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volume 1 issue 7 2008

## Spartanburg Memorial Auditorium



>>highlighting **venues**

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### PUBLISHER NOTES:

Summer is in full swing. We have seen several successful conferences, including InfoComm, and the IAAM National gathering is in session. Questions abound regarding the economy, the state of the live event industry and the cost of production. For once, I am at a loss for words (take note, this is a VERY rare occasion). We have heard several opinions on what is happening that ranges from the price of fuel to the changing demographics of concert attendees. Corporate events are changing budgets, and arena acts are doing theater tours. It all seems to indicate that our business is in a state of flux that probably will not clarify till the end of the year.

Some things, however, are certain. Business will continue, and although we may see some consolidations and downsizing, we are still the best-kept secret in the "Global Economy." Our business is driven by entrepreneurs, talent and breaking technology. We are still resourceful, tenacious and hard-working. As an industry, we are resilient and insightful. As individuals, we are driven to succeed in our chosen fields in the business we all love. So, keep the faith and hang in there... it is just part of the journey.

*Larry Smith*

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# Jag Music Productions Takes Delivery of D.A.S AUDIO AERO 38A LINE ARRAY SYSTEM

*Regional sound provider expands equipment arsenal*



JAG Music Productions' Juan Gonzales with his D.A.S. Audio Aero Series loudspeakers

**D.A.S. Audio** USA, a leading manufacturer of loudspeaker systems, power amplification, signal processing, and related components, is pleased to announce that JAG Music Productions, a regional sound provider based in Fresno, CA, has taken delivery of a new Aero 38A line array system. The new loudspeaker system expands upon JAG Music Productions' existing D.A.S. Audio equipment arsenal and is expected to enable the company to take larger projects.

Catering primarily to the Hispanic market, JAG Music Productions is a provider of live sound reinforcement for concerts, fairs, corporate industrials, and other special events in the greater Fresno and Central California areas. The company took delivery of 16 D.A.S. Audio Aero 38A line array elements.

The D.A.S. Audio Aero 38A is a powered, medium format line array module which integrates low, mid, and high frequency transducers into a single unit. Low frequency reproduction is handled by two D.A.S. 12GNC loudspeakers in a bass-reflex

configuration. Two D.A.S. 10LMN16, 10-inch cone transducers incorporating neodymium magnetic assemblies and 3-inch voice coils are used for mid frequency reproduction. High frequency reproduction is handled by a single D.A.S. ND-10 large format compression driver using a 4-inch titanium diaphragm, copper clad aluminum edge-wound flat wire (EFW) voice coil with a 1.5-inch exit throat. Power is provided by a three-channel class "D" power amplifier.

According to Juan Gonzales, owner of JAG Music Productions, "We've had a very positive experience with D.A.S.

Audio. Both the sound quality and build quality of their loudspeaker systems is first rate. We've used D.A.S. for quite some time now. Prior to taking delivery of the new system, our D.A.S. inventory included twelve Aero CA-28A powered line array modules, eight Aero 218A self-powered subwoofers, and nine self-powered stage monitors consisting of a combination of SM-12A and SM-15A models. With the sixteen new Aero 38A's, we are well positioned to handle larger projects. Now that we have the ability to use a combination of Aero 28A's and 38A's, we have much greater flexibility, and I expect this to translate into bigger projects that were previously difficult for us to do."

When queried about those aspects of the Aero Series that he finds particularly beneficial for the type of work his company handles, Gonzales was quick to point out several features. "These loudspeakers sound very good straight



out of the box, so they don't need a lot of processing," notes Gonzalez. "Their self-powered design is another big plus, as it reduces the amount of weight and volume that we have to transport to and from a job. The fact that we don't have to haul a lot of heavy powers amps around is a big plus, and this also simplifies system cabling."

"We purchased our 38A's with the transport carts," continued Gonzales, "and this makes moving the enclosures much easier. On jobs where we're not flying the loudspeakers, we can roll the carts into place, uncover them, make our connections, adjust the angles of the cabinets, and pretty much be ready to go. On jobs where we do fly the boxes, D.A.S. Audio's hardware really helps make the work easier. Everything is fully captive, which makes it easy to keep track of since it stays with each box, so setup and teardown is quick. Two guys can raise and lower this rig quite easily."

Gonzales recently used his new Aero 38A's on a spring festival at Fresno's Grizzly Stadium, home to the town's minor league baseball team. With live music and all the various festivities being sponsored by KRDA-FM, the local Univision radio station, Gonzales reports that the company's first outing went very smoothly. "We had roughly 8,000 people in attendance for this event in early April," notes Gonzales, "and both the performing musicians and the audience were very complimentary about the sound quality. The 38A's have long throw and broad horizontal coverage, so we had very clean, evenly distributed sound throughout the entire audience."

Gonzales is optimistic that his decision to go with D.A.S. Audio equipment was the right choice for his business. "Right from my first purchase," says Gonzales, "D.A.S. has been great to work with. Whenever we've had questions about the gear, the company has always been very responsive and supportive. The equipment sounds great, it's built very well, and is competitively priced. For me, I really believe it's a good investment that will enable JAG Music Productions to grow." ☺

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# Glorious Glasto for ADLIB

**ADLIB Audio** approached Glastonbury 2008 with its usual enthusiasm and spirit, supplying sound to six stages and fielding a crew of 20, chiefed by Hassane Al Essiahi. The project was co-ordinated by Dave Jones back at HQ in Liverpool.

Dave Jones comments, "The Circus & Cabaret fields at Glastonbury are now part of our heritage as we have supplied sound systems since 1994. This year was especially poignant to us as a mark of respect in memory of Bella Churchill, a significant and very sad loss to the festival. We will always look forward to being associated with the Glastonbury Festival Circus & Cabaret fields. To us these stages epitomise what this festival is all about."

### Cabaret Tent

ADLIB set up a Nexo Alpha system in this arena, tech'd by Nick Bellis, Steve "Patto" Pattison, George Puttock and Kenny Kristiansen, complete with a Soundcraft Series 4 at FOH and a Soundcraft MH3 console for monitors. Onstage they also supplied 10 ADLIB MP3 wedges and an 8-way send rack.

ADLIB also supplied a tea urn for the Cabaret artists and crew backstage area. This can be more important than the PA system on occasion, especially to the stage manager Mark Collingwood.

### Circus Stage

Richie Nicholson, James Coates, Neil Holloway and Tom Cunningham were the happy ADLIB crew in this very busy

tent, running a 6K ADLIB FD rig, with AA61 wedges hung at the back of the tent on a small raked seating stand to cover the higher sections of this.

The FOH console was a 48-channel Yamaha PM5D-RH, chosen for its flexibility, speed and ease of use. This arena had to be up and running from 5 p.m. on Wednesday before the festival opened on Friday to accommodate the massive amount of rehearsals and sound checks needed by the myriad of different artists appearing over the 3 performance days.

A 24 channel Soundcraft Delta was utilized for the monitor mix along with 6 ADLIB AA121 wedges.



Richie Nicholson and James Coates [adlibaudio.co.uk](http://adlibaudio.co.uk)

### Astrolabe Stage

This consisted of an ADLIB FD system with a Yamaha LS9-32 digital console at FOH that was also used for monitors, along with 6 AA121 compact wedges. It was looked after by John Fitzsimmons, Otto Kroymann and Laura Davis.

### Blazing Saddle Stage

This featured another ADLIB FD system, with 8 FD2 high packs a side and four ADLIB DF415 subs, with a Yamaha LS9-32 console out front, a 24-channel Soundcraft GB4 for monitors plus 8 AA121 wedges. This was overseen by Chris Sudall, Michael Flaherty and Hannibal Chaabouni.

### Outdoor Circus Stage

A small 3K FD system, Allen & Heath Mix Wizard and AA121 wedges were deployed here, crewed by Jay Smith and Jay Petch. The outside circus stage featured some special performances in addition to its regular schedule, including the aerial dance by Fidget Fee and Eddie Egal's famous nightly pyrotastic fire shows – which have become a Glasto landmark!

### Going Mobile

ADLIB also had a mobile system on site – a small Yamaha EMX 500 powered mixer with two speakers on stands, which flitted around constantly to different areas providing sound reinforcement to various events as and when they happened. It was minded by Dave Cowell and Chris Wall.

Playback facilities for all these areas included CD and mini disc players.

Jennifer Wait was in charge of all ADLIB's radio mics – 12 Shure lavalier, 4 Shure Beta hand-held and 6 Beyer headset systems, all licensed through JFMG. ☺



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## ACCURATE STAGING: Representing East of the Mississippi

by REBECCA DAVIS

**A**ccurate Staging has come to Nashville gracing music city with a brand new manufacturing and rental facility. The opening of this third facility marks an important step forward for Accurate Staging, as their facilities had previously resided only on the west coast, with locations in Los Angeles and San Francisco.



