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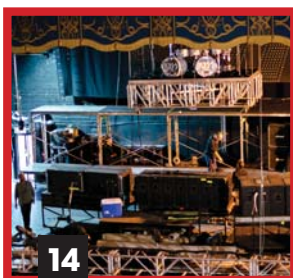




mobile
monthly
by TONY GORDON

volume 5 issue 8 2012

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FROM THE *Publisher*



Our Chief Writer Michael Beck recently had the opportunity to spend a few days with Production Manager Chris Kansy, Bill Kenney, and the Roger Waters crew at Fenway Park to chronicle how "The Wall" show transitions from an arena production to a huge stadium show. We covered the tour in Mobile Production Monthly in 2010, but this has a different slant. We look at the logistics of a stadium show; but not just any stadium. This was Fenway – the oldest and most storied stadium in America with quirks and idiosyncrasies that make baseball a dodgy proposition. Putting a show this large and sprawling into this house was, well read the piece and you'll get the message.

Part and parcel of the logistical challenges of the getting "The Wall" down the road is getting the crew to the show on time. Celebrity Coaches has been integral to Roger Water's tours for years now. Mr. Waters' tours have used Jeff Michael's company since 2007, and with good reason as you will read in a story written by long-time touring pro Mike Wharton.

XL Video, Clair Global and Bill Kenney Productions all spoke to mPM about their contributions to this hugely successful tour, and we also give you part 2 of our conversation with Neil Diamond's LD Marilyn Lowey explaining her passion for light.

Kiss played a rare club show in London's HVM Forum and our UK correspondent Richard Bennett was there to see how Production Manager Patrick Whitley dealt with the challenges of fitting the KISS spectacle into a theater, on the heels of a tour with co-headliners Motley Crue.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as we enjoyed putting it together.

Love/Hate mail is encouraged.

ooops! we messed up!

Our feature on JBL in Mobile Production Monthly #7 had a couple of errors. Our fat fingers mistakenly typed the VTX System as the "VYX" System in the title of the story and we misspelled Paul Bauman's name as well. We apologize for the errors.



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Printing by: Warehouse Multimedia
(www.warehousemultimedia.com)

PUBLISHED BY

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-Larry Smith, Concert Producer



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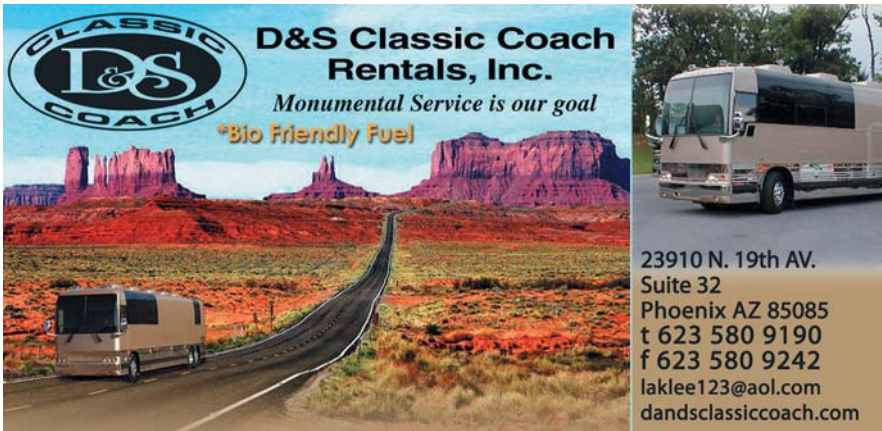
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CHRISTIE LITES

OPENS NEW NASHVILLE OFFICE

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Christie Lites has opened a Nashville office and warehouse, the latest additions to its multi-office network of full service stage lighting supply locations across North America.

Effective immediately, the Christie Lites Rental Rep team will support clients from its newest regional office location within the Soundcheck complex at 740 Cowan St. in Nashville.

Equipment support of the full CL range of lighting and rigging equipment will come from Christie Lites' new warehouse and prep location in the Nashville suburb of Antioch. The 50,000 sq. ft. high volume facility is located at 650 Dana Way. Shannon Scott, long time industry professional from Huntsville, AL, has joined the Rental Rep team and is based in the new Nashville location. Scott started in the industry in 1997 in operations and quickly began touring with such acts as Hank Williams Jr. He was most recently a senior Project Manager handling a wide variety of touring, worship and special events.



Christie Lites CEO Huntly Christie said, "As a strong relationship builder with more than 20 years of experience in the lighting industry, Shannon is a perfect fit. We follow a 'One Contact - One Rep' client management policy, and believe we are unique in this regard, as we support our clients based not on geographical territory but on relationships."

Shannon Scott can be reached by phone at: 256-684-3136 and by email at sscot@christielites.com

JANDS VISTA L5 TAKES CONTROL FOR QUEEN AND ADAM LAMBERT

A Jands Vista L5 was chosen by leading Lighting and Visuals Designer, Rob Sinclair, to control lighting and media for British rock legends, 'Queen'. Their recent string of high profile shows featured American Idol star Adam Lambert as lead singer.

The first highly anticipated show truly tested everyone's technical and creative skills. Performed in front of enormous crowds (estimated at up to 500,000 people) in Independence Square, Kiev, Ukraine - the concert was televised live as part of the Euro 2012 Football Championships as well as streamed online.

Although Rob has been a keen Vista user for a number of years, this was his first experience using the new flagship L5 console. Choosing to do so on a show of such stature and visibility was a real testament to his confidence in the reliability and flexibility of the Vista family.

Rob's design concept began with the classic look of the massive Queen PAR can rigs of the 1970s and 80s. It was then evolved into a stunning contemporary version by taking advantage of the latest LED, automation and control technologies.

The touring rig featured over 200 moving lights arranged on six moving pods over the stage that were able to shift into different positions throughout the show.



Custom video - co-ordinated by Rob - was played back from a Catalyst media server that was also under control of the VistaL5. Rob was extremely impressed with his experience, "The L5 has definitely been designed to make controlling even large and complex shows like this extremely easy" he comments. He found the console's 21 inch high-definition screen made it "very easy to find everything quickly."

Rob took full advantage of Vista's "Matrix Effects" to quickly get some great looks out of the rig's

180 Mac 101s when they were configured as a big "par wall". He concludes that Vista gives the tools

to "Achieve straightforward tasks very easily, whilst retaining the ability to engage in complex programming. You don't have to do any math to write a cue."

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Alanis Morissette Tours With Outline GTO And Britannia Row

Canadian-born singer songwriter and actress Alanis Morissette recently embarked on a short summer tour in support of her forthcoming album 'Havoc And Bright Lights' which is due for release in August.

Best-known for her 1995 'Jagged Little Pill' album which has sold more than 33 million copies globally, Morissette has garnered numerous awards including 16 Junos and 7 Grammys as well as being nominated for two Golden Globes and an Oscar. Subsequent album releases have taken her global sales to over 60 million, while a successful acting career on stage, film and television has raised her profile yet further.

Her 2012 dates, which were interspersed with various festival appearances, included shows in the UK and France at which production provider Britannia Row Productions deployed a substantial Outline GTO system. These shows were also some of the first in Europe to showcase two brand new Outline designs, specifically the GTO-SUB low frequency element designed specifically for the GTO system, and the GTO-DF downfill 120-degree element.

The production also carried six Outline Mantas 120° downfill elements and six Outline Butterfly CDH-483 hi-packs, all used variously as infills depending on the venue, and everything was powered by Outline T-11 amplifiers. FOH engineer Maurizio Gennari said, "I've used Outline Butterfly in the past and I was hoping to try the GTO at some point. Finally an opportunity came when Britannia Row's Bryan Grant suggested I take the system for the UK and French dates of the tour. I really liked the system clarity in the mid-hi range and also the new subs, which Dave Compton and I tried in different configurations - they were very powerful and precise. I will be happy to use the system again in the future".

Britannia Row Productions MD Bryan Grant said, "Our systems tech on the tour reported great results with the GTO, which really didn't surprise me because it's one of the most natural-sounding systems out there at the moment".



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Pete's Big TVs Debuts MK7s at Country Concert '12

Pete's Big TVs recently added to its rental inventory 1,200 panels of digiLED MK7 video screens, using 350 of the panels for the first time on the Country Concert '12 in Ft. Loramie, OH.

Daytime concerts in the hot summer sun can pose problems for video screens. But the digiLED MK7 provide a solution, says Project Manager Guy Benjamin of Pete's Big TVs.

"The MK7 are brighter than the midday sun," he explains. "The digiLED MK7 are 6500 nits in brightness. They have all the features of the 7mm MC7 - which are popular because of their no Radio Frequency interference - except that the screens are not transparent, which makes them twice as bright. They are the perfect solution for the daytime to nighttime concerts."

Pete's Big TVs has supplied the Country Concert, a music and camping festival,

for four non-consecutive years. Held this year July 5-7 on a 500-acre area of Hickory Hills Lake, performers included Blake Shelton, Zac Brown Band, Eric Church, Sara Evans, Luke Bryan and more.

To bring the audience up close to the action, especially for the RV campers farther away, 350 MK7 panels were fashioned into five screens for several areas: the largest screen hung above the main stage, with a smaller screen in the VIP area and three screens in the outfield.

Pete's Big TVs' Matt Ellar was the main LED tech working the gig.

"We were happy to again work with Country Concert," Benjamin said. "We were also happy with the performance of the MK7, as was the concert promoter Jim Prenger, who has made mention of this year's video screens on his website."



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MCMEEN JOINS CHRISTIE LITES RENTALS TEAM



Christie Lites, one of North America's premier entertainment stage lighting and rigging suppliers, announces the appointment of Chris McMeen as a new member of its Rental Rep team. McMeen is already on board in his new role, developing new client and market relationships in the New York City/New Jersey area and serving his client base from all 12 Christie warehouse locations across North America.

Christie Lites Owner/CEO Huntly Christie comments, "Chris represents a big step forward for us in our efforts to expand in the Northeast. His extensive background and experience in the lighting marketplace makes him an ideal fit for Christie Lites."

McMeen says, "I'm pleased to bring Christie Lites to the New York clientele. I believe customers will find value in using Christie Lites' service that they haven't seen before in the New York rental market. They will also be pleased that Christie Lites provides the newest lighting equipment available, including LED products and moving lights, as well as a vast scope and deep inventory of rigging products of all types."

McMeen brings a broad base of knowledge in market sectors of TV, Corporate, Theater, Concert Touring and Special Events. He was most recently Northeast Regional Sales Manager at High End Systems, a Barco group. Prior to that, he spent six years as VP Sales at Scharff Weisberg. His industry career started in 1997 with High Output in Boston, where he served as Director of Theatre and Special Events.

In related news, Christie Lites continues to expand its successful partnership with Hudson-Christie Lighting to serve the New York Theater community. Hudson/Christie Lighting shares offices with Hudson Theatrical Associates in mid-town Manhattan and supplies Broadway and Off-Broadway shows from its new expanded lighting shop location, which is part of the Hudson Scenic Studio complex in Yonkers, NY.

GREG OSHIRO JOINS COMMUNITY



Industry veteran Greg Oshiro has joined Community Professional Loudspeakers in the position of Senior Design Engineer. Oshiro will play a key role in new product evaluation, design and development.

Oshiro comes to Community after several years as President and Principal Consultant at Arlington, TX-based Grep-pen Solutions. Previously, he served as Technical Director for L-Acoustics US, where he was responsible for a wide range of technical manufacturing processes.

He has also held high-level engineering positions at Universal Studios Japan, Advanced Media Design, Maryland Sound, and Clair Brothers Audio. "We're thrilled to welcome Greg to Community," said Community

President and Founder Bruce Howze. "He brings a wealth of expertise and knowledge to the position, and I'm certainly looking forward to working with him. I have no doubt Greg will add a significant new dimension to Community's product development process."

