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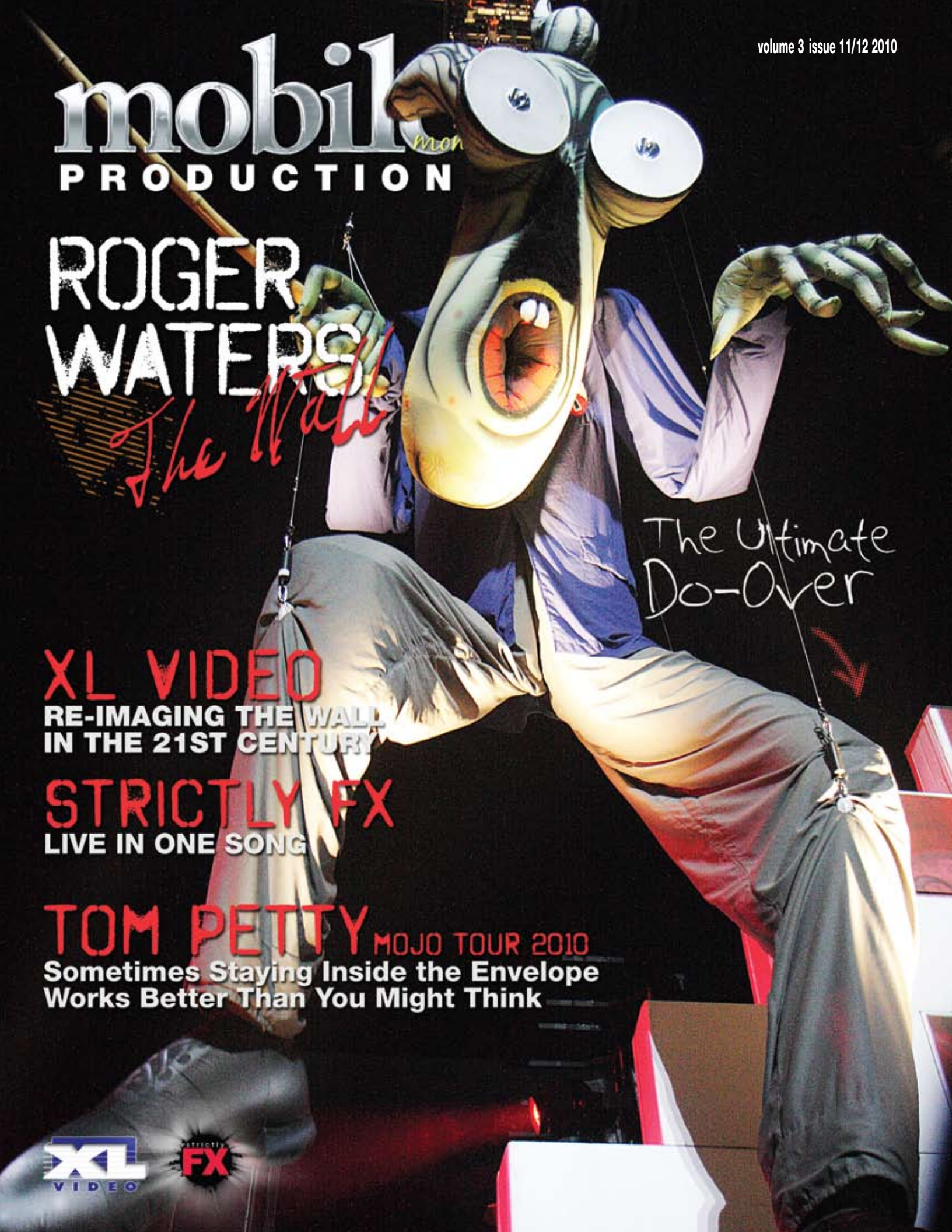
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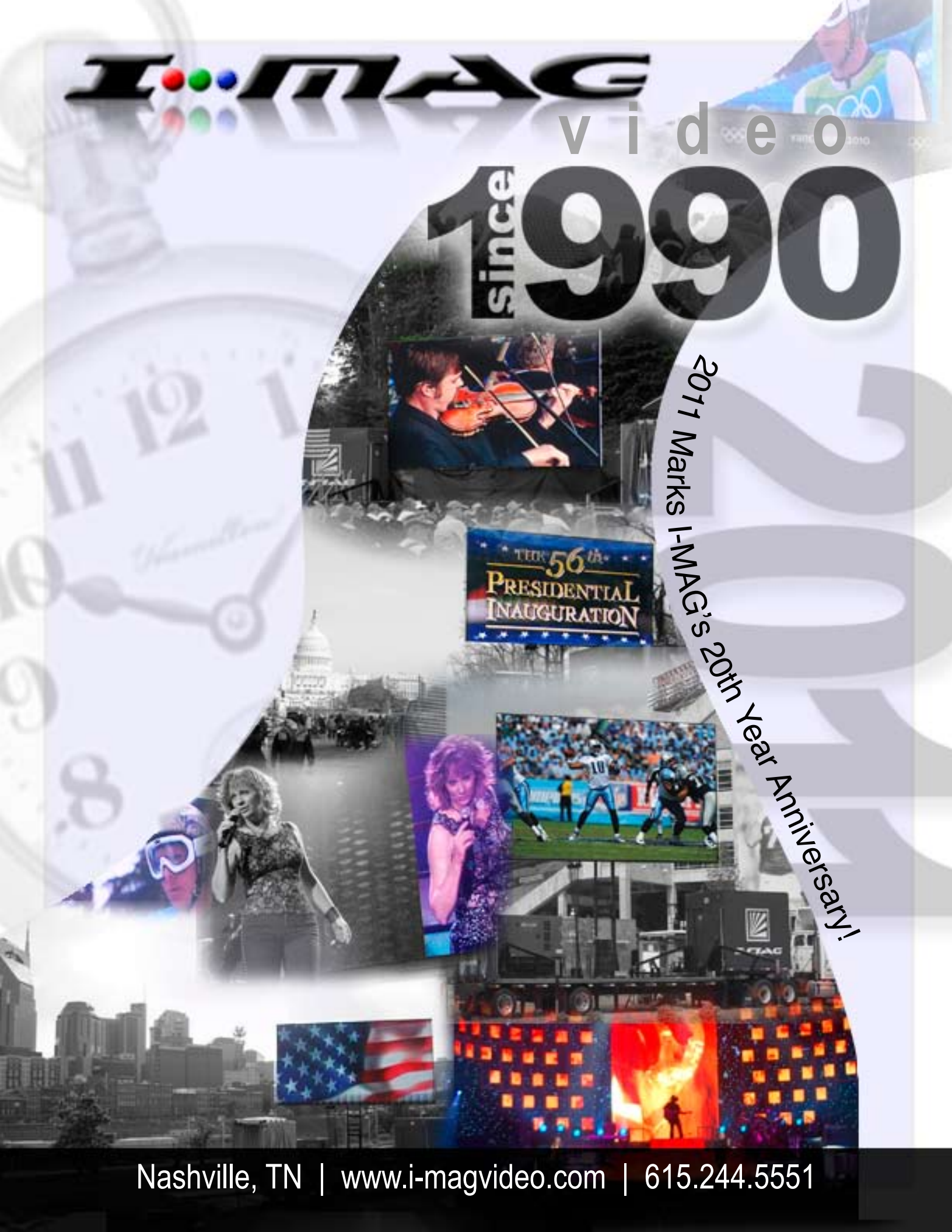
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photo courtesy of Mark Fisher



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## FROM THE *Publisher*



As we wrap up the year, we have put issue 11 & 12 together for the first time. Honestly, this year has been hectic and with staff changes and the explosion of interest in Tour Link, we simply fell behind and this is the only way we could get back on schedule. Our cover feature, Roger Waters is combined with our coverage of the recent Tom Petty tour. We hope you will enjoy the reading.

As I mentioned, Tour Link has experienced a dramatic increase in attendance and interest from all parts of the industry. The new Entertainer Motorcoach Council has decided to hold one of its annual meetings with us. Manufacturers are inquiring about hosting workshops and registrations are pouring in from the UK, Austria, Germany, Japan and Canada. The current list reads like a virtual "Who's Who" of the industry, and it is gratifying to see that people are coming for the entire event, not just the Saturday evening Award Show. See a list at [tourlinkconference.com](http://tourlinkconference.com)

Finally as we close out our business year, I want to send out a special message to the Regional Production Companies, the touring personnel and anyone else who has the idea that Tour Link is just for the "Big Guys". This event is designed to accommodate everyone from entry level to the seasoned professional, from major to new companies, riggers to CEOs. This is truly a wide open event. I can tell you from nearly 30 years of experience attending similar events and this one in particular, that the relationships that are formed and the information that is gained will make a difference in your professional and personal lives. For me, it made all the difference. Please join us in Scottsdale January 27 - 29 and be prepared for a wonderful experience.

*Larry Smith*



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# A TALE OF RIBBONS ON THE ROAD

Are ribbon mics up to the rigors of touring?  
Yes, according to Maroon 5's Jim Ebdon.

BY ROGER MAYCOCK

**W**hile ribbon microphones are widely recognized for their strengths in the recording studio, more and more high profile performers are finding they make an excellent choice for use on tour. Such is the case with Maroon 5 and it's **Front of House (FOH) Engineer Jim Ebdon**. Ebdon, who in addition to mixing Maroon 5, also holds down the FOH spot for Aerosmith, finds Royer's ribbon microphones to be robust and well suited to the requirements of today's touring sound professional. He's used ribbons for years and, presently, just completed the first leg of Maroon 5's Palm Trees and Power Lines tour.

Ebdon's background includes work at the UK's Surrey Studios (where the first three Police albums were recorded) as well as touring stints at FOH with Aerosmith, Annie Lennox, Sting, Matchbox Twenty, and the American Idol tours. He discussed how he came to use Royer's R-121 Live microphones on Maroon 5's two guitarists, Adam Levine and James Valentine.

"I first got the call about mixing Maroon 5 back in 2007," says Ebdon, "but due to other commitments, I didn't actually get behind a mixing console for the band until the summer of 2008. I started with the band during rehearsals at S.I.R. (Studio Instrument Rentals) in Hollywood. I was in the fortunate position of being in a separate room, so I could fine tune sounds on a pair of Genelec nearfield monitors. After a few hours, it became apparent these musicians were really into their sounds and getting them right. After having a very positive experience with the Royers I previously used with Matchbox Twenty, I knew the R-121's would also make a good choice for Maroon 5. I mentioned this to the band and they embraced the idea. So during rehearsal, we did a listening test and they were very quickly convinced that these mics were absolutely the right way to go."