Tye Trussell

The Nashville facility, says President Tye Trussell, is “tailored to the south and the east coast side of the United States so we can take care of our clients, from Miami to Chicago.” Trussell adds, “the tour circuit goes all around the United States. So now we’re here and we’ve been able to cater and service these clients that are out here, you know, east of the Mississippi, as we like to say.” The west coast and the Nashville offices play well off one

also offering full service truss and rigging packages, all of which are available for rent or sale.

Trussell is excited about the range of services and equipment offered. He states, “We wanted to come out here with newly built equipment, not hand me down equipment. We wanted the bling bling, bells and whistles! Round decks, crated decks, plexi decks, seated platforms, bleacher platforms, trussing, curbs, lifts and turntables, instead of just coming out here with the intent to just be satisfied with standard items.”

everything.” He places full confidence in the staff, which is headed by Mike Garabedian, Ken Thomas and James Miller.

“Between those individuals, myself, and the rest of the staff,” Trussell says, “we have anything from production to the rigging to the backline to the manufacturing to the client relationships covered. And it was really important to pull together a team because it’s not a one man show here and it never will be.”

Since its March opening, Accurate Staging has worked with many big-name musicians including Jason Aldean, Taylor Swift, Staind and Colbie Caillat. Although Accurate Staging has been able to get a lot of country gigs they probably would not have landed without this Nashville

location, it was clearly noted they are not just catering to country acts. The facility has additionally landed some important corporate gigs, such as its most recent partnership with American Spirit cigarettes. Dave Longwell, who joined them working with American Spirit has been extremely helpful getting the word out about the new office. Also helping to spread the word is Chris Alderman with Three Ring Circus Management Company.



LEFT TO RIGHT James Miller, Ken Thomas, Tye Trussell, Mike Garabedian

another. Trussell’s office gets jobs from the west coast when the touring production is for example, Charleston, South Carolina. It makes sense so the production or tour company does not have to pay the cost of shipping across the U.S.

Accurate Staging specializes in custom sets, stages and rental decking, while

The 15,000 square foot facility consists of a warehouse and an interior which houses about thirteen employees including a draftsman that can take care of all the renderings, basically turning the designer’s fantasy into a reality for a particular tour. The office setting is streamlined with no actual individual offices per Accurate Staging’s “open door communication policy” which Trussell says “helps with

**Accurate Staging** specializes in custom sets, stages and rental decking, while also offering full service truss and rigging packages, all of which are available for rent or sale. [accuratestaging.com](http://accuratestaging.com)



Trussell also went on to explain, “Ben Jumper over at Soundcheck and his whole staff have been excellent to us and definitely should be noted that they have had open arms and been very helpful.”

Accurate Staging continues to push forward and is wasting absolutely no time. It is currently working on a project with Scott Bishop for I-Mag Video and also supplementing the tour of Sheryl Crow. Next on the books is a project for the group Boys Like Girls. With fifteen years of experience under his belt, Trussell and the rest of the the new Nashville office has surpassed everyone,s expectations. Lets just say the Los Angeles office is extremely happy with the results. ☺

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# Event & Arena Marketing Conference Hits Washington D.C.

by T.J. LONDON



**Marketing**, public relations and sales professionals from venues across North America converged on the Nation's Capital June 4-7 for the 28th Annual Event & Arena Marketing Conference. Hosted by the Verizon Center, the conference offered the chance for event marketers to discuss ideas and best practices for promoting concerts, sporting events, family shows and other special events across the globe.



all photos courtesy of EAMC

What began humbly in 1980 with a small gathering in Minneapolis of a dozen arena marketers has steadily grown into the industry's leading conference, welcoming more than 350 attendees this year.

The conference officially kicked off with an opening night reception, sponsored by Ticketmaster and Live Nation Motorsports, at the Old Ebbitt Grill – a favorite of many former U.S. Presidents and a meeting spot of political insiders, journalists and celebrities. Other evening functions during the week included a reception at ESPN Zone, hosted by the Harlem Globetrotters, as well as a night at Verizon Center, where conference goers were treated to cocktails and dinner, courtesy of Levy Restaurants, and toured the home of the NHL's Washington Capitals and the NBA's Washington Wizards.

This year's keynote address was delivered by political heavyweight,

the Ragin' Cajun James Carville, who offered his usual bombastic, enthusiastic, no-holds-barred presentation focused on the historic 2008 presidential primaries and general election showdown. Concurrent and breakout sessions covered a wide range of marketing, PR and sales issues, with topics such as 'The Inside Scoop on Radio & TV Partnerships,' 'Successful Ticket Sales Programs,' 'The Perfect PR Pitch,' 'Arena Openings & Name Changes,' and 'Family Show Group Sales.' A unique 'A View From Both Sides of the Business' panel discussion was also offered for the first time, which featured individuals that had been either a promoter or a venue executive but now found themselves on the other side of the business.

Of particular interest to attendees this year was a greater focus on new media and technologies that are changing the way marketers promote their events. Non-traditional marketing sessions such as 'Understanding Social Networks and How To Market On Them' and 'Grass-Roots/Alternative Advertising' were especially popular. Sponsor presentations featured WWE, Feld Entertainment, the Harlem Globetrotters, Ticketmaster, Smucker's Stars on Ice, carbonhouse, VEE Corporation and Tickets.com.

# EAMC

For the ninth consecutive year, the EAMC Board of Directors also presented its Gigi Award of Excellence (named in honor of the award's first recipient Gigi Pilhofer) to an industry professional in recognition of their 'significant contributions to professionalize and educate event marketers within the live entertainment industry.' This year's honor was bestowed upon industry veteran Bobby Goldwater. Goldwater served 24 years at NYC's Madison Square Garden in a number of executive positions before leaving to launch the STAPLES Center in Los Angeles. He also served as the President and Executive Director of the D.C. Sports & Entertainment Commission, prior to starting his own management consulting company.

The EAMC Board also inducted two additional arena marketing icons into its Hall of Fame. This year's inductees were World Wrestling Entertainment's Bob Collins and Champions On Ice's Tom Collins.

Bob Collins, who recently left WWE to start his own company, was formerly the senior vice president of promotion



all photos courtesy of EAMC

for WWE. He most recently promoted WrestleMania XXIV which broke attendance and revenue records at the Citrus Bowl. Before joining the WWE, Collins was marketing representative for Ice Capades and for Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus.

Tom Collins originally organized the "Tour of World Figure Skating Champions" following the 1969 World Figure Skating Championships. Tom Collins Enterprises ran the tour, which adopted the name "Champions On Ice" in 1998, until it was sold to AEG in 2006.



More information on the Event & Arena Marketing Conference, its mission and select presentations from the 2008 conference are available **online** at [eventarenamarketing.com](http://eventarenamarketing.com)

Venues interested in hosting a future conference or industry executives wishing to assist as a member of the EAMC Planning Committee can **email** [info@eventarenamarketing.com](mailto:info@eventarenamarketing.com)

EAMC recently announced that its 2009 conference will take place in Colorado Springs June 10-13 and will be hosted by World Arena. ☺

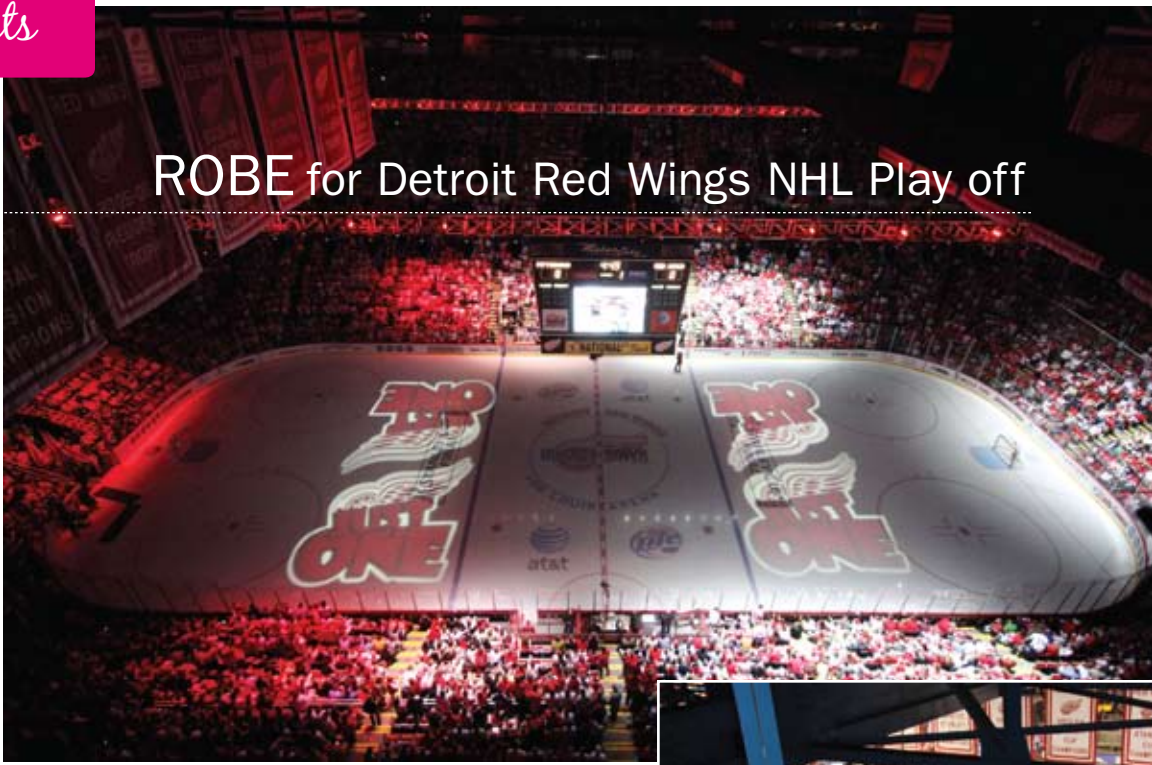
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# ROBE for Detroit Red Wings NHL Play off



