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Part TWO

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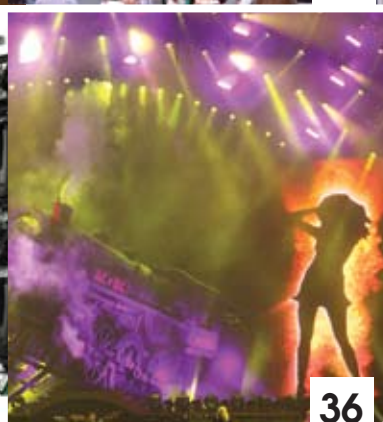
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With this edition, we proudly present our coverage of the AC/DC world tour. Our writers were able to cover both the arena and stadium versions of the show. The technical innovation that premiered with this event is especially interesting. What impressed me the most was the collaboration in not only solving technical issues, but the way these innovations sparked new product lines and cross company collaboration. In the middle of an economic downturn, keen minds seized an opportunity and expanded their offering to the industry.

Now that we are in the middle of the summer touring season, everyone is busy trying to make up for slow times. However, we should not lose sight of overall plans and strategies. It has been difficult for many companies to sort out the economic swings we have all experienced. It does seem that the worst may be over. While buildings that depend on municipal funding are clearly stressed, hotels are trying to fill rooms, and manufacturers are still trying to keep inventory moving, yet many other parts of our industry are thriving. We will try to keep you informed on trends and ideas that surface as everyone combats his or her own challenges. To this end, we deliver part two of Jessi Wallace's probe into this issue and her interview with industry pro Steve Gudis.

Finally, we have all seen the difficulty many conventions have had this year. Exhibitors are pulling back from marginal events. Buyers are more than wary and in many cases, not even investing the money to travel and attend these events. There may yet be some additional "fall out" with these meetings. Michael Beck has a review of the NAMM show in this issue that identifies some of the bright spots.

For our part, we are trying to organize a very special meeting at the next Tour Link Conference that will be both informative and entertaining. We hope that our announcement of Jake Berry as the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award will be reason enough for many to attend the event. The expansion of our sessions to include targeted workshops should make this a "must attend" event. Certainly, we have been able to hold down the cost of attending for everyone, thanks in large part to the efforts of our board and sponsors. If you ever considered attending our annual gathering, let me assure you that this will be the right time. Visit tourlinkconference.com and we will see you in Mesa!

Larry Smith



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The State of the Economy in Touring **Part Two**

by JESSI WALLACE with STEPHEN GUDIS

For part two of this editorial series, *mobile Production monthly* got a chance to catch up with industry veteran Stephen Gudis and pick his brain on what he sees happening in the touring industry due to the economy. One thing is certain; everyone is talking about next year and feeling pretty optimistic that things are going to be busier and better in 2010. This year has been one of those strange years where everyone seems to be just going with the motions. If 2009 had two slogans to perfectly depict how the personnel side of the touring industry is functioning, they would be “Beggars can’t be choosers,” and “Never say never.”



Stephen Gudis

Gudis shares, “This is the first summer I’m not on a bus, and people are telling me to enjoy my summer because next year I’ll be so busy there will need to be three of me.” But for 2009, things have been a little different. Even the highest qualified personnel are looking for jobs or taking whatever paycheck they can get. Gudis explains, “[Tours are] hiring those who can multi-task, which is good for us seasoned pros because we can do a lot of things. The riggers that used to just go to the bus after rigging are now stage managers, etc. They’ve cut back on the labor ... there is only so much labor time and money to go around. Employees are expensive.”

“Tours are cutting back the amount of gear they carry on tour. They are switching to the newer/smaller pieces of equipment that are lighter and easier for touring.”

Labor is a big issue on the road right now. Gudis has noticed that everyone is mandated to cut back on his/her labor cost. Equipment has to be in and out quicker. The trend right now is trying to do it quicker, better, lighter, smaller, but still get the same bang for what you’re doing. But consolidating personnel isn’t the only act of downsizing in touring. Gudis shared with *mPm* that tours are cutting back the amount of gear they carry on tour. They are switching to the newer/smaller pieces of equipment that are lighter and easier for touring. In the sound world, the self-powered amps are easier... in the lighting world it’s the LED lights. Sets are becoming lighter as well; tours are turning to aluminum designs instead of steel.

Gudis commented on the manufacturing side of the business, “The NAMM show was not as well attended as in the past. No one has anything new. You would think that if you don’t have anything new, you might choose to work twice as hard to sell the old but the manufacturers didn’t even come to do that. It was very strange this year. LDI the year before last was a little slow; the huge booths weren’t there anymore. I don’t think vendors will opt out like they did at NAMM, but everything

will be smaller. The foreign companies might make a larger presence showing new equipment.”

“In the country music world, a lot of bands that were in trucks are now in trailers. They aren’t carrying as much gear. They are relying more on local and regional production companies. They’re carrying more stacks and racks and not carrying as much of the big stuff. They’re finding they can make it that way by using the regional companies,” Gudis told *mPm*. Regional production companies will benefit greatly from this new process. However, the trucking side of the business could be in a little bit of trouble.

mPm asked Gudis from his own tour manager standpoint, does he tend to use regional companies versus taking more trucks on the road? What it comes down to: Who is the act? What do they want? He shared, “If it’s smarter for them to send a truck and it’s not going to slow down production, I don’t have a problem with it. We haven’t done that too much lately ourselves. The fairs and festivals are providing their own production. Big touring acts are still carrying their own sound system. For some acts it’s about the comfort level. They say they are already paying for

their speakers, and they want to use them.”

Overall, the touring business is looking a little different in 2009, but business is still really good. However, at the end of the year, it'll be obvious that bands worked less billable weeks. This number will be down because the number of dates is down, and it trickles down to the number of buyers being down. It is a domino effect, but things are still looking up for most. At the end of the day, it's all about the fans and what they can afford to buy in order to keep touring personnel employed. Gudis remarked, “Shows are still being very well attended and ticket prices haven't changed that much. Live Nation has been doing their lawn programs ... with a 4-pack for \$24.75. Keith Urban and Taylor Swift are both offering a \$20 ticket. There is plenty of that ... most bands have stepped up to do something ... it's still about the fan.”

So who is hurting the most in the touring industry right now? Everyone knows it is a trickle-down effect, but where does it start? Gudis believes it's the transportation side of things, “The record companies don't seem to be breaking any new acts on the road this summer. Bus and truck transportation is having the biggest struggle.” Who is doing really well right now? Big festivals. The country festivals are doing quite well and haven't seen too many cutbacks. According to Gudis, established festivals able to retain sponsorship are going to be okay.

In concluding the interview, Gudis shared his opinion on what has happened to touring over the summer, “I think bands got scared and decided through their record companies and management to take advantage of the summer and spend time with family. They decided not to push the economy. From what I've seen, most are working part of the year, not all year. The fall is looking thin right now ... doesn't mean it won't change.”

mPm intends to continue this topic in other avenues of the touring industry in upcoming issues. Hotels, venues and transportation companies are invited to submit their input on how the economy is affecting their side of the business. Part three of this series will be hotel focused. To take part in this editorial journey, please contact Jessi Wallace for an interview. If preferred, interviewees may be anonymous in print.

Until next time.... ☺

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The advertisement features a background image of a blue, rippling water surface. In the center, the text "ConCentRICs" is written in a large, bold, white font. Below this, the word "by" is written in a smaller, white font. To the right of "by" is the RIC CORP logo, which consists of the letters "RIC" in a large, bold, white font, followed by "CORP" in a smaller, bold, white font. Below the logo, the text "riccorp.com" is written in a smaller, white font. At the bottom of the advertisement, the contact information is provided: "RIC Corporation | 6215 Constitution Drive | Fort Wayne, In 46804 | 212.432.0799".

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Summer NAMM

THE SHRUNKEN SHOW STILL SHOWED SOME GEMS

by MICHAEL A. BECK



Recently *mPm* went to the summer version of the **NAMM (National Association of Music Merchants)** trade show held in Nashville. For the uninitiated, this is an exhibition wherein retailers and wholesalers come out to have a look at what music manufacturers are offering. The show is held twice annually with the summer event in Nashville and the winter affair taking place in Anaheim, CA.

These days, trade shows of all kinds are shrinking faster than a new shirt in hot water, and NAMM is not exempt. In the case of Nashville's event, the story isn't about the new stuff that was there and who was showing it. The real story is about who *wasn't* there. In the area of guitar manufactures alone, the list of names of those missing from the show was staggering — with icons like Guild, Paul Reed Smith, Fender, Epiphone and even Nashville based giant Gibson all sitting it out. The only big name guitar manufacturer to show up was Martin Guitar Co.

While the conspicuous absence of the titans in all areas of the music retail industry (not just guitars) was alarming or at least disheartening, the companies that might otherwise live in the shows of the erstwhile big kids in the yard were now front and center. There

was indeed some great merchandise to be seen, and the light was spread out among them more evenly than ever before.

It is important to acknowledge that the charter of *mobile Production monthly* is to look at all things pertaining to mobile entertainment production, which might lead one to ask why it is we would feel the need to cover a retail trade show. Let's face it, not too much gear you see on a major production of any kind is going to be purchased off the rack (as it were). However, not long before Summer NAMM, we received a heads-up on

some gear that would be there that could have curb appeal to touring personnel. It didn't take too long to get in the car and get over there and find two products that truly outshined the pack.

Phantom Powered Pedal

First was a company called P3 (Phantom Powered Pedal). The owner of the company is Jason Robeling who came up with a system that was a huge buzz on the show floor. P3 is a modification system that allows effects pedals to pull phantom power down the guitar line to the effects chain. The system allows for a variety of different ways to make this happen. The most direct format is to have P3 (or an authorized P3 service center) modify amp head itself with a step down transformer that sends 9 volts through the ring of the tip ring sleeve connector (standard stereo cable).

