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The Summer of **AVENGED SEVENFOLD**



Notes from the Publisher

In this issue we feature Avenged Sevenfold and their tour for their album Hail to the King. The band broke the album touring cycle into three legs: Hail to the King, Shepherd of Fire, and as headliners for the Mayhem 2014 tour. Gallagher Staging, Media Visions and Pyrotek brought the Skeleton King to life for all legs of the tour and succeeded in amazing fans all over the world in venues of all sizes. Our expanded tour coverage includes pieces on both Media Visions and Pyrotek.

Also in this issue is a story on our good friends at the InterContinental Times Square in New York City. Their penthouse suites are beyond fantastic, make a luxurious home away from home, and they're open to the idea of filming a music video there. If you take them up on the offer, be sure to tell them Mobile Production Monthly tipped you off to the idea.

This issue is partially the work of our new Associate Editor, JJ Janney. She joined after a stint with Homeland Security doing something that she's not allowed to talk about though I am told it required a security clearance. We are all very happy that she's joined our team. Among her various skills she is fluent in Spanish and we plan to put that to use in the near future as we expand our coverage into the Latin Market.

Finally, a word about the Tour Link Conference. As of the day that I am writing these notes, we have more attendees registered than any time in the 35 years that I have been doing this work. If we are correct in our assessments, we will have the largest conference we have ever produced with people coming from all over the world. This increase in attendance, especially over the past three years, enables us to keep increasing the number of sessions and workshops. Our goal is to be a magnet to the young up-and-coming professionals who need to meet the older, established pros and vendors.

So, if you have not already made the decision to be at the conference in Palm Springs, CA Jan 8-9-10, then check out the conference website www.tourlinkconference.com to see who attended last time and who has already signed up for this one. If that does not help you to make a decision, there is little I can say that will.

Larry Smith
Publisher



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AC-ET APPOINTS Mats Karlsson

in International Business Development Role

A.C. Entertainment Technologies (AC-ET) Ltd., a 'one-stop' provider of cutting-edge lighting, audio, rigging and video products and solutions to users in over 80 countries, are delighted to announce their appointment of well-known industry figure, Mats Karlsson, in a new International Business Development role.

Mats has more than 30 years of experience in various roles spanning rental and production, lighting design, sales and product development - and joins the company after some ten years in LED display development at Barco, Martin Professional, and most recently, VER.

He will be responsible for increasing the market share of AC-ET's exclusive and key brands internationally, including the supply of Chroma-Q®, Jands, Prolights and many more marques - from a portfolio of over 200 - to selected territories.

Commenting on his appointment, Mats says: "My association with A.C. goes back almost 30 years, and so to be asked by co-founder David Leggett to come on-board to grow their international business is a real honour for me. As everyone knows, AC-ET have a massive portfolio of products available, yet the real secret to their success has always been the people, and hopefully I can bring some new ideas and insights to this amazing team and organisation."

AC-ET's Co-Founder and Executive Chairman, David Leggett, says: "I have known Mats for many years and have always respected his views - which I believe is also true for many of our industry colleagues. This, and his wealth of industry experience, will in my opinion be invaluable in growing our International Sales business."

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InterContinental Times Square
in New York City -
Where Every Guest is a Rock Star



Mobile Production Monthly recently spoke with Andrew Garjary, General Manager of the luxurious New York City hotel, The InterContinental New York Times Square. The hotel is part of The InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) which owns and manages over 4,700 hotels worldwide including Crowne Plaza, Holiday Inn and Hualuxe (China) hotels. Andrew has worked for IHG for eighteen years and was kind enough to share some of his experience and enthusiasm.

We asked Andrew why people working in entertainment should make InterContinental hotels the preferred home away from home when on the road. He started off by mentioning their international presence, "We are first and foremost a truly global company, but more importantly we maintain a global standard of service with great consistency." He emphasized the fact that the InterContinental brand is already the preferred hotel for celebrities, dignitaries and business people from all over the world, meaning "our staff already have the experience and confidentiality that would be expected and that's in addition to the training they receive." He sums up the philosophy this way, "it's like that saying, treat every guest like they're a rock-star and every rock-star like they're a guest." So whether you're the top production guy or an intern, you can expect to be pampered. And if you're Madonna, you'll be pampered too but you won't have staff asking for your autograph or stealing your lipstick stained glass from the room service tray to sell on eBay.

While standards for quality are global, Andrew noted that every individual hotel is designed and staffed with an emphasis on local knowledge and resources. He said proudly, "You walk into any InterContinental and it's got the look and feel of the local in that particular place, whether it's the room furnishings, meals, drinks or how the staff engages you by sending you to where the locals go and not to the tourist traps." A local touch for the Times Square hotel, Andrew mentioned they keep beehives and herb gardens on the roof of the hotel to provide guests with the freshest honey and herbs in their cocktails and meals.

