

# BRAD PAISLEY

## Virtual Reality Tour

**In the House  
with the Thin  
Lizzy Crew**

**A Gig From Hell  
With the Twins of Evil:  
Rob Zombie and  
Marilyn Manson**

**Warriors  
of the Road  
Reunion**

**>> Plus  
Inside**

**Harness Screens**  
Knows Why Custom  
Projection Screens are  
Becoming Increasingly  
Popular in the USA





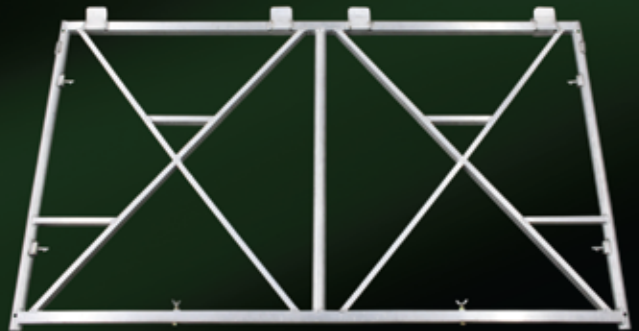
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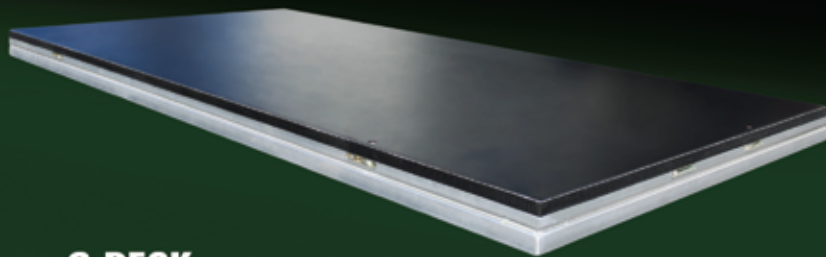
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volume 5 issue 10 2012

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It is hard to believe that the Country Music Award shows are all here. For me, those events always signal the beginning of the end of the touring season. Everything starts to slow down and people start to come home from the road.

This is also the time that our office switches into high gear with both the annual Road Book and the Tour Link Conference to deal with. I can assure you, it is a challenge. At least, with the conference, we have some new, young and energetic people involved this time and it is really refreshing.

Speaking of refreshing, that is just what our cover feature, Brad Paisley's Virtual Reality tour is....refreshing. The show is crisp, clean and professional. I think you will enjoy reading about it. Inside this issue, we also take a look at the Rob Zombie and Marilyn Manson Twins of Evil tour and the Thin Lizzy crew deal with the challenges of using in-house great for a one-off club gig.

So, I hope your year is going well and that you close out strong. Also, please try to attend Tour Link this coming January. We will be honoring A GREAT group of inductees to the Touring Hall of Fame and the event is shaping up to be one of our best. You can still register at HYPERLINK "http://www.tourlinkconference.com" [www.tourlinkconference.com](http://www.tourlinkconference.com).

See you all in sunny Arizona January 24 - 26, 2013.

*Larry Smith*



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# IN THE NEWS



## Lighting

### Bandit Clients Dominate at CMA Awards

Bandit Lites, Inc. is thrilled to announce that Bandit clients were the big winners at the 46th Annual Country Music Association Awards. The event was broadcasted live on Thursday, November 2, 2012. Country superstars Brad Paisley and Carrie Underwood hosted the event, which was held in Nashville at the Bridgestone Arena.

Of the twelve awards given, almost all went to clients of Bandit Lites. Blake Shelton took home Male Vocalist of the Year and the ever-coveted Entertainer of the Year in addition to winning Song of the Year with wife, Miranda Lambert for the song Over You. Lambert also won Female Vocalist of the Year for the third consecutive year. Little Big Town celebrated two wins, both Vocal Group of the Year and Single of the Year with their first #1 hit, Pontoon. Thompson Square, comprised of husband and wife team Keifer and Shawna Thompson, were awarded Top Vocal Duo, breaking Sugarland's five year streak.

Country newcomer Hunter Hayes won Best New Artist. Hayes has been a part of Underwood's current Blown Away Tour, which Bandit has had the privilege of being

a part of. Superstar Kenny Chesney was awarded the CMA for Best Musical Event for his "Feel Like a Rock Star" duet with Tim McGraw.

Additionally, Toby Keith can raise his glass to Music Video of the Year with "Red Solo Cup," and multi-instrumentalist singer-songwriter Mac McAnally took home his fifth CMA "Musician of the Year" award.

Michael Strickland, chair of Bandit Lites, celebrated the success of Bandits' clients saying, "Bandit Lites is very fortunate to work with the top artists in the world. It is a responsibility we take very seriously and we strive daily to help them reach new heights. We develop relationships early in their careers and are a part of their family as they grow and achieve monumental success. We are blessed to have these opportunities and will never sway in our commitment to excellence." ♦

[www.banditlites.com](http://www.banditlites.com)

## Venues

### Inside and Out, Harrah's Sounds Good With Community

Drive through the parking lot at Harrah's Philadelphia Casino and Racetrack any time, day or night, and you're likely to find it packed. With the Philadelphia area's only 5/8 mile harness racing track and a casino larger than three football fields, Harrah's draws a steady stream of customers coming to play, eat, drink, and be merry.

With the casino's close proximity to busy Philadelphia airport, selecting the right sound system took on a critical role. As Jim Esher, Harrah's Technical Director of Entertainment, explains, "We're so close to the end of the runway, I can tell you what kind of sunglasses the pilot's wearing."

Esher specified Community Professional Loudspeakers across a wide range of the venue, including more than 140 Community R.5 loudspeakers for the main casino and gaming room. The expansive outdoor

racetrack area is covered by 15 R1 all-weather loudspeakers, and the multi-tiered, glass-enclosed Clubhouse overlooking the track is served by seven iBOX-Series loudspeakers. A selection of I/O surface-mount loudspeakers covers the Racing Lobby and adjacent sports bar.

One of the casino's most popular watering holes is Barleque's, a bustling restaurant and lounge that offers drinks and dining all day and live entertainment in the evenings. Six of Community's Distributed Design DP6 Pendant Loudspeakers provide background music for the dining area. BSS London BLU80 series audio processors handle signal drive and distribution.





# IN THE NEWS

“The system in Barleque’s is designed for flexibility,” explains the casino’s AV manager Nelson Brittin. “It’s configured as two zones - one for the dining area, the other for the bar. Volume and source selection is handled via a local BLU-10 controller. That way, if there are customers who want to hear the game on TVs over the bar, they can do so without disturbing the customers in the dining area.”

The system, installed in-house, is powered by a network of Crown CTs amplifiers, located in multiple rack rooms and networked via an Entertainment Department LAN.

“The combination of the two zones establishes a pleasant and manageable level of background music throughout the entire venue,” says Britten. “Coverage is consistent, with no hot spots and no voids.” ♦

## Sound

### DiGiCo is in Total Control of Cirque du Soleil’s MJ World Tour

After spending more than a year touring North America, Cirque du Soleil’s Michael Jackson THE IMMORTAL World Tour has finally touched down in Europe. After a run of nine shows at London’s O2 Arena, this production, which fuses the King of Pop’s greatest hits and Cirque’s trademark acrobatic prowess, will then head into Europe for an extensive six-month stint, returning to the UK again in March 2013 for several shows in Manchester and Birmingham. For the whole tour, two DiGiCo SD7s are in control of everything audio at both FOH and monitor positions respectively.

“This isn’t a typical monitoring position, but it’s great, as I am in the perfect place to see the stage and the people,” smiles monitor engineer, Renato Petruzzello, whose SD7 is positioned on the upper tier of London’s O2, looking down on the stage, and boasting a panoramic view of the arena. “I use the SD7’s video screen to keep an even closer eye on the band, too. I split it into four

sections, with a focus on the key musicians; I can always tell if there’s something not quite right going on by the faces they pull – it’s a really neat function!”



