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- / SKY RACING PICKS A WINNER
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- / Jenny Barrett in NZ
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## Road Test

- / Robe Robin Spikie

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Contents Photo – Fall Out Boy. Photo Credit: So Midwest

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# VECTORWORKS 2024

## *Vectorworks 2024 to Unleash Limitless Creativity for Designers*

Global design and BIM software provider Vectorworks, Inc. is preparing to release the 2024 version of its product line, dedicated to providing comprehensive solutions that automate processes and let designers tackle more complex problems with less effort. The upcoming version includes Vectorworks Architect, Landmark, Spotlight, Design Suite and Fundamentals, along with 2024 versions of ConnectCAD, Braceworks and Vision.

“Vectorworks 2024 represents a significant move forward in integrating our tools into specific design workflows. By taking a holistic and high-level approach, we work hard to ensure that our software aligns seamlessly with the natural processes of designers,” said Vectorworks CEO Dr. Biplab Sarkar. “From ideation to final execution, this latest version has been carefully crafted to ensure new tools and existing features work together harmoniously to diminish disruptions and enhance productivity.”

### For all Designers

In a continued effort to save designers valuable time, Vectorworks 2024 delivers an updated and modernised user interface that makes working in Vectorworks more efficient and easier to customise. The reorganised View and Mode bars bring a wide range of tools to the forefront, so users can decide how to organise tools and shortcuts for easy access.

Additionally, Project Sharing has been rebuilt to ensure project data and geometry is always current in a project file. Project Sharing+ tracks every change, every time, and substantially improves reliability regardless of your team or project size. Designers will see another massive productivity gain with the ability to save custom viewport settings as “styles,” making them easily transferable between

viewports on different sheets or project files, cutting out the tedium of replicating viewport settings and avoiding errors.

Vectorworks’ commitment to delivering a transformative edge in BIM and other digital design workflows is evident in the 2024 version. The newly added ability to reference data from native Excel files reduces manual steps and the risk of user input error, resulting in better connectivity to external data and a new avenue for designers to enhance their collaborative data capabilities.

Creating higher levels of realism earlier in the design process can also be achieved with further improvements to Shaded Rendering. Designers can assess their designs more confidently with improvements to shadow casting and the addition of camera settings that allow them to define depth of field, exposure and bloom for real-world camera-like effects in the real-time Shaded Rendering mode.

### For Lighting and Live Event Designers

The Equipment Lists feature exemplifies our focus on providing automated solutions to manual, complex and repetitive tasks experienced in the Entertainment industry by unifying the equipment and inventory

tracking process. Equipment Lists streamline the preproduction process by providing the tools to plan and document all the equipment needed by a show or production.

And for those focused on A/V installation, the upcoming ConnectCAD “Share Reports” command lets designers upload design data to Vectorworks Cloud Services as a configurable worksheet so it can be viewed in a web browser on any device, ensuring that all project partners and installers are accessing the most up-to-date information.

In addition to empowering designers with advanced automation and problem-solving capabilities, Vectorworks 2024 will build on the platform’s long-standing commitment to continuously delivering quality improvements. Users can expect several significant quality enhancements in the approaching version, with more detailed information to come soon.

“Continuing our tradition of excellence, Vectorworks 2024 embodies our quality initiative, emphasising solutions to complex problems,” said Vectorworks Chief Product Officer Darick DeHart. “We believe in the power of comprehensive workflows that address the challenges faced by designers and can’t wait to share more on the exciting improvements in quality that await our users in the new version.”



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OF RUN TIME\*

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# ALLEN & HEATH CQ-18T



Though we're not clear why, Allen & Heath's newest digital console release has, up until now, remained a closely guarded secret, so much so that barely a handful of people worldwide have known about its existence. Only one solitary example of the new CQ-18T exists on Australian soil at present, and recently I was given special access to the product, but only after several secret handshakes and an extensive police check were conducted.

Every now and again I'm approached by a shady character on a train who subtly passes me an envelope that self-destructs seconds after reading its contents. The information I'm privy to in this exchange is usually 'Top-Secret' stuff, often with the security of nations riding on my next move.

So it has been these last few weeks, where a game of cat and mouse has taken place between myself and a certain secretive manufacturer. The company's Australian importer has been the meat in the sandwich of this shadowy exchange, fielding repeated calls around whether I was trustworthy: "Who is this Andy Stewart character anyway? Do you think he can keep this highly sensitive information under wraps?"

I pleaded my case, pointed to my long track record, and sat tight awaiting further instructions.

So then, a few days ago, disguised as a Matildas fan (actually that was my normal attire on the day), I was blindfolded, repeatedly shunted from one electric car to another to ensure we weren't being followed, and eventually unceremoniously dumped in a back alley in Collingwood. From there I was frogmarched to TAG's Melbourne HQ, perched on the topmost floor away from any ground-based threats and finally shown what had, up until that moment, been either described as a new exercise bike, a vase from the Ming Dynasty or a fresh 100m roll of Cat6 cable.

It was, in fact, Allen and Heath's brand-new release: the unremarkably named CQ-18T digital console. Why the name doesn't include the numbers 00 and 7 somewhere in there seems like an opportunity lost...

The new CQ-18T console is a compact desktop-styled 18-input digital mixer that takes its cues from different aspects of Allen & Heath's extensive range of more expensive digital mixers. Built like a small tank, fader-less and somewhat understated in its appearance, the CQ-18T offers a wide array of mix controls and recording features, albeit with one substantial caveat: the console is designed for people who don't know much about consoles.

If you're at all familiar with any of the digital consoles in Allen & Heath's extensive range, then you'll no doubt find many of the CQ-18T's innumerable features more than familiar looking: the parametric EQs, the compressor's GUI, remote access via tablet software etc.

But ironically, this console has not been designed for you or me.

The console is aimed squarely at the gigging musician, pub owner or band that can't afford its own mix engineer. In short, it's for crew without a clue... well almost.

But whether the console manages to pull off this two-card trick, perhaps only time will tell. By my first reading of the console's layout, language and simplicity, there's every chance the CQ-18T will be a good fit for all kinds of

gigging musicians, pub owners and location recordists who often find digital consoles intimidating, and in some cases, terrifying. But will they at first find it simple to operate? I'm not so sure.

You see, it would seem the inventive folks at Allen & Heath haven't been able to stop themselves shoehorning all manner of facilities into this unit, and consequently the features list of the CQ-18T is long.

Physically, the compact design layout includes 16 mic/line inputs (a generous eight of which are on combo jack connectors), a stereo input via left and right ¼-inch jacks, six outputs also on ¼-inch jacks, a balanced footswitch jack that can be customised to perform a wide range of tasks, and a stereo main output on XLRs. There are USB-A and B facilities for audio and data transfer, a Cat6 connector for networking, and perhaps less predictably, an SD card reader for more reliable multitrack recording and playback. There's also built-in Wi-Fi featuring an external antenna (that looks a tad vulnerable given its position on the console).

On a slightly different angle, tilted towards the operator, the main deck of the console features but a scant few controls positioned spaciouly around its main 7-inch colour touchscreen. To the right are three soft keys and a main rotary encoder; to the left, three smaller illuminated soft rotary encoders that change colour to reflect your on-screen selections. So when,

# CQ

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CQ-18T



CQ-20B



CQ-12T



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**ALLEN & HEATH**

for instance, you select a filter band inside a parametric EQ that's colour-coded purple, the soft rotaries on the left will mirror this colour scheme.

Excluding the main rotary encoder, all of the aforementioned controls are, needless to say, customisable and versatile (and therefore, arguably, complex). There's also a row of screen selector buttons below the touchscreen itself, described as: Config, Processing, Fader, FX and Home. Each of these gives you access to a wide array of controls and options via different pages (again – adding complexity). And finally, on the front edge of the console there's facility for two sets of headphones, which is a great idea.

In addition to all of this, the CQ-18T has four FX engines that include many of your typical effects, and these can be accessed via busses in the usual way. The console can also multitrack record and playback at 24bit 96kHz, and these recordings can be played from, or recorded to, an SD card. The console even has feedback elimination and gain assistant software onboard to get you out of trouble when you steer yourself into dangerous waters.

But what separates the CQ-18T most significantly from larger and more elaborate digital consoles is its use of instrument presets, called 'Quick Channels'. These allow a user to quickly setup a channel of say Bass Guitar, whereupon a simple GUI of a one-knob rotation control then allows you to flow between preset sounds until you hear something you like. Embedded in this virtual knob is also a small graphic representation of the EQ you're creating, which morphs as you rotate the dial. This is a great idea, one that's bound to help people overcome possibly the most foreign and intimidating process a mix-outsider could ever attempt: the paralysing task of EQing a sound.

This one aspect of the console makes pulling a relatively decent sound simple indeed, but overall the navigation in and around the various tabs and screens of the CQ-18T still seems potentially confusing to someone

with little knowledge of the basics of mixing. And I haven't touched on even half of what this console is capable of. The CQ-18T is an awesome little console; a one-stop-shop for all manner of recording, mixing and live performance tasks. It sounds cool, takes up no more room than a small laptop and is bound to have a big impact on the market, given Allen and Heath's long-standing reputation for quality and reliability.

But is it intuitive enough for crew without a clue? I'm not so sure. You'd have to know something about mixing and recording to navigate your way around the CQ-18T, but I'd imagine that once things became familiar it would be fast and intuitive to operate. And though it's not entirely relevant here, I'd reckon it will only be a matter of time before some of these preset concepts appear on the more expensive end of the Allen & Heath spectrum.



CQ-12T

CQ-20B

CQ-18T

"The CQ-18T sounds cool, takes up no more room than a small laptop and is bound to have a big impact on the market, given Allen and Heath's long-standing reputation for quality and reliability."

# GT Appoints New Sales Manager

Group Technologies has announced Ben Rivers as its new sales manager for the NSW/ACT Projects division.

With two decades of multidisciplinary experience across account management, operations and sales, Ben has been responsible for driving successful business growth within major NSW and SA integration sectors. A solid history of relationship development, tendering and negotiation has afforded Ben a plethora of distinguished career highlights, including General Manager positions within two of Australia's leading integration specialists: Diversified NSW (formerly Rutledge AV) and Pro AV Solutions NSW.

A unique blend of top tier project development, strategic leadership, planning, supply and quality management have seen Ben excel at successful solution delivery across multiple nationally recognised markets. His focus on client service excellence and extensive knowledge of the provincial audio-visual landscape, are welcomed by Group Technologies as it continues to maintain a comprehensive level of collaboration with the NSW/ACT projects sector.

"We're delighted that Ben is joining the team at GT. Ben brings a wealth of experience across Commercial AV, Live Venues, Theatres, and Stadium projects. Having worked together on countless major undertakings over the years, Ben's exceptional work ethos has resulted in nothing short of a stellar career to date. This is a great fit all round, as we continue to grow the team, while rapidly expanding in the Australian AV space. Ben will further reinforce the depth and expertise behind GT, while adding tremendous value and support to our customers and partners in NSW and the ACT." Shane Cannon, Director of Sales, Group Technologies.

"I've been working closely with Group Technologies for the past five years, where I've become familiar with their key brands and dedication to a high quality of service. As I learned more about their passionate philosophy around audio distribution, along with their long-term vision for the Australian



Ben Rivers

market, I knew this was a journey I had to be part of. Their portfolio features industry-leading technology that I am excited to begin working with, and I look forward to what we will be able to accomplish in the NSW and ACT markets together," explains Ben.

As GT remains focused and dedicated to delivering class-leading professional audio solutions, Ben's impressive skillset and passion for audio makes him an ideal candidate to lead Group Technologies' NSW/ACT department. Consistently growing their national footprint, the team at GT are ready to support Ben collaboratively as he develops the role.

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by Jason Allen

# FACTORY SOUND GETS IMMERSIVE

## The New Avid Experience Room

Melbourne's Factory Sound have added yet another reason for gear heads to visit the destination store; a gleaming 7.1.4 Dolby Atmos room powered by Avid's flagship mixing products. At a busy and bustling launch party in early August, Factory debuted the room with Avid's Audio Applications Specialist Drew Parsons, who will be spending a fair amount of his work time at the facility.

The beautifully fitted out and acoustically treated demo room sounds fantastic, and is currently running Genelec 8341s and 8330 powered monitor speakers in full Atmos mode. An Avid S6 control surface for Pro Tools is at the central mix position, connected back to a rack that includes both Avid MTRX II and Avid Pro Tools | Carbon audio interfaces. It's not just



for the studio and post people though; an Avid VENUE | S6L live desk, engine, and stagebox occupy the other half of the room, with a pair of d&b audiotechnik E8s as near-field monitors.

"Factory Sound really wanted to bring back the customer experience to retail, and I was looking for a space to have an Atmos system and everything Avid on display," explains Drew Parsons. "We're seeing now it's not just TV and film mixers that are using Dolby Atmos. Apple in particular have been pushing Dolby Atmos

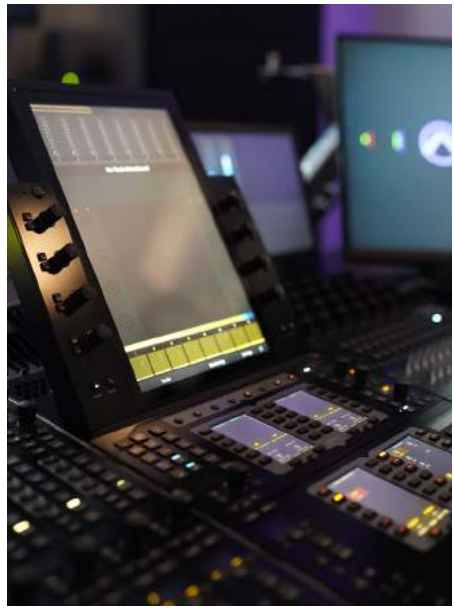
Music. A lot of composers and mix engineers are reaching out to us because major labels are requesting Atmos as well as stereo mixes. For example, I just did an EP for Universal in Atmos. It's about getting on a playlist; I recently



Artie Jones



Drew Parsons





"This room is now here for anyone who is thinking about getting into the immersive space."

spoke to an engineer and producer in Sydney that told me Apple wanted to put his artist's track on a playlist but wouldn't do it until they got an Atmos mix. This room is now here for anyone who is thinking about getting into the immersive space."

Over on the live side of the room, Drew is very happy for engineers about to tour to drop in and build shows. "Supporting live engineers is something we've been doing for a long time," continues Drew. "They are very welcome to

bring in their Pro Tools session and build their show files on the S6L."

Artie Jones, Operations at Factory Sound, helped turn what was a storeroom into the Avid Demo Room in just over a month. "We gutted it right after our EOFY sale in June," relates Artie. "It's an exciting space, and we're centrally located. TV channels 7, 9, and 10 are nearby, the post industry is all through South Melbourne and Port Melbourne, Austereo and Nova are around the corner; there are a lot of

audio engineers nearby who are contemplating the jump into Atmos. It's great having Drew on-site. Just at the launch party, we've met lots of people who know Drew and Avid but haven't been in the shop before, and lots of our existing customers who are getting excited about the possibilities of Atmos. It's a win-win."

If you'd like to check out the Avid Demo room, Factory Sound is at 75-85 York St, South Melbourne.

[factorysound.com](http://factorysound.com)

# TU Series

TU Series integrates LED control, video processing, media player, Human-computer Interaction Application (Conference Application), which is a intelligent, flexible and convenient broadcast&control processor. Users can easily handle LED display and applications with only one device. The minimalist solution brought by an all-round product.



**NOVA STAR**

✉ david@novastar.tech



# Small is Beautiful for Robe Getting Back to its Base

**Basement Theatre in Auckland, New Zealand, is living proof of how the 'small is beautiful' concept can become a hub of creative endeavour, a hot bed of ideas, experimental art, and the instigator of lively political and social discourse, as well as an inclusive place for talented live performance imaginers to hone their craft.**

Squeezed into an old industrial building, once part of a large grain silo development, the charismatic theatre has been on the site for 15 years now, making the most out of a challenging layout with some out-of-the-box reimagining that has ensured it has everything needed for a busy and thriving venue to function as an iconic cultural melting pot.

A busy and diverse programme of shows run Tuesday to Saturday in the two intimate spaces, attracting generally younger audiences together with those who might not necessarily frequent more traditional theatres. Though smaller in size, Basement Theatre has a massively big heart!