P3: Jason Robeling





The power travels backward through the effects chain. Once it gets to the first pedal there is a decision to make. Either the pedal can be modded to accept the power and send it along through the chain or a P3 splitter box can be purchased that will deliver power to all of the effects without making changes to anything. If the choice is made to alter the first pedal in the chain, the pedal is set up to take the power in and pass it along the line without the need for changes to anything else. In this option the DC converter input on the pedal can also be used as a power pass through as well.

If you don't want to have surgery done on any of your gear, P3 offers a kit that contains an external power supply that replaces the transformer that would otherwise be inserted in the amp head. The kit also has fore mentioned splitter box and a 10-foot cable. While it is understandable to have a certain trepidation about such modifications made on your vintage amp, it should be pointed out the modifications don't come anywhere near the signal path. This cannot affect the sound of your amp or your pedals.

The obvious advantages of this product is to rid yourself of batteries and wall warts so you no longer have to run AC power downstage for effects gear. And because the entire guitar system is now grounded at the same place, there's no ground loop noise. But there is a caveat as well. While this system will power up to 12 pedals (depending on the pedals) it will only work with 9 volt

DC pedals. So if you have anything in your effects chain that takes 120 volts, this package isn't for you. Barring that technical disqualification, this is a fantastic product. P3 modifications are being offered as options on new Analog Man and Barber pedals as well as Fuchs amps. More information on P3 can be found at the P3 website (p3dals.com)



JamHub: Dave McCarthy (VP of Marketing & Sales, Americas), Chuck Nemitz (Director of Customer Services), Steve Skillings (Creator/Owner) & Veronica Pierni (VP Operations & Finance)

JamHub

The other shining star was something that was equally impressive called JamHub. How do you feel about the idea of putting a rehearsal facility in a computer bag? Now it's possible to do with this cool pick. JamHub is an electronic device that allows bands to rehearse silently anytime and anywhere. JamHub easily interconnects instruments and microphones for quiet rehearsing via headphones. By using a control pallet dubbed SoleMix™, each band member creates his or her own clear and balanced mix.



top to bottom:
JamHub's BedRoom,
GreenRoom & TourBus

JamHub was born when its creator, Steve Skillings, was at one of his children's soccer games and one of the fathers on the team was telling how they only let their son's band play in the house one hour a week. Being a guitar player with a garage band of his own, a wave of empathy washed over him as he considered what a drag such limitations would have been for him at that age. However, being a responsible adult, he could understand the need for the

limitation. JamHub was the answer. It was seen for the first time at this year's Summer NAMM show and was a major hit. There are three models; BedRoom, GreenRoom and TourBus.

***BedRoom** is the basic unit. It has 15 audio channels for up to five musicians. It is able to send a digital signal out to a recorder and can receive an input from an MP3 player. It has onboard effects that include reverb, delay and modulation.

***GreenRoom** has all of the features of BedRoom with the addition of space for two more musicians. It also has the ability to send phantom power and has a USB port to allow recording directly into a computer.

***TourBus** also has the capacity for seven musicians as well as all of the other features of the two models junior to it. However, the standout feature of this model is its onboard recording capability. It can record up to six hours to an SD RAM card. It also has a click track as well.

The street price of this model figures to be somewhere in the area between \$700 and \$800.

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Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival

Food, Jazz and Major League Logistics

by MICHAEL A. BECK

With every passing year, the music festival is becoming a larger part of the American entertainment culture. *mPm* recently stopped in to have a look at the **Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival**. This event was in its eighth year and seems to be growing in leaps and bounds, but it's a little different than what one might expect, especially when we think of the typical music festival in which the whole thing takes place in one area that contains several stages.

This one took place in 15 venues throughout the deeply arts oriented East End area of downtown Rochester. The list of venues included a ballroom, a massive Hoecker tent, night clubs, theaters and auditoriums, a riverboat, outdoor mobile stages and two churches.

The festival took place over the course of nine days and included over 800 artists ranging from club acts and high school bands to such legends as Smokey Robinson, Marshall Tucker Band, Taj Mahal, Buckwheat Zydeco, The Fabulous Thunderbirds and Michael McDonald. Leave no doubt about it, this story is all

about logistics. And we're not just talking about the physical logistics of getting the performers in and out of the various venues.

Festival Logistics Coordinator Jennifer "Jenna" Manetta explained, "It's really about communication and everyone playing their part. There are a lot of people with their hands on things like backline, production, hospitality, transportation, and I have to know what's going on with much of it." Manetta went on to explain, "I don't have my hands on all of it, but my job requires that I have to know what's going on with about 80 percent of it so I can

answers the questions that come my way."

When one considers the logistical challenges of a major concert tour that is happening in one location on any given day with the [roughly] the same needs every day, it doesn't take the "beautiful mind" of John Nash to do that math and see the logistical tight rope that a production like this walks for nine long days as well as several weeks leading into the event.

Many of the acts such as small but successful club acts and high school bands are happy to be there. It's simply a matter of having the stage ready and getting the acts on and off on time. Lest we give the impression that the smaller acts are given inherent "cattle call" treatment, Manetta was careful to point out that everyone is treated with peak professional care. "Many of the smaller acts rarely get to play in venues like these in front of crowds this big and receive the treatment we give them. We make them happy to be here."

It starts getting a little more complicated as the acts get bigger in stature. Such issues as hospitality riders, backline gear and trans-



Festival Producer/Artistic Director, John Nugent

portation become major players in the game. The nature of some of the venues, specifically churches, also figures into the logistical mix as well.

Manetta described how that worked, “There weren’t too many limitations in the two churches. Christ Church wouldn’t allow the alcohol portion of the riders, but everything else was fine. The Lutheran Church [of The Reformation] was a little more tolerant and while they didn’t allow the sale of alcohol to the patrons, they did allow for the dressing rooms to have alcohol as requested by the performers.”

A big part of being able to achieve the international feel of the event was getting acts to come in from overseas. As one can easily imagine, this posed a daunting financial task. Festival Producer/Artistic Director, John Nugent explained how that was handled in many cases, “One of the reasons for our continued growth is that we have been able to get the arts councils of foreign governments to fund getting the acts from their countries to come over here. They’re paying thousands of dollars to get these cats here. Of course we pay them a fee and treat them well, and we promote the hell out of them here in the states and they get great visibility which they wouldn’t get any other way.”

Another secret of success is the level of local involvement that the festival enjoys. The people of Rochester are heavily behind this event. Over the past several years the city has been undergoing a huge revitalization, and the people of the city are fully onboard with the project. This translates into predominant volunteer involvement. Indeed, it can be safely said that without the massive volunteer presence on this gig it wouldn’t have been able to happen.

But the biggest and most important demographic involved in the Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival is the patrons. While we weren’t able to get a precise number of exactly how many people turned out, the closest ball park figure was 200,000+ and that number would have been a good bit higher had rain not put a damper on one Saturday of the event.

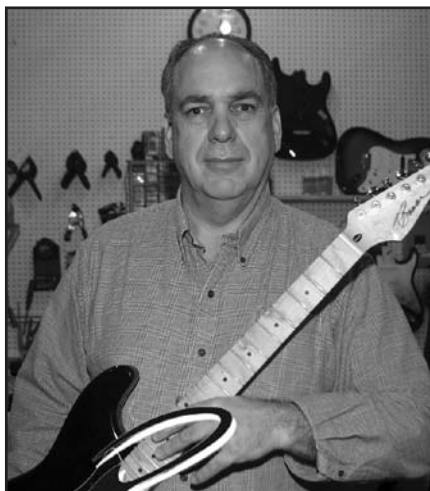
to check this show out except that we only had one day. Everything was well oiled and seemed to be running smoothly with no reason to believe that it wouldn’t continue to do so throughout the duration of the event. This was a great time, and if you find yourself with a day off in Upstate New York in 2010, make time to swing by and grab some great food and Jazz. 🎷

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Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival
Further information on the may is available at
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Bernunzio Uptown Music

a Better Life Born from the Search for a Better Banjo

by MICHAEL A. BECK

I was recently in Rochester, New York covering the **Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival**, which is held in the artsy district of the city known as The East End. To my extreme dismay I found that the batteries in my flash were dead as I was trying to get a photo of my new friend Jules Corcimiglia, audio engineer at the legendary Eastman Theatre. So I put the shots on hold and struck out on my own to find a place where I could pay \$20 for a pack of four batteries, which is what one can expect in any so-called “convenience store” downtown in any city.

But something happened on the way from the theatre. As I came to the intersection of East Avenue and Swan Street I realized I was standing in front of Bernunzio Uptown Music. Being little more than a novice guitar player, but a guitar player nonetheless, I can never resist the temptation to go into a store and see what's there. However, this wasn't just any music store. This was heaven with strings.

This place was full of new and vintage guitars (arch top, electric, 12 string and classical), basses, mandolins and banjos ranging in prices from \$95 up into five digits. It even had a couple of harp guitars, which is the bazaar and beautiful instrument that Robbie Robertson Plays in the very last scene of *The Last Waltz*.

Walking into the place I felt like I was in the inescapable lure of a siren's cry. I knew that I would have to be careful or Chris Cogswell was going to have some serious question for me when I got back without the stories I came here to get because I was drawn into temptation. So I had to stay ever mindful of the clock.

The question kept running through my mind, how does an enterprise like this get off the ground? So I hunted down the owners of the place, John Bernunzio who is right out of a scene at Rick's in *Casa Blanca* and his beautifully vivacious wife Julie Schnepf. They were gracious enough to sit down and chat.

It all started when John got a cheap banjo as a gift back in 1972 and wanted to find

how something of such low quality could be sold. “I was teaching school at the time,” he recalled, “and I was mowing lawns after school to make extra money to afford a better banjo. I found out that the old ones were better than the new ones, and I started collecting them.”