Petruzzello is running 140 channels from the console: 80 for the live band, 48 for sequencing tracks, and the rest are utilised for various comms channels. All 11 in-ear mixes are sent to the band members in stereo, and he also creates separate stereo mixes for the Digital Performer operator, four backliners and pyro operator, mime act and two tap dancers in the show, as well as the side-fills.

“Another feature I really like using on the SD7 is the recall and duration time on snapshots, whereby I have the console on a timer; all I need to do is hit the first snapshot and then it rolls through all of the snapshots in the list with this function enabled,” he says. “It’s great for me because it means I don’t need to be hands-on; I can be doing other things like listening to the mixes and making sure the band are getting what they need, without having to worry about changing the snapshots. It makes life easier for all parties.”

FOH engineer, Martin Paré, utilises 166 inputs on his SD7 and has an SD Rack at FOH position to accommodate his favourite bits of analogue outboard. Channel count and the ability to run everything in 96k resolution are two major advantages in using DiGiCo, he says.

“When we were doing the concept of the show, we ended up with 448 I/O and didn’t have enough room on the console we were originally thinking of using. Here, I have

two racks, Ray has two, and there are a further three that we share; I don’t think there’s another manufacturer out there that can accommodate those kind of numbers,” Pare insists. “And in terms of quality of sound, what’s coming out of those pre-amps is pretty amazing. You don’t have to do too much to make it sound great – just plug it in, and away you go. For this show, it’s all about the I/O and the amount of cards you can have in every rack, and the SD7 does the job absolutely perfectly.” ♦

[www.didico.biz](http://www.didico.biz)

## Workshops

### Milos Runs 2012 Safety Workshop in China

Trussing manufacturer Milos recently hosted a product seminar and safety awareness workshop at its facility in Guangzhou, China, which was well attended by entertainment industry professionals from Hong Kong, Macau, Thailand and Indonesia as well as mainland China. The two day event - the fourth that Milos has conducted in China - was modeled on the workshops that Milos regularly runs in Europe.

The workshop was led by Milos China’s Chief Engineer Marek Zubor, Milos Sales Manager Michal Zykan, and Director of Milos Guangzhou Stephen Huang. The workshop illustrated the high quality of Milos trussing, roofing and staging products and emphasized the benefits of using the best products and always following safe working practices.

Attendees were treated to a full factory tour of the impressive Guangzhou plant, seeing first-hand the manufacturing processes in action. This was followed by an overview and profile of Milos regionally and globally, with an outline of future business and development strategies. Then the most popular of Milos’ extensive current product ranges were examined in depth, with particular focus on new products introduced to China this year – the T12 modular display system and x.Truss range. This was of particular interest to those from rental companies and design

firms, and the delegates split up into smaller groups to participate in complete test-builds. The workshop concluded with a safety session, led by Zykan and Zubor, which outlined safety issues specific to temporary trussing and environmental factors that can impact its safe use.

Milos is currently experiencing a healthy growth of business in Southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent, which is seeing a growing demand for quality. Milos has also recently spearheaded new business in Korea and Australia. 2012 has been a major year for the company, now the largest aluminum trussing manufacturer in the world with its acquisition of the TOMCAT and Litec brands. This is boosted by its policy of talking directly and straightforwardly to end users, offering fast and efficient service, and having a large range of products available in stock to ensure speedy delivery. ♦



[www.milosamerica.com](http://www.milosamerica.com)

## Special Effects

### Justin Bieber's "Believe" Tour Believes in Special Effects from Strictly FX

Pop star Justin Bieber goes on a worldwide tour supporting his album "Believe" with pyro, lasers, confetti, fog and more from the effects experts at Strictly FX.

When it was time to put Justin Bieber back on the road for his current "Believe" tour, a production filled with pyro, lasers, confetti, fog and more, Production Designer and Tour Production Manager Tom Marzullo turned to the creative experts at Strictly FX for their expertise. "Strictly FX is always my first call, for the service and creativity that

I'm looking for. In fact, they've been my go to effects provider for several years," explains Marzullo.

Pyro from Strictly FX, in the form of gerbs and sparks are part of the first moments of the show, when an image of Bieber appears then takes flight over the audience. The first song of the set, "All Around the World," is awash in effects, including lasers, ultra-fast comets, and confetti airbursts- a pyro effect that drops confetti over the audience. "They're not your typical way of doing a confetti drop. Tom said, 'if everyone is doing standard confetti, let's not,'" explains Strictly FX Partner and Bieber Effects Designer Mark Grega. There's also an automated whirling waterfall of pyro that appears during "Believe," red hot flame projectors in "Never Say Never," and gerbs in "She Don't Like the Lights." During the final moments of the last song of the production, Bieber's mega hit "Baby," comets and mines explode upstage. The pyro is controlled by Strictly FX's Reid Nofsinger. "Reid is a consummate professional whose main goal is 100 percent perfect shows night after night," states Grega.

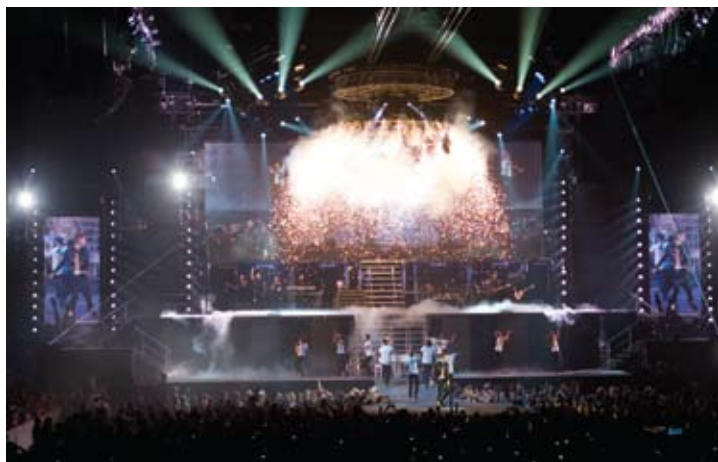
The intricately programmed lasers- three high powered RGB custom lasers- one upstage center, and one each upstage left and right in the wings, as well as two green diode lasers on the thrust, are one of the visual backbones of the production. "I would say we use the lasers more than most- the pyro and the fog are accents, although there are some times in the show where they're the signature of foundation look of one of the numbers that we do," explains Marzullo. The lasers, programmed by Doug Cenko and assisted by Nick Meyer, are intricately woven into the lighting cues of the show. "The laser looks that are on the Bieber show are extremely artistic-you're

not going to see anywhere else," states Strictly FX Visuals Director and Partner Ted Maccabee. The lasers can be found during "All Around the World," the "One Time," "Eenie Meenie," "She Don't Like the Lights," "Beautiful," "Never Say Never," "As Long As You Love Me," "Believe," "Boyfriend," and the finale, "Baby." "For the tour, the collaboration we had with lighting co-designer Chris Kuroda allowed the lasers to look unique and play an important role within the overall design," notes Grega.

The production also includes thick white fog courtesy of two low smoke generators in "Catching Feelings," eight cryojets that are used during "Never Say Never," and even has eight specialized electric snow disposal systems that distribute what appears to be snow over the audience for almost eight minutes during the acoustic medley that includes "Be Alright" and "Fall."

Justin Bieber's "Believe" tour is on the road until April of 2013. ♦

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# NEW HIRES



## David Cooper Joins L-ACOUSTICS as Regional Sales Manager for Asia

L-ACOUSTICS strengthens its commitment to the Asian market by announcing the appointment of David Cooper as regional sales manager for the territories of China, Japan, Korea and Southeast Asia.

Cooper has developed a strong career in sales and marketing for a number of professional audio manufacturers, notably in the Asia Pacific region. In his new role as regional sales manager, he will be responsible for building solid and supportive relationships with Asian counterparts to aid in distribution as well as developing sales targets in Asia.

Director of Business Development Jochen Frohn states, "Here at L-ACOUSTICS, we take our appointments very seriously, and for this position we were looking for someone with management expertise who would also be an asset in the Asian region. With David's track record of performance and technical expertise, we are confident that we will enjoy collaborating with him."