In 2022, Basement Theatre purchased its first Robe LED fixtures – two CycBar15s – a sale in proportion to its production needs that has made a big difference to how shows can be lit.

The venue's then technical manager Michael Trigg explained that all their fixtures must be flexible and multi-purpose, and the CycBar15s fitted this context.

He looked at several options before deciding the CycBar15s offered the best value for Basement Theatre's requirements. The fixtures are rigged in the 100-capacity main space and were purchased with support from Robe distributor Jands New Zealand at the start of 2022.

Michael was looking for a very specific piece of kit. It had to be low-profile due to the 2.5-metre ceiling height, and an LED source with a good throw as well as decent angles that would work in the space.

CycBar 15 ticked all the boxes as a lightweight static one-metre LED batten with 15 equally spaced, super bright RGBW multichip LEDs giving homogenised and smooth colour mixing and linear dimming. A fixed but re-definable beam angle offers optional diffusers, and a new split filter system allows three different beam angles across the entire CycBar, generating an asymmetrical light output particularly useful for

wall and cyc washing. Optional barn doors can also be used to trim the beam if needed.

The CycBar 15s cover so many bases, Michael explained. "They can be a front wash, a back light, a wash or a top light or they can be rigged vertically for more of an effects look, and the individual pixel control was something that really appealed for this," he enthused, adding that the fixtures can also be rigged on side booms for dance shows.

They can paint the walls with light using the CycBar 15s, then change the colour one minute and flip the fixtures around the next and use them for key lighting using the diffusion panels.

Michael was already familiar with Robe products through his work in events, so he was happy to specify the brand, and when he left earlier this year after several years in the post, new technical manager Paul Bennett is also delighted with the lights.

The CycBar 15s have been a great success at Basement Theatre, so much so that it's set to triple its Robe inventory, adding two iBar 15s – an updated and IP65-rated version of the original CycBar – and two ParFect 150 LED source ACL style beam fixtures.

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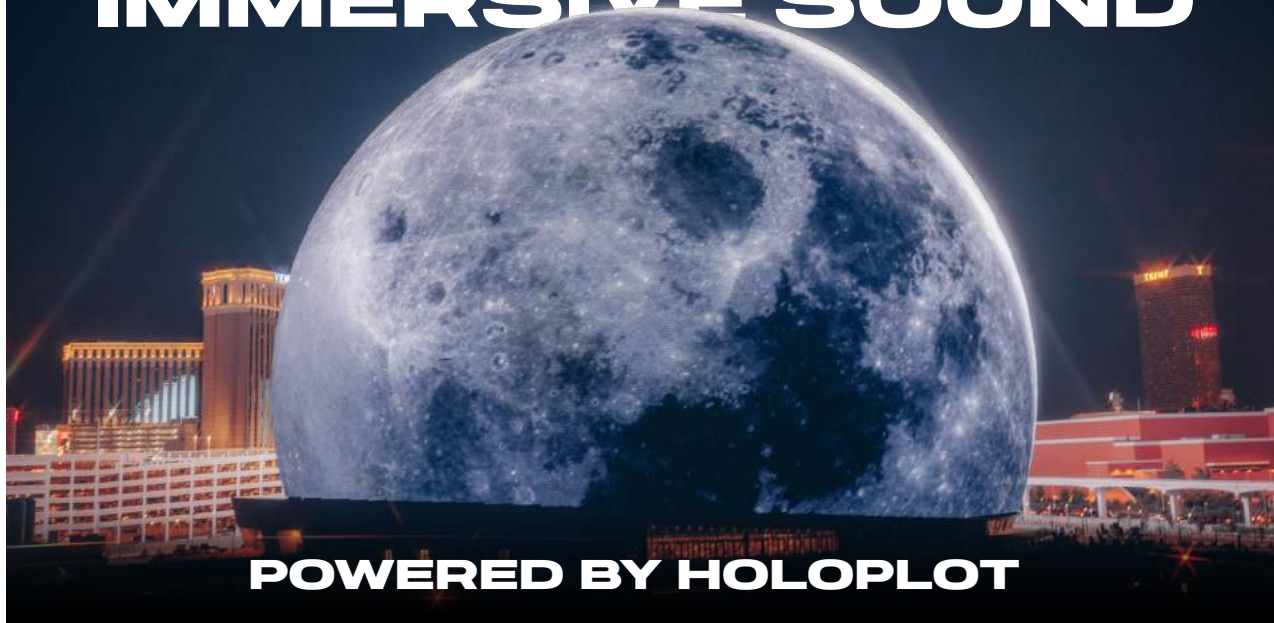
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# SPHERE ENTERTAINMENT UNVEILS SPHERE IMMERSIVE SOUND



**POWERED BY HOLOPLOT**

**Sphere Immersive Sound, designed and customised by Sphere Studios in partnership with HOLOPLOT for Sphere in Las Vegas, delivers crystal-clear immersive audio to each seat in the house through 3D Audio-Beamforming and Wave Field Synthesis.**

Sphere Entertainment Co. has unveiled Sphere Immersive Sound, powered by HOLOPLOT, which provides crystal-clear, individualised sound to every seat in Sphere: the next-generation entertainment venue opening soon in Las Vegas. Sphere Studios, which develops groundbreaking technologies and content, partnered with HOLOPLOT, a global leader in 3D audio technology, to create Sphere Immersive Sound – the world’s largest, fully integrated concert-grade audio system that revolutionizes immersive audio experiences.

U2’s The Edge said of the new technology: “The beauty of Sphere is not only the groundbreaking technology that will make it unique, with the world’s most advanced audio system integrated into a structure that’s designed with sound quality as a priority. It’s also the possibilities around immersive experiences in real and imaginary landscapes. In short, it’s a canvas on an unparalleled scale, and a once-in-a-generation opportunity. We all thought about it and decided we’d be mad not to accept the invitation.”

“Sphere Immersive Sound is a cornerstone of the custom-designed technology that will make Sphere unlike any venue, anywhere in the world, providing audio with unmatched clarity and precision to every guest, no matter where they’re seated,” said David Dibble, CEO, MSG

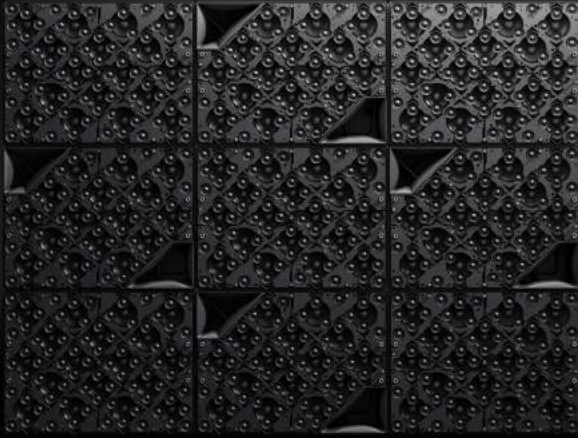
Ventures, a division of Sphere Entertainment. “Creating this experience required us to go far beyond existing audio technology, and in HOLOPLOT we found a partner at the forefront of innovation to help achieve our vision and truly transform what is possible with audio.”

“From the beginning, HOLOPLOT has been focused on radically transforming audio technology, rethinking the underlying physics of sound reproduction as we know it,” said Roman Sick, CEO, HOLOPLOT. “Working alongside Sphere Studios on Sphere Immersive Sound has been a truly thrilling opportunity for our team – challenging us to extend the boundaries of our technology to create a revolutionary listening experience.”

Sphere Immersive Sound is the world’s largest concert-grade audio system and was specifically developed for Sphere’s unique curved interior. The system consists of approximately 1,600 permanently installed, and 300 mobile, HOLOPLOT X1 Matrix Array loudspeaker modules and includes a total of 167,000 individually amplified loudspeaker drivers. The system utilises HOLOPLOT’s next-generation 3D Audio-Beamforming and Wave Field Synthesis technology to transform how audio is delivered in large-scale venues. This results in controlled, consistent, and crystal-clear concert-grade audio for audiences

of up to 20,000 people, providing each audience member with a truly exceptional and personalised listening experience. The entire sound system is completely hidden behind Sphere’s 160,000 square foot interior LED display plane. Any audio transmission losses are fully compensated for by HOLOPLOT’s algorithms in the optimisation engine, resulting in clear, full-range sound with virtually no coloration and a completely unobstructed visual LED surface – which wraps up, over and around the audience and combines with Sphere Immersive Sound to create a fully immersive environment.

Traditional loudspeaker technology in large-scale venues can result in audio quality that diminishes as distance from the speakers increases, due to the uncontrolled nature of sound wave propagation. HOLOPLOT’s patented 3D Audio-Beamforming technology uses intelligent software algorithms to create unique, highly controlled and more efficient soundwaves than conventional speakers, ensuring that levels and quality remain consistent from point of origin to destination, even over large distances. HOLOPLOT’s proprietary beamforming technology can also simultaneously send unique audio content to specific locations in the venue, creating the possibility for different sections to hear completely different content – such as



"The system utilises HOLOPLOT's next-generation 3D Audio-Beamforming and Wave Field Synthesis technology."



Sphere Immersive Sound, powered by HOLOPLOT, was first introduced last summer at the Beacon Theatre in New York ahead of being further customised and scaled for Sphere – which leverages the full capabilities of the new technology. The introduction of this audio innovation at The Beacon brought a nearly 100-year-old venue into the next generation, setting a new standard for sound quality in performance venues.

Sphere Immersive Sound is just one of the technologies working together in Sphere to create extraordinary immersive experiences that activate the senses. In addition to Sphere Immersive Sound and the interior LED display plane, Sphere also features patented '4D technologies' such as infrasound haptic seating, and various atmospheric and environmental effects, such as warm breezes, evocative scents and changing temperatures, to create multi-sensory experiences that take storytelling to an entirely new level.

languages, music, or sound effects – offering limitless opportunities for truly customised and immersive audio experiences.

Sphere Immersive Sound will additionally utilise HOLOPLOT's unique Wave Field Synthesis capabilities, a spatial audio rendering technique that leverages virtual acoustic environments. With conventional audio technology, the perceived origin of a

sound has traditionally been the location of the loudspeaker. Using Wave Field Synthesis, sound designers can create a virtual point of origin, which can then be placed in a precise spatial location. This enables audio to be directed to the listener so that it sounds close, even though the source is far away. For example, an audience member could hear a whisper that sounds like someone is talking directly in their ear.

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# THE P.A. PEOPLE ARE KICKING GOALS

**For the P.A. People's Event Communications team, the year has been hectic and it's not over yet!**

For the event comms team at The P.A. People it's been a busy year, supporting everything from the F1 GP in Melbourne, Vivid Sydney, FIFA Women's World Cup Unity Celebration and 'live site', to Suncorp Super Netball, Swifts and Giants at Ken Rosewall Arena, the NRL home games at Netstrata Stadium, City2Surf in Sydney and the Boomers vs the World basketball tournament at Rod Laver Arena in Melbourne.

At the recent City2Surf there were a reported 70,000 participants, where the P.A. People

provided distributed PA along the CBD staging area streets, and for the starting line, live sports presentation packages and official announcements. Similar coverage was provided for the finish line and Event Village, which included a small Bose Professional ShowMatch system, catering for the welcome to participants, live music, award presentations and the MC and sports presentations.

Meanwhile in Melbourne, a 66-box ShowMatch system was transported to support the Matilda's vs France FIFA game 'live site' inside Rod Laver Arena – the same system that was used for the Sydney Kings and Sydney Flames at Qudos Bank Arena and three days of 'friendlies' for the Boomers vs the World basketball tournament.

Following on from the F1 Grand Prix in Melbourne earlier in the year, the P.A. People also supported Vivid Sydney with PA systems at various installations around the CBD and an extensive comms package that comprised 650 digital two-way radios for the security, volunteers and staff over the 8km Light Walk. The P.A. People built a network over the whole site, which also included 80 network switches all temporarily installed on a combination of existing in-ground fibre, temporary fibre and RF links.

"We also provided network to 40 VMS display boards for directions, each of which had a PA system for emergency crowd control, as well as some sixty CCTV cameras," said Chris Dodds.



Additionally, the team provided audio for the Elemental show in Cockle Bay, Darling Harbour, which used 48 Celto 10-inch coaxial cabinets in pairs on three-metre trusses, with an 18-inch sub at the base of each truss. The company also provided the production sound system for First Light, the Vivid Opening Ceremony, featuring a live performance from Australian Rock legends, Yothu Yindi.

Following Vivid, the Event Comms team were then asked to provide an unusual audio solution to support the FIFA Women's World

Cup Unity Celebration on the Sydney Harbour Bridge. It was an early start for the team to ensure everything was in place quickly for the 8am celebrations. Once again, the team was able to work alongside the event producers to provide high quality audio systems for the marshalling areas and the actual ceremony on the centre of the bridge, all with a bump-in time of just a few hours.


As if all that wasn't enough, July saw the team return to Qudos Bank Arena to finish off the Suncorp Super Netball season, where a Bose

Professional ShowMatch PA, along with a full duplex Clear-Com FSII communications system for both the major semi-final and the preliminary final, were provided. The P.A. People also provided venue technical support along with sports presentation requirements for both the Swifts and Giants home games at Ken Rosewall Arena. Meanwhile, a second ShowMatch system deployed on its 'Carts' PA also returned to Jubilee Netstrata Stadium, augmenting the installed system for the Dragons home games for the NRL.




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# Astera's Innovative Lighting Solution for Richard II Production

**Astera's Titan and Helios lighting tubes have provided stunning visual props for this cutting-edge Canadian theatre production.**

Acclaimed and innovative, a mind-blowing new production of *Richard II*, adapted by Canadian playwright and provocateur Brad Fraser, is playing in the Tom Patterson Theatre as part of the 2023 Stratford Festival in Stratford, Ontario, Canada.

Conceived and directed by Jillian Keiley, the work is lit by Leigh Ann Vardy, who is utilising 12 Astera Titan Tubes and four Helios Tubes as stunning and inventive lighting and visual props to assist the ambience and narrative flow.

Jillian Keiley wanted a minimalist stage setup, and as the creative team started to evolve the aesthetic – with the action set in a Studio 54-inspired disco steeped in the glamour, grit and glitz of 1970s and '80s New York – it became essential to involve lighting elements that could take on the roles of both physical props and metaphysical suggestion. In particular, light sources that a 'Chorus of Angels' could use and manipulate.

Leigh Ann, Jillian and Stratford Festival's technical director Greg Dougherty, started looking at options for sourcing the right luminaires to meet this challenging brief, and it was Doug Ledingham, head LX for Stratford Festival's Tom Patterson Theatre who first suggested looking at Astera's wireless Tubes as a versatile and dynamic solution.

Chris Pegg from Astera's Canadian distributor, Lumenayre, rocked up with some units and demonstrated some of the capabilities of the Tubes. "Basically, this was exactly what the creative team wanted," stated Doug. "It was a 'Holy Grail' moment."

The confrontational piece asks some cerebral and awkward questions swirling around a time of general craziness and hedonism all juxtaposed with bathhouse raids, Stonewall, gender rights uprisings as the politics of conservatism and fear reverberated, threatening to throttle expression and freedom.

Leigh Ann was especially interested in the concepts of divinity and disco. "Richard believes his power comes from the divine, so I wanted to match the boldness of Brad's adaptation with sharp, bright lighting to help support this play's audacious vision!" she explained.

She was thrilled at seeing the first Titan Tube demo by Chris. "What was already in our imaginations in terms of lighting were these fixtures!" she stated, adding that she was even more impressed when the Titan and Helios Tubes "could do far more than I had anticipated."

Initial concerns were that they might be too fragile or too heavy to work as hand-held props, but these concerns were dispelled as

soon as Leigh Ann physically held them and saw firsthand "just how rugged and lightweight they are!"

The Tubes are used multiple times throughout the performance but never lighting an actor, set or scenery piece in a conventional way, an aspect that also fitted the lateral approach and brutal directness of the piece.

One of Leigh Ann's favourites is a bath house scene where the cast enters in a transition holding the Titan Tubes. On a downbeat of music, the lights snap on and sputter out, creating a dramatic shift in the mood. The cast then places the Titan Tubes in patterns on the stage, unlit, and as each character enters a small 'room' created with them, they glow in different colours to outline the action. "So, they work in an architectural context as well as illuminative!" she notes.

