volume 6 issue 5 2013



Rising from the Ashes to Rule the Roost with Phoenix Bussing

Widespread Panic On the Road Again Doing What They Do Best

BottleRock 2013

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≫ IN THE NEWS



With this issue, we feature one of the top tours in Europe this year, Status Quo. I have to confess that this gives me a certain amount of personal gratification, since I started my professional career in Europe in 1968. OK, I am dating myself, but it is true that we all think about how we got started in this industry.

Like most of us, I started at the bottom, tried other things, including teaching high school and in the middle of doing my Master's Degree, had an opportunity to do what I am still doing now and never looked back.

My experience in the overseas market gave me the understanding that this is a global market and I have spent many years preaching to anyone who would listen that this is not, nor has it ever been a provincial marketplace; not for successful acts. Look at any top tour in history and the thing they have in common is international appeal. For that reason, I crafted this publication to have a global perspective from the beginning.

So, with this issue, we have an opportunity to take a look at Phoenix Bussing in England, a long-time touring service company with a stellar reputation. They have been a standard of excellence for a long time, serving the needs of the industry regardless of the size of the show.

Also in this issue, we have a chance to read the work of one of our newest writers, Richard Bennett, our UK Bureau Chief. I have looked for many years to find someone overseas with the passion for our business who could represent us in the manner that fits our philosophy, and I think we finally found our man!! I hope you enjoy reading his work as much as we enjoy working with him.

Finally, we are hard at work getting ready for the next Tour Link Conference, so expect to see relevant e-mails coming your way soon.

Publisher Larry Smith





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>> IN THE NEWS

ADLIB SUPPLIES LANA DEL REY TOUR

Liverpool UK based technical solutions provider Adlib supplied innovative singer / songwriter Lana Del Rey with an L-Acoustics K1 sound system for her on-going and highly successful UK and European tour.

Adlib's George Puttock designed the audio system, which was specified by Joe Harling and Tour Manager Peter Abbott. Puttock and Adlib's Sam Proctor rigged and oversaw all the equipment on the road, with Adlib's Simon Lawson as PA Tech ensuring that Del Rey's FOH and monitor engineers Joe Harling and Matt Kanaris could achieve the best possible sonic results in a wide variety of venues.

The main PA hangs in their largest configuration were 12 x L-Acoustics K1 per side with three KARA downs, together with side hangs of three L-Acoustics SB18s with 12 KARA underneath.

These were supported by 16 x SB28s subs on the floor – six left, six right and four in the centre - cleverly positioned to double up as steps that provide stage entrances and exits for Del Rey.

This worked extremely well - the subs were in exactly the right place to make a huge difference to the sub / low coverage, mitigating the normal 'power alley' that is traditionally associated with subs.

The ground SB28s merely 'tickled' away to provide a low frequency extension to the K1 elements in the air, which are renowned for their solid low frequency handling.

With a string quartet and all other musicians and Del Rey on stage using in-ear monitors, the stage area is really quiet, so the front fills are very important and have to be leaned on heavily, so KARA and ARCS were used.

These needed to be tightly controlled as Del Rey spends a fair amount of time in front of the stage.

Lake LM26s provided vocal and band mixing capability to individual front fill speakers, allowing Puttock to reduce the vocal in specific speakers whilst Del Rey was in front of them.

The L-Acoustics speakers were all driven by LA8 amplifiers running the latest firmware, which brings many new refinements and additional functionality.

Two audio networks were run on the tour, one for all the LA8 amplifiers and the other for Lake LM26 & LM44 processors, plus some Lab.gruppen amps.

The consoles were both Soundcraft Vi6s, with Vi1s for support.



Del Rey and the band used their own IEM and radio mic systems with 12 stereo in-ear mixes, eight for the band and four for technicians, running 67 channels into the desk including shouts and clicks.

Adlib provided a complete line system with stage distro and full mic splits, plus two of its MP4 low profile wedges for Del Rey as backup and reinforcement for the more challenging acoustic spaces. Two L-Acoustics ARCS with an SB28 sub per side comprised the side fills, and there was also a full mics-and-stands package for the band utilising a mix of Beyer, Sennheiser, Audio Technica and Shure brands.

Lana Del Rey uses a Sennheiser radio mic with a Neumann KMS105 capsule which sounds "Fantastic" comments Proctor – ideally suited for her distinctive style and voice - transparent and 'open' sounding.

Puttock, Proctor and Lawson really enjoyed the tour, and Adlib Account Handler Phil Stoker adds, "Rarely does such a unique artist come along nowadays as Lana Del Rey, and we have been incredibly lucky working on such a stylish and cinematic style live show.

"Production Manager Peter Abbott is fantastic to work with and Joe Harling at FOH had it sounding incredible through the K1 system. The set and lighting all added to the intimate yet expansive theatrical feel. Soon the rest of the world will see what European fans have been so vocally excited about...."

www.adlibsolutions.co.uk

UTOPIUM BRIGHTENS UP BOOMTOWN

Utopium supplied festival lighting rigs for 11 stages at this year's Boomtown Fair held at Matterley Estate near Winchester, 8 – 11 August 2013.

The fifth instalment of Boomtown Fair, a live music and arts festival, attracted audiences of around 30,000 each day to see performances from headlining artists including David Boomah, Dub Inc., Mad Caddies, Babyhead and Slamboree.

For the third consecutive year Utopium supplied

lighting and rigging installations for the elaborately themed and creative Boomtown Fair. This year Utopium was approached to provide festival lighting rigs for the large stages, including Lions Den, Town Centre, Devil Kicks Dancehall and Circo Baile.

Will Howie lighting designer and production manager for Utopium commented: "Boomtown Fair was a very unique project for us. The festival was split into 12 districts, each one its own theme to represent the different musical genres from ska and reggae to dub and bass culture. This presented the challenge for us to



ensure each stage reflected the style and appropriately created the desired atmosphere. Being a four day festival it was equally as important to ensure lighting worked effectively during both the day and the night for each artist's performance.

"This year we were appointed with our largest project to date for Boomtown Fair festival, supplying a wider array of lighting and rigging installations."

www.utopium.co.uk



» IN THE NEWS

ENTEC INVESTS IN LATEST CLAY PAKY TECHNOLOGY FOR MARK KNOPFLER TOUR

West London based rental company Entec is supplying lighting and rigging equipment and crew to the UK and European legs of legendary singer songwriter guitarist and music producer Mark Knopfler's 2013 Privateering tour, with lighting designed by the also illustrious Simon Tutchener!

Entec made a major investment in the latest Clay Paky moving lights – buying 38 Alpha Spot QWO 800s and 20 Sharpy Washes - to ensure that Tutchener had exactly the creative tools he wanted for the tour, which plays 72 concerts in 65 cities and has already included a six night sold-out run at London's Royal Albert Hall.

It's the first time that Entec has worked with Knopfler, but Tutchener has designed his lighting since 2000. He and Production Manager Kevin Hopgood have both used Entec before on various projects and decided that they were the right company for delivering a classy lighting solution for this one.

With the intensity of the tour schedule to the fore, Tutchener designed the rig to go in and out of venues quickly and easily ... as well as looking fabulous. Making an aesthetic link to previous Knopfler tours, he designed a strong, elegant architectural lighting centrepiece, this time in the form of a diamond shaped truss.

"The diamond is clean looking and simple to rig," he explains. It also accentuates the depth of the 56 ft wide x 40 ft deep performance space and is complimented by a front truss. All of it fits into one truck and can be up and working in two and a half hours on average in the right venue.