Oshiro joins Community at a pivotal time for the company, which has experienced strong growth in recent years despite the economic recession. The appointment of Oshiro coincides with the company's plans for continued growth through product diversification, and commitment to developing products that comply with international safety standards and regulations.

"Community is a legendary brand and a great group of people," added Oshiro. "The company has a long and well-deserved reputation for their dedication to innovation and great sound. I'm really looking forward to joining the Community team."

PHIL MERCER BACK IN UK TO HEAD XL VIDEO CONCERT TOURING



Following three successful years at XL Video in the US where he oversaw the Los Angeles office, Phil Mercer has returned to his native UK to take up the role of Group Head Of Concert Touring.

Phil's brief is to develop the Concert Touring division of XL Video globally, by working with XL's offices in the US and mainland Europe to provide artists with a seamless touring solution across multiple continents.

Having worked his way up through XL Video, Phil brings a strong technical knowledge of the equipment and services that XL Video provides, coupled with excellent connections with decision makers and touring artists worldwide.

He also has an inherent sense of the best way that artists can transfer their creative ideas into the live performance arena. "I'm hugely excited by my new role within XL Video," says Phil "and the responsibility that comes with keeping us visionary in our approach to the industry; in terms of providing cutting edge display technology, high skilled crew, efficient packaging and unequalled service. "With live show revenues increasingly replacing CD sales as the main income stream for most touring artists, this places equal importance on high production standards and value for money from technical solutions providers like XL Video.

"The wide scope of our work from small bespoke LED scenic pieces with interactive server setups for up-and-coming DJs, to ongoing stadium shows with Coldplay and Roger Waters and, of course, everything in between..... ensures no two shows are the same.

"Although High Definition, Media Servers, DLP Projectors and LED screens are increasingly widely available, our relationships, experience and creative technical thinking are vital in transforming a concept to a practical touring reality."

NATIVE MEDIA SALES JOINS RENKUS-HEINZ

Renkus-Heinz has announced the appointment of Native Media Sales as the company's newest sales representatives.

Native Media Sales was founded by audio industry veteran Michael Austin, who has spent more than 25 representing some of professional audio's biggest names. He has also served on a number of representative councils and advisory boards for several manufacturers. Native Media will cover the Renkus-Heinz line for the Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana area.

"We're really pleased to welcome Native Media Sales as our newest reps," commented Rik Kirby, Renkus-Heinz VP of Sales and Marketing. "Michael and his company are more than just a rep firm - they have a fresh approach and a keen understanding of

today's market. This is an extremely important region for us and we're excited to be working with Native Media to grow our presence there. This territory is one of the most influential, both domestically and internationally, and we're looking forward to continuing our success."

"It's a privilege to be working with one of the most respected names in our industry," added Austin. "Renkus-Heinz has an amazing history as an innovator and a technology leader, and we're thrilled to add them to our client list."

Michael Austin can be reached at Native Media Sales' offices in San Antonio, TX. Email them at Michael@nativemediasales.com, or phone 210-900-2250. Visit www.nativemediasales.com for more info.

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A big KISS and a tight squeeze in London

By Richard Bennett

Photography by Helen
Bradley Owers





© Helen Bradley Owers 2012

There is an old saying, too frequently used at times, that size doesn't matter. For veteran KISS Production Manager, Patrick Whitley and his crew, fitting the band's larger than life pyrotechnic-laden show into London's HMV Forum, the smallest venue the boys have played in more than 35 years, size, or more accurately a distinct lack of it, was a logistical challenge, long before the first truck rolled up to the back door.

focus," says Whitley.

"The Forum is a nice sized theater, not as big as some, but big enough, which allowed us to get creative and even push the envelope a bit. The size of the place defiantly defined how much of the set we could fit in. We trucked everything, except video, from Oslo to London. Once there, we added a bit of extra lighting from our European tour vendor

took out some of the photo pit, and raised the extension higher than the basic stage height, which wasn't very high," says Whitley.

With the stage area at the venue only 25 feet deep, getting the equipment on it was another logistical challenge, as Whitley explains.

"With a new stage set ready for the forthcoming US dates, the Forum show was probably the last time we were going to use the cabinet set, which basically consists of layers and layers of our KISS custom 4 x 12 cabs, about twenty in total, laid out on various levels. On top of that, we added to the backline with a ton of cabinets from John Henry's. We used ten red police lights laid out on the lower cabs, and loads of pyro. In fact, more took more pyro than I think any other band has ever taken into that size venue, although we reduced the height of the effects due to the low ceiling and the ornate curtains in place around the stage area. NEG Earth Ltd provided the lighting, with Clair/ Audio Rent supplying any sound gear we didn't bring. As for trucking the gear from Oslo to London, I used the same company I have used for every tour I have done on that side of the pond, Transam Trucking," he says.

Built in 1934 and originally used as an Art Deco cinema, the HMV Forum became a live concert venue in the 1980s. Split across two levels, a lower level standing area and a seated balcony, the capacity stands at 2,450. With tickets for the KISS concert selling out in pre-sale alone, and tickets selling on E-Bay for more than \$600, the worlds hottest band was the hottest ticket of the year. With that many crazy KISS fans packed into the intimate venue, the temperature soon rose to sauna level, something that Whitley had not anticipated, causing him a number of challenges during the show.

"I knew it was going to become smoky, there's no way it wasn't with all that pyro, but I hadn't expected it to get as hot in there as it did. The band dealt with the heat really well and played the whole set, but fairly quickly into the show we opened all the stage doors along with the load in door as well, to try and create some sort of ventilation. I thought that the smoke from all that pyro might vent out through the grid above the stage, but it didn't, it just sat there. As we had pyro on most songs in the set, it just got more and more. At one stage during the show, we even considered cutting some of the pyro effects, but in the end we rolled with them all," says Whitley.

With the combination of the band performing a two hour set, the heat generated by the packed house, and the smoke from the pyro refusing to



"We had this show on our radar about 10 weeks before the actual date. When I heard the guys were going to play there I had no idea what size of venue it was. A few days earlier we had played at the Holmenkollen Summer Festival in Oslo, Norway. The size of the festival show helped drive the production we brought over with us, and with the amount of gear we took over for that show, I knew that I had more than enough options for the Forum show," he says.

With these two gigs being the only KISS European shows of 2012, Whitley treated them as what he refers to as "non touring" shows, by which he means a loose show, without the usual full touring production. Getting the gear over to Europe, Whitley used a method he has used time and time again over his many years of on the road experience.

"The number one rule for me in transporting gear over that kind of distance is to sea-freight the lot. It's really the only way to go. However it's not always possible, but that's always my

and that was pretty much the basis of our plan," he adds.

The Scottish poet Robert Burns famously once wrote, "The best laid schemes o' mice an' men go often awry," and for Whitley and his crew, the theoretical preparation did not quite match up to the practical implementation.

"A production team meeting was held at the Forum two days before the gig," explains Whitley. "We had about thirty KISS crew in place for the show, and I took twenty of them to the Forum so we could get in synch with the precise plan for the show. As for set up, we took in the legendary KISS Sign, other key staging elements, sound, lights, our own backline, monitors and pyro. During that first visit, we took measurements and came up with a sketch, with the intention of getting as big a show in the building as possible. But even on the day, once we started load in we discovered problems that meant we had to make changes from the original plan. We extended the stage, which

With the stage area at the venue only 25 feet deep, getting the equipment on it was another logistical challenge."



shift, visibility soon became an issue, particularly for the fans in the balcony. The same thing went for the spotlight guys, who were using four Vector MSR 1800DEs housed at the highest point at the back of the balcony. During the last song of the night, and with the eight infamous KISS confetti cannons in full deployment turning the whole venue into one giant KISS snowglobe, the spot guys lost total visibility, completely missing their cues. By the end of the gig, the operators were standing in pools of their own sweat and no doubt a few pounds lighter in weight.

Another issue that Whitley and his team had not anticipated, and that only became apparent during Eric Singer's drum solo, was supplied by the very large and ornate fascia situated across the full length at the top of the stage.

"During the drum solo, we flew the riser up from the stage on a winch system, with rocket effects firing from each corner, which was a really cool effect for the show. Because of height issues with the stage, we tried to not take it up too high, but it reality it flew too high for the people in the balcony to see when it disappeared behind the fascia. It's never a perfect world," he says with a laugh.

As the satisfied and sweat-drenched fans walked out into the great British summer rain, Whitley and his crew descended onto the stage for load out, packing up several containers, all heading back to the KISS warehouse in Los Angeles. There was a brief respite for the bands production manager to have a moment of reflection on what he and his crew had just pulled off:



"All in all a very successful show from a production point of view, I hadn't done a show at that particular venue before, and since there aren't many places left that I haven't done a show at, it was pretty cool to do this one. Very intimate, very loud, very hot and very, very smoky...what more could you ask for?" he says.

And with that, these warriors of the road headed off into the dark and rainy London night, bound for the US leg of the tour, leaving behind an event that will be talked about for years to come.

XL VIDEO AND THE ART OF WALL TO WALL

By Richard Bennett

projection

When Benjamin Franklin so beautifully stated, "By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail," I doubt he had the challenging world of tour production in mind. But like anything, the sheer scale, size and financial expenditures of touring in the modern day means that mistakes can be very costly. For XL Video, with concert touring divisions based in Los Angeles and Hemel Hempstead UK, good old Mr. Franklin's words are the mantra they live by, no more so than when it came to their involvement with the recent Roger Waters *The Wall* world tour.

XL Video's Head of Touring Phil Mercer explains, "Preparation was the key for us, particularly regarding the stadium leg of the tour. All the venues were site visited in advance by Production Manager Chris Kansy and Screens Technical Director Richard Turner in an effort to make sure that what they were proposing would fit. We were fortunate in as much as we didn't have to make any specific changes for any of the shows. What we took on the road pretty much

worked in every venue. The leasing and positioning of the projectors was determined after the pre-site visits, by working on the measurements from each venue, and we came up with an average set of figures that would work for each show. For the stadium runs, the majority of pre-production was done in Perth, Australia prior to the arena tour in Australia and New Zealand. That took about 10 days and then there was another six days in Santiago Chile, where the stadium run started. On both of those we had all the additional playback and control elements in Perth and we added the extra projectors in Santiago, so it was a bit of a two pronged thing."

