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Miranda Lambert

ON FIRE

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FROM THE *Publisher*



This issue of *mPm* features the Miranda Lambert On Fire tour. This show features some of the best production companies in Nashville. On a personal note, the people heading up those companies had a lot to do with my early success in Nashville when I moved to town. Scott Scovill of Moo TV, Ralph Mastrangelo of Clair and Pete Heffernin of Bandit all have been supportive of my work and understood what we were trying to achieve with a different look at the touring industry. There have been several other people in town who were significant in my tenure, including Ben Jumper, Everett Lybolt, Chip Huffman, Mike Slarve, Mark Dodd, Steve Daniels and many, many others.

My experience has not been unique. The industry in Nashville is certainly insular, to some degree, but once the community accepts anyone into the rank of trusted professionals, life becomes a lot easier. This community is certainly competitive, but not in the same manner as I have experienced in other major markets. In Nashville, personal qualities are important. Professionalism, honesty, integrity, client service are all old fashioned qualities that are still respected and appreciated. That is the core of the industry in Nashville and the people involved in this tour personify those qualities.

As the summer continues, the busy time of the season can cause everyone to be so focused on the day-to-day tasks that are time and energy consuming, that it may be a good time to reflect on some of the issues that are pressing on all of us. Stage safety, certainly has become a primary focus for many of the industry leaders. New DOT regulations as well as new pending State and Federal regulations will be discussed in detail once the season winds down at the end of the year. To that end, we are already starting to make plans for Tour Link 2013. The discussions will continue to expand and action groups are bound to be formed. This is a very healthy development in an industry that has always tried to address issues before they become major problems.

So, have a safe and profitable Summer and try to make plans early to attend the annual Tour Link gathering in January and add your voice to the continuing discussions that are shaping our business.

Larry Smith

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IN THE NEWS



Lighting

HIGH END SYSTEMS Adds Musical Colors to Tangerine Dream's 2012 Tour

High End Systems products play an instrumental role in Tangerine Dream's spring/summer *Electric Mandarine Tour 2012*.

The German electronic music group has become internationally known not only for their mind-entrancing concerts but also for their film soundtracks for *Risky Business*, *Firestarter*, *Sorcerer*, *Near Dark*, *Legend* and others.

LD Andreas Fink, from Austria's Preworks, specified 2 High End Systems DL.3 Digital Lights and 2 SHOWGUN 2.5 and 2 SHOWBEAM 2.5 automated luminaires. He's controlling the rig with a Road Hog Full Boar with Road Hog Full Boar Playback Wing including DMX Extension Kit.

The DL.3 Digital Lights, which feature an on-board media server, allow Video Designer Michael Koschorreck to use his custom content in HD quality. "Incredibly, it was my first experience with Digital Lights from High End Systems," he said. "The light output and quality of the images matched my imagination, and the real time access to all parameters - all I can say is wow. We placed the DL.3s on the road cases left and right side of the band; it was so easy!"

LD Fink points out that the DL.3's Collage Generator feature - which allows the seamless merging of multiple DL.3 units to project one panoramic image - is "the simplest" way to quickly manage displays across big screens using more than one projector. They mostly used a projection size of 12 x 5 meters (39 ft by 16.4 ft) to enhance the music using non-specific images, concentrating on movement and textures.



"The HD SDI input is also really great for using custom content which can be produced in real time," Fink adds. "So we had saved time with the quick set up possibilities and didn't lose any of our creative time to work with all the other features."

Fink was also able to create intensive looks with the SHOWGUN 2.5s (spot luminaire) and SHOWBEAM 2.5s (wash luminaire), using them as back lights - even in performance venues which allowed no smoke or haze. Both fixtures offer the innovative LED tracking system ring around their lenses, allowing the designer to use them together with the exiting beam or alone as an LED wash and effect light.

"The mix between SHOWGUN 2.5 and SHOWBEAM 2.5 gives the possibility of playing with different beam sizes and splitting beam looks. The LED tracking system makes the fixtures unique," Fink says. He chooses the Road Hog Full Boar on

this and past tours, describing it as the console that gives him "the power and intuitive handling" of current Wholehog OS.

Preworks' Andreas Reinbacher praises Andreas Fink's quality work created with using the HES Digital Lights in combination with the Wholehog consoles, saying it is a perfect pairing of skill and equipment.



Over 300 ROBE LEDWashes for BMW at Geneva Motor Show

Over 300 Robe ROBIN 600 LEDWash and PureWhite moving lights were specified by LD Peter Heilig of Sfs Project Aschaffenburg to light a special pavilion area showcasing the new BMW 6 series Gran Coupe on the BMW stand at the 2012 International Geneva Motor show.

A steel superstructure was designed in collaboration with architects Puchner & Schum from Munich, together with engineers Structure GmbH from Frankfurt.

This was then clad with fibre glass to create two curved three dimensional latticed set piece walls surrounding the two Gran Coupe vehicles, one of which was on a revolve. There was a circular ceiling above the area with three rings of trussing for lighting positions, and at the back of the presentation space was a circular hires LED video screen.

For the duration of the show, the car's promotional video was looped and shown on the screen, accompanied by a stylish light-show that integrated the cars within the set, so choosing the



IN THE NEW

right luminaire was absolutely crucial to Heilig's lighting design.

Previous to this event, he had not used Robe products, and before making his decision, he conducted several shootouts. He was looking for a luminaire with a good quality of light, a flat and even beam field, smooth colour mixing and a good zoom range.

After the first couple of shootouts it fast became apparent that the only LED wash fixture meeting all his criteria was the Robe ROBIN 600 LEDWash and the ROBIN 600 PureWhite SW (the smart-white version of the luminaire).

Robe pulled all the stops out to deliver the LEDWashes in a short lead-time, and made a special order for the 42 SmartWhites as Cree normally produces this LED multi-chip only in the US. Ninety-four of the 311 units used for the installation were supplied in white housings.

A hundred and twenty LEDWash 600s were ensconced in the narrow corridors behind the latticed set walls either side of the Gran

Coupe arena – both on the floor and in the air, and they lit a cyc wall behind, as well as the set itself. The rest of the fixtures were rigged on the three circular trusses in the ceiling.

Heilig had to create three different lightshows for the overall event – one for the BMW Group Conference, one for the DTM (racing series) press conference, plus the one for the on-going show presentation.

Sound

D.A.S. AUDIO Aero 50 Line Arrays Make their German Début

Googosh is a star among Persians with good reason: she is feted worldwide as an idol and a pioneer of a unique singing style. However, a Googosh live concert is a rare event, and Hamburg, Germany, was lucky enough to recently host one of her very rare live performances.

Soundart GmbH & Co. KG from Bochum has been the technical firm of choice for Persian concert

organisers for several years now and enjoys an excellent reputation in the field. This was an ideal opportunity to introduce the as-yet unknown in Germany Aero 50 Line Array system by D.A.S. Audio to the crowd of demanding music-lovers that descended on Hamburg's O₂ World arena to see the Persian idol perform live.

Lars Schnier, D.A.S. Audio System Engineer in Germany, opted for a left/right configuration of 10 Aero 50 units on each side of the stage as the main PA system, plus eight Aero 12A systems as PA out fill. The system was supplemented by 15 LX-218A powered subwoofers in cardioid formation with the aim of limiting the low end to just the stage. The self-powered Aero 50 system was operated using 16 Lab. gruppen FP 10000Q amplifiers and four Lake LM 26 processors, which actively powered Aero 12A systems via two D.A.S. DSP-4080 system controllers.

Lars Schnier had only positive things to say about the process and results of the D.A.S. systems at the O₂ World arena, "Thanks to the very useful planning tool offered

by D.A.S. Audio, we were able to determine all of the parameters in advance of the concert, which saved us a great deal of time, particularly in terms of construction, in combination with the excellent handling of the system. Speaker performance is very strong. Both systems have excellent output reserves and reproduce music extremely accurately, something that was particularly noticeable during the complex arrangements performed by the artist."