In the play's prison scene – Richard, who believes God gives him the right to live above the rules, is banished to a prison near the end of the show – a stark look is achieved by flying a four-foot disco ball no higher than about four feet above the stage. The Chorus of Angels then carries 12 Titan Tubes onstage and attaches them to a custom-built cage around the disco ball. As the ball flies out, the Titan Tubes are eased down to create illuminated jail bars around Richard.

The jail is then 'broken' by a character wielding a Helios Tube who 'smashes' the bars with a



Titan and Helios Tubes in this very precise and dramatic way. More ideas of how to integrate them dramatically and figuratively into the piece flowed freely as the production was developed.

For Leigh Ann, the most important attribute the lighting fixtures needed for them to play all these parts was their ability to respond to effects, pixel mapping and control, plus “their excellent dimmer curves,” which enabled a host of very subtle effects as well as big bold gestures.

She notes that they were rarely run at full intensity, and “are super punchy, crisp and clear even at low intensities.”

A major general lighting challenge was keeping the show’s electric energy pumping, and this was also the most invigorating part of crafting the lighting.

“It is a visual and auditory feast,” she described, “So pulling the audience’s eye to the critical story beats was my obsession through the tech process.”

“The Astera Tubes were fundamental to achieving this,” Leigh Ann concluded, adding that she’s enjoyed creating a magical world that is “exciting, irreverent, and where the design elements have supported the storytelling throughout.”

From the Stratford Theatre’s standpoint, Doug Ledingham is also very happy that they made the investment. Apart from being instrumental in Richard II, “they will be great stock items to have on hand and will definitely be used on future productions,” he stated.

“I already knew they were a fantastic product for film and TV applications, but for us, portability is a key and we can even programme them while actors are holding them and dancing! Being pixel driven, they can easily be integrated with our other pixel-based fixtures” remarked Doug.

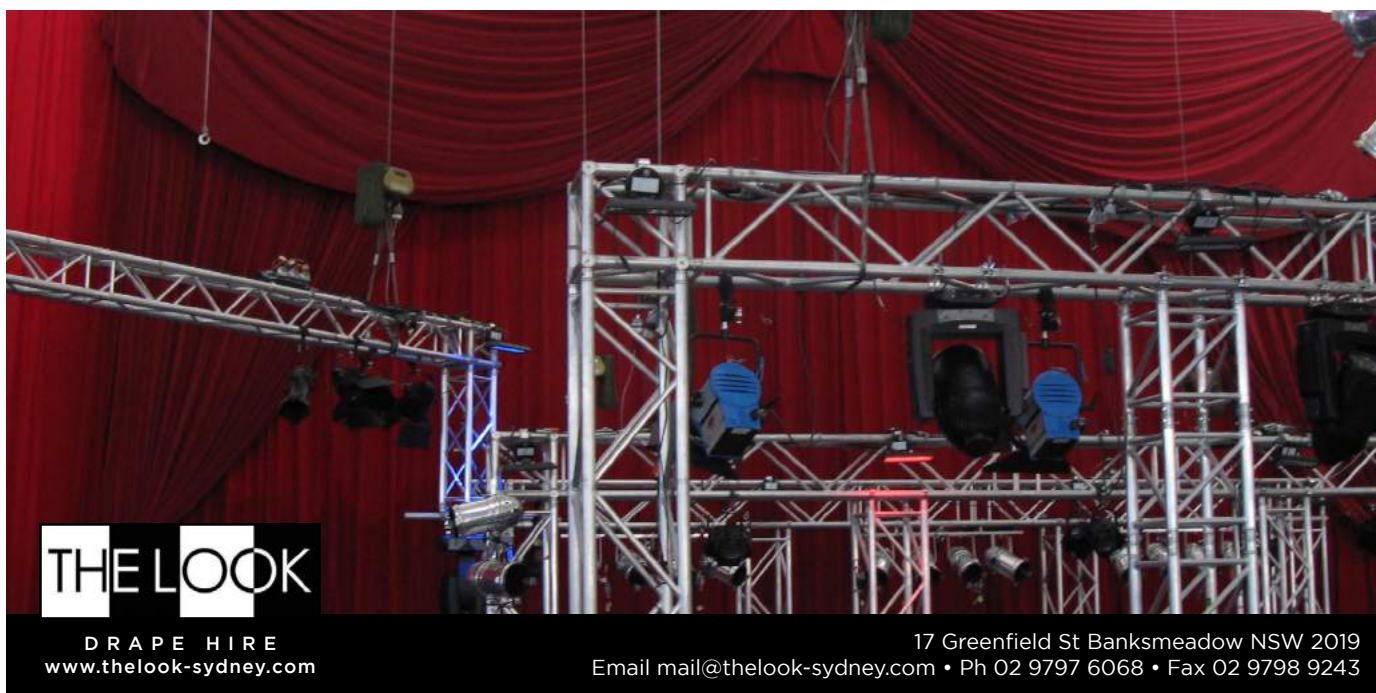


combination of shattering glass sounds and Helios pixel effects.

In the final moment of the show, Richard is stabbed with a glowing pink Helios Tube, and as this happens, the colour drains out

of the Tube as neon pink blood pours out of his wound.

All these ideas demonstrate the ingenuity and imagination of the creative team as well as the detail and finessing that’s possible using



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## THE ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION



# TECHNICAL EXTRAVAGANZA

## AV1 deliver biggest corporate event this year

Dylan Batterham, AV1's Melbourne based producer worked in tandem with Rotary and the LIVE event team out of the US to pull together the Rotary's annual International Convention, a mammoth production that attracted over 14,000 attendees from around the world and ran over four days. Hosted across the Rod Laver Arena and Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC), AV1 beat out some stiff competition to win the tender for production of the Rod Laver Arena programme.

Dylan puts the win down to their thorough approach, "We were rethinking our proposal documents and this became a bit of a blue print. I sat down with close friend and colleague Cory Hoyling from Shadow AV in Melbourne, and we did the floorplan on Vectorworks, sound design for the room, factored in the rigging, and went into quite a lot of detail in terms of exactly what fixtures we were going to use. We made sure that we were pitching the client something very accurate from the beginning."

"The client was quite detailed in their specs but not so much on how to achieve it. They gave us a 3D mock-up of their concept which

was pretty similar to what they'd done the year before in Houston but they were completely open to our suggestions. They had part of the screen sitting on the stage which we could see causing a whole lot of issues. When we said everything needs to be hung we thought it was going to be a deal breaker, but they came back and said do what works. We focused on giving them the best bang for their buck and when they walked in they were really impressed, especially when we showed them what we could do with the lights."

The AV1 team were in pre-production with the US for 6 weeks, "It wasn't a huge amount of time but because we had done so much work

on the proposal including 3D renders, once we got the job, we were pretty much ready. We ran it past the riggers and changed a few things up for them but otherwise we were good to go."

The main challenge was the time difference, "We had limited time to chat and if we needed info during our work day, we would have to wait until the evening to get feedback

. They had four guys in the States from LIVE and their own specialists overseeing the local providers, such as graphics and stage management. On the Rotary side of things, we worked with four people from different departments."



## A Technical Feat

The Rod Laver Arena component of the event ran for two hours each morning and was also broadcast live into the MCEC. The opening ceremony included a parade with 191 countries' flags Choreographed by the Rotary and Live team, and then followed musical acts such as the Tenors, and keynote presentations from the Rotary team and high profile guest speakers.

They had four days to pack in, "I estimated three days, but they wanted us to get done early so we had a technical check day up our sleeve. On day one we got the rig and line arrays up and even got the majority of the lighting up."

The venue was set up in concert mode with the 80 foot by 60 foot stage, "We carpeted the stage to get a very professional look, not your old rock 'n roll one that gets rolled in and out. We used a full concert line array from Front of House Productions. They had just bought the KSL which was really good for that space."

Day two saw the major LED build, "We had a huge number of panels including a curved screen out to the side which took some time to build. We also had a central screen on Kinesis motors that could fly in and out so the entertainers and speakers could walk on through the middle of the set. We had three teleprompter screens in front of the stage also on motors, so when people needed to use the autocue we could fly them in and out. If presenters only wanted one or wanted them lower we could automatically make the change."

Inventory included 168 ProLights OmegaPix 26BE 2.6 mm panels for the 6 metre by 3.5 metre outer screens for IMAG; 140 ROE MC3 panels for the 8 metre by 4 metre reveal screen with 2.5 metre by 4.5 metre wings; and 228 ROE MC3 panels for the 14 metre curved backdrop wings. There were also an additional 56 ProLights OmegaPix 26BE 2.6 mm for the teleprompt and four Barco HDX W20 FLEX DLP projectors with 20 foot screens hung throughout for sight line.

AV1 provided all the 2.6mm LED panels and sourced the rest from CT Group. The 13 Kinesys motors were provided by Get Rigged and operated by Cameron Paterica.

Day 3 saw the lighting up and running, "We made some lighting changes on site and end up with over 100 lighting fixtures," explains Dylan. "We used 32 ShowPro Pluto 250 Hybrid moving beams and 24x RGB LED Strobe fixtures for room looks. 16 Ayrton Eurux for were used for stage wash. 24 ShowPro Pluto 4000 washes, 8 ShowPro Pluto 2000 washes, and 10 GLP X4 Bar 20were used for on-stage looks."

FOH Productions helped AV1 out with all the moving fixtures and also came to the party with the rest of the audio in addition to the KSL line array, "We used the V system for the side field and had the Y series doing the delays which was really only just colouring the top pockets. We had a heap of subs but ended up turning half of them off as the KSL was amazing on its own and there was not a lot of sub heavy content. We used our own Digico SE10 and SD11i desks, with the presenters making up the biggest part of channel count."

## The Event

Even though the shows only lasted two hours each morning the days were long with lots of rehearsals, "The client was good with our rehearsal schedule but presenters' schedules were very tight so we were on call for 12 to 14 hours a day and rehearsed in small segments when we could. We also had another studio used for filming vox pops and interviews, some used in the show, some for archive purposes. It definitely wasn't your normal rock 'n roll show. There were a lot of moving parts."

AV1 dedicated 28 operators at any one time including autocue, cameras, video crew, stage hands, and hair and make-up, and there were also a few guys from the US, "We were very blessed to have a great team, everything went really smoothly, nothing was too much trouble."

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Highlights for Dylan included the flexibility provided by the Kinesis motors, being able to use his drone in the Rod Laver Arena to film their tech, and he was particularly impressed with his choice of media server and software, "Rather than Pandora's Box we used a IOversal media server and software developed by Sydney's Paul Rodger at Light Engine. It is a great programme and absolutely nailed it for this job, pushing high quality video content out to three separate 4K outputs to run the whole show."

Dylan was also pleased with their decision to use an onsite video editor, "We had someone top and tailing and editing as we went. The client appreciated that we had done all the work, fixed it up and it was ready to go by the end of the day."



## Gear List

### Control

- 1 DiGiCo SD10 144ch Digital Mixing Console
- 1 DiGiCo SD11i Core 2 80ch Digital Mixing Console
- 1 ONStage 48ch Multicore Split & Stage Power Kit
- 1 FOHP Drive Rack for d&b audiotechnik systems, BNC Madi FOH Loom 4-Way 100m
- 1 DiGiCo D-Rack Floor Mount 32 In, 8 Out Stage Box, Digico SD-Rack 56 In, 40 Out Stage Box & AES/EBU (HMA/Madi)

### Main Hang

- 20 d&b audiotechnik KSL8
- 4 d&b audiotechnik KSL12

### Side hang

- 24 d&b audiotechnik V8
- 8 d&b audiotechnik V12

### Delay hang

- 6 d&b audiotechnik Y8
- 4 d&b audiotechnik Y12

### Lip Fill

- 6 d&b audiotechnik Y7P

### Sub

- 6 d&b audiotechnik SL-G

### Foldback

- 6 d&b audiotechnik M4 15"

### Amplification

- 12 d&b audiotechnik D40
- 6 d&b audiotechnik D20
- 3 d&b audiotechnik D80

### LED Screen – IMAG

- 2x Outer LED Screens for IMAG, 6m x 3.5m
- 168 LED Panel - ProLights OmegaPix 26BE - 2.6 mm
- 2 Novastar MCRTL 4K Processor Rack

### LED Screen - Reveal

- 140 ROE MC3 LED Panel
- 2 Brompton SX40 LED Processing Rack w/ IPRO4K
- 1 Optic Fibre Kit, Single Mode, 225m, 12way IPLC, 2 runs

### LED Screen – curved wing

- 228 ROE MC3 LED Panel
- 1 Brompton SX40 LED Processing Rack w/ IPRO4K Brompton Tessera XD 10G Signal Distributor
- 1 Optic Fibre Kit, Single Mode, 225m, 12way IPLC, 2 runs

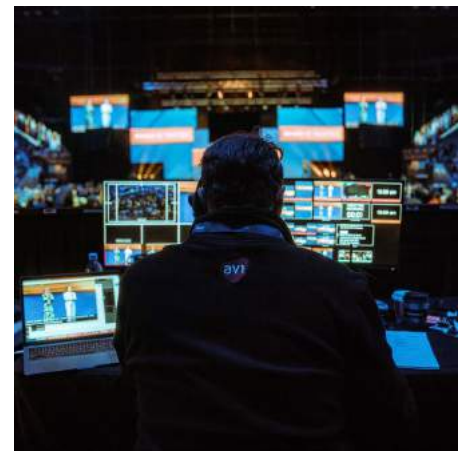
### Teleprompt

- 56 LED Panel - ProLights OmegaPix 26BE - 2.6 mm
- 2 Novastar MCRTL 4K Processor Rack
- 2 Monitor on Tall Stand Package - 85" on 2.4m
- 1 Dual Fibre Optic SDI send to stage & front truss

### Lighting fixtures

- 24 ShowPro Pluto 4000 Moving Wash
- 8 ShowPro Pluto 2000 Moving Wash
- 32 ShowPro Pluto 250 Hybrid Moving Beam / Spot
- 16 Ayrton Eurus
- 10 GLP X4 Bar 20





## Crew List

**Producer/Show Caller**  
Dylan Batterham

**Technical Director/Stage Manager**  
Cory Hoyling

**Speakers Prep**  
Trent Ward

**Production Assistant/Showrunner**  
Theodore Papatheodorou

**Head Rigger/Automation Tech**  
Cameron Paterica

**Graphics Operator - Media Server**  
Paul Rodger

**Vision Operator**  
Jay Wragge

**Audio FOH Engineer**  
Paolo Tomassini

**Lighting Operator**  
Michael Zagarn

**Onsite Video Editor**  
Tim Holly

Plus cameras, hair & make-up & comms



## Looking forward...maybe to the 2024 Rotary International Convention

Dylan's meticulous approach and AV1's recent companywide investment in people and gear paid off, "This was the largest event to date where we have managed all the production. The nearest to this was a similar but slightly smaller event in Shanghai. We have been involved in bigger events before but usually it's been the client relationship management or just one or two technical elements like the video system or the camera content, the media based side of things. This was a wonderful opportunity for us and with our recent investment in full time technicians across all skill levels and in gear and warehousing space, we are excited about what's around the corner. I definitely have some ideas and am planting some seeds for next year's Rotary International Convention in Singapore."



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## Lightware Taurus TPX

The Taurus TPX is essentially Lightware's Taurus UCX split into two boxes, a transmitter (TX) and a receiver (RX), seamlessly connected using a single CAT cable, utilising the SDVoE technology to establish a smooth transition between the two. With this solution, users can enjoy the same benefits of simplified connectivity of video, audio, control, Ethernet and charging over one single USB-C cable in rooms where longer distances need to be bridged.