Tutchener and his three Entec crew – Steve Rusling (Stona) Ewan Cameron and Tom Crosbie – all work on the build. Tutchener assembles and rigs the front truss while the others work on the diamond, a situation that sometimes gets highly competitive in a friendly way!

In addition to the QWOs and Sharpy Washes, there are three strings of ACLs (i.e. 24), two on the floor and two in the truss – the antithesis of the new fixtures as a classic touring stage lighting effect from the industry's infancy; four 8-lites on the front truss which are used once; and 15 ETC Source Fours utilised for key lighting and front specials for the band and guest artists. LED fixtures enhance the diamond.

Eight of the QWOs are positioned on the floor for aerial and gobo effects and low level beam-work, and the whole stage is wrapped in a starcloth backdrop. Entec is also supplying four Lycian 2K followspots.

Tutchener operates the show using a grandMA2 full size console with a grandMA2 light for backup, and runs it very much in theatre style mode.



He took the control consoles and a WYSIWYG system into Music Bank studios for 9 days of band rehearsals, and was able to crack on with pre-programming. After that it was into LH2 for a week of full technical rehearsals with the rig, then to Bucharest for the first show.

He's delighted with the new Clay Paky's – the strength, intensity and quality of the light output and the smooth colour mixing amongst numerous other features.

Noreen O'Riordan, Entec's Project Manager for the tour comments, "Manager Paul Crockford, Tour Manager Tim Hook and Kevin Hopgood lead from the front and have employed a community of people that pull together to match the on stage perfection driven by Mark Knopfler.

"His tours are full-on so it is essential that both work ethic and personalities gel. Visiting the Royal Albert Hall show was fabulous with so many life-long friends on the team there with many stories to be shared and much laughter and banter.

"Simon's light show really lived up to all our expectations and made the months of preparation and financial investment worthwhile, no pressure Simon!"

With a relatively expedient amount of lights for the profile of the show, Tutchener has produced a tasty, dynamic mix that keeps plenty in reserve to ensure that there is never a repeated look throughout the two and a half hour set.

www.entec-soundandlight.com





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>> IN THE NEWS

ETC GEARS UP FOR EDINBURGH FESTIVAL FRINGE 2013



Scotland's annual Edinburgh Festival Fringe is always a busy time for lighting manufacturer ETC, and the company is already gearing up for this year's event, with more lighting and control desks on stages there than ever before.

The Festival, which runs each August, has almost 300 venues that can vary as widely as upstairs at a pub or in a conference room to an otherwise vacant store room or a shipping container in a parking lot. In addition to independently run venues, 21 rooms that are normally part of Edinburgh University's student association are being rented out by companies such as Pleasance.

This year, Pleasance has teamed up with dealer Black Light to install ETC lighting and control in every one of its spaces — including 26 ETC control desks. Pleasance's head of lighting Dom Knight explains: "Our venues range from the 50-seat Cellar and Hut to our flagship Pleasance Grand, which seats up to 750. Each venue hosts about ten shows a day for 27 days, and we had over 200 companies performing last year, during which, for the first time, we only used desks from ETC."

"We decided to install ETC control desks – a variety of SmartFades, lons, a Gio and, for our biggest venue, an Eos, because they would be familiar to many of the incoming lighting operators, or, in the case of student operators, are very likely to be the type of desk they'll end up working on when they finish their studies."

Training:

Each year staff from ETC visits the festival, offering training to the many operators who will be using ETC equipment, and ensuring everyone has all the support that they need. Because so many operators are needed, many will have never used a lighting desk before. Continues Knight: "The great thing about having ETC staff on hand is that they can make sure everyone is up to speed working the equipment when we're so busy getting everything else set up. The beauty of ETC consoles is that they are very easy to work with and troubleshoot."

Student David Johnson, who used an Ion for the first time at the Festival in 2012, says: "I worked my way through some of ETC's Tea Break Tutorial worksheets to help teach myself how to use the desk and also had some training. This was my first experience working on theater lighting, and while programming can seem intimidating at first, the Ion makes things really easy."

Backlit Keys:

Yvette Sedgley, who worked on a Gio® in the 150-seat Pleasance One, adds: "I've used an Ion before but never something as advanced as this, and I love it. It was easy to use and even enabled me to do some impressive effects. I learned it as I went along. What I particularly liked, when compared against other desks, was the backlit keys. I've found that Littlites, which I'd otherwise have to use, can cause reflections on my glasses."

Source Four LED[™] for reduced heat:

Two of the biggest problems for found venues such as those at Pleasance are excess heat and the lack of available power. Most of the venues are without air conditioning, and electric fans would be too noisy to use during the show. "Last year, we installed ETC Source Four LED Lustr+ fixtures in our biggest venue, the Pleasance Grand," says Knight. "They worked fantastically well, providing coverage that is as good as any conventional we've used, but at a fraction of the heat and power usage. And of course, with the color-changing possibilities, we added an extra layer of versatility for the incoming companies. We're looking forward to using them again."

www.etcconnect.com

XL ON TOUR WITH 'PRISCILLA QUEEN OF THE DESERT THE MUSICAL'

XL Video is supplying LED screens, LED animation cloth and Catalyst media server control to the current David Ian Productions and Ambassador Theatre Group UK and Ireland touring version of the hit 'Priscilla Queen Of The Desert The Musical'.

The colourful, award winning, glittering, fast paced, witty show which features a stream of disco stomping musical numbers is the latest high profile West End musical to hit the road, and is being project managed for XL by Ed Cooper, who has worked on previous shows for the producers.

For this one XL engaged in some heavy customization of the main scenic piece - the bus – which is built onto a large stage truck and forms the hub of Brian Thomson's touring set design.



The bus has four 'windows', which are made from 96 panels of XL's Pixled Flex-10 high-resolution flexible LED screen product.

The Flex-10 is used to make up straight panels on this case, but was chosen because they needed a doublesided screen product, and at 8.5mm deep it's extremely thin, and highly practical for the application especially as the bus is broken down into various component parts each time the show moves.

The video content for the bus windows which includes various journeys, graffiti, fireworks and other interactive elements is stored and replayed via a Catalyst media server sat at the side of the stage in the main video control rack. Data signals are sent via a WDMX wireless DMX system to a Mac mini server built into the floor of the bus, together with processing and other bits of control engineering. This means the bus is completely wire free and can be more easily moved around the stage and taken apart for the moves.

XL fitted the entire processing and control infrastructure into the bus at Rocket Scenery in Nottingham. The tour is out until the spring of 2014, so it was essential that all the work be completed to long term touring standards.

A special 8 metre wide x 7 metre high version of S+H Technical's Animation Cloth was manufactured for the tour, made with a 130mm grid matrix of pixels (on the standard Animation Cloth, this is random). The modifications were needed to display the specific content being played through it.

The Animation Cloth comes in and out at key points in the show and is also fed from the Catalyst.

The third video element is a Barco O-lite border (dubbed the 'Twitter screen' by the crew), which is 10mm in pitch, measuring two blocks high x 62 wide. This comes in at the start of the show and is used to relay local information like the population of the current town and its distance from certain Australian references.

Content for the bus windows, the Animation Cloth and the Twitter Screen is all stored and played back via the main Catalyst, which is in turn fired by the grandMA console running all the lights, complete with a tracking Catalyst and lighting console supplied for backup. Oliver Luff programmed video with the lighting by Chris Hurst.

Lighting and video are being looked after on the road by Chief LX Joe Dowling, who comments, "Working with XL has been brilliant. The services are excellent and Ed is always there for whatever you need".