As time went on, John bought a house that was in a state of disrepair and the need arose to sell the collection. In looking for a way to off load the instruments, he found a network of buyers through classified ads in magazines he'd seen in music stores. Again he explained, “So I went over to the old ditto machine and printed up a bunch of blue copies of the inventory list and sent it out to people in the rolodex I'd compiled.”

The result was that he made enough

money to fix the roof on the house with cash to spare. Seeing how well the mailing list worked, the first thing he did with the change he had left over from the roofing project was buy more instruments. By 1985, John was a single parent of two children after his wife passed away, and this is when he met Julie. By now he'd developed a small mail order business buying and selling vintage instruments. And one day the opportunity arose to teach tax-free in Europe, and off they went. After teaching for a year in Europe they returned - and though they'd left a guy here in the States to run the business, there wasn't much left of it when they got back.

Julie had been working as a legal secretary, and when they came home from Europe the question arose; what now? The decision was made to pick the business back up and run with it.

"It wasn't a matter of more than three or four months after we were back when an old friend called me up telling me that a member of the family had passed away, and he had a collection of maybe 75 instruments of all kinds, guitars and banjos and mandolins. He asked if I'd be interested in buying them." John recollected, "I had to figure out how to approach this. I mean these were friends, and I wanted to be fair with them. At the time, this was 1986, nobody was really buying anything, the economy was a little shaky, and everyone wanted to consign things rather than buy. So I went to the bank and took out a second mortgage on the house, and I bought the whole collection."

John and Julie put together a mailing list announcing that they were back in business that had the whole inventory on it. The result was something akin to blowing a hole in a dam. The business was off and running. Soon they were mailing out (this was before the days of the web) an inventory list six times a year and were trading with some right serious collectors.

This had become a full contact sport with single deals bringing in upwards of \$30,000. When that was held up against a \$12,000 teaching salary, the decision to make a serious career commitment was easy. By now a baby had come along for the couple, and John took a maternity leave and never went back.

Thirteen years ago this couple took the plunge and, in keeping with their love of all things old, they bought an old five family Victorian house that nobody wanted in an historic part of Rochester, converting it to be a space that they could repair, photograph and store instruments. That worked well for a while. Then three years ago retail space became available on East Avenue right next to the famed Eastman School of Music. When a friend told them about the space the response was, "Why would we want a storefront?"

Then another friend called and told them about a guitar line that was being made in China called Eastman. There were two problems with that; John sold vintage guitars and didn't want to sell Chinese guitars, but his friend convinced him to sit down and play one. He loved the guitar and suddenly a picture started to come into focus. Eastman Jazz Guitars. Eastman School of Music. Space on East Avenue in the East End. Maybe they were being sent a message. So they bought the place.

At the time there were 12 music stores in the Downtown area. Shortly after moving into the new space, adjacent space freed up, and they bought that as well and expanded the store so the whole operation could

move from the house into the store. "The city of Rochester is going through this big revitalization, and we're really behind the new mayor [Duffy]," Julie told me, "So we decided if we were going to do something we were going to do it downtown because we wanted to be part of the revitalization effort. And this was fun because we're always retrofitting old stuff. But this was new, and we were able to make it how we wanted it from the beginning."

"Another way we were different was that we'd had a website (Bernunzio.com) for about 12 years before we moved down here," John added, "So we opened a new store

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KLEEGE Goes Mobile

by MIKE WHARTON

Kleege Industries, co-founded by Nevin Kleege and Greg Hareld, had its beginnings during a San Diego Old Aztec rugby game. Their paths had previously crossed off-field while Kleege was freelancing as a tour rigger and Hareld was working part time as a stagehand. In a bit of a twist on the old myth of “hey ya wanna be in show biz?” Kleege wanted to know if Hareld was interested in formalizing a staging business.

Twenty years later the company is in the midst of another busy summer providing its staging products, personnel and expertise for the Vans Warped Tour, The Bob Dylan Show and the Mayhem Festival.

Each of these tours utilizes Kleege Industries’ hydraulic mobile system product lines manufactured by Stageline out of Montreal and Apex, which is based in Kansas. These hydraulic mobile stages were developed in response to the touring industry’s need for a quick efficient setup that reliably repeats the performance platform day after day, field after field and city after city.

While the Kleege reputation had been built on providing roof systems, custom decks, entertainment structures and rigging installation personnel, its venture into hydraulic mobile stage systems came about with an introduction to Kevin Lyman.

“It really started in ‘95 with the Warped Tour for the mobile stage side of things,” says Hareld. “Our company was offered the opportunity to put in a bid for the stage. So we purchased our first hydraulically operative mobile stage, crossed our fingers and were awarded the bid. We are truly grateful to Kevin for his generosity. We have added more stages to our inventory as that festival has grown.”

The **Kleege Industries** full product line, services and contact information can be viewed at its website: kleegeindustries.com

The 2009 festival features four Kleege stages at each event doing 45 shows over a 60- day span and marks Kleege Industries’ 14th year working with Lyman on the tour.

The Mayhem tour features three Kleege stages as well.

The typical stage is 32’ wide by 24’ deep with a trim height of 17’ and is totally self contained. The bed of the tractor/trailer and its sides are actually the stage floor and roof. A Honda engine powers the hydraulic system that deploys the columns to raise the roof and extend the stage floor. The stages are stored, maintained and prepped at Kleege Industries’ 24,000 sq. ft. facility in San Diego.

Each stage takes one to two hours to set up and requires two mobile fleet technicians. One is typically a rigger. These technicians are all trained by Ken Walker Jr. (aka Junior). His official title is Mobile Fleet Manager, reverently referred to as “our Mobile Fleet Deity” by the folks at Kleege, but will only respond to “The Greatest Trucker on Earth.”

“He is renown on the touring circuit and is largely responsible for our excellent reputation in the mobile world,” enthuses Hareld. “He came out here as a kid from Philly, put himself through truck driving school and became an expert in hydraulically operated stages. We are very fortunate to have him lead our group of mobile fleet technicians.”

Of course, the greatest trucker on earth deserves the best trucks. Hareld acknowledges Chris Keikilhan and Sundance Transport, who have been with Kleege Industries practically from



top to bottom: Warped Tour 2004, Ken Walker Jr. (aka Junior), Ken Walker Jr. with Chris Keikilhan

its inception, as another factor critical to continued success. “Without them partnering with us on these events, our lives would be a lot more difficult,” Hareld says.

In 2005, Kleege hooked up with JAM Productions out of Chicago. JAM wanted to do an outdoor tour with Bob Dylan, in minor league ballparks throughout the US and come in without damaging the turf. Prerequisites for the production were that it be very efficient with labor, have a large presence on the field from the stage perspective, but be able to do the load in, show and load out in a single day. Kleege’s solution was to purchase (2) 50’ x 40’ Apex stage with a 35’ trim height. It proved successful and is being utilized again on Dylan’s tour this summer.

In an otherwise down economy, Kleege Industries continues to thrive. Hareld attributes that directly to the superior folks at JAM; Don Sullivan, David Van Pufflen and Jeff Kicklighter, who promote and produce the Dylan tour, and of course

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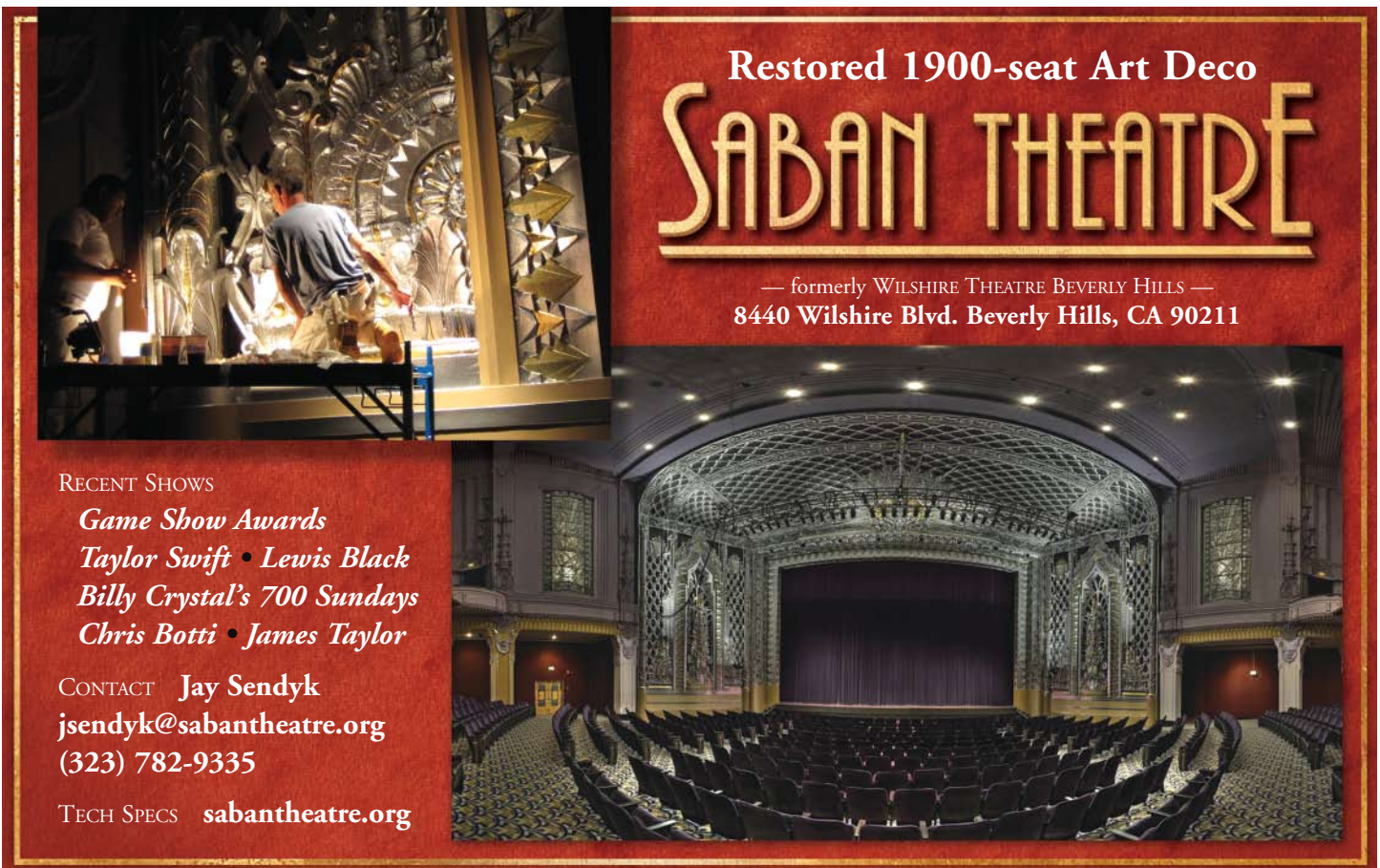
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BEAT THE STREET Is Driving AC/DC All Over Europe