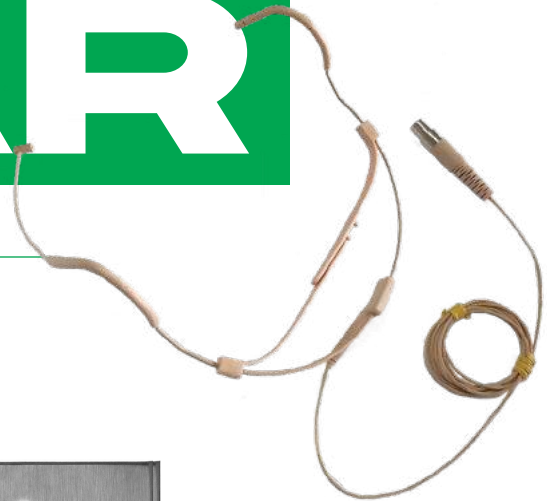
## Lightware HDMI-TPN-TX107 and HDMI-TPN-RX107

The HDMI-TPN-TX107 and HDMI-TPN-RX107 transmitter and receiver devices with SDVoE technology allow users to extend HDMI 2.0 signals up to 4K60 4:4:4 video resolution from a single source to multiple destinations through 10G Ethernet networks. The extenders are capable of handling various connectivity standards, including a 1G user Ethernet channel over the 10G link, as well as command injection into IR and RS-232. The additional Gigabit Ethernet port is also a valuable addition, allowing users to connect an additional device to the network directly through the TPX extender.

Australia: Lightware Australia [lightware.com](http://lightware.com) 02 9188 0658  
New Zealand: Pacific AV [pacificav.co.nz](http://pacificav.co.nz) 09 947 5230



# NEW GEAR



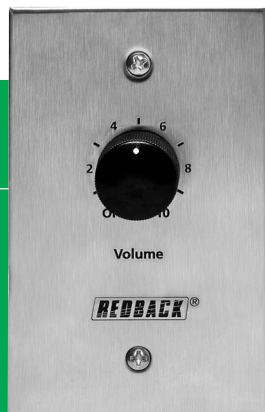
## Chiayo Fitness Microphone

Chiayo Electronics pumps up the volume with a new sweat-resistant fitness microphone featuring professional sound and robust waterproof design. It's a premium fitness microphone with a replaceable cable, designed for fitness enthusiasts, instructors, and presenters. It features a thin boom (2.2 mm wide) and waterproof connector.

Australia: Amber Technology [ambertech.com.au](http://ambertech.com.au) 1800 251 367  
New Zealand: Amber Technology [amber.co.nz](http://amber.co.nz) 0800 4 AMBER

## Altronics A2260SS Attenuator Volume Control

Designed to control 100V line speaker systems, these attenuators are fitted to industry standard wall plates and install into an electrical wall box. They feature 11 position switches for fine adjustment of sound level. All circuitry is housed on a PCB with screw terminals for easy installation. They include override relay for emergency paging applications and a 22µF bipolar capacitor for line monitoring purposes.



## Altronics PC0446 XLR Microphone Wallplate

The secured fascia plate can only be removed with a tool preventing tampering and accidental removal due to impact. Available in white and black, will blend into any commercial environment. Also available in a 5-pin version.



## Altronics C1064 Black PA Speaker

Featuring a two-way driver, 8-inch woofer and 1-inch tweeter. It offers the flexibility of 8 ohm or 100V line settings with a total power handling up to 250W and max 100V power tap of 150W. All connections are covered by a sealed screw in panel preventing moisture and dust ingress to a rating of IP55. Also available in white (C1061)



Australia: Altronics [altronics.com.au](http://altronics.com.au) 08 9428 2188



## Megadeck Illuminated Stair

Megadeck have added an illuminated stair module to their stage decking inventory. Illuminated stairs bolt onto any side of the Megadeck stages and come in either black steel frame or aluminium silver frame. Removable inserts allow for different colours and effects, such as opal acrylic for back lighting.

**Australia: Megadeck**  
[megadeckstaging.com](http://megadeckstaging.com) 02 9550 3459

## Sennheiser TCC M Microphone

With a coverage range of up to 40 m<sup>2</sup>, the TeamConnect Ceiling Medium (TCC M) microphone is a good choice for mid-sized lecture or collaboration spaces. The TCC M allows cable-free tables and flexible furniture arrangement with PoE. TCC M uses automatic dynamic beamforming with 15 German made SMD Electret condenser capsules. Dante or analog output is standard. TCC M is certified for Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Tencent, DingTalk and more.

**Australia: Sennheiser** [en-au.sennheiser.com](http://en-au.sennheiser.com) 02 9910 6700  
**New Zealand: Sennheiser** [en-nz.sennheiser.com](http://en-nz.sennheiser.com) 09 580 0489



## NST Audio VR2 Wall Panel

VR2 is a PoE touch-enabled wall panel designed for remote control over specific parameters of any NST Audio processor. It uses NST Audio's D-Net software and can be setup to allow control of one or more processors connected to the same network. The panel displays and controls channel and matrix gains, routing and channel mutes, preset recall, and OEM IP commands. Available in semi-matt aluminium, silver anodized, black anodized, or white anodized.

**Australia: Group Technologies**  
[grouptechnologies.com.au](http://grouptechnologies.com.au) 03 9354 9133



## ROXX Cluster S2

The S2 is an advanced pixel mappable strobe and washlight that combines three complementary effect elements in one unit. The centre high-powered "strobe tube" provides traditional high output strobe effect, but the tube is also controllable into twelve individual pixels. A further four lines of white strobe tubes are spaced across the face of the unit allowing for further white strobe impact, shadow effects and pixel mapping. The S2 also has two high output RGB banks to allow for background colour, high intensity and suitability as a flood source, plus the ability to pixel map across six segments per bank.

**Australia: LSC**  
[lscontrol.com.au](http://lscontrol.com.au) 03 9702 8000



## Listen Technologies ListenWIFI

Listen Technologies has launched the next generation of its audio-over-Wi-Fi solution, titled ListenWIFI. It's an upgrade on their popular Listen EVERYWHERE solution for audio-over-Wi-Fi assistive listening. Features include operating on an existing network, private channels, custom branding in the app (with no monthly fees), ultra-low latency, and Dante on-board.

**Australia: NAS Solutions**  
*nas.solutions 1800 441 440*  
**New Zealand: NAS Solutions**  
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## Aver Vb350

VB350 from Aver is a dual lens PTZ video conferencing soundbar. The VB350 uses 4K dual-lens technology to deliver a wide 113° field of view (FOV) with 18X zoom. Features include adjustable audio fence and SmartFrame / SmartSpeaker (Auto tracking and FOV adjustment to fit all participants and focus on the speaker).

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## Sonance SONAMP 16-50 AMP

SONAMP 16-50 AMP is a 16 Channel (8 stereo Zones) amplifier. It has output power of 8 ohms (Stereo) at 50 watts RMS per channel (all channels driven); 4 ohms (Stereo) at 100 watts RMS per channel (all channels driven); or 8 ohms (Bridged) at 200 Watts. The subwoofer output has a selectable crossover filter to support a separately powered subwoofer on Bus A. Each Sonance digital amplifier includes two Bus inputs with a pass through feature to allow multiple amplifiers to be linked.

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## Roland Vr6hd

The VR-6HD is an all-in-one solution for everyday business livestreaming events. It features video switching, audio mixing, and LAN/USB streaming encoders, automation tools, one-touch macro sequencing, PTZ camera control, and more. There's six 1080p HDMI inputs with frame rate converters and real-time scalers and five total outputs: three HDMI, USB-C streaming, and a dedicated direct streaming output. Each VR-6HD has a 28-channel digital audio mixer with advanced effects and processing. VR-6HD users can control six PTZ cameras with support for multiple brands and mixed protocols, using a 4.3-inch touch screen with graphical menu.

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# THE EVOLUTION



LISTEN HERE

by Andy Stewart

# OF THE MIX

**Mixes are mostly 'evolved' these days, rather than built from scratch at the end of a recording process. Unlike previous decades where there was a distinct line between the two tasks, today we can produce a finished product from concept to final mix, in many cases without ever leaving our preferred DAW environment. So how does that change things?**

Evolving a mix, rather than starting one from scratch with nought but raw files, undoubtedly changes the way a production comes together. For some readers out there, the idea of a mix being constructed from a bunch of raw tracking alone at the end of a 'recording phase', minus the original DAW session, including all its playlist layers, in-progress plugins and mix bus processing, might seem like a foreign concept. And as for mixing off tape, by extension, that's a trip to the moon!

But for those of us who do know the difference between the recording and mixing phases of

a production, and by design or circumstance no longer bother to maintain a delineation between them, the evolving mix demands a different mindset. Yet how that mindset differs and what its dangers or pitfalls might be is a question most of us have simply ignored in recent years, which is an oddly blasé game to play when it comes to mixing. Evolving a mix is different in more ways than you might think, and it pays to know what these differences are.

When a mix can essentially start the moment a recording kicks off, it almost goes without saying that the changes it foreshadows are enormous. Essentially everything that was once linear about the music production process, from recording through to mastering, can now be performed in essentially any order you like in one amorphous task, or at least that's the current perception.

In this scenario, the sounds you monitor during tracking, overdubbing and editing are always in play and open to scrutiny. You can start building effects right away, EQing instruments, grouping, bussing, editing parts and even setting up the mix bus to export a quasi-final master. While this is arguably one of the great advantages DAW-based systems have over older, linear analogue and digital setups, simply because you can work this way, should you? Sure, you can start working

on sounds as you imagine them in the mix right from the get-go, rather than having to put those ideas off until later, but what are the consequences of that mindset?

When your mind is thinking about mixing from the outset, your workflow changes considerably, and the way you interact with others around you in the studio also changes. The main concern here if you're the producer, engineer or mix engineer – or all three at once if that's your role here – is staying focused and 'in the moment'. Rather than concentrating on the musicians around you and the performances themselves, there's a tendency here to start fiddling with sounds and disappearing down your own rabbit hole while others around you sit idly by. And that, my friends, is not cool. When you stop listening carefully to the sounds you're recording, interacting with those around you or communicating what you're up to during a session, you cease to be a decent engineer.

Staying inside the recording process; listening to performances, discussing them with the artist, imagining how a musical approach might be improved or changed, making sure recording chains are all working as they should and that everyone can hear superbly well in headphones, and so on, is already a large enough set of tasks for the average

mind to cope with. They're all important, time consuming and mentally draining, and can't afford to be compromised by outside influences.

But when you add to this exhaustive list a bunch of open-ended mixing questions around things like whether a guitar overdub should have a plate reverb on it or a delay, whether a vocal needs a high-pass filter at 70Hz or 105, whether the mix bus could do with a 16kHz shelf on it or how the panning might work now that we've added a new tambourine, two acoustics and congas, that's exactly what you're doing. You're adding too many tasks to your mental process, potentially compromising the session by either overlooking a crucial recording chain, not having enough headspace to hear why an overdub isn't working musically, or just pissing off those around you by ignoring them for too long while you perform some 'crucial' task that they're not privy to.

Sometimes of course, the opposite scenario holds true. As a recording engineer, you might be utterly focussed on the recording process, determined to avoid any mix related tasks until further down the pipe, meanwhile it's the artists around you who either can't separate the processes in their own heads, or can't stop themselves from thinking too far down the road even when they know better. There may even nerves at play here too: some artists unconsciously try to avoid scrutiny by asking a bunch of seemingly unrelated questions.

Regardless, when this happens during a tracking session you can often find yourself pulled in 10 different directions by those around you as they seek answers to mixing and mastering (or even video and management-related!) questions:

"Hey Andy, what does it sound like when we pan those two sounds left and right just for the chorus?" or "Can we change my guitar sound to better suit the mix right now; maybe see what it sounds like a bit brighter?" or "Do you think we need to organise a band manager now, or should we wait 'til the album's done, do you reckon?"

Andy hits the talkback button and responds: "Maybe let's just get this vocal right first, shall we, and maybe later on we can talk about management over a coffee..."

All I can say is that while DAW-based productions have innumerable up-sides, given their capacity for a seemingly endless array of processing tasks, they are dumber than a bag of hammers when it comes to people management because they can literally say 'Yes!' to any request, whether it be idiotic or well-considered. Sometimes a limitation is critical to keeping things rolling.

## Drifting Off Course

One of the most insidious things that can happen when a mix evolves over the course of a project is that you drift off course without realising it. And the longer the project goes

and the more familiar you become with it, the further off course this drift can take you, whereupon you eventually you find yourself living on an island somewhere with an old volleyball as your musical collaborator... or at least, that's the risk.

In short, it's about a loss of perspective, and a sometimes unhealthy (or unhelpful) attachment to old audio processing that isn't doing your mix any favours.

You can grow accustomed to just about anything if you listen to it for long enough, and this is where an evolved mix can sometimes really let you down.

In some cases where a mix has been evolving over weeks, months or even years – I kid you not – people lose sight of what the original tracking sounded like, and in many cases, haven't heard the 'in-the-raw', plug-in and effects-free musical elements for months! In other words, what the unadorned tracking files originally sounded like is forgotten as the mix evolves, and even though playing the raw files back seems like a relatively easy task to perform, people either don't think to do it, or more commonly, choose not to because they think everything is hunky dory. In some other cases, people also develop an irrational fear of back-tracking and discovering something they'd rather not reveal to themselves or others. In some ways, the evolving mix can, in this situation, be used to hide problems rather than reveal and then resolve them.

## In With The Old, In With The New

In many cases too, early tracking elements can become outmoded or even superseded by more recent overdubs during an endlessly evolving mix production. Indeed, many early overdubs on a typical recording session will take place with little or no concrete expectation of what might ultimately follow in the future. I mean let's face it, who among us hasn't recorded music in the last two decades where a song arrangement wasn't predetermined: you tracked an idea, had another cool idea, had a crisis about the tempo, re-recorded the drums with sticks instead of brushes, recorded even more musical ideas, then a few more, then changed a few of the lyrics, and so on.

When this freedom of musical expression continues unrestricted for months, and onto this you heap layers of experimental, sometimes half-baked, ill-considered effects and processing, some of the early tracks inevitably become so peripheral sounding in the 'evolved' mix that the song essentially turns into an indecipherable mess. But sometimes these early elements need to stay strong in the mix for the music to hang together, but because you've had them mixed low for six months while you pile on new parts, you've grown unwittingly accustomed to them at the wrong volume – a fatal error.

## Regaining Some Objectivity

So 'evolving' a mix isn't necessarily all beer and skittles, as they say, but avoiding many of the traps that lie in wait for those who choose to mix this way is a relatively straightforward task. It's all about objectivity.

If this crucial ingredient has been eroded away over time, now is the time to act – and when I say 'now', I mean, when the mix process begins in earnest. But if you honestly can't see when or where the 'mix process' begins for you, look at your project this way: are you still overdubbing? If the answer is (finally) no, then you're mixing.

Now is the time to 'Save As' create a new session file that you call "All Tracking, No Effects" or whatever, and then ditch every single plug-in. If that sounds all too embarrassing for your fragile ego, do this in private if you must. Now listen to the tracking 'in the raw'. Get reacquainted with the unprocessed sounds on file. Let yourself be influenced by your ears alone and try your best to recalibrate your thinking and recapture your objectivity. It may not be quick, it may be confronting at times, but it will be well worth it.

When you do finally go back into the 'evolved mix' file you might be in for a rude shock, and that's a good thing.

**Andy Stewart owns and operates The Mill studio in Victoria, a world-class production, mixing and mastering facility. He's happy to respond to any pleas for pro audio help... contact him at: [andy@themill.net.au](mailto:andy@themill.net.au) or visit: [www.themillstudio.com.au](http://www.themillstudio.com.au)**



Andy Stewart

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## Duco Events

# Synthony's Success Story Continues...

## GLOBAL PRODUCTION PARTNERS ON SYNTHONY IN THE DOMAIN

Originally the brainchild of Erika Amoore and David Elmsly, Synthony was acquired by Duco Events of sporting promotion fame (think Joe Parker), with the founders staying on as consultants. The Synthony concept of dance party featuring orchestra and anthem covers has since scaled up across New Zealand and offshore. The success of its latest iteration, 'Synthony in the Domain' is evidenced by its shortlisting for the New Zealand Events Awards Music Event of the Year, up against both Ed Sheeran concerts and Wellington's Jim Beam Homegrown, amongst others.

Jason Steel, Creative Director at Global Productions Partners (GPP) has been on board from the start: "I was involved with the original town hall shows, then about three years ago GPP pitched to Erika offering the full concept design including video, lighting, laser and pyro. We were really keen to take the show to the next level."

Synthony and GPP haven't looked back, with Jason and his team managing full creative production for the Australian and New Zealand tours, the recent show in Singapore, the upcoming Synthony in the Snow in August, a return to the show's roots at the Auckland Town Hall in September, and a New Year's Rhythm and Alps set.