Ed Cooper adds, "This was a challenging project dealing with new equipment and a truly unique design, which required real attention to detail and close relationships with production and management alike. The end product looks great and really adds to the high production values set throughout. The crew are fantastic to work with and the show a rewarding production."

www.xlvideo.com

≫ IN THE NEWS

OUTLINE PROVIDES SONIC THUNDER FOR MILLER LITE OASIS STAGE AT SUMMERFEST 2013

GTO-Based System Delivers for Rock, Rap, Punk, EDM and Country Acts

Clearwing Productions, a full service production company specializing in audio, light, stage and video support for major concerts and festivals, chose an Outline GTO-based speaker system to provide the sonic thunder at the Miller Lite Oasis Stage for Summerfest 2013. Dealing with an eclectic range of music acts from Diplo (EDM), Dropkick Murphys (Celtic punk) and Imagine Dragons (rock), to Leann Rimes (country) and Nelly (rap), among others, the Outline system faithfully delivered the essence of each musical genre for eager audiences of up to 15,000 people per show.

"Summerfest 2013 was our first experience with the Outline GTO system and I can say the sound quality was exceptional," says Bryan Baumgardner, audio operations and logistics, Clearwing Productions. "We knew Outline was very good, but the system far exceeded our expectations and worked flawlessly. The GTO system was used to provide the sound for a wide variety of acts, such as country and electronic dance music, for example. That is hard to do and only found in the realm of the best systems. The Outline GTO is right up there."

Summerfest, affectionately known as "The Big Gig," is certified by Guinness Book of World Records as the "World's Largest Music Festival," drawing an audience of some 800 thousand to one million people over the 11 days of the event. Acts ranging from headliners to local bands perform on 11 stages, with the Miller Lite Oasis Stage as the largest walk up stage. With the GTO system powering the performances for this stage, a wide range of different audio engineers operating the system for the different acts were very impressed with the sound.

"The GTO was fantastic and a pleasure to work with," says Mike Grabarczyk, audio systems technician for Clearwing Productions. "It really is a top-notch system. We had a lot of engineers come through, many using it for the first time, and they loved the power and clarity. Others were excited to use the GTO once again. It blew everyone away."

The Miller Lite Oasis stage system consisted of nine GTO, one GTO-DF down fill and eight GTO-SUB subwoofer cabinets per side as the main FOH system, with four LIPF-082 Lip Fill cabinets used to even out coverage. Clearwing Productions staff used Outline's OpenArray 3D simulation software to ensure each cabinet was properly aimed to maximize audience coverage.

"We took existing computer models of the stage area and had no problem bringing that into Outline's OpenArray software," Baumgardner relates. "From top to bottom, everything about the physical design of the system is very straightforward to use."

"I think we really shocked every one of the audio professionals at the festival," adds Tom Bensen, Sr. VP and Managing Director of Outline NA. "Beyond the intense clarity and high-definition of the GTO, the most impressive feature was the system's headroom. It never seemed to end! We measured over 124dB C-Weighted at FOH, 80 feet from the array and we easily had 6dB or more additional headroom. To be honest, it even surprised me!"



www.outlinearray.com www.clearwing.com

ON STAGE AUDIO EXPANDS, BUILDS NORTH AMERICA'S LARGEST MARTIN AUDIO MLA INVENTORY

With three locations in Chicago, Las Vegas and Nashville and a hectic schedule of live production work, corporate shows, product launches, TV broadcasts and special events; On Stage Audio (OSA) continues its national growth in audio rentals, service and production.

As part of that growth, OSA recently purchased a number of additional Martin Audio MLA and MLA Compact enclosures, resulting in OSA having the largest MLA inventory in North America. With this and other recent sales, the total number of MLA cabinets deployed worldwide is well over 3,000 cabinets at this point.

Asked about the MLA acquisition, OSA Vice President Jim Risgin said, "We believe in the product, technology and, most importantly, the result that MLA delivers."

In addition to successful deployments of MLA and MLA Compact at a growing number of corporate and special events, OSA recently equipped the pavilion stage at Ravinia Festival with the MLA system, the first new PA system at North America's oldest music festival in a decade. Ravinia welcomes about 600,000 guests every summer to over 100 events, including the annual residency of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Since Ravinia's 1904 inception, a residential neighborhood has grown around the concert venue resulting in Ravinia becoming increasingly sensitive to containing sound within its gates.

Asked why MLA was chosen, Jim responds, "Sound is crucial in two ways to outdoor concert presenters who not only want to provide the best musical experience they can to their attendees but who also want to prevent that music from reaching unintended listeners. We are proud Ravinia chose us to help them present a premium customer experience and to help them be a good neighbor to the residents of its home community." Expanding on his feelings about MLA, Jim points out, "It's the first technology in the last 30 plus years that is truly delivering sound in a new and exciting way as far as I'm concerned. Even with the obvious benefits the Multi Cellular drive brings such as SPL control, consistent audience coverage as well as out of area rejection, it still amazes me how good it sounds every time I turn on the system. Simply input the room calculations and MLA in turn delivers the expected coverage as well as giving the engineer a stellar sonic canvas to work with. Now I can allocate my time to



my craft and art of mixing rather than spending the time mastering conventional systems to gain similar results. The timesaving translates into both a better end product for our clients as well as savings in time and labor.

"In terms of its performance, MLA never runs out, it never stops. I think it's the best sounding system with the most even coverage out of the box. Every seat gets the same high quality sound regardless of the location, which helps our clients reduce costs for acoustical treatments in some venues. At this point, the level of the MLA system control has become second nature. For me to work on something other than MLA has become an eye-opener rather than the other way around."

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BottleRock 2013

utting together a successful multi-day multi-stage music festival is a gigantic undertaking fraught with potential for failure. Even people and organizations that have done it and done it well can fail. Look at Asbury Park, New Jersey's Bamboozle, put together by Live Nation. It debuted in 2012 with Skrillex, Foo Fighters and Bon Jovi, but by the end of the year, the founder was forced out of Live Nation and the 2013 festival was cancelled, or at least moved west to Las Vegas. The Vegoose Festival put together by the same group that does Bonnaroo and the Bay Area's Outside Lands lasted three years with headliners including Tom Petty. Black Crowes, Rage Against the Machine, Daft Punk and Dave Mathews Band. But after the 2007 edition, however, it died and has not made a return in the ensuing six years.

The success stories tend to be located in areas away from homes - especially high end homes. Coachella at the Polo Grounds in Indio and Bonnaroo in the middle of nowhere Tennessee come to mind.

So, at first glance, a new festival in a fairly sleepy, pricey town known for wineries and artists put together by locals who have been part of a group that relaunched a 1937 vintage movie theater as a music venue just two years earlier, seemed destined to fail.

Except it didn't.

George Edwards, GM of the Delicate Productions' operation in San Francisco had heard rumblings of a desire to do something big. Delicate had done a lot of work with Bob Vogt and Gabe Meyers having handled the install at the Uptown Theatre and supplying production for specific artists as needs arose. However, it was a surprise when in December of 2012, the pair came to Delicate and told him they had the money to book the acts and they wanted Delicate to handle... everything.

Oh, and one more curveball. The festival, dubbed BottleRock, was originally envisioned as something akin to Austin's South by Southwest spread out around various venues throughout the city. But in a casual conversation with some folks at AEG, Vogt and Meyers were told they were nuts to not do everything at the Napa Expo, a 26-acre outdoor facility that stood empty most of the year but that stuff like power and flushable toilets already there.

So the folks at Delicate had just a few months to put together all of the audio, video and lighting, including non-stage lighting, between the time they got the "go" and the festival which took place in mid-May.