Maroon 5's present tour commenced in August to coincide with the launch of the band's new Hands All Over record, which was released in September. To date, the band



has performed a number of TV appearances throughout Europe in addition to touring the United States. December will see several radio promotional appearances before the band goes on hiatus for the holiday season. The second leg of the tour gets under way in February in the United Kingdom. Throughout all of this, Ebdon reports his Royer R-121 Live ribbon mics and an R-101 that he uses on the guitar cabinets have never disappointed him.

"Mike Buffa and Matt Teal—the band's two guitar techs—did an excellent job of building fantastic sounding guitar rigs for both guitarists," says Ebdon. "My job then, is to get that same sound through the PA system without altering it. I want the guitarists to be ultra happy with the sound they hear, so my goal is to take the sound they're getting from their amp setup and pipe that through the larger PA with minimal, if any, alteration. For lead guitarist James Valentine, I place a Royer R-121 Live (and other times, the R-101)

on the 'Matchless' cab and a Shure SM57 on a 'Divided by 13' cabinet. With the Matchless being Valentine's predominant sound, I mixed in the 'Divided by' enclosure about 45%. The result was a gorgeous, consistent sound. For rhythm guitarist Adam Levine, I used two Royer R-121 Live mics—one on his 'clean' cabinet and one on his 'dirty' cabinet. Again, the Royers picked up the true guitar tone."

Ebdon reports that, for both setups, he placed the microphones approximately 3.5 inches away from the cabinet's grill. "This seemed to allow the air to breathe a bit before hitting the ribbon," explained Ebdon, "and I found the sound more natural that way. I should also note that I'm not using any wind screens or filters to protect the mics from wind—even during outdoor concerts. I haven't noticed any wind noise because the guitar cabinets' output is much louder than any wind, so the noise floor remains very low."

Ribbon microphones are extremely tolerant of humidity and temperature fluctuations and, this too, is quite beneficial for the touring professional, as Ebdon noted. "Condensation on microphone elements can be a problem when temperatures drop in the evening, but it's never been an issue with my ribbons," he explained.

When queried about the mic preamps he was using, Ebdon indicated he likes to take the straight and narrow path. "I'm using the mic



preamps on our DiGiCo SD7 Live Digital Console, he explained. "I thought about using a separate mic pre, but I decided that would just be adding electronics unnecessarily, so I just go straight into the board. What's particularly nice about the SD7 is its tube emulator, which I use quite a bit. The emulator adds a bit of warmth and crunch that I might not otherwise have."

So are ribbon mics—a stalwart of high-end recording studios everywhere—too much trouble to be used successfully on tour? "That's an old wives' tale," says Ebdon. "We had two R-121's that have gone around the world on a previous tour and, I'm telling you, these mics were well used. They've been on airplanes and were routinely exposed to pressure and temperature changes for a good year or so. I sent them to Royer Labs to have them checked out—to make certain they were up to snuff for the next project. Royer's technicians inspected them and found absolutely nothing to repair or adjust. Everything was up to spec."

As for handling, Ebdon reports their ribbon mics are handled carefully, but do not receive any special attention that their other equipment doesn't receive. "We have a person whose job is to look after the mics, and so he always makes certain that they are properly protected," Ebdon explained. "While I'm sure they get their fare share of bumps and knocks, and we've also exposed them to some pretty drastic temperature variations, they don't get any special treatment other than the fact that I listen every day to the mics. Handled responsibly, they're fine."

Ebdon was quick to point out that the Royer R-121 Live and R-101 mics have really assumed an integral role with both guitarists, "When we tour, the ribbons are always on the guitar cabs," he says. "With radio and TV appearances, this isn't always the case. We always try to use our equipment on everything, but sometimes the broadcast engineers have their own ideas and, maybe, we'll have to forego the ribbon mics. On the few times this has happened, both James and Adam have noticed—the ribbon mics have become that important to their sound."

"So do I have a favorite?" asks Ebdon. "I suppose I still prefer the R-121 Live, if for no other reason than the fact that I've been working with them longer. But I have to tell you, if there is a difference in the sound when I use the R-101, it's absolutely negligible. I'm honestly not sure if I'd know the difference in a blindfold test. To me, that speaks volumes about Royer's new entry level ribbon mic. The build quality and performance of these ribbon mics should never become an issue for any touring sound professional. I'd say, 'Audition them and make your own decision.' If the mic sounds right for the job, you certainly needn't have any reservations about taking Royers out on the road." ☺

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# GABRIEL SOUND

## Lord of the Rack Realms

BY HANK BORDOWITZ



↑ Erik Wayne & Todd Whitford of Gabriel Sound

**E**rik Wayne adjusts some screws in one of the house racks Gabriel Sound uses to showcase some of the audio equipment it sells. “We had to move repairs out here for a while,” he says, indicating the showroom, as he puts the tool down on a speaker cabinet. “It’s crazy. We have so much stuff going on that we had to clean up the showroom and move stuff back into the repair area. We’re not supposed to be working in here.”

Repairs make up a good portion of Gabriel Sound’s day to day work. Located in an industrial area of Pompton Lakes, New Jersey, about 30 miles northwest of New York City, the shop is unassuming. The showroom has several racks with a variety of signal processors that Gabriel sells, a couple of portable racks, some used for its own live sound business, some recently deposited for repair, and one or two that it rents out.

“The business is divided into three parts,” Wayne, who lists his role in the business as ‘Lord of the Realm,’ says. “One part is fixing gear and building stuff from scratch, the kind of stuff nobody else can do. Then, we have the sound systems that we take out live. We also sell and do installs. The parts fluctuate with the economy. Some years there’s an incredible amount of live work. Lately, not so much.”

The showroom features large mixing boards, testifying to its live work. One sits on top of some showcases off to the side of the shop, while another dominates the area just to the right of the front door. The former is a digital board, the latter board is by Orion, and unless you recognize a quality board, you’d likely not know it from the brand name. “It’s a real good analog board, made in Holland,” Wayne says. “I’ve only seen one other, ever.” Yet another, much smaller board is built into the top of a road case on the display floor. “We used this for an internet TV show we did with the New York Giants,” Wayne says. “Those TV guys, they have no concept of audio. If they get anything on the video tape, that’s good enough. Anything! They really don’t care. We told them we can make it sound *good*, but you’ve got to have that.”

“The show was called Giants online,” adds Wayne’s associate, Todd Whitford. “This guy wore a Giants helmet, and he had a vocoder so he sounded like Darth Vader when he answered questions. So we recorded stuff for them with this rack,” Wayne continues. “Once we got the TV guys not running sound, the editing was like one take for us instead of 22.”

All the portable racks have no loose wires visible, and the back is sealed tight. This is a hallmark of Gabriel’s work. “We custom build racks,” Whitford explains. “Turnkey situations. Multi-pinned, engraved panels with all Middle Atlantic Audio parts. We shared a building with Bob Schuller, the owner (of Middle Atlantic), many years ago. He now rules the world as far as rack gear and racks.”

“There are so many wires in here,” says Whitford as he points to the small rack, “and if someone sets it up in a rush, if you’re at a gig in the dark, you can pull a wire out, and then it doesn’t work. People come in here with racks, and all the wires are hanging out. So we hook it up right and seal off the back. Idiot-proof it.”

“We do that with our own racks, too,” Wayne adds. “That way it always works. That’s how I get a lot of the live work, because I know the system, and I can guarantee it’s not going to fail. I’ve never had a show not go on.”

But the most notable part of the business, the element that really sets Gabriel Sound apart, is speaker reconing. Gabriel has been an authorized speaker reconing shop

for decades. “A new speaker costs \$500,” Whitford explains the benefits of repairing rather than replacing. “I can recone it for \$200. It is usually about half the price of a new speaker and faster.”

“Also, we keep parts on hand,” Wayne adds. “How long is it going to take to get a speaker? Usually, we can get parts fast, but right now a lot of the companies are having a hard time, so that’s a problem.”

“I just got this cone from Nevada,” says Whitford as he points to a blown speaker on the workbench, “and then I had a guy call me from Texas. He sent me two more of these. Now, he was able to get me the kits, but I have the glues and the experience. It probably cost more in shipping back and forth than we’re charging him for labor. This will be an authorized service, an authorized recone, using the right stuff for it.” (See reconing sidebar)

Working on speakers can be an adventure. Not so much for the reconing, but for what is found on the way to the cone. “We find a lot of animals in old cabinets,” Wayne laughs. “You get mice and moles and bees nests. This guy did a kid’s gig at one of the local Jewish Schools, and he brings his PA in because there’s this weird flapping sound coming out of it. We check out the amp and there’s nothing wrong. We check out the speakers, they were perfect. We put them back in the cabinet and you hear flap, flap, flap, flap, flap. So we look in the port, and there’s this thing flapping around. We reach in and pull out this lovely metallic blue and white yarmulke that a kid stuck in the port.”

“Another time we get this speaker and there’s something stuck in the port,” Wayne continues. “We begin pulling it out a little bit and some more. And we pull, and we get this sleeve hanging out of the port. We pulled some more, and it was a small kid’s parka that someone had stuffed into the port somehow.” He considers this for a second. “I hope he didn’t do it for acoustic reasons.”

If ever a speaker does need that kind of dampening for acoustic reasons, however, the Gabriel team stands ready to fix it. 🙏

## ➔ Reconing:

Sure, most companies will sell a kit for reconing speakers. These are the same kits that Gabriel uses to recone. The difference is experience. "The process," says Wayne, "it's not that it's that hard, but you have to be skilled. Let's say he screws up, that's \$100 in the garbage! You can't do that. You can't have any mishaps."

**first step** we strip the speaker down to the bare bones and clean out the voice gap. We put this in with the voice coil and the spider. We put in a shim and let that set up.



**second step** when that stage is done in the next day or later, depending on the glues, we take the cone and glue that on to the spider and frame assembly...



**third step** ...put the leads through and solder them down by the terminals.



**final step** we take out the shims, break it in, give it a sweep test, run it at a certain voltage, depending on the specs from the manufacturer. When that passes, we put the dome on top, let that cure, and then we test it again, make sure nothing's pulled off center from the glues. I can do this in a day, depending on the glues. Sometimes it will take two.



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## HSL Supplies Total Lights for Foals UK & European tour

Leading UK lighting rental company HSL is supplying lighting kit and crew for the Foals acclaimed “Total Life Forever” tour - as Oxford’s current finest punky indie rockers take to the road in the UK and Europe.

Lighting designer Davy Sherwin has put together a stunning show based around an inventive design that makes the rig appear vastly bigger than it actually is. He first met the band when they were supporting Snow Patrol, for whom he has worked for several years producing some amazing shows, and they wanted a similar vibe, and something that suited their energy and ballsy music.