"L-ACOUSTICS has become a leader in its field and I've long admired the way this status has been achieved," comments Cooper. "My perception is that the brand has innovation and quality at its core, and this was evident during my visits to the HQ at Marcoussis. I was also struck by the very friendly, team-based, vibrant atmosphere that runs through the company, and this made a very big decision actually quite easy for me." ♦

[www.l-acoustics.com](http://www.l-acoustics.com)

## Richard Willis Joins Christie Lites Nashville Rental Rep Team

**Christie Lites**, one of North America's premier entertainment stage lighting and rigging suppliers, appoints Richard Willis as a new member to its Rental Rep team. Willis recently joined the company as a National Account Rep in the Nashville office and serves his client base from all 12 Christie warehouse locations across North America.

Willis has played many roles in the concert touring industry since his start in the 1980s. With a law degree in hand, he left New Zealand to tour as a lighting tech. He returned to New Zealand in 1989 and soon became general manager of Theatrelite - a manufacturer of lighting consoles and dimmers - where he established a dealer network throughout Australia and Asia. In the early 1990s he moved to Tennessee to join Bandit Lites as marketing manager, moving up to vice president. While there he established relationships with the industry's top designers, production and tour managers for WWE, Van Halen, Queen, Radiohead and more.

"After being out of the touring market for the last four years," Willis said, "it is my great pleasure to join Christie Lites and get back into the business that I enjoy so much. I never realized how big and successful Christie Lites is, and the employees are happy, friendly and highly skilled. I am pleasantly surprised by all the support I have received from the industry. It's great to be working with all my friends again."

Christie Lites Owner/CEO Huntly Christie said, "Richard Willis? We Canadians get along okay with the Kiwis - it's probably our shared inferiority complex. LOL! Richard's arrival to Christie Lites is certain to bring more color, depth and personality to our already eclectic and somewhat crazy group of reps." ♦

Contact Richard Willis at Christie Lites Nashville, cell 865-384-6894 or email [rwill@christielites.com](mailto:rwill@christielites.com)

## Scott Vontobel Joins Creative Stage Lighting

Creative Stage Lighting has announced that Scott Vontobel has taken a position with the company as Business Development Manager.

Vontobel has a strong lighting and entertainment industry background. He was previously with Lex Products, TMB, and Global Distribution Systems and has strong experience in introducing products and brands to new markets and ensuring customer satisfaction. Vontobel also brings a experience in cable and cable assembly products, power distribution, and more. ♦

[www.creativestagelighting.com](http://www.creativestagelighting.com)



## Robert Habersaat Rejoins HARMAN's Studer as VP of Sales

"A return to the family" is how Robert Habersaat describes his new appointment as VP of Sales for HARMAN's Studer team as he rejoins Studer after seven years working as Head of Broadcast Sales for Dr.W.A.Günther in Switzerland. He takes over the Studer brand sales job following Adrian Curtis's new appointment running HARMAN Professional's EMEA Regional Sales Office which created two vacancies, this one for Studer, the other for Soundcraft.

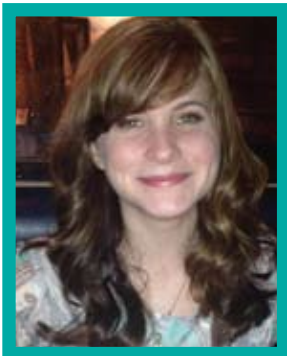
Robert originally joined Studer in 1996 managing sales for Switzerland and distribution in Germany, Austria, France, Italy and the Nordic region. In 2001 he headed up the Studer sales team before joining Dr.W.A.Günther, the HARMAN Pro distribution partner for Switzerland.

Habersaat commented, "Studer has been the continuous thread running through my entire career; as a customer, distribution partner and as a staff member of the team. I am very proud to return and contribute to one of the best companies in the professional audio industry."

Studer General Manager Bruno Hochstrasser added, "To have Robert return to the Studer family gives me a great deal of satisfaction.

He is a wonderful individual with a lot of professional expertise in the broadcast business and most of all Robert is a loyal and very hard working team player always putting the business and our clients' interests first. I am looking forward to working with Robert again and a bright Studer future." ♦

[www.harman.com](http://www.harman.com)



## Bandit Lites Adds Media Relations Coordinator to Family

Bandit Lites is pleased to announce the hiring of Sharon Gross as Media Relations Coordinator. Gross will be the primary contact for advertising inquiries, social media and general public relations.

Sharon Gross has previously worked with Scripps Networks Interactive and The Knoxville News Sentinel.

Raised in Nashville, Tennessee, Gross graduated with a bachelor's of science in communications with a major in journalism and electronic media from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville.

"This is the opportunity of a lifetime," Gross said. "Bandit has been a pillar in the industry for decades, and to be fortunate enough to be a part of the Bandit family is beyond my biggest dreams. I look forward to growing with the company as it continues into the New Year and beyond.

"Sharon adds a new excitement to Bandits' media presence," said Pete Heffernan, Bandit Lites president, "and a completely different approach to reaching our clients." ♦

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## Harness Screens Knows Why Custom Projection Screens are Becoming Increasingly Popular in the USA

Outside of the USA, event organizers and set designers have extensively adopted custom-made projection screens for state-of-the-art sets to create exciting projection and lighting effects. In Europe, the Far East and Middle East, presentation companies carry snap frames and AT frames in stock, but not in the extensive range of sizes held in the USA, particularly the larger sizes. Inside the USA, companies such as Scharf Weisburg and Creative Technology have invested heavily in snap frames and AT frames as it seems the majority of live events are designed around fixed picture sizes. This may be because of the venues, cost of hiring the venues, ease of access, labour restrictions or even show budgets; and of course designers and producers utilising available hire stock.

In Europe for example, the live event industry has evolved over many years to one that uses bespoke made up screens for specific events. Screens can be stapled into frames by set builders or supplied with eyelets and installed into freestanding or flown truss frames by rigging companies. By using these solutions, producers and designers are able to gain a great deal more flexibility in terms of size, shape and surface when discussing their requirements with their projection suppliers than with fixed frame solutions and it is this ability to be flexible and creative that has resonated with show designers.

Custom projection screens are gaining an increased prominence in the USA, and Harkness Screens, a leading provider of projection surfaces for the live events and

cinema industry has seen a dramatic increase in the number of enquiries received over the past 12 months.

“There’s a definite ramping up of interest for custom projection surfaces in the live event market,” says Richard Mitchell, Worldwide Marketing Manager at Harkness Screens. “Traditionally a difficult market to crack, our products are starting to gain the type of interest and support from event designers and organizers in the USA that we’ve traditionally see from their European counterparts. It’s a growing realisation that whilst fabric surfaces or fixed frame screens have been acceptable in the past, there’s now a need to do something more superior to give the event the necessary quality look and feel it requires,” Mitchell adds.

Proof of this could be seen at the Robin Hood Foundation’s Annual Gala Dinner held at the Javits Center in New York in May 2012, one of a number of recent projects in the US where Harkness’ event screen surfaces have been deployed. The event designers (Peter Crawford and Doug “Spike” Brant) for the Robin Hood event sought to create a New York subway scene for the event and show fabricators Atomic Design turned to Harkness’ Translite™ surfaces to not only meet specific design requirements but also provide a high quality projection solution.

“Rather than using fabric surfaces, the designers mandated the use of custom-made projection screens to provide crisp and clean imaging to really get across the key messaging and to give the event the

prestigious look and feel it deserved,” explains Chloe Rich, Marketing Manager at Atomic Design. “Given the ambient lighting conditions for the event, the venue size and various space issues, it was vital to have projection surfaces that addressed all the specifications.”