LL The toughest part of the run for us was South America, just because of the distances involved with the state of the roads and the change in altitude, which can do funny things to the equipment in terms of moisture." - XL Video's Head of Touring Phil Mercer

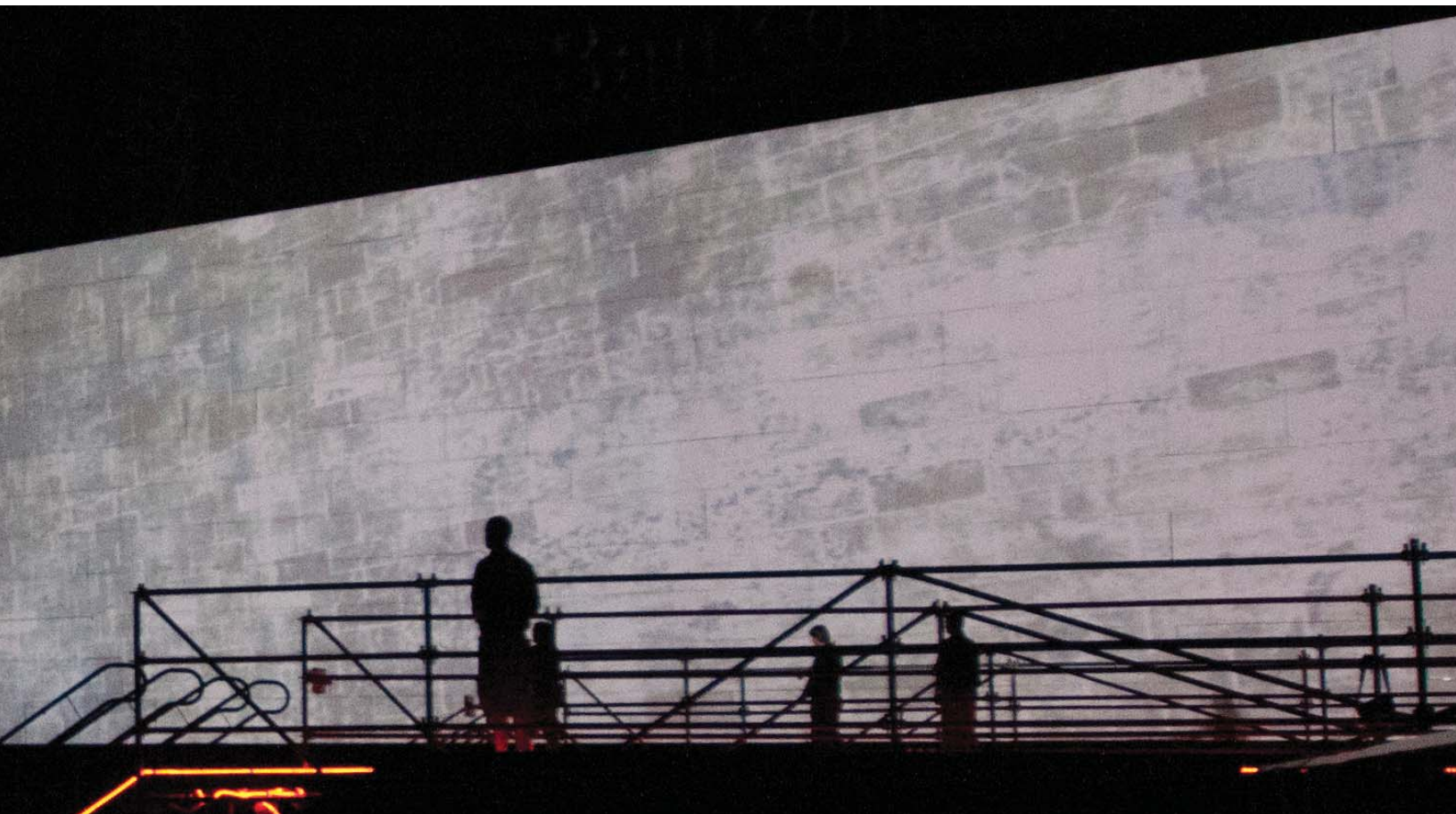
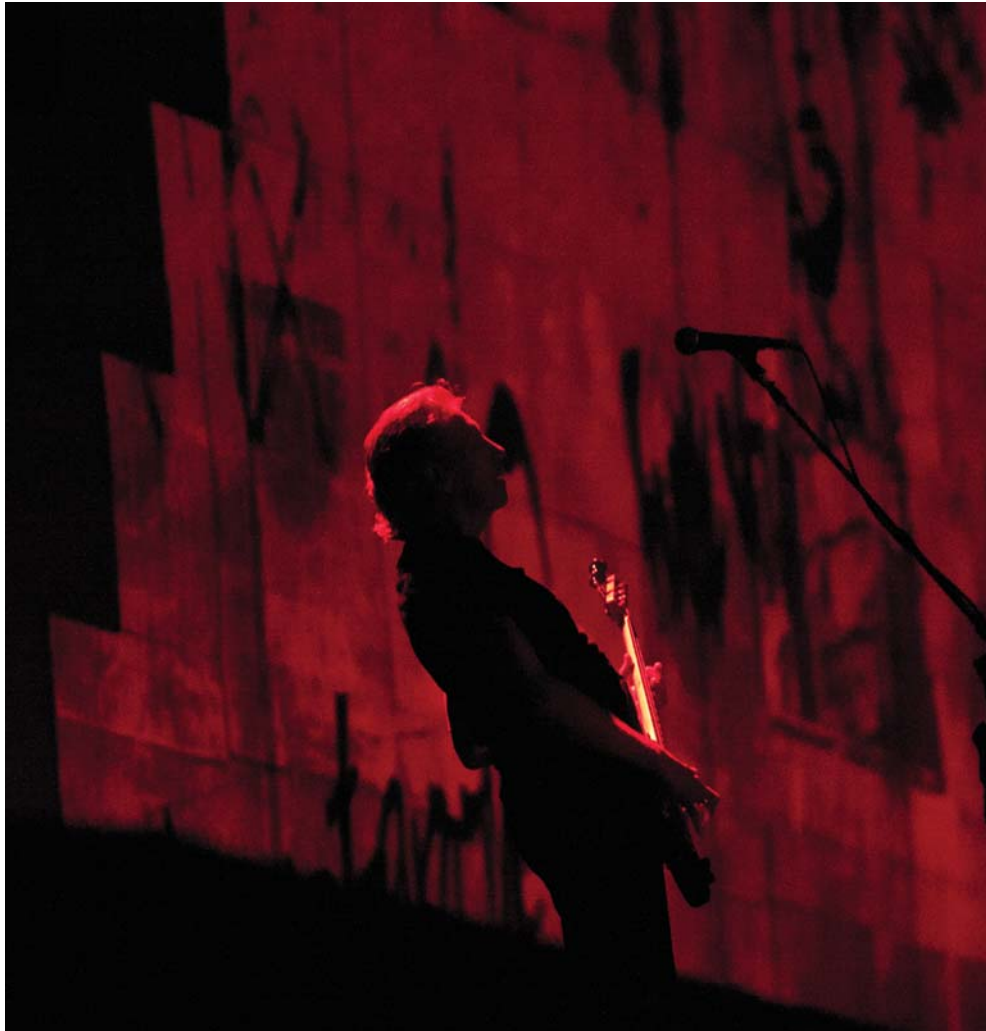
Formed in 2000, XL Video has firmly established itself in the field of projection, particularly when it comes to the more bespoke and challenging tours. For the Waters tour, it helped that the company already had a relationship with Tour



Director Andrew Zweck, as Mercer explains:

“We did the *Dark Side of the Moon* tour, with Roger a few years ago, and have a strong relationship with Rogers’s camp, mainly with Andrew, Chris and Richard. We have worked with them for a number of years and we have learned to understand the way we each approach things, which in this business is key. Richard was instrumental in the system design and the specs of the tour. One of the big questions we had to answer very early on prior to the tour starting on the road in 2010, was what projectors we were going to use. We didn’t actually use the biggest and brightest projectors on the market. Instead, we used slightly smaller ones that were more robust and road-worthy. We ended up using multiples of them instead of bigger ones that just didn’t have the robustness and lamp life. We did some testing early on to get everything the way it needed to be, and then when we moved into the stadiums we just scaled up the size of the systems from the one we used in the arenas.”

For the stadium leg of the tour, Mercer and his team used six Barco FLM 22+ projectors for the 30 foot diameter center circle and 36





whole process took about eight hours a show, but that was stretched over an eighteen hour window. In terms of the dimension of the wall, it varied a bit in the stadiums due to the seating, etc. At the last show in Canada, it went to about 600 feet wide, although in most of the stadiums it was about 240 feet wide. It scaled up considerably and with the light levels in stadium significantly higher you don't get control of the ambient light, so we had to upgrade the projection system to cope with that. There were some challenges in terms of content, which had to be changed because the dimension and aspect ratio of the projected area changed, so it was a case of adding more projectors and playback machines. Another challenge for us, within the stadium context, was fighting with the weather and different projector distances along with the fact that you are projecting onto what is essentially a cardboard brick wall, which is liable to move a little bit in the wind and then collapses over at the end of the show," laughs Mercer.

Although the XL team of Crew Chief Clarke Anderson, Projectionists Gary Beirne, Paul Maddock-Jones, Rob Wick, Gabby Linford and Playback Operator Phil Haynes, took the whole tour in stride, as the South American leg posed some unique challenges.

FLM HD20's for projecting on to the wall itself. The playback system consisted of Barco Encore and Apple Xservers running a virtual VVTR program all tied into Medialon Show Control software, while a Barco High End Systems Full Boar console controlled the catalyst system along with custom artnet controlled projector shutters built by Tait Technologies, for creating seamless projections, which were the main guts of the system. A number of Sony High Def cameras were used for certain pieces where a bit of IMAG was added to specific bricks within the wall or cut-outs during the show.

"All of our gear, including a number of SGPS custom made three-way projector cradles fit into two and a half trucks. With set up done the day before the show, we were able to do the lineup the night before, as we obviously needed darkness to run through the projections, challenging considering it was summer and we had limited night time to work with. The

"The toughest part of the run for us was South America, just because of the distances involved, the state of the roads and the change in altitude, which can do funny things to the equipment in terms of moisture. So we carried lots of spares and had people around who knew what they were doing. By the time we got to the states, it became more of a bit more of a well oiled machine," says Mercer.

As for the experience, Mercer feels that it not only worked well, but has also put live tour projection into a new light.

"This tour has really put projection back into people's consciousness. For many years LED has grabbed all the headlines and the big tours, but *The Wall* has, I think, put projection and what can be done with it in the live arena back into people's minds."





CONCERT
TOURING

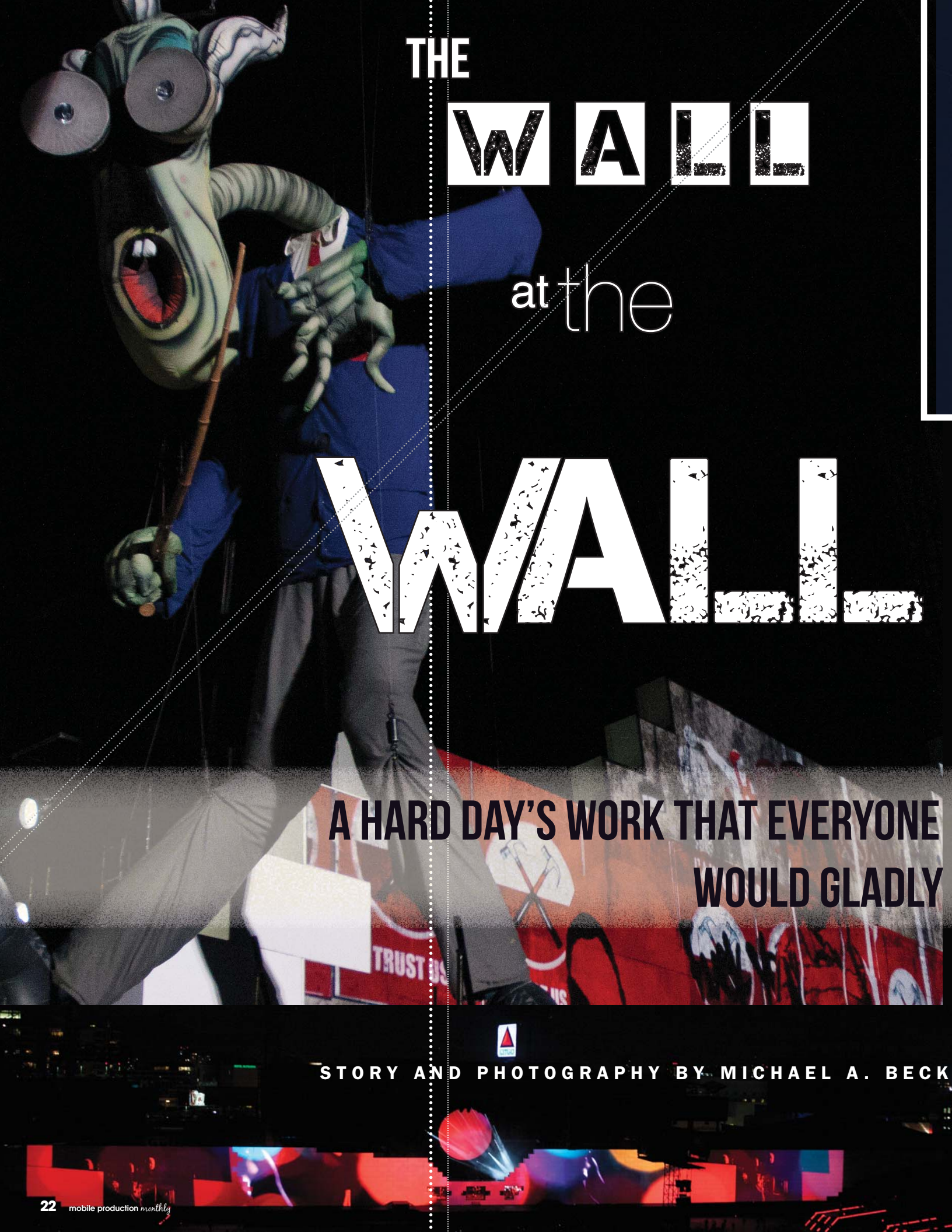
PROJECTION
MAPPING

LIGHTWEIGHT
LED
SCREENS

SD & HD
CAMERA
PACKAGES

MEDIA
SERVERS/
SHOW
CONTROL

EXPERIENCED
TOURING
CREWS



THE

WALL

at the

WALL

A HARD DAY'S WORK THAT EVERYONE
WOULD GLADLY



STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL A. BECK



If you're not a baseball fan, the importance of this year came and went without notice. But for those who are or, at least were at one time, faithful followers of brother Babe