The project is being handled by Mike Oates for HSL, who says, “It’s always great working with Davy, he is one of the most talented of the UK’s current new wave of LDs”. The band gave Sherwin a few basic pointers in terms of what they wanted incorporated in the show, and then left him to it. They are very dynamic to light, with the music veering from moody and dark to percussive and shouty to full sensory absorbing rock out!

They particularly wanted multiple shades of blue, so the show errs towards the colder end of the spectrum in terms of colour, together with some classic and classy white moments, specially towards the end of the set, along with some surprise CTO variants.

Another specific instruction was that they wanted as little front light as possible! This of course was no problem, offering the perfect opportunity to make some great drama with

beam work amidst some seriously atmospheric haze and smoke management.

The full rig contains a front and back truss plus a substantial floor package, the latter of which will travel to Europe with them where they will hook in to house rigs overhead.

Four different length tank traps come down as drop arms from the back truss, and another 5 come up from the stage underneath, with 1 x GLP Impression LED wash light on the down pipes and 2 on each of the up pipes. Another 2 x Impressions are on the floor, one to the side and the other on the mid stage riser for low level cross lighting for ambience, shadows and silhouettes.

Sherwin has used these briefly before on Snow Patrol and really likes the colour range, which includes some fabulous purples, oranges and reds.

Five i-Pix BB4s are positioned upstage on the floor washing up the ‘Foals’ logo on the back-drop.



Then there are 4 Robe ROBIN 600 Spots upstage on flight cases and 6 Robe ColorWash 700E ATs on the deck behind the backline, for some powerful back beamage. Five Omni floods on low ‘turtle’ stands are also sitting behind the band, introducing a tungsten contrast, with a further unit downstage right as a soft key light for lead singer Yanis Philippakis. The floor picture is completed with 4 Martin

Atomic strobes in a row upstage. On the back truss, in addition to the 4 x GLPs on the drop arms, are 6 x Robe ColorBeam 700 - for intense, mega bright slicing effects, and 7 Atomics, 4 on drop arms and 3 on the truss.

The front truss features just 5 x 4-cell linear Moles, shooting into the audience and 6 Robe ColorWash 700E ATs, which are used for subtle but powerful washing along the front section of the stage, cleverly focussed to avoid over-lighting the band!

The floor orientated show is capable of producing lots of huge anthemic beam looks which work beautifully and flexibly on a variety of stage sizes, from town halls to pros arch theatres, opening right out to accommodate the largest performance space on this current leg of the tour which is Brixton Academy.

For control, Sherwin is using a Road Hog Full Boar console.

The crew from HSL are "Theatre" Tom Wright and "Rock 'n' Roll" Johnny Harper, a great combination in technical skill sets and senses of humour!

Sherwin has worked with HSL since 2006,



when they first serviced the Snow Patrol tour... and comments, "HSL has grown substantially in that time, and it's easy to see why - they have absolutely the right attitude, great equipment, crew and a service second to none. Mike (Oates) ensures that attention is paid to every detail and nothing is ever too much trouble - I'd recommend them to anyone!"

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Leading London UK based automation specialists Kinesys has sold the first variable speed motion control system into Israel, to Jerusalem and Tel Aviv based Stage Design, one of the country's leading rental and staging companies.

The sale consists of a 24 way Kinesys Elevation 1+ variable speed motor control system, with 16 x Lifket 500kg 20m/min hoists and 8 x 2 tonne Yale motorised Beam Trolleys (plus 8 x 'slave' beam trolleys) - all converted for use with Kinesys Elevation 1+ variable speed controllers. For control, the Stage Design team chose the latest Kinesys K2 3D graphical automation and motion control software.

Stage Design is part of The Design Group, whose Eyal Lavee explained that they had been checking out the options on the automation front for some 2 years before the purchase, "The Israeli market is always keen on new effects," he confirms.

After careful deliberation, they decided on Kinesys as the best choice for their touring and general production needs. "It's excellent quality and engineering, flexible, durable and straightforward to install. The innovative programming possibilities of the K2 then really made the final choice an easy one," confirms Lavee.

As soon as it arrived in Israel, it went straight out on the Festigal 2010 Show, a famous annual children's extravaganza in Hanukkah which has been going for 30 years and is one of the largest and most popular in Israel. It tours between 3 venues

in Haifa, Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem over the period of a month, producing about 100 shows that are enjoyed by over 500,000 people.

Festigal is an in-the-round arena stage set up, based on lively audience interaction and 8 LED screens flown around a 15 metre revolving stage. The Kinesys system enabled the screens to make a series of synchronised moves - both vertically and horizontally - throughout the show. They could also all be moved together to work as one single surface, or they could be split into 8 individual sections. Over 150 different positions were programmed into the K2 for the show, which was operated by Tsah Eliahoo.

The LED screens were flown on special lightweight aluminium I Beams with 'smart' connections to any truss, a custom developed and manufactured product from Stage Design. This maximises headroom and speeds up installation time.


Kinesys' Sales and Business Development Manager, Mark de Gruyter, along with training and technical support specialist, Andy Hicks, travelled to Israel to co-ordinate the initial training with the Stage Design crew - as the equipment was going into immediate use.

"I could not wish for better support from Kinesys for that first set up," comments Tsah Eliahoo who is also head of the Kinesys team for The Design Group.

de Gruyter and Hicks worked with Tsah and his team for 7 high pressure days of programming as the show was in production rehearsals. This resulted in Eliahoo gaining, "A very full understanding very quickly about the system's capabilities".

Eyal Lavee adds, "Kinesys founder & Managing Director, Dave Weatherhead, proved to be a true partner. When some additional training was needed, he jumped on a plane and came out with exactly the right backup we needed at the time - very impressive".

Everyone is happy with the results. "Within the Design Group we have huge faith in this system, and believe that creative minds will find many ways to integrate Kinesys into all types of designs for events, tours, exhibitions, theatrical shows and TV productions, etc," concludes Lavee.

Mark de Gruyter comments, "It has been a real pleasure working with the team of professionals at Stage Design and we're confident they will enjoy putting their newly acquired Kinesys system to good use in lots of bold and exciting future designs." 

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# THE MOTOR TOWER 2010

Sometimes Staying  
Inside the  
Envelope  
Works Better Than  
You Might Think

BY MICHAEL A. BECK



**Tom  
Petty's  
Mojo Tour 2010**

wound down in October and was one of (if not the) most elegant and efficient shows *mPm* has covered this year. The production had several visual elements that were all controlled from one point. 

“Every tour is different with Petty,” said long time Lighting & Set Designer Jim Lenahan. “Sometimes he likes the first thing you show him and *ping*, you’re done. In this case, I gave him six different designs. I did a lot of things that really pushed the envelope, and this year Tom didn’t want that. He wanted something that was very straight forward.”

The flown rig was broken up into three parts. The largest section established an upstage line and curved around toward the downstage. Six evenly spaced truss “fingers” hung vertical off of the truss. These pieces had lighting fixtures mounted on the top and bottom so that they could hit the stage no matter where each finger was oriented. The fingers were separated by three vertical panels of low medium res video product (15 in all).

The next part of the rig was called the “Superman” truss because it was shaped similar to the Superman logo. This section of the system fit inside the larger system and the exact size of the band footprint. The Superman rig sported three banks of vertical video panels. There were times when the Superman rig was flown in close to the stage. This tightened the look down and presented a very intimate arrangement. During that look, the fingers on the main rig were flown down in the absolute vertical position as to allow the inner rig to fit through the space. When this look was in effect, the main rig was flown out to a higher trim to add to the tightened down look.

Other times the two grids traded places with the larger bit flown in to the lower trim. This gave the big rock show effect as the smaller rig on top gave a tapered cathedral look. There were also times when the Superman system was flown in to slightly overlap the larger one.

The video panels on both of these systems were used exclusively for content. When they overlapped, the challenge was finding video content that wouldn’t clash between the two displays. But that wasn’t the only kink in the cable. Petty is one who doesn’t necessarily do the same show every night. This causes problems when having truss movement as part of the show. “You can’t design a truss move for a particular song because you don’t always know where that song is going to fall in the show, or even *if* it will be in the show on any given night.” Lenahan explained.

Because there were several system configura-

tions that he wanted to achieve during the show, Lenahan had to fit the songs into whatever look might be up when a given song occurred in the set. Otherwise, the rig would have been moving all night long, which would have created an unacceptable distraction.

In the beginning of the tour, the rig achieved 11 positions throughout the night. This created a programming nightmare because each song had to be programmed for each configuration. The result was that Lighting Programmer Stan Green wound up having to write cues for every truss variation of every song in the set or might be in the set. Then he had to maintain all of this every day. The best news was the final set list wouldn’t be handed down until about a half-hour before show time, and the set list would have its own land minds in it. The word “audible” would appear where a song title would normally occur.

As time went by the set list stabilized and the number of different truss positions was whittled down to five. This also gave Green a bit of a rest as now he only had to focus each song in the set five times.

The video portion of the show was completely run through the lighting control system including camera input, picture composition and robotic moves of the automated RoboCams. The system had six 8 mil WinVision I-MAG displays configured to curve around the downstage edge of the stage. Each one of the screens was capable of displaying a different camera so that everyone on stage could be highlighted.

However, because there was no director calling the shots, the camera ops had to be on their toes as they could go hot at any time especially in a world wherein so many audibles are being called. “It’s not as big a deal as it might sound,” said Lighting / Video Crew Chief

Kevin Cassidy. “We don’t do a lot of fancy cues, push-ins and fly-aways or any of that kind of stuff.”

All of this gave birth to a somewhat odd FOH set up. There was the typical master and slave configuration of grandMA consoles. But there’s a kink. These were being triggered by an old 2 x 60 Janz board. This allowed Lenahan to call his own audibles dur-



ing the execution of the show. For example, Lenahan had faders on the Janz console that could change the configuration of the I-MAG content.

This was the first American tour to take out the L-ACOUSTICS K1 system, which is a completely networked amplification system. House Engineer Robert Scovill explained, “In this system all equalization and tone shaping is done in the amplifiers. Our drive rack is literally a laptop sitting out at the desk.”

Additionally, the sub array doesn’t have a crossover point where it blends



into the mains via an auxiliary or some other form of discrete output from the console. In this case, the PA runs completely full range with the subs as an integrated part of the system. The result is that the dead zone of the cardioid is on stage where it has no real effect on the audience.