A 6,500-strong audience followed every nuance and delicate syllable uttered by the singer, and the highly percussive and dynamic repertoire played by Googosh made for a goose bump inducing performance.

Soundart is to provide support to D.A.S. Audio in Germany from now on. In cooperation with Lars Schnier, who is in direct contact with the Spanish manufacturer, the successor to the tried-and-tested Aero product line, the Aero 2 Series, has been introduced to Germany. Close collaboration with the D.A.S. network means that each and every challenge can be met head on by a competent, reliable support service.





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Elcea to manufacture Sensaphonics custom sleeves in Europe

Custom-fit sleeves for Shure SE Series earphones will now be available directly to European IEM users.

Sensaphonics, the in-ear monitoring technology leader, and Elcea, the Netherlands-based specialist in custom hearing solutions under the Elacin brand, have reached an agreement whereby, effective immediately, Elcea will manufacture Sensaphonics custom-fit sleeves for Shure earphones in the European market.

“We are very pleased to be working with Elcea,” says Sensaphonics President and founder, Dr. Michael Santucci, Au.D. “Our companies share a common heritage and mission: to provide our customers a safe, high fidelity listening experience without compromise. Now European users of Shure SE Series earphones can get the same custom-fit silicone sleeves that Sensaphonics provides in North America.”

A leader in promoting hearing health in the European market, Elcea already possesses the manufacturing expertise to produce the precision-fit soft silicon sleeves that set Sensaphonics apart.

“The cooperation with Sensaphonics and Shure is a very welcome addition in delivering what we promise to our customers: an outstanding sound experience,” states Joris Wels, CEO of Elcea.



Joris Wels, CEO of Elcea

Sensaphonics is Shure’s preferred provider of custom-fit earphone sleeves, allowing users of the SE Series earphones to achieve a secure, comfortable fit with improved isolation. Elcea will manufacture and sell the same sleeve design in Europe, co-branded with its Elacin mark and the Sensaphonics name.

For more info, please visit: sensaphonics.com
elacin.com

Video

WorldStage Devises Smart Solutions for National Tour of “American Idiot: The Musical”

Hailed as “the first great musical of the 21st century” by the Toronto Star, “American Idiot: The Musical” is now on national tour with AV support from WorldStage, the new brand for Scharff Weisberg and Video Applications.

Playing dates in Los Angeles, Dallas, Seattle and San Francisco in the recent and upcoming months, the tour commenced directly after the Broadway run of the show, based on Green Day’s Grammy Award-winning multi-platinum album.

The production features an extensive amount of video with more than three dozen flat-screen monitors, provided by Vizio, suspended in frames throughout the obliquely angled warehouse-like living space by set designer Christine Jones, who netted a Tony Award for the Broadway show. The set’s walls also serve as large projection surfaces.

WorldStage was tasked to provide a cost-effective video package that would satisfy and support the sophisticated design requirements and which could also withstand the harsh and rigorous environments of a touring show. In the end, the delivered package was comprised of a specialized playback system, a high-brightness projection configuration, and a one-to-one signal distribution system capable of delivering the bold and brilliant imagery created by projection and video designer Darrel Maloney.

Maloney crafted hundreds



of video images for the show. Imagery for each song ranges from Iraq war footage and clips of Britney Spears to graffiti art, home movies, test patterns, paint splatters, color bars and live video.

“I’ve always respected WorldStage a lot, and when it was time to do this show I had to put together a package that would be extremely road-worthy,” says the tour’s technical supervisor Rhys Williams. “I needed a team that could support me and everything I needed to get accomplished. WorldStage, with Lars Pedersen and TJ Donoghue, was the perfect complement to what I needed.”

According to Williams, all the video elements “make a really strong impact on the show.” Before the tour’s current technical team came on board it had been determined that front projection could not be used. But Williams thought that point deserved reconsideration. After meeting with Maloney and members of WorldStage’s New York City office, Williams felt it was indeed feasible to do front projection for a tour that would play a variety of different theatrical venues from coast to coast.

Williams set up the show’s walls and a trio of Christie Digital S+16 projectors from WorldStage near his shop to test the projection system they devised. “I felt we couldn’t do front projection from a balcony rail since we wouldn’t always have a balcony rail in the theaters on the tour,” he notes. “We needed a system that would work and be within our envelope. WorldStage instantly translated our desires into a work-

ing system within our budget.”

He points out that the stage set used on tour, which is black with gray and white elements, is “much darker” than the one used on Broadway. “We had to have projectors strong enough to pop against the dark background,” he says. One of the Christie S+16 projectors is mounted stage left and projects onto the right wall of the set. Two S+16s are mounted stage right and project onto the larger left wall. “Nobody can tell that there isn’t one projector shining from the front,” says Williams. “Three images appear on stage as if they are one – it’s pretty amazing.”

A major dilemma for the WorldStage team centered around finding an economical solution to meet Maloney’s desire for an independent feed for each of the monitors and projectors. In total, 40 channels of video were required to feed the various display devices. Initially, budgetary constraints looked as if they would restrict the design to just six or eight discrete feeds to the monitors – a major limitation for Maloney’s design. “But by working with Lars and other members of the WorldStage team we were able to get 37 discrete images on 37 monitors,” says Williams.

WorldStage’s solution? Three United Visual Artists’ D3 4ru quad-output media servers each outfitted with a 4x multi-display adapter. Two United Visual Artists’ D3 2ru machines served as main and backup masters and provided additional video feeds. WorldStage also designed the signal distribution system includ-

ing the aforementioned 4x units, a large matrix router and various signal converters. Since fragile and expensive fiber optic cable was not a practical option for a touring show, the company opted for HD-SDI via coax, which is proving to be a robust choice.

“Thanks to the collaboration of Darrel, WorldStage, D3 and [UVA’s] Ash Nehru we were able to come up with an extremely good solution,” says Williams. “The system is rock solid and does more than we ever hoped it could. We believe we’re doing more video more aggressively on tour than on Broadway. That’s partly because the set’s walls are a little over half as tall as they were, but there are still the same number of monitors so their density is greater. As a result, they have a bigger impact.”

XL VIDEO Steps Up To Stadiums with Coldplay

XL Video continues to supply Coldplay’s *Mylo Xyloto* (MX) world tour with LED screens, cameras / HD PPU, media servers and control plus crew, which has stepped up to play stadiums shows in the UK and Europe.



The expanded design features XL Video’s new Pixled F-12 LED screen product. XL Video is the first company in the UK to take delivery of this impressively bright and clear surface.

The screen layout for this leg of the tour - developed by production and lighting designer Paul Normandale - features five striking circular F-12 surfaces onstage. The central one measures 9 metres in diameter and is flanked by two at 8 metres and then two at 10 metres on the outside. The two 8 metre screens are slightly angled to maximise site lines for the audience seated on the sides of the stadiums.

The live camera mix is cut by Andy Bramley, and the media server system is designed, programmed and operated by Ben Miles. They work closely on the show’s very memorable aesthetics with Normandale, Coldplay’s creative director Phil Harvey and Misty Buckley who styled the lively graffiti themed set decoration with the help of graffiti artist Paris.

The screens contain over 1140 Pixled F-12 tiles, flown as squares from special screen support towers supplied by StageCo and masked with circular set fascias constructed by Tait Technologies - splattered with graffiti.

XL Video worked closely with Tait Technologies to design a custom touring system for the F-12 screens to make rigging straightforward and safe. This also includes sets of dollies in which the screen panels are stored for transit, giving full portability and expedient truck packing.

XL Video is supplying seven Sony HXC-100 cameras in total. Two are

fitted with long lenses, stationed at the FOH mixer position and on the base of the house left follow spot tower; two hand-helds are at the front-of-stage, one on a tripod; two cover either side of the central ramp coming offstage into the audience and the final one is a hand-held onstage.