For nearly two decades Beat The Street Band and Crew Bussing has been offering top of the line entertainer coaches across Europe and the United Kingdom. The company's president Jörg Philipp told *mpm*, "I bought a 20-year-old school bus in 1991 and converted it with a friend. It took almost six months to complete." Its first client was comedian troupe **Jango Edwards and the Little Big Nose Band**. "It was a great tour," continued Philipp, "and the engine blew out the first week!"

Philipp's career before was as stagehand and then tour manager for Mothers Finest and George Clinton. After he converted and leased the first school bus, he bought, converted and leased his second. Today, Beat The Street operates an extensive fleet of single, super-high and double-decker purpose built sleeper coaches for the entertainment industry. Its interiors encompass the top of the line quality and design features artists and crews expect from the coaches in the United States. The interiors are designed by them and use rose and maple woods throughout. "We only do conversions on our own vehicles," Philipp boasts. "A Beat The Street interior will always be on a Beat The Street Vehicle."

BTS has been providing AC/DC with coaches for seven years. Its client list reads like a who's who in the entertainment world including Madonna, Radiohead, Coldplay, Counting Crows, Pearl Jam, Rolling Stones, the list honestly just goes on and on.

Philipp tells of doing business in this economy, "Honestly, if it would not be all over the news all day long, we would not even know there is a problem with the current economy. We are having one of the best years ever." ☺

beatthestreet.net

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Potenza Enterprises Inc.

Touring Transportation Specialists

Photo by Jeff Boguski



Potenza Enterprizes

Trucking Through North America



Since opening its Las Vegas office in the last quarter of 2008, Potenza Enterprizes Inc. has been expanding its presence in the West by providing on-site service for its clients, increasing mobility and flexibility with localized equipment in the region and preparing for the fall/winter touring and event season. Sitting down with company owner **Paul Potenza**, who started the company in 1993 with one truck in Toronto, Canada, we discuss his company's growth, the state of transportation in North America and entertainment transport in specific. The result, some great insight into how it moves and where things are going.

mPm: Paul, what's your take on the entertainment industry, and now that you are in Vegas, the corporate, trade show and convention industries, right now?

Paul Potenza: Like all industries at this time things are tight, and everyone is looking at the bottom line. This is true in Canada as well as in the US. That being said, things are not at a standstill. People are cutting back at all levels. The trade show and convention markets have scaled back the size and length of time of shows and reduced production and crews. This means clients need fewer trucks to transport the shows. Customers are always looking for value, but that does not mean the low quote always gets the work. Clients also expect great service, which is as much a priority for us as great pricing. The touring industry as always looks for value of service, this industry relies on relationships and the ability to up-size or downsize, as the situation requires.

mPm: How has the recession affected transportation?

PP: We have to keep finding innovative ways to remain competitive. We are continuously trying to minimize our operating costs without jeopardizing the integrity of our work.

With the downsizing of everything due to the recession, there is more equipment available for less work. You have to try and offer something that adds value to the service. In our case, flexibility has really played an important role. Especially with the presence here in Vegas, we've been able to help our clients on the spot.

Recently we were working for a client in Las Vegas doing a local corporate show. At load out, we were informed there was an additional truck showing up to take part of the production to Montreal. When the truck showed up, the equipment was not as specified by the client, and they were not able to secure the load properly. Our client turned to

us at 2 a.m. and asked if we could provide transport to do this crucial move, requiring team drivers. I was personally on site and was able to coordinate drivers and equipment to accommodate them, and the load arrived at its destination safely and on time.

mPm: So what would you say are your secrets to success, your company has grown steadily over the past 15 years.

PP: First and foremost it is our employees. We deliberately built the company at a slow and steady pace careful not to over extend ourselves for the short-term gain. With this model, we were able to be particular about whom we hired, and we're not just trying to fill positions. Rather than that, we developed relationships with other entertainment carriers to augment our fleet and to service our clients. As a result, we have been able to put together a very diverse team. Starting with our management team, we have people from all aspects of the entertainment industry. Our staff has worked extensively in logistics management and planning, production, event planning, security and the recording and management sectors. Our drivers are handpicked and trained before they ever tour on their own. We only hire drivers that are able to cross borders, as this can be a major stumbling block on international tours. This is a significant benefit to our clients both in our flexibility and keeping costs down staffing wise. We really have a great team with a great work ethic. We are now incorporating these same ideals into the expansion in Las Vegas.

Our clients are the backbone of our operation. We work very closely with our clients, and try to make each event unique and tailor to their specific needs. We do this whether it is a single truck or a 30-truck tour. This seems to keep clients coming back and recommending us to their colleagues. We have grown our client list slowly and methodically. We have used this methodology in all aspects

of our business. Our clients are also very diverse, from trade shows and conventions to theater, sport and, of course, music. Our goal is to service each client individually and provide as many resources to the client as possible.

mPm: You seem to have a wide variety of clients, tell us about some of them.

PP: One of our unique clients is LiveWire Remote Recorders. We are the exclusive carrier for LiveWire. This is a 31' mobile studio that does many types of recording projects for: all genres of live music, live broadcast, television, film, theater and DVD recordings. We've been working with owner Doug McClement since he built this studio, and as a result, we've been exposed to a vast array of situations we may otherwise not have encountered.

PRG Canada, along with PRG Services here in the US, have been long standing clients, and we have provided transport for everything from the North American Auto Show to the Pope through this relationship.

In Canada, Westbury National Show Systems is another long time customer. It is one of Canada's premier production houses. We've worked with this company over the years on the annual AID's event Fashion Cares, the MuchMusic Video Awards and many unique special events and festivals.

mPm: So what is coming up for you?

PP: We're starting to gear up for our annual Trans Siberian Orchestra tours. It is a perfect example of a relationship that has grown over the years and a wonderful success story in terms of its work.

We started out with Trans Siberian Orchestra in 1998 when the tour consisted of two trucks, one for the west and one for the east. Today we are preparing for the simultaneous East and West touring shows which last year had a combined 31 trucks. TSO is a really professional organization, but it is also like a family and we're really fortunate to be a part of that family.

We're thrilled to be involved with the 2010 Winter Olympics and the Para-Olympics coming up in British Columbia.

Generally, we are seeing things picking up, and our presence in Las Vegas is creating more opportunities for the company to grow. We're looking forward to some new ventures in the marketplace and just continuing to provide really high value service to our great stable of clients.



Potenza Enterprizes Inc.
Touring Transportation Specialists



CONTACT

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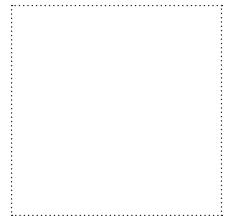
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AC/DC **BLACK ICE TOUR** A GOOD OLD-FASHIONED ROCK SHOW

By BILL ABNER & MICHAEL A. BECK

Four hundred and ninety-nine lighting fixtures, forty-eight boxes of PA per side, a couple of moving video surfaces, some well placed pyrotechnics and one bigger-than-life locomotive. For the gearheads out there (and you know who you are), those are the numbers. More about that later, but now let's talk about how those numbers are put together night after night to produce one of the best rock 'n' roll shows on the road.

Driven by the quiet confidence and steady hand of legendary Production Manager Dale "Opie" Skjerseth, the show moves along deliberately, seamlessly and with a life of its own from the minute the rigging truck's doors are opened 'til the last stagehand is waving goodbye to the red taillights of the same. Skjerseth handpicked the crew from amongst the best in the business, and some members of the team have now been touring together with AC/DC for twenty years. Consequently, while it is still a major tour and nothing out there is ever "easy," this team has most of the kinks worked out and could hold a clinic. Call it: "How to Do a Rock Show."

This group of pros, from one discipline to the next, and right through the ranks, work and produce together with respect, trust and an appreciation of each other's talents that is rare. Video Director Jeff Claire knows why, "This is a job that only the crème of the crop get. You've got *the best* camera guys, *the best* sound guys, and *the best* lighting guys out here, so everyone knows what they can expect from each other. We're given all of the tools to work with, so it only makes sense that on a day to day basis we're gonna have it fairly easy compared to some of the younger or less experienced crews out there on the road. And when something out of the ordinary does happen, we're not standing around scratching our heads wondering what to do. One or more of us have probably experienced it before."

However, take a step back and look at the results produced every night and it becomes apparent that just as with every other aspect of the show, this is by design. Cosmo Wilson, lighting director and AC/DC tour veteran since 1990 tells *mPm*, "We had all been anticipating

this tour for a long time; we had been discussing it for a couple of years. So when we finished the last tour, we all took notes. We decided that on this particular tour we were going to get everything in place before the tour even started. Out of the gate it was like we had been



AC/DC



— The Band —

Lead Guitar - Angus Young

Rhythm Guitar - Malcolm Young

Vocals - Brian Johnson

Bass Guitar - Cliff Williams

Drums - Phil Rudd

— Band Group —

Tour Manager - Tim Brockman

Tour Accountant - Mike Klein

Security Director - Bob Wein

Assistant Tour Manager - Darren Hagen

on tour for two months. Our first real show was like our fifteenth or twentieth.”