When asked about security, Andrew explained, "I won't speak about the specifics of our security but we have amazing security professionals on staff and this is true whether we're talking about this hotel or any of our hotels in other countries." More generally,

the ability to block public access to certain floors, offers of alternative entrances and exits if needed and the willingness to meet other security needs are all standard as would be expected for a hotel of this caliber.

Besides the chic furnishings, besides the professional yet friendly staff in dark business attire, besides concierge services with bilingual staff who really know the city and can help you find anything from Broadway tickets to the best Salvadoran food in Brooklyn, the look and feel of New York comes from location and simply looking out the windows. They have 607 spacious guestrooms and 29 luxury suites with floor-to-ceiling windows offering stunning panoramic views of the Manhattan skyline, Hudson River and Broadway.

One of the suites is a 2700-sq-ft Penthouse Suite with three bedrooms, two-story living space with master bedroom fireplace, private bath with a free standing tub and sliding glass doors overlooking spectacular views of New York City. When talking about the Penthouse Suite, Andrew mentions it's been used as a television location for Glee and The Good Wife and could be potentially be used for a music video, "but it really is a stunning accommodation." Since seeing is believing, photos are included.

Business services include everything you'd expect to be able to get work done--and then some. Courier services, private limousine, secretarial services and mobile phone rental are some of the things that can be conveniently coordinated through the hotel. Also onsite is a 2000 square foot health and fitness center with 24-hour access and a fantastic view of the city. Personal trainers and massage therapists are available for appointments.



With numerous music and video recording and post-production studios located nearby in the Midtown, Times Square and Hell's Kitchen areas, the hotel is well acquainted with the extra pampering, security and confidentiality that artists and production crews expect.

One notable mention in music, Platinum Sound Recording Studio, which claims Pitbull, Bruno Mars and Madonna as clients, is on 320 West 46th Street in the heart of Times Square and is in walking distance to the hotel. As expected, Andrew wouldn't name-drop any of the specific artists or crews who have stayed in the hotel, reminding with a friendly smile, "Remember... discretion is required of a hotelier."

During our interview Andrew mentioned that, "The best compliment to me is when someone tells me, 'you know, I really felt at home while I was staying here.'" We here at Mobile Production Monthly would add, "If only home were as nice as the InterContinental!"

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Eps america llc welcomes veteran Production Manager Ron Doroba. Working with eps america since early 2014, Doroba now serves as Vice President of North American Sales, bringing with him 20 years of event management experiences within the live entertainment industry.

Doroba began his career playing a part in pinnacle events such as Woodstock '94, Pope John Paul II – The Mass in Central Park and The Tibetan Freedom Concerts. He has since gained worthy standing on the arena, stadium and festival touring circuits. Some of his credits to date include – tour director for “Star Wars In Concert” world tours, production manager for Paul Simon and Yanni, and main stage production manager for California’s Stagecoach and Coachella music festivals, among many more. In 2013 alone, he served as general manager for the Electric Forest Festival in Rothbury, Mich., performance stage production manager for the Electric Zoo Festival in New York, N.Y., and as festival production director for the Life Is Beautiful Festival in Las Vegas, Nev. Doroba currently operates as director of Same World Entertainment, LLC in Marin County, CA.

“I am excited to work with the eps america team and help expand their business opportunities through this partnership,” said Doroba. “Together, we can develop new relationships and provide even more turnkey production resources and solutions within the United States.”

eps america is pleased to welcome Doroba’s repertoire of industry experience and forward-thinking business strategies. “As eps america has grown, we’ve been fortunate enough to find Ron Doroba to both educate us on the industry’s needs and introduce us to new clients and markets,” said Neel Vasavada, eps america’s managing director. “We’re impressed with his knowledge and experience and are excited to have him as a part of our team.”

www.eps.net



Photo credit: Bruce Rodgers

ROBE. for Eminem X Rihanna Monster Tour

Lighting Designer Daniel K Boland specified 64 x Robe ROBIN Pointe moving lights for the much talked about Eminem X Rihanna 'Monster' stadium tour which played six sold-out dates in three key cities across the U.S. - at the Rose Bowl, Pasadena, MetLife Stadium in New Jersey, and Comerica Park in Detroit.

The tour was a massive success and a unique performance collaboration for fans of two of the world's highest profile artists.

Boland has worked with Eminem for almost 10 years, so when the show's set design by Bruce Rodgers was approved, he created a lighting plot that would "cover all bases" for both artists.

He already knew what Eminem would like in terms of look and feel, and when it came to lighting Rihanna, he considered many parameters including that she would be accompanied by dancers, all of which would need imaginative and appropriate lighting. Once completed, the lighting design was submitted to management and also approved.

The dramatic set comprised two large angled 50 mm semi-transparent LED panels stage left and right, flown about 40 feet high on the downstage edge and 10 feet on the upstage edges. There were also three video 'spines', two on the offstage sides of the LED panels and one in-between these two panels, rigged on high speed motors which moved during the show.

The majority of the lighting was hung on these spines, and there were also two tracking video trucks onstage, utilised for closing the space down mid-stage in front of the band.