Every Synthony show offers something slightly different, and Duco Events took advantage of the green fields of Auckland Domain to offer

a full day summer music festival featuring performances by Dick Johnson, P-Money, Dave Dobbyn, Kimbra and Shapeshifter as well as the debut of Synthony No4 with an all-new set list. For GPP this meant they needed to design a set nimble enough for full band set ups during the day but still deliver the unique Synthony concept in the evening.

"We designed a 14x7 metre deep rolling riser with a tiered platform that moved downstage and had the orchestra set up and ready to go. As the orchestra takes up so much space, we were worried that the stage could look very flat, so we designed an architectural arched LED tunnel to create depth." They also utilised Notch as live IMAG effects and two huge IMAG screens, one either side, to integrate the orchestra into the dance party's pulsating patterns and colours, "The whole Synthony brand is built around the powerful collision of

the live orchestra with the DJs, instrumentalists and singers so it is always important to capture that visually as well as musically. We utilised Follow-Me rather than follow spots. It gave us the freedom to attach the majority of the rig to the main performer, making it quite top-heavy and suited to the dance party vibe."

The Synthony set featured the Auckland Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sarah-Grace Williams, and kicked off with a powerfully moving karakia. Highlights included Savage doing a version of Stop, Drop and Roll and the iconic sax player Lewis McCallum, a Synthony stalwart. Tiki Taane covered three Prodigy tracks, including sure-fire crowd pleaser Firestarter, and Dave Dobbyn returned to the stage to cover The Verve's Bitter Sweet Symphony. Sandstorm by Darude brought Synthony No4 to a close and made way for Shapeshifter, with Tiki Taane on the sound desk.

Even after producing so many Synthony shows, pushing the orchestra through the DJ's electronic anthems remains a fine balancing act, "We use close miking techniques and highly experienced audio technicians. At the Domain, the orchestra came in at 11 o'clock on show day, we had one full run through, time for fix ups and then we were straight into the show, so that audio experience really counts. The location, the size of the show and the different orchestras means there are a lot of variables. For Synthony in the Snow, it's a

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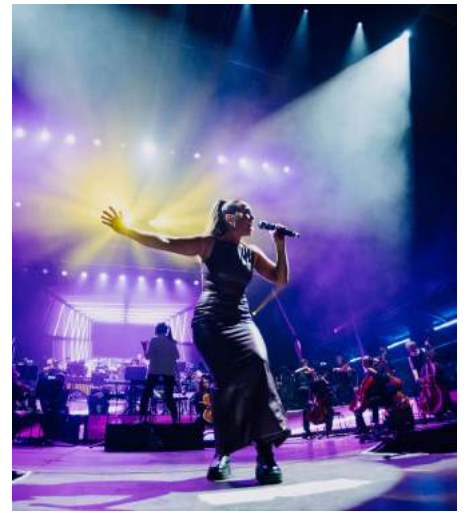
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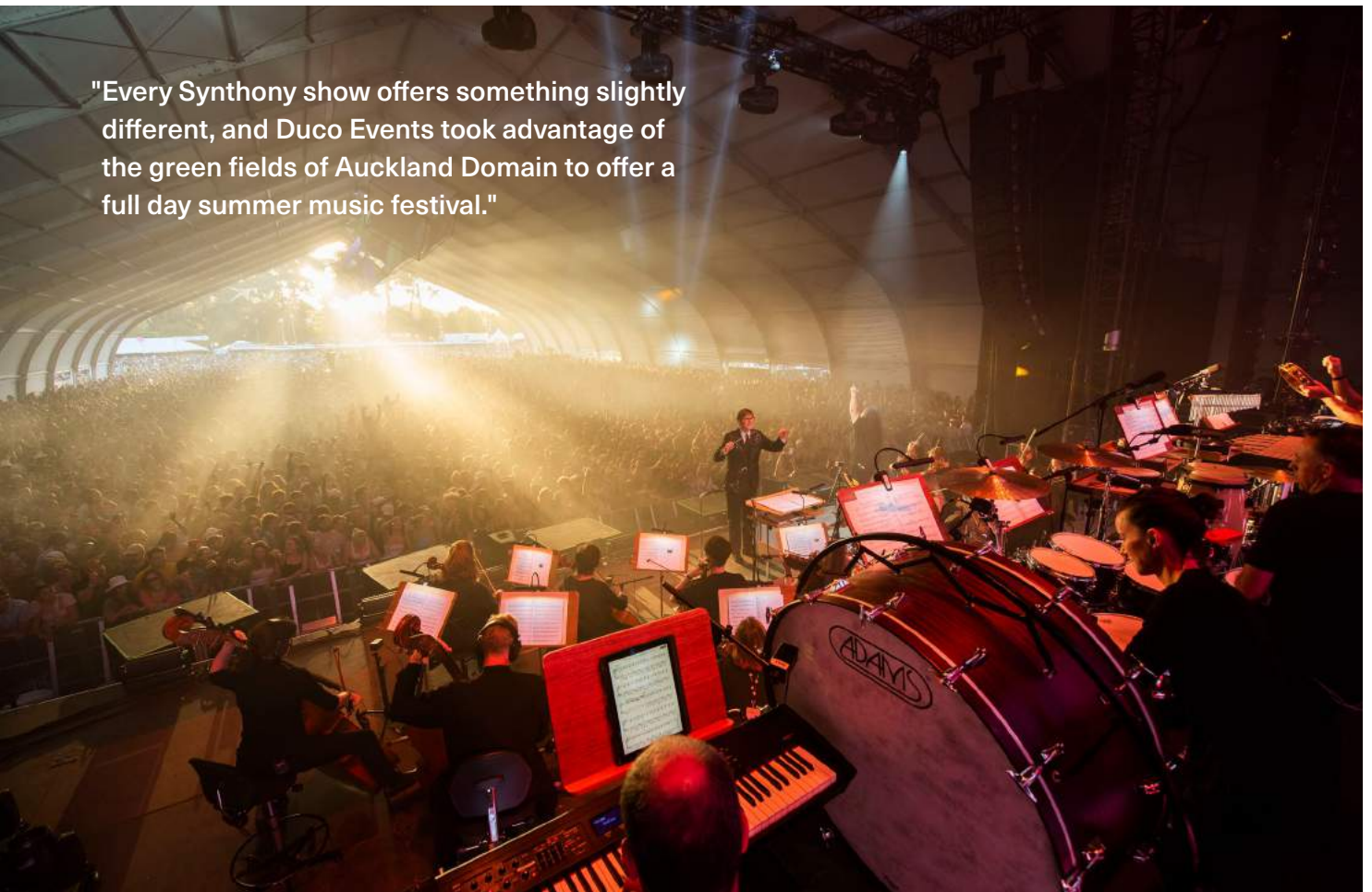
scratch orchestra so separately contracted musicians which will add to the challenge."

For all that, GPP specialises in delivering big events and Synthony sits totally within its scope. Even the quick turnaround due to time restrictions that come with utilising the Domain posed no problems, "You just can't do the big scaffold stage, everything has to be pretty turnkey. So we used a 20 metre stage from Stageset NZ, did full pack in on Day 1, programming and sound checks on Day 2, and then ended up with an extra day when the show shifted from the Saturday to the Sunday, due to the weather."

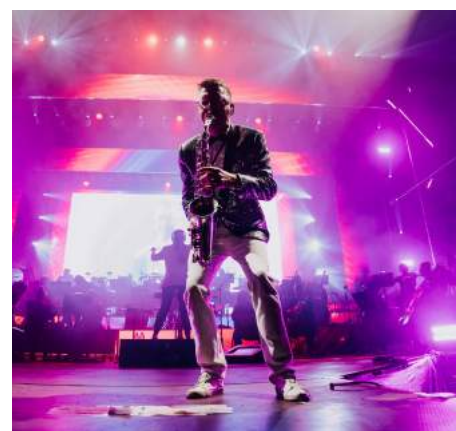
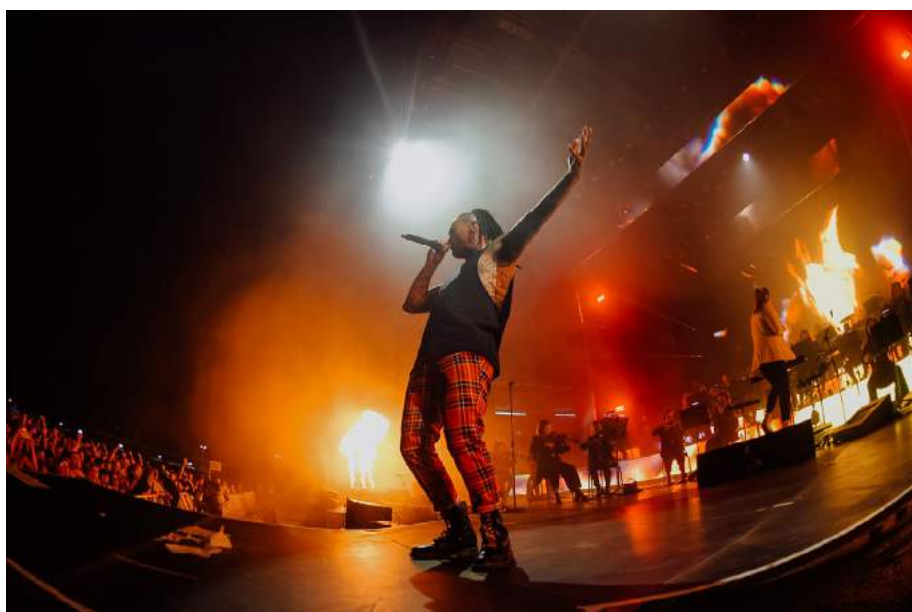
In addition to Stageset, suppliers included: College Hill on audio, MJF Lighting on lighting,



"Every Synthony show offers something slightly different, and Duco Events took advantage of the green fields of Auckland Domain to offer a full day summer music festival."



*"We were really keen to take the show to the next level."*



Monstavision on video, GPP on lasers, LiveFX on pyro and Show Light & Power on staging. Production Manager Robbie Barclay delivered the Domain build. The rest of the production team comprised Mark Corbett as Audio FOH, Heath Clapperton on Audio Monitors, Jason himself on lighting and pyro design, and the GPP team comprised Scott Rowland as Lighting Assist, Andrew Naysmith on video, and Jack Hooper on lasers.

Jason got to enjoy the entire show and was delighted with the cohesion, "That's what GPP is about, tying all the elements together: the audio, visual, lighting and special effects. Synthony in the Domain was a great example of what we can accomplish. Duco was really pleased with the delivery too. It's an added bonus that we've now reached the finals for the New Zealand Events Awards."

GPP's aptitude for full production management and creative design has seen the company expand dramatically over the last four years. It now has ten full-time staff and an increasing amount of overseas work, supported by an office in Singapore. It has just finished the Head in the Clouds season, is currently working on New Zealand Fashion Week, and the team recently arrived back from providing the sound, video and lighting for NIKI's tour.



# STATE OF THE MARKET

## A view from the frontline



Axiom AX2065.1

LD Systems MAILA

LD Systems ICOA 15 inch

LD Systems IPA424T

James Pavey started his career as a sound technician in Sydney in the 1990s. Making the move to Melbourne during a chilly winter in the early 2000s, he moved sideways into video, then into a Production Management gig at the under-construction Federation Square. Moving through production and operation at the new-defunct Shed 14 at Docklands and in AV for Clifton Productions, James moved to the sales and distribution side of the industry five years ago, and holds the title of Business Development, Vicotria, at AVECorp.

AVECorp are a one-stop-shop solutions provider for the AV, install and production sectors, carrying 25 brands across lighting, audio, rigging, staging, and lasers. Based out of Dandenong in Melbourne, they're a family-owned company that's been trading since 2000, and have recently added Adam Hall lighting brand Cameo to their stable, along with Proel and Axiom audio lines.

James' day-to-day is at the frontline of sales, support, and customer service, looking after current customers while drumming up new business. As such, he deals with installations, integrators, hire, and production customers, granting him a broad view across most of the industry, in most of its disciplines. We sat down with James to get a view on that state of the market just over half-way through this year, and what he sees as driving demand through the next.

### Install and Integration

"Demand has been good all through winter," reports James. "The mid-tier integrators that we deal with that typically work with customers such as churches and gyms have been very busy. The bigger integrators have been working on a lot of town halls, and integrated communication solutions for councils and business, in both new builds and refits."

James sees the majority of refits being driven by a demand for front-end usability and back-end automation. "The jobs that are ripping out most of their old infrastructure and replacing their back-end are doing so because they want the user interface at the front-end modernised," explains James. "This is in the form of iPads and touch screens for the end-user, triggering automated processes in the background. In terms of our products, this means something like an LD Systems ZONE X 1208 DSP going in. It's got 12 analog ins, 8 analog outs, Dante, and eight GPIOs. It's programmed and controlled from Xilica Designer software, and compatible with Xilica

X Touch user interfaces. From the integrator's perspective, that's an environment that's easy to programme. The ZONE X even comes with Xilica Designer templates that are easy to modify and add to."

Having your installation run on an IP backbone is now par for the course. "Network audio connectivity is a given now, and Dante is very important," observes James. "Almost every install we've been involved with lately has the system processor or other devices outputting through a network connection to the amplifiers, and occasionally to the loudspeakers themselves. From our side, we've got the LD Systems I IPA 424 T four channel power amp that you can fit with an X-EDA1 expansion card that gives you Dante and control over Ethernet. That gives you 4 x 240 W @ 4 Ohm or 70V/100V, switchable per channel, which is great for flexibility and scalability."

Going fully IP is making life easier for the integrator, and for James. "AV over IP is much easier now than it used to be," remarks James. "In a lot of cases now, it's plug'n'play. There's a lot less tech support and programming support requested from our end. Everyone pre-programmes the gear before going on site, so if there is any tech support needed, it's in the relative calm of the office. In addition, IP cuts down on cable, clutter, and cost, while giving you scalability for future upgrades without much disruption. Integrators also love remote support and monitoring; get an email that there's a fault, and tunnel in through a port without leaving your chair."

## Hire and Production

AVECorp's three main lighting brands are Beamz, Chauvet DJ, and Cameo, each offering different price points and capabilities for different market sectors. James sees battery operated, wirelessly controlled fixtures as a major driver of the current market. "Battery powered wireless lights are proving very popular, and we're selling a lot of them into production," imparts James. "They're getting more powerful, and easier to use. The ease-of-setup and cost savings in labour are undeniable. We're just about to land the new Cameo ZENIT B200 battery powered, IP65 rated outdoor wash light. It runs 21 15W RGBW LEDs and puts out 6,600 lumens. Cameo say it can run for more than 20 hours on a charge."

IP65 ratings are another market driver, with production companies replacing their 'indoor' fixtures with lights that can do both. "It's not just about surviving outdoors," notes James. "We've got nightclub customers replacing their movers with IP65 versions because the need to service them diminishes greatly. They don't get choked with dust, or particles from hazers. We're seeing fixtures like the Chauvet DJ Intimidator Spot 360X IP moving head going into this space, which is all about inventory simplification and less servicing."

On the audio side, James observes that production companies buy to maximise their ROI, seeking out products that are good

quality, well-made, and durable. "A good example is the ICOA range from LD Systems," offers James. "They're powered, coaxial, and can be used as mains or monitors; it's really easy to rotate the horn 90 degrees. There's range of 12"s and 15"s (plus a 15" and an 18" sub) with different options, including Bluetooth, which is great for dry hires. They also go into installs, with their range of brackets."

Just added to AVECorp's range are line array options from Proel under the Axiom brand. "Axiom have the dual 6.5" AX2065 and dual 10" AX2010A in powered or passive, and the powered AX800ANEO dual 8". The dual 8" is proving popular in club installs, with multiple venues in Sydney taking it on. The clubs like to have a bit more power and headroom on hand in their audio systems than they usually need. Better to have it and not need it than the other way around, I always say!"

Speaking of line arrays, James and the AVECorp gang are currently in the middle of a national roadshow to launch LD System's MAILA (Modular All-Round Intelligent Line-Array). It's a scalable system made that is built from four units; an amp module, a top box running 5x1" titanium tweeters, a low-mid powered column with 4x 6.5" woofers, and a dual 15" sub. The roadshow kicked off in Brisbane on 22 August, swung through on 29 August, visits Melbourne on Tuesday 5 September and finishes in Perth on Wednesday 20 September.