**Lighting** designer Robert Wertheimer of Michigan-based Spectacle Lighting Design used 64 Robe ColorSpot and ColorWash 1200E AT moving lights on his rig to light the 2008 Detroit Red Wings National Hockey League (NHL) play off series and Stanley Cup Finals, staged in the Joe Louis Arena, Detroit.



Lighting Designer Robert Wertheimer [robe.cz](http://robe.cz)

Wertheimer lit his first Red Wings shows back in 1995, and has returned to do all their lightshows since.

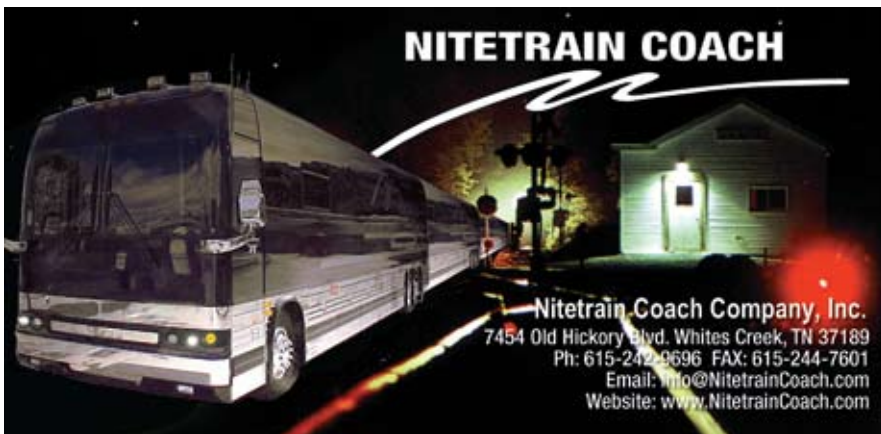
The main part of the show was a three minute pre-show video played just before the players took

to the ice. This vibed the 20,000 audience up for the action to follow, with lighting playing a huge part of the atmosphere building. All lighting cues were triggered by SMPTE timecode running into the grandMA console that was

programmed and operated by Wertheimer.

In addition to this, there were various environmental lighting looks for strategic moments throughout the game, ranging from color washes and logos on the ice to rapid ballyhoos when the teams took to the ice or scored goals.

The fixtures were all hung on 320 ft of trussing flown at a trim height of approximately 65ft in 4 sections around the perimeter of the ice. The 40 ColorWash 1200E ATs were used to fill and stripe the ice with color, while the 24 ColorSpot 1200E ATs were utilized for custom







gobo projections and movement effects.

Wertheimer is really impressed with the reliability of the Robes, saying that since the initial install for the start of the season in early April to its conclusion nearly two months later, he didn't have to swap out a single fixture after the initial install, which is "unprecedented" in all his NHL seasons!

He also really likes the zoom facility on the ColorSpot, and the rich and vibrant red produced on both units, which is – obviously - essential for a Red Wings show!

"Both Wash and Spot were plenty bright enough at every beam angle; pan and tilt are snappy and the image projection has good sharpness and contrast," he concludes.

All lighting equipment for the Detroit Red Wings play off season was supplied by Belleville, Michigan-based Fantasee Lighting. ☺

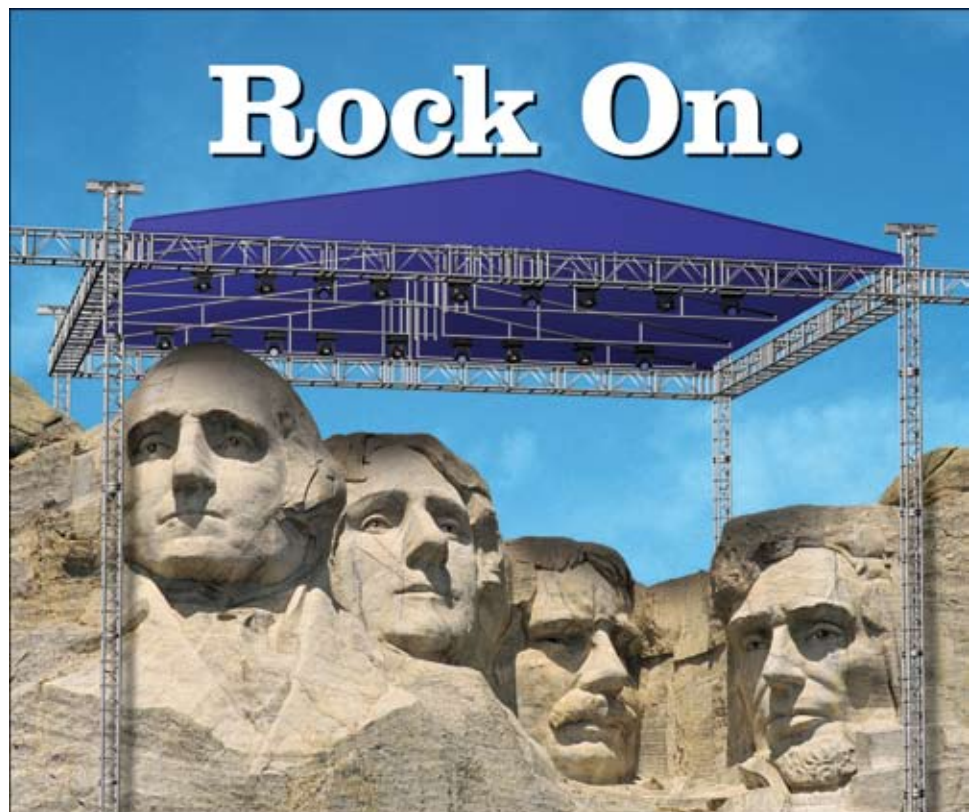
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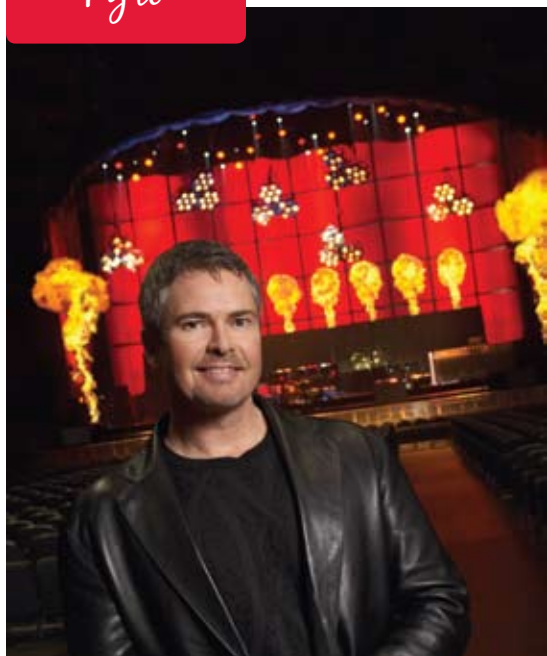
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You have to wonder what Tchaikovsky would say if he could have seen what Ontario based **Pyrotek** did with the music of the recently completed Metallica European stadium tour. We were able to sit down with **Pyrotek owner Doug Adams** and chat about the tour and coming attractions. As is the case with every other aspect of the 21st century mobile production universe, it is a case of dizzying technological advances being applied to the oldest and most basic elements of nature. **In the case of Pyrotek, that element is FIRE!**

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## PYROTEK PAINTS

### Outside the Lines with a Full Pallet of Fire and Water

A chat with Doug Adams

by MICHAEL A. BECK

**mPm:** Why don't we start with the work you just wrapped up on the Metallica run through Europe?

**Doug Adams:** Well I did 48 fire balls for *Enter Sandman*, 21 concussion mortars tied in with the war sequence prior to it along with another 250 effects that went off in about 50 seconds in the war scene. I used the preloaded red flash for the intro to *Sandman* and I used these ak-ak hot bursts that are like bomb bursts that are hung from the truss and look like the flak that you would see around WWII bombers. I used 24 of those. And for the "Boo" cue in *Sandman* I used 48 250 foot comets with tails. In the intro of *Sandman*, I used 48 red 250 mines. Again, with the war scene, I used a sequence with tracers that look like tracer bullets. Then I did a 'Machine Gun Chase' all the way across the downstage edge with mortar hits lined up across the stage. I had four really large Dragons on this that were in the wings that had 400 pound accumulators and shot up about 60 to 80 feet.