Ruth and all who came before and after this year marked the 100th anniversary of one of the most venerated sports shrines to ever stand in our country, Fenway Park. In a "must see" documentary marking the occasion titled "Inside Fenway Park: An Icon at 100", the calm, almost soothing voice of Matt Damon noted, "Fenway has been putting on 'the show' for 100 years."

In baseball parlance "the show" is a reference to major league baseball or "the bigs". And while the primary reason for the existence of Fenway has been the spectacle of baseball from the very beginning, for decades if the city of Boston needed a stage for anything big, Fenway got the call for everything from high school and college football games (and even a couple pro games) to Catholic memorial masses and even a rally for Irish independence. Indeed, Fenway Park was the place where Franklin Delano Roosevelt gave his last campaign speech.

However, the one thing that had not found its way into the stadium was rock n' roll. As we moved into the late 60s and beyond, concert promoters saw the value of doing shows in stadiums. But apart from two shows in 1973 (Stevie Wonder and Ray Charles) the powers that be at Fenway sat it out. Nevertheless, the issue had come up from time to time in side conversations says Red Sox Senior Vice President of Fenway Affairs Larry Cancro, "Don Law and I had become friends through our religious love of hockey," Cancro recalled. "Don and I were always exchanging little ideas but never actually thought it would come to us working together. Then in '93 we got an



inquiry from Paul McCartney. He was at a stage in his career where just playing for the money wasn't everything he wanted to do. He wanted to play places with reputations and interesting stories and he wanted to play here. We looked into it and we really felt the weight of the stage they wanted to put on the field would destroy our drainage system. It was late in the season and we were looking at a potential run at the playoffs, so we didn't feel like we could take that chance. We wanted to keep baseball as our driving force."

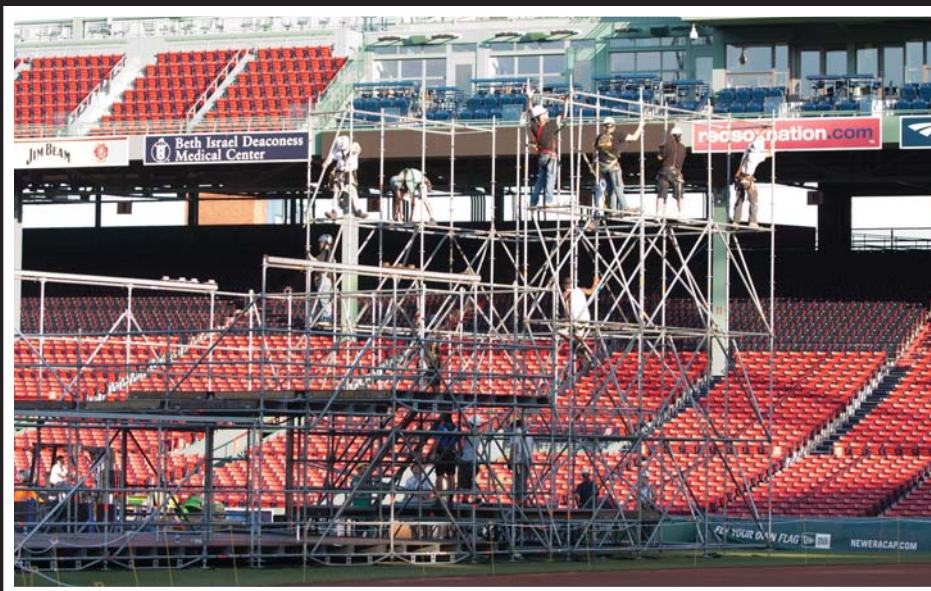
In 2002, the Red Sox came under the ownership of the trio of John Henry, Larry Lucchino and Tom Werner. Red Sox owners over the past 30 years [backed by the all parts of the establishment including sports press] had wrestled with the notion of tearing the stadium down and replacing it with a new facility that would undoubtedly bring in more revenue. Henry, Lucchino, and Werner – who once said, "This is a cathedral and you don't mess with Notre Dame" – were not only committed to saving the chapel on the Charles, but they believed they could find new wells of income.

The prevailing wisdom at the time was that it [Fenway] was a relic, it was outdated. You needed a new ball park with new revenue streams," said Werner in the aforementioned documentary. "Our group said, 'No, we disagree with that. There's something special about Fenway Park and we will keep it as an appealing part of this franchise if it's humanly possible.'"

Much of the new revenue was found in the addition of thousands of new seats including 274 seats on top of the 37 foot high left field wall known to all as the "Green Monster".

In addition to the installation of seats, the new management team set its sights on broader entertainment horizons.

"We always had the prospect of concerts in the back of our mind and over time we made upgrades to the field," said Cancro. "The new management team came in they said, 'We've paid a lot of money for this team and we've got to find all kinds of revenue streams, has anyone looked into concerts?' So I told him



about '93 and they asked if I could put them in touch with the local promoter." With that, the stage was set (as it were) for large scale concert productions to start taking place in Fenway Park. The first show was Bruce Springsteen. In 2003 Bruce Springsteen inquired about playing the stadium. Because Springsteen's management team are from Massachusetts and have long lived relationships with Don Law dating back to the beginning of Springsteen's career, there was a built-in respect and sensitivity to the sacred respect for the park that Fenway management needed to see in order to take this huge step.

The first issue to be faced was and always is logistics. The modern stadiums that exist in America today are built with the understanding that massive concerts will be coming into the buildings with cranes and several trucks. For that reason, they are designed with loading access to make shows as convenient as possible. Such is not the case for a stadium that was built five years before the forklift was invented.

While everyone was cautious and even a little nervous about what was about to happen, one element of the equation made the process easier. Springsteen Production Manager George Travis lived in Boston at the time and was able to spend a lot of time at the park looking over every contingency. Cancro explained, "He kept coming to the ball park and asking, 'well if we do this or we do that, how do we get it into the park?' He worked with Tom Bates from Don Law's production team and Mike

Markettis and we figured it all out. If it was somebody who was coming from England or someplace else, it might have been a lot more difficult."

The two night stand went off without a major hitch and everyone came away from the experience with the feeling that this was something that could happen more in the future. Since then Jimmy Buffett, The Rolling Stones, Dave Matthews Band with Sheryl Crow, The Police, Neil Diamond, Dave Matthews Band with Willie Nelson, Phish, Paul McCartney, Aerosmith with

the J. Geils Band, New Kids on the Block & Backstreet Boys and Dropkick Murphys with Mighty Mighty Bosstones have all played Fenway Park. Although some shows were a little tougher than others, the road has been predominantly smooth.

When the doors were opened to do shows at

Fenway, an interesting thing began to happen. People who'd grown up in Boston loving the Red Sox through thick and thin and wondering what it would like to actually step out onto the fair side of "Pesky's Pole", would now see the park from the field. These people responsible for getting some of the biggest names in the world of entertainment down the road, are among the most jaded professionals on earth. But they would now be caught in the pinch between having to proceed with the cold objective professionalism needed to get the gig done, and the shivering joy of being able about to walk up to the Green Monster and touch the place where "Yaz" played countless fly balls on the bounce.

The basic premise of the show was the same as it always been, only larger. Nowhere was this more evident than the projection area of the wall.



One such person is Paul McCartney Production Manager Mark "Springo" Spring, "When we were kids we would go out and sit in the bleachers out in right field because it was the cheap, easy thing to do. But people come from all over the world to see Fenway. It used to be Faneuil Hall or the Freedom Trail." Springo's tone brightened when he told of being able to sign the inside of the Green Monster (a huge honor typically reserved for players and high dignitaries), "I wrote, 'Springo was here!'"

However, the big league production manager had a different tone when he was first faced with the prospect of taking his show there. "When I was a kid it was tough to walk there, never mind parking trucks. It's a pain in the ass to do a show there. You had to crane everything in over the wall. Nothing is level or square. At first I was asking, 'Why are we even playing here?' But the people there are great and they really have the process down. It wasn't nearly as tough as I thought it would be."

Another production manager who grew up

coming to games at Fenway, is Roger Waters' Production Manager Chris Kansy. We caught up with Kansy during the load in of *The Wall* at Fenway in July of this year. He was more than happy to share the experience of coming back to work in Fenway, "When I came here for the first time back in 1969 when I was eight years old, I could never have imagined that I would be out working on the field with a massive production like this. It's absolutely stunning. We've done plenty of stadiums on this tour - you walk in and you see the stadium and the green grass and you

the Fenway people on board and getting them to trust us in how we wanted to approach the build. We drive a lot of vehicles on the grass. We put a lot of weight on the grass. We spend a lot of time on the grass. Getting them to trust us was probably the most difficult thing."

"We thought *The Wall* in front of 'The Wall' would be worldwide publicity," Cancro explained. "Even though the show wasn't a perfect [physical] fit for our building, our building is about a wall and it seemed like a

of Mountain Productions' scaffolding. Because the portion of the wall that extended beyond the main structure of the stage - known as the rampart - was little more than a wind wall, it had to be ballasted. This was accomplished by placing 42 [375 gallon] tubs of water along the bottom of the structure. This put 131,355 pounds of weight at the bottom of the wall.

All told, this build was designed to take five shifts - one shift per day. However, with the show being on a Sunday, the Red Sox had a day game on the previous Wednesday. This required that steel crews work in shifts around the clock to get the venue ready to receive production on Saturday for a Sunday show. According to I.A.T.S.E Local 11 President Chris Welling, the union provided 175 stage hands, show operators, production riggers and utility people over the course of the load in, show and load out. The steel call was handled by Boston based Bill Kenney Productions which provided over 200 climbers, ground personnel and forklift drivers.

The basic premise of the show was the same as it's always been, only larger. Nowhere was this more evident than the projection area of the wall. End to end, the field was 500 feet wide. In the arena configuration, the projection field covered five screen areas with three Barco FLM HD20 [provided by XL Video] hitting each area. The five banks of projectors spread evenly across the face of the stage so they could hit the wall from straight on. With the stadium show, the coverage was nine screen areas with three projectors per area. The rub was that the projectors couldn't be placed directly in front of the wall because of site line obstruction.