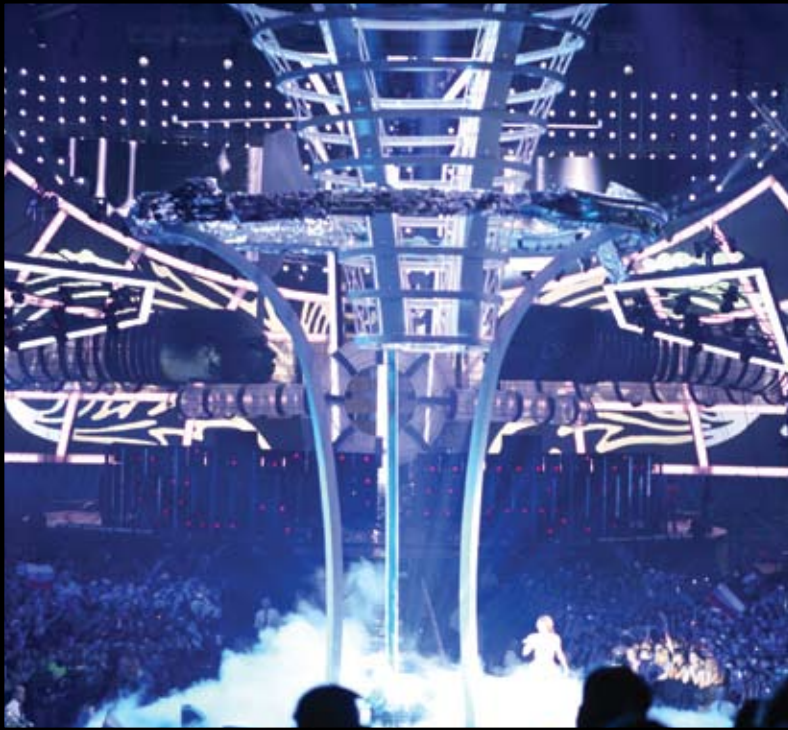
In the events industry one of the key factors in product purchasing/rental or hire is driven is the ability to source products with fast turnaround times. This is one of the main reasons why fixed frame screens and tension fabrics have for so long been the backbone of projection in the US market however with the market clearly turning, Harkness Screens is one of a number of screen manufacturers taking a proactive approach to the US live events market.

“Demand is definitely growing and with an increasing number of clients, it’s a market we feel we need to better service, says Tony Dilley, Head of International Sales at Harkness Screens. “Previously we’d manufactured event screens in Europe and shipped them to the USA. Now we’re holding a stock of our front and rear projection materials in our cinema screen factory in Fredericksburg, Virginia meaning we can make screens in the US and meet much tighter deadlines than before.”

As projection screen technology continues to develop and designers and producers become more demanding, there will be a need for a more robust and durable 3D screen surface for passive front projection which can be rigged and de-rigged with ease for continual re-use. Products such as Harkness’ Stagelite Stereo, a passive 3D front projection surface designed specifically for events which debuted at the Pula film festival in Croatia has already drawn interest from across the world, even in its early development stage.

With 3D projection on the rise and show designers in the US looking to create visually impressive scenes to make their projects stand out, it seems only natural that the requirement for high quality custom projection solutions is likely to increase over the coming months and years. ♦

For further information on Harkness Screens, visit [www.harkness-screens.com](http://www.harkness-screens.com)



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# WARRIORS OF THE ROAD REUNION

BY MICHAEL A. BECK

On November 3, 2012 a small group of devoted friends gathered together in the upstairs private dining room of La Cazuela Mexican restaurant in Lawrenceville, Georgia to rehash old stories and find out what has been going on with one another in the years since they all worked together in the glory days of the 70s and 80s. It was the third annual "Warriors of the Road" reunion.

But this isn't just a party for anyone who has ever worked in the touring world. It's a much more tightly focused group than that. Indeed, this is a group of people who worked out of the Atlanta area during the aforementioned glory days of the 70s and 80s during a time when such legendary acts as Mother's Finest, .38 Special, Atlanta Rhythm Section, Hank Williams Jr., Poison, Patti LaBelle, Triumph, Fat Boys, The Temptations, Billy Squier and many other acts of the day were touring out of Atlanta.

Jeff Jackson who serves as GM of Crew One's Atlanta Office, toured as production manager for .38 Special and lighting designer / production manager for Atlanta Rhythm Section, has a pedigree that goes back to some of the earliest days of the [greater] Atlanta music scene.

Jackson described the nature of the culture of industry professionals in the Atlanta area. "I can't really answer the question as to why so many ended up in the business. I would say that Robert Roth's lighting company or companies had a lot to do with it because he did a lot of the major acts and that brought a lot of them to be looking for people to work on tours. My scenario was such that Robert and I were roommates and one morning he came down the stairs and said, 'Atlanta Rhythm Section is looking for a lighting director. Do you want it?'"

While Jackson admits that at the time he wasn't enamored

with ARS, he took the job and to this day they are among his closest friends.

"It's almost like the bonds you make in college when you go out and tour with people for a year or years," said Jackson. "You form a bond with these people unlike any other job and you just don't want to lose touch with them."

The annual reunion was the brain child of Fred "Fuf" Owen who worked for R. A. Roth in the late 70s through most of the 80s. "I had been out of [touring] for a while and I hadn't seen people," Owen explained. "The only time I get see people is when they were in town with a show or through email and I just thought it would be great to get everyone together. I just started a thing on Facebook because that seems to be the easiest way to get a hold of people, and that's how it started. The main thing was just getting old friends back together again."

While this year's turnout was a bit smaller than the first two gatherings, the group was impressive nonetheless with people coming from California, New York and Wisconsin. "The first two years were unbelievable," recalls Owen not hiding his surprise at the initial turnout. "Yeah, I was surprised, especially when you had people coming in from Indiana, Las Vegas, New York. It wasn't just the Georgia connection. It was people from all over the country."

One of this year's attendees was *Mobile Production Monthly* writer Mike Wharton who toured out of the R. A. Roth shop for many years. "Just seeing some of the people I hadn't seen in quite a few years a lot of fun. I actually reconnected with some people who were mentors in the early development of my career," said Wharton. "Fred [Owen] was a big influence in my early days. He took me on my first rodeo with Hank Jr."

Events like this are there to catch up with old friends, trade the stories that can't ever be printed and raise a glass to those who couldn't make it or have shuffled of this mortal coil. They're great fun and everyone leaves saying we have to get together more often only to reconvene one year later at the next one.

That being said it's odd that we don't hear of these gatherings taking place more often. ♦



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# Brad Paisley Virtual Reality World Tour

## WELL PLANNED AND EVEN BETTER EXECUTED

STORY AND PHOTOS BY MICHAEL A. BECK

One of the more exciting country music shows on the road is Brad Paisley. It's difficult to find a guitar player anywhere who doesn't call Paisley anything short of sensational. All of that being said, it falls incumbent upon Paisley to go out and put on a show that keeps pace with his "live wire" musical reputation.

The experience of seeing a Brad Paisley show begins before the audience members ever get to their seats. The tour has a specific crew that sets up and maintains a separate event in the parking lot known simply as "The Escape". This is an area set up outside of the main stage of the venue in the case of the shed or outside of an arena. The centerpiece of "The Escape" is the Stageline 260 portable stage called the "Virtual Opry Stage".

The idea came to the production team when Paisley's manager Bill Simmons called Production Manager Kevin Freeman, "He said, 'Hey we want to do a plaza stage for an afternoon show. We'll take it with us and you've got this much to spend. Can you make it happen?' I said, 'I don't know but we'll figure it out.'"

When the tour pulls in a detachment of nine people, Plaza Coordinator Kari Kuefler, Stage Manager Kerry Gammon, Audio Techs: Marc Esterin, Steven Wharton, Stage Techs: Casey Feldman, Aaron Jenkins, Clint Killian, Plaza Emcee Keesy Timmer and Plaza Truck Driver Greg Hasty, head directly to the area where the The Escape will be presented and begin setting it up. The decision of the location is finally decided upon the day of the show, although there is some advance conversation leading up to the gig.

That decision is made by Plaza Coordinator Kari Kuefler, "It's something where people can come in early and engage and have fun and it's all free. It's a way to get the fun started leading up to the main stage," said Kuefler. However, the fun isn't limited to the start up acts that perform on the Virtual





Opry Stage. The area has several activities and exhibits beyond the stage. The majority of these other areas of interest and attraction are sponsor driven and are set up and managed by the sponsors, but there are some that need help getting set up. This falls to a team of eight local stagehands, although staffing of some of the “fun activities” like slip-n-slides and bungee runs are often manned by volunteers from Paisley’s fan club.