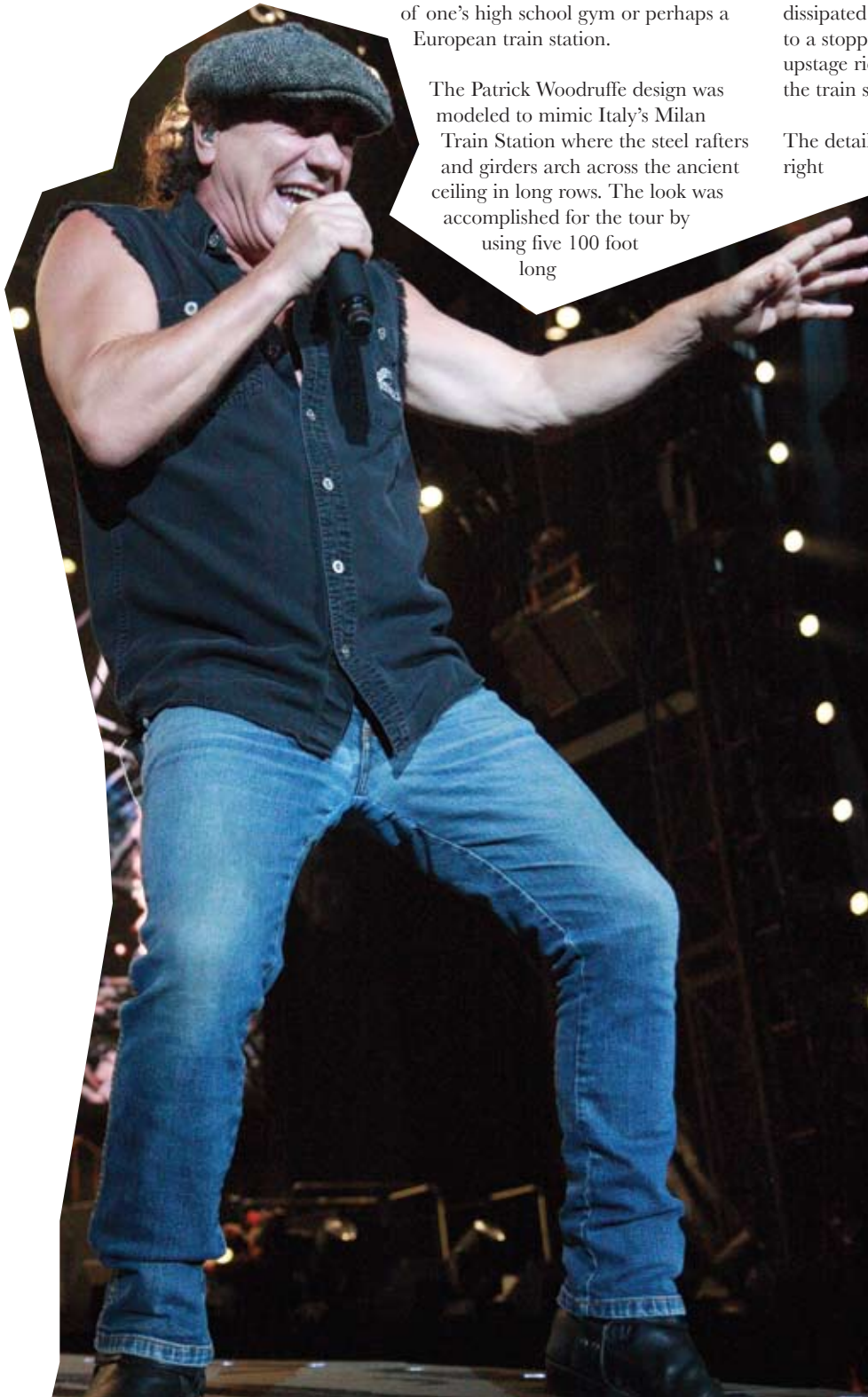
Black Ice is a great show to watch and Wilson’s results are impressive. He said, “AC/DC, they’re rock oriented; they like to feel the heat of the par cans and feel the intensity change. With the combination of the movers and the other stuff on our palette, we have a rock show – a big old-fashioned rock show.” Wilson, a self-titled “Dinosaur LD” uses his tools – all four hundred and ninety-nine of them, tongue squarely in cheek – to produce a punchy and old school look and feel to the show that visually reduces the expanse of the arena down to the size of one’s high school gym or perhaps a European train station.

The Patrick Woodruffe design was modeled to mimic Italy’s Milan Train Station where the steel rafters and girders arch across the ancient ceiling in long rows. The look was accomplished for the tour by using five 100 foot long

arched trusses. The HUD Truss™, patented by lighting systems provider Upstaging, housed most of the rig’s permanently mounted moving lights, reducing setup and teardown time. The truss hinges that give the structure its distinctive arch were specially manufactured to enable the riggers to maintain the same curve in any venue.

The arched lighting rig only makes sense when one sees the centerpiece of the stage; a huge steam locomotive measuring 35 ft. long and 20 ft. high. The show opened with an animated visual segment that played on a large upstage video wall. When the video bit ended, the screens opened by flying offstage as the massive pyro sequence began. When the pyro ended and the dense smoke slowly dissipated revealing the train, it then drifted downstage to a stopping point just above the top level of the highest upstage rider. As it came to its stopping point the nose of the train swung out toward the crowd adding depth.

The detailed reproduction of this piece was breathtaking right



down to the smoke escaping from the stack as well as the steam chest that pushed the drive rods on the real thing. However, as realistic and dramatic as this thing is the way that it moved was even more impressive. The fascia of the locomotive is made of fiberglass and hung on an aluminum skeleton. As the train was assembled it was flown out to make room to build the tower it was mounted on. Once the tower was completed it was anchored to a 2,000-pound base that was able to roll up and downstage on to tracks.

Now here's the best part. None of the movement was automated. The whole thing was balanced so well that the move was possible without the aid of motorized assistance, which is to say that it was able to happen without the *weight* of motorized assistance. Members of the crew pushed the thing into place. Once the downstage move was completed, locking pins were disengaged allowing the pivot move to happen. At various times during the show the train ducked back upstage in order to make room for

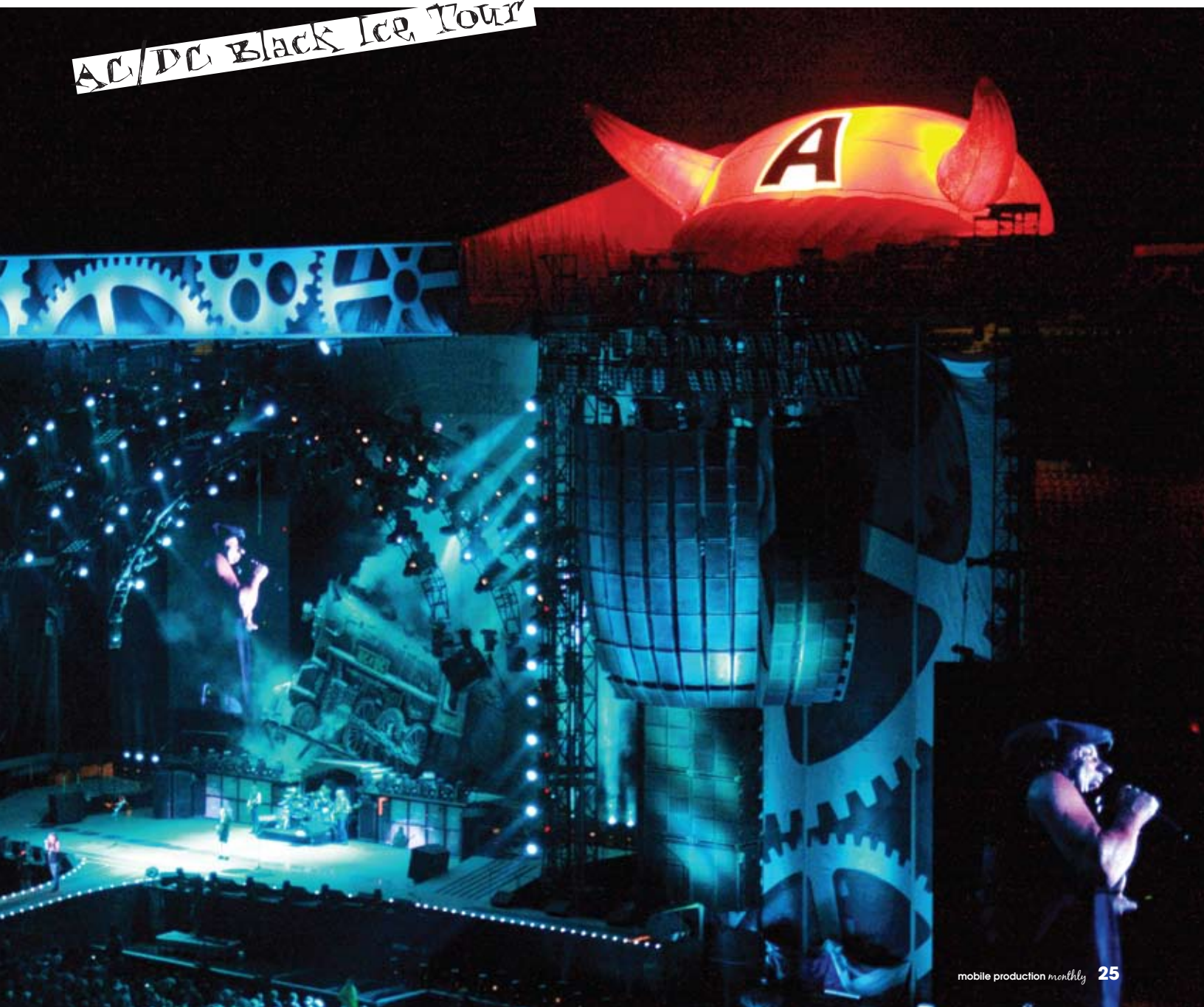
the video screen to close. When it happened, the crew gathered around and pushed it back into its first position.