The Pointes were positioned on the two offstage video spines, and utilised for dramatic aerial effects. They also had the potential for cross-lighting the performance space.

Boland chose Pointes initially as he needed a fixture with a good zoom - particularly if they were to be used for cross lighting - although in the end, they weren't used for this application.

Once the programming phase commenced, the Pointes proved, "So useful in so many other parts of the show that I really regret not getting more!" states Boland.

He likes the Pointe's zoom - 2.5 - 10 degrees for beam application and 5 - 20 degrees in spot mode - and the two prism effects, especially the linear one.

He declares himself a "Big fan" of most of Robe's ROBIN range and has used LEDWash 1200s on Eminem's festival lighting plot for some time, as well as utilizing over 150 LEDBeam 100s on The Voice.

The biggest creative challenges for lighting the Monster tour were getting rear and side light into the performance space ... as the stage was effectively dissected diagonally due to the video elements, and also getting the spotlights balanced for the video was an exacting task.

Monster tour Lighting Director Benny Kirkham came on-board a few weeks before the pre-visualisation stage, and he and Boland programmed the show together.

The two have collaborated on many previous projects, and once in pre-visualization for Monster they really maximised the time, which enabled them to start production rehearsals with the full set and lighting rig - at the LA Sports Arena, Los Angeles - well ahead of the game.

At this stage, Boland then had to switch over and coordinate lighting for Eminem and Rihanna's performance at the Lollapalooza festival in Chicago. He left Kirkham to refine the Monster programming process, and during this period he developed many of the looks for Rihanna's portion of the show, all the time keeping Boland's specific and distinctive oeuvre of lighting carefully in mind.

Also integrally involved in the spectacular Monster tour de force technical production were Video Director Ben Johnson, Set & Production Designer Bruce Rodgers, Production Manager Curtis Battles and Lighting Crew Chief Wayne Boehning.

Lighting and LED screens were supplied by VER.

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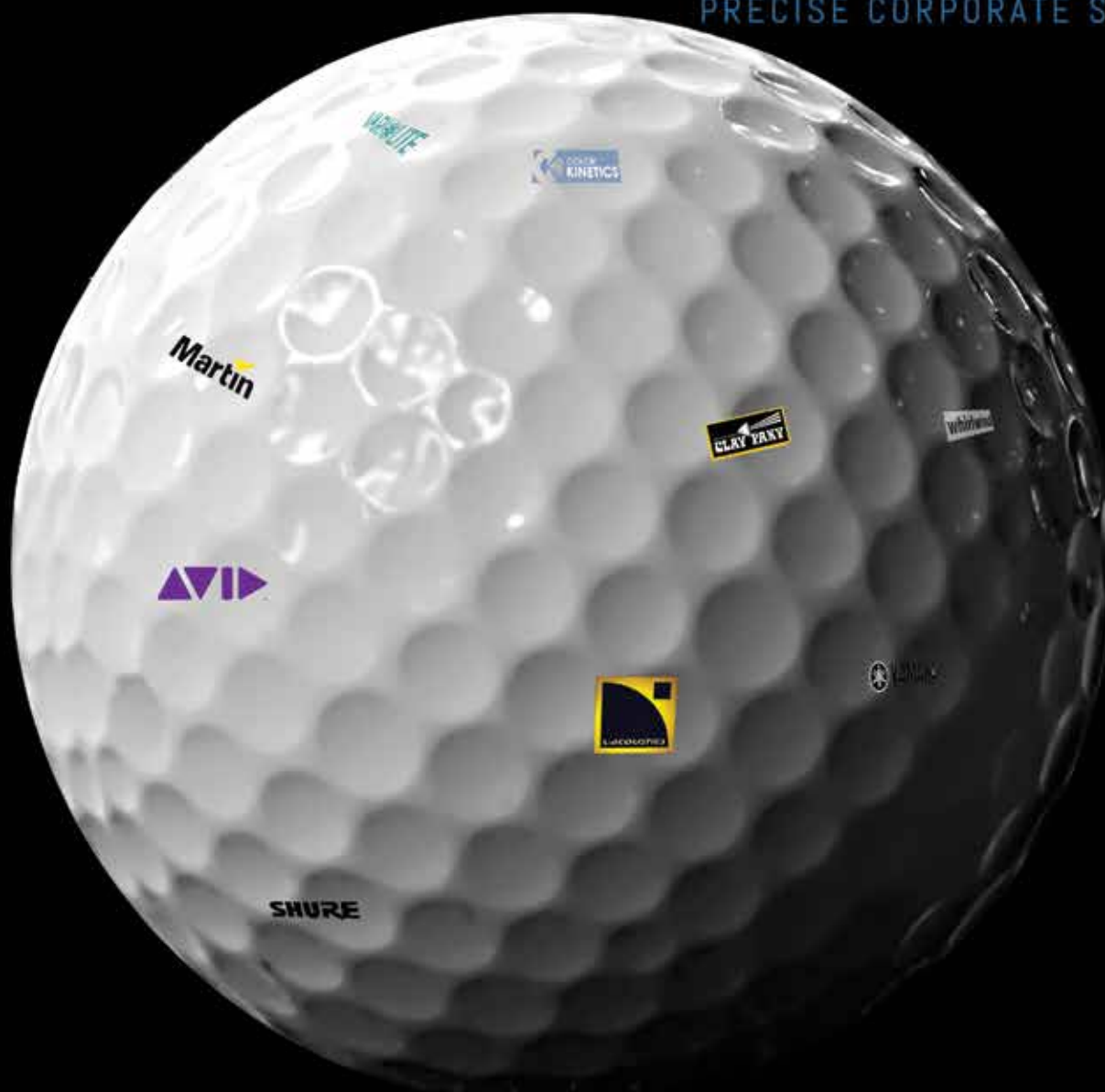
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For Avenged Sevenfold's tour, the question was: "We need flames that shoot down, not up. Can you do it?"