Kuefler, who also serves as the tour’s production assistant, comes from a background in corporate marketing, which meant she had to get up to speed pretty fast regarding how things happen



in the concert world. Who better to help in the education than Kerry Gammon who served as stage manager for The Escape and load master for the main stage. “Kerry and I balance each other so well,” Kuefler volunteers. “I come from the sponsorship and marketing side whereas he comes from the production and music industry side and we really have taught each other so much over the last three years we’ve worked together. He opened my eyes to the logistical realities when I would tell him, ‘Kerry I don’t care what you do, I just want it to look pretty. I come from that client side.’”

Gammon agrees with that assessment, “Because

Kari comes from the corporate world where everyone is a client, one of the things she had to get used to is that we’re all in the bush together and we can say things a little differently in order to get the job done. Certainly you can say things a little differently than you can in the corporate world. Other than that she does real well. And she taught me a lot about what I call the ‘pretty stuff.’”

When the audience eventually made it past The Escape into the main stage, the production is as high tech as any country show on the road. This idea is driven directly from Paisley himself. “We don’t hire a [production] designer when we put the show together,” explains Freeman. “We all come together at Brad’s house and sit around his kitchen table. It’s Brad, his manager Bill Simmons, myself, [Stage Manager] Bill Farris, [Lighting Designer] Dean Spurlock, Scott Scovill [Moo TV] and sometimes we’ll have the booking agent and maybe Brian O’Connell from Live Nation. Brad bounces ideas off of everybody and we pass a note pad around the table until we have a working idea of what we’re going to do. Then I come home and sit in front of AutoCAD® for as long as it takes and we build this thing.”

As is the case with most shows today, the center piece of the production was a 60’ x 24’ video array comprised of three screens of Elation EVLED1024SMD 20mm LED Video Screen provided by Nashville based Moo TV. Additionally, the offstage IMAG walls were 12 mm Barco SLite panels. The IMAG screens were used differently in arenas than in sheds. In the arena configuration they were flown a little farther upstage than what is most often seen in other tours. This was done to add greater width to the overall look of the set. However, when the show pulled into the sheds, the walls were floor supported on the far offstage aprons of the stage. Video Director Bailey Pryor explained, “Brad loves to go stand in front of them several times during the show. Also because

they’re so much brighter than the [IMAG] projection screens that all sheds use, we choose not to use the house screens. It would create a redundant shot.”

The system was fed by one stationary FOH camera and two handheld cameras that roamed the stage. Having the cameras on the stage as opposed to in the pit served multiple purposes according to Pryor, “I just like them up on stage. It gives them more flexibility and it’s not that up-the-nose shot. And Brad just loves them on stage. Although they’re not a prominent part of the stage look, Brad considers them part of the show and he plays to them a lot.”

The result is a much more personal presentation for IMAG purposes. Another added benefit of having the handheld cameras on the stage rather than in the pit is that it eliminates the need for a pit. This puts the audience roughly six feet closer to the stage thus offering Paisley greater personal contact with his fans and vice versa, especially when he goes out onto the B-stage or the stage set up behind the mix position, a sort of C-stage (as it were). In another rare twist, all video content for this show is managed and cued by a video engineer/playback operator from the video mixing position rather than the lighting console.

In addition to the three manned cameras, the production also had two robocams fixed on the pedal steel and the drum kit.

Much of the video content was computer generated animation produced by Paisley himself. Beyond that, he is very hands-on with every aspect of the content process. “A lot of time Brad has no idea what content he wants in the video until he sees it all set up,” says Kevin Freeman. “At that point they bring in the content boys and they camp out in the back room. He [Brad] understands how all that stuff works. He knows his way around Final



Cut Pro® and he also does all the animation himself on ToonBoom [animation software] which he learned in about a week, so he can go back to the guy doing the video content and use actual 'video speak' to do it."

As the show opened, the whole stage should have hit the audience like a train with the whole array of the upstage video wall in full effect. However, it seemed a bit muted. But it wasn't just the video wall that looked toned down and even diffused. It was the entire stage and everything – and everyone – thereupon. The riddle was answered when five Slovakian made Kvant 20 watt RGB lasers (provided and operated by Jim Martin, owner of Atlanta based Peachtree Laser) opened up projecting images onto a Bobinette.

Often also spelled as 'Bobbinette' or 'Bobbinet', this product has a hexagonal weave with larger holes than traditional theatrical scrim. It is often used on film sets where more transparency is needed. This transparency is created when the Bobinette (of which there were four of various sizes based upon the size of the proscenium) is lit from behind. It also produces more diffused lighting, resulting in a softer, warmer looking film scene shot. When the initial laser look was finished, the Bobinette, which was hung from a travel track on the downstage line, was pulled away by two crew members in a dead run.

In the beginning of the tour when the show was playing arenas, the Bobinette - used at two different times during the show - was deployed and removed via a kabuki drop system. However, this would have posed a bit of a problem when the tour moved into sheds as Freeman explained, "You're talking about a 2,400 square foot piece of material that's about the same weight of pantyhose outdoors. If there's a slight breeze, you drop that thing and it'll cover the whole band. We knew that going in so we put it on a track."

The audio portion of the show was provided by Sound Image. The main hang was JBL Vertec 4889 cabinets with 4880 used for subs. Under the hangs were QSC Wideline cabinets which were used for front fill along the down stage line. Freeman mixes the show through a Midas Heritage 3000 analog console. Pulling 38 inputs from the stage with an additional few effects and video inputs he admits to an old school approach to mixing. "I'm one of the old guys," he says laughing. "Nothing against digital, it's just that I'm very comfortable with this console. I've had it now for ten years or so. If I'm thinking about changing something I can just go there and change it. I don't have to go someplace, select an option and go work on it somewhere else."



**Lighting Designer Dean Spurlock did a fantastic job of feathering the lighting design and video display together for a seamless show.**

3000 Spots, 23-VLX Wash's, 20-VL 2500's and 20-VL 3500 Wash's (52 for stadiums). All but 16 of the Color Blast units were used in the in the main truss. The 16 color blast fixtures were used for interior lighting on the four stage risers. There were also six VLX's lined across the upstage that eventually got cut. The final touch was two truss

sense of ease about the day.

Freeman is emphatic about one thing in the beginning of a tour, "One thing I can't preach enough during rehearsals is, 'spend this two or three weeks here working really hard to make sure that for the rest of the year you don't have to. You put a lot of thought into what you're doing and make your job easier. If you come up to me two months down the road telling me you need more people or something like that I'm going to laugh at you.'"

That being said, Freeman understands that times change and sooner or later he will as well, "If I continue to make my living doing this [mixing audio] I'm eventually going to end up with a digital console, but no one has built one yet that I feel is better than the one I'm using now."

towers separating the upstage video walls, which were loaded with four Elation 5r Platinum Beams and two vertically mounted ColorBlaze units per tower.

The result of that mindset is a situation wherein from early on in the tour Freeman can spend more time doing his job and less time wandering around the production looking over the crew's shoulders.

Far too often – in the opinion of this writer – lighting is reduced to the roll of an ancillary effect in support of a massive video presentation such as Brad Paisley's Virtual Reality World Tour. However, such was not the case. Lighting Designer Dean Spurlock did a fantastic job of feathering the lighting design and video display together for a seamless show.

When the tour went back out in the spring, 22 VLX3's were added with ten placed on the floor across the downstage line and six attached to vertically mounted hexagonal pods positioned upstage on either side of the stage. "We got a bunch of the VLX's and we really liked them. Then they came out with the VLX3's and he [Paisley] wanted some stuff on the floor to play around and we went with the X3's with the three engine LED," recalled Spurlock. "That light's cool because you can control each engine individually and get some nice effects out of it."

Freeman concludes, "If I have to check on your work I've hired the wrong person for the job." ♦

The backdrop of the whole look was a 40' x 120' LED star drop that blew through the video wall beautifully during several looks throughout the night. At the center of the main body of the lighting rig is a "Y" shaped truss (made possible by a custom "Y" connecting truss section fabricated by Tyler Truss) that extends roughly 32' downstage from the video wall. On either side of the center truss are three curved truss sections arching out in their respective directions. On the 2011 tour this truss configuration was used only it flew flat over the stage and didn't contain the center truss. Although the 2011 look was layered and gave a good amount of dynamic definition to the system, Spurlock wanted to change it up. So the center truss was added and the entire system was raked upward so that it sloped down toward the upstage. This gave the look of an eruption.