The answer was to put three pods of [four] projectors in three positions on the field and deal with the keystoneing. This did indeed create a pretty large sideline issue. However, the problem was mitigated as much as possible by utilizing the top of the mix tower as the center position. For the uninitiated, the expanded video field of the stadium show wasn't just an expanded or "blown up" version of the arena imagery. According to Video Technical Director Richard Turner, the reformatting of the content was massive undertaking for Video Content Producer Sean Evans, "Initially Sean was just going to put a bit of live material on the extra screen areas on the side. But when Roger [Waters] started getting into it, it was decided to make it go full-width. At 15,800 pixels wide, that is a considerable amount of effort."

The lighting - provided by PRG didn't change at all from the arena shows, although the house spots had to be moved onto the field in order to get them close enough to the stage to read properly. This was achieved by placing them in



go to work. But when I walked in here I got a chill. It's thrilling to be welcomed here by the Red Sox Staff and given the ultimate respect as the production manager of a touring act. But as a fan, they gave me the tour and let me take batting practice and see the locker rooms. Then I got to sign the inside of the Monster."

Fan excitement aside, there is still the job at hand to be considered. Kansy's assessment of doing a show in Fenway was no different than Springo's. "It's tough to play baseball here. Never mind do a rock show. People like Jake [Berry] and Opie were some of the first to come in here and they were craning stuff over the wall and going the Ho Chi Mynh Trail just to get everything in. Now they've learned stuff, the promoters have learned stuff and they're settling into a formula here that I think works. The Stage Co guys are saying this is one of the easiest experiences they've had here just due to the fact that the venue is more accommodating and they've learned how to tame this room."

When asked which myriad of challenges is the greatest, he didn't waste much time thinking about the question, "It was probably bringing

perfect place for that statement to be made. We were almost to the place where we thought, 'Too big. Let's not do it.' And then Ron Delsener called me with Roger Waters sitting there. Roger hardly said anything but he said just enough. Basically what he said was 'this is one of the places I really want to perform this show.' When someone really wants play you particular venue, that carries a lot of weight as opposed to someone who thinks they can make a lot of money there or it's just another stop on the tour."

To say *The Wall* was not a perfect fit for Fenway Park is an understatement of considerable weight. The main portion of the stage - provided by Stage Co - was 264 feet wide and weighed roughly 600,000 pounds including ballast. However, that was just the stage over which the same show that plays in arenas (which we wrote about in November of 2010) sat and flew. However, the wall extended out roughly 285 feet in each direction from the center of the stage. Although the portion of the wall directly in front of the band was comprised of the same [cardboard] bricks created by Tait Towers for the arena shows, it extended out away from the stage as a façade attached to a structure made up

» THE WALL AT THE WALL

huts atop two towers which were also used as audio delay stacks.

While perfection is impossible to achieve in anything, the audio reproduction of this show comes as close as one could imagine. In discussing the audio portion of the production with Clair Global System Engineer Bob Weibel, the question came up of how often there is a show that the team is unhappy with. Weibel's response was to chuckle slowly at the absurdity of the question and simply say, "Rarely."

The show is never over-mixed. Although it obviously has to be loud enough to fill the space of the venue, this show is a classic example of the difference between loud and painful. "I would ascribe the quality that you're describing to [Tour Manager/FOH Engineer] Trip Khalaf. He mixes it to his taste in agreement with Roger. It's as loud as a rock concert needs to be and not overbearing or oppressive to listen to. That ultimately is reflecting his decision in judgment."

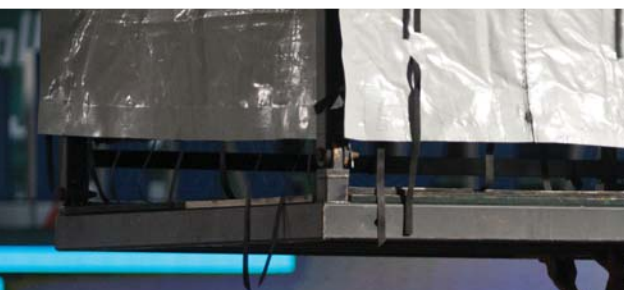
The most commonly noticed feature of the audio portion of the show is the fact that it's delivered in surround sound. However, there's surround sound and there's *surround sound*, Weibel explained. "The system that we use, is basically five sources. The concept is not the idea of your home living room 5.1 'put you in

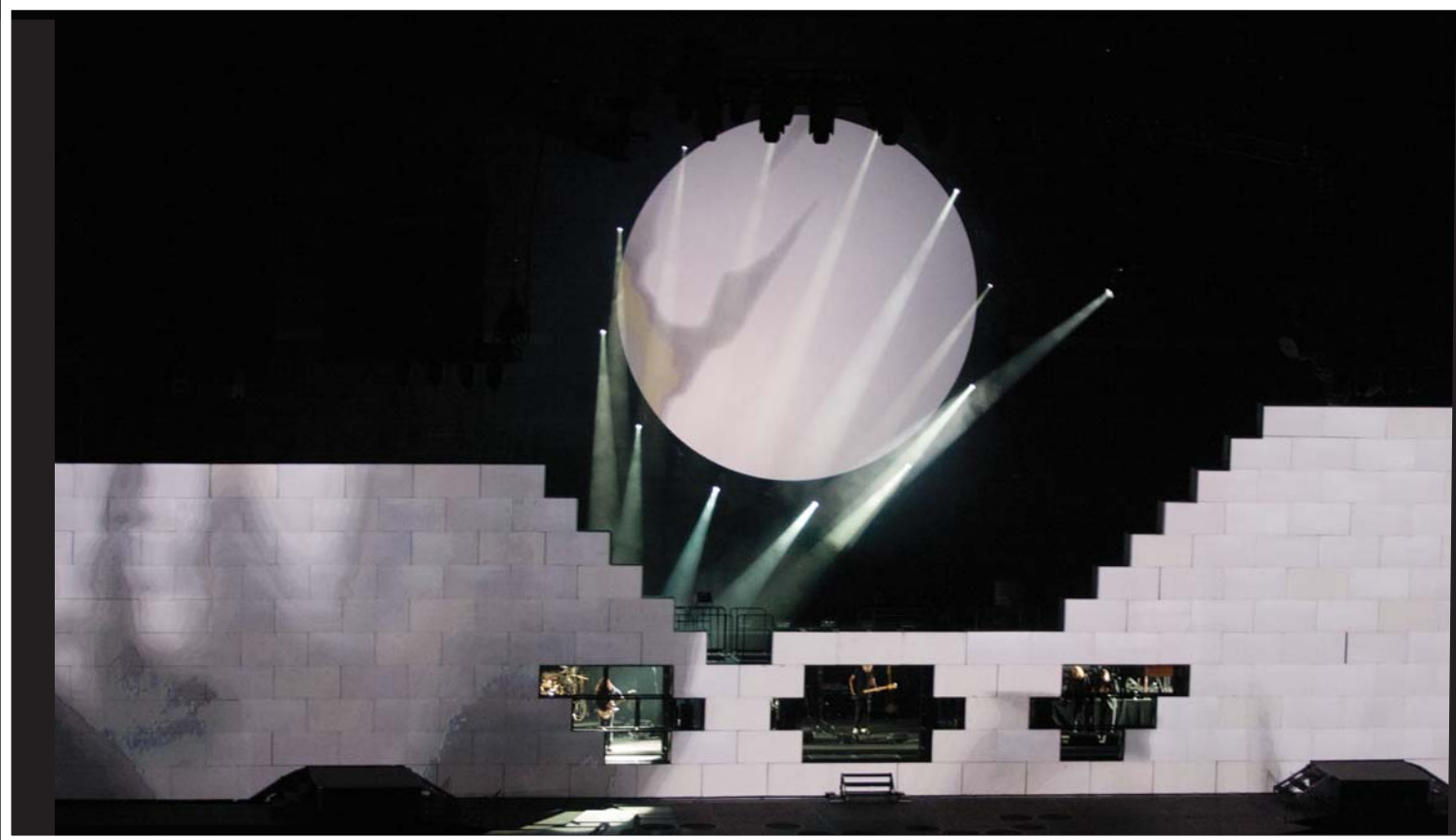
middle of the band' sort of surround system. The band comes out of the main stereo PA left and right which is to the front of the audience. Then there are three other surround sources through which we play primarily pre-recorded sound effects."

As with many other aspects of the show, the sound reproduction is approached much differently in the stadiums than in the arenas. Weibel described the disparity, "The indoor show is constrained by the economics and logistics of what we can do in a given day. Given that, everything we do in an arena all has to come up off of the arena floor. Logistically, that's where you'd have the space to build it and it's generally where you're going to find rigging points above it. So [for the surround] we build three clusters that radiate 360°. Right and left are located midway down the arena floor and

as far off stage as we can get them, and the rear one is located on center as far back as we can get it.

"We've found that that's the design that we can do with the budget available within the time that is available. Outdoors, on the other hand, we use what I call the 'perimeter approach'. We put up six loudspeaker sources pretty much around the perimeter of the performing area. You come in about a third of the way down where the audience are, and put a source there left and right, go out another third of the way and then for the rear once again, come in a third from each side. This seems to provide pretty even coverage and gets the most information to the largest number of people. But once again, it's only driven as three sources right, left and rear."





The asymmetrical design of Fenway Park threw a bit of a wrench in the layout of the surround system. In most cases when this show played a baseball field such as Yankee Stadium, the stage was centered in straight away center field. In Fenway, the stage ran parallel to the Green Monster (left field wall). The result was there was nowhere to place the far house right surround cluster. Instead of hanging six independent clusters, the clusters were paired and under-hung from the upper deck in three positions; over the right field bleachers, house right, above the first base dugout house center, and just down the line from the third base dugout. Each position was two speaker clusters.

“Boston was an extremely challenging venue just in terms of where we could put stuff with weight constraints and vertical trim limitations.” He explained “We had a pretty challenging day in Boston. Back in November when Chris Kansy and I went around and did site surveys of all of the stadiums we were projected to play, Tom Bates, the Boston Live Nation promoter rep, took us into the venue and introduced us to the building. And after we developed a plan he got the building engineers involved and we did the best job we could. Tom was a big help.”

Another key player on the Clair staff was Senior System Engineer Jo Ravitch. Ravitch came in with Tim Joyce the day of the production load in – the last day of the steel build- and set up the surround system. Then during the technical load in – the day before the show – Ravitch and Joyce would set up the three delay arrays.

This show is full of iconic images that span the length of Water’s career including huge upstage circular video screen, the inflatables and the puppets. Another unforgettable emblem of the show is the replica of a German WWII Stuka Dive Bomber that flies into the wall with a pyro explosion upon impact. Although none of these gags – for want of a better description – changed in size or structure for the stadium show, the distance that the plane has to cover during its flight did. “It involves getting the high point of the line from which the plane embarks rigged to

“Boston was an extremely challenging venue just in terms of where we could put stuff with weight constraints and vertical trim limitations.”

a place where nobody normally rigs,” said the incredibly affable London based Head Rigger Dave “Dash” Rowe. “In North America that wasn’t quite so bad because there’s all kinds of structure that we could attach to, other than having to talk the engineers into it because you’re talking about running a line from their stadium lights to the stage and flying an airplane on it. Immediately people are not very happy with you. But in South America and more remote parts of the world, it’s a real challenge because they don’t have the same kind of structures in stadiums that you guys do in North America. It’s a lot more rickety and off-the-cuff. It’s

down to making an experienced judgment, whether it’s strong enough rather than being told by an engineer, ‘Yep, you can get away with this.’”