**mPm:** In the design process of something that is this pyro-intensive, do you sit down with the production designer and get some sort of design directive at which point you say, I have these ideas?

**D.A.:** No. They have always given me cart blanche and said, "Doug, make look amazing." They have specific songs that they might want to see something in like *Sandman*, which is an old favorite. They'd been doing pyro in that for years before I came along and the same with war scene. They were doing a really minor sequence in War and I just came in and really beefed it up a lot. Peter Mench (Metallica's manager) has come up with some really good ideas over the years. He gives them to me and I just run with them.

**mPm:** So what's next?

**D.A.:** Well the next Metallica tour is going to commemorate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Justice* (And Justice For All) album and it's going to be in the round. So we're going to do an insane war scene for the big hit off that album called *One*. I want to make this one a lot more interactive.

**mPm:** How do you make something like what you do *interactive*?

**D.A.:** By very safely putting things in close proximity to the crowd and doing things that you wouldn't expect to see. I tie in movie effects, like maybe having an effect of a cable breaking up in the truss and dangling with all kinds of sparking going on. I also spread it around. I don't just limit the effects to the stage. It might be in a spot chair or at the front of house. It might be behind or directly in front of the audience. Again, with safety as the watch word.

**mPm:** When is that going to happen?

**D.A.:** It takes off in October.

**mPm:** Is it going to come through the states?

**D.A.:** It should come around a couple of times. It's going to be a long one. A couple of years.

**mPm:** You don't carry supplies with you right? You have shipped fresh everyday, as it were?

**D.A.:** Oh yeah, we drop ship every day.

**mPm:** That's got to make for some hefty shipping costs with size of productions we're talking about. What kind of logistical backing do you need in place to handle an effort like that?

**D.A.:** Fiona Thain handles our logistical chores and maintains liaison with the crews, venues, safety people and local municipalities worldwide. She's been with me forever and she is my saving grace for all of that stuff. I also have a tremendous support team that makes it all happen around here. I have Lorenzo Cornacchia who is my right arm for all of the day-to-day things that happen around here. There's Gordon Hyndford who takes care of pulling all of the shipments together and gets them out the door. I've also got a phenomenal crew out there on the road. Right now I've got Douglas Reid Schulte-Derne, Dimitri Timohovich and Renato Sulmona out on the road. It's just a great, great crew.

**mPm:** Have you pushed out farther than ever before on this Metallica show?

**D.A.:** Absolutely. On this one I pushed the limits regarding sightlines. No matter where the audience was in the show they got to see something. I paid a lot of attention to sightlines. This was a stadium tour. So I used the space behind

the stadium and way off to the side. We weren't just limited to the confines of a 90 foot stage. We were everywhere.

**mPm:** The interior dimensions of an arena are a lot more similar from one place to the next than stadiums. How much did the design change from venue to venue on this tour?

**D.A.:** Yeah, there was some of that that had to happen. A lot of the stuff on this one was recessed worked within the set. But there was a good deal of off stage stuff that had to really tighten up in some places. So we had to be flexible.

**mPm:** Was it the usual advance work on this tour or were there extra measures to be taken because of the sheer size of it?

**D.A.:** No, the site coordinator handled it for us.

**mPm:** One question I love to ask is, what part of what you're doing are you really talking to your friends about these days?

**D.A.:** We have been working on this fire screen that we just put out on Jonas Brothers and we're going to be using it on the next Metallica tour. It's a chasing sequential screen that you can matrix to create scenes. It's pretty incredible. We're soon going to get it to the point where it will be a full screen on which we can create pictures and logos. On the Jonas Brothers, they're being used as set pieces that create some pretty cool effects to boarder the stages. We also have colored flame effects that we can do color mixing with. But the true latest and greatest is actually water and not pyro of all things. It's our aqua-visual effect water screen that can create animation and logos and other stuff. That right now is the thing that I'm really excited about. It's opened up a lot of windows for me for creating different ideas with fire and pyro. I like to color outside the lines and look for things that aren't possible and make them happen. That's why I like to tie the movie effects into my work. It helps me to fill my palette.

**mPm:** Indeed. ☺



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{ Venues }

Big or Small, They Have It All

The venue side of the live entertainment industry is a melting pot of various sizes and styles of facilities, all with their own personalities. This month, *mobile Production monthly* highlights a handful of the best. Whether it's a 20,000-seater arena or a smaller university venue, readers will find that no matter what size the facility, behind the scenes are some amazing people who are all in this industry for the same reason: they absolutely *love* it. In this issue's Highlights section, we are taking a look at the Anaheim Convention Center, Curb Event Center, The Morris Performing Arts Center and Spartanburg. ☺

# { Anaheim }

The Hub of Entertainment in the OC

**A**naheim / Orange County is a vibrant metropolitan area filled with a creative spirit and diversity of activities, making it one of the most popular meeting and vacation destinations in the U.S.

This land of plentiful sunshine, majestic mountain backdrops and miles of soothing beaches spans 798 square miles and is composed of 34 cities, each with their own distinct personality and charm.

It is world-famous for its theme parks, distinguished shopping centers, dynamic meeting venues and trendy beach communities.

The hub of entertainment in Orange County is centered in Anaheim. The city was made world-famous when Walt Disney built his dream theme park, Disneyland here in 1955.

Today, the Anaheim Resort district is recognized as a leading leisure and business destination, and is the home to The Disneyland Resort; including the original Disneyland, Disney's California Adventure and the vibrant Downtown Disney. It is also home to California's largest convention center, the 1.6 million square-foot Anaheim Convention Center, Major League Baseball's, Angels, NHL's Anaheim Ducks and NBA's development league Arsenal.

Brand new to the city is Anaheim GardenWalk, a 440,000 square-foot lifestyle center that includes energetic entertainment offerings, world-class dining and shopping.





The spectacular Anaheim Convention Center first opened its doors in 1967. Since that time the venue has undergone five major expansions and renovation projects. In 2001 a 40 percent expansion and transformation project dramatically changed this area landmark forever, making it an iconic modern venue.

Today, the center is the largest convention center on the West Coast, and the cornerstone of Anaheim's reinvented visitor district, called the Anaheim Resort district.

The \$13 million dollar glass wave patterned wall that encases this striking venue sets the tone for a sophisticated yet casual SoCal experience for meeting attendees and guests alike, as it brings in elements of the sunny weather framed by the rows of towering palm trees just outside the doors.

The Anaheim area boasts nearly 20,000 guest rooms in the immediate area and 55,000 countywide, 42 miles of beautiful coastline and hundreds of diverse venues. Orange County has become one of the nation's most desirable meeting and event locations in the nation.

The massive Anaheim Convention Center features 1.6 million square feet of flexible meeting and exhibit space with a newly enhanced and expanded outdoor courtyard. The Center offers event space; featuring 815,000 square feet of exhibit space and a 38,000-square-foot ballroom, 51 meeting rooms, 130,000 square-feet of meeting space, a 200,000 square foot lobby and 100,000 square feet of outdoor event space.

The Center has grown up with Orange County to become one of the region's jewels and an icon for Anaheim. ☺



{ Anaheim  
Convention  
Center }





## 83rd Annual IAAM Conference & Trade Show

As you prepare to attend the IAAM 83rd Annual Conference & Trade Show, July 25-29, 2008 in Anaheim, CA, here are some of the sessions that your ears will fancy!

Hear ... Keynote speaker Daniel Pink, sponsored in part by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, LLP. This presentation will highlight how businesses in the near future will transition from an era of "left-brained dominance" to an era of demand for "right-brained" individuals. Workplaces that accommodate this change will thrive, suggests Pink. Pink is the best-selling author of *Free Agent Nation* and *New York Times* best seller, *A Whole New Mind*. He recently released, *Johnny Bunko*, the first book in America that uses the Japanese comic book format, manga. Come learn why individuals with high touch talents are the way of the future for American businesses!

Hear all about leadership from a woman with plenty of experience in this session with Anne Doyle, sponsored by Global Spectrum. The old leadership template is dissolving. According to Doyle, the most diverse workforce and challenging business environment we've ever seen are upon us. It's time for leaders to move out of their comfort zones and embrace the new leadership template.