Bramley is using a GV Kayak 2.5 M/E mixer/switcher with Evertz router and Zander Multiviewer and also running Thundering Jack’s Video Dust effects software on two Macs.

Ben Miles is running two active Catalyst media servers via a grandMA lite console each with a hot backup and fitted with a tripleHead2Go, giving three outputs per device – allowing all the screens to receive independent feeds. He takes in four of Bramley’s seven camera feeds plus his program TX as an HD feed, and 90 per cent of the show is full HD with 720 pixels output to each screen.

A number of effects, including flips, solarization, monochrome and the frame drops which bring a filmic quality to the images in key songs, together with the masking and all routing to screen, is done within the Catalyst system. All Catalyst signal /data distribution is run via an XL Video custom DVI fibre system.

The tour is project managed for XL by Phil Mercer and Tracey Donnelly. Mercer comments, “We are thoroughly enjoying playing our part in XL’s continuing long association with Coldplay, particularly enjoying the challenges, both technical and logistical, of keeping them visually at the very top of their game.”



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NEW HIRES

ALAN KEMP Appointed ADAPTIVE TECHNOLOGIES GROUP'S Director of Business Development DIRECTOR



Kemp's Extensive Experience in the Rental and Staging Industry To Boost Company's Presence in the AV Market Further

Adaptive Technologies Group, comprised of Allen Products, ATM Fly-ware and Adaptive Video Walls and Displays, and a premier developer of state-of-the-art rigging and mounting solutions for a wide range of audio and video applications, has appointed Alan Kemp as the company's new Director of Business Development. In his new role, Kemp will help lend direction to all aspects of business development from the Adaptive offices, located in Signal Hill, CA.

"We are excited to have Alan Kemp join our team," says Paul Allen, president, Adaptive Technologies Group. "With Kemp's talent and experience, we are confident he will help us increase our brand visibility in the rental and staging markets significantly. We look forward to working closely with him to achieve

our goals."

Kemp brings more than 25 years of diverse sales experience in the rental and staging industry to his new position. Prior to joining Adaptive Technologies

Group, he worked for Video Applications, NEP/ScreenWorks, BlueWater Technologies and SmartSource Event Technologies.

Kemp distinguished himself earlier in life as a boxer. He was a three-time Buffalo Golden Gloves Champion and a successful professional middleweight. He was inducted into the Buffalo Boxing Hall of Fame in 2011. Kemp humorously says that his "battles in the ring" prepared him for the demands of the industry. The father of two daughters in college, he currently resides in San Juan Capistrano with his wife of 25 years.



AES Names STEVE GREEN Business Development Manager

New Job Title Reflects Organizational Evolution

Recognizing the importance of engaging directly with its stakeholders, Executive Director Bob Moses has named Steve Green AES Business Development Manager. An accomplished audio systems and applications engineer, and skilled technical marketing manager, Green will focus his energies on expanding the AES constituency and maximizing the value of its many assets and services.

"I've known Steve Green over twenty years," Moses said. "I was his customer for more than half of them, and I learned that I could go to Steve whenever I needed an honest answer to a question, or help getting my project out the door. I want that experience for all AES members, exhibitors and attendees. His mission is simple – talk to people and find out how we can make AES better. Then, as we used to say in the manufacturing business, ship it."

Sharing his thoughts for his new position, Green remarked, "As an AES member for over 30 years, I have a personal interest in the continued success of the organization. My primary goal is to increase the value of the AES for the individuals, companies and educational organizations within the audio community.

One of the unique attributes of the AES is the incredible diversity in the interests and focus areas of our members. Facilitating the exchange of ideas and knowledge both within and between these groups is something that only the AES is in a position to provide. I look forward to meeting with many old friends and to building many new relationships on my new journey."

Steve Green has worked for the past 20+ years with integrated circuit manufacturers focused on audio products, primarily with Crystal Semiconductor/Cirrus Logic. He has held various positions including Applications Engineer, Applications Manager and Technical Marketing Manager. In November 2010 he was awarded an AES Fellowship "In recognition of two decades of valuable contributions to mixed-signal audio design and implementation."

The Audio Engineering Society was formed in 1948 by a group of concerned audio engineers. The AES counts over 14,000 members throughout the U.S., Latin America, Europe, Japan and the Far East. The organization serves as the pivotal force in the exchange and dissemination of technical information for the industry. aes.org

Community Appoints ROD FALCONER as Director of Technical Training and Education

Community Professional Loudspeakers is pleased to announce the appointment of Rod Falconer to the position of Director of Technical Training and Education. An industry veteran with nearly 30 years' experience, Mr. Falconer first joined Community in 2007 as Regional Manager for the Western United States and Canada. This new role is a natural extension of his prior experience.

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NEW HIRES

“Technical training is increasingly important in today’s sophisticated contracting business,” stated Julia Lee, Community’s Director of Sales and Marketing. “Rod has effectively taught numerous sessions on understanding and selecting the appropriate technology for given applications.”

Mr. Falconer brings a wide range of engineering knowledge to the position, including first-hand experience in networked control systems and systems design for projects ranging from small churches to performing arts facilities to airports and other large-area notification systems. He is experienced with all types of loud-speaker systems, and has a strong background in array physics in theory and practice.

“I really enjoy helping people understand the tools that are available to them as designers, getting past the rhetoric and marketing hype to really comprehend what’s appropriate for a given situation,” he explained. “I love watching the light bulb come on.”

As Director of Technical Training and Education, Mr. Falconer will be responsible for developing and delivering programs and training support materials for Community customers and dealers worldwide.

He will manage the company’s field training efforts, developing curriculum to enhance the technical skills and product knowledge base of Community users, focusing on the appropriate application of Community products and design tools.

“Rod is the ideal person to take on this challenge and be an effective resource for our customers,”



said Dave Howden, Community’s Director of Technical Services. “We’re very glad to have him on our team.”

MARK ENGBRETSON Joins VUE Audiotechnik Engineering Team

VUE Audiotechnik today announced that pro audio luminary, Mark Engebretson, has joined the company’s San Diego-based engineering leadership group.

In his role at VUE Audiotechnik, Engebretson will work as an engineering consultant, overseeing development and patent efforts for several advanced audio technologies slated for deployment throughout the VUE Audiotechnik line over the next 24 months.

“Mark and I have worked together numerous times over the years and I couldn’t be more excited that we’ll be collaborating once again,” commented VUE Audiotechnik’s Design Chief, Michael Adams. “I have tremendous respect for Mark’s innate abil-

ity to develop and leverage seemingly esoteric concepts into industry-defining products. His reputation speaks for itself and his experience

will be a huge asset as we pursue new performance standards with unique designs that challenge commonly accepted conventions.”

“I’m excited about what I see happening behind the scenes at VUE Audiotechnik,” commented Engebretson. “There’s a powerful combination of passion, experience, and a commitment to exploring all options in order to drive innovation forward. At VUE I can bring something totally new to the industry I love. It’s a level of creative freedom that I’ve not experienced in a very long time.”

Prior to joining VUE Audiotechnik, Engebretson held influential leadership positions at some of professional audio’s most respected companies. Most recently he was the VP of R&D and chief design architect for QSC. Prior to that he led JBL Professional’s Northridge, California-based R&D department. Other highlights include a stint at Summit Laboratories, Vice President of Product Development for Altec Lansing, and VP of R&D for Paramount Pictures.

In 2002 Engebretson was honored at the 74th Academy Awards with a Scientific and Engineering Award for his contributions in the design and engineering of the modern constant-directivity, direct radiator style motion picture loud-speaker systems.



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Memphis Barbecue Co.

WHEN OUTSTANDING IS THE ONLY OPTION!

— by MICHAEL A. BECK

A little over a month ago, I went over to a little town called Southaven, Mississippi to catch Miranda Lambert’s show. It’s important to note that Southaven is just across the border from Memphis, Tennessee. So when it was finally decided (at 2 p.m. the day before the gig) that the trip was on, I packed up my stuff and headed out on the eight hour drive during which I had plenty of time to think about one thing – Memphis Barbecue.