As is the case with any design process, people get smarter and the design gets better as time goes on. When *mPm* first caught up with the tour in Atlanta in December 2008, the train was traveling in 14 carts. By the time *mPm* saw it again in Giants Stadium on July 31, 2009, it had lost enough body fat to fit into eight carts.

During the song "Whole Lotta Rosie," a massive inflatable of a "dancer," the like of which would make the owner of the sleaziest strip joint on earth grimace, emerged riding the engine, bobbing her head and tapping her foot in perfect time. When the song ended, there wasn't a delay whatsoever while the piece was deflated and stowed.

The stage had a runway that extended out into the center of the house, which was used extensively by lead guitar

AC/DC Black Ice Tour



player Angus Young and singer Brian Johnson throughout the show. During the last song before the encore, “Let there be Rock,” Young went out to the end of the ramp to a platform (affectionately dubbed the “satellite dish”) that rose about 10 ft. into the air where he did an incredibly long solo. In the Stadium format he did the same thing; however, there was a shed built around the lift upon which is mounted several banks of crowd lights. The lift rose up out of the shed to a higher elevation than in the arena configuration, and the shed made for a more dramatic open to the bit. The solo ended with an impressive confetti and chrio burst.

While the show looked great and kept the viewer’s attention wondering from one song to another what visual gag might be next, not to be overlooked was the outstanding job by the audio team. Led by Crew Chief Jason Vrobel, the team’s biggest challenge everyday has been, “Trying to fit a show like this into places that weren’t built for shows like this, but we make it happen, everyday,” said Vrobel. However, he needn’t worry. Clair’s 96-box Electro-Voice X-Array system is one of the best sounding rigs on the road today.

FOH mixer Paul “Pab” Boothroyd (*Paul McCartney, Faith Hill, Rolling Stones*) is another example of the talent on this tour. He worked directly with Harry Witz at Clair Global on the design and implementation of the system. Using tricks they learned while using the X-Array system on The Rolling Stones’ *No Security* tour, they designed this system specifically for this tour. From anywhere in the house: the floor, the first tier and even further up into the heights of Atlanta’s Philips Arena, the system was clear, loud and intelligible. After all, it is a big old-fashioned Rock Show.

The stadium shows are packed tightly together such that by the time the run is over it will have leapfrogged two stages with a third stage being used in Edmonton. The usual additions to the lighting, sound and video systems are made to give the performance the stature needed to not get lost in the bigger arena. Stage & Effects Engineering did a great job of blowing the show up as is usually the case. But the delineation point between the arena show and the stadiums was the full on fireworks show that took place after the band left the stage.



Crew Chief Vrobel tells *mPm*, “It’s just a great crew that we have out here. Everybody, production, all the departments, they just get along well, and hey, it’s AC/DC. It’s a big tour, so we’re pretty proud of the show.”

Opic added to that sentiment, “This is meat and potatoes rock ‘n’ roll. There is no pretense at all. There are no Pro Tools tracks. No one is pushing a button to start a song. These guys really take care of their fans. What the crowd saw in Serbia is the same they will see here in New Jersey. We took this whole thing overseas.”

It is a big show, and nobody wanted to pack it up and go home just yet. Nothing makes for a great tour like the seats being full, and this show is packing them in and for good reason. People who are good at what they do “make it look easy.” When he or she does the job well, we can appreciate the talents of the manual laborer just as readily as we can appreciate the talents of the skilled surgeon with the scalpel in his hands or a wide receiver stretched out across the goal line with the ball in his fingertips.

For those of us in the production world it sometimes becomes hard to see a show and not critique it just on its face value, only because ... that’s what we do. Occasionally we have the opportunity to see something really special. To watch pros that are really great at their jobs make what we know are difficult tasks seem ... easy. It can be a pleasure to watch, to hear, to experience and to be a part of. They make it look so easy. AC/DC *Black Ice* tour is one of those shows.

Here you have a good old-fashioned rock ‘n’ roll show that comes screaming at full force like a rock show should. However, a calm determination on the inside drives it along, purposefully and full steam ahead, like some bigger-than-life locomotive bellowing fire and smoke “all night long.”





AC/DC CREW LIST

Dale "Opie" Skjerseth – Production Manager



Renny Kruse - Power Crew, Arturo Martinez – Power Crew Chief, John Ellington – Power Crew, Ivan Macias - Power Crew



Chris "Super" Deters – Stage Manager



Carpenters: Mike Kinard, Guy Habosha, Alex Blais, Denny Rich - Head Carpenter, Jeremy Miget, Mo Hale, Dana Vanella, Jo Van Loo



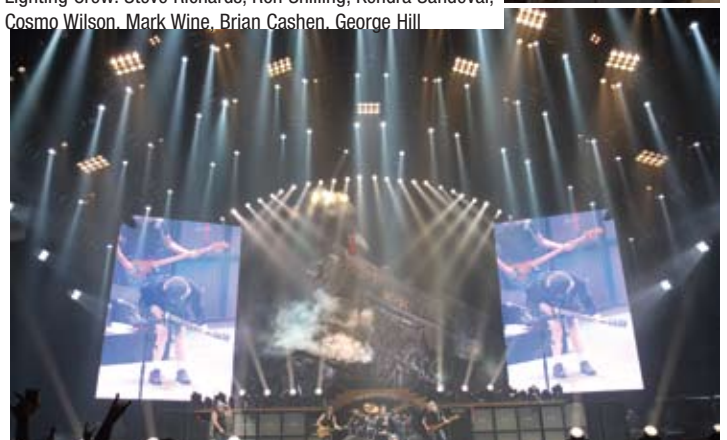
Riggers: Aaron Alfaro - Rigger, Lyle Harris - Rigger, Chad Koehler - Head Rigger



Lighting Crew: Steve Richards, Ron Shilling, Kendra Sandeval, Cosmo Wilson, Mark Wine, Brian Cashen, George Hill



Audio Crew: Guy Habosha, Mike Adams, Kenny Check, Jason Vrobel, Robert Collins, Pierce Brosnan, Adam Rebacz





Video Crew: Front: Gabriel Lopez Back: Greg Santos, Angelo Bartolomey, Michael Bukay, Jeff Clair, Bob Larkin



Pyro Crew: Mike Kinard, Casey Lake, Chris Davis



Tait Towers Stage carps: Mike Kinard, Denny Rich, Jeremy Miget, Mo Hale, Mike Calucci, Alex Blais

— Production Crew —

Production Mgr - Dale "Opie" Skjerseth
Production Coordinator - Alexis Wadley
Stage Mgr - Chris "Super" Deters
Sound Engineer - Paul Boothroyd
Lighting Director - Charlie Wilson
Video Director - Mike Duque
Guitar Tech - Geoff Banks
Drum Tech - Richard Jones
Guitar Tech - Takumi Sutsugu
Bass Tech - Luke Lowes
Dressing Rooms - Maurice Johnson
Monitor Mixer - Jon Lewis
Amp Tech - Rick St Pierre
Head Rigger - Chad Koehler
Riggers: Aaron Alfaro, Lyle Harris
Head Carpenter - Denny Rich
Carpenters: Mo Hale, Mike Kinard, Alex Blais, Jeremy Miget, Guy Habosha, Jp Van Loo, Dana Vanella
Sound Crew Chief / Systems Engineer - Christopher Nichols
Sound Crew: Ken Check, Ricardo Roman, Adam Rebacz, Paul Swan, Andy Walker, Sean Baca, Richard Thompson
Lighting Crew Chief Ron - Schilling
Lighting Crew: Mark Weil, Mike Ryder, Kendra Sandoval, Brian Kasten, Richards, Jim Fredrickson, Josh Wagner, Phil De Boissiere, Dean Thomsic
Pyro Crew Chief - Casey Lake
Pyro Crew: Chris Davis
Video Engineer - Kevin Tokunaga
Video Crew: Greg Santos, Angelo Bartolomey, Gabe Lopez, Tina Skjerseth, William Duncan, Marty Vindinha
Power Crew Chief - Arturo Martinez
Power Crew: Ivan Macias, John Ellington, Robert Kruse
Head Merchandiser - Nick Jones
Merch Crew: Sharie Metzler, Sebastian Perry, Jonathan Francis
Lead Crew Bus Driver - Ronnie Bullington

Crew Bus Drivers: David Walters,
Crew Bus Driver - Mike Mallatt, Chris Vankersen, Mike Edlin, Fred Anderson
Lead Truck Driver - Jody Winslette
Truck Drivers: Anna Winslette, Leslie Washington, Cory O'shea, Donnie Ballard Jason Christian, Toby Williams, Jason Vind, Rick Placher, Herb Cohn, Driver Neil Lilly, Dan Bookhart, Peggy Patche, Larry Betterley, Cornelius James

— Blue Steel Crew —

Blue Site Co - Richard Barr
Blue Steel Header - Jason " Attaboy" Stalter
Blue Steel: Jordan Centola, John Champ, Frederic De Schepper, Farley Gross, James Machowski, Dennis Moronil, Chris Rouelle, Mark Tarsitana, Dave Vasi, Michael Sheehan, Dennis Moroni, Stefan Nolte