This year has been a year of contrast between the huge majestic 20+ truck show that bowls the audience over with sheer incredible production mass and the small discrete shows that offer a more intimate, personal experience with the artist on stage. We leave it up to the public as which format they would like to

see and the crews as to which they would rather work. However, the 2010 Tom Petty tour was had the look of both. It was an eight truck show that looked like something far bigger that hit with the force of an extremely good looking velvet hammer.

*Editor's note: There are a few different reasons why we might visit a tour and not write the story. One of rationale is that in the flurry of activity in an ever morphing editorial calendar that is managed by a small staff a story can get squeezed out. Once the tour or event in question has been over for a certain amount of time it becomes old news and therefore, dead on the vine. In the time since we have been covering the industry in the way that we do that rule has not been broken once. This story is the first exception to the rule. 🍷*



Ken Graham - Production Manager



Robert Scovill - House Engineer



Robert "Bo" Crowell - LED Technician, Jason Taylor - LED Technician, Jesse Parker - Laser Technician, Armando "Mondo" Figueroa - Lighting / Power Technician, Kevin Cassidy - Lighting / Video Crew Chief, Jim Lenahan - Lighting & Set Designer, David Cruz - Video/ Camera Engineer, Gary Boldenweck - Lighting Technician, Shawn K. Welch - Lighting Technician, Stan Green - Lighting Programmer



Roland Castillo - 2nd Rigger



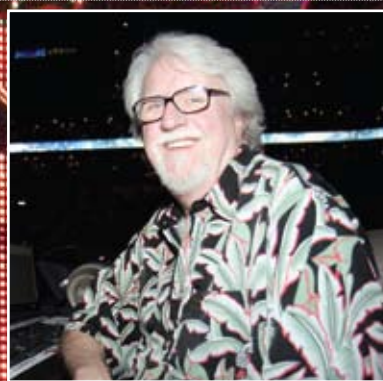
Andy Tennille - Web Video / Photo Blogger



Michael Murante - Sound Stage Technician, Jim Brentlinger - Sound System Technician, Robert Scovill - House Engineer, Greg Looper - Monitor Engineer, Mike - Bangs Monitor Assistant, John Tompkins - Sound Crew Chief



David Greene - Drum Technician



Jim Lenahan - Lighting & Set Designer



David Cruz - Video/ Camera Engineer, Robert "Bo" Crowell - LED Technician



Jesse Parker - Laser Technician



Mike Campbell & Tom Petty



Travis Weidel - 2nd Carpenter, Jack Deitering - Carpenter

# TOM PETTY MOJO TOUR 2010 CREW

## MOJO TOUR 2010 PERSONNEL

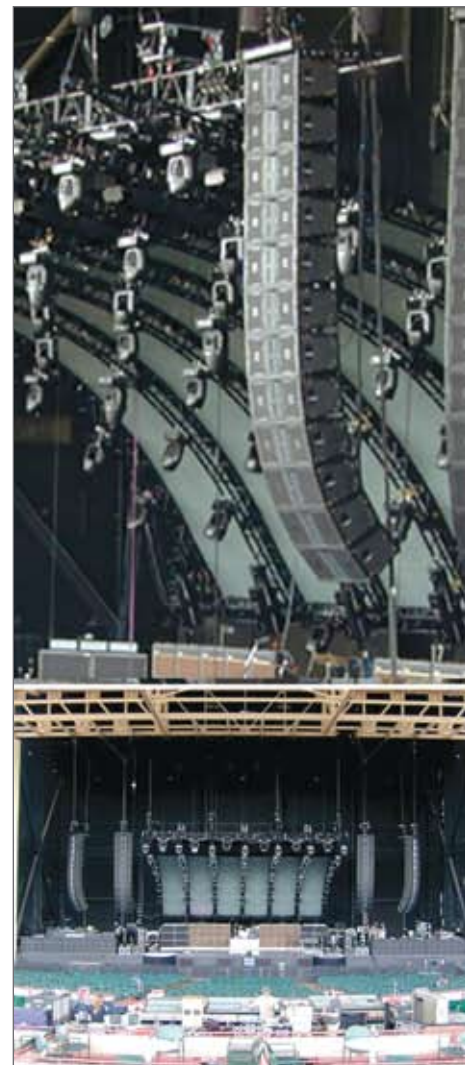
TOM PETTY - Vocals / Guitar  
MIKE CAMPBELL - Guitars  
BEN TENCH - Keyboards / Vocals  
RON BLAIR - Bass / Vocals  
SCOTT THURSTON - Guitars / Vocals  
STEVE FERRONE - Drums

Artist's Manager - Tony Dimitriades  
Tour Manager - Richard Fernandez  
Production Manager - Ken Graham  
Assistant Tour Mgr - Mark Carpenter  
Tour Accountant - Joshua Hassell  
Security - Dean Correa  
Stage Manager - Larry Yager  
Dispatch Tech - Alan "Bugs" Weidel  
Keyboard Technician - Wayne Williams  
Guitar Technician - Alan Rogan  
Guitar Caddy - Steve "Chinner" Winstead  
Drum Technician - David Greene  
Wardrobe Mistress -  
Linda "Queenie" Burcher  
Tour & Production Assist. - Karin Senecal  
Head Rigger & Operator -  
William Tell Agerter  
2nd Rigger - Roland Castillo  
Carpenter - Jack Deitering  
Tam(Go To Guy) - Mark "Smokey" Kohorn  
2nd Carpenter - Travis Weidel  
House Engineer - Robert Scovill  
Monitor Engineer - Greg Looper  
Sound Crew Chief - John Tompkins  
Sound System Tech - Jim Brentlinger  
Monitor Assistant - Mike Bangs  
Sound Stage Tech - Michael Murante  
Tele Prompter - Mick Walker  
Lighting & Set Designer - Jim Lenahan  
Lighting/Video Crew Chief - Kevin Cassidy  
Lighting Programmer - Stan Green  
Lighting / Power Tech -  
Armando "Mondo" Figueroa  
Lighting Techs:  
Gary Boldenweck, Shawn Welch  
LED Techs:  
Jason Taylor, Robert "Bo" Crowell  
Video / Camera Engineer - David Cruz  
Laser Tech - Jesse Parker  
Ticketing - Michele Mecca  
Live Nation Rep - Blain Brinton  
Web Video / Photo Blogger -  
Andy Tennille  
Merchandise Rep - Mark Haynes

Backline Bus Driver (Sept.) -  
Justin Wadsworth  
Lighting Bus Driver - Andy Murphy  
Production Bus Driver - Mike Lemaster  
Audio & Video Bus Driver - John Ertler  
Tp Bus Driver - Ben Kitterman  
Backline Bus Driver (Aug.) - Brant Quick  
Lead Truck Driver - James "Jj" Johnson  
Truck Drivers: Larry Hockensmith, Bill  
Sowell, Tim Faye, Bryan Roddy, Mark  
Selhorst, Nate Thompson

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The teacher and the wife were stored in a "diaper" which cradled the deflated puppet up out of sight when they weren't being used in the show. When they were cued into motion, the "diaper" would release the puppet as it fell into place. As this was happening the puppet inflated.

photo by Michael A Beck

*Artist and Band*  
Roger Waters - Vocals, Guitars & Bass  
Dave Kiminster, Snowy White, GE Smith - Guitars  
Jon Carin - Keyboards  
Harry Waters - Hammond & Keyboards  
Robbie Wyckoff - Vocals  
Pat Lennon, Mark Lennon, Kipp Lennon - Background Vocals

# ROGER WATERS

## The Wall

### The Ultimate Do-Over

BY MICHAEL A. BECK

In 1980, Pink Floyd unleashed the epic production of *The Wall*. It was regarded as an enormous undertaking at the time with a production cost of one million dollars. This was something that the touring industry had never seen. The biggest challenge of the production was logistics. There had never been an indoor concert production with this many moving parts. Such was the case in 1980. That's why the thing didn't tour back then. It just made a few extended-stay stops.



photo by Set Designer Mark Fisher

"This show is driven by the concept, and I think that legitimized the scale of the show," explained Set Designer Mark Fisher. "It's very much an expansion of Roger's message. He's got a lot that he wants to say, and in many ways it's a lot more than he was saying 30 years ago."

That being said, *The Wall* version 2.0 delivered that expanded polemic through much the same media as it did in 1980. All of the video content of the show was delivered via five stacks of three Barco R20 FLM projectors hitting the front of the wall and five Barco R22's throwing rear projection images at the signature [37-foot-wide] circular screen that flew above the upstage line.

Every characteristic of the tour was affected in one way or another by the needs of the projection element of video imagery starting with the marking of the floor, which happened at 4 a.m. with production load in starting at 6 a.m. The reason for this is the room had to be show-ready with the wall fully constructed by roughly 1 a.m.

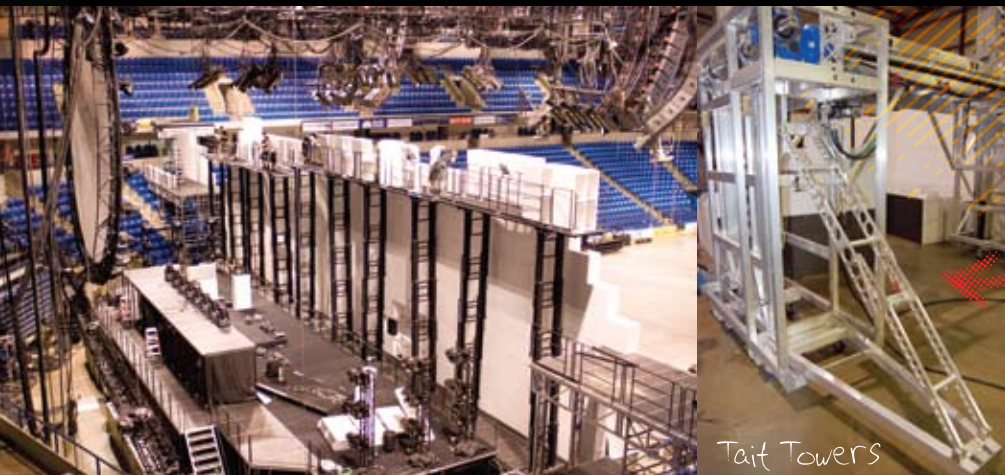
in order to give Video Crew Chief Clark Anderson and projectionists Andy Joy and Gary Burn time to converge the projections with the precision this show requires.

As is stated in the onset of this essay, the reason the original production didn't tour was because it simply wasn't logistically feasible. What made it possible this time around was the amount of control capability available to production engineers in today's world. Fisher expounded on that, "In fairness we did the very same show 30 years ago with hardly any automation, but it wasn't any less complicated. It was just that we didn't have cheap computers in those days. So whereas in 1980 we did it with men who learned what to do and operated switches, now you have fewer men who sit in front of computer screens and the computers basically operate the switches. Everyone says 'Oh Lord save us, this is so complicated' because we have all of these computers doing it as if having 30 men doing it somehow isn't complicated. And that just ain't true."