When I got to the hotel – a couple miles away from the gig in Horn Lake, MS - I skipped right past any conversation of registration to the biggest issue of the day. I scanned the counter that was covered in promo sheets from local businesses including restaurants. The only barbecue I could find was a chain called Corky’s BBQ. I’d been to this place a few times in various cities and it wasn’t bad, but I was in [greater] Memphis and “not bad” wasn’t an option. Corky’s BBQ would have to take a seat. I needed something outstanding! After I finally settled into my room (which proved to be a bit of a hassle that involved malfunctioning locks and TV’s) I went out to the desk and asked the guy where I could

find some really good barbecue and warned him not to give me the name of a chain.

He barely looked while saying, “Memphis Barbecue Company.” The matter of fact way he said it made me know I’d was about to find greatness. With my mind at rest after having been assured that my “holy grail” was in sight, I slept well and woke up the next day charged with the notion of satisfying my quest (oh and checking out Miranda Lambert’s show). When I drove to the place, I did so with my windows down because I wanted to take note of how far away I would smell the inviting aroma like a siren’s call. Because the restaurant was pretty close to the hotel it didn’t take long

before my nose could take over the helm and lead me in.

Walking into Memphis Barbecue Company I wasn’t struck by the decor of the restaurant but rather the fact that the place was packed and lunch hour had come and gone by an hour and a half. That told me this place has been around a while; certainly long enough to do this kind of business flow. However, that’s not the case. Co-owners Pete and Melissa Cookston opened the Memphis Barbecue Company in December of 2011. When asked how it is that things are going so well so early Cookston explained that between herself and her husband the two have over 50



Co-owner
Melissa Cookston

years of restaurant experience.

However, she had another explanation that seemed to trump their wealth of experience, "I pretty much attribute it to a bunch of luck. Dumb luck.

I'm really not quite sure how it happened, but hey, I'm not looking a gift horse in the mouth. We were thinking about doing something on a small scale and this place became available and we took it. We had certain projections when we opened and those projections got thrown out the window immediately. We're doing four times better than we thought we would."

Luck notwithstanding, it's hard to imagine how this venture could have failed. Several years of working in what Melissa called the "corporate rut" (Ruby Tuesday's, Applebees, Lone Star) she and her husband gained a solid understanding of how to establish a successful system by which to run a thriving restaurant. Keep in mind, this isn't just another fern bar. This is serious barbecue in an area that is known worldwide for a style of barbecue that borders on religious.

When Melissa and Pete started dating, Pete suggested they go check out a barbecue competition. After watching from the stands for several years they decided to throw their hats in the ring as serious competitors in 2007 and found success early on. Although Melissa was reluctant to talk about her achievements in competition I was able to find out that since '07 they have won the "Whole Hog" championship at Memphis in May under the team name Yazoo's Delta Q three out of the five times they've competed and they've twice won the Grand Championship including this year. In addition to her success at Memphis in May, Melissa also has a national championship under her belt.

All of that notwithstanding, Melissa is reluctant to discuss her competition credits, "I don't keep track of how many contests I've won,"

continued on 38



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A Vegas Weekend

with Lenny and Laurie and Dan

BY BILL EVANS



Laurie Quigley

Photo BY LINDA EVANS

Laurie Quigley:

It looked like a piece of cake gig. A one-nighter at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas with arrival and load in a full day in advance, and maybe even time for a bit of R&R. But those who have been in the touring game for any significant period of time know that the gig on the itinerary that looks like a piece of cake is generally the one to be most wary of.

So, of course, that full day of down time turned into just a few hours when a one-off private gig celebrating Muhammad Ali's 70th birthday was added to the schedule, which meant an additional load-in and load out.

When we arranged to go down to the MGM and chat with Laurie Quigley, we figured it would be easy-peasy. So it was a bit of a surprise to arrive at the venue expecting a quiet, laid back vibe only to find a total bee-hive level of activity as the crew tried to make up for that unexpected gig and get it all together for the show. To make it even more interest-

ing, some of the other acts on the birthday gig might or might not be appearing at the show that evening as special guests. No one is really sure.

And that is the scene that was set for this writer's first-ever conversation with the famously curmudgeonly Laurie Quigley. Laurie has a resume that reads like a who's who of rock and melodic metal bands. Kiss, Motley Crue, Aerosmith, Van Halen and, for the better part of the past decade, Lenny Kravitz. And it is a great match. Kravitz's music is modern but harks back to rock roots established nearly 50 years ago, and Quigley uses cutting edge gear but it is in the service of a totally old-school approach to audio and the entire role of a live sound professional.

The Out of Sight Out of Mind Theory

"I am a big believer in the out of sight out of mind approach. People have forgotten what this job is about and they take themselves way too seriously. Some think they are bigger rock stars than the rock stars onstage. We should come in, do our jobs and go away. And our job is simply to support the artists onstage and make it loud enough to cover a large crowd," Quigley states.

Some might ask Quigley what he thinks about the acts that depend on Pro Tools and pitch correction plug-ins?

"You say 'Some people need plug-ins.' Well, I disagree," counters Quigley. "That is if the product is reasonable coming off the stage—and it should be. They wrote the song, they

recorded the song and now they are playing the song. They should be representing the song in a f%#@ing reasonable shape, manner or form. Therefore, all I should be doing is making it louder. Other people I'm sure have their own opinions."

His point is pretty hard to argue with. As long as he is on the subject of what's wrong with acts and engineers...

"There are too many people out there who do not even know what a proper sound console is. I'm not going to turn around and start picking on people, but half of the kids engineering bloody country acts these days... They are just video game players. They're not sound engineers. They've never stood behind and XL4 and done anything with it. They wouldn't know what an XL4 was. If they saw it in a road case they would think it was a grand piano."

Stuff Laurie Likes

JBL VerTec and Crown amps:

Kravitz has been a Sound Image client forever and the rig in the air has been VerTec for about the same amount of time. On the recent Australian leg of his *Black and White* tour, Quigley drove a VerTec rig driven by Crown's new VRACK amp and controller system. The PA system consisted of JBL VerTec; 12 deep on the mains and nine deep on the sides with 12 subs a side and eight subs in the center. The JBL VerTec was driven by 12 VRACKs, six a side situated behind the subs on stage left and stage right. "The VerTec and the VRACKs worked really well on the Australian tour and I was extremely happy with the sound," he commented. "The VRACKs are very versatile; you can do whatever you want with regards to turning certain amps up or down.

Audio Technica mics—especially the dual element AE2500:

"The AE2500 is possibly the best mic ever

Dan Horton



Photo BY LINDA EVANS

made,” Quigley tells us. “It’s an incredible kick drum mic, but I also use it on guitar cabinets. The first time I used the AE2500, I shoved it in front of a guitar cabinet just to see what it would do, and I was frightened by the sound—it was that good.”

DiGiCo Consoles:

“Let’s forget all the BS and just plug a mic into a channel and let’s see which one of these wonderful digital control consoles sound like a soundboard. DiGiCo products sound like soundboards, like the analog boards, that we who are old enough to remember, were brought up on. The SD7 sounds like a soundboard; like a more convenient version of an XL4, but better, smaller, lighter, quicker and more adaptable. It’s all there under one console, not two or three very large and HEAVY soundboards. Quigley adds, “And the new DiGiCo SD 96kHz racks rock!” On this tour, they have supplemented the SD7s at both FOH and MON with a couple of diminutive SD11s. “We have done a lot of small clubs where we would go in and do two or three songs, plus one-offs for companies like Facebook and Google where we played a short set in their lobbies. We only needed 32 inputs but wanted to give Lenny the sound quality he is used to. The SD11 allowed us to do that. It was a bit weird to go in with something so small and set it up yourself but it was the perfect solution,” he says.