One of the most striking aspects of the show was the stark visual contrast between the full on head jarring power of the system when it was turned up to 11 and the subtle elegance of nothing but the star drop and a few back lights. Spurlock went there many times. "If you're out there for two hours you can't just hammer these people the whole time," explained Kevin Freeman. "They've already sat through two acts before you get there and if you slam them to the wall they're going to walk out of there saying 'dadgum, I'm tired.' We want them walking out saying 'boy I liked that. I want to see that again tomorrow.'"

With the exception of 49 Color Blast 12's, 28 Syncrolite 10k's (used in stadium shows only) and eight Elation 5r Platinum Beams, the tour went out with nothing but Vari\*Lite instruments; 20-VL

Outside of the talk of technology and logistics there was a theme that played as a subtext to everything that took place all the way through the day. While every aspect of the job is approached with an impressive level of professionalism and sincere concern for all things from the weather to the smallest, most innocuous detail, there is a

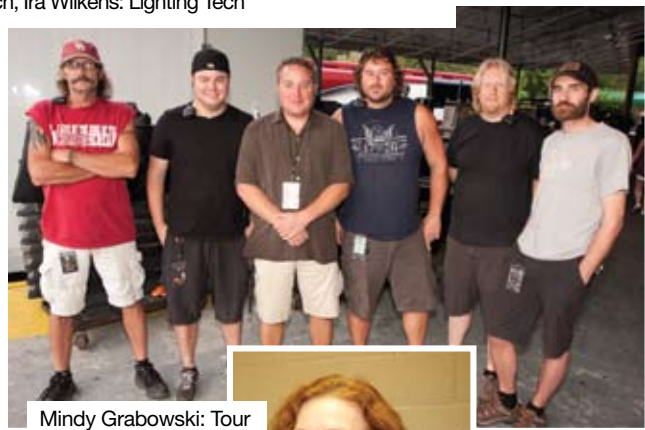
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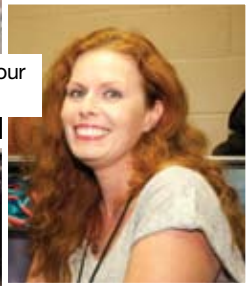
Brace Balthrop: Lighting Crew Chief, Matt Mays: Lighting Tech, Dean Spurlock: Lighting Director, Dustin Sciaraffo: Lighting Tech, John Nichols: Lighting Tech, Ira Wilkens: Lighting Tech



Chris Hallman: Video Tech, Cole Duddleson: Handheld Camera Operator, Joe Monahan: Video Playback, Bailey Pryor: Video Director, Video Crew Chief, Jamie Mortimer: Handheld Camera Operator, Jessie Quinn: FOH Camera Operator, Quentin "Q" Voglund: LED Wall Tech



Mindy Grabowski: Tour Accountant



Ben Enos: Tour Photographer/Fan Club/Website



Brent Long – Tour Manager



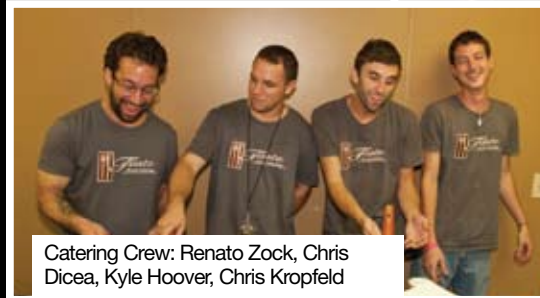
Kari Kuefler: Plaza Coordinator, Kerry Gammon: Stage Manager, Marc Esterin: Audio Tech, Steven Wharton: Audio Tech, Keesy Timmer: Plaza Emcee, Clint Killian: Stage Tech, Aaron Jenkins: Stage Tech



A.J. Gammon: Lead Set Carpenter, Jason Bailey: Rigger, Motor Tech, Greg Harvey: Lead Rigger, Marcus Martin: Set Carpenter



Kevin Freeman: FOH Engineer/Production Manager, Zachery Janney: Huge Brad Paisley fan, Bill Farris: Stage Manager



Catering Crew: Renato Zock, Chris Dicea, Kyle Hoover, Chris Kropfeld



Kevin Varnado: Guitar Tech, Dave Rouze: Guitar Tech, Chris Dowis: Drums & Keyboards



Gregory Hancock: Audio Crew Chief, Scott Ferguson: Monitor Tech, Kevin Freeman: FOH Engineer/Production Manager, Mark Gould: Monitor Engineer, Brendan Hines: FOH Tech



## Brad Paisley Crew & Vendors Crew

Tour Photographer/Fan Club/Website - Ben Enos  
Production Assistant - Kari Kuefler  
Tour Accountant - Mindy Grabowski  
Radio Tech - Doug Paisley  
Stage Manager - Bill Farris  
Assistant Stage Manager/Load Master - Kerry Gammon  
Tour Manager - Brent Long  
Production Manager - Kevin Freeman  
Instrument Techs

Drums & Keyboards - Chris Dowis  
Guitar Tech - Kevin Varnado  
Guitar Tech - Dave Rouze  
Audio Crew  
Monitor Engineer - Mark Gould  
Audio Crew Chief - Greg Hancock  
FOH Tech - Brendan Hines  
Monitor Tech - Scott Ferguson  
FOH Engineer - Kevin Freeman  
Lighting Crew

Lighting Director - Dean Spurlock  
Lighting Crew Chief - Brace Balthrop  
Lighting Techs: John Nichols, Matt Mays, Ira Wilkens, Dustin Sciaraffo  
Jim Martin - Lasers

Video Crew  
Video Director, Video Crew Chief - Bailey Pryor  
Video Playback - Joe Monahan  
Camera Operators (handheld): Cole Duddleson  
(handheld), Jamie Mortimer (handheld),

Jessie Quinn (FOH)  
LED Wall Tech – Quentin Voglund  
Video Tech – Chris Hallman

Riggers  
Lead Rigger – Greg Harvey  
Rigger, Motor Tech – Jason Bailey

Set Carpenters  
Lead Set Carpenter – A.J. Gammon  
Set Carpenter – Marcus Martin

Merchandise  
Swag Tech – Mike Osgerby

Bus Drivers  
Lead Bus – Driver Grady Carroll  
Band - Donnie Andrews  
Crew: John Hill, Jerry Rutland, Donnie Townsend, Jim Taylor

Catering Crew  
Brett Bond – Caterer  
Chris Dicea, Noe Pineda, Renato Zock, Hugo Hernandez, Mike Jerome, Eric Greenwalt, John Bailey, Eric Frost, Burnie Cochran, Eric Johnson, Tyler Huffman, Kyle Hoover, Chris Kropfeld

Truck Drivers  
Lead Truck Driver, Merch Truck – Eddie White  
David Blanton, Randy Chamberlain, Paul Dunham, Joe Hickman, Marc Hinds, Ed Lester, Bob Sheehy, Jimmy Thomas, Scott Haynes

Plaza Stage Crew  
Plaza Coordinator - Kari Kuefler  
Stage Manager - Kerry Gammon  
Audio Techs: Marc Esterin, Steven Wharton  
Stage Techs: Casey Feldman, Aaron Jenkins, Clint Killian  
Plaza Emcee - Keesy Timmer  
Plaza Truck Driver - Greg Hasty

## Vendors

Audio  
Sound Image  
Dave Shadoan  
Escondido, California

Lighting  
Spurlock Lighting & Design  
Dean Spurlock  
Burns, Tennessee

Video  
Moo TV  
Scott Scovill  
Madison, Tennessee

Lasers  
Peachtree Laser  
Jim Martin  
Dunwoody, Georgia

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Atlanta Rigging Systems  
Jon Wismer  
Atlanta, Georgia

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## IN THE HOUSE WITH THE THIN LIZZY CREW 2012 FACING THE CHALLENGES OF THE IN-HOUSE ENVIRONMENT

BY RICHARD BENNETT/PHOTOGRAPHY BY HELEN BRADLEY OWERS

There are a number of phrases in the English language that are guaranteed to make the heart sink, “You need to see a doctor, it shouldn’t be that color”, “I think I’m pregnant” and the heart stopping, “My mother’s coming to stay for the weekend.” For many road crew, you can add the management phrase, “We’re planning to do an intimate gig on this run,” to the list.