Pyrotek Special FX prides itself on innovation. If it can be done - and done safely - they will make it happen.

"The band wanted flames shooting down from the top of the wall. We had units that shoot a liquid flame upward, not downward," said Hans Lundberg, gas specialist with Pyrotek. "So I took the request back to Pyrotek, the company R&D'd it, built it and it was the first time anybody had used these on this tour."

"If a client says they want to do this, we'll see what we can do to make it happen. Some things are ideas we come up with, while at other times, we think of an effect that would be a cool thing to do," he added.

The Avenged Sevenfold tour design depended on collaboration between many people. The production team and the band were familiar with Pyrotek FX's work, having worked with them previously. "We had dragons and a lot of pyro in the previous shows, so there was already an idea of what they wanted," Lundberg said.

"I talked with production designer Jordan Coopersmith about what we're looking for and he had an idea of the effects from previous tours. He particularly liked the straight line of Fire Screens across the stage."

"It was up to Pyrotek FX's President/Designer Lorenzo Cornacchia and Keith Maxwell, who had worked with Avenged LD, Trevor Ahlstrand and Lorenzo, to come up with some of the designs. Then I joined in with the bat set, tweaked it a little, and the King's set came along and we went into rehearsals."

The band wanted to add in some new songs from their album, so Lundberg listened to songs, segmenting it into parts where he

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could imagine visual effects, and worked with Ahlstrand, Coopersmith and Cornaccia on the plan. They tested out the arrangement during rehearsals, allowing them to tweak a few things before the tour began.

Safety, of course, goes hand in hand with any pyro design and placement. "It was more of a matter of, how can we put this in to make it work out and make it be safe? Especially the line of Fire Screens - the drummer was relatively close to it, so we had to work around that and do extensive tests to make sure he was far enough away from the flames. To keep our distances, we figured out where all that goes and we come up with, ok, what are we going to build from these positions and how do we make this look good?"

The 48-foot long Fire Screen is another innovation that came from one of those, "Hey, look what we can do with this," Lundberg explained. Chief Creative Officer Douglas Adams and the Pyrotek FX team manufactured, engineered and introduced the fire screen in 2008 and since then have enhanced it with technology upgrades.

The Fire Screen is designed for touring, and can be integrated into the set in multiple configurations. It can be mounted to trussing horizontally or vertically. Each module is networked via Ethernet, is DMX-controllable, fully programmable and uses propane to generate the flame effects. The speeds and height of the flames are also fully controllable. The system can also integrate various sized fireballs and flame columns, as well as chase sequences and flame effects.

Lundberg, with Pyrotek FX for six years, said he has never had a problem with any of the effects.

Cornaccia said, "From a safety stand point, the shooter has final decision of firing cues to ensure 100 percent safety of artists. Our crew always has the ability to kill an effect if it is not safe. We always say: When in doubt leave it out."

Lundberg elaborated, "The band know the areas in the pyro zone. I've never had a concern with them walking on the deck and having to cut an effect for that, although it is one of the things I can do. If there's a wind concern, then I would turn that unit off. On top of all that, there are emergency stops I can activate in case something happens during a show - I can kill the power on everything instantly. But I've never had a need to do that."

For its innovations and professional service, Pyrotek FX has had an explosive amount of industry awards over the company's 35 years in business. From its offices in Toronto and Las Vegas, Pyrotek FX services the needs of the live production, television and touring worldwide. Its sister companies Laser Design Productions and Aqua Visual FX provide laser and water screen effects.

Beyond Avenged Sevenfold, other artists Pyrotek FX has or continues to work with are Trans-Siberian Orchestra, Metallica, Sir Paul McCartney, Kid Rock, Justin Timberlake, The Killers, Britney Spears, Lady Gaga, Taylor Swift, Michael Buble, Rihanna and Bruno Mars. They also provide special effects and laser effects for prestigious award shows including The Grammys and more.