James Pavvey – Business Development Victoria – AVECorp



"I first heard MAILA at PL+S in Frankfurt," recalls James. "I'm quite critical of mid-range performance in PA systems. I really concentrated on listening to the snare crack, and MAILA punched me in the chest. It's a really lovely, powerful PA and scales as small or as large as you need it. For the roadshow, in each city, we're doing an AVECorp tradeshow from 3 pm, then the MAILA launch at 6, complete with live band."

More info at [www.avecorp.com.au](http://www.avecorp.com.au)

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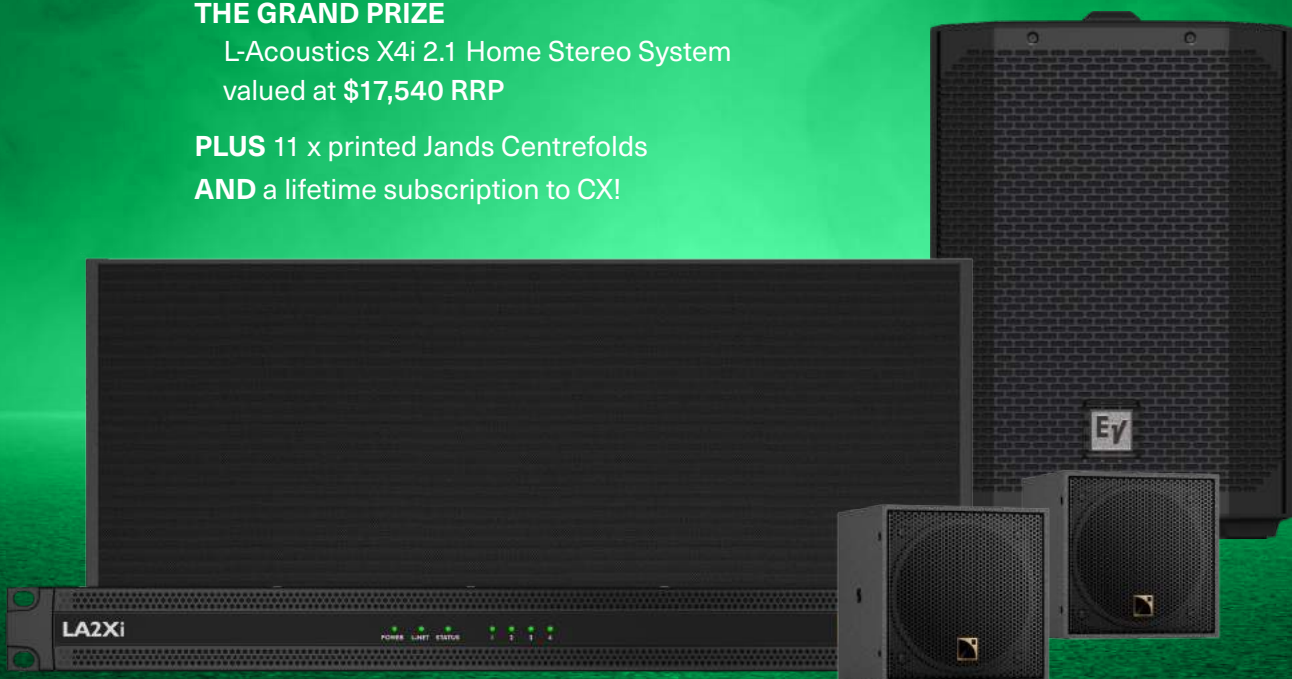
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## Robe T2 Profiles Make No Noiz for West Australian Ballet Shows



**The first Robe T2 Profiles to arrive in Australia were snapped up by Perth-based lighting and visual rental and production company What Noiz and made their debut on the lighting rig designed by Matt Marshall for West Australian Ballet's compelling "As One: Ballet at the Quarry".**

This was performed as part of the 2021 Perth Festival at the Quarry Amphitheatre, a magnificent outdoor rock quarry in Perth's coastal suburb of City Beaches.

What Noiz's founder and owner Benjamin Fry explained that they had been looking for a powerful LED profile for some time. They loved what they saw in terms of features and functionality with Robe's T1, but wanted something with just a bit more brightness, and then along came the new T2 Profile just at the right moment! These have replaced the company's older discharge profile moving lights from another manufacturer.

"It's a beautiful fixture," stated Ben, adding that he was considering both the T2 and Robe's FORTE, however it was the complete silence of the T2 Profile, designed from the ground up for theatre and other performance events that tipped the scales as it is one of their primary sectors.

He mentioned that the quietness is also ideal for servicing high-end corporate events and other spoken presentation scenarios where no noise is essential.

Additionally, he appreciated all the subtleties and elegance of the T2, complete with CMY colour control and DataSwatch filters offering exact pre-programmed colours via Robe's RCC (Robe Colour Calibration) algorithm plus the extremely flexible 2,700 – 8,000 degrees K variable colour temperature.

The purchase was completed in time for the West Australian Ballet's 2021 summer season with its three dynamic works combining ballet and contemporary dance.

"4Seasons" was a stirring existing work choreographed by Natalie Wier; "Heartache" was a collaborative re-working of six different pieces delivered by the

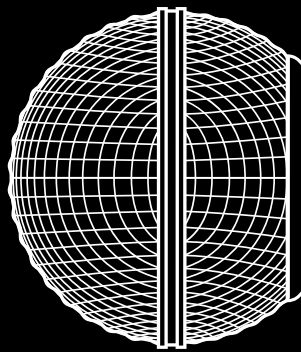
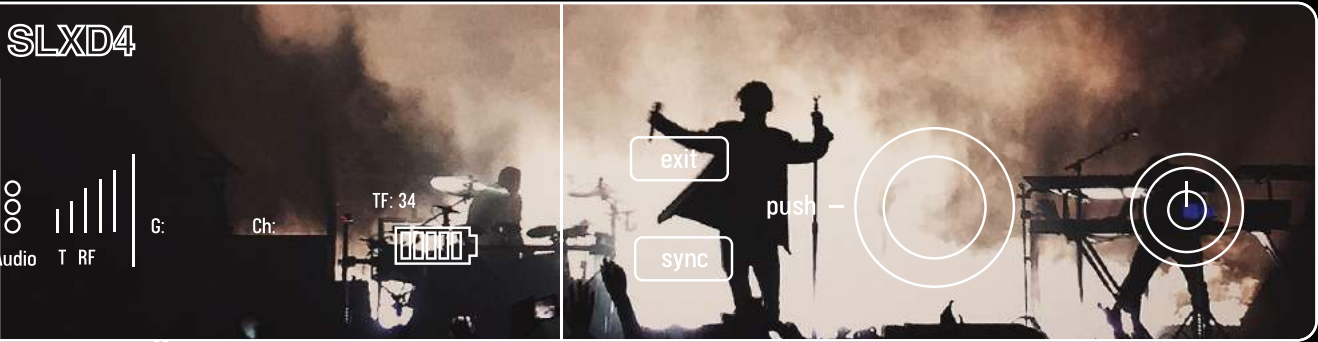
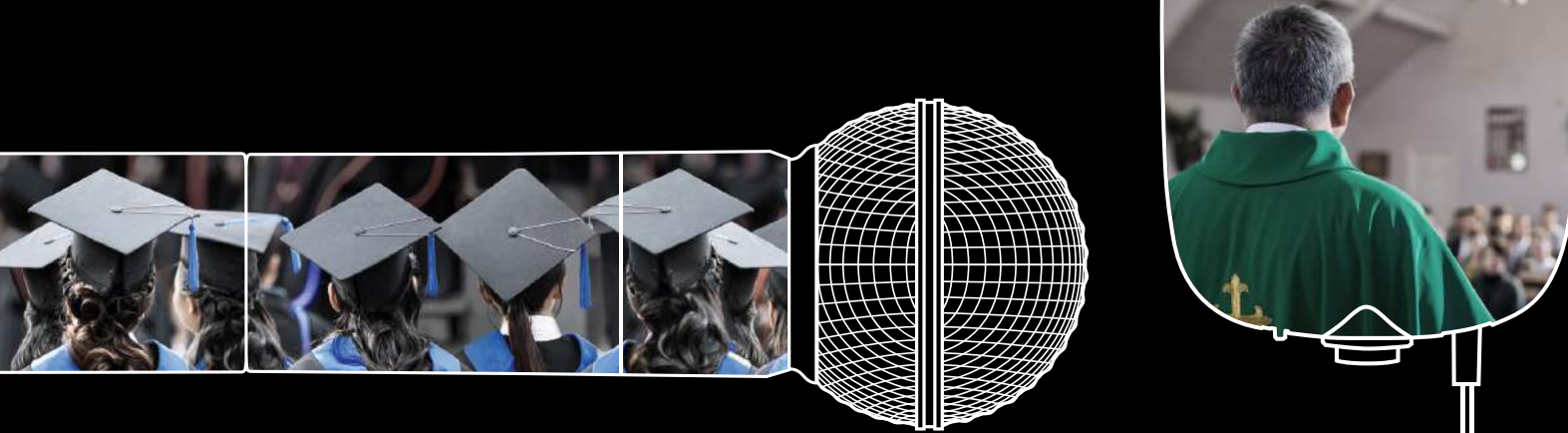
Company dancers and artistic team, with a concept created by artistic director Aurélien Scannella and principal rehearsal director and artistic associate Sandy Delasalle; and "Moment of Joy" was a brand-new piece presented by West Australian Ballet principal dancer Dayana Hardy Acuña and soloist Juan Carlos Osma.

This exciting outdoor venue, formerly a working limestone quarry, dates to colonial times, and West Australian Ballet is the resident company there every Perth Festival season.

The Company's lighting designer Matt Marshall was delighted to be the first in Australia to use the T2s, having already used the T1 Profiles on various projects.

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# MIRROR



# MIRROR

## Lightware's UBEX AV-Over-IP Solution gets Immersive with Novatech

**“Amazing, playful, awesome experience for the entire family! You come out feeling incredible joy! Really engaging and interactive!” - these are just a few comments from those who visited Mirror Mirror, an immersive art experience by Moment Factory held by Illuminate Adelaide as part of their incredible creative installation in the heart of the city of Adelaide from June 28th to July 30th 2023.**

With Illuminate Adelaide, South Australia's winter turns into a season to bring leading local and global digital artists to Adelaide using

technology to activate city-wide interactive immersive experiences. For Mirror Mirror, a custom pavilion, 18m x 65m x 9m, was erected in the centre of the CBD in Victoria Square to create a custom home for the activation.

The immersive art experience Mirror Mirror was created and produced by Moment Factory. With their breathtaking content across 'Forest of Echoes' through 'Intelligent Window' down to 'River of Now', and further into 'Mirrors of Tomorrow', the team from Moment Factory engaged each visitor in an individual dazzling experience allowing people to unleash their imagination and rekindle their wonder and love for beauty within themselves and the surrounds.

Novatech Creative Event Technology offered a technical solution for Mirror Mirror in a collaborative partnership with Moment Factory & Illuminate Adelaide. Novatech supplied key items of the project's equipment including audio, lighting and vision elements working hand-in-hand with Moment Factory's custom

media servers and world leading interactive technology. For content delivery, Novatech confidently opted for Lightware's technology, tested by years of the most challenging live event installations. They deployed Lightware's UBEX AV-over-IP solution for transport of signals from the central control room across to six various zones.

Each zone had varying visual elements provided via various technology formats including projection using Barco UDM & UDX projectors, ROE Visual LED screens, and LED strips that were all running custom, interactive content. Each zone relied on UBEX devices delivering signal directly to the equipment both suspended 10m in the air and at various spots around the Pavilion. UBEX devices were used for all network control as well as primary and backup signals, which provided the flexibility and reliability required for an event running over five weeks. It also allowed for multiple uses of the fibre optic backbone that Novatech ran around the venue.

With Lightware's 18 units of UBEX-PRO20-HDMI-F120, Novatech ensured delivery of uncompressed content at zero latency and smooth integration with network equipment which spared them running a separate network. All multiple installation zones across the setup were remotely managed and controlled via the network for all parameters including powering on/off, real-time device monitoring and management as well as using to tweaking focus across the projection blends given the temporary nature of the structure. Using the UBEX'S dual network ports, each being utilised on a dedicated network switch, Novatech provided complete redundancy for all signals (should the primary source fail).

Leko Novakovic, Managing Director of Novatech Creative Event Technology says:

**“UBEX has changed the game in the large-scale signal delivery for our larger projects. Over the past four years, we’ve deployed them on a variety of sites including demanding outdoor events sites across Australia. We had confidence that UBEX was the best choice for 100% reliable and versatile delivery of critical program, control and content signals for a long-running activation.”**

For more information on the award-winning UBEX, please check out: [www.lightware.com/product-families/ubex](http://www.lightware.com/product-families/ubex)



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Sky Racing Queensland's new Panasonic PTZ in use

# Picking a Winner

Sky Racing Queensland chooses Panasonic professional 4K and premium PTZ broadcast cameras and solutions

Sky Racing Queensland broadcasts thousands of thoroughbred, greyhound and harness races each year taking Queensland racing to TAB venues, gaming apps, homes and international audiences. Recently the company had a requirement to upgrade all of their OB facilities, including outside broadcast, production and speciality cameras. Having carried out a comprehensive assessment, evaluation and due diligence of available options, Sky Racing decided a range of Panasonic professional broadcast cameras, equipment and solutions would best meet their requirements.

Sky Racing Queensland's Racing Outside Broadcast Manager Mark Bonnici explained, "Our core business is to provide outside broadcast facilities for race meetings around Queensland. We also add hosts to most of our TAB Provincial and Metropolitan race days, both at the meetings and remotely and cover special events such as barrier draws and awards evenings. We have a diverse range of shooting requirements, and our old fleet of cameras and copper-based infrastructure was aging so we engaged with Mojo Media Solutions to start the evaluation process for replacement options. When all was said and

done, we felt the level of technology, options and features with Panasonic professional broadcast cameras and their related solutions was far and away better than any other brand we tested."

Sky Racing also took the new camera refresh as a catalyst to transition from copper/triax-based production to IP/fibre-based production. This in turn was part of the company's wider plan to create a remote centralised production hub in Brisbane which would better enable them to take advantage of the costs, benefits and flexibility of an IP/fibre-based infrastructure.

Bonnici continued, "Moving to an IP/fibre-based workflow gives us improved human resources and equipment efficiencies by utilising ST-2110 and other IP based workflows like SRT and NDI to centrally locate our core operations. This means we now only need to transport essential equipment and personnel to the race meetings."

In total, Sky Racing purchased multiple Panasonic AK-UC4000GSJ 4K studio cameras, AJ-CX4000GJ 4K field production camcorders with Videosys wireless backs, AW-UE100KEJ 4K premium PTZ cameras. They also plan to

add ST-2110 enabled PTZ cameras in the Hub, enabling a true end-to-end digital workflow.

Bonnici added, "After evaluating various camera brands and options we decided on Panasonic cameras because they provide wonderful picture quality, outstanding reliability, great value for money and Panasonic is able to offer a complete IP workflow across the studio cameras, field production cameras and PTZ cameras with standard Remote Operation Panels (ROPs)."

Sky Racing also evaluated Panasonic's PanaPod camera elevation units to potentially be paired with their AW-UE160W/K premium PTZ cameras in the future as Jamie Ford, Sky Racing's Technical Operations Manager explained, "The shots from the AW-UE100KEJ and PanaPod were so smooth that we were getting calls from our Sydney office asking us just how we managed to get a camera jib and operator in such a small area! The PanaPod is compact and all the kit could all be controlled from the AW-RP150GJ controller and included foot pedals, which was particularly easy for our operators to manage. The ease of installation across the entire Panasonic workflow is very attractive to us. An OB environment can be unforgiving at the best of times; however, we could easily add these products into our workflow without any issues whatsoever."

Sky Racing's new AK-UC4000GSJ studio cameras feature a large 4K sensor with

**"The Panasonic studio and field production cameras combined with the premium PTZ cameras have enabled the team to get more creative with the shot selection without having to sacrifice on the picture quality or video performance."**



high-speed output in HD mode which the company uses to simultaneously output 4K via 12G-SDI and HD knowing that when required the IP/12G/3G Interface Kit AK-NP600G – an optional accessory - can be equipped for ST-2110 support.