"Is that enough time? It is for us," said Delicate President Jason Alt as the final day of the festival got under way. "It was challenging in the beginning, but our team executed really well, and in the end it all came together very nicely."

There were a lot of things that were different about this festival. First, Vogt and Meyers say there was no real research into what kinds of acts would drive traffic. "We basically just booked acts we wanted to see," said Meyers. The acts they wanted to see included big draws like the Black Keys, Kings of Leon and the Zac Brown Band right alongside up and comers including Alabama Shakes along with veterans Richard Thompson and Charlie Musselwhite, who did a show on his own and a set with Ben Harper.

Second, there was a big charity component. Vogt's 21-yearold son, Will, is autistic and 10 percent of the net from the festival is going to autism causes. In addition, six bucks of every ticket and \$1 of every beverage sale goes to local Napa charities. In an attempt to alleviate the traffic concerns of locals, they made 700 special "bike or walk" tickets available for \$70 off the normal cost and used shuttles to bring people in from as far away as the city of Davis. Some 300 wineries were involved. And of note, right when you walked in the front gate, you were standing in front of a video wall.

"Most festivals rely on printed signage, but the organizers wanted something different and spectacular to confront people right when they walked into the venue, so we have a Winvision 8 mil wall that we are controlling remotely," said Alt.

Delicate brought in a crew of 46 and a ton of Martin Audio gear. It was the first U.S. deployment of the Martin MLA at a large festival and it's vaunted steering abilities were a big part of the audio success here.

There are homes within 150 feet of the main stage and using the MLA software to limit the throw and steer the low-end energy into the venue and away from the homes, they were able to stay within city noise ordinances. Pretty unheard of.

"We got very few complaints," said Alt. "And the few we did get were from like, eight miles away, so we are really not considering those as valid."

"They were below the level of ambient noise," added Edwards. "It doesn't matter if they can hear it. When the level is lower than birds or a car driving up their street, then we're fine."

Both of the larger stages had an Avid Profile at house and a Yamaha PM5D on the deck though most of the headliners provided their own consoles. The exception was the Black Keys for whom this was a fly date so Delicate provided a Midas Pro6. The main stage had a full size MLA system with 18 per side plus 24 subs. The second stage used the MLA Compact and a standard Martin line array used on the third music stage. Delicate also provided everything for two smaller "lounge" venues including one devoted to comedy.

"Like the main stage, the second stage had houses just over the fenceline so MLA allowed us to keep the audio energy within the venue," said Alt.

"The field is about 800 feet," Edwards added. "We used the MLA software to make the audio really drop off at about 700 feet. It makes all the difference in dealing with the neighbors."

While MLA has had a ton of press since it was released, most touring acts have never used it and most audio buyers and production managers have not actually heard it. A festival environment like this allows a lot of production pros to see, hear and drive the system in a short period of time. (Martin's sister company EAW did something similar when they did a prerelease coming out of their super-steerable Anya rig on a secondary stage at Coachella.)

For a company like Delicate, it becomes a form of marketing. Only a handful of touring companies in the U.S. have MLA. Delicate, OSA (who just hired Martin's tech guru Martyn "Ferrit" Rowe as their Director of Engineering), Special Event Services and maybe one or two others. If you want MLA, there are only a few companies that can give it to you. BottleRock was almost an extended, real world demo of a system that Delicate and few others can offer. Brilliant.

We have looked but not been able to find another example of one company handling all of the audio, lighting and video for a festival of this size.

"It was classic divide and conquer," said Alt. "George knows the founders very well so he took care of all of that end including the politics of dealing with the city. The rest of it came



out of our Los Angeles office. Every department head jumped in and advanced everything with the artists and we did what Delicate does best and pulled it all together."

"At the end of the day, gear is gear," said Edwards. "And we are not just guys with a bunch of boxes. We are very passionate about what we do and very much a team. This morning one of the founders came up to me and just wrapped his arms around me and said,

tion monthly

'Delicate helped make our dreams come true.' And that is an amazing feeling."

BottleRock appears so far to be a success story. And, before the last note was played at the inaugural event, there was a buzz building about BottleRock 2014. Is Delicate up for it?

"Absolutely," said Alt. "Give us a couple of days to rest and debrief. We'll start planning for 2014 on Tuesday..."

Afterview and Hindsight:

Putting together a festival is an undertaking that most people are simply unable to grasp. There is a reason so many fail and why the big ones are generally run by the same small group of companies. The number of moving parts and the potential for failure is just massive.

So it is no surprise that, well, there's a problem. Unfortunately it is financial and is directly affecting some 140 stagehands who were NOT working for Delicate as well as numerous others. There appears to be a big disconnect between the founder/ promoters and the Napa company that provided the catering services about how much was collected and who is owed what.

For a full rundown of the situation, check out the links below.

blogs.sfweekly.com/shookdown/2013/06/ bottle_rock_nappa+valley_still.php

http://napavalleyregister.com/news/local/ police-investigating-bottlerock-s-bouncedchecks/article_9e7006a8-ef3c-11e2-9b2a-001a4bcf887a.html

Delicate brought in a crew of 46 and a ton of Martin

Audio gear.



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CHALLENGINGTHE</t

The crew on the recent Status Quo UK reunion tour, not only got the chance to go back in time technically but also to go back to some of the more historic concert venues of days gone by.

Situated in the London Borough of Hammersmith, in the shadow of the busy fly-over, proudly sits one such example, the iconic and legendary Hammersmith Odeon.

Built in 1932, and originally known as the Gaumont Palace, the Grade II listed building has seen its fair share of live concerts over the decades, rightfully earning an affectionate place in many a rock fans heart. From David Bowie's final concert as Ziggy Stardust in 1973 and Bruce Springsteen's legendary 1975 performance, right through to Bob Dylan's sold out three night run in 2010, the Odeon (now known as the Apollo) has earned its place in the history books of the live touring industry.

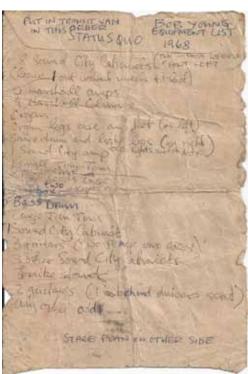
Another chapter was added to that ever-expanding historic roll call, when for the first time in more than 30 years the original four members of British rock legends, Status Quo, decided to reform for a nine date UK tour. It was only natural to expect the band to return to the good old Hammy-O, a venue they first played together in 1968, for two sold out nights.

While this jaunt down memory lane was a trip back in time for the band and fans alike, it was undoubtedly a challenge, albeit a pleasant one for Quo's hard working, loyal and long-serving crew. **BY RICHARD BENNETT**

"When we knew that the reunion tour was actually going to happen, we weren't given any direction from the band or management as to how it should look," explains Tour and Production Manager Glen Smith. "Because this crew is with the band all the time, it's a permanent crew and we are permanently touring, we just felt that in this situation it's got to be a retro set up. We had no idea what the band were going to play, but the band's manager Simon Porter said, 'retro is the way to go'. That's how we approached the nine date tour. We were in production rehearsals for about a week. The problem was that things have moved on since the boys last played together. John (Coghlan) and Alan (Lancaster) remember those days, but with Status Quo today it's a massive machine, and they had to fit in with that. The idea of them travelling on the bus was different for them," laughs Smith.