From the design perspective Fisher divides the project into two areas of effort: artistic and technical engineering. At the artistic level Fisher confesses to having done very little. "We were setting out to create a facsimile of what had been done 30 years ago. We made no changes to what the show looks like."

tics. Tait Towers Engineer Tyler Kicera described the challenges, "We really had to get our heads into what the worst case was and design a kit that would be pretty versatile in terms of getting into every venue on the tour. We had a preliminary list of the buildings the show was going to play. We had pretty basic drawings of the

Tait Towers Engineer Tyler Kicera described the challenges, "We really had to get our heads into what the worst case was and design a kit that would be pretty versatile in terms of getting into every venue on the tour..."



Tait came up with a slatted system that deployed much like a roll top desk. When the hole was covered, the top was sturdy enough to support Waters anywhere he wanted to travel on the stage.

The biggest esthetic change to the show was done by Sean Evans and his team at Breath Editing who had to create vast amounts of video content in order to update the message that Waters wanted to convey to a 21<sup>st</sup> century audience. This created a huge challenge because as the wall was one big video screen in 1980, this year the video actually used each brick of the wall as individual screens in many cases during the show. This was as much of a design problem as it was a personnel management issue.

The wall stretched from mezzanine to mezzanine in every arena that it played. It rose to a level of 35.5 feet off of the arena floor when fully constructed. The first challenge was that while North American hockey rinks uniformly are 85 feet by 200 feet, there is no uniformity whatsoever from one arena to another. While some may have symmetrical distances from across the bowl, others like Atlanta's Philips Arena has a standard mezzanine arrangement on the house left side with the opposite presenting a wall of press and VIP boxes. Even the arenas that were evenly laid out were not consistent from one to another in that they might have had varying seating rakes, roll-out seating systems or even the arrangement of the seats within the fluctuating bowl characteris-

rooms. We didn't have any 3D models of them, so we had to take our best guess as to what were going to be the worst case venues and go out and survey them to make sure that our kit was going to work."

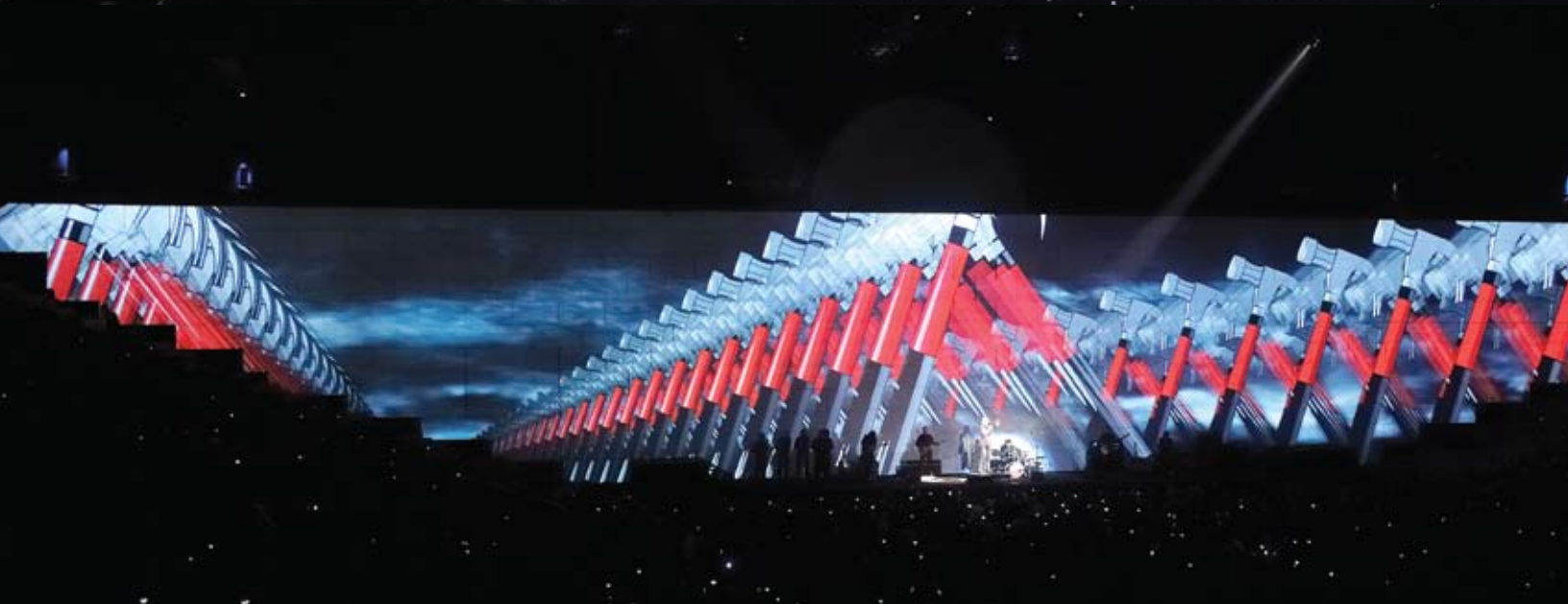
As was the case in 1980, the bricks were little more than cardboard boxes, fire treated and painted with white latex. Predictably, they weren't very roadworthy. They had a production life of one to five shows. That meant that someone was sitting around building boxes every day off pallets that were getting shipped out to every venue.

As the show started out the wall was only partially constructed, which is to say that it was built to its finished height at its far off stage ends with the center section unfinished down to one brick above the stage level. When the projection hit the wall at the opening of the show, it seemed to be hitting only the area where the wall actually was. In reality, it was hitting the entire area of the wall as if it were fully erected. This was achieved by creating a video mask layer over the projection that was removed one brick at a time as the individual bricks were laid into the structure thus revealing the video on the new brick sometimes on the downbeat of the music.





The wall stretched from mezzanine to mezzanine in every arena that it played. It rose to a level of 35.5 feet off of the arena floor when fully constructed.



This was without a doubt the most delicately sensational thing seen on a concert stage. It was pure elegance. However, the team had to walk through heel to heel to get it correctly choreographed. Mark Fisher elucidated the process, "We went into the arena in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania for the whole of August this past summer and basically rehearsed the crew in building the wall. It was rather like a *Cirque du Soleil* in that respect. We took a bunch of guys who would normally have thrown the wall up and gone to have a beer and said 'look, this is the order the bricks should go in at' and sort of stood there and shouted 'no' at them unto they got it right. It was really brutal. The result is pretty amazing. In some ways it's rocket science and in others it just people being very careful."

That process was guided by Assistant Stage Manager Josh Gelfold who was also the Brick Sequence Controller. He sat out at the front of house and called the cadence to 10 carpenters as they placed the bricks. Shortly into the tour the "brick layers" knew the very precise order of the bricks as they needed to be placed, and they even had a good handle on the timing. However, it's impossible to keep a ballet like that on the critical timing that needed to stay synced with the time code of the video. Although the mask was manually removed by striking a go button on a computer, the whole thing had to happen to the video time code.

At the opening of the show, Waters came out and put on the famous Gestapo looking long trench coat as five 20-foot-long platforms raised in mass into the air with several crew members standing on the holding flags brandishing the iconic crossed hammers. Although functioning as powerful set pieces, their greater purpose was as work platforms that supported the set carpenters while they built the wall. These platforms were custom made by Tait Towers. However, they were made from the same parts that were used to make the lifts that were used in the 1980 shows, which were manufactured in the Genie plant in Seattle. End to end they established a 100-foot-long stage. Beyond the lifts on either end of the stage were scaffold towers each of which contained a track system upon which a scaffold platform traveled, allowing the crew to build the wall out beyond the reach of the towers.

As the wall grew in height, a series of

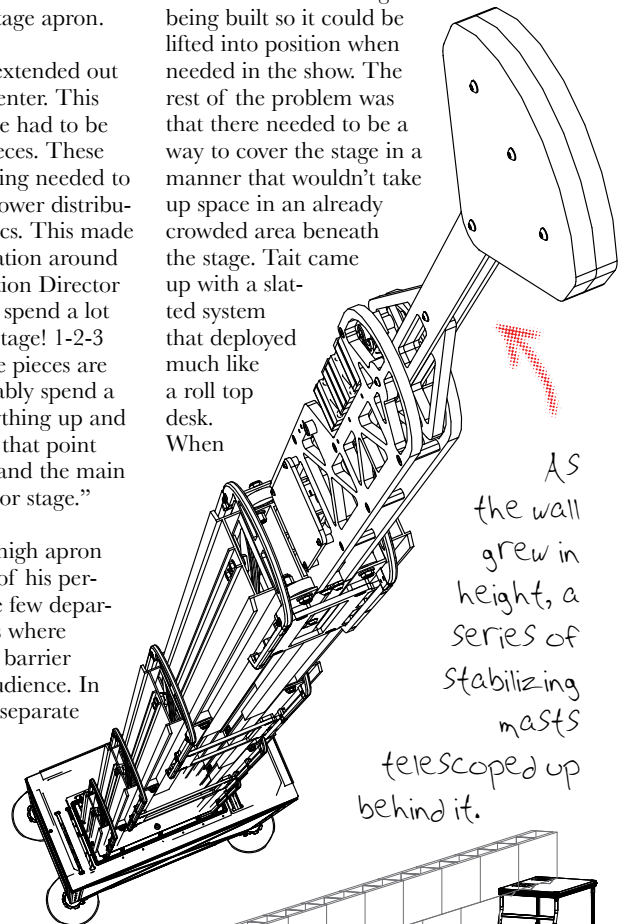
stabilizing masts telescoped up behind it. When the wall was finally knocked down, the masts quickly retracted back down to their home position. As this was happening, a hammer mechanism knocked the bricks out toward the downstage apron.

The 8-foot-high main stage extended out to a distance of 52 feet off center. This meant that the stage structure had to be rolled into position in five pieces. These five pieces contained everything needed to control the show including power distribution, amp racks and hydraulics. This made for a very sleek field of operation around and under the stage. Production Director Chris Kansy explained, "We spend a lot of time screaming '1-2-3 upstage! 1-2-3 downstage!' then once all five pieces are in place the carpenters probably spend a good 20 minutes lining everything up and getting it locked together. At that point we have all of the main lifts and the main stage. Then we roll in the floor stage."