— Red Steel Crew —

Red Site Co - Jez Craddick
Red Steel Header - Matt Tucker
Red Steel: Stefan Angillis, Tim Praet, Jochen Ryckeboer, Jim Stoner, Geert Van Heertum, Frank Vorwald, Gommar Vekemans, Lennie Watson, Gilles Gemberling, Dave O'leske, Hunter Pipes, Michael Richard

— Green Steel Crew —

Green Site Co - Andy Omilianowski
Green Steel: Frank Bohme, Thomas Sieber, Jens Romer, Kai Stechow, Torsten Kraushaar, Prause, Andreas Deubach, Oskar Gentry, Jason Beaver, Eddie Shugart, Heiko Meyer, Konrad Peter

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MANAGEMENT / ACCOUNTING - UK/ EUROPE
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LEGAL
 GRUBMAN INDURSKY, P.C.
 Stuart Prager
BOOKING AGENT
 CAA
 Rob Light, Chris Dalston
SET DESIGNER
 STUFISH
 Mark Fisher, Jeremy Lloyd
LIGHTING DESIGN
 Patrick Woodroffe
 Dave Hill
TRAIN CONSTRUCTION
 BRILLIANT STAGING
 Tony Bowem

STAGE CONSTRUCTION

TAIT TOWERS, INC
 James "Winky" Fairorth, Adam Davis
US TRAVEL -CREW
 SATELLITE OFFICES
 Wendy Stephenson, Lori Tierney

US TRAVEL—BAND

SERVICES TZELL TRAVEL
 Amy Keeling
AIR CHARTER
 AIRWORKS
 Sean Magovern, Anthony Fernandez

EUROPE TRAVEL

MUSIC BY APPOINTMENT
 Sarah Currie, Barry Mead
SOUND
 CLAIR SHOWCO CHICAGO
 Harry J Witz

LIGHTING

UPSTAGING INC
 John Huddleston

VIDEO

SCREENWORKS
 Danny O'Bryen, Amy Segawa

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 Rob Harries

PYRO

STAGE & EFFECTS ENGINEERING, INC
 Dave Greene, Alysia Hofstra

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 Lon Porter, Donna Hair, Liz Ortega

TylerTruss Systems, Inc.

Delivering on a Mission



In 2004, Mark Dodd received a call from veteran truss builder, Scott Almand, then a “free agent” and looking for a new opportunity. Almand had built trusses for Dodd’s event and entertainment production company (Dodd Technologies, Inc.) for years. And at the time, Dodd was contemplating expanding his services to include fabrication. The timing couldn’t have been better. In a matter of a couple of months Tyler Truss Systems, Inc. was born. Named after Dodd’s grandson Tyler and the company’s location in Tyler, TX, inside of two years, the company was moved to Pendleton, IN where Dodd’s event production company was located. The move had to do with better use of management resources, a highly skilled and motivated mid-western workforce, and the synergy that happens when you get manufacturing and live production minds working in tandem.

Fast-forward to today, Tyler is now in its new 20,000 sq. ft. manufacturing facility in Pendleton. It has survived and prospered as the “new kid on the block” in an industry filled with heavyweights. Much of the success can be credited to Tyler’s mission of engineering and manufacturing world class custom and standard products, on time and on budget for corporate events, meetings, concert tours, trade shows, exhibits, concert venues and much more. With a history of fulfilling its mission, Tyler set its sights on innovation. Arguably, it is redefining the truss and entertainment structure industry.

Relationships with the likes of David Milly/TLS, the teams at Brad Paisley and George Strait, TMS, Upstaging, Epic Productions, Bandit Lighting and a host of others thrust Tyler into the mix. And in the past three years, Tyler has carved out an enviable position in the industry.

In 2007, Dodd and Almand met with Upstaging, which was looking for a truss solution that would save on truck space, hold fixtures during transit and be easy to handle. Tyler went to work and invested significantly in research, engineering and destructive testing. Opportunities to

potentially change even part of an industry with a new product are hard to come by, so the solution had to be extraordinary.

In a period of only a few weeks, Dodd and Almand knew they had a breakthrough on



The ingenious Tyler Link™ enables flat to arch in minutes
[Visit tylertruss.com](http://www.tylertruss.com)

their hands, and a new Tyler Truss product was born. In appreciation of Upstaging’s substantial commitment to this new design, the private label *High Utility Design* truss (aka HUD Truss) was manufactured and started pouring into its inventory. Upstaging took advantage of its leadership role with this new product and quickly integrated the product into tours for Neil Diamond, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Cheetah Girls, Radiohead, Motley Crue, Janet Jackson and others. An unqualified touring market success, six months later Tyler introduced




pictured above: Tyler GT® stacked two high for transport below: President of Tyler Truss Mark Dodd and General Manager/Sales Scott Almand

the broad market Tyler GT® to the rest of the performance lighting industry.

During this exciting time in Tyler’s growth, along came another innovation opportunity with Upstaging’s AC/DC tour...ARCHES! “Our Tyler team was sitting around the office one night and thought, we’ve rigged arches over the years for tours and other events, a slow and tedious task...there’s got to be a better way,” said Dodd. “At the end of a long brainstorming session, the Tyler Link™ was born.”

The Tyler Link™ is little more than a hinge with the required angle set by a sliding link... a concept so simple – yet so brilliant. It enables the truss to go from flat to an arch in a couple of minutes. Incredibly strong, it has been destructive tested to over 40,000 pounds.

Another recently launched product, Tyler True Fold™ (featured in the new Dallas Cowboy’s Stadium’s 100’ x 200’ concert master grid system), stands to again launch Tyler Truss products into the industry forefront. “More Tyler innovations are in the pipeline,” according to Dodd.

Tyler Truss manufactures world-class standard and custom truss systems and develops solutions to improve productions and profitability. 

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Tyler Truss Systems is proud to introduce the Tyler GT® and our new green friendly family of products. Developed and designed by Tyler Truss Systems, the Tyler GT was formerly placed into the market as the High Utility Design or HUD™ truss in early 2008. In less than one tour season, the Tyler GT truss is being requested for some of the largest tours in the industry.

The Tyler GT is a heavy duty truss that comes in standard 5', 8', and 10' sections, and provides complete protection for the lighting fixtures. The adjustable legs of the Tyler GT allow the truss to be stacked for transportation and storage. Legs can be either removed or relocated on the truss during your show. The center loading design of the truss allows a high density, uniform load of large format automated and conventional fixtures.

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Saves Time

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Cheetah Girls
Keith Urban

Mötley Crüe
Nine Inch Nails
Radiohead
Toby Keith
Walking With Dinosaurs



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Tyler GT®

If you've been under a rock, Tyler GT® is a 14" tall x 24" wide heavy-duty truss (5', 8' and 10' lengths), light-weight, stacking, locks together, has height adjustable wheel dollies that detach and re-locate to the top of the truss and a center-loading design that allows a high density of large format automated and conventional fixtures to be installed and protected. When trim height is an issue, Tyler GT® can be used without the wheel dollies, allowing the truss to be used at higher trim levels.

Tyler GT® is perfect for tours and event producers trying to go greener as well. Truth is, Tyler GT® is not only eco-friendly, it saves you *green ... money.* There is no longer a need to build fixture cases (a savings of raw materials and energy). You can save substantially on trailer space, which means potentially fewer semis, less fuel used and fewer emissions. And don't forget the added bonus of faster load ins/outs, which can save big money in labor costs. Your crew may even catch a few more ZZZs.

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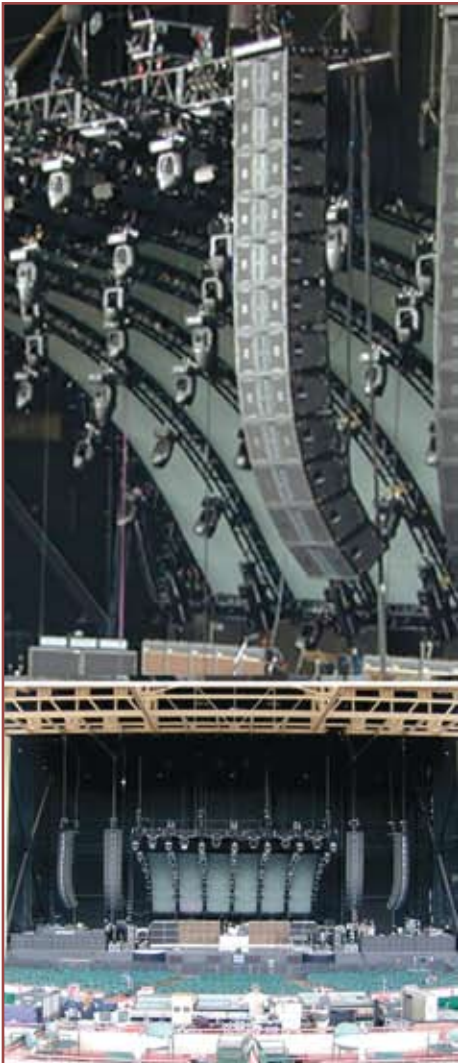
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Sound Moves

Global Orchestration

by BILL ABNER

If all tours were just two guys and a truck with some gear like back in the “good old days,” there wouldn’t be a use for a company such as Sound Moves. If all tours only spanned over one continent, businesses could probably pull off the logistics of getting the show from point A to point B and wouldn’t need to call someone like Duane Wood, President and Founder of Sound Moves, Inc. However, that just isn’t the case for today’s mega-tours, and it’s certainly not the case for AC/DC’S 2009 *Black Ice* Tour.