**Dan Horton:
The Other End of the Snake**

Take a look at Quigley and monitor engineer Dan Horton standing next to each other and it appears to be the stereotypical study in contrasts. Quigley is the very definition of the crusty older, super experienced sound guy. Horton is a lot younger and the ever-present baseball cap just accentuates the stereotype. He may be a kid, but he’s no rookie. Before taking the MON reigns with Lenny Kravitz (a gig previously held by A-Listers including Brian Hendry and Kevin Glendenning) he did stints with Kiss (also a Laurie Quigley client) and shared Monitor World with Jerry Harvey on the *Glee Live* tour.

The MON package—also provided by San Diego, CA-based Sound Image—includes a

DiGiCo SD7 to match Quigley’s out front.

“I started on the SD7 about three years ago—right when they first came out. When I started with Kiss we are on the SD5 and then switched to the SD7. On the D5 you can move things around to suit your individual needs, but on the D7 I find that for me configuring a show is really easy. The addition of things like multi-band compressors was really useful. So switching to this console has been great.”

Even with all of the bells and whistles of the SD7, Horton carries a fair amount of outboard processing. “Lenny is very into an analog sound but we are using digital consoles. Therefore, just for his mics, I have an API Channel Strip because that is what he prefers in the studio. From there it goes into an AnaMod which is kind of like a Fairchild clone and then the next gain stage is a UA LA2A compressor.”

Also in the rack—specifically for Kravits’ vocal is a Bricasti reverb. “It is his favorite reverb in the studio so we use it here, too. He has a preset built called A&M Chamber—their vocal chamber. I can’t match it on any console. I can’t make that specific sound.”

Talk with him for just a few minutes and it is clear that Horton knows his stuff, but

he’s not above asking for a tip now and again. “Lenny likes a very compressed vocal sound. So that LA2A is running at about 12:1 and back into a channel on the console labeled ‘Crush.’ I actually got that from my buddy Kevin Glendenning who had this gig. Before I took the gig, I called him and asked if there was anything he could tell me and he told me about the super compressed vocal and the 12:1 thing. I gotta give him the credit.”

So, credit where credit is due. At the end of the day, Quigley and Horton are a team. And as a team they serve as a great illustration of Quigley’s take on the importance of great gear versus the importance of great people. He knows that as great as the gear is, it is not the only part of the puzzle. “A good sound system, good crew, good company. The gear is only as good as the company that preps it and only as good as the crew that puts it in the air.” ♦

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Point to Point Touring

A 'Taxing' Problem for Canadian Bus Companies

Q & A with Joe Bamford of *HalJoe Coaches*

HalJoe Custom Coach has been in business for over 20 years. The family owned business led by Harold and Joe Bamford started as a hobby with the purchase of a single Eagle Coach, which they eventually hoped to convert into their own motorhome. More purchases soon followed and as of ten years ago the company owned fifteen busses, making it the largest Canadian bus leasing company. These were license-plated in

Canada, the original base of operations for the company.

In 2003 Joe Bamford found it necessary to shut down physical operations in Canada and establish a new base in Florida. What started with a simple question at Tour Link 2012 of "How's business in Canada?" developed into the following conversation with him.

BY MIKE WHARTON

What are your concerns about the law regarding US busses picking up clients in Canada?

They're not just concerns; they're facts. Let me give you a little background. The way the transportation industry works, you're allowed to go "point to point" in your country where you are from, but you are not allowed to go "point to point" in another country. In other words, a Canadian bus cannot go to the US empty and pickup goods or people in one state and then deliver them to another state in the US. That is known as "point to point."

Sounds like a fair law as long as it applies both ways at the border.

"It does apply both ways. The American government does an excellent job of enforcing this law, which has been around since before the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) came into effect. My government doesn't do a very good job at all. I no longer have a business in Canada because of this lack of enforcement."

Does this lack of enforcement create an increase in competing companies from the US?

It's not competition from the US coach companies that I have a problem with. That's just a fact of doing business. It is the unfair advantage the US competition has, and here's why...

Canada has a federal and provincial sales tax. These two taxes have been combined into a bill called the Harmonize Sales Tax (HST) which comes to 13 percent.

Everything I purchase in Canada; fuel, wheels, grease, etc., I must pay that tax. I also pay the tax on the price charged to the band for the leasing contract. When a US coach comes in, and they're coming in all the time, and they go point to point, they are not paying that tax! So I have a 13 percent disadvantage. That's my problem, that's my issue. I no longer have any busses plated in Canada because I couldn't afford to. I was driven out of business by American competition that were, in my opinion... my opinion mind you, operating in Canada illegally."

Does that hold true for all US busses that enter Canada?

No. International tours, which are tours that start in one country, travel to another, then back to the point of origin is legal. I don't have a problem with a US bus company picking up a band, starting their tour in the US and then continuing Canada for a tour. What I do have a problem with is when the bus crosses the border empty, doesn't pay the HST, then picks up a band to do an entirely Canadian "point to point" tour. And here is my point, when I had Canadian plated busses and they went to the border to enter the US, they were asked, "Where are you going?" American coaches coming into Canada don't get asked that.

The other problem is unfair application of the tax. When a Canadian band hires a US coach to do their tour in Canada, the band is not charged that HST. When I had coaches in Canada, I paid that 13 percent. I was at a disadvantage to begin with. How these companies are getting around this, I do not know. I have tried and tried to get an answer and I just can't. There are only four other companies in Canada and

when I speak to them about this problem, they just shake their heads. They have no interest in buying new coaches, and I can't afford the purchase for my company.

Your website says you have offices in Florida and Canada. Is this what prompted the move to Florida?

Yes. I originally added an office in Florida to beef up service to my US customers and then just gave up on keeping busses plated and registered in Canada. I'm a Canadian citizen and I still have a Canadian business. I just don't have any coaches plated in Canada. When I do work in Canada I get the bus brokered in, and pay the proper taxes to get a temporary import. There's a cost involved in that and I have to pass it onto my customers, to do it legally. With Tragically Hip, who we have hauled for twenty years, I do a temporary importation to cover their Canadian tours.

I've got drivers that have been with me since the beginning twenty years ago. They are Canadian citizens. They show up at the border going into Canada and because they are Canadian, customs may think they're trying to bring the bus in permanently, which is illegal. So I do everything by the books to protect them and their families as well as my company. I don't want my government coming to me one day and saying 'what's going on here.'

Any ideas as to why there is this apparent discrepancy at the border?

I'm trying to get an answer as to why my government allows this to happen and wave a red flag to the US companies. One of these days an auditor will come along and start questioning what's going on.

One of the ways I think the US coach companies get around this is that for instance, hockey arenas are known in Canada as "Exempt Buildings." The driver doesn't need a work visa for these type buildings, so the border agents never bother to walk across the hall from immigrations to check the bus through customs. This is just my assumption. I don't know this for a fact, but I think this is what happens. I believe the promoters and managers in Canada who don't support Canadian industries and that operate in the country are part of the problem as well. But, maybe they don't know the rulings.

What other, if any, situations have become apparent to you?

One of the aspects of the coach business is rotation of stock. Older buses are replaced with newer ones by profits made in the company and the selling price of the older buses to secondary or private markets. HalJoe is at a disadvantage because we are unable to purchase newer stock due to revenue losses from the inequity applied through the tax payment process. The lack of newer busses puts HalJoe at a disadvantage competing in the market too. This has an effect on the economy as well. Less new product is being purchased because of it. The coach business is very cyclical in that replenishment of stock generates business and cash flow to the manufacturers and the secondary market purchasers.

What do you hope to accomplish by bringing this up?

My government needs to be a little stricter. Competition is competition, but fair is fair. I want American coach companies to understand they are actually bending the rules by not paying the tax to operate in Canada. I want to raise this flag, 'cause one day, maybe, one of these custom officers will see the situation and pounce on it. The ramifications for that are the same in America as Canada. The bus could be impounded, fines levied, all sorts of financial problems. But... it is what it is.