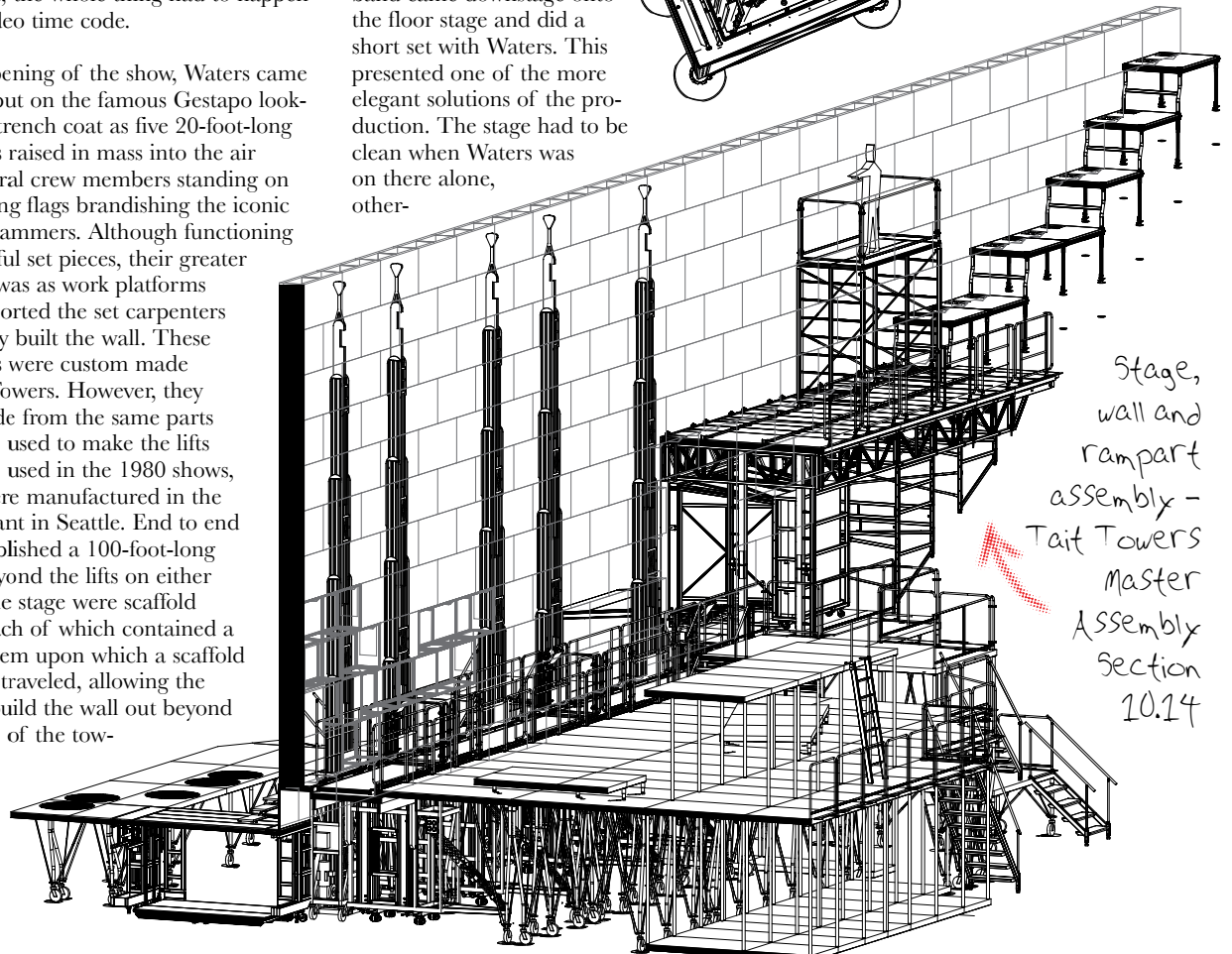
The floor stage is a 5.5-foot-high apron where Waters did almost all of his performing. This was one of the few departures from the original shows where the wall was built to create a barrier between the band and the audience. In this case, the wall seemed to separate Waters and the band. There was a portion of the second half of the show when the band came downstage onto the floor stage and did a short set with Waters. This presented one of the more elegant solutions of the production. The stage had to be clean when Waters was on there alone, other-

wise he would have had to wonder about on a stage full of empty band gear.

The answer was to load the gear onto elevators when the stage was being built so it could be lifted into position when needed in the show. The rest of the problem was that there needed to be a way to cover the stage in a manner that wouldn't take up space in an already crowded area beneath the stage. Tait came up with a slatted system that deployed much like a roll top desk. When



As the wall grew in height, a series of stabilizing masts telescoped up behind it.

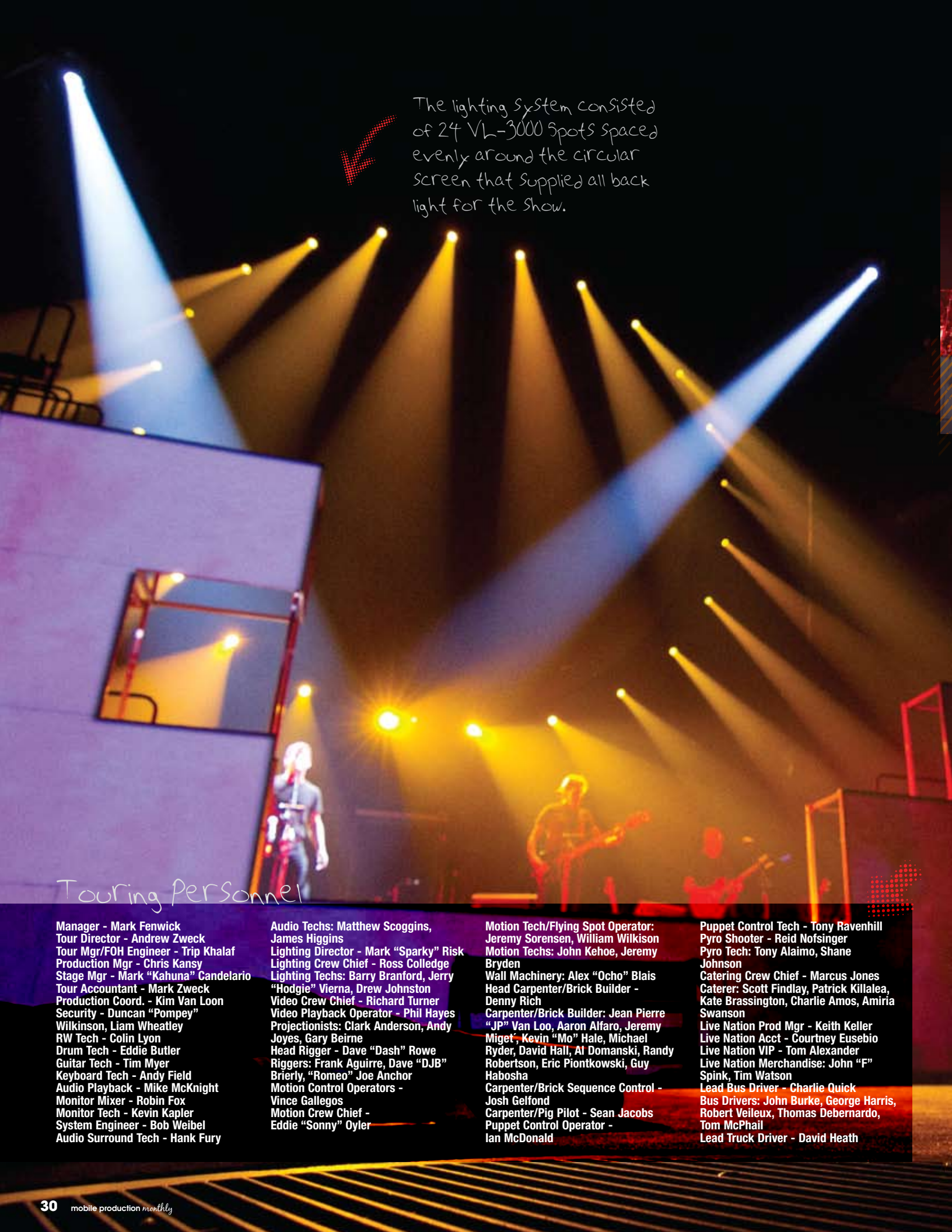


Stage, wall and rampart assembly - Tait Towers Master Assembly Section 10.14

© STEVE JENNINGS

photo by Set Designer Mark Fisher

photo by Set Designer Mark Fisher



The lighting system consisted of 24 VL-3000 spots spaced evenly around the circular screen that supplied all back light for the show.

## Touring Personnel

Manager - Mark Fenwick  
Tour Director - Andrew Zweck  
Tour Mgr/FOH Engineer - Trip Khalaf  
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Stage Mgr - Mark "Kahuna" Candelario  
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Security - Duncan "Pompey" Wilkinson, Liam Wheatley  
RW Tech - Colin Lyon  
Drum Tech - Eddie Butler  
Guitar Tech - Tim Myer  
Keyboard Tech - Andy Field  
Audio Playback - Mike McKnight  
Monitor Mixer - Robin Fox  
Monitor Tech - Kevin Kapler  
System Engineer - Bob Weibel  
Audio Surround Tech - Hank Fury

Audio Techs: Matthew Scoggins, James Higgins  
Lighting Director - Mark "Sparky" Risk  
Lighting Crew Chief - Ross Colledge  
Lighting Techs: Barry Branford, Jerry "Hodgie" Vierna, Drew Johnston  
Video Crew Chief - Richard Turner  
Video Playback Operator - Phil Hayes  
Projectionists: Clark Anderson, Andy Joyes, Gary Beirne  
Head Rigger - Dave "Dash" Rowe  
Riggers: Frank Aguirre, Dave "DJB" Brierty, "Romeo" Joe Anchor  
Motion Control Operators - Vince Gallegos  
Motion Crew Chief - Eddie "Sonny" Oyler

Motion Tech/Flying Spot Operator: Jeremy Sorensen, William Wilkison  
Motion Techs: John Kehoe, Jeremy Bryden  
Wall Machinery: Alex "Ocho" Blais  
Head Carpenter/Brick Builder - Denny Rich  
Carpenter/Brick Builder: Jean Pierre "JP" Van Loo, Aaron Alfaro, Jeremy Miget, Kevin "Mo" Hale, Michael Ryder, David Hall, Al Domanski, Randy Robertson, Eric Piontkowski, Guy Habosha  
Carpenter/Brick Sequence Control - Josh Gelfond  
Carpenter/Pig Pilot - Sean Jacobs  
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Pyro Shooter - Reid Nofsinger  
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photo by Set Designer Mark Fisher

Lighting Designer Mark Brickman positioned 8 pods of 3 Cyberlight Turbos on an oblong track that allowed them to be positioned for side, back or key lighting. Additionally each pod was able to move vertically adding an extra dimension of shot angle to the pallet. Of course the Cyberlights were in place of the notoriously unreliable French made Telescans that were used on the Pink Floyd tour.