Dash recalled one such difficult situation in Santiago, Chile, “We were playing in the stadium where Pinochet murdered all those students. They had an enormous tower that went up 150 feet. No one was really keen to

go up on it, so I got someone to break into it and I took a long stroll up to the top. It wasn’t long before I was in complete darkness and the smell was horrendous, absolutely horrible. When I got up to about 120 feet, it was muddy. I was confused, how could there be mud in this arid country. Then it occurred to me that it wasn’t actually mud, it was the excrement from thousands of birds.”

Just writing that description was enough to trigger a gag reflex, but it got worse. “After a while I came back with a flashlight,” continued Dash. “When I turned it on it was ghastly. Rotted flesh and carcasses and bones of birds and rats - there were roaches like I’ve never encountered before. I’m not particularly squeamish, but in the same breath I’m not particularly fond of the creepy crawling things and I was surrounded by thousands of these cockroaches.”

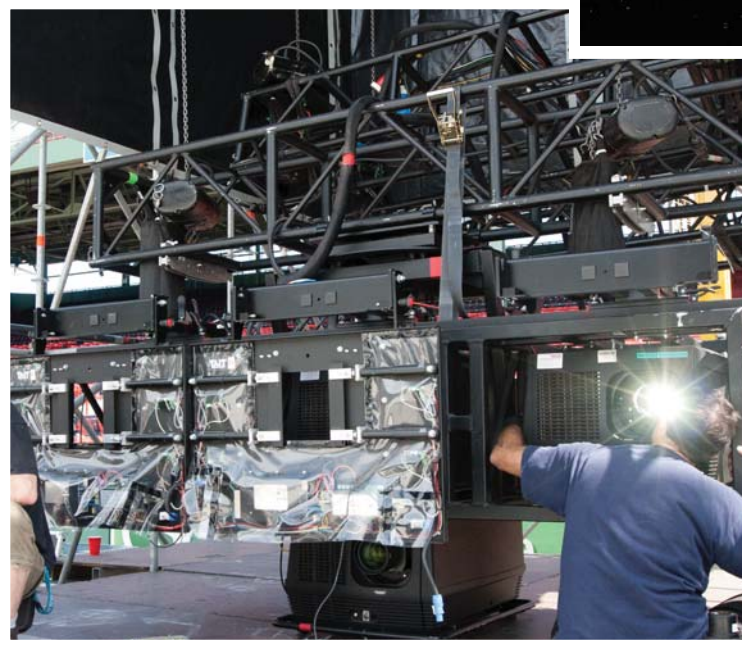
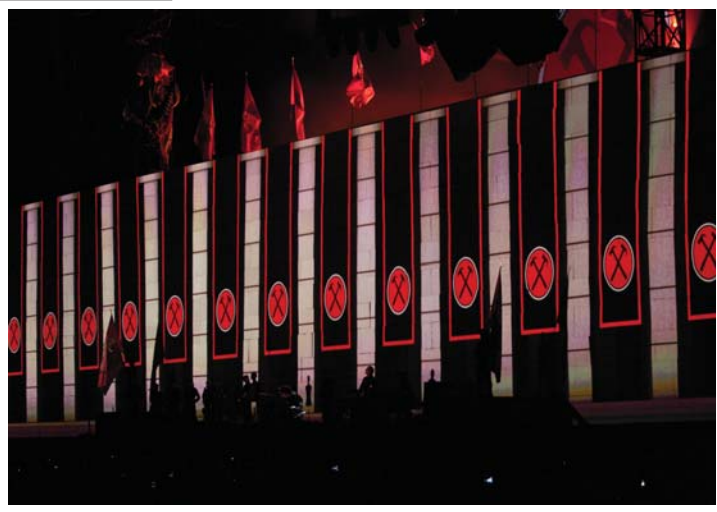
And thus, we get to the devotion this crew has for the production. When asked if he would have passed on the job of going up into that place and rigging and then removing the line, Dash said, “I wouldn’t have been

forced to do it. When you work for someone like Roger you can go the easy route if you want to. But there's a certain sense of pride – dare I say it – in being associated with a production like that. So when the opportunity presents itself to go all in and pull something off that's a bit more spectacular, you feel duty-bound to give it a try."

Having seen this show more than once, it is difficult to imagine what a bad show might look like. It is polished to the point of having no daylight between this show and the unattainable point of perfection.

When it came into the tight, asymmetrical and limiting, albeit majestic, confines of Fenway Park, everyone knew it was going to be a tough push. Chris Kansy put it into words best, "Everyone working in this venue has put in a hard day's work before. We've been to the difficult markets. We've all played Greece and South America and Central America where it is just a long, ass kicking day. We're not afraid of the long day, but once Fenway agreed to let us do what we have to do, the Stage Co guys came in and had a wonderful build. This was the most condensed build they had on the whole tour. The Sox had a day game on Wednesday and they welcomed production on Saturday. That's impressive."

For all the bumping and grinding needed to get this leviathan into the park, Fenway management had nothing bad to say about the event. In the end, the team seems undeterred from continuing on with concert production in the 'Chapel on the Charles'. "We're not a concert facility," concluded Larry Cancro, "we're a baseball park. But we know we can deliver a good show when we get the right act and we know that's a good thing for the people who are coming here."



THE CREW

MEET

THE PRODUCTION TEAM BEHIND THE WALL AT THE WALL

Burt Deckers
Stageco



John "JC" Christopher
Bill Kenney Productions



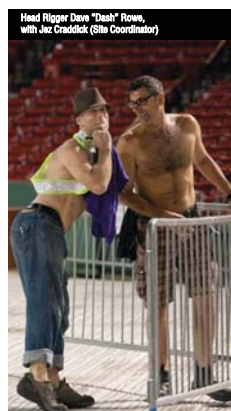
Bob Devine
IATSI Local 11 Stagehand



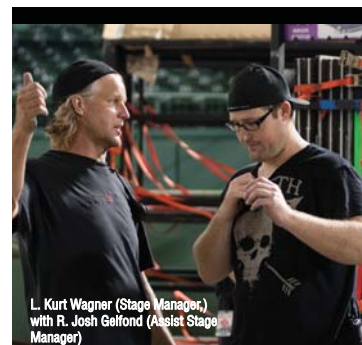
Bill Kenney with
Michael Marchetti
(Live Nation
Production
manager)



Pete Ashurst - Carpenter



Head Rigger Dave "Duck" Rowe,
with Jaz Cradick (Rite Coordinator)



L. Kurt Wagner (Stage Manager),
with R. Josh Gelfond (Asst Stage
Manager)



Dave Kaplan
Bill Kenney Productions



Tony Ravenhall
Puppet Technician



Kevin "Mac" Hale, Bill Kenney,
"JC" Christopher, Chris "Huge" Russell



Joe Anchor
Rigger



Craig Sriederman
Live Nation Tour Rep



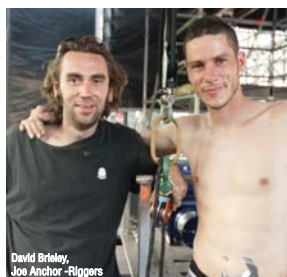
Chris Walling
IATSI Local 11
President



Bob Weilbel
Clair Global System
Engineer



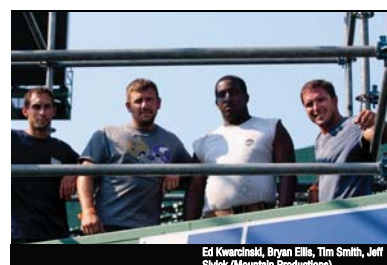
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Bill Kenney

THE BOSS, THE COURT JESTER, *THE LUCKIEST GUY IN THE WORLD*

— STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY **by** MICHAEL A. BECK

Upon meeting Bill Kenney at Tour Guide Publication's Tour Link Conference a few years ago, it was obvious that this is a guy who loves to laugh. Bill has a lust for life and seems to have boundless energy. Having kicked about the industry for close to 30 years, there isn't a lot this guy doesn't know. He talks straight and when he's said his peace, it's impossible to be unclear on what he meant to convey. His company – Bill Kenney Productions – got a huge chunk of the crew staffing call for this year's production of Roger Waters' "The Wall" in Boston's venerable Fenway Park. It was a pleasure and perfectly fitting to sit in the gentle summer breeze of the upper deck of Fenway with this lifelong Bostonian and discuss the journey of his career.



MPM: JC [John Christopher] has been telling everyone on the [Roger Waters] show site that I'm here to do your life's story, and to a certain extent, that's just what this is.

BK: I guess it is my life's story. Yeah.

MPM: So let's go back to the beginning. Where and how did this all start?

BK: Basically I wanted to be a broadcaster, and as you've seen through the people you've met around me, I obviously have a big mouth [laughing] and I can project. I don't need a bull horn or radio in many cases. But way back when, I wanted to be a DJ. I had a friend named Phil Harvey who worked for a radio station in LA. Phil mentored me and said, "Why don't you come on out here?" So I followed that proverbial dream out to L.A., you know, a kid from Boston packing up and going west. Of course it never took off, but they gave me some little side pieces to do. It worked out that I interviewed Joan Jett and I thought she was the coolest person ever. I went to her show and looked around and checked out the lights and sound and said, "What's that all about?" Suddenly I don't want to be the voice of the guy who introduced the acts anymore. I met a guy named Joe Lennane – God rest his soul, Joe left us a couple years ago. Joe did numerous tours. He was with Joan [Jett] back in the day. While I was out west I asked Joe a lot of questions and got a lot of information. Soon my mom got ill - and eventually we lost her- so I came back home. I ran into Joe about a year later when I was dating a gal at the University of New Hampshire who turned out to be Joe's niece. Next thing you know, I started doing some side shows with Joan Jett and the Blackhearts. I had zero skill and he recommended me for a gig. He said "I've got this British artist. Can you tour manage him? You seem like a level headed guy." I then wound up working with John Entwistle. I was really fortunate. I started doing this stuff without knowing how to do it.

MPM: How did you do with it?

BK: It was such a joy. Doing a club circuit with John was amazing. Every day someone great would come and sit in. In San Rafael, Huey Lewis and the News or the Tower of Power Horns would sit in. In Memphis Joe

Walsh came out. And it was happening in these little clubs. We had a little 24 foot truck and an old Eagle bus. But boy when you start off like that, you just know good things are going to happen. That's how it all began.

MPM: Where did you go to school?

BK: I went to school here in Boston – Boston State College.

MPM: What time period are we talking about?

BK: The early 80s. I think I met Joe in '82. He was working with Lisa Lisa and Cult Jam and Bobby Dallas. They were both New Yorkers, so I got to learn from New Yorkers and our friends from the UK. It was good because you got tough love. They taught you that you were going to do a lot of work. What's next? What's next? Don't push us around. We're going to be treated fairly. That sort of stuff. I really think that created the foundation of what I'm all about. The New Yorkers and the Brits are very stern, however, I find them to be fun to work with. For example, the guys I'm working with on this project [The Wall] Jez Craddock and Nick Evans... some people have said they're difficult to work with because Brits are supposed to be hard to deal with, but I have a great time with these guys. That may sound like I'm prejudiced against working with American people, but I'm not.

MPM: We live in a time where if you compliment someone you're perceived as dissing someone else, and I don't buy that. I get what you're saying. At some point you pulled it back home to Boston. How did that happen?

BK: That's right. Everything I did was tour management, road management, and production. I'll be very honest with you. In those days if someone came to you and asked if you're an audio guy, you said yes even if you were a lighting guy - whatever it took to get the gig -which is how we all started back in the day. Of course that has all changed. As long as you had a stable sense of confidence and you knew how to ask the right questions you could bluff your way through until you sorted it all out. Of course, there were some things you couldn't bluff your way through. I did that into the mid 80s on various tours. I wound up coming

home and they were opening a new amphitheater here in Boston called Great Woods. I decided I would take some time off and go out to Great Woods without telling people who I was or what I'd done – which a lot of people like to embellish - and become a stage hand. Between you and the lamp post, here I was running all these shows and I understood it, but did I understand it (shaking his head)? So I started out as a truck loader. I got to meet a lot of people coming through, you know, the Jake Berry's and the Charlie Hernandez's at the lower tear of their careers before they became the megagiants they are now.