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MEDIA VISIONS IS THE CHOICE FOR AVENGED SEVENFOLD & FOR ABSEN

Media Visions, Inc. is a production company as unique and elaborate as the video system they've been providing for Avenged Sevenfold. Based in Birmingham, Alabama, they also have offices in Huntsville, Alabama and Nashville, Tennessee. They provide video, lighting, audio, staging, and special effects rentals to a wide variety of clients ranging from touring and festivals to corporate general sessions. And if that doesn't keep them busy enough, Media Visions is also one of the Southeast region's top design and installation companies and hold dealership agreements with some of the industries most distinguished brands including Absen.

For the last year and a half, Avenged Sevenfold has toured the world supporting their latest album, *Hail to the King*. To give the best possible show to their fans, the band knew video had to be incorporated—and simply hanging a big LED wall wouldn't cut it. So they

turned to Ken Sorrell, Production and Accounts Manager for Media Visions, Inc.

It wasn't the first time Avenged Sevenfold carried video elements on tour with them—their previous Lighting Director introduced video and Media Visions gear to the band's show in 2008 on the Taste of Chaos tour. It also wasn't the first time Avenged Sevenfold worked with Ken Sorrell or Media Visions' Nashville General Manager Chris Bissinger—both of these guys are former Avenged Sevenfold crew members. Sorrell was the afore-mentioned Lighting Director from 2006 to 2008 before Trevor Ahlstrand took over that position. Chris Bissinger was their video director.

Given the history between the band, Trevor, Ken and Media Visions, the choice to rekindle that relationship for the *Hail to the King* tour was an easy one.

Experience Makes the Difference

Having key management roles filled by touring veterans gives Media Visions an edge over other companies. Sorrell explained, "It adds a personal touch... I'm not just an account manager renting someone gear. Clients know I understand touring first hand because I spent 13 years on a bus and the last 6 years in account management."

In addition to time on the road with Avenged Sevenfold, Chris Bissinger has toured extensively with several top acts including country music superstars Brooks & Dunn and Alabama while Sorrell's touring resume includes artists Toby Keith, Brooks & Dunn, Good Charlotte, and the WWE.

Continued on pg 20

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Photo by Scott Uchida

Sorrell added, “as a company, we understand what our clients are going through out there on the road and we know what they expect from us as a vendor. When we’re hired to turn someone’s vision into a realistic and working system, we have personal experience in their side of the industry and can anticipate challenges that may come up.”

Media Visions Envisions an LED Future with Absen

Something else that gives Media Visions an edge is their relationship with Absen, a China based manufacturer of who has been the number one exporter of LED displays for the past six years running and ships products to over 117 countries. Its U.S. division, Absen American, Inc. is headquartered in Orlando, Florida in 6,400 square feet of office/warehouse space that also houses a full-time technical team to support customers. Media Visions was recently awarded their exclusive Southeast distributorship.

We asked Sorrell, in his capacity as regional sales manager for the Absen line of LEDs, how their agreement adds to the array of services they provide. Sorrell said, “Having such a close working relationship with Absen has allowed us to expand our Touring & Special Events division well beyond our expectations as a company.” In short, the Absen deal gives Media Visions the ability to provide the top end highest quality equipment the touring community demands while also offering more economical LED options for even the smallest operations.

Using Avenged Sevenfold for example, Sorrell explained that when the band sought an LED solution for their tour, “I knew that Absen’s A7 LED tile would be the perfect recommendation. Hands down, Absen manufactures the most reliable product that we’ve found and it has picture quality that easily rivals anything we’ve compared it to.” Absen’s A7 is an outdoor rated 7.8mm LED tile and is what gave Avenged Sevenfold the flexibility they needed for the wide variety of venues the band performed in while also providing the high resolution product that could crisply display media content and the IMAG from the 10 cameras requested for the tour.

At the other end of the spectrum, Absen manufactures LED displays specifically engineered for TV & Broadcast, House of Worship, Sports Arena, and Digital Signage markets. Custom shaped LED displays and LED lightboxes are available as well. Mike Cruce, President of Media Visions, explained that the strategic

alliance with Absen allows them to forge new inroads into the LED marketplace. He observed, “Absen’s commitment to produce excellent quality at an affordable price will allow the products to be purchased by clients who, just a couple of years ago, may have never been able to afford this level of equipment.”

In addition to other production equipment, Media Visions stocks a full inventory of Absen’s entertainment and event rental LED tiles with different resolutions as high as 2.5mm. Their 10mm and 16mm “digital billboard” tiles designed for commercial indoor/outdoor installation are also available for immediate purchase and delivery.

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AVENGED SEVENFOLD

*Dragon Heads. Death Bats. Fireballs.
Red tracer comets. Concussions. Gerbs.
An animatronic Skeleton King.
A 48-foot fire screen.*

Perusing the prop and pyro list for Avenged Sevenfold's tour provides a mental picture of what one might have seen in their show. The heavy metal band just wrapped up a year and a half of touring, finishing in the US this summer as headliners on the Mayhem Festival tour.