Anne Doyle, president of Anne Doyle Strategies ([www.annedoylestrategies.com](http://www.annedoylestrategies.com)) knows all about the challenges of change and the risks of shaking up the status quo. She is a veteran of some of the toughest leadership laboratories of the last three decades. One of the first women TV journalists to achieve access to sports locker rooms, Anne

overcame gender stereotypes and often hostile work environments to earn the respect of athletes and peers and be named to the Michigan Journalism Hall of Fame. Whether you are an executive insider polishing your leadership skills or an ambitious outsider looking to make your mark, you won't want to miss Anne Doyle's practical insight and inspiring vision on leadership for the 21st Century.

Hear about the top technology trends that are transforming the public assembly management industry with presenter Corbin Ball, CSP, CMP. This interactive session will give those who attend a better understanding of some of the important technology trends that are being used in today's society as well as in our industry. Ball is an international speaker, consultant and writer who assists clients worldwide using technology to save time and improve productivity. His experience includes 20 years of running international technology meetings as well as being a highly acclaimed speaker with the ability to make complex subjects understandable and fun. Corbin serves or has served on numerous hotel, corporate, convention bureau and association boards. In addition, he was named as one of "The 25 Most Influential People in the Meetings Industry" by *MeetingNews Magazine* for the past four years.

Hear how to become a great presenter and trainer! Paul Turner, guest services manager for the Philadelphia Eagles, will take time to teach attendees the importance of the "3Ps", Prepare, Practice, and Perform. This model for presenting will be only the beginning as you learn new tools to become a great success.

Hear your industry peers' jealous comments resulting from the education you will receive in the Global Issues Summit with Richard Gesteland, Global Management LLC, sponsored by VenuWorks. A popular keynote speaker, Richard R. Gesteland is also a busy seminar leader, author and executive trainer. He has 30 years of hands-on international business experience, including 26 years overseas on eight management assignments. Gesteland has published articles on global management and international negotiation in the *Asian Wall Street Journal*, *Chief Executive Asia*, *Foreign Trade*, *Purchasing Executives Journal*, *Singapore Economic Journal*, *National Development*, *Trade & Culture*, *UN International Trade Forum*, *Export Today*, *China Online* and many others.

Hear speaker Bob Wendover twice at conference! He will speak on the importance of how new generations will alter tomorrow's public assembly facilities as well as serve as the University Venue Management Conference (UVMC) closing luncheon speaker. The UVMC presentation will focus on the importance of using the internet to provide services for future generations. Wendover is the managing director of the Center for Generational Studies in Aurora, CO and has emerged as one of the nation's leading commentators on how the generations relate to one another in American society. The author of eight books, he is a regular guest on radio and TV across the U.S. and some of his clients include IBM, Sears, Discover, Kinko's, State Farm Insurance, AllTel, Hampton Inns, AT&T and the Professional Golfers Association,

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## {Curb Event Center}

### Presidential Aspirations

**T**he Curb Event Center in Nashville, Tennessee is part of Belmont University's campus, and brings the community a beautiful location for an array of live events ranging from sports, meetings, weddings, and of course, concerts. mobile Production monthly had a chance to meet with General Manager Ron Jackson and learn a little bit about him and this vibrant facility that is approaching its fifth birthday.

Jackson has spent eleven years servicing the venue industry. He began as Event Services Director at Nashville Arena (now The Sommet Center) in 1998, shortly after it opened. It wasn't until two and a half years ago that he joined the Belmont family and now enjoys an exciting job as General Manager, where he handles a team of professionals who assist him with booking and making sure everything runs smoothly.

The largest event Curb Event Center hosts every year is the CMT Music

Awards in April. Soon, the venue won't just be famous for hosting the biggest award show in country music. In October 2008, just in time for its fifth birthday, Curb will be the first venue in Tennessee history to host a presidential debate. The venue staff is excited to have its facility chosen for this event. Already, personnel have been working hard to prepare for this mammoth occurrence. Jackson told *mPm* that the staff has been upgrading security and production, lining up vendors for supplemental power needs, developing plans for the media and hospitality center and creating a transportation plan... all for this one debate. "This event was made possible through a lot of hard work by everyone involved from Belmont University, as well as cooperation and support from both the Mayor and Governor, and many other governing officials and departments," Jackson said.

Aside from all the upgrades the facility is making for the presidential debate, it recently purchased two new video screens from Daktronics. Jackson told *mPm* that

he is excited about the new screens and would love to purchase two more in the future. On top of the new video screens, Curb Event Center is also home to high-quality seats from Interkal, a basketball floor from Covington



For additional info,  
visit: [belmont.edu/curveventcenter](http://belmont.edu/curveventcenter)

Flooring, staging from StageRight and audio from Clair Bros.

Each year, this facility hosts approximately 200 events. While that number may be less than some other larger venues,



Jackson knows that his venue is set apart from others because of his excellent staff. Due to the smaller number of bookings, the staff is able to concentrate more on the events that do come through without getting stretched too thin. One major concern some have with university venues is the parking situation. When asked about it, Jackson let us know that a solution is on hand, “We have a number of surface lots on the outskirts of campus that we use for buses, depending on numbers. We have also worked with both Greer Stadium and the State Fairgrounds (both less than two miles away) to use their parking and employ shuttles to bring people to our events from off-site.”

*mPm* was curious as to what it is about a university venue that appeals to Jackson versus working in a larger scale venue. Speaking from experience in both, he closed the interview by saying, “I have always enjoyed the atmosphere on college campuses. Being around people that have a genuine thirst for knowledge appeals to me both personally and professionally. The pace suits me much better as well. The college world is not quite as frantic as professional sports venues.” ☺

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# {The Sommet Center}



Recently, The Sommet Center in Music City brought on board a new Director of Marketing with plenty of industry know-how. *mobile Production monthly* got a chance to meet David Kells and dive deeper into not only what the venue has to offer, but what Kells brings to the table in his diverse experience.

**mPm:** To get started, tell us about yourself... your background and when you came to The Sommet Center.

**DK:** For the Sommet Center, this is the second time around. I came straight out of college in 1997 and started with the operations, set-up crew and the AV Staff. I went away and worked for different promoters and venues, then came back in August 2006. I started back in operations, but as a supervisor for the overnight crew. So a hockey game would end at 9:30 at night... concert set-up would begin at 8:00 in the morning... we were responsible for flipping everything in between. I also

have a lot of experience doing marketing, promotions and event coordinating. So I went from Operations Supervisor to Event Manager to now Director of Marketing and I started this position in January.

**mPm:** So how many years have you worked for the venue industry as a whole?

**DK:** Well... I don't know specifically 'venue,' but live entertainment since I was 18... so 1994. When I was in college, I would intern at radio stations and record companies and promotions companies during the summer... but of course, they did not pay, so I'd be a stage hand to make money.

**mPm:** As Director of Marketing, what does your job entail now?

**DK:** I handle marketing for everything non-hockey. It varies a lot. Local promoters have offices here that (take care of) Nashville, so I help them on various other things... like if they need new information on (situations) that have changed. For other shows, such as Poison, we handle all the promotion in house from start to finish; situations vary.

**mPm:** What has been the biggest challenge so far in servicing the entertainment industry?

**DK:** I can't think of anything that's been overly difficult... it's

To contact David Kells:  
PHONE 615.770.2096  
EMAIL dkells@sommetcenter.com

all I've ever done, so I've heard of folks who come from another profession and then get into this... and for them, the hours are a big deal... it's all I've done, so it just makes sense to me. I don't know if I could do anything else. Maybe deadlines are a challenge, but that's with any job, and it's nothing too difficult to handle.

**mPm:** We know the Sommet Center has undergone several name changes in the past year, but how has it become what it is now?

**DK:** The Sommet Center began as the Nashville Arena when the building first opened, and then the naming rights were sold to Gaylord Entertainment. That contract expired, and the hockey team, who handles all the sales, changed the name back to Nashville Arena for a few months until The Sommet Group out of Franklin came on as the naming rights.

**mPm:** About how many shows per year do you guys host?

**DK:** Last year, we hosted 340.

**mPm:** What production has been the largest and most difficult to pull off so far?

**DK:** The CMAs is the biggest event we do every year. It's here for ten days so it's an ongoing thing. I think people tend to forget the rehearsal hall we have here... Tim and Faith will set up for at least a month - and Kenny Chesney had a stadium rig here for several weeks at a time.

**mPm:** Speaking of the rehearsal hall, are you guys competing with Soundcheck and SIR, or just letting people know it's available through advertising?

**DK:** It's available, it's just another service we have. We have some regular clients like Kenny Chesney and Martina McBride. We just want people aware that it's here and it's a good opportunity for folks.

**mPm:** In your opinion, what three things should every venue make priority when servicing the industry?

**DK:** On the industry side, not the patron side, number one would be making sure the interior staff really understands the nature of the business. You hire the best folks you can... people who are trained and have experience in it. You don't want someone in here who three months later is asking, 'What do you mean I have to work Thanksgiving?' You know, it makes them unhappy and trickles over to the artist side of things. Another would be to have as many dates available as possible. Routing tours is crazy. I don't think I could handle that part of the world! Also, have as much gear as you possibly can. Make sure the personnel staff matches up with what you have put into the building.