Today’s touring sphere is no longer only nationwide or even continental, but truly global. Therein lies the need for a company to provide “Global Freight Orchestration” for tours moving anywhere on the planet. Since 1995, Sound Moves Inc, now with 14 offices strategically situated around the globe, has been that company. For the past nine years, Sound Moves has been the go-to guys for AC/DC tours and most recently for the super group’s *Black Ice* World Tour.

mobile Production monthly caught up with Wood while on the road in London where he is preparing for the upcoming U2 World Tour. “We’re the company that is responsible for designing the logistics for the world tour,” says Wood. “The only exception is the American and European trucking from venue to venue.” Sound Moves does however work hand in hand with the production managers and tour managers months before the first truck is ever loaded, or the first Sea-tainer leaves port, to ensure a seamless movement around the globe. For *Black Ice*, Wood began conversations with AC/DC Production Manager Dale “Opie” Skjerseth and his staff almost a year before the show ever hit the road.

Just orchestrating the movements of this show’s (or any show for that matter) 32 semi trucks around the continental US

can be a daunting task all its own. But when the tour gets ready to globetrot over to Europe, or Asia or New Zealand, that task can become monumental. The most recent trip across “The Pond” took a total of 80 forty-foot-long ocean containers or Sea-tainers. That includes three complete steel systems taking up 17 ocean containers each, and another 29 containers for the production alone. It takes roughly a leisurely two weeks, including customs inspections on both ends and actual at-sea time, to make the 3,500-mile trek.

From the outside, one would expect that it would take a whole department of planners and logistical schedulers to conduct these menageries around the world, but according to Wood, “I work it out myself. I’m in charge of loading, unloading, getting it through customs, on the trucks and then on down to the venue. On these big shows I’m personally at every load in and load out making sure the aircraft get loaded and unloaded. I’m like the ringleader. I just can’t trust it to anyone else.”

According to Wood, the next major movement for the show is going to be more time critical. “We’re going to be flying the gear to Puerto Rico and then down to South America and that requires cargo aircraft that we lease. It’s a much different operation.” Wood and

Sound Moves have not only orchestrated the last few AC/DC tours but the last four Rolling Stones tours as well as the last U2 tour. “When those tours start ramping up, we’ll have 30 to 40 747 charters going around the world in a matter of a couple months.” Talk about a mobile production!

However, Sound Moves isn’t just tied up with AC/DC. Remember, the company has 17 offices around the world and at any one time the company is supporting as many as 20 to 30 other tours of varying size. With offices in cities such as New York, Los Angeles and London to cities like Mexico City, Singapore and Munich that are just a little off the beaten path, the company is well suited to handle those challenges.

Speaking of challenges, the next big thing on the horizon for Sound Moves is the U2 tour that Wood is now in London preparing for. “That monster is getting ready to come to the US, and that will comprise about 240 ocean containers. About three times the number we used for AC/DC.”

Wood sums it up, “We’ve got a great bunch of people, we love what we do and we’re just proud to be involved in all of this. When people go to a show, and they see all of that stuff up there, they’ll be surprised to know what it takes to get these big monster tours around the world. Just think about the hundreds of shows going on around the world at any one time. We’re really proud to be a part of this.” Rock on Maestro, rock on! 🎸



Sound Moves

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AC/DC BLACK ICE TOUR

Interview with John Huddleston

by MIKE WHARTON

The spirit of Chicago architect Louis Sullivan is alive and well in the offices at 821 Park Ave. in Sycamore, Illinois. Near the loading docks, a lighting tech is pondering that old British Army adage of the 6 Ps and Midwest sensibility, prevalent in the Upstaging way of doing things, again has launched one of the biggest rock 'n' roll tours on the road.

AC/DC's *Black Ice* World Tour, out since October 2008 has just returned from Europe and are on their second American leg. *mobile Production monthly* spoke with General Manager of Lighting, John "Hud" Huddleston to find out how Upstaging helped bring LD Patrick Woodroffe's vision to reality.

Production Manager Dale "Opie" Skjersteth contacted Huddleston with two criteria that needed to be met, both equally important – one, the budget. The other, the right parts to implement the design to make it tour easily.

The HUD truss, conceived by Huddleston and manufactured by Tyler Truss, was an obvious piece to the puzzle. Upstaging introduced this product to the market in February of 2008. Capable of being fully loaded with conventional or automated fixtures, it has the advantage of being more truck efficient than other truss on the market in both size and weight.

The challenge presented was that each of the five trusses had to form an arch. The arches, almost 80' wide, needed to be assembled, raised and lowered very quickly.

A hinge of some sort was needed between the sticks of truss. Huddleston recalled seeing something on a previous tour that he thought might work. A prototype based on that was built by the crew at Upstaging, hung in the warehouse and determined not to be fast enough for the tour needs. Tyler Truss was called in to take a look. A short time later the "slip joint" was created. It was Sullivan who coined the phrase "Form Follows Function."

"It's hard to say who actually came up with the idea," says Huddleston. "It really was collaboration between our guys and the folks at Tyler. We just continued to refine the idea till we got what we wanted. By this time we were all working at the speed of sound."

Production and design criteria had been met.

Woodroffe, co designer/programmer Dave Hill, and AC/DC's LD "Cosmo" Wilson began building the show in one of the two ESP Visualization suites available at Upstaging.

Next door in the 24,000 sq. ft. rehearsal facility, Lighting Crew Chief Ron Schilling and his eight touring crewmembers began building the rig. The facility can nominally handle two to three good-sized lighting systems. AC/DC's took practically the whole space.

"In my estimation," says Huddleston, "there are only a handful of guys in the world that can do systems of this size well. We always had Ron Schilling in mind. He is a veteran of huge lighting systems. We knew with him at the helm we would be in good shape. Then we wrap a crew around Ron with guys that he needs to fill particular positions. It is a good-sized crew for a monster lighting system. Ron and the guy's are just nailin' it."

Approximately six weeks had passed from confirmation to fabrication to in the truck and out the door. When the system went into production rehearsal, it had been pre-programmed, tweaked, fine-tuned and was essentially "show and tour ready." *Prior Planning Prevents Piss Poor Performance* goes the 6 Ps.

Within that system and not so apparent to someone watching the show is the infrastructure of data distribution. As data systems got bigger and more complicated the folks at Upstaging realized they needed a better and faster way to distribute information.

Upstaging has a team of people on staff that research on daily basis different approaches to improve accepted industry standards.

They developed and built their own fiber optic touring snake system with proprietary opto splitters in data racks called the Data Split. AC/DC is touring with a fiber optic backbone that Huddleston calls "bullet proof."

When speaking about the more prevalent gear on the tour Huddleston unabashedly admits to a wide and varied inventory of automated and LED fixtures on hand.

"We can't limit the pallet of these designers to one or two brushes. We're working with designers that want the tools they want so it's our job to supply them. At this level everybody wants the newest and greatest thing, and we try to supply it to make sure we are on that cutting edge. We're not too far ahead of the curve, because that's how you get hurt, but we do pay attention to the designers requests."

The Clay Paky Alpha Beam 300 was specifically bought for the *Black Ice* Tour as Woodroffe was looking for the ACL beam effect it produces.

Huddleston continues, "The Alpha Beam 300 produces an effect you really could not get in another fixture. We all recognized that and knew it was something Patrick felt strongly about and needed, so we bought it. He was right you know, sometimes it's a no brainer."

Upstaging, owned by Peter Carone, started as a lighting company in 1974 and trucking was later added to support some of the work they were doing.

Reflecting on AC/DC's lighting system which incorporates the latest in 21st century technology as well as the old school PAR Can power washes from our industries infancy, Huddleston sounds as enthusiastic as the kid who once did all those Midwest Arena rock tours of the 70s and 80s.

He has this to say about the design team, "Patrick, Dave Hill and Cosmo Wilson are 100 percent together. They know what they want. They are very easy to deal with; that part has been a dream."

continued on 38



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There are other features included in this package that we didn't talk about. But there is one strong caveat to this product. When one hears the phrase "recording capability," thoughts instantly shift to the notion of affordable and portable multi-track recording. Although the company has a ten year development plan in place with more features and enhancements to current features on the way, Skillings is quick to note, "This was not designed as a serious recording tool. There are all kinds of great software packages out there for that." The recording output from this item is uneditible. It is a strictly a rehearsal tool. But it is a truly great rehearsal tool. 🎧

Bernunzio Uptown Music cont. from 17

exclusively online."

When you walk into the store, which was completely designed by Julie, you see a place that has a shiny new look built to house a beautiful collection of the past. In that way it fits perfectly in the East End of Rochester – that is a place where one can come to find all things musical old and new. 🎧

Kevin Lyman. Kleege would be remiss if it didn't also acknowledge the huge contribution to its success from Jim Digby of Linkin Park and Mike Karsting of the *Lowrider Tour*.

The list of folks to whom Kleege Industries owe many thanks for their continued business over the years is too long to produce here, but Kleege hopes they know how much it appreciates them.

Of the staff at Kleege, Hareld has this to say: "It's a joy to go to work every day with extremely competent people who are able to solve any challenges on the road in sometimes very hostile weather conditions. The attitude of 'I can't accomplish this' simply doesn't exist for these folks." 🎧

He attributes the success of the company to the fact that, "We're partners with these people, fully invested in their success. It's hard to find a client, but easy to keep one. We just try to provide the best services we possibly can and hope those efforts are rewarded with loyalty. In return, we reward that with extra loyalty and pretty soon we're partners and friends."

Skjerseth is certainly one of those.

"I think Opie does an amazing job of being prepared for these tours," says Huddleston. "I'm not just blowin' smoke because he's my client. He does an incredible job of organizing and knowing what's important and what's not, he really does."

Huddleston is quick to point out too that you can always buy gear and make it work but it's the people that matter. "I can't say enough about Ron and his crew. These guys put it up, maintain it, move it across the world, get it up on time, keep everybody happy and do it with a smile on their face. You know, that's an incredible thing. My hat goes off to those guys."

He speaks with awe about the AC/DC organization. "This is first class big league touring, these guys are doing it right. We're proud to be associated with them."

"I look back at what we did in the late 70s and look at these tours now and really think my gosh, this is the pros, we've come a long way... You know, It's fun to look back at that and realize we're doing this and we're doing it well. People are happy."

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