With very few exceptions, all of the front of house spot light work was done from two truss spots that were slung from tracking wenchs. They were able to move vertically, up and down stage. They were able to come so far down stage that they were able to hit Waters at any position on stage. Because of insurance limitations these spots had to be operated by touring crew members.

In much the same way as it did in 1980, this show was a watershed experience in live concert touring technology. The hallmark of the show was precision; from the engineering of the technology of the show to the surround sound, to the video projection all the way through to the meticulous placement of every brick. On the other hand, there was a sense of enormity that cannot be accurately portrayed in any number of words or photographs. This was instantly established with the more than 700 pyro shots in the first song of the show.

Outside of all of that, it was the ultimate do-over. "It really is the aggregated knowledge we've all gained over 30 years of working in this rather arcane industry," said Mark Fisher. "There was a bit of 'why did we do it that way?', and you can't even remember why you did that way, but it was definitely stupid. And now you do it differently because you know that it was stupid. However, you have to remember that back in 1980 we'd never done it before. For me it still remains a wonderful adventure and a great way to avoid having to get a real job."

There could be a broad number of reasons to come out and see this show. For some it was a nostalgic trip to "back then." For others it was a desire to lend an ear to the ever expanding polemic of a truly angry guy with a gigantic megaphone. Then there is the desire to see the largest and most complex indoor show to ever travel. Either way, this was going to be serious spectacle. It had more axis of motion than Tait Towers had ever designed into a show. Yet it had fewer people on the crew than the first one. On every conceivable level this show hit like a hammer. That said, it was as sleek and elegant a hammer as we are likely to see for a long time. 🍔

the hole was covered, the top was sturdy enough to support Waters anywhere he wanted to travel on the stage.

There were other iconic elements to the shot. Notably among them were the puppets representing the teacher, the wife and mother. All of these were inflatables, but they were deployed and manipulated in different ways. The teacher and the wife were stored in a "diaper" which cradled the deflated puppet up out of sight when they weren't being used in the show. When they were cued into motion, the "diaper" would release the puppet as it fell into place. As this was happening the puppet inflated.

These puppets were surprisingly animated. They were controlled much the same way marionettes are controlled. Teacher was controlled by 11 axes of motion and wife by 8. The controlling mechanism was a series of wenchs that communicated with an onboard processor that in turn talked to a computer at the processing rack/control desk of Puppet Control Operator Ian McDonald. On its face it seems like a somewhat basic system. However, it's a bit more complex than just that. Each wench transmitted telemetry data to the processor several hundred times per second pertaining to its position. If it reeled out to 6 ft. at that time in the program and it was supposed to 6 ft. 3 in., the computer would make the correction. The mother inflatable was a more traditional floor mounted inflatable that was controlled on two axis of motion.

The lighting system consisted of 24 VL-3000 Spots spaced evenly around the circular screen that supplied all back light for the show. In a design move that seemed to borrow from Pink Floyd's Momentary Lapse of Reason Tour,



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XL Video & Roger Waters  
RE-IMAGING THE WALL  
IN THE 21ST CENTURY

BY MIKE WHARTON

Roger Waters' remounting of his epic and historical rock opera production, *The Wall*, is allowing audiences to experience his vision as never before.

Working with long time creative collaborator Sean Evans, they have been able to re-imagine that vision with 21st century technology, which was unavailable when the show was produced the first time through the use of image media of 35 millimeter film and analogue cueing. *mobile Production monthly* spoke with Phil Mercer, Managing Director of XL Video Los Angeles, about XL's current work on the tour and how that vision is achieved each night live.

"This was a fairly complicated brief in terms of the scale of the projection and also in terms of the complexity of the playback in some way," says Mercer. "Front projection is five HD images that have to seamlessly be stitched together and played back in sync. Although," he laughs, "it looks quite simple." The build took about five months. Following detailed discussions, it was determined a "shootout" test would be performed in Las Vegas, wherein various projectors were looked at. The decision was not based purely on brightness of image alone. The 30K, a definitively brighter projector was discarded due to the much larger size, weight and shorter lamp life. Mercer continues, "We worked closely on system specifications with Richard Turner, who is the 'video guru' if you will, of the tour. He turns the creative into something that will work day in day out on the tour from the video perspective."

Mercer points to this type of effort as key to the longtime relationship XL has enjoyed with

Waters' Manager Andrew Zweck, whom he gratefully acknowledges. These two factors, he believes, led Chris Kansy (Tour Production Manager) to "feel comfortable with us continuing our association with the tour. This is a very ambitious project Kansy has undertaken for an arena production. "His stamp on it is obvious," states Mercer.

The R20 FLM 20K Barco projectors were chosen for Front of House. While not the brightest projector on the market, it had several aspects which translated better for touring purposes. XL worked closely with tour vendor Show Group Production Services (SGPS) on projector packaging and deployment as well. Originally XL looked at the signature upstage center circle being constructed of LED, but the choice was to keep all images consistent in their display medium. Five Barco R22 FLM projectors were used for rear projection on the circle. Pre-build took place in Wilkes Barre, Penn. followed by a month of production rehearsals at the IZOD Center in New Jersey, though pre-production of content had been going on the previous year between Waters and his long time creative associate Sean Evans. "Roger is very involved in the whole design process," says Mercer. "It's his vision we're seeing." Of Evans, Mercer emphatically states, "There is a guy who is very much at the top of his game."

Control playback is accomplished via six active

and six backup Apple MAC Mixers running Virtual VTR software through the Barco Encore System. The challenge every day was how the line of the Wall terminated on the far reaches of the stage as the rake, angle and depth of the seats varied venue to venue. Two Catalyst media servers were utilized to update this parameter.

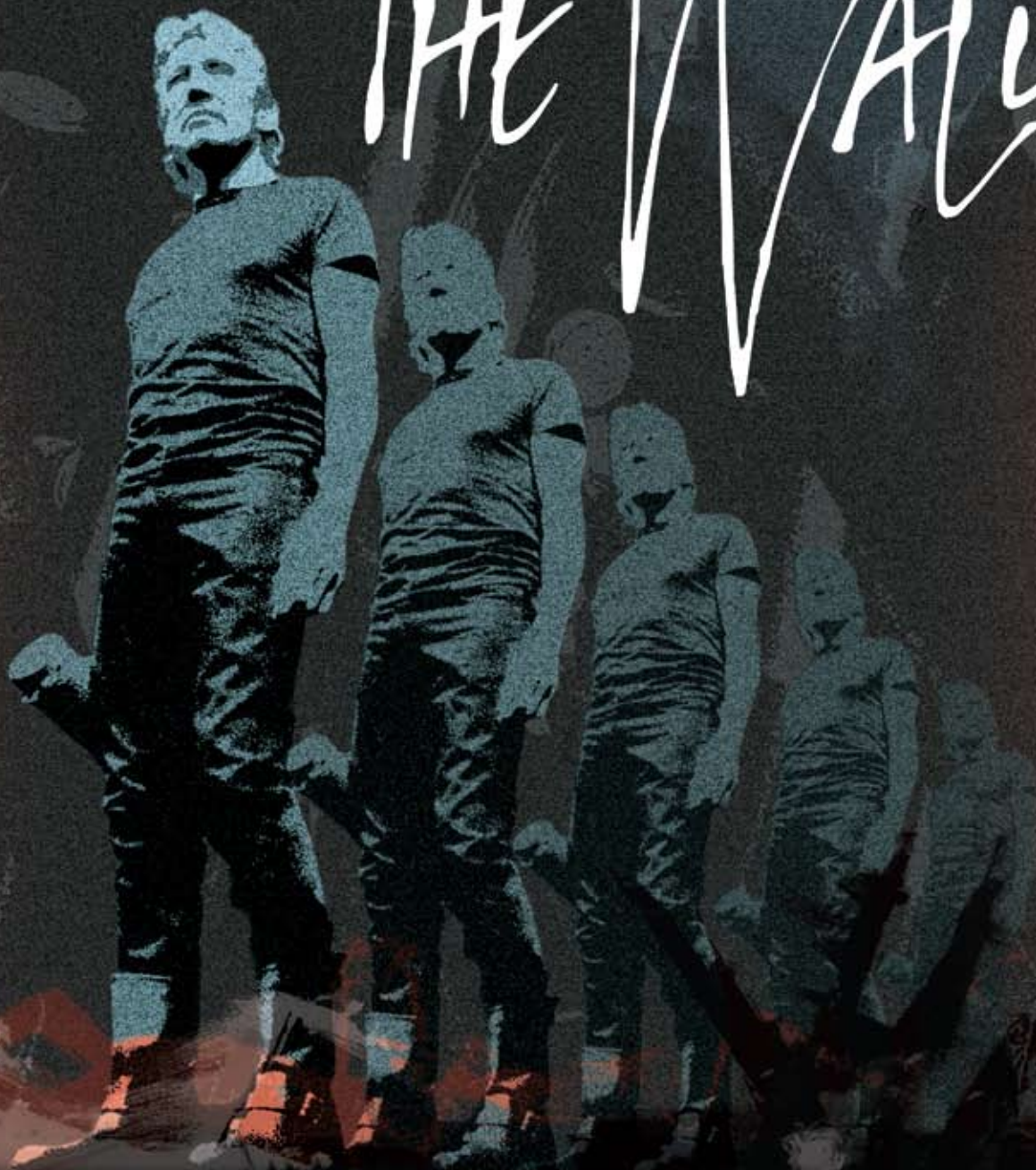
The hang was fairly constant every day. Zoom lens capabilities made up some differences. Though Turner, Head Rigger Dave "Dash" Rowe, and Head Carpenter Brick Builder and Danny Rich knew well in advance each day what they were walking into, the precision of interplay between these three elements of the production demanded a critical eye with adherence to details. "Perhaps more so than most tours," states Mercer.

One of many critical requirements was that all the projection of the cement brick outlines had to fit each "brick" in the wall so these white cardboard boxes actually looked like bricks. The overall image across the wall had to be seamless. Each image had to fit perfectly brick by brick as well. "That was the basic requirement of the show," said Mercer, "making sure every image was perfectly scaled for the bricks." This was achieved with a combination of software and image manipulation, by lens zoom and scaling from the projectors, using the Encore Console and the Barco Projector's onboard soft edging capabilities. "There is no

continued on 36

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# The Wall LIVE IN ONE SONG

BY BILL ABNER

One song. That's all you get - one song. Give us every gag you've got in just one song. In a way, isn't that what we all want to see from the FX guy?