Jordan Coopersmith had three titles: production designer, production manager and tour manager. He had to balance the needs of what he wanted to see, with how much it would cost and how easy it would be to transport.

"The design is based around a painting that was done by the band's friend Cam Rackam depicting the band's 'Death Bat' character as the king on his throne. It was a possible cover for the record," said Coopersmith. "I was given that painting, along with a few other images, and the lyrics for about half the songs being recorded for the band's new album to work from as I started on this design. In the past we have leaned toward a more theatrical, pyro and prop-based show so for me the king character was an obvious choice to bring to life and build around."

Joey Gallagher of Gallagher Staging & Productions said Jordan Coopersmith's biggest need in set construction was to make the set adaptable in different environments. "This is a standard request but it's not

every day that a band tours with so much large scenery. So we had to make it break down to adapt to different situations. It's like six sets in one; there are multiple configurations. The truck pack was important. Everything packages up in set parts, even the King prop breaks down for transport and it's fairly quick. People are shocked how fast the crew can build it and strike it. No tools are needed—it's all quick clamps."

Gallagher provided a full rolling stage with a modular set to adapt to sheds or arenas, allowing for versatility in festivals as well, to change the set but still maintain its thematic look.

Pyro was the second biggest influence on the design, influencing all aspects of the set construction and materials used.

The set's centerpiece is a scenic wall with three arches, called "cut outs," constructed of aluminum framing with hand-sculpted foam. The foam is all FR (fire retardant) rated, "because they have more pyro than any show we've worked with," Gallagher said. The scenic wall's two outer arches are designed for video screens. The center arch holds the most surprises. It is covered with a video wall on a traveler so it can open up and reveal the main set piece: the 12-foot tall animatronic King.

During the song "Hail to the King," the center arch LED video wall opens up to reveal the animatronic Skeleton King on a throne. His head moves. His wings not only move, but are equipped with pyro. He can track upstage and mid-stage for his reveal.



Pre-Reveal photo by Scott Uchida

The Skeleton King moves in and out twice during the performance.

Custom stairs lead up to the King and the drum riser, while a custom built-in deck features built-in pyro from vendor Pyrotek Special Effects that travels with the unit. “We have built in carts that act as the understructure of the stage as well, so they roll it into place and they don’t have to install pyro - it’s already plug-and-play.”

They also built custom pyro carts to house the pyro units, which travel inside with it.

Gallagher also constructed the four Death Bats sitting on top of the wall. A pyro unit mounted below each allows the Death Bats to shoot out 40-50-foot strings of fire and flame.

“Everything was built to be fire retardant. It’s in the decking, the grating - this pyro gets so hot it will sometimes melt metal. So everything had to sustain the heat,” Gallagher said. “This is the most pyro that I’ve ever seen on a tour. It’s quite impressive.”

PYRO

This story should have started with the pyro, because for some concert tours, the pyro is the extra boom at the end: a pyro fountain burst here and there, maybe for the encore with a confetti gun. For Avenged Sevenfold, the formula is reversed. The show starts with

explosions of flames and heats up from there.

“This show is heavy on the flames,” confirmed Hans Lundberg, a gas specialist with Pyrotek Special Effects.

“There are a large amount of gas effects from beginning to end. There may be only a few songs that do NOT have pyro.”

Lundberg is definitely busy during the show. “There’s one song where I stretch my legs and get back to it.”

As the shooter, or the gas specialist, Lundberg also serves as the crew chief overseeing his team of Terrence Birdsley and Bryan Whittaker.

One favorite effects segment is “Hail to the King”, Lundberg said.

“It has a lot of fire, movement and video. At the beginning of the song, it builds a bit, then the King tracks out and smoke comes from the deck, then Fire Screens start from the middle of the stage out to the sides, curling up. It’s all within the music timing. So it’s a grand entrance for the King.”

Another favorite is during the song, “This Means War.” The scene is further embellished with Pyrotek’s 47 red comets with tails. “It captures the audience,” Lundberg said. “The lights go down a little bit and in the middle of the song there’s a barrage of comets ending with a bang. I enjoyed shooting that.”



Pyrotek Bringing the Fire, photo by John McMurtrie



King Reveal photo by Scott Uchida

The Fire Screen is 48-foot long line of fire running the width of the stage. There are 12 sections, each four feet long, with 12 pyro heads on each section. The flames from the heads shoot up seven feet.

“The 12 heads were hung underneath the metal grated deck, allowing us to shoot the flames up through the deck. You couldn’t see the heads in that position,” Lundberg explained.

“We had to take precautions around the drummer when we first set it up. We used a heat gun to measure the temperature on the drum kit, and then put one of our guys sitting at the kit to test it out. Finally we put the drummer in and had him sit at it. It turned out it was OK. There were some instances in festival stages where the stage was open to the wind where we sometimes could not use the fire screen, or bring down certain sections. In the wind, the flames will bend over or lean over, so that had to be addressed.”