MPM: What was the big nut that you were able to take away from the experience?

BK: I didn't become some big technological wiz, but I truly got to understand what rigging was about. The first time I went up and my friend Paulie Gattoni said "Pull that two ton up," I had no idea what a two ton was. [Writer's note: for those not familiar, a "two ton" is an electric chain hoist capable of lifting two tons.] Oh my dear God in Heaven! Then I went up in the Boston Garden. I thought I was tough until I walked a beam at 125 feet. I walked one beam and went home. That was it. I knew rigging wasn't for me. I tried a little bit of everything, I tried lighting and sound. As I got into this they saw I was more than just a stagehand. They would start to use me as a runner and people started finding out what I'd done when tours would come in and they would say stuff like, "Hey, I haven't seen you since the Beach Boys." So the magic was exposed.

MPM: Was that your cue to move into the role of labor provider?

BK: After a while, I started looking at the way the nonunion component of the Boston market was being handled and I wished I could have my own company that could do the same thing only doing it my way. Everyone said, "you're nuts". A few more years passed and then Joe Lennane called and said, "I have this great idea. Why don't you start a labor company?" I said, "What, are you high? What do I know about starting a labor company. I'm just learning how to do the job." But this was my Obi-Wan Kenobi, my mentor telling me "I NEED YOU TO DO THIS." He told me that my



promoter rep would either be him or Bob Dallas, so I said “terrific” and went for it.

MPM: *Where was your first gig?*

BK: It was the Palace Theater in New Haven, CT. At that time Boston was pretty much a locked down union city apart from what Don Law was doing on his shows, so I began driving two and a half hours every day to do a couple shows. They were four, maybe 10 man calls. The Palace had a counter balance system there and in-house PA and lighting. We got to tinker with all of it and that made all of us stronger. Eventually we started getting asked to do scenic stuff in Boston and we started filtering up here. Then a fellow named Adam Klein called and said, “I have this thing called Earth Fest, can you produce it for me? We’re going to have 12 bands.” They’d been doing it at the Hatch Shell where the Boston Pops plays but it got too big. That was my first start at big stuff. I brought my guys in and we had a great experience. I was doing production, which is what I was accustomed to and that’s where it really began.

MPM: *Was there a tilting point when*

you went from just providing stage-hands to more of a general store of production personnel?

BK: Very much so. We were finished loading out Van Halen one night and someone asked when the steel guys were showing up to take the stage down. It was like there were tumbleweeds blowing through that ball park. So guys who had never climbed other than [long time steel hand] Dave Kaplan, had to climb and get the thing down. That was when we attained the ideology of “Whatever you need”. What we’re doing here at Fenway Park this week has more than just a labor component. Our company is a labor provider as well as a production company, which allows us to provide either/or to a given project. We don’t own anything and that allows us to work for everybody. For example, we work for seven different audio companies in the New England area. We work for five lighting companies and six different video companies and no one seems to care because of the quality of the people we provide. If someone calls and says they need a front of house audio engineer I’ll get it for them and they won’t

come back and say, “I needed a mixer and you sent me a knucklehead.” For us it’s not just quantity, it’s quality as well. There is also something else about our company that is unique. We’re a benefitted company. I offered health benefits before the law said you have to. We understand that in doing that, we’re investing back in the product we offer our clients. We treat our people well, we give them a great benefits package and the end product is a safe, happy and productive work environment. The other result is that people look around and say, “Those are Bill Kenney’s guys and gals over there.” Everyone comes away a winner.

MPM: *I’ve been joining in on the chorus of busting your chops with a lot of good natured ribbing over the past few days and you give as good as you get.*

BK: That’s the status quo for this place. It means you fit in with the crew.

MPM: *But you take it in a way that shows a graceful humility that isn’t necessarily seen everywhere in this*



industry. Where do you draw the line between treating people as gently as possible and firmly as necessary? Because I've also seen you drop the hammer a couple times this week as well.

BK: That's a great way to put it. It goes back to the beginning. There were times when I was treated gently and there were other times when I was treated in a manner that was very unkind and belittling and I didn't want to be treated like that nor did I want to treat people in that way either. It's tough when there's tough love, but then you have to lighten it up. For example, there is the Bill Kenney shorts line that my buddy JC [John Christopher] has been making fun of. You have to make light of a tough situation. This is hard work out here. If you can't have fun with your co-workers in this industry then you're a failure. I'm the court jester one

minute and the boss the next. I really don't think about it all that much. It's just who I am. I love my work. I tell people all the time that I've never had a job in 30 years.

MPM: There is always the danger that someone who might not be as professionally tuned-in could see you as more of a co-equal than the guy whose name is on the shirt. How often does that happen?

BK: You're right and yes it did happen but that was just another progression in the business. Guys were blowing me off and we were giving them second and third chances and the company started to stagnating. We had the approach that it's okay. Well it's not okay so we had to tighten things up a little.

MPM: You say that you love what you do and you've never had job in 30

years. Be that as it may, this business is stressful and demanding on many different levels on its easiest day. Has there been a physical toll on you?

BK: Back in 2006 I was providing labor for Great Woods – 150 strong. I was also running Bill Kenney Productions and I was a promoter rep for Live Nation and I ran myself into the ground. That year I went on vacation to Disney World with my family and we were having dinner one night and I notice that I couldn't see. The EMT took me in and my blood pressure was at stroke level. What had happened was I was running so hard that when I stopped it all caught up. My doctor called long distance and said, "You have to quit your job. You can't have three jobs. You can only have one." I called Tom Bates whom I have the utmost respect for and was my boss at the time and he said,



"Then you have to give something up."

MPM: *So how did you work it?*

BK: Well I put some key people in the necessary positions and met with Don's [Law] people and set out to build Bill Kenney Productions as it is today, which has been extremely successful.

MPM: *How are you now?*

BK: I'm going to tell you, I'm the luckiest guy in the world. We've all been there. We've all done things we probably shouldn't have.

MPM: *Well I haven't. But I know what you mean.*

BK: Yeah right. You more than most.

MPM: *Busted.*

BK: I thank the good Lord that we survived all that stuff and we're here doing great. I tell my wife [Faith] who handles the administrative end of the company - and does great job at it - that we we're the luckiest people on Earth.

MPM: *Amen.*



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THE WALL TOUR GETS A SMOOTH RIDE FROM CELEBRITY COACHES

BY MIKE WHARTON

Celebrity Coaches is currently on tour with Roger Waters' *The Wall*. The company's association with Waters touring productions has been ongoing since 2007. Jeff Michael, President of Celebrity, began his association with Waters Production Manager Chris Kansy back in 2005. At that time, Kansy had hired Celebrity to do the Motley Crue reunion tour. Several other tours followed which built up a good working relationship between Kansy and Michael eventually leading to the *The Wall* tour. "Chris has always been very gracious, pushing work our way whenever he had a chance," says Michael. The Waters production had its own special set of needs as Darla Wood, a Celebrity leasing agent since 2006, points out.

"They're all seasoned professionals on that tour with very little drama factor involved," says Wood, "so they look for the same attributes in their drivers."

Celebrity's relationship with Water's started in 2007 with 3 coaches and now encompasses seven. Several of the same drivers have been requested to return to the production repeatedly over the last five years. Wood feels this has contributed to the family like atmosphere engendered on the tour. Charlie Quick, the lead driver on the tour has been with Celebrity since 1999 during its previous incarnation as Pyramid Coach.

While Waters is transported venue to venue via air, the crew and band ride comfortably on the seven Coaches contracted from Celebrity. The buses are all 2004 or newer and are made up of a combination of models including XL2's and H3's. Though most of the fleet of Prevost's from Celebrity are biodiesel capable, none are currently out on *The Wall* tour. Individual bunks



offer a variety of media accommodations such as iPod dock stations, direct TV, and iPads as monitors.

Given the ambitiousness of this tour, the timely arrival of a well rested crew is a necessity. Celebrity delivers that on a consistent basis.

Michael states, "We think the secret of being successful is doing what your competitors don't do. We believe that if we go the extra mile our clients will see it and appreciate it."

Though, this is not the company motto nor a mission statement per se, it is a mindset that has served the company well, and proven by repeated association with *The Wall* tour.

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CLAIR GLOBAL REINFORCES THE WALL

by Bill Robison

Roger Waters' *The Wall* tour has notched up the benchmark for live event production. Twenty trucks carry the equipment to indoor shows and for stadium dates an additional seven trucks are added. State-of-the-art equipment is used to present this stunning concert event.

Waters' music is complemented by enormous high-resolution video images projected onto a set that stretches the entire width of venues. Audience members may know and love the songs, but this presentation of "The Wall" gives them a new way to experience Waters' vision. An extensive audio package was provided by Clair Global to fulfill the show's elaborate sound design.

Bob Weibel, Clair System Engineer/ Sound Crew Chief on *The Wall* tour told us some details, "On this summertime leg of the tour we were doing both indoor and outdoor shows. There were 3 tractor trailers dedicated to audio gear to do the indoor shows and an additional two trailers worth of gear that would only appear on the outdoor shows. It's a tremendous amount of gear that's got to get handled every day."

Weibel says, "The PA that we used is the current Clair Global I-5 System. Left and right were the main arrays. Each included a column of 14 I-5 full range cabinets as well as a column of 14 I-5B sub bass cabinets. Both hang from a single rigging bumper/bar. We were also using 12 of our BT218 double 18 subwoofers positioned on the floor. Two additional arrays of eight I-5's hang to provide left and right side coverage. For front fill we had eight of our FF-2 cabinets all mounted underneath the front of the stage."



"The Wall" presents a sensory experience and surround sound is an important component. Delivering high quality surround sound in arenas and stadiums is a challenge. Weibel tells us about their solution, "Indoors we used a three position surround sound system. We would hang 3 clusters each radiating 360 degrees. Two of them, the left and right, were located about two-third's of the way down the arena floor and as far off stage as we could." The third surround cluster, rear, was towards the back of the house and centered."

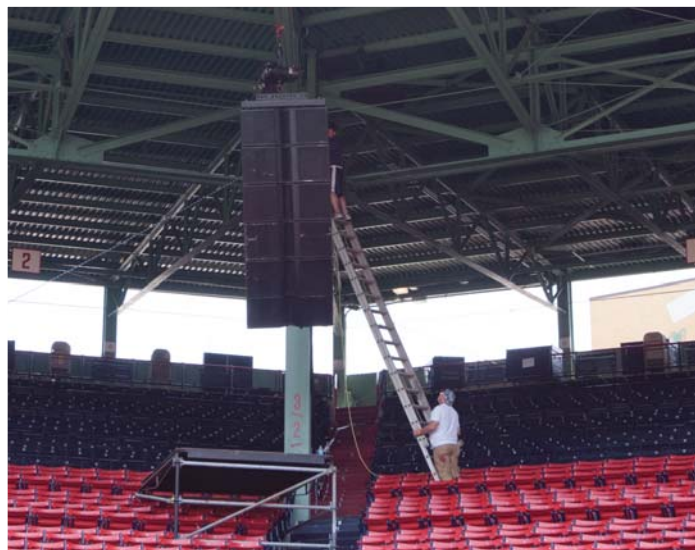
Weibel further explains, "All three clusters were identical. One foot heavy-duty aluminum truss was built in roughly a 10 foot square. On each side we would hang a column of four of our R-4 full range loudspeakers or 16 boxes per cluster. This provided remarkably good 360 degree horizontal coverage and because the rigging is really flexible, we could provide almost 90 degrees of vertical coverage. A group of 12 sub bass cabinets were positioned in the back of the arena wherever we could find space. Those are specifically for producing additional rumble when the actual wall falls down."

