road.” Martinez didn’t know John Mayer from Adam but thought that this could boost his luthier business, Texas Guitar Whiz (texasguitarwhiz.com). When he came home from the gigs, Martinez told his wife how great Mayer was to which she replied, “I guess this means you’re going back out on the road again, doesn’t it?”

Such a move would be hard to resist. John Mayer 2007 Summer Tour was excellent in every way. The ever-vivacious Chris Adamson, who is quick to pass all accolades on to his crew, headed it up. The tour moved in a compact package and delivered exactly what the show called for. There was nothing in this production that creates attention away from the artist or could be called gratuitous. It was a perfect fit.

EAW continued from p. 28

Engineering Department on the development of new MicroWedge models as well as other EAW touring products, with initial product debuts expected well before the end of this year.

“Over the past 27 years, I’ve devoted a tremendous amount of effort to designing and building innovative products for real world, live performance audio, and this is exemplified by the MicroWedge Series,” Dave Rat explains. “The new partnership with EAW is an exciting step towards realizing the product the way I have always envisioned it. The brilliance of the people, the culture of the company and the knowledge and desire to push audio to its highest level that is evident at EAW makes working with them a dream come true. I am excited as this alliance will allow MicroWedge and other designs that I have been working on for many years to finally come to fruition.”

EAW Brand Group Vice President Jeffrey Cox notes that the MicroWedge agreement is indicative of the company’s long-term philosophy. “In securing this preeminent floor monitor line for our worldwide customer base, EAW is once again demonstrating its commitment to true performance audio by bringing the best in both design and talent to the EAW brand.”
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ADVERTISER’S INDEX

1st Mariner Arena...................................14
Accurate Staging....................................40
All Access Limo.....................................22
All Access Staging................................18
Arie Crown Theater.............................39
Artisan Transport................................33
Audio Analysts.................................23
Celebrity Coach..................................22
Clay Paky..........................................11
Clearwing.........................................31
Collinsworth, Bright & Co.....................16
Complete Logistics............................15
Creative Stage Lighting.......................33
Cube Passes......................................15
D & S Classic Coach.............................15
Dewitt Stern Group..............................40
Eagle Nest Coach.................................34
EAW - Eastern Acoustic Works............34
EBTECH - Sound Enhancement................44
Entertainment Coaches......................IBC
Florida Coach....................................IBC
IAAM - AVSS.....................................30
IAAM - ICMC......................................37
In Tune Rentals.................................22
Jumbocruiser...................................22
KWest..............................................35
Maximum Limousine..........................18
Metropolitan Hotel............................31
Meyer Sound.......................................3
Motor Coach Industries (MCI)............IFC
Music City Coach...............................4
Nitetrain Coach..................................40
PLA Media..........................................18
Powersource Transportation................9
Precise Corporate Staging..................44
Prevost............................................BC
Production Air Services (PAS)............17
Pyritz Pyro........................................33
Roadhouse Coach................................2
Roadshow.........................................40
Robert Magnum Trucking...................2
Roberts Brothers Coach.....................7
Sammy Bones.....................................44
Sedan on Demand...............................16
Sound Image......................................31
Soundcheck.......................................10
Stage & Effects.................................5
Strictly FX........................................33
Superior Coach..................................43
Syncrolite.........................................27
Taylor Tours.......................................32
Tyler Truss Systems...........................6
UpLight Technologies .......................15
Ziggy’s Custom Coaches....................15

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