"C'mon man, just shoot your whole wad at once and let's see what it looks like, it'll be cool!" Mark Grega's team at Strictly FX, accepted the challenge thrust upon them. The result? The opening pyro sequence in Roger Waters' *The Wall Live* show uses over 700 pieces of pyro in the first three minutes, with over five hundred of those pieces firing in a 28 second chase. Yeah, *in one song*.

Grega explains the concept and how it came to life. "We went to New York and had several meetings with Roger where we did a lot of "pre-viz" and shot these sequences over and over again in 3D. There were a lot of places in the show that we wanted to do pyro, but since the entire show is front projection (video), anytime we would set off our product, it would white out the video screen." That didn't go over well with the video team. So how did the team overcome that little issue? Grega: "The way we overcame that was simply to put all of the pyro in the opening number. That made it into something that no one has ever seen before, which is shooting seven hundred and thirty three pieces of product in the first song." To put that into perspective for the average joe,

the pyro heavy KISS show only uses four to five hundred pieces in an entire show! It can take the crew as much as five hours each day just to load all of the product and get it ready for the show.

Grega and his team were not only entrusted with the execution of the show, but were responsible for its design as well. "Strictly FX was fortunate enough to also be out with Roger on the *Dark Side Of The Moon* tour, so he trusts us and allows us the freedom to be creative. He has tweaked the show certainly, and everything is approved by him, but he gave us free reign to come up with what we saw in the music."

From the very first note of the show's well recognized first song, "In The Flesh Part 1", the audience is hit hard with visual stimuli. There are 16 pieces of product on the down beat of the song's first note. "Imagine. Some fans have been waiting 30 years to see this show performed live again, and as far as we can tell by their response, they feel that the wait was worth it. They got what they wanted. That whole opening sequence has people just inundated with sights and sounds. They are overwhelmed."

The type of product used in the sequence amounts to a virtual laundry list of effects. While it may appear as if the pyro guys just went to his locker and started tossing cool items onto the truck, actually, the list is well thought out for maximum effect. To begin with, there are about 530 1-second-by-45 silver gerbs, twenty five medium to large SPD or spark devices, one hundred and eighty forty-five foot ultra fast comets, eight forty foot red ultra fast comets with tails, over thirty modules, as well as other effects such as flame balls and podium cannons during the iconic airplane crash at the end of the song. The whole system is programmed and controlled via the state-of-the-art Fire One control system firing software and hardware.

Maybe even more amazing than watching the show itself, is the reliability of the systems. Other than a minor timecode issue on one show, the crew has pulled off over 48 (as of this writing) shows without a hitch or a missed cue. That speaks volumes about the amount of preparation and work that has gone into the show. Add to that the inherent danger of working with this much product night after night, and the result is even more impressive.

In this road-wear, oft-jaded, and sometimes apathetic industry in which we work and live, it's rare to hear any of our number proclaim a show to be the "best show I've ever seen." But seriously, that's the chatter out there about the Roger Waters show. Chatter not by this writer, continued on 36

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background photo: Roger Waters - The Wall Live 2010

small amount of skill required for this entire process,” notes Mercer.

Soft-edging is what creates the “seamless” display shown through multiple projectors. Basically the image intensity is dropped off at the edges creating a “stripe.” The projectors are overlaid on top of these “stripes” creating a 100 percent seamless image across the projection surface; in this case, the Wall.

Custom projector shutters which sit in front of the projector stacks were built by Tait Technologies and dubbed “electronic gaffers tape,” from the old days when gaffers tape was actually applied to control light spill from the projectors. While these were not a solution

invented for this tour, they had to be built on a custom basis for this tour’s application to ensure greater accuracy of imaging and facilitate speed of set-up.

Load in starts at 6 a.m. with the video crew of five coming in at 9 a.m. Front of House projectors are self-contained traveling in custom truss frames built by SGPS. The economy of time and equipment deployment was applied to selection and size of the video crew as well. There are only five accomplishing setup and being ready to start converging the projectors in three hours. These are the men who help make this extraordinarily complex show look “simple.”

Richard Turner is responsible for playback and control during the show. Video Crew

Chief Clark Anderson and Andy Joy are the projectionists for the 15 Barco R20 FLM’s front of house. Gary Burn handles setup of the rear circle projection of 5 Barco R22s. Philip Haines manages the two catalysts, handles playback, and runs cues during the show.

Mercer recalls a comment made by Hamish Hamilton (noted Academy Awards television director) while attending the tour’s LA show, “He told me that he was blown away by the overall production, not just the video, but the sound, set; the whole show. All of us in this industry get somewhat anesthetized, you know, after four songs or so... it’s time to go!” Mercer continues, “This one’s different and hearing that from someone who has seen and produced hundreds of spectacular events is quite a statement.” 📺

Strictly FX continued from 34

or by this magazine, but by other, seasoned touring professionals who you probably know, pros who have seen and produced hundreds and thousands of shows. That’s some pretty strong endorsement coming from as tough a crowd as this one.

While this is certainly a major tour for Strictly FX, and one that will be out until well into 2011 and beyond, it isn’t the only major show in which the company based in suburban Chicago is involved. The 14 year old company is currently supporting Toby Keith’s *Bullets*

in *The Gun* tour, among others. Says Grega, “We’ve been working with Toby since 2001’s *Angry American* tour. We went out and did a show with him, and have been with him ever since.”

While the Roger Waters show is basically the same every night due to the nature of the material, the Toby Keith show will be slightly different every night depending upon the venue. The team usually has two different types of product sets that they can customize for each venue. “One night we might be in a shed, the next at a fairgrounds, and the next at a military base, or even a theater, so the team has to be

really flexible. Once our crew has done a Toby Keith tour, they are pretty much ready and prepared for anything.” (See coverage of the Toby Keith tour in *mPm* issue #10).

Apparently so. Strictly FX is out right now supporting some of the biggest acts on the road today: Keith Urban, Justin Bieber, Black Eyed Peas, Avenged Sevenfold, Jennifer Lopez, and Taylor Swift. Those are some serious shows, and Strictly FX are a serious FX provider. 📺

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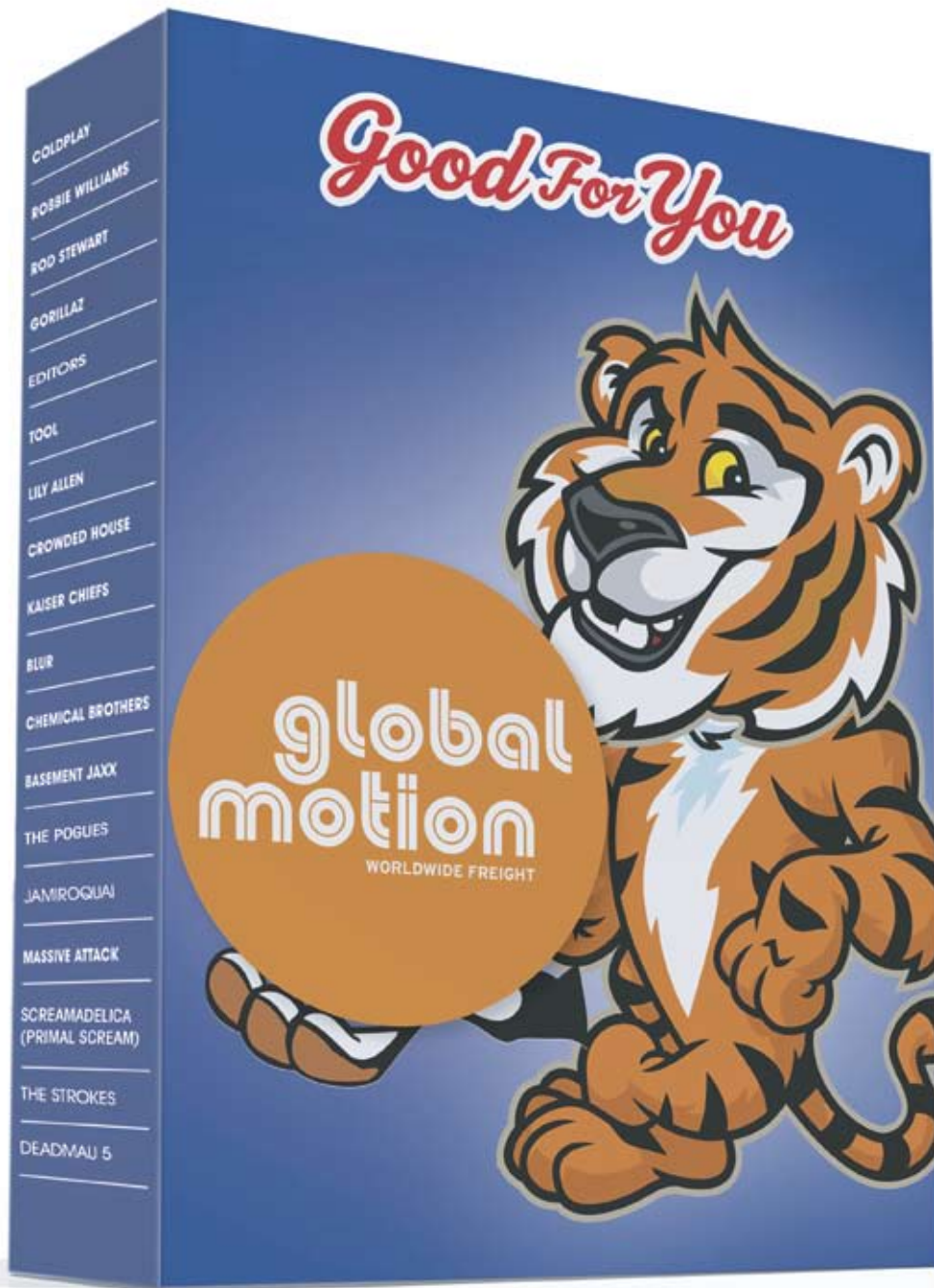
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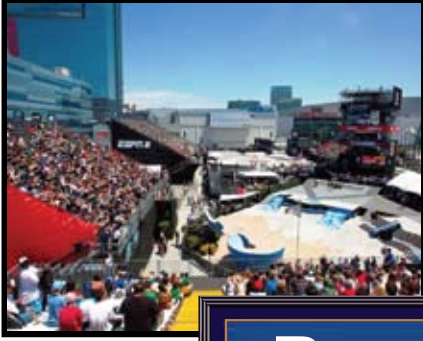
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