I'm too old to fight this fight, get a lobbyist and go to Ottawa, which is our nation's capitol, and lobby for adherence, or change. I have no interest in maintaining any physical coach presence in Canada. Its financial suicide is what it is. It's just not a 100 percent playing field, and that's all I know. ♦

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Paul Dexter

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BY MICHAEL A. BECK



Paul Dexter - All Things Visual

Paul Dexter has been involved in lighting since 1970 when he had an epiphany, “I went to see Redbone in a gymnasium and I swear it was like a little angel came and sat on my shoulder and said ‘this is what you’re doing’. At the time I was in high school and people were suggesting I go in the Coast Guard, join the Navy, or go to college and I didn’t want any of that.”

Not long after that moment of enlightenment, Paul teamed up with Frank Zappa Road Manager Dick Barber and built his first lighting system out of “Hawaiian pineapple cans”.

With his 42 light system Paul was on his way. Although his primary gig was working with a band called Central (which came close but imploded just prior to being signed), he did work for other bands as well. “I did lights for Van Halen before they even had a record deal,” he recalls. “They played shows down in Hermosa Beach in ballrooms. I would get hired to go and do these jobs for \$50. I’d take my truck full of gear and set them up and do their lights.”

In 1973 Paul went out on his first tour, which was Billy Preston. Soon after that his friendship with Dick Barber paid off in a big way and he went out with Frank Zappa.

Eventually Paul became an “A” circuit lighting designer working with an enormously diverse range of clients spanning from The Carpenters and Air Supply to Rick James, LTD to Ozzy Osbourne and Ronnie James Dio. “Ronnie James Dio and I became very close friends after I came on board with him,” Paul recalls. “We had a great partnership in all things creative. This was during the *Holy Diver* tour. That tour was when his career took a meteoric climb. We went from doing small theaters to arenas very fast. I was redesigning systems during the tour to accommodate the demand.”

Despite his long list of concert lighting credits, there have been stretches during which Paul stepped away from lighting to follow other entrepreneurial pursuits. In 1986 he relocated to England where he created Heritage Media, Ltd. through which he imported well known

vintage radio shows such as the Orson Welles classic “War of the Worlds” as well as live concerts ranging from Westwood One and King Biscuit Flower Hour (James Taylor), and sold series to BBC Radio 4.

In 1996 Paul came back to America and took up where he left off ten years earlier – LIGHTING. However, the lighting he was now working with was not just limited to concert design as he studied graduate level courses in architectural lighting. At the same time he got involved in music videos and film, eventually designing all the concert scenes in the 2001 Mark Wahlberg film “Rock Star”.

Since 2005 Paul has been the production designer for REO Speedwagon which is currently out with the Styx and Ted Nugent on the *Midwest Rock and Roll Express* tour.

In keeping with the entrepreneurial spirit that has always guided Paul’s life, touring is not enough to feed his creative jones. With that in mind, he has his hands in several pics. For

several years Paul has worked through his design company called Masterworks Lighting (www.masterworkslighting.com). However, a number of other projects have sprung forth including Road Cases (www.roadcases.tv), which is a website whose mission is to “To record on film and print, the years of untold, and so far undocumented extraordinary stories/tales of our unique road life direct from crew, side musicians and rock stars, for worldwide media distribution.”

Another project he has recently completed is the co-authoring of “Concert Lighting, Third Edition”, a Focal Press publication, which he wrote with longtime friend and renowned Lighting Designer James L. Moody. The book is an A-Z volume of lighting topics. With the completion of the book, it occurred to Paul that the job wasn’t done. Therefore, he has embarked on what he considers to be a natural extension of Concert Lighting, Third Edition. The project (online as of July 12, 2012) is a website called www.lightingwriting.com.



“Lighting Writing was born from navigating the vast subject matter posted on Facebook - everything from bashing politicians to romantic messages - to find any information of real value to the lighting community,” Paul explains. “The website provides a topic specific community within which to exchange ideas and observations, and engage with others who are equally as passionate. One key to the success of Lighting Writing will be my ability to bring top designers to converse with everybody. I was interested to know how Bruce Rodgers of Tribe Design achieved such vivid and large projections at the Super Bowl halftime show, so I wrote to him on Facebook, and he graciously wrote back with an answer. I believe it will be the same for anyone who needs to ask questions or comment on Lighting Writing. It’s a new way to allow all of us and our projects to be easily reached.”

In the final analysis light is light, and while light sources may vary, the nature of light will always remain what it has been since the first flicker became visible in the universe. So the question is how one puts light to it’s most effective use. It comes down to discipline of application. Paul believes Lighting Writing will tie the big picture of the lighting universe together, “Lighting Writing is all of those disciplines. It’s proving the cross-pollination of all areas of light.”◆

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Miranda Lambert ON FIRE

Lambert As Straight Forward As It Gets

Story and pictures by Michael A. Beck

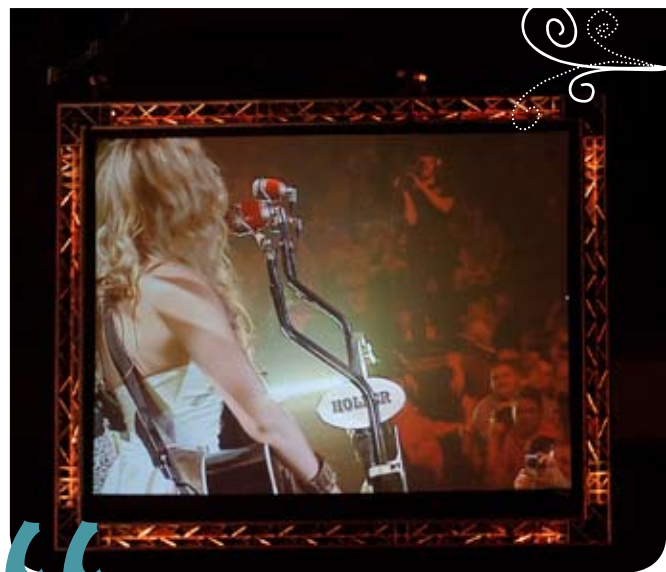


When Miranda Lambert's On Fire tour hit the road for the first time in the fall of 2011, it only had a portion of what the show is sporting in its current configuration, as it had to fit in the number of trucks and crew the budget would sustain. However, when the tour broke for the holidays, the decision was made to expand the visual aspects of the production. In its first incarnation the show had a central 12'x 24' 10 mil LED video wall provided by Nashville based Moo TV which, aside from the IMAG projection screens, was the extent of the video technology. The LED wall was surrounded by ten flown set pieces that had the look of window panes and were toned with Bandit Lites' GRN Lite technology.

When the tour went back out, the upstage space above the stage was still anchored by the aforementioned LED wall. However, the ten "window panes" were replaced with 14 4'x 4' ten mil video panels flown in pairs from curved truss sections that are also toned with GRN Lite units. The video content that appears on the small video panels or the "pods", as they're known on the tour, comes from a Catalyst media server while the main wall and side screens are fed by a Knockout media system that is controlled by Video Engineer Eric Heidel.

While the main focal point of the video element is the large video wall, Show Designer Chris Lisle places high value on the pods. "The pods are what tie this show together. They help this make a big picture. I'll use them to enhance the color pallet in the same way I'll use a light. They don't have to have moving content on them all the time. It's fun just to put a static color on it and let that paint the picture."

The out-rigged IMAG (directed by Video Director John Breslin) projection screen is nothing new, but in this case the screens are framed truss that is also toned with GRN



When I put that truss and toner around the screens, I widened the look of the stage by another 30 feet. It's kind of like magic. We're making things look bigger than they are. This is a four truck tour that looks bigger than it is.

- Show Designer Chris Lisle





I'm really into big saturated color looks. On the other hand, I tell the guys I work with that black is a color too, and we will use it. I also believe that just because a light can move it doesn't mean it has to. It's about that voice and her performance, and if we can enhance that, great. We don't want to distract from it.