While these one-off shows afford bands the chance to ‘go back to their roots’ and the fans to see their heroes in a unique environment, it can make even the most hardened and road-weary crew member shudder as they contemplate the inevitable headaches that await them with the venue’s in-house equipment.

There are many challenges facing any production team that find itself in this situation. From the uncertainty of the type and condition of the gear in the venue, down to the limited size of the place, resulting in a “what do we leave out” decision having to be made. For Thin Lizzy’s crew, coming off the back of a run of festivals, turning up at London’s 550 capacity Under the Bridge club for two sold out shows, was not as bad as it could have been.

“One major change in the industry over the past few years is that most of the smaller venues have websites,” says Production and

Tour Manager Tony Selinger. “You can go on-line and have a look at the setup and the space, long before the date of the show. You don’t have to do a site visit, but can still do your research. To an extent you can prepare yourself, but you’re still not sure what you’re going to get until you turn up. Our biggest concern was ‘Are we going to be able to get all our backline on the stage’”.

Another key aspect that Selinger believes is vital in dealing with these types of shows is the mental attitude of the crew. Having your head in the right place at the right time can make or break your day, along with managing your expectations.

“You can’t walk into a place like this and expect it to be Wembley Arena. Our production is not set up to play really small venues,” continues Selinger. “I would much

rather have our own PA and lights with us every night, but that’s not possible in these situations. Most of our crew prefer working with their own gear, so put them in an in-house situation and they can get a bit grumpy,” he says.

For Lighting Director Mick Thornton, it helps to have a set routine when it comes to turning up at a smaller venue, as he explains:

**“Most of our crew prefer working with their own gear, so put them in an in-house situation and they can get a bit grumpy,”**

-Tony Selinger

“The first thing I do is check out the fixtures and console. For me the key to getting it right, is before you arrive at a venue like this, you have to take on board that you are walking into somewhere that is going to be fairly limited on the clearance side of things, so as long as you keep that in mind and you’re not in a situation that your intending to bring any special effects in as such, then you should be onto a winner.”

Situated in the shadow of Chelsea Football Clubs, Stamford Bridge Stadium in North London, Under the Bridge boasts an extensive range of in-house equipment, including 10 KF740’s, six SB1000’s and four KF730’s, amongst its EAW supplied range of speaker boxes. FOH carries a Yamaha PM5D-RH and two [Light and Faderwing] grandMA desks. The stage lighting consists of 16 Martin Mac 700’s, eight Martin Mac 401 RGB&W’s along with 20 IPix Satellite LED fixtures.

The in-house set up differs from what the Lizzy crew carry on a normal tour, with the band preferring to go for an old school big rock show, consisting of 240 par cans, 38 Robe 600 E’s, spotlights only with no wash lights, and a load of LED supplied by Southampton based GLS and a small amount of pyro.

“One of the biggest problems with using in-house equipment is that most of the time the setup has been put together by people who don’t understand the needs and requirements of a live band on the road. Here there have been some issues with the PA. Soundcheck was not good, and it was down to the way the system is set up. It had side-hangs that you can’t control individually. All the processors are locked down, so the sound is bouncing off all the surfaces, which has been a bit of a nightmare,” says Selinger.

He admits struggling to communicate with the venues staff on what the production, crew and band need to be able to do their job, as Selinger explains:

“We must be the biggest act they have ever had here, combine that with the fact that we have been on tour for over six months so we know what we need to deliver a show, and still the venue staff don’t understand that. Communication needs to be established early on, along with an understanding that the staff at these venues are not used to dealing with this type of show, so they can be a bit unhelpful at times. Once the staff got over the sight of a 45 foot truck turning up at the back door, they kind of got on a bit better with us.”

Thornton’s customary on-arrival stage inspection presented him with his first challenge of the day. As with most small venues the stage is not always on the big side, a situation overcome by adding a two foot extension. The sloping ceiling from front of stage to the back wall, with a 12 foot clearance, curtailed the use of the infamous Thin Lizzy logo. This was rectified by projecting a digital image of the logo via the in-house media server.

The house lighting system consisted of a fixed motion





house grandMA2 desk.

“Personally I am not a great lover of using in-house gear, but the grandMA2 is a nice board. I think that even on an arena or stadium tour, you would never use more than 20 percent of its potential. There are some really clever things in it, but for me finding the right platform to exploit the board to its full potential would be a struggle,” says Thornton.

To a certain extent, the in-house set-up should be used to aid the individual’s principles when it comes to what they do. In most instances, the crew members won’t know what their dealing with until show day. However, by sticking to their way of doing things, the integrity of the show won’t be affected. Thornton will always approach the in-house situation with two main things in his mind, getting the timing and focuses right.

“As long as the in-house board can help me do that, then that’s a good start. I will use the lights to create a big show, bigger than it looks. Even if we are using an in-house set up, it can still be achieved. It’s all down to vision. The way Lizzy plays, there is no need to overdo the lighting. There is no need to overcomplicate things, which with an in-house situation is good, as you never know what the limitations of the desk are going to be. I am a very visual person. I’m an old art student so the stage is a blank canvas to me, on which I can paint,” Thornton explains.

For Selinger the main ingredient for dealing with the one-off “intimate shows” is the crew you have around you, something that he keeps in mind when it comes to assembling his team.

“You hire the best the people you can, who are all-rounder’s. I’m not going to hire a FOH who is only good working with a desk he likes. He has to be able to work with, whatever is thrown at him, that’s where it counts in an in-house situation” ♦



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# A GIG FROM HELL WITH THE TWINS OF EVIL

BY BILL EVANS AND BOB LINDQUIST



ZOMBIE



ROB ZOMBIE AND MARILYN MANSON





**R**ochester, NY. Could have been just another gig but, 'twas not to be.

About the venue...It's a 100-year-old armory that has been abandoned and totally unused for decades. It was bought from the city for the grand sum of a grand. The owner did some basic repairs and set himself up as a concert promoter. They have done shows, but nothing on the scale of the Rob Zombie/Marilyn Manson Twins of Evil tour. A big, bad, rock/pop/metal show with a massive PA, big staging and all the things one expects when Mr. Zombie hits the stage.

When Bob Lindquist arrived around 9 a.m. for load-in, things were already hours behind.

The stage was not what the production needed and they actually had to hit the home improvement store next door to buy sheets of plywood to reinforce the stage before anything could be loaded in.

When the time came for doors to open, even after busting hump from the moment the stage was in shape (but still too small), they were just getting ready to line check. Long lines, pissed off crowd and unhappy act ensued. And then to top it all off, the promoter threw the tour under the bus in the local press. It was obviously not a great day to have the press around, but house dude Joel Lonky and the rest of the Sound Image crew kept their cool and made the best of a super-trying situation.



**mPm:** So, the easy stuff. Just a few gear questions to fill in the blanks. By the way, thanks a ton for doing this. I'm sure the last thing you guys needed was a press guy hanging out on a very tough gig day. But we are both really grateful for the time you guys took to make this happen. Is this still a Sound Image gig?

**Lonky:** Yes, still with Sound Image.

**mPm:** You've been out with Adamson for a bit now and have as much experience with the E15 as anyone out there. Thoughts on the rig now that you have been using it for a while? What do you like? What could be better?

**Lonky:** I still love the rig. I like the rigging, easy up easy down. The sound is on par or better than any other A+ rig out there like the K1, D&B, etc. I like it better than the K1 for the sheer power and intelligibility of the system, and it doesn't get blown away in the wind like K1. I like that the kevlar drivers stay clean even up to ungodly db levels like 120+ A-weighted. The box has a couple of little things that need to be tuned out but nothing major. It's the same as every other box. It stays smooth throughout a venue with no real weird spots or hot spots. The E15 has so much power that in some cases the subs get overtaken by the top boxes. That isn't happening to me now as I have 18 Adamson T21's in endfire configuration.