The Wall's outdoor shows were mostly in baseball stadiums. Weibel says, "For the outdoor shows the PA got quite a bit bigger. We doubled the amount of subs and we used a completely different approach with different loudspeakers for doing the surround system. We hung six positions of I-5 full range cabinets and each of those columns was six boxes high. In general we were pretty successful in finding places and methods to rig the surround arrays. We managed to get it flown, out of people's sightlines, and do it practically and safely."

Weibel told us about the audio crew for the tour. "Five Clair staff plus two mixers toured with the show. Long-time Clair engineer Tripp Khalaf mixed at

front of house. The primary console, a Midas XL-4, handled all the band inputs from the main stage. A second XL-4 had all of the bands inputs from a secondary stage built in front of the wall. A PM5D mixed effects returns on one page while a second page contained our surround inputs, all the surround routing, and fed the surround outputs. Ian Newton mixed monitors on a Digico SD-7." An extensive package of IEM (in ear monitors) was used by the band. Weibel said, "Clair staff member Kevin Kapler was our monitor tech and also handled 50 plus channels of RF coordination each day. This included band instrument RF's, IEM's, and wireless mics. The day before the outdoor shows the audio crew grew by two. Jo Ravitch, Clair Senior Touring Engineer was the crew chief for installing the six surround sound delay clusters. He did an outstanding job and I was really satisfied with how the surround worked out in the baseball stadiums."

When asked about highlights of the tour Weibel remembered, "One of most enjoyable parts working this tour was getting to listen to a wonderful sounding show. And at the end of the night while I was packing up FOH, it was not uncommon for members of the audience to stop by on their way out and just say thanks. Generally we had really outstanding sound results. Fundamentally it just comes down to the fact that Roger wrote great sounding songs and in addition to being great players the band got great sounds out of their instruments. The drum kit just sounded fabulous and it didn't take a tremendous amount of tweaking and tuning to get it to sound great. The same thing was true with the guitar rigs and the bass as well as the keyboard sounds. We had great inputs coming to us. Tripp Khalaf did a masterful job of mixing it and we had an outstanding loudspeaker system to project it to the crowd."



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MARILYN LOWEY

MARILYN LOWEY HAS A LIFE STORY THAT BORDERS ON THE STUFF OF DREAMS. AT FIRST BLUSH, ONE LOOKS AT THE PATH OF MARILYN'S JOURNEY AND SEES THE CHARMED LIFE OF A CAT ALWAYS LANDING ON ITS FEET. HOWEVER, UPON CLOSER EXAMINATION IT BECOMES CLEAR THAT THE SECRETS TO HER SUCCESS HAVE AS MUCH TO DO WITH KEEPING HER EYE ON THE BALL AS LUCK, OR EVEN PROVIDENCE. JOHN WAYNE ONCE SAID, "LIFE IS HARD. IT'S EVEN HARDER WHEN YOU'RE STUPID." MARILYN LOWEY CHOSE NOT TO BE STUPID, AND AS A RESULT, SHE DODGED BULLETS AND FOUND SUCCESS.

BY MICHAEL A. BECK

MPM: During our Last conversation, we talked about the flash point of your career when you gave an emotional account of the 'moment' and realized what it is to work with light as this was truly the pathway of your career. My brother Billy once told me that light is the closest thing to perfection we have in this world that we can actually see. A beam of light can't be bent or swayed from hitting its target. Indeed, the only way to alter light from doing its job is to get in its way. That was my big lighting epiphany I likened it to working with God.

ML: What you're talking about is the materiality of light. And as material as it is, it's ephemera. Being a Christian, as you are, you can understand the metaphor of light and how intense it is. When I first started working with it in an art context, I Googled "metaphor of light" and it just comes up and up and up. If you go through the Bible, there are lists of how many times it refers to light.

MPM: Hundreds and it's always good. One example "...out of the darkness into the light." During our last conversation, we discussed how you moved into the concert

scene.

ML: There are some things you react to viscerally and say, "I want to do that." And if it didn't work for me, I probably would have gone back to theatre. But it did work.

MPM: There's visceral reaction and there's visceral reaction. There's something very visceral about the subtle lighting of a theatrical production, and then there is a whole different sensational experience to the bump and grind of lighting a very dynamic medium such as a rock n' roll show.

ML: Well, what I think I brought to the party was that sensibility of the subtly of my classical training and I incorporated that into the rock n'roll type of lighting. For years I did not use Vari*Lites because they did not use cross-fading colors. For a good part of my career I only used fixtures that had cross-fading colors because I could then get the sensitivity that I employed in theatrical production, even if I was using color faders or color changers through which I could use conventional lighting to make that happen. I don't think I used their gear until the VL5.



MPM: In 2005, I did a story on the 25th anniversary of automated lighting and it was discussed that primary idea was more theatrical...

ML: Yes, but Michael forgive me for interrupting you. We talked last week about the fact that the powers that be in New York didn't want to spend the money to invest in [automation] They just wanted to keep the Altman Lekos moving

along.

MPM: And quite possibly “the devil you know is better than the one

you don’t” came into play.

ML: That’s right.

MPM: So you made the jump to something more. How did the progression into concert lighting take place?

ML: During my time with Imero Fiorentino I had been exposed to industrial shows, and at that point they were just starting to do live video broadcast events. I started touching on that and I just kept going. I moved out to their west coast office because as a kid growing up in New York, I always thought California looked like fun, so I got out there and stayed. But at that point, it didn’t matter where you lived because you had fax. At that point, the fax machine was liberating to a lot of people. By then I was already doing paperwork on computers and the writing was on the wall. There was a modem that cradled a phone and we could stay in touch like that no matter where we were. Look at us now. That was just the beginning.

MPM: Was Neil Diamond your first big touring concert account?

ML: I’d have to say yes. I was working at ISA and I had heard that the lighting director decided he wanted to go into architectural lighting, so I said, “I’d love to step up to the plate and do it if you don’t have anyone else.” I was kind of green as I’d never done it before. But they put me on it and when I first met Neil he asked, “Well are you ready to run the show?” and I said, “Absolutely.” You know how you test people. I wasn’t timid about it. “Of course I’ll run the show.” I watched the show one night and two nights later he told the lighting director, “Let her run it.”

MPM: Wow. How was it?

ML: Of course I thought my heart was going to come out of my chest. It was the fastest two hours of my life but the longest two hours of my life (laughing). The next time I worked for him, I was lighting the concert sequences for The Jazz Singer.

MPM: No kidding.

ML: Yeah, and after that I was lighting the tour. And

that was it.

MPM: Of course that must have opened you up to a broader scope of opportunity.

ML: It enabled me to get many other projects and shows because Neil’s a bit of a legend with a high profile. At that point I don’t think there was another woman doing this.

MPM: Well there was Candace Brightman with the Grateful Dead.

ML: That’s right and that was it.

MPM: Frankly, there aren’t too many female designers now.

ML: There’s Abby Holmes, but after that there’s no one. There are female board operators.

MPM: There are some incredibly talented female lighting directors out there, so let’s talk about that. Why do think there is such a dearth of female designers? The claim of sexism looms off in the distance.

ML: Yeah but that’s passé. It’s always been passé. People ask, “What’s it like working in a man’s world?” I don’t know. This is the world I live in and if people want to label it they can do it. It wasn’t my problem, it was someone else’s issue and I didn’t know any different. I was going to do what I was going to do.

MPM: What would you tell women coming into this industry?

ML: Just do your job. I will tell you this; there were steps along the way where, in some cases, if I were up for a job against a guy, I would say that in most cases the guy got the gig, and I don’t know that. Who knows.

MPM: I don’t know that I’ve ever seen overt sexism; I think it more a case of dogma. You know, “This is just the way we’ve always done it.” That sort of thing.

ML: I don’t think it’s sexism.

MPM: It just worked out that way?

ML: It just worked out that way. And I have to tell you that I was too smart along the way to sit back and say, “He got the gig because he’s a guy.” Why would I say

that?

MPM: That kind of stuff takes your eye off the ball.

ML: That's exactly right and I'm not interested in that. You know what, I didn't get the gig. There's another one in front of me and another one in front of that. Again, I would say to a woman entering the field, just do your job and do it really well and just keep going. That's all you've got to do.

MPM: The problem with having a chip on your shoulder is that it takes a lot of effort to keep it there.

ML: That's very true. That's very true. Times have changed in some respects, but Michael, times haven't changed. We haven't come that far. I mean, look at what's going on in the world. You can't focus on that as it's a waste of energy.

MPM: Well regardless of the anything that's going on, here you are. Are you going to let your circumstances define who you are, or are you going to let your work make that definition?

ML: That exactly right.

MPM: You went back to school to be an artist. Could you talk a little about that?

ML: I always thought of myself as an artist until I realized what the difference is between an artist and a designer. Then I really appreciated what an artist was and only then became in touch with the true essence of that.

MPM: How did that lead you back into art school?

ML: On one hand, there was a lot of newly built cruise ships coming out. I was working on some ship shows and the scenery kept missing the ship. So I was lighting the show in a black box with legs and boards and there was no scenery. We were going from port to port and the scenery would arrive the day after we left a given port. I'm looking at a black box with light and smoke and all the sudden I said to myself, "You really don't need scenery." Scenery is just another didactic form that's reiterating what's happening on stage. You really don't need it. The light is the scenery. It just kind of clicked.

MPM: What kind of stuff were you doing?

ML: One of my first projects was to reconstruct a light bulb. I actually made the filament. It was all about the importance of one light and what makes it work. I went

from the context of – like we talked about before – the materiality of light, its representation and what it's symbolic of and all of the context that's attached to it in many different arenas. I felt I needed to re-explore the context of light and re-contextualize all of my many experiences as a designer as an artist.

MPM: How did you do that?

ML: That was the big question. There was a whole different language in talking about art than there is about design, so I started taking classes at Otis School of Art and Design. They have a very interesting program call the "Fifth Year Program" where you can take classes but you don't ever get a degree. It wasn't about me getting a degree, it was about me learning art-speak and getting an understanding and broadening my horizon. I was put in as a junior in college – that's to say I was in with all the juniors – and I went there for a year and a half and it was fabulous. That's when I decided that I had to go to grad school, so I applied to Cal Arts and got in.

MPM: So this wasn't so much about you becoming an artist in the classical sense as much as it was about getting deeper into what it means to light a subject and have a deeper knowledge of light, right?

ML: Well the art world has changed. Contemporary art is less about paintings and more about space and exploring different materials and contexts and different contents attached to those materials. I think that was where I was more interested, and you can't help but have it better your design.

MPM: How did all of this help your designs?

ML: The solutions came easier and faster.

MPM: Was that because now you had a broader creative pallet?

ML: As artists, you create your own problems and then you solve them, and as a designer you're solving someone else's problems. It became easier to solve someone else's problems. It came faster because I was used to solving my own problems by creating them. When you're creating and solving your own problems, you have to think outside of the box. That's the only way to make it happen. You don't find solutions any other way. When you approach a problem from an artistic frame of mind you solve thing faster because you identify the problem faster, so design became easier. Plus the more you do something the easier it gets.

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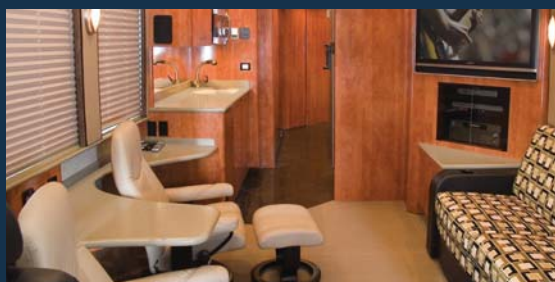
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