- Show Designer Chris Lisle

Lites. "From my end it's all about filling dark space," adds Lisle. "When I put that truss and toner around the screens, I widened the look of the stage by another 30 feet. It's kind of like magic. We're making things look bigger than they are. This is a four truck tour that looks bigger than it is."

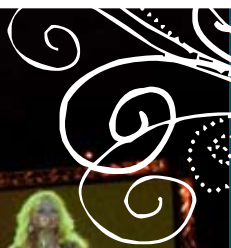
The lighting of the show is another area wherein the task at hand was to make the production look bigger than it is. With a total 71 fixtures (14 VL300's, 20 Mac 2k Washes, 6 Alpha Beams, 15 Atomic Strobes, 16 four light Moles) the lighting rig isn't the biggest system on the road, but Lisle puts what he has to excellent use. "We don't have a ton of light there and that's why I combine the video and lighting systems to create big looks," he explained. "My job is to accent what Miranda is doing because the audience is paying to see her. It's not about a big light show and I'm really glad to be able to do it with the gear that we have."

In keeping with the general style of his design theory, Lisle's lights employ a deeply saturated color pallet, "Nine out of 10 shows that I light are going to be basically that kind of look," Lisle proclaimed. "I'm really into big saturated color looks. On the other hand, I tell the guys I work with that black is a color too, and we will use it. I also believe that just because a light can move it doesn't mean it has to. It's about that voice and

her performance and if we can enhance that, great. We don't want to distract from it."

Lisle puts those principles into practice several times throughout the show when he goes from a big huge ballyhoo look during the classic Rick Derringer "Rock and Roll Hoochie Koo" to subdued ballads wherein he uses four lighting instruments. Incredibly, when the system was brought down to minimal levels, the huge amount of video gear and truss hanging over the backline completely disappeared even when the star drop lit up.

FOH Engineer Jason "Pone" Macalik has the same straight forward approach to mixing the show as does Chris Lisle does doing his job. He mixes the show on a Midas Heritage 3000



MIRANDA LAMBERT

- Angaleena Presley (Pistol Annies)
- Ashley Monroe (Pistol Annies)
- Electric & Upright Bass - Aden Bubeck
- Keyboards, Steel & Utility Instruments - Chris Kline
- Electric Guitar - Alex Weeden
- Electric & Acoustic Guitar - Scott Wray
- Drums/Band Leader - Keith Zebroski



Todd Ortmeier — Production Manager



Crew

CREW TOUR MGR Jordan Powell
PRODUCTION MGR Todd Ortmeier
STAGE MGR/SET CARPENTER Fred Yanda
PRODUCTION ASST Blu Sanders
MERCH Jose Raices
BACKLINE TECHS: Sammy Bones, Scott Fowler
FOH ENGINEER Jason "Pone" Macalik
FOH SYSTEM TECH Pat Oneill
MONITOR ENGINEER Chris Newsom
MONITOR / BACKLINE Tech Adam Tart
LIGHTING DIRECTOR Craig Richter
LIGHTING CREW CHIEF Dave Butzler
LIGHTING TECH TylerVeneziano
VIDEO DIRECTOR John Breslin
VIDEO ENGINEER Eric Heidel
SCREENS / FOH CAMERA: Edwin Lewis, Dylan Taylor, Aaron Barbatti
BUS DRIVERS: Charlie Sherman, David Sherman, Mike Martin, William Brown, Aaron Bass
TRUCK DRIVERS: Andy Vest, Brian White, Shorty Westra, Bruce Kenyon, Jerrel "The General" Haberer



Catering Crew: Jesse Hood, Miller Himelbright, Vanessa Bartkold, Michael Garbrough, Not Pictured - Shawn Hines (owner)



Jason "Pone" Macalik — FOH Engineer, Pat Oneill — FOH system Tech, Adam Tart, Monitor / Backline Tech, Chris Newsom — Monitor Engineer



Dave Butzler — Lighting Crew Chief, Craig Richter — Lighting Director, TylerVeneziano — Lighting Tech



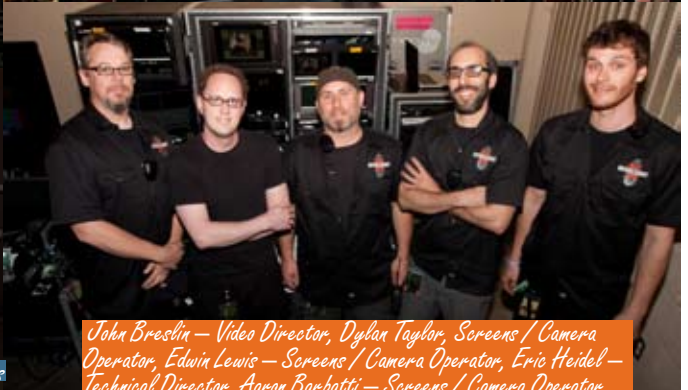
Scott Fowler, Sammy Bones — Backline Techs



Fred Yanda — Stage Manager/Set Carpenter



Denise Garrett, Brad Garrett — Tour Promoters



John Breslin — Video Director, Dylan Taylor, Screens / Camera Operator, Edwin Lewis — Screens / Camera Operator, Eric Heidel — Technical Director, Aaron Barbatti — Screens / Camera Operator

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TOUR CATERERS

Knoxville Catering

LIGHTING DESIGN /

PROGRAMMING

Lisle Designs — Chris Lisle

Lambert

“

I use as little compression as possible. I like to let the band and the music breath and sound as natural as possible. I think a lot of people these days are trying to reproduce something that's not there. They're not doing sound reinforcement. They're trying to make it sound the way they want it to sound rather than letting the band do their thing on stage and reproduce that.

- FOH Engineer Jason "Pone" Macalik

provided by Clair Global, which, for our readers who don't know its audio gear, is an analog console.

The desk is not the only place where he avoids digital technology. Indeed, the entire system is analog, "I keep everything analog. It sounds warmer and bigger than most of the digital stuff out there," Macalik explained as he went on to discuss his aversion to other effects. "I use as little compression as possible. I like to let the band and the music breath and sound as natural as possible. I think a lot of people these days are trying to reproduce something that's not there. They're not doing sound reinforcement. They're trying to make it sound the way they want it to sound rather than letting the band do their thing on stage and reproduce that."

One thing that seems to hold true throughout the production is the sentiment that while Lambert has very specific ideas on how she wants her show to look, sound, and feel, she gives her team a great deal of latitude within which to get the job done. "One of the things I love about Miranda is that she is great about giving broad stroke directions and big picture ideas," Lisle explained. "She is one of those artists who believes that when she hires a team to accomplish something, she lets us run with it. Every now and then during programming she'll give us some feedback on blackouts or spotlight moments, but she's really good about giving us our creative freedom."

That being said, Lambert is very clear on the overall picture of what she wants to present during the show according to Production Manager Todd Ortmeier, "Budget obviously plays a part in everything these days, but when it comes down to design theory, Miranda doesn't want all the bells and whistles and gags. She doesn't want 500 moving lights in

the air. Her theory behind her music is simple and straight forward and that's what she wants everything to fall into."

As the tour progresses through the year, the biggest challenge is to make the cuts needed in order to fit safely into stages on the fair circuit and some sheds. As challenges go, there have been bigger.

When *mPm* caught up to this tour outside of Memphis, the one thing that seems to be missing was a sense of urgency. To be sure, everyone was about the task of getting the room show ready, but the pace was gentle and easy. This was no doubt fueled by the [unofficial] motto of the tour as expressed by FOH Engineer Jason Macalik... "Be nice or go home." ♦



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Moo TV ON FIRE

The 'Zoo TV' for Country Artists
Story by Mike Wharton



When asked where the name Moo TV came from, *Chuck Young*, General Manager for the video production company gives his "reader's digest" version of its history. *Scott Scovill*, the owner of Moo TV was on tour with the Rolling Stones *Steel Wheels* tour navigating for a position on the upcoming U2 *Zoo TV* tour. At the time, Scovill was on on the Stones tour with Lee Griffin. Griffin had approached Scovill about opening a Nashville office to service a "new" client Alan Jackson. Scovill agreed only to find out the Zoo TV position was offered to him. Keeping his commitment to his friend and co-worker, Scovill set up Griffin's Nashville video company which was named Moo TV. "We're the Zoo TV for country artists," jokes Young.