Dominating some of the other effects, such as the gerbs, concussions and fireballs, are the six Dragon Heads. “They look like heads of dragons when they explode,” Lundberg said. These effects shoot large columns of flames up to 25 feet.

On the arena run, the Dragon Heads would be placed two each downstage left and right to widen up the area of the flame,” Lundberg explained. “Otherwise, in amphitheatres we kept them all on the line of grid decking.”

VIDEO

There is nothing average about an Avenged Sevenfold show and that includes the video. From the moment the decision was made to incorporate video into this album’s touring cycle, Avenged Sevenfold wanted it big and more importantly wanted something different that would stand out.

The team at Media Visions, Inc., led by Ken Sorrell, Account Manager and then newly appointed Video Crew Chief Tim Rockett, worked closely with both Jordan Coopersmith and Trevor Ahlstrand (Avenged Sevenfold’s Lighting Designer) to create an ever-growing video package that would travel the world with the band.

Sorrell explained, “We wanted to design a system flexible enough to play any size venue, anywhere in the world, while offering numerous configuration options allowing integration into the many festival situations the band would be facing.”



Video Screens from Media Visions, photo by Scott Uchida

A photograph of a concert stage. The backdrop features a large stone archway with a cross in the center. The stage is lit with warm, orange-red lights. Three large, bright yellow pyrotechnic bursts are visible on the stage floor. A drum set is visible on the right side of the stage. The text is overlaid in a white, stylized font.

“ THE GOAL HAS ALWAYS BEEN
TO KEEP THE SHOW EXCITING
BUT ALWAYS BE A
BAND'S

A photograph of a concert stage. The backdrop is a large, ornate stone archway with two main arches. The stage is lit with warm, orange-red lights. Three large bursts of yellow and orange pyrotechnics are visible at the base of the archway. A musician is partially visible on the left side of the stage. The text is overlaid in a white, hand-drawn font across the upper middle of the image.

ING
CENTING THE
MUSIC AND WHAT THEY DO,
NEVER DISTRACTING FROM THEM."

More than 95% of their show contains some element of video that was provided by Media Visions, Inc. out of their Nashville office.

Media Visions initially provided two LED screens consisting of 120 Absen A7 LED tiles that filled the outside arches of the set. Ahlstrand specified the Absen A7 tiles after a demo at Media Visions. Rockett commented on that decision, “The overall quality and crispness of the product was compared to several other products and was determined to be superior in all aspects to make this product ideal for this tour.” Video content for the tour was created by Ofer Zmora and sent to the LED by way of two PRG MBOX Studio media servers.

Shortly after the first run of shows, the band decided to replace the doors in the center arch with more LEDs that split open mid show for “The King” reveal. The split was accomplished thanks to a trolley system designed and provided by Gallagher Staging.

Adding more LEDs wouldn’t be enough for the band though. For this leg of the tour, Media Visions was asked to design a system that not only included 10 HD cameras but would have the ability to put any camera or video content on any screen at any time. To handle all of this processing, the team at Media Visions relied on an HVS-390HS broadcast production switcher as well as a Vista Spyder system programmed by Tony Wallace. Sorrell gave props to Wallace and added, “When it comes to programming any video system, but specifically when Spydere are involved, Tony is as good as it gets. It’s always great having him on board as part of the team.”

The system Media Visions provided allowed Avenged Sevenfold additional flexibility and creativity that could be tailored to the specific shows and venues. “The products are integrated into the main set structure when the entire set is used” and “flown independently” at smaller venues, Rockett explained, adding that they “would incorporate video content designed specifically for the show as well as IMAG, which was done through the Spydere, to provide a variety of looks that would correspond with the songs during the show.”

A system this elaborate wouldn’t have been possible without a solid crew behind it making things happen each day. Tim Rockett took the lead as Crew Chief and Video Director while receiving support from

the rest of his touring crew: Kenny Kightlinger, Jeff McBride, Josh Stewart, and Wes Jacobs.

DESIGNING THE LIGHTING

Lighting Designer Trevor Ahlstrand has worked with Avenged Sevenfold for six years, with each tour collaborating with Coopersmith to enhance the overall goal of the show.

“We make a great team,” Ahlstrand said. “The goal has always been to keep the show exciting but always be accenting the band’s music and what they do, never distracting from them.”

Ahlstrand described this year’s set as “an impressive structure with lots of texture and layers to it. I approached it as if lighting the architecture of an old building, looking for ways to highlight its features.”

Christie Lites provided the tour lighting.

Ahlstrand described the lighting design. “I washed the entire wall with Martin MAC 2K Performances, which allowed me to shutter off the parts of the set so it would not flow onto the (arched) cut outs that contained the video screens. I then up lit the wall, pillars and flags separately from the different LED fixtures placed on the floor. This allowed the texture of the wall to stand out while giving the set depth and separation between its elements, while the lights could stay as hidden as possible. The additional elements of the show Jordan and I work on together with Hans (Lundberg) for the pyro and Tim (Rockett) for video to try and ensure a cohesive look is always complementing the bigger picture and not blowing each other out.”