**mPm:** We are definitely into the second round of the line-array wars. E15, VerTec2 or VTX or whatever they call it, K1. Any thoughts about where all of this is headed?

**Lonky:** Being a market-driven industry, I'm sure these evolutions of PA's will continue onward and upward.



**mPm:** Is there enough market for this many large-format boxes?

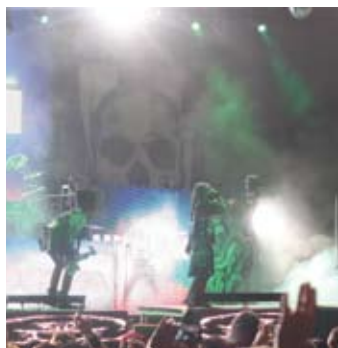
**Lonkey:** Worldwide, maybe. But it will kill itself out eventually, kind of like the airlines. Survival of the best-sounding and sad-to-say, maybe the best marketed.

**mPm:** I know a lot of people who think the real action is in the smaller boxes on a straight logistics level, but big tours need big boxes. Question is, how many big tours are we gonna see in the next few years? I know. Probably too philosophical, but any thoughts would be interesting.

**Lonkey:** That market segment might be in a stagnant or declining point at this place in history. We are seeing fewer "dynasty bands" and more of an organic-type of touring in small and medium markets. Being that it is harder for a band to reach the level of touring that will require a big box system for its own tour, the future will probably be lending itself to the festival style of tours like Mayhem, Uproar, etc...for those big box PA's. Plus people (the general public) don't care so much about audio quality like we did, say in the 70s and 80s. The mp3 algorithm and the mass use of "earbuds" has gotten to a point were people just don't care or understand about true audio quality anymore, kind of an "Idiocracy" effect to the consumer masses. Recorded audio listening quality has gone backwards.

**mPm:** You're a Midas guy I do believe? Pro 9 on this tour? Lots of choices out there. Why is Midas your choice?

**Lonkey:** Yes I am a Midas guy. I'm running a Pro 9 out here on the Twins of Evil tour. Its simple. The Midas is the best sounding console on the market. It has the most natural front end I have



found on any console. I can saturate the front end and it doesn't get dirty or have any of the audio penalties associated with a digital front end. It's a digital XL4 plain and simple.

**mPm:** Anything unusual like mic choices? Challenges of doing Mr. Zombie shows? Any extra issues with having Manson on this run?

**Lonkey:** Well I am running a Protools HD9 rig on the Midas via a KT9650 network bridge AES50 out of the desk converted to MADi into an AVID Madi I/O. That gives me the power to record 48 tracks and have virtual soundcheck through the Midas. The reason it's only 48 is that I am also running WAVES native rack as well via another DN9650 into a RME192 card via Thunderbolt to a MacBook Pro, so 24 in/outs are dedicated to the WAVES, otherwise the ProTools can do 62 tracks. Manson is self contained in regards to the console as they are using a Digidesign Venue.

**mPm:** What about mics then?

**Lonkey:** All the brass on the drums are Neumann KM184s, the kicks are Shure 91 (new style) and a Beyer M88. The snare is a Shure B56 and a Neumann KM184 on the bottom and toms are AT350 and Sennheiser E406. John 5's guitar rig is a KSM32 and a Heil PR31-BW mounted in a single speaker ISO box and a Radial JDX, with a Shure SM57 onstage for emergencies only. I try not use any stage mics for the guitars or bass as it so loud up there. We only use live monitors, no IEM's. As for the bass, the bass pre-line is a Radial Active DI and the post line is a Radial JDX, no bass cabinet mics are used. Vocal mics are for John and Piggy are Shure B58's and Mr Zombie is on a wireless B58. ♦



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## Donald Barger "Buddy" Aley, Everyone's Buddy

BY MICHAEL A. BECK AND ELIZABETH "SUSIE" BECK

There's a little hole in the wall diner in Greenbrier, Arkansas just outside of Little Rock called "The Wagon Wheel" wherein you can grab a great southern breakfast and the best coconut cream pie on earth. There are about 20 tables and booths in the place and when you walk in you hear the usual cacophony of sounds one would expect in a rural diner. But in this place there is always an extra audio track coming from a round table positioned over by the pie rack.

Described by one occupant as the "talkin' table" this is where a group of older gentlemen gather every morning for breakfast and solve the world's problems before going out into the day. On the morning of November 7, 2012 the rhythm of the friendly banter around the table was missing a beat. One of the group's standard fixtures, Donald Barger "Buddy" Aley was not part of the conversation and the entire place - patrons and employees alike - were aware of the gaping hole in the room.



The fact is Buddy hadn't been there for quite some time, but on this day it became painfully obvious that the daily talkin' table summit conferences would never include his folksy wisdom again. The previous morning (11/6/12) Buddy Aley lost his herculean two and a half year battle with pancreatic cancer. It is said that only one percent of pancreatic cancer patients live longer than six months beyond the date of their diagnosis. However, if you knew Buddy you would understand exactly why he did so well. He never gave up. He was not just a warrior, he was a happy warrior.

You always knew he was just waiting for the next chance to laugh at something. Spontaneous laughter was his expression of the way he saw life. That's not to say Buddy didn't have a serious side. Indeed, he served in the Navy, Marine Corps, Air National Guard, and finally retired from

the Army National Guard. "His military background and patriotism showed out in just about everything he did," recalled 30 year U. S. Air Force retiree Ken Montgomery. "It was there in the way he conducted himself and the way he spoke to people."



While military service was a thread that ran through his life since he was 16 years old, there was another piece of his life that had been present off and on for 30 years. Buddy was a member of I.A.T.S.E. Local 204 in Little Rock.

"He [Buddy] and I hit it off right away," said Local 204 business agent Rusty Hardy. "He was always kind and compassionate. If anyone ever needed help with anything Buddy was the first one there. When he lived in East End and we had an early morning call after a late night load-out he would let me stay at his place rather than making the long drive to Malvern."

While Buddy was respected as a friend to many people within the union he was also highly regarded professionally. "Everyone looked up to him and he taught our younger members a good deal as well. He served as steward on several occasions," added Hardy.

"I never saw him have a bad day," said Montgomery, who is also an IA 204 rigger. "He was a service-before-self kind of guy. He was always making sure his guys were safe and taken care of."

Buddy was a larger than life character who lived as he saw fit and never cared what anyone thought about it. The notion of political correctness was beyond laughable to him, it was offensive.

He is preceded in death by his parents Clara and Wilson Aley and three sons, Gary Don, Randy and Patrick.

Survivors include his loving wife of 11 and a half years Annabelle Proffitt Aley, daughter Amberle Folsom, son Ronnie Aley, daughter Billie Jo Helsel, and a special daughter Cheli Hunter, son in-law Steve Hunter and grandchildren, Zach Hunter, Jeremy and Chelsea Folsom, as well as great grandson Izak Folsom. Other survivors include sisters Elizabeth Ann "Susie" Beck of Courtland, New York and Donna Gospodarski of Buffalo, New York, loving aunt and uncle Billie Jean McDaniel and Arthur (Mack) McDaniel, special friends Billy English, Rusty Hardy, Larry McHughes, Phillip Nelson, and his hero Jim Proffitt, along with many cousins, nieces, nephews and loving friends.

In the final entry of her journal on Caring Bridge ([www.caringbridge.org](http://www.caringbridge.org)), Anne wrote, "He was by far the most positive person I knew, and I miss him terribly! He was the love of my life, and we had the best 11 and a half years together, and I thank God for that."

Buddy was by no means the perfect man. He was as flawed as the next person. However, through those flaws he showed compassion, wisdom, humor, and a steadfast adherence to his convictions. He was deeply committed to and protective of those he loved starting with his gentle-spirited wife. In the words of a plaque given him by the members of I.A.T.S.E. Local 204 during a retirement party thrown in his honor, Buddy Aley was everyone's "Buddy" and we miss him badly.

As of November 6, 2012 neither heaven nor earth will ever be the same.

Rest well Uncle Buddy. ♦

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