It is this commitment and down to earth philosophy that has been the guiding principal behind the company.

Chuck Young and Scott Scovill share a long working history of friendship, having first crossed paths in the early 90s on an Alan Jackson tour. Eighteen years later, Jackson is still a loyal client. Scovill had been trying to convince Young to come to work for him over that course of time, "I had never imagined myself behind a desk and fought all my life not to have office hours," says Young.

In 2008 though, Scovill had an immediate vacancy and asked Young to "fill in" while he sought a permanent general manager. By this time Young had been heavily involved in the Nashville scene as an event producer, which while rewarding, was tending to burn him out.

Young agreed to step in, shortly afterward making a permanent move to come on full time. The pace was no less demanding, but he enjoys working with the staff at Moo and the artist roster that has developed from his, Scovill's and Production Coordinator Craig Stahl's contacts.

Each of them has over thirty years experience in the touring industry, and have sought to staff their shows with people whom are happy with what they do, as well as technically proficient. Consequently the fifty plus technicians staffing the dozen tours currently out aren't necessarily full time employees, but Moo TV keeps them working all the time.

"We like working with people who are happy," states Young.

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He emphasizes too that, "Anybody can buy a bunch of gear and rent it out. It's the people who make or break the success of that company."

Moo TV also is in the enviable position to work on projects and tours much the same way.

"I know it's almost heresy but we will turn down projects that aren't a good fit for the company or that may jeopardize our loyal clients," says Young.

The Miranda Lambert *On Fire* tour is a good example of a good fit Young is talking about. Scovill is the account rep for the tour, but Young, while working Chevy and Wal-Mart promotional tours, had crossed paths with her when she was just starting out. Scovill's association with Lambert began while she was opening for another client of Moo TV. Todd Ortmeier, Miranda Lambert's Production Manager, whom both men had known for years, gave Moo TV a shot at the bid for the 2012 tour.

"We were lucky enough to get it," says Young, "and it's been great. They're a happy bunch out there; it's just a real comfortable place to be." Young adds too that his crew would definitely mutiny on him if he tried to send them elsewhere. "She treats her people real well out there, knows all their names." Young speaks with respect and admiration in his voice when he talks about how involved Lambert is on the creative decisions regarding her show, and how vocal she is in that process.

continued on 30

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moo tv

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“We create video content for our clients as well as provide crew and hardware. A lot of times we don’t get feedback until we’re in rehearsals, and the client may know what they don’t want but they aren’t too sure about what they do want. Miranda, on the other hand, is very decisive about these things.”

Lambert’s tour utilizes the Watchout computer/server multi-display system. Made by Dataton and Windows® based, this is not a proprietary system unique to Moo, however the company does send it out on practically every tour. Toward that end, the chief engineer on staff at Moo, Tim Monnig, is certified by Dataton on the Watchout system. He teaches a class each winter in-house when business is slow.

Young points out that while this helps the company in the long run, it also gets their touring personnel a bit of work during slow times. “We bring them in for training, have a cookout, and pay them for their time. That comes from Scott [Scovill’s] philosophy of keeping everyone happy, informed and treated like family,” he says.

While artists and their management can submit gear specs, for the most part, these items are not “off the shelf”. Systems are built from the ground up according to

the specs. Even cameras have to be ordered and built. Due to this, maintaining a good relationship with preferred vendors is essential.

Once a system has been assembled, it is set up and “burned in” for a couple days to make sure there are no glitches. The new warehouse Moo moved to after the 2010 flood destroyed the space at Soundcheck, currently affords the area to do this. “We have about reached capacity though and are looking for a bigger facility,” Young says.

True to form with Moo’s commitment to the community, the studio suites for editing and creating were rebuilt in the Soundcheck facility. The capability to bring these systems online in the new warehouse for a client to view in real time with the touring system is an option, too, but Soundcheck is where “they do their magic” as Young puts it about the creative staff.

On the horizon for Moo is a Toby Keith tour which Young says will feature prominently the “Red Solo Cup” fan favorite. The company is also doing Nashville’s Fourth of July Celebration, The Daily Show, Zac Brown, Peter Frampton, Vince Gill just to name a few. ♦

she says. “Someone does, but I don’t. I try to be the Chicken Little of barbecue. I’m not the arrogant one.”

On the other hand Melissa does recognize the importance of the accomplishments. Her business card says “Pit Master,” which on its face looks like someone important. However, Melissa is dubious of the claim in general, “It’s over used in my opinion.” She concluded, “Anybody who has a grill and enters in a competition considers themselves a pit master. I feel like you have to have the creds to back it up.”

That doesn’t seem to be a problem as the company notoriety extends well beyond the patrons of Memphis Barbecue Company and barbecue competitors around the country. A couple weeks before I found out about the place, Guy Fierri, host of the Food Network’s “Diners, Drive-ins and Dives” program featured Memphis Barbecue Company in a show that will air during the new fall season. Team “Yazoo’s Delta Q” was featured on TLC’s “Barbecue Pitmasters” and Melissa was also contestant on Food Network’s “Chopped.”

While Melissa gets most of the face time she is quick to give credit where credit is due, “When we decided to get serious about competition we decided against having a big team and it would just be the two of us. When we did that,

I just kind of took the lead. Of course I could never do what I do without him [Pete].”

As I said, when I walked into the Memphis Barbecue Company I was too preoccupied with the smell of what I was about to thoroughly enjoy to pay attention to the very comfortable décor. It’s important to know that if you’re looking for Beverly Hills art food this probably isn’t the place for you. Melissa isn’t shy about presenting a menu of comfort food, “We don’t do small plates here,” Melissa says. “I’m from the Mississippi Delta and Pete’s from a small town in Tennessee and comfort food is what we grew up on, and in this economy it really makes sense.”

From the time I walked into this place to the time I left the second time (after I left the gig), I felt completely at home and as comfortable as the food they serve. So the next time you look at your itinerary and see a date in Memphis with a day off, plan to take the 20 minute ride out to Horn Lake, Mississippi to the Memphis Barbecue Company. If you like barbecue, you’ll love this place. The donut burger and donut bread pudding are pretty incredible as well. Don’t worry, while I didn’t see it, I’m told they have a defibrillator on site. ♦





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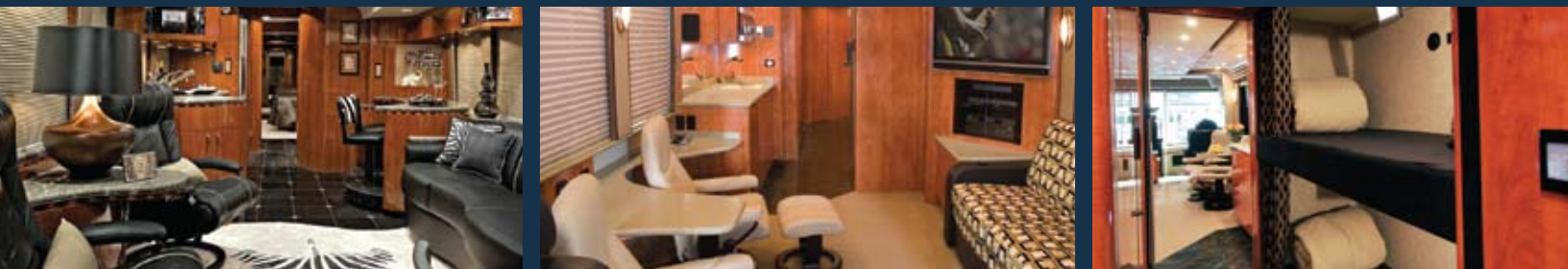
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