The new AK-HRP1010 ROPs are paired with the AK-UC4000GSJ 4K studio cameras and 4K premium PTZ cameras for control and paint. When paired with the AJ-CX4000

4K field production camcorders the AK-HRP1010GJ run remotely via a Videosys/DTC wireless back, so they control and paint the AJ-CX4000 cameras just like they are studio cameras, but with the seamless freedom of being completely wireless.

Sky Racing have also combined the AK-UC4000GSJ 4K studio cameras and AJ-CX4000GJ 4K field production cameras with their AW-UE100 premium PTZ cameras

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to open up a range of shots that were not possible before.

Bonnici said, "The Panasonic studio and field production cameras combined with the premium PTZ cameras have enabled the team to get more creative with the shot selection without having to sacrifice on the picture quality or video performance.

The combination of these cameras with IP control also gives us the flexibility to address all of our shooting requirements, both local and remote, so we can decide which configuration best suits the activity of the day. Our ROP set-up gives us the freedom to move operators with the AJ-CX4000GJ camera virtually anywhere at any time during an event. The wireless connection via the Videosys backs means there is constant connection so the cameras can be colour adjusted while the operator is moving or setting up for the next shot."

Ford added, "One feature of the AK-UCU600ESJ CCUs for the AK-UC4000GSJ studio cameras that stood out for us is that we could simultaneously get 4K, HD and high-speed outputs and thus easily provide feeds for our various requirements. This allowed us to have super slow motion and standard HD workflows from the same CCU at the same time with spectacular results and all without the need for external conversion, which was a real gamechanger for us."

As Bonnici mentioned, Sky Racing uses all of their new Panasonic Studio, ENG and PTZ

cameras for live racing, live studio production and ENG production shoots including the famous Magic Millions and QLD Winter Carnival Race Days. They also typically race 6-7 days a week across multiple venues throughout all of Queensland.

Their current workflow while the Hub is being built is based around live horse racing where they have multiple OB cameras and ENG cameras operating via an OB facility, with the new premium PTZ cameras used in their studio environment or for enhanced camera options on-site.

It's clear that Mark Bonnici and the Sky Racing team are very pleased and impressed with their new Panasonic cameras as he concluded, "As I mentioned, in our testing phase we felt Panasonic cameras excelled far beyond any other brand of cameras in regard to value for money. They give us class leading picture quality, excellent skin tones and are built to be reliable when used in harsh OB operating conditions. The real wow factor with these Panasonic cameras though is the picture quality. The pictures are just amazing. As a result and since using the Panasonic cameras, we now feel our production values and quality are as good if not better than any others in the market. The fact that Panasonic is also able to offer a complete IP workflow across all of our new cameras with common operation panels enables us to be more innovative, take our production values to the next level and is simply the icing on the cake."



The AK-UC4000GSJ 4K in use



The AK-UC4000GSJ 4K in use



Sky Racing Queensland's new Panasonic Connect AK-UC4000GSJ 4K studio camera

# AV Stumpfl screens for Greta Van Fleet



AV Stumpfl's industry-standard Monoblox projection screens helped deliver visual impact for Dreams in Gold, the latest, critically acclaimed world tour by Grammy-winning rock revivalists Greta Van Fleet.

The Dreams in Gold tour, in support of Greta Van Fleet's acclaimed 2021 album *The Battle at Garden's Gate*, kicked off in the band's home state of Michigan in March 2022 and concluded at the Golden 1 Center in Sacramento, California, on 28th March 2023.

For the final North American leg of the tour, Missouri-based Gateway Studios & Production Services (GSPS) provided a 4K video production package comprising equipment from Ross Video, Panasonic, Canon, Fujifilm (Fujinon lenses) and Barco (4K projectors). GSPS also supplied projection screens for the shows, choosing Monoblox projection surfaces and frames from its existing inventory of AV Stumpfl screens.

Andy Gerber, president of production services for GSPS, says it was a "bittersweet" moment to see Dreams in Gold come to an end, having "supported the tour with video since last August", but praises the work of the GSPS video team, who used all the AV tools at their disposal to deliver an electrifying production worthy of the band's brand of "classic rock and roll at its finest" (concert review, 8th March 2023, QRO).



"GSPS rear projected the video content, with a throw distance of between 11–20m."

For the Dreams in Gold tour, the 671cm x 377cm Monoblox screens were used for IMAG purposes, allowing the band to be visible to the crowd even in large arenas such as the 19,000-capacity Golden 1 Center, the 19,000-cap. AT&T Center in San Antonio, Texas, and the 21,500-cap. AMALIE Arena in Tampa, Florida (which Greta Van Fleet played on 5th November and 10th March, respectively). Gerber explains that GSPS rear projected the video content, with a throw distance of between 11–20m depending on the size and lay-out of the venue.

Manufactured in Austria, AV Stumpfl's lightweight, portable Monoblox displays are the mobile projection screen of choice for the world's leading rental-staging companies.

Monoblox offers users easy handling, a quick set-up, low operating costs, and great image quality. It ships with a variety of different surface types, as well as an industry-leading five-year warranty.

"We had a blast on the Dreams in Gold tour providing our 4K video production package to one of the most exciting bands in rock'n'roll today," comments Gerber. "When we were also asked to supply projection screens for the tour, it was a no-brainer that we'd turn to our stock of Monoblox, whose reputation for ease of use, superior build quality and high durability means it is rightly regarded as a standard in the live touring industry."

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

# FALL OUT BOY



## Visuals Fly High With Hippotizer

Fire blasts, frenzy and rock 'n' roll bombast is bolstering American emo-pop-punkers Fall Out Boy's current US tour, which is playing amphitheatres across the country backed with LED and projection driven by Green Hippo Hippotizer Boreal+ MK2 Media Servers.

Screen content is guiding the audience through the hitlist set via colour, with strong orange content for the daytime and cooler blues, greens, and purples for the night time scenes. The Boreal+ MK2 Media Servers are running pre-made content and Notch Blocks as well as live feed for the IMAG screens, with one live and one as backup.

BAFTA and Billboard Award-nominated creative directors, TAWBOX, consisting of London-based visionaries Amber Rimell and Bronski, have created a theatrical show for the band as they tour to support their 2023 album, *So Much (for) Stardust*. It sees an array of high-production-values pyrotechnics and effects alongside the visuals and live feed IMAG action to create a truly cinematic experience. The TAWBOX team created all visual content, with Notch Blocks provided by Pixels and Noise.

Chicagoan production designers at So Midwest, Inc. delivered both lighting and video design, production design and additional cameras and video infrastructure processing. "We are returning to this tour as the lighting designer after our successful previous work with Fall Out Boy," says So Midwest's Connor Sullivan. "The band wanted to step away from a big LED surface for this tour, so we created visual staging that was focused on a modest

2m x 2m LED screen placed centre of our midstage proscenium. The creative team opted for more practical scenic looks with softgoods and set pieces, and the LED 'cartouche' – the central element of a proscenium arch in most venues - was sort of the meter on where we were in our show. We stepped between two themes, night and day, and as we processed through each scene in the show the screen served to keep us in that realm."

House IMAG screen are being used on most shows for the live stage feed, with other venues opting for projection. "Because of the size and involvement of the LED screen, I was looking for something that was reliable and something I wouldn't have to fuss over every day, but still had enough juice to also process our IMAG and add Notch over the top," Sullivan continues. "The Boreals held strong and were consistent throughout the whole tour."



The Boreal+ MK2 machines were also utilised for Notch content to the IMAG screens for one of the openers. "I was hammering the Boreal+ MK2 hard with processing and they still held their own with content playback and Notch running."

Sullivan kept close contact with Green Hippo's product specialist Nick Spencer throughout the tour, who helped the team get the Hippotizer-driven visuals "off the ground" before being on call for technical expertise. "He is a saint for his patience and knowledge," adds Sullivan.

The current tour is playing venues across the US and Canada, taking in venues including Chicago's Wrigley Field, LA's BMO Stadium, and the Budweiser Stage in Toronto. A major tour of Europe starts in October.





## *Brompton Technology Wins Emmy Award*

**Brompton Technology has been recognised by the Television Academy with an Emmy Award for Outstanding Achievement in Engineering, Science & Technology. The Emmy was awarded for its Tessera SX40 LED video processor, which has played a crucial role in the widespread adoption of LED screens for virtual production and elevated the storytelling process through its impact on how television programs are created.**

The Television Academy named Brompton Technology's founders Richard Mead (CEO) and Chris Deighton (CTO), alongside Director of Engineering Adrian Jeakins and Engineering Manager Evangelos Apostolopoulos, as the core team responsible for the Tessera SX40. Since its debut in 2018, the SX40 has played a crucial role in the widespread adoption of LED for virtual production in the television industry, and has been used across many of the most popular and technologically advanced television series in recent years, including: The Mandalorian, House of the Dragon, The Book of Boba Fett, Westworld, Foundation, Our Flag Means Death, and Star Trek: Strange New Worlds, among others.

"The entire Brompton team is incredibly thrilled and humbled to receive such a prestigious award from our industry peers, and for the recognition of the vital role that LED processing plays for in-camera visual effects," commented Mead. "It is a demanding medium that aims to recreate reality within a studio, and that is exactly the kind of challenge that Brompton Technology has always sought to meet. Our mission is to deliver the best possible image quality, breadth of functionality, usability, and reliability in every product we build."

With a long legacy and stellar reputation in LED processing for live events and concert touring, Brompton brought its extensive experience to support the pioneers of in-camera visual effects. The LED processor's role is to faithfully reproduce the creative team's intended visual content on the LED panels, to be captured in-camera, without any visual artifacts that would destroy the illusion of realism. Brompton's colour accuracy and deep understanding of how LED panels and cameras interact, were the foundation for an ever-expanding toolset that has helped establish in-camera visual effects as a mainstream filmmaking technique.

Emmy Award-winning lighting designer and virtual production specialist Peter Canning noted that in television and film, "it is all about getting the LED screen as close to reality as possible, which is where the Tessera SX40 is perfect. It is the one part of our pipeline which has never let us down."

Since the Tessera SX40's launch, the Brompton team has continued to develop a variety of improvements, available via free software upgrades, keeping ahead of the curve as the industry's gold standard for colour accuracy and on-camera visual performance.

As virtual production has become more widely adopted, specific features were also designed to address common challenges facing directors and cinematographers. Some of the company's key Tessera software features include ShutterSync, which allows the refresh of the LED screen to be tuned to the preferred camera settings; Extended Bit Depth, which improves the dynamic range and low brightness performance of LED panels; and 3D LUT import, for advanced colour control and grading. Together these continued advancements ensure the greatest possible flexibility and collaboration for the creative team, enabling them to focus on the storytelling rather than the technology.

**The 75th annual Engineering, Science & Technology Emmy Awards will be presented on October 18, 2023.**

For additional information and the full list of winners, please visit the Television Academy's website: [www.emmys.com/awards/emmys/engineering-emmys](http://www.emmys.com/awards/emmys/engineering-emmys)

# Sometimes it all gets too much...



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# Meyer Sound PANTHER

## Carries Dead & Company



Oracle Park, San Francisco, CA

## through the Final Chapter of a Musical Epic

### The Grateful Dead's Enduring Legacy Intertwines with Meyer Sound Systems

By any measure, the numbers for the Dead & Company Final Tour of 2023 are impressive. Although among the top-grossing acts since its first tour in 2015, with this year's outing the band shattered all of their previous totals. Across 28 shows in 19 cities, according to Billboard Box Score, Dead & Company grossed \$114.7 million and sold 845,000 tickets.

However, the magnitude of this final leg of "the long, strange trip" must be measured by more than hard numbers. It marked the coda of a resilient cultural and sociological

phenomenon launched by the Grateful Dead that has spanned nearly six decades and three generations. Appropriately, the tour's significance as a milestone of Americana was recognized in a lavishly illustrated 2,500-word feature in The New York Times.

As has been the case since the outset, Dead & Company was again accompanied by a Meyer Sound reinforcement system provided by UltraSound, LLC, and for the second year, the core of the system was powered by Meyer Sound PANTHER large-format linear line array loudspeakers.

As with last year's tour, the PANTHER-based system adapted to a mix of large venues, in this case, one indoor arena, one college football stadium, nine MLB baseball stadiums, and 14 large outdoor pavilions. Each venue type required significant adaptations of the base system, but fortunately, the relatively light

weight and compact size of the PANTHER loudspeakers made the changes quicker and easier.

"The change from LEO family boxes to PANTHER came in particularly handy for the delay towers," says Derek Featherstone, Tour Director/FOH mixer for Dead & Company from the beginning and also CEO of UltraSound. "The audio delay towers are limited in total weight capacity, but with PANTHER we were able to hang more cabinets out there for better coverage in the back rows of stadiums."

The main system for stadium shows comprised four main PANTHER arrays, two front and two side, each with 14 PANTHER-L long-throw loudspeakers and 4 PANTHER-W wide coverage loudspeakers.

"This year, we made a change and split the main and side hangs," notes Featherstone. "In the past, we would keep them relatively close

together, but this time we put them offstage of the video wall. This gave us a more consistent level across the floor. Also, we added a six-box LEO array offstage of the side hangs in order to get better coverage in the far extent of stadiums."

Deep bass power was propelled by dual, flown end-fire arrays of 11 - split 5 and 6 - 1100-LFC low-frequency control elements. On the ground were nine 700-HP subwoofers and ten LYON-W loudspeakers for front fill. Delay towers for stadium shows were loaded with either PANTHER or LYON loudspeakers, drawn from UltraSound's own inventory on the West Coast or cross-rented from DBS Audio for East Coast shows. The band's foldback system included eight MJF-210 stage monitor loudspeakers plus two each MJF-212 monitors, 1100-LFC elements, JM-1P, and UPJ-1P loudspeakers.

The stellar audio quality of Dead & Company concerts has helped build the band's following, and the fan base was exultant for the final tour. Postings on the Relix website include effusive comments like "best sound of any show I've ever been to," "noticeably fantastic sound" and "the sound was perfect at all spots in the stadium I went around to listen."



Folsom Field, Boulder, CO

Featherstone shares credit for audience satisfaction with the entire UltraSound crew: System Engineer Michal Kacunel, Monitor Engineers Lonnie Quinn and Ian Dubois, Monitor Tech Reilly Williamson, PA Techs Sean McAdam and Riley Gajewski, and Delay Tech Erik Swanson. The audio recording tech was Ross Harris.

As the one principally responsible for bringing music out to the audience, Derek Featherstone inherits the mantle of audio/touring legends like Owsley "Bear" Stanley, Dan Healy, and John Cutler. "All of these people kept pushing to make the band sound better and better," says Featherstone. "The band welcomed this, of course, and in my case, I really



Oracle Park, San Francisco, CA

appreciate working with a client that genuinely values high-end audio and supports our advancements in that department.”

The Grateful Dead and subsequent iterations of the original band are connected to UltraSound and Meyer Sound in a symbiotic relationship unique in the industry. “Meyer Sound always has listened closely to the needs of the touring band, as well as the packaging and durability needs of UltraSound,” says Featherstone. “The equipment has to sound great yet also reliably withstand the rigors of the road. For years UltraSound has been in the middle of this product development relationship, and Meyer Sound always has been good about addressing any items that would benefit from improvement.”

Looking back on his years with Dead & Company, Featherstone has a sense of completion but not of finality. “It has been great to be part of it,” he says. “Certainly, I did not expect this level of success or the duration. It’s hard to speculate what comes next, but I know these guys love to play and are far from done performing as individuals. As for the group... who knows?”

Company founders John and Helen Meyer, who attended the final shows in San Francisco, celebrated their past relationships but also looked forward to new possibilities.