Keeping with the return to the good old days theme, the groups' first roadie, harmonica player and co-writer of some of their early hits, Bob Young joined the band on stage which, as he freely admits, brought back some fond memories of when he started out with the band in the late 60s:





"The set list on this tour is based around the 1977 live album with a few extra tracks thrown in. The whole thing about these shows is that it really needed to be back to what it was; it still has the rough edges from the old days, but that's fine. When I started in the band, driving the van and gear around back in 1968, it was a great time to be in this industry. Then I became the tour manager and got an extra £5 a week. In those days, I would write on the back of an envelope the gear list in order of how it should be loaded in the van, and on the other side I would draw a little plan of how it would all fit on stage. I remember one of the very first gigs I did with the band, at the end of the show I was packing up the gear and was taking out all the plugs from this old five amp metal plug board we had, and blew myself up! John Coghlan walked past me heading to the dressing room and said to the rest of the band, 'that new f'ing roadie is having a lie down already.' They ended up having to call an ambulance," says Young.

It was important to the crew that the whole production stayed loyal the Quo's sound of the original albums and the tours of the 70s, which also meant it had to be bloody loud. So it was no surprise to see another old friend making an appearance at this exceptional event, loads of Marshall amps to make sure it was bloody loud and heavy:

"It's incredibly loud, everything's out there on the edge of where it should be. Rick's guitar is constantly on the edge of feedback. There have been problems, level-wise because the band is quite close to their mic line, but we have overcome those. John has pushed his drum kit forward, because old school they used to play in front of the amplifiers," says Guitar Tech Lloyd Gilbert.

The stage and backline set up is also very simple, and once again a throwback to the late seventies. With the obligatory Spinal Tap Marshall Amps with Vox Heads, the stage is a classic example in what a good old mean and dirty rock 'n' roll should look like, but as with most of this tour, technology is not far away as Gilbert explains.

"Rick and Francis have always used a Marshall Head and 4 x 12's and a Vox AC30, and wherever the AC30 sits sometimes changes. On this rig, because we have gone for the retro look, we have the AC30's in the front end but they are actually running to speakers that are offstage. On our main rig, I have put AC30 chassis into Marshal Heads so it looks like a Marshall, and again that runs to a speaker offstage. That is our trick to have a signal running offstage turned up real good and loud. It doesn't affect anyone out there, but it keeps the low end going.

"Onstage, we angle the speaker cabs in so the sound will hit Rick and Francis just at their mic stands. It's a very earthy guitar sound and it's not as polished as with the other tours, but in this case it doesn't need to be. You want to hear it like you're hearing it in the back of a pub. I am a great believer in just getting up on stage, plugging the guitar in and playing, and with this show, that's what we have. You could take two Marshall's and two Vox's, put them in a pub and you will get pretty much the same sound we are getting on this tour. Technology has been bypassed in the grand scale of things, it's just good old-fashioned Telecasters and Marshalls," continued Gilbert.

One distinctive absentee from this fine example of a 70s rock set up is the good old instantly recognisable, and part-time footrest, the front-of-stage wedges. With the sound as loud as it is on this tour, the inclusion of the wedges would have finally put an end to most of the bands hearing, so technology comes to the rescue, with the entire band running with Sennheiser in-ears.

With the retro-theme in place, the challenge of recreating a late 70s stage production was enthusiastically embraced by the crew, including veteran Lighting Director Patrick Marks, as he explains:

"These days, I find that stage lighting has become technology led, and as a consequence, so many shows

start to look the same. The biggest challenge for me with this gig, was trying not to use the technology available. I originally wanted to go with all Par Can lights, because I am old school and also to get that 70s rock show feel. They were difficult to find, combined with the fact that they generate so much heat that the band would fry onstage. I started to look at using a Clay Paky set up but I did not want to use any moving lights or gobos. I needed to get my head around the fact that I was using moving heads, but not moving them. I was concerned it might not work, as all I was as doing was flashing around, which 20 years ago was what we did. I remember Freddie Mercury from Queen saying when asked what stage lighting he wanted, he said "give me lots of Smarties darling" which meant he wanted big blocks of Par Cans."

Working with Mick Freer of Leicester based lighting company Hawthorn Theatrical, Marks was able to bring to the stage the lighting design vision he had in mind.

"I've known Mick for more than 20 years," said Marks. "He was my old crew chief. He called me up and asked if he could do a quote for me, and I thought, Hawthorn, they're not really a rock n' roll company. But I went up to see him and said he had been given free range. What lights did I want? What truss did I want? I can get it, and I was able to hand pick my own crew. My relationship with Hawthorn's is very important as I tend to deal with the person rather than the company. The brilliant thing about Mick is he understands about having the right crew and he understands the problems on the road because he's done it. When Mick said he could do something, I trusted him and he didn't let me down."

Marks continues, "We started using them last year and it has been a great success. Hawthorn's has invested heavily in Clay Paky. Four years ago I would have said, 'Clay Paky, they're an Italian company who make disco lights, why would I want them?' However over the past few years they have come of age. They are reliable, light, small and really pack a punch."

By going back and watching old Status Quo concert footage, combined with Marks 20 years' experience





with the band, he was able to create an old school rock n' roll rig. Based on three triangular trusses, they would ramp that up to five for the following day's Wembley Arena show. Marks used a combination of six Clay Paky Alpha Beam 700's, 46 Alpha Wash 700's, 20 300 beams and 10 of the Alpha Wash 300's all run through a grandMA2 lite.

"About 20 years ago when I was working with Quo, we had three triangular trusses and two big circles with no moving lights, and I wanted to get that type of look again," Marks tells us. "The question was how I could achieve that with moving heads. I just keep them static and only moved them in blackout. The Alpha Beam 700's are fantastic. They are a big ALC, but you have a color change with them and the 300's are as bright as you could need. They have a soft edge and tight beams so it's that old Par Can look,". says Marks.

With his lighting crew chief, Tom Crosbie, technicians Dan Oswald, Ewan Cameron and production rigger Bryan Wilson, Marks was able to produce a stunning and effective old school rock show look with modern technology; although he admits to being nervous as to if he could pull it off. "I think you have to have the courage sometimes to say 'back off', and believe that less is more.," Marks explained. "You have to go back and look what other people have done. Willie Williams is a classic LD and his work with Dire Straits was outstanding. The song "Private Investigations" is a fine example of less is more. He used a blue wash and he had his follow spots doing a very slow movement. It took courage to do that, but it worked. There are a few things I do to get that classic rock look, and that's down to the experience of working in a number of different mediums. It's a very weird thing to do a 'retro' show on a modern board. Working on this project has made me think about what I do with the main Status Quo tours. Like, do I really need to use so many gobos?"

For Smith, the key to making the whole thing work in the context of a 'retro' setting was creating a 'retro' vibe in a modern way, as he explains:

"Some of the equipment used back in the day you just can't get anymore. The last thing we wanted to do was put a load of PA on the side of the stage. We just wanted to keep it simple. The PA system supplied by Capital Sound Hire is perfect. It's very low profile, and we didn't want the technology to interfere with the show, so we used technology in a 'retro' style."

The by-passing of technology ran through all levels of the production, including the mixing of the shows. For longtime Quo FOH Andy May, the challenges fell once again into the less-is-more category.

May: "Loudspeaker wise, I have a Martin LC System with twin 18 bass units. It's loud but it needs to be. This show is all about a punchy and raw sound. It still needs to be clean, but not too smooth. We are using a line array system that's not a 'retro' version but on the other hand, it's not too modern. It's running off XTA crossovers. I have eight Meyer Melody front fills across the front of the stage that just have vocals in, to lift the vocals up above the guitars for the fans at the front of the barriers. The mix is done through a Yamaha 5D. It's a bit antiquated in a way, but it helps with this type of show."