During the year and a half duration of the tour, two different lighting directors ran the show on the grand-Ma 2 Lite console.

“Matt Mills took the show first and did an amazing job through the States, Europe, Australia and South America,” Ahlstrand noted. “He had amazing timing and was able to clone over the show flawlessly when needed for South America and other challenging one-off rigs. This last leg of the tour was directed by John Bailey, who flew in straight to the second show after finishing up another tour he had a prior commitment to. He picked up the show quickly and has done extremely well with the show for the remainder of the tour.”

Continued on pg30



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"I STRIVE TO ONLY
HAVE CUES THAT ARE
VISUALLY ACCENTING
WHAT YOU HEAR"



photo by Scott Uchida

When it comes to specific design requests from the band, Ahlstrand said, "The guys put their faith in us to do what we have always done for them. We know what they like. I keep the lighting saturated and moody. If I use white or any other bright color I do it carefully and not for any length of time, knowing they are not big fans of things being too bright. I strive to only have cues that are visually accenting what you hear, which is easy to do with their music because it has many changes and is extremely dynamic."

Explaining his lighting choices further, Ahlstrand points out the 47 Martin Viper AirFX.

"I wanted big unison looks of one fixture type but I did not want to be limited to using all washes or all spots in the show. The Vipers gave me the option of both, all in one. It is an intense fixture with all the normal features I am accustomed to in a profile fixture and has incredible output and great aerial break-ups. In a shoot out with other wash fixtures it was brighter than the majority of them. Its parameters are fast but especially its dimmer, which sets itself apart for this type of music. It lets me slowly fade in strobe effects rather than using a shutter, which I would have to use on other fixtures without any options with timing. The Air FX ended up being the perfect fixture for this show and helped me achieve exactly what I was going for!"

All 22 Clay Paky Sharpys are placed on the floor. "The Sharpys are used mostly in big fans

extending out to the edge of the down-stage edge risers to help the production feel wider. Sometimes I will use them in groups and accent them in chases or hits, much like I would with ACLs. They work so well for these kind of hits as the speed of the head is so fast. I like the ability to move them in black and almost instantly turning them on again, aimed somewhere completely different."

Though he's specified 56 Atomic Strobes, surprisingly there is not a lot of strobing in the show. "I have that many strobes to show the dimensions and shape of the rig when they are all used but for the most part I use them in intensity chases or groups and try not to overuse them. Most

songs will only have a quick hit or two and a lot of songs don't have them in them at all."

When asked to pick his favorites moments in the show, Ahlstrand cites "Hail to the King" and "This Means War."

"Both of these songs are where the animatronic King makes his entrance and tracks through the center wall," he explained. "It has a great mix of content, IMAG, pyro and big lighting looks to complement both of these high energy songs. All those elements do an amazing job of complementing the band and piquing the audiences' senses."





GEAR

LIGHTING GEAR LIST:

2 X GRANDMA2 LITE
2 X GRANDMA2 NPUS
2 X PRG MBOX STUDIO MEDIA SERVERS
41 X MARTIN MAC VIPER AIRFX
12 X MARTIN MAC III PERFORMANCES
21 X MARTIN MAC 2K PERFORMANCES 16 X MARTIN MAC
2K WASHES
46 X MARTIN ATOMIC 3000 COLOR STROBES
4 X MARTIN MAC AURAS
22 X CLAY PAKY SHARPYS
5 X PHILIPS COLOR BLAZE 72
4 X PHILIPS COLOR BLAZE 48
13 X PHILIPS COLOR BLAST 12
8 X 4-LITE IN-LINE MOLES
20 X 2-LITE IN-LINE MOLES
6 X REEL EFX DF-50 DIFFUSION HAZERS
2 X MARTIN JEM 2R44 SMOKE MACHINES

VIDEO GEAR LIST:

200 X ABSEN A7 (7.5MM) LED TILES
1 X FOR-A HVS-390HS PRODUCTION SWITCHER
6 X FOLSOM IMAGE PRO II
1 X VISTA SPYDER 344
1 X VISTA SPYDER 380
1 X HRS CONTROL LIGHTING BRIDGE FOR VISTA SPYDER
3 X PANASONIC HD CAMERAS
7 X HITACHI HD POV CAMERAS

PYRO LIST:

12 FIRE SCREEN HEADS
6 DRAGON HEADS
4 DOWNWARD SHOOTING FLAMES
2 LSGS (LOW-LYING SMOKE/FOG GENERATORS
FOR LSG)
47 RED TRACER COMETS
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20 FIREBALLS
5 CONCUSSIONS

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Avenged Sevenfold



Pharrell Williams



Iggy Azalea
Photo Credit: Chris Schwegler



Robin Thicke



Avenged Sevenfold



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