**mPm:** Are there any upcoming changes to the venue you'd like to share with the industry?

**DK:** Our capital budget isn't approved yet for next year, but within the last

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# {The Morris}

Performing Arts Center



**T**he Morris, in South Bend, IN originally opened as The Palace Theater in November 1921. The building was designed to combine many different eras in architectural history: Italian Renaissance, Spanish Revival and Baroque. Architect J.S. Aroner of Chicago hoped that a trip through the theater would make patrons feel like they had just made a trip through Europe. The opulent interior décor was designed by Marshall Fields of Chicago. Patrons of the Palace enjoyed a magnificent ballroom and a theater that boasted the largest stage in the state. Luxuries of the time consisted of a supervised nursery, a sitting room for women complete with an attendant and a smoking room for men.

In August of 1959, with the advent of television causing low attendance records, the theater was almost demolished. Mrs. E.M. Morris purchased the theater for an undisclosed sum and sold it to the city for \$1

who then renamed it the Morris Civic Auditorium in her honor.

In February 2000, The Morris completed an extensive \$ 24.3 million renovation (soft and hard dollars) and was renamed The Morris Performing Arts Center. The Morris reopened boasting upgraded technical equipment, enlarged performance and backstage spaces, as well as a completely restored interior.

The Morris offers the best of the old and new: a combination of opulent décor and rich history with upgraded technical equipment and expanded space. This venue now hosts over 125 events per year including pops concerts, national Broadway tours, dance, symphony, comedians, rock concerts, etc. The Morris has over 156,000 guests yearly and has an economic impact of \$5.9 million on the City of South Bend.

In 2003, the Morris Bistro Restaurant opened on the lower level as “The place to go before the show.” Theater guests can enjoy dinner two hours before evening performances. Lunch is also available Monday – Friday from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

#### **CAPACITIES:**

**The Morris Performing Arts Center offers:**

- New audience seating with a maximum capacity of 2560
- Completely repainted and restored interior
- Brand new stage that measures 45' deep by 103' wide, with a 72' fly height and 70 fly lines
- Expanded loading area with three new docks.
- New stage lighting and sound system
- Expanded orchestra pit
- Full Wenger symphonic shell
- Fully updated utilities and HVAC system

**BACKSTAGE AREAS:**

- Expanded Loading area with three new docks
- 8 Dressing Rooms
- 3 Principal Rooms on Stage Level
- 2 Principal Rooms in Lower Level
- 3 Private Rooms in Lower Level
- 2 Chorus Rooms in Lower Level
- Women's Accommodates 27
- Men's Accommodates 24
- 1 Hair/Wardrobe Room 30x18
- 1 Catering Room

**EXHIBITION SPACE:** Lobby area is available for displays. Palais Royale ballroom is available for rent for larger exhibitions and conventions.

**SOUND/LIGHTING:**

**Sound** – 40 channel DDA console, cluster, fill and under balcony speakers, 300 watt system hearing-impaired enhancement

**Lighting** – 4 Super Trouper Follow Spots, ECT Insight 3 System, (48) Pars, (16) 36-degree Source 4, (26) 26-degree Source 4, (58) 190degree Source 4, (10) 5-degree Source 4, (10) Triple Cyc, (48) 10-degree Source 4.

**FOOD & BEVERAGE:** Full service in-house catering is prepared and served by Centerplate/Masterpiece Creations. Masterpiece Creations provides dinner in the Bistro Restaurant prior to shows, theater concessions and backstage catering. The Bistro Restaurant and Palais Royale ballroom are available for private party rental.

**BOX OFFICE/TICKETING:** The Morris offers a full-service box office, regional outlets and promotional remote box office sales to assist with maximizing ticket sales. Tickets can be purchased at the Box Office or over the phone at 235.9190 or 800.537.6415. The Box Office is open Monday - Friday 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM and Saturday 10:00 AM -2:00 PM. Tickets can also be purchased 24 hours a day online at [www.MorrisCenter.org](http://www.MorrisCenter.org) and patrons have the option of printing tickets at home.

**AUDIENCE AMENITIES:** Assisted Listening Devices, Side Boxes, No Pillar Obstructed Views, Handicapped accessible

**PARKING:** There are approximately 2000 parking spaces available within walking distance of the theater, including parking garages, lots and street parking.

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# {Spartanburg}

## Memorial Auditorium



### Just Another Auditorium?

W

ith all of the snazzy new arenas and auditoriums going up these days, it's easy to forget there are some auditoriums that still have some age to them. The Spartanburg Memorial Auditorium in Spartanburg, South Carolina is one of them. The auditorium seats 3,217 with handicap seating making up the first two rows of the far house right and left section as well as a handicap section on an elevated platform behind the mix position.





by MICHAEL A. BECK

Indeed there is even a VIP suite at the center of the room on the back wall under the balcony. At the time it was built in 1951, the auditorium was the largest theater in the Carolina's; a title that it holds to this day.

With Charlotte on one side and Columbia on the other, it's easy to forget that Spartanburg is there. In 1999, the facility was shut down for a well-deserved facelift and reopened in 2000. And while the Spartanburg area doesn't have an arena large enough to attract an A-list show, there is obviously a market for this facility in that it has booked 168 event days so far this year.

The stage is unusually deep at 89 feet with the orchestra pit in the up position. The proscenium width is 59'4" with a height of 27'4". The grid is not exceptionally high at only 51'6". On the other hand, it's hard to imagine a touring theater show that could outweigh the buildings load capacity, which is 90,000 pounds. The fly system has 58 line sets - each capable of 1,300 pounds.

The stage has 366 lighting circuits between the stage and FOH. The stage has 1,700 amps of three-phase power (800 on each side and additional 100 on stage left). There are several 20-amp circuits at the FOH, certainly more than enough to run whatever might be needed for even the largest theater tour on the road.

As increasingly more shows are paring down to save truck space (and ultimately, fuel) the first things to go are stacks, wracks and lighting rigs. This venue has a compliment of 270 lighting instruments of various makes and models. And while the system is controlled by a slightly aged ETC Expression 3, 400-channel console, the Expression still has game, and plans

are in the making to upgrade the console in the near future. The house also has two Xenon Super Troopers with 1.6K lamps (located in upper balcony 150 feet from the stage). House audio is made up of EV in left, center, right clusters and JBL under-balcony on a delay.

There are two loading docks that feed directly to the stage (stage right). While the access to the stage from the loading dock is very convenient, the access to the docks is a little ticky, as the trucks have to back up a 150-foot ramp. On the other hand, a good driver will do it just to show he can.

Because this venue did many *theatrical* productions in its early years, it has an abundance of dressing room space. There are 11 dressing rooms totaling roughly 2,400square feet with 71 makeup counters that can accommodate 250 performers. There are three washing machines and two dryers. There is a kitchen, however, it primarily a staging area for food that would be cooked outside. The Green room is big enough to double as the catering area and is attached to the kitchen.

When one talks about the Spartanburg Memorial Auditorium, it's easy to think only of the auditorium. However there is more to it. The entire facility is actually a convention center. That being said, the convention center is somewhat small to handle some of the convention trade, given that it is only 15,000 square feet and falls short of the convention needs of many events. On the other hand, out of the roughly 288 event days (actual production days) that the facility books, 120 of them are booked in the "arena" of the convention center. The arena also has a 600-amp service that is a 200-foot run up to the auditorium in the unlikely event that a shoe on the stage might need more than the 1,700 amps available to the stage.



TOP TO BOTTOM:  
General Manager Steve Jones  
Assistant Manager Jonathan Pitts  
Event Manager Scott Ellis



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The arena also has two loading docks that service its events. When events are taking place in the auditorium, the arena docks are often used for loading in merchandise or deliveries for the house. The house docks are on the second floor of the building and the auditorium docks are on the fourth floor. However, a freight elevator opens up with easy proximity to the stage. Speaking of merchandise (how's that for a smooth segue?), when the main lobby was renovated, care was taken to build a moderate but attractive merch booth.

It would be easy to peg this facility as just another auditorium in another small town if you are of the mind that any auditorium can be called "just another auditorium." But that mindset is one of sheer ignorance. Any auditorium is a place to be adored as a sacred place whose position in the human experience dates back to ancient Greece and beyond. The fact that *this* auditorium only dates back to 1951 simply means that it's younger than some and older than many. Its walls have heard the words of Presidents, foreign heads for state and the music of such names as Chet Atkins, Tim McGraw and Faith Hill (before they were "Tim & Faith"), Billy Joel, Journey, Lyle Lovett and The Birds. Its audiences have also laughed at the jokes of Jerry Seinfeld, Bernie Mac, Jerry Clower, Yakov Smirnoff and the recently departed George Carlin. This place has character that comes from its history. There are indeed much fancier auditoriums that have technology far beyond this place, but what this place lacks in 21<sup>st</sup> century accoutrements, it makes up for in heart.