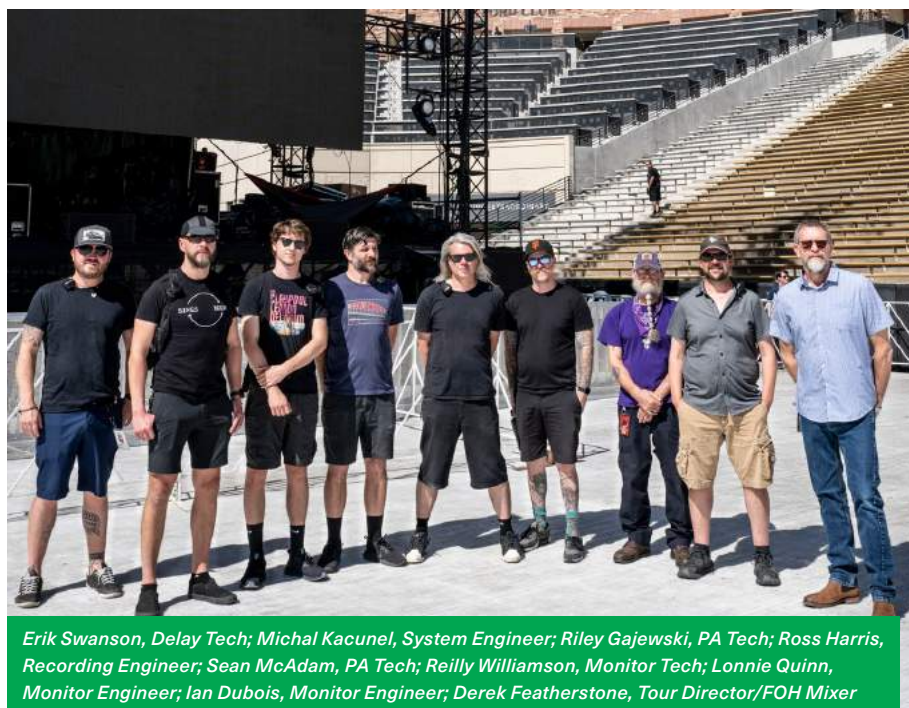
**“This final tour closes an important chapter in the story of the Dead in its many forms,” says Executive Vice President Helen Meyer. “But it’s not the end of the book. There’s still more to come, with the people and the music.”**



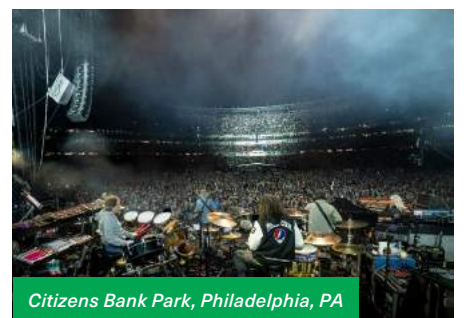
Folsom Field, Boulder, CO



(L-R) Derek Featherstone, Mickey Hart, Helen Meyer, John Meyer



Erik Swanson, Delay Tech; Michal Kacunel, System Engineer; Riley Gajewski, PA Tech; Ross Harris, Recording Engineer; Sean McAdam, PA Tech; Reilly Williamson, Monitor Tech; Lonnie Quinn, Monitor Engineer; Ian Dubois, Monitor Engineer; Derek Featherstone, Tour Director/FOH Mixer

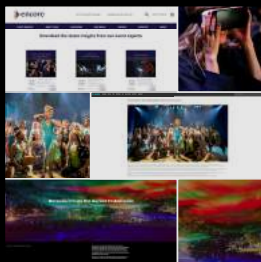


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# WINTER SOLSTICE FOR ASTERA

**'SOLSTICE: Reflections on Winter Light' is a multimedia and meditative art experience celebrating the shortest, darkest day of the year, created by MASARY Studios from Boston, and presented at Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge and Watertown, Massachusetts.**

It started as a small two-day installation idea in 2020 during the pandemic and has grown rapidly and organically to become a hugely popular and accessible 10-day annual public art festival. Visitors engage with the magic and ephemeral beauty of lighting and sound and its relation to the algorithms, mystery, and energies at work in the greater universe.

MASARY Studio's Sam Okerstrom-Lang initially needed "high quality and durable kit to withstand tough environmental conditions of New England in the winter," so when their technical partner AVFX introduced them to Astera in 2020, they were delighted with the results and happy to keep using the brand as the event has expanded.

The 2022 Winter Solstice event, the largest to date, will be repeated in 2023 and 2024, with Sam and his colleagues again looking forward to utilising nearly 250 Astera LED lighting products.

SOLSTICE now embraces three areas of the land that was dedicated as the first 'garden cemetery' in the USA in 1831. The special setting encompasses classical monuments in

an attractive, undulating landscaped terrain, the perfect location for a contemplative and contemporary piece of multi-media art.

All three Winter Solstice areas involve the application of Astera products.

A total of 48 AX3 LiteDrops, 24 AX2s, 80 AX5s and 32 AX7s were deployed in 2022 to light these different parts of the project, including illuminating the interior of the Bigelow Chapel and highlighting the numerous interconnecting pathways around the Cemetery.

'Phase Garden' was a new immersive lighting and sound piece realised for the first time in 2022, scheduled to return this year. MASARY artists Ryan Edwards lead the audio and Touch Designer guru Jeremy Stewart, PhD lead the lighting.

It features 12 towers arranged around a 70-metre mapped circumference, each rigged with four Astera AX5 TriplePARs, two AX7 SpotLites, two AX2 PixelBars, and a loudspeaker.

The lighting fixtures were all chosen for their excellent colour mixing together with the ability

to pixel map the AX2s in particular, creating smooth and fluid vertical animations.

Geometry was a big inspiration for this piece explained Sam, especially with it located in the Asa Gray Garden, a space designed by America's most famous Botanist located just inside the Cemetery's Egyptian Revival Gateway. It serves as a focal point and crescendo of the celestial experience.

Each tower acts as an independent channel of light and sound in the spherical space, with cues triggered by a series of cosmic "events". Guests are free to enter and sit down, dwell, contemplate, move around, etc., and remain for any amount of time.

Phase Garden's lighting and audio is transformed by a series of calculations relating to the different cosmic ratios created by the periodic relationships between the earth, sun, and moon at various and combined scales.

The 'events', which dramatically shift the melodic scale, colour palette and frequency (rhythm) of sound and lighting, are run via a grandMA3 lighting console and an Ableton

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Live interface connected to Touch Designer, the latter creating dedicated mathematical 'hot' zones derived from algorithmic events in the universe. These are compressed and organised for a more direct and intimate connection between their phasing, frequency, and coincidence.

"Visitors can be connected to and reflect on the cosmic rhythms and cycles that transform the seasons; they can feel the power of the cosmic clock that is our earth's solar journey," elucidated Sam.

The Asteras were all run wired – although Sam also appreciates their wireless capabilities – and were completely open to the elements where they were frequently subjected to wind, snow, sleet, rain, and freezing temperatures. Their performance and robustness coupled with the brightness and focusability were "excellent" he affirms.

Phase Garden was a massive hit with the public which is why it is returning for this year's Winter Solstice alongside the other site-specific artworks.

The lit interior architecture of the Bigelow Chapel offered a totally different atmosphere, elegantly lit with AX3s and AX5s set to flickering colours and intensities that complemented a host of the glowing candles which each guest places. Sam particularly likes the Astera amber ranges and the softness and homogeneity of the output.

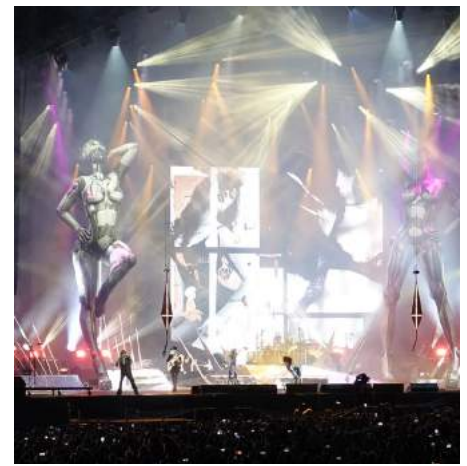
With all these three pieces of light and mixed media art returning in December, Sam hints that, like every living, breathing project, there will be some further "evolution" on all of them.

MASARY Studios is a transdisciplinary artist collective which is creating, reconsidering, reimagining and energising environments through site-specific installations and performance using sound, light, video, and other digital and electronic media.



**"Visitors can be connected to and reflect on the cosmic rhythms and cycles that transform the seasons."**





# Claypaky Xtylos Rock with KISS at Hellfest 2023 in France

One of the biggest heavy metal music festivals in the world, Hellfest recently wrapped its 16th edition in Clisson, France where KISS launched the festival with Claypaky Xtylos and an array of Claypaky fixtures played key roles for other bands.

The four-day festival featured 180 bands performing on six stages in the concert area plus additional outdoor stages. KISS, Iron

Maiden, Motley Crue, and Slipknot headlined as more than 150,000 extreme music fans attended performances, camped out and explored the full Hellfest 2023 experience.

France-based B Live Group has been Hellfest's technical partner from the start of the festival providing lighting for both of the main stages and the Warzone. This year, they chose Claypaky Sharpy X Frames to illuminate Main Stage 2, which hosted the biggest international bands, and Arolla Profile MPs and Sharpys for the Warzone, the stage dedicated to punk bands.

Getting the festival off to an electric start, Lighting Designer Sean "Motley" Hackett

selected Claypaky Xtylos for the two-hour KISS show. The compact beams, equipped with a RGB laser source, were placed on the floor of Main Stage 1 where they gave the show a futuristic dynamic thanks to the fixtures' extremely fast Pan-Tilt movements.

A spectacular set design and a fireworks display ended the KISS concert on a high note. The legendary band is continuing its 'End of the Road' farewell tour, on which they also deploy Xtylos fixtures.

At B Live Group, Cyrille Dupont is the Project Manager and Designer and Sébastien Sacco the Network Manager. Dimatec is Claypaky's lighting distributor in France.

## Are you concerned about your mate's mental health?

**FACT: Most Australian tech crew and roadies have attempted or considered suicide<sup>1</sup>!**

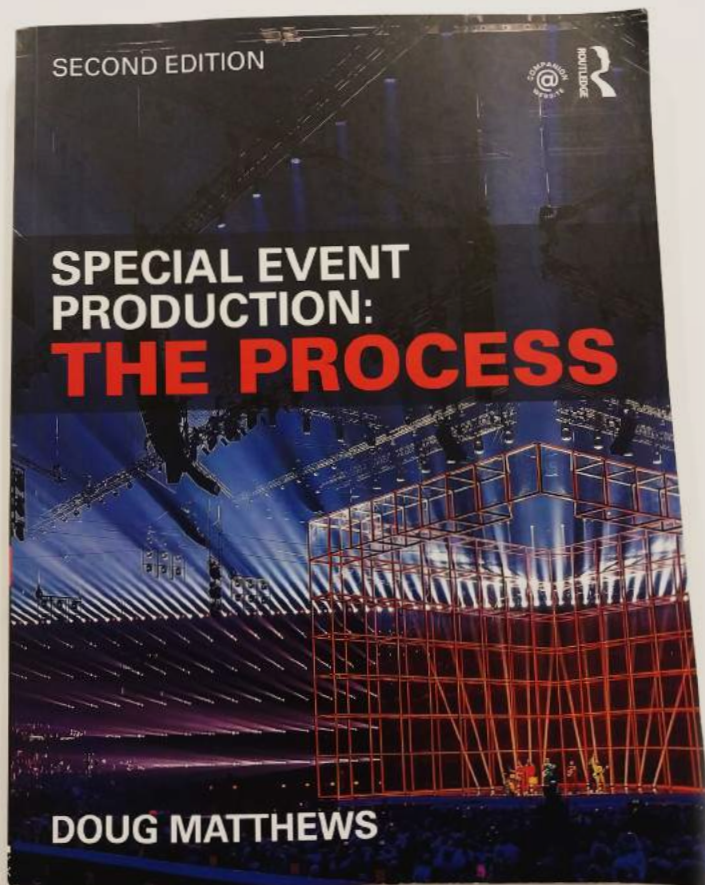
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<sup>1</sup>Passion, Pride, Pitfalls Dec 2014

[www.entertainmentassist.org.au](http://www.entertainmentassist.org.au)

Supporting the mental health of Australian entertainment industry workers



Front Cover

Author: **Doug Mathews**

Number of Pages: **256**

Release Date: **2015**

Cost: **\$103.06 - Amazon**

# Special Event Production: The Process, 2nd edition

## About the book

"A successful event sends a message to the audience in a manner that engages them at an emotional level."

Special Event Production: The Process, by Doug Mathews is the first of a two book series covering the Special Events Industry. Written as a 12-chapter textbook, it serves to analyse the process of Special Event Production. We are only covering the first book in this review. The second book, Special Event Production: The Resources, goes more into more depth on the technical aspects.

Special Event Production: The Process is a rather dense read, focusing on how a special event comes together. It introduces the pieces of the puzzle, how they relate and work together to create a seamless and memorable event.

What the book does well is offer an approach to producing special events and handling their various elements. A few of the topics the book covers include the following:

**Event Design** - Emphasis is given to approaching event production through a marketing lens: "The producer must design the event to sell the owner's message to

the audience using the raw materials at their disposal." Approaching event design from a marketing standpoint has numerous advantages and keeps you in touch with the big picture.

**Budgeting** - "It assists an event manager in keeping control of an event." The approach to budgeting is to effectively treat each event like its own business, with return on investment (ROI) and an eye to making money front and centre.

**Proposals** - "A winning proposal covers all the bases: it is creative, it matches the client's vision and goals, it is unique in presentation, it is timely; and it fits the clients budget." The book dives into proposals, how to present them and how to approach them to win business.

**Contract management** - "A verbal or oral contract is too confusing and is hard to enforce if there is a dispute." Staying on top of your contracts will help you manage the deliverables of the event and the expectations of your client. "There are two main types of contracts involving producers; those between the producer and the client, and those between the producer and suppliers."

**Risk management** - "Clients and audiences demand increasingly spectacular events and

they usually carry correspondingly more risk." Operating in an industry that doesn't really fit the mold of any typical occupation means that a lot of adaption and improvising has to take place. The book also spans out past operational risk, delving into areas such as legal, financial and intellectual property risk management. "Insurance in its different forms is one of the most effective controls to transfer and diminish risk amongst the members of the event and production team."

**Production management** - The production manager and team is responsible for tying all the pieces together. "Production management, also occasionally called technical direction, is the task of integrating all the technical - and many non-technical - event elements."

**Post-event follow up** - "What happens after an event is over can be critical to decisions to hold similar events in the future." Getting appropriate feedback at an appropriate time from the client as well as suppliers gives you the tools and information you need to improve for next time.

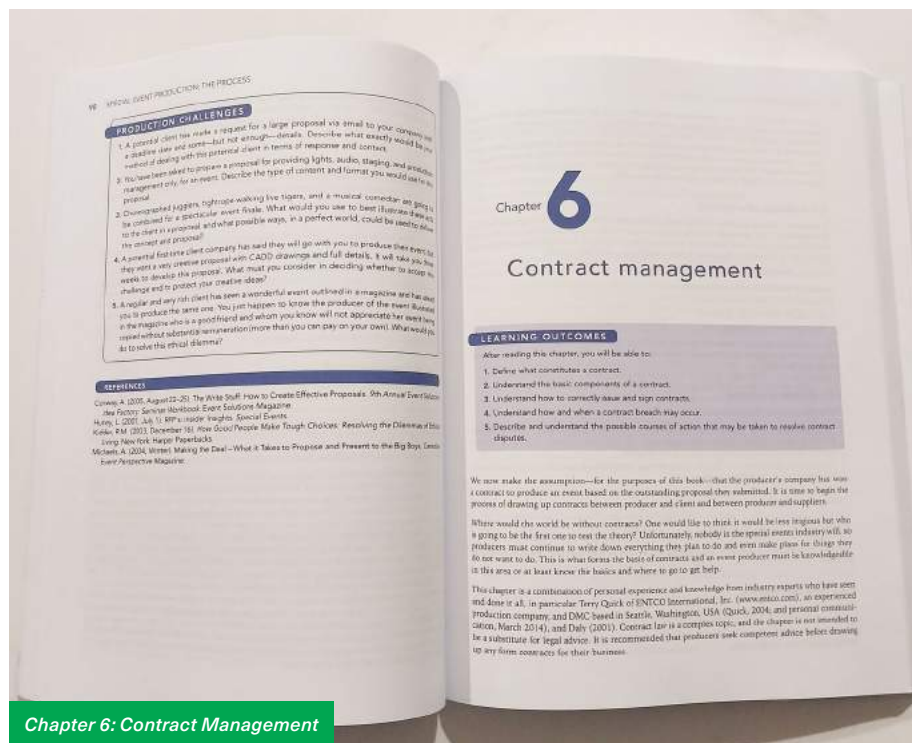