"The whole of the show only runs on 24 inputs, and I am being greedy with that," says May. "I could get way with 16 inputs. I have two kick drum mics, two snares, a hi-hat, three tom toms, a ride cymbal, two overheads, and a mic on the cowbell. For the guitars I have two channels of bass guitar, although I only use one, three channels for Rick's guitar, one for the 4 x12, one for the AC30 and the third one is a backup. I have the same for Francis. I've got three vocals and Bob Young's harmonica mic and I mix them altogether. I never have to flip the faders, which is unusual for a digital desk. I've got two tiny reverbs, one for the drums and the other for the vocals and that's it. I have

"Working on this project has made me think about what I do with the mail Status Quo tours. Like , do I really need to use so many gobos?"

- Quo LD Patrick Marks



some gates on the kick drums and the tom toms and a compressor on the bass and the vocals," says May.

Like the rest of the crew on this run, the move back to a retro feel has not only been a challenge, but also a chance to put to use their collective decades of experience. By trying to tone down their reliance on technology, it has forced everyone to look at how it was done back in the day, their own personal trip down memory lane.

"I listened to all the original albums so I could get the right feel for the sound the band wanted," continues May. "It's a big sound but nothing flash, it's all simple. We are using SM58 mics, just regular stuff, nothing expensive. Capital Sound Hire has done a great job on the sound. I have had a good relationship with Capital for more than 20 years. They have always been my preferred UK supplier and they have never let me down, which is really important when you are out touring as much as we do," says May.

As the reunion tour comes to an end, everyone from the production team, band and the fans can sleep safe in the knowledge that they collectively managed to pull off something quite exceptional, and for Smith there's his own moment of nostalgia as well.

"It's not just another show. This tour is pretty special. And special for me because I grew up with this music. Francis will tell you and we know it's not as slick or as tight as the modern Quo, but that's part of the charm."





Band:

Francis Rossi-Guitar and Vocals Rick Parfitt-Guitar and Vocals Alan Lancaster-Bass and Vocals John Coghlan-Drums Bob Young-Harmonica

Crew:

Lyane Ngan-Band PA Paul Ashcroft-Assistant to Rick Parfitt Glen Smith-Tour/Production Manager Patrick Marks-Lighting Designer Andy May-FOH Sound Engineer Tim Franklin-Monitor Engineer Lloyd Gilbert-Guitar Tech Lance Miles-Drum Tech Andy Tomkins-Key/Bass Tech Graeme Bell-Merchandise **Tom Crosbie-Lighting Tech** Dan Oswald-Lighting Tech **Ewan Cameron-Lighting Tech** Bryan Wilson-Rigger Damo Dyer-Audio Tech Jon Allen-Audio Tech Sean Stone-Catering Mickey Thomas-Catering George Baker-Catering Steve McNamra-Band Bus Driver (1) John Dines-Band Bus Driver (2) Carsten Madsen-Crew Bus (1) Mick Birch-Crew Bus (2) **Russell Burrows-Truck Driver** Colin Regan-Truck Driver James Brown-Truck Driver Kevin Gray-Truck Driver

Vendors:

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GLEN SMITH, VICKI LUNDFORD (APPLE EVENTS), AND BOB YOUNG













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PAUL HATTIN@PHOENIX-BUSSING.CO.UK ANDY.GRAY@PHOENIX-BUSSING.CO.UK hen the original Status Quo ventured out across the UK for their retro-based reunion tour, they knew just the right bussing company for a high quality and professional service, Phoenix Bussing.

BY RICHARD BENNETT

In these economic challenging times, finding that subtle balance between a professional service, high quality and affordable prices, is a mountain that most tours seek to find. And like most things you struggle to find, they end up being in the most unusual of places.

Sitting quietly in the unassuming and typically English rural town of Romesy, in the county of Hampshire, lays the answer to the above conundrum, in the shape of Phoenix Bussing. Formed in 1988, rising like a Phoenix (pun intended) from the ashes of Len Wright Travel, the company has grown its fleet from the original four converted buses, built by the employees, to an impressive choice of more than 30 vehicles, ranging from eight berth single-decker's right up to 16 berth double-deckers, and all points in between.

The company's success is mainly due the commitment and vast experience of the team, including Doug Hamnett, Andy Gray and Operational Manger Paul Hattin. To have a team that has not only vision, but a large amount of touring experience is the key to their position as one of the top companies in their field. "I stared out as a driver, but had to give that it up due to an eye condition in 1998, 10 years after Phoenix started business. I started work at Len Wright in 1982, but eventually Len's business got too big and he lost control of it. He ended up selling a controlling interest to a company called Cantabrica, who took control of the company in 1998. The problem was they were mainly a coach company and had no idea about the tour bus industry. They didn't want to listen to us as we were long haired, smelly yobs, and that's when I decided to leave the business," says Hattin.

ing From the Ashes to Rule Roost with Phoenix Bussing

> Like many before him, Hattin may have left the road, but as many of us know, she is a demanding and patient mistress, who's calls like those of the mythological banshee, will finally call us back to the road, like doomed sailors on to the rocks.

> Hattin: "A little while later in 1988, two of the drivers from the original company contacted me with the idea of getting the company back on the road, so to speak. We approached the original family, the Buddens, who funded Len back in the day, and asked them if they wanted to give it another try. Len had ordered four new bus shells that were still sitting in the factory, as Cantabrica didn't want them, so the Buddens brought them and we started up the company. When it started there were seven of us involved, although to be honest, at the time I wasn't sure I wanted to get back into it.

That soon changed. We had these four bus shells, and the seven of us built them and kitted them out, then started contacting the people we knew in the industry."

It was one of these contacts, Phil McDonnell (later of Horizon Entertainment Cargo) who decided to take a punt on Phoenix, and offered the company a tour by the traditional Irish band Clannad. That was all this experienced and ambitious company needed to start them on the road to establishing themselves as one of the best known and trusted bussing business in the marketplace today. When you consider the dramatic and turbulent changes within our industry in the past 20 years, this was quite a feat.

"Back in the early days, the touring industry was like being part of a family. You would regularly meet the same people, not with us now) and anytime we got to Hamburg you just knew that Brian would be down the Reeperbahn, getting up to mischief. He would always park his truck at the end of the road, same place every time. At the gig the next day, you would hear the cry, "anyone seen Brian's truck?" We all knew where it would be, so another driver would go down to the Reeperbahn and sure enough, Brian's truck was there, with Brian asleep in it with the keys hidden under the wheel arch. In today's business if that happened, the driver would be sacked. The business changed for me in the 90s. I always used to do the Sting tours, then on one of them, we suddenly had an accountant on the tour. I thought, accountant, why have we got an accountant on the tour?" laughs Hattin.

The decision from the very start was to go for the quality end of the market. A

have not been able to work with because our fleet is booked with other bands, which pisses me off a bit, but we will always try to help them out. The funny thing is that two bands have already blocked booked buses for next summer with us, even if they don't use them."

The experience of driving on the road has also had its benefits when it comes to working with a customer.

"It's all about understanding the nature of the business, and that is difficult at times to get across to people. I will always work with the production. I will ask to look at their itinerary and if it looks tight on time, I will advise them that maybe they should fly this bit, even if it loses us business. It is all about working together to get what you and the customer wants. People ask me how can they can get into the music business,



but the business changed in the 90s as it got a lot more professional and the bigger productions started to come along. There are just so many people involved in the business now. There are more of the biggersized companies in the trade now than there were back in the 80s. If you did a three truck, two bus tour, that was a big tour. When I worked on the Bruce Springsteen *Born to Run* tour, we were playing all the big stadiums across Europe, and we were running on only two buses for the whole of the crew. Now look at what happens today... With the recent Lady Ga-Ga tour, they had 35 trucks and 16 buses," continues Hattin.