The proof of that is clearly seen in the fact that General Manager Steve Jones has been on the job for 30 years. His Assistant GM, Jonathon Pitts has been there 18 years and Production Manager Scott Ellis has been there 11 years. By the time you've been on a gig like this for even half as long as these guys, you have the chops to move on. The fact that they have chosen to stay is pointed up in one simple sentence spoken by Steve Jones, "I know a good gig when I see it."

Just another auditorium huh?...Or not! ☺

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# Omni Hotel

in Jacksonville, Florida





# q&a

with Director of Sales Wendy Priesand

wpriesand@omnihotels.com

**mobile Production monthly:** How many years have you personally been servicing the music industry, and how many of those years at The Omni?

**Wendy Priesand:** I've been in the hotel industry for over 25 years, the majority of the time being split between the Omni Jacksonville Hotel (1994-1998, and 2005 to present) and MGM Mirage Resorts.

**mPm:** Why do you feel it is important for your hotel to market itself towards the music industry versus just vacation travel?

**WP:** Since we are located directly across the street from the Times Union Centre for the Performing Arts and just up the street from the Veterans Memorial Arena and the Florida Theatre, the music industry is a huge part of our business. We value the financial support that this industry has given us over the past years. In return, we've bent over backwards to learn how we can best meet the needs of the performers and their bands. Our staff understands the importance of having the key packets ready for the tour manager, so guests are able to get into their rooms quickly. We have an entertainment sales manager, Yolanda Bradley, who works almost exclusively with tour groups, and really understands the industry. Whether it's arranging with the Chef to ensure that special dietary needs are met or stocking the mini-bar with favorite snacks (no matter how hard they are to find!), Yolanda makes it happen. We know that the tour manager has to have a zero-balance invoice at departure, so, we make sure all charges are posted in advance if necessary.

Other added touches are a customized one-page City fact sheet, flexible check-in/check-out policies to meet the band's schedules and coordination with the entertainment venues to make sure all details go smoothly, right down to the welcome amenities.

**mPm:** What challenges have you had to overcome when trying to provide excellent service to someone in our industry? Give an example of something your hotel did for a tour that other hotels possibly wouldn't bother doing.

**WP:** We've learned that we have to be flexible with check-in times. If a band is checking in at 7 AM and can't afford to buy the rooms for the night before, we'll do everything within our power to get the

rooms cleaned and ready for the band's arrival. It takes a lot of teamwork (and a little luck that the prior night's guests check out early)!

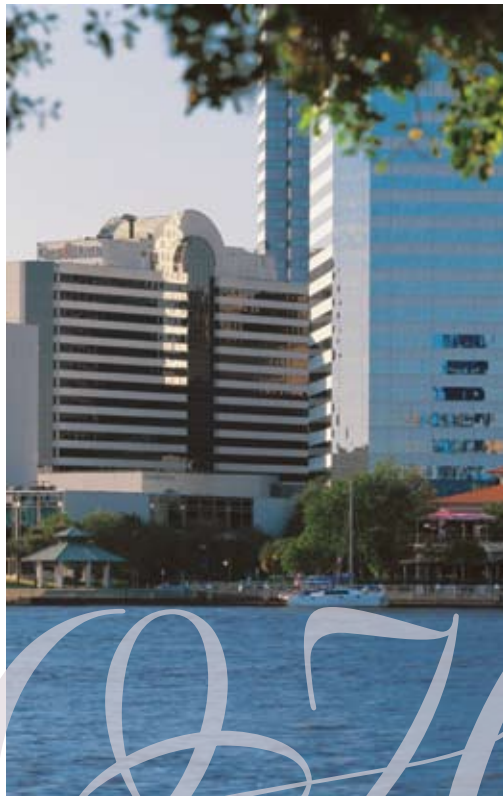
**mPm:** What makes the Omni different from any other hotel in Jacksonville?

**WP:** We are the only 4-Diamond Hotel in the City. At only 354 rooms, we can offer the upgraded amenities, service and attention to detail. We make sure that we put our bands in quiet areas of the hotel so they can get the rest they need. Our staff understands the words "Do Not Disturb," and since we have 24-hour room service, we can provide urinary service anytime of the day or night. At almost 400 square feet each, our over-sized rooms and marble baths are extremely comfortable, even

for guests doubling up. We are very aware that tour managers are working while they are here with us, and we try to upgrade their rooms whenever possible to give them a little extra space.

**mPm:** How long has the Omni been in a part of Jacksonville?

**WP:** We just celebrated our 20th Anniversary in the City. Since opening, we have been owned and operated by Omni Hotels - we're the only hotel downtown that has not changed flags in the past few years. Tour Managers know that we are going to





provide consistent service levels and that's important with the travel schedules they keep.

mPm: Has the hotel undergone any renovations or are there any planned for the future?

WP: We had a \$5M rooms renovation (both soft and hard goods) in 2005. We put in new bedding packages in 2006 and redesigned our restaurants in 2006 as well. We're about to spend a few more million redoing our suites and some of our meeting rooms in July. The hotel looks wonderful.

mPm: What is the bus parking policy?

WP: We arrange for bus parking for a fee (currently \$50 per bus per night), about one block away. The buses can load/unload right here at the hotel, then the driver can park the bus. The venues will also arrange parking for the tours.

mPm: Do you offer room service 24/hours? If so, is the menu limited and to what items?

WP: Yes, it's 24-hours. After 1 AM, it's more limited (salads, burgers, etc.), however, we'll do our best to accommodate special requests.

mPm: How many rooms and suites do you offer?

WP: A total of 345 rooms including four, one or two bedroom suites with separate parlors. We also have 33 executive kings which have small sitting areas.

mPm: How many rooms are on each floor - in case a tour wants to book an entire floor?

WP: 33.

mPm: What venues are nearby?

WP: Times Union Centre for Performing Arts, the Florida Theatre, The Ritz Theater and Veterans Memorial Arena. We're right across the street from the Jacksonville Landing which has numerous restaurants and entertainment venues.

mPm: Is there anything else you would like to share with the industry?

WP: Our associates are dedicated to ensuring that guest privacy is maintained. They are well trained, respect confidentiality, and are very discreet. We will do whatever it takes to exceed our bands' expectations. ☺





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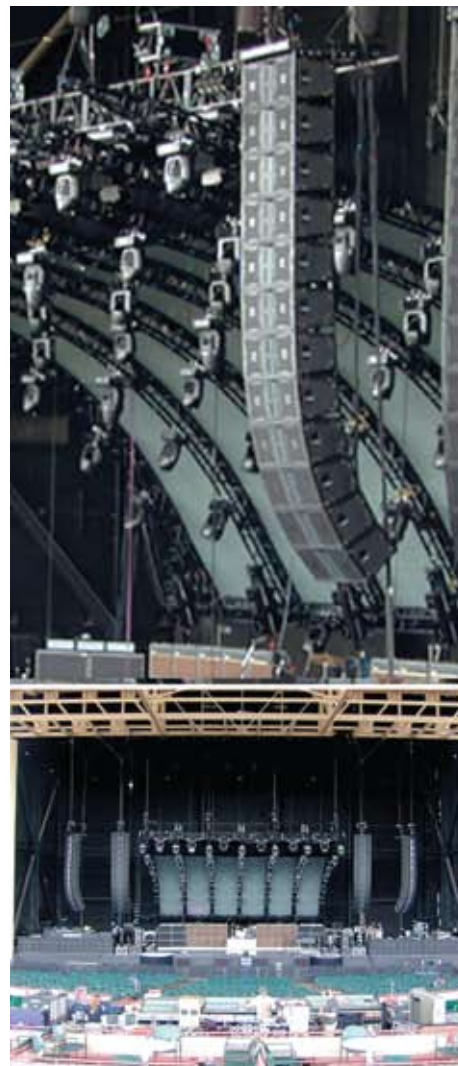
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## THE STATE THEATRE LIVES AGAIN!

by BILLY BECK

For many years, it was a running question about The State Theatre in Ithaca, New York; “Will anyone ever find a chicken in this egg?” It had been nearly a quarter-century since I had last been in this place, a far cry from its service as a dual-screen film house even further back in the mid-1970s. That had been a bit-sweet experience – to see the balcony separated from the orchestra like that, but the wonderful scenic aspects of the interior were on working display. At least the place was doing business.

When visiting there in the early 80’s, there was barely enough temporary power in the joint for a metal band’s tour rehearsals. Under a leaky roof, it was cold and dark except for about forty amps of AC rigged onstage and a couple of work scoops. It wasn’t the most miserable three days I had ever spent, but it was sad to see the demise of this place.

The State was the last proscenium house in a downtown that was once full off theatres. The Strand had been the only one I’d known and closest to my heart (not to mention my hide) since I had lived in a dressing room there while honing my craft, and had woken in the middle of the night to find the place burning down. We went from roaring flames to Muddy Waters live on that stage in eight days if I remember correctly. The State was never going to be that important to me, but over the years, its image did come to mind now and then.

Originally built as a parking garage for a car dealership in 1912, it opened as a theater on December 6, 1928 with a film and live big-band bill. The building was about

to be razed in 1998 when it was bought by Historic Ithaca, a non-profit building preservation group. Three years of thorough-going physical rehabilitation brought the building into shape for a re-opening on December 5, 2001. The question of The State was looking nearer resolution except for something fundamental – whether to go for the full museum – quality building and program refinement or get the place on a working footing in order to pay the bills.

Along the way, a Cornell University graduate with a taste and a head for live music settled roundabout back in Ithaca and became the Executive Director of The State Theatre in 2007. Dan Smalls outlined his view of things when I visited his house, “There are two schools of thought in theaters like this, and hopefully anyone who’s said the same thing would look at it the way we do. You [can] build a museum and then you try to turn it into a performing arts center, or you make something viable and show the community it works - and then go out and say, ‘Okay, it works,’ now let’s make it really nice. And that’s the model that we’re approaching.”

Dan arrived on scene as that evolution was mounting in the wake of previous administration, but he looks distinctly adept in this project. With long experience at concert promotion and a hearty feel for Ithaca, he is catching a pulse that had gone thready in this town for too long.

“It was a matter of just finding what they wanted,” Dan said. “I think our first year was a little more on the – ‘we’ll give you a lot of culture’ right out of the box, and you can’t just become a performing arts center over night. You have to know what you’re giving your market. And I think we certainly went after the right acts for this market this year. As much as some of the things for ‘06 - ‘07 were okay, this town wanted to see Richard Thompson, Lyle Lovett and Nancy Griffith.”

With the theater on steady technical legs, its market has widened to student groups off the hills (Cornell and Ithaca College). Mark Scarborough in the house as Production Manager had the place clean and squared-away on the day I walked in, and it’s easy to see how handy a space this is. Aside from its backstage capability, it can handle projects on a shorter time-line than the academic calendars can.

Mark spoke of his personal desire to see tour rehearsals in the place, and I could only think of my three days there as a touring LD getting ready to go out, back in the day. The State Theatre has come a long way, and I think it would be a groove to set up a show there now.

At 1600 seats, it’s as sweet a proscenium house as you’ll ever see from any seat. The 10-foot apron downstage makes the not-exactly-generous deck area workable for the breadth of markets that Dan & company have in mind. With seventy events behind them in the 2007 season, there is no question that The State is now a working theater with every prospect of flourishing into the future. You should visit soon.

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The MultiTasker product line is a modular, card-based, and freely configurable AV system. As an alternative to traditional AV system designs with stand-alone AV components, the MultiTasker system facilitates 100% flexibility and modularity. Designing an AV system with MultiTasker components is no different than designing an AV system with traditional stand-alone products, yet with over 70 available plug in cards from which to choose, the MultiTasker approach provides greater freedom in configuring a system, coupled with increased savings, as contractors need not acquire any more I/O capacity than is required for the scope of the project.

The key to building a successful AV system begins with the matrix switcher (or router) and this is, unquestionably, one of the Altinex MultiTasker system's greatest strengths. Available in a wide range of signal terminations, the MultiTasker matrix switchers enable one to configure an AV system as small as 4 x 4 or as large as 64 x 64. Designed to enable a contractor to assemble an AV system with the perfect combination of connectors, Altinex MultiTasker matrix switchers are available in the following signal formats: composite video, S-Video, HDTV/component video, VGA, Twisted Pairs, as well as mono and stereo audio. In addition to the extensive standard offerings already available, Altinex also offers contractors custom configurations — thus ensuring the perfect fit for each and every installation.

In addition to the extensive number of matrix switcher configurations available, contractors and their customers needn't be concerned about capacity for future system expansion. While the MultiTasker matrix switchers' maximum I/O capacity on a single system is 64 x 64, these routers can be cascaded in any combination up to a maximum of 128 x 128—ensuring more than enough capacity for even the most ambitious expansion plans.

With the multitude of MultiTasker matrix switcher configurations available, housing the components of the AV system is an equally important consideration. Altinex offers a variety of enclosures and front panels designed to house the I/O cards. Enclosures are available with and without front panel control keys. For systems utilizing computers or third party system control, enclosures with front and backside 9-pin D-sub connectors and microprocessors are also available. MultiTasker AV system matrix switcher enclosures are available in 4-, 8-, 12-, 19-, and 20-slot configurations.

As one would expect from a world-class AV system, control is equally important and, once again, Altinex has the bases covered. In addition to their ability to be controlled via the front panel of the matrix switcher enclosure or via computers or third party systems, Altinex also offers its MultiTouch™ touch screen panels as well as a tabletop keyboard controller.

Altinex MultiTouch panels include dual RS-232 ports, two network ports, two to four USB ports (depending upon model), along with a built in wireless access network plus Bluetooth. Additionally, the MultiTouch panels' wireless access capability can be permanently disabled for use in secure environments. For smaller AV systems, the Altinex CP450-124 Tabletop Keyboard Controller has 25



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dedicated keys that can be programmed to control an AV system. No matter what the client prefers, the Altinex MultiTasker AV System has the control capability designed to fit a wide range of capacities and aesthetic preferences.

Altinex President and CEO Jack Gershfeld commented on the company's expanded MultiTasker AV System product line. "Regardless of the size and complexity of the AV system one envisions, our MultiTasker AV System offerings are the most comprehensive in the industry and offer the flexibility to build exactly the system the client wants. With a comprehensive range of I/O cards, enclosures, and control options — combined with the formidable capabilities of our free AVSnap™ system design software — Altinex re-defines the AV system design landscape. I'm confident today's consultants and contractors will find much to like." ☺

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as well as other household names, government agencies and educational institutions.

Hear more than Who Shot JR from actor and activist Larry Hagman during our Inaugural Luncheon sponsored by Cleanevent USA, Inc. According to the California Public Utilities Commission and the Solar Electric Power Association, Larry Hagman and his wife Maj own the largest residential solar-power system in the United States. This former oil tycoon actor is looking for ways to preserve the environment and will share some of his knowledge with you!

Hear the closing keynote session, sponsored in part by AEG Facilities, which will provide you with the perfect information to take back with you after conference. Simon T. Bailey is the founder of The Brilliance Institute, Inc., an organization that is "dedicated to building the world's most valuable resource, people." He works with Fortune 500 companies, national associations, government agencies, and educational institutions to transform their cultures and release employee potential. Bailey uses a diamond as a metaphor and will discuss the importance of releasing the brilliance in your employees. Bailey was with Hyatt Hotels, the Orlando Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Walt Disney Company for over two decades resulting in his expertise in leadership, sales, and customer service. He is the author of the top selling, *Release Your Brilliance*, *Simon Believes... Brilliant Service is the Bottom Line*, *Simon Believes... Success is an Inside Job*, and *Simon Says Dream: Live a Passionate Life*. ☺

The Sommet Center continued from 27

year, we replaced all the lower bull seats. We have a new scoreboard that's fantastic! It's amazing, night and day - it's different. It's totally HD... and we also built a new HD production room downstairs. So we can do a lot more than we could before.

**mPm:** Finally, what do you think sets the Sommet Center apart from other venues?

**DK:** The folks who walk in the door every day. We have good, trained staff. I think everyone here does a good job and understands what the music business is. Most people here are lifers... it's what they love and they've been through all the early hurdles... they're here because they *want* to be here. Also, the fact that we can host the CMAs in the rehearsal hall is different. People are here often. For example, when a tour manager comes in, he's been here for three weeks already and has a relationship with our event staff... they'll go have coffee together, and because of that relationship, little things don't become big things on show day. ☺

The Morris PAC continued from 28

**OTHER VENUE FEATURES:** New state-of-the-art electronic marquee was one of the final steps in the process of restoring the 1920's Vaudeville-era building to its original grandeur. The marquee, which includes chaser lights, search lights, and full color Daktronics ProStar® and Galaxy® display boards measures approximately 57 feet across and projects 17' from the wall and includes a Daktronics full color LED electronic display on each face. The display board on the front face measures 3'4" by 39'6" with the end display boards each measuring 3'4" by 10'4".

**MARKETING/PROMOTIONS:** The Morris assists with on-site marketing including posters, 3-sheets, electronic marquee with full color display, website, and Morris fan club email blasts.

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| Hillary Duff         | The Strokes            |
| Fall Out Boy         | Sum 41                 |
| Ben Folds            | Tegan & Sara           |
| Fuel                 | Third Eye Blind        |
| Godsmack             | Tila Tequila           |
| Good Charlotte       | Tina Turner            |
| Green Day            | Loudon Wainwright III  |
| Josh Groban          | Tom Waits              |
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| Hall & Oates         | Weird Al               |
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