"Those days were completely different. It was fun, shit used to happen but it was never a big issue, plus you had all these characters and great stories. I worked with a driver called Brian Schofield (unfortunately risky move with so many other companies trying to branch out into that market over the years, many who just couldn't stay the course. For a while, Phoenix had most of the market and at times, was probably the only choice the bigger tours had. With the foresight of Hamnett, Hattin and their team, the company took advantage of the situation to build a strong reputation for excellent product and service, a reputation that continues to grow to this day.

"It's all about reputation. This year we are working with Muse, Green Day and Springsteen, customers we have worked with for many years. There is incredible loyalty in this business, and we have worked with bands that keep coming back to us year after year. The problem we have this year is that some our regular customers, like Elton John and the Pet Shop Boys, we and I tell them you have to know somebody who knows somebody. I get a lot of normal bus drivers phoning me looking for work. I ask them if they have any experience, and their answers is, "it's just driving a bus," but its not. When I first started as a driver, people used to say to me, "you drive like a coach driver." I had to learn that you don't go round a roundabout like your driving a car. You go around at about 2 miles an hour because you have people in the back trying to sleep," says Hattin.

As Hattin freely admits, getting into this business was never a career choice, but he loves what he and his team do, even though in today's corporate environment he misses the old days of the road.

"I remember doing the first European tour of a band in the early 80s. We met them in Stockholm and did the rest of the tour for them. As we didn't stay in hotels in those days, we had buyouts and spotlight money. The tour manager said to me and the other two drivers, "wait until we get to Newcastle in the UK and I will settle up in £s with you then." We get to Newcastle, and he says, "come to the office after the show to get paid." We all walk in, and there he is with this brief case of money. So we tell him what he owed us and, with a shocked look on his face he said, "but that's all the money we took tonight!" laughs Hattin.

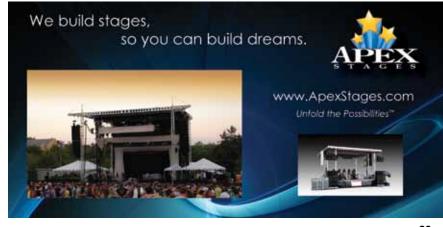
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WIDESPREAD PANIC-On the Road Again

fter a one year hiatus, Widespread Panic is touring again. The current production was debuted New Years Eve 2012/13. This follows the usual procedure for each year's tour, though a good deal of preparation goes into what would normally be considered a 'one-off', with pre-visualization of show programmed for two weeks in December using LD Paul Hoffman's grandMA 3D at home.



In terms of the actual rig design that is currently out, Hoffman reached out to the band last summer during the break and asked them what they are thinking of for the New Year's show.

"They usually have some sort of thematic concept. This year it centered on the Mayan Calendar and great planetary alignment. Originally the concept was a rising sun; hence the half-circles with graphics chosen to encompass the feedback from the band members. Their responses can be somewhat brief but having been with the band several years, I've found I can articulate those responses fairly well," says Hoffman.

Hoffman came on board in 2005 when Candace Brightman assumed the reins as lighting designer following LD Dino Derose passing away. Hoffman had worked as Brightman's crew chief and programmer since 2002.

"When Candace retired, she recommended me for the position. She has been a major mentor to me both in lighting and in life," Hoffman says.

The rig consists of two semicircles which practically sit on the stage. The distance between the two is bridged by 11 Bandit LED battens spread around the curve which faces the audience. Hoffman has programmed

some truly unique looks into them, providing counterpoint beats to the VL 3's accents in the rig. A third curved truss creating a long "eyebrow" hangs midstage, with a downstage truss completing the flown part of the rig. 5' x 5' Matrix Blinder Dragons are spread across the face of the downstage truss. Here too, Hoffman has programmed truly unique looks into these, utilizing their 29 channel capabilities. This layering effect creates a strong visual 3D presence.

"I'm pretty lucky in that I get minimal resistance on the things I put forward," says Hoffman. "That said, there is a number which we try to target. When I have something special, like the Clay Paky Mirage, the band is willing to put forth the money to add it to the rig."

Bandit is the lighting vendor with Shawn Beaulieu as Crew Chief and Wayne Lotoza and Andrew French rounding out the lighting crew.

Upstage center in the third semicircle hangs the Clay Paky Mirage. This LED wall is very impressive visually, especially for not having very high resolution.

The 20mm pixel pitch enables a bright, vibrant display that, coupled with the layered look of semicircles, enhances the 3D perception these layered circles bring to the stage. Of course,

Hoffman's choice of graphic images displayed further heighten the effect, virtually jumping off the flat LED screen.

The beautiful perception presented by this tool would, in the hands of a less capable designer, tend to get overused. But, like a great actor, comfortable enough in his craft to be able to turn away from the camera and emotively express his feelings, Hoffman judiciously takes the screen to black for equal effect.

Hoffman points out further that with well over 300 songs in the bands repertoire and the occasional pulling of a rabbit out of their collective hats, by necessity the show is almost 100 percent punted. Cues have been written for a few particular songs so he can pull them up instantaneously, but mainly everything is run on the fly.

"I really like getting the audience into the action. To be able to pull those people from the back into participating with the show and see their reaction is very cool for me and the band as well. I'm not a white glove LD and have a very capable crew from Bandit, but I'm old school. I haven't come to peace yet with sitting on the bus in my flip flops during load out," Hoffman explains further.

Andrew "Dros" Liposcak is the FOH engineer



Doing What They Do Best BY MIKE WHARTON

employed by the audio vendor on the tour, Eighth Day Sound. He too is very much a participant on this team that puts the system up every day. Panic is a player's player band. Every note, tone and chord builds a sonic story. Nothing is in there for "fill". Each component fills an important space in the overall structure. Dros is acutely aware of this and utilizes this atmospheric philosophy in his mixing.

"I do not like to mix at what many people would consider a 'loud level'. That requires constant additional gain for the audience's ears to adjust to the level, so that at the end of the show people walk out with nothing but ringing in their ears," he says. "What I try to achieve at a consistent level, which usually peaks at 105 db, is reproduce the sound reinforcement to where there is no harmonic distortion."

"One of the challenges of live sound reinforcement is that you're constantly fighting crowd noise to reproduce a good clean signal," notes Dros. Getting the system up and running efficiently requires a big team effort and Eighth Day has always been good about sending guys who understand that team vibe," he states.

One of the mainstays of a Widespread Panic show was the jungle of microphones and stands in the audience. That jungle is very thin and practically non-existent these days.

"Taping stopped about three years ago," notes Brad Blettenberg, monitor engineer and a 17 year veteran of the Widespread production staff.



Blettenberg also was the recipient of the 'Top Dog Monitor Engineer of the Year Award' at Tour Link 2013. Blettenberg used to maintain the 90 channel recording rack in monitor world to archive shows for future distribution. That is no longer necessary with the digital technology available presently. He says that the fans are still welcome to tape. They just don't do it much, with the advent of hard drives, Pro Tools and the board's capability.

"We can now download and get it on the website within forty-eight hours".

John Switzer, percussion tech, Pro Tools guy and all about advocate for getting the band out there

digitally, also is in charge for shows that are uploaded for nugs.net. The goal is to accomplish a show turnaround in about forty-eight hours.

Dro feeds the mixes and gives Switzer a thumb drive to break it down to multitrack recording. Everything is mixed off the live show board. No post production per se is done to remix the board tape. It is then fed to the Widespread Panic site for sale and to nugs.net, "the biggest music site you probably never heard of" according to their site slogan.

Switzer also sets up the analogue to digital computer for live streaming.

"We started streaming shows this tour and they are free," he says.

With the demise of record labels, touring is the main source of bands' revenue. Widespread is utilizing 21st century technology to get their music out while on the road. This is a practice that found its beginnings with Hank Williams Sr. and all the country acts in the early days. Carry your albums with you to sell at the show.

Like has so often been said before," The more things change, the more they stay the same."



Band Party: John Bell

Guitars/Vocals

Dave Schools Bass /vocals

Todd Nance Drums/vocals

Domingo "Sunny" Ortiz Audio Crew Percussion

John "JoJo" Hermann Keyboards/Vocals

Jimmy Herring Lead Guitar

Steve Lopez Tour Manager

Larry "Big" Garten Bus Driver

Sam Lanier Band Manager

Buck Williams Band Manager/Agent

Crew Party: Mike Smith

Production Manager

Jennifer Kreps Production Assistant

Laura Nordai Tour Accountant

Brad Blettenberg Monitors

John Switzer Percussion Tech

Paul Agostino Bass/Keys Tech

Eric Bice Drum Tech

Joel Byron Guitar Tech Andrew "Dros" Liposcak FOH Engineer

Chris Berry Audio Crew Chief

Drew Marvar Audio Crew

Corey Willis

Paul Hoffman Light Designer

Shawn Beaulieu

Light Crew Chief

Wayne Lotoza Light Crew

Andrew French Light Crew

Tom Cusimano Tour Rigger

Rachel Kellenberger Merchandise

Andy Tennille Tour Archivist/Media

Randy Alm Crew 2 driver

Michelle Morrow Crew 1 driver

John Harvey Lead truck driver

Jim Baker Audio truck driver

Management: Browncat 400 Foundry St. Athens, GA 30601 706-354-8301 (f) 706-369-1631 Sam Lanier – Manger Buck Williams – Manager Ellie Macknight – Office Manager Matt Decamp – Office Manger

Booking Agent:

PGA Music 103 W. Tyne Dr. Nashville, TN 37205 615-354-9100, (f) 615-354-9101 Buck Williams, Jennifer Fowler

Accounting:

Trinity Accounting Group 1550 Timothy Ln. Suite 203 Athens, GA 30601 (p) 706–546–1422 Tom Scott, Scott Saucier, Cindy Saucier

Travel Agency Flights:

Aspen Travel 3395 N. Pines Ways Wilson, WY 83014 307-733-7893 (f) 307-733-7131 Chris Burnside, Macey Scott, Rob Feagin, Randle Feagin

Travel-Hotels:

Altour/Travel Like a Rockstar 12100 W. Olympic Blvd. Suite 300 Los Angeles, CA 90064 310-571-6039, (f) 310-689-5993 Tracy Williams, Jeany Kim, Zamora Figueroa

Bus Company: Diamond Coach Leasing Inc. 533 Hickory Hills Blvd. Whites Creek, TN 37189 (p) 615-228-3130 (f) 615-228-3171 Michelle Bernadsky

Trucking: Roadshow Trucking 5501 Third St. San Francisco, CA 94124 (p) 415-822-3000 (f) 415-822-1293

Sound: Eighth Day Sound 5450 Avion Park Dr. Highland Hts, OH 44143 (p) 440-995-5900 (f) 440-995-2828 Owen Orzack Lighting: Bandit Lites 1476 Townview Ave. Santa Rosa, CA 95495 (p) 707-579-1850 (c) 707-843-9122 Dizzy Gosnell

Merchandise: WP Merchandise 113 Rowe Rd. Athens, GA 30601 706-369-0840, (f) 706-369-0407

Merch Manager: Robert Macknight Paul Edwards

Radios: Spotlight Express 406 Plum St. Danville, VA 24540 (p) 434-787-1922 Barry Davis

Passes: Cube Services 4090 S. McCarran Blvd. Unit C Reno, NV 89502 775-823-9933 (f) 775-823-9934 Kiersten Holland

Itineraries: Knowhere 1706 Ocean Park Blvd. Santa Monica, CA 90405 310-314-5595 (f) 310-314-5594 Tina Ogata tina@eknowhere.com





MIKE SMITH-PRODUCTION MANAGER

SHAWN BEAULIEU-LIGHTING CREW CHIEF PAUL HOFFMAN-LIGHTING DESIGNER/DIR.

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WAYNE LOTOZA-LIGHTING TECH



PAUL HOFFMAN-LIGHTING DESIGNER/ DIR.

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Panic Tours with Bandit Lites

American rock band and road warriors Widespread Panic are back on the road with Bandit Lites, bringing their Southern rock sound to sold-out shows across the US during the current summer leg.

Following an incredible New Year's Eve performance where the stellar rig included truss running the length of the arena over the



audience and two trusses encircling a video wall, lighting designer Paul Hoffman was tasked to adapt the immense rig for both the road and varying venues.

"Obviously we are not playing the Pepsi Center every single day, so we had to scale it back," Hoffman said.

Hoffman simplified the front truss to a straight piece rather than New Year's massive, complicated arch which was extremely time-consuming to build.

"We whittled away at it till we got it to fit in the right amount of truck space and fit the right budget," explained Hoffman. "It was an iterative process, but we did it."

While the front truss was simplified, the centerpiece of the design did not change. With direction from the band consisting of the words "Mayan", "Space", and "New Age", Hoffman created the image of a rising sun: two circles of truss surround a huge circular video screen with psychedelic images.

Equipment for the design included Hoffman's workhorse, VL3000s, GLP Impressions, GRN LED Pars and GRN LED Battens from Bandit Lites, in addition to Clay Paky Sharpys (an addition Hoffman loves for their compactness), Maxedia Video Servers, Mirage Video Panels and a GrandMA2 Console.

The constant changing of styles of venues requires multiple adjustments day to day. While the original design was in a colossal open space, Hoffman worked to adapt the design to the more confined spaces of theatres, where proscenium arches tuck the design behind the stage. To that end he created varying show files to make up for the fluctuating spaces, which included both indoor and outdoor productions.

Indoor shows allow for intricacies that will get lost in outdoor productions. Where gobos may be able to be utilized inside, outdoor concerts need to be "a big, flashy rock show" as Hoffman puts it. "It is never the same thing twice."

Having been Widespread Panic's lighting designer since 2009, and having worked as the programmer beforehand, Hoffman is no stranger to the tour, and welcomes the return each year.

"The crew we have out here is really great. It feels like a big family. Everyone really watches out for each other, takes care of each other and likes each other," said Hoffman, adding, "Mike Smith, the production manager, is a big part of the process in helping us make it happen all the time. It is really very enjoyable to come back to this from other projects."

In addition to the family like atmosphere, Hoffman credits Bandit Lites, who has been supplying the band for over five years, with keeping things on the road running smoothly.

"It has been fabulous working with the Bandit crew," said Hoffman. "Shawn Beaulieu is a fantastic crew chief, and Wayne Lotoza is just an engine; he never stops. Andy French is pretty new, but we have always had great people from Bandit. Dizzy Gosnell of course is a life saver. He handles all the engineering design, the budgeting, and solves all our problems, so it's really been a very good arrangement, which is why we still have Bandit. It is such a strong customer service company, which is distinctly absent from some other people.

www.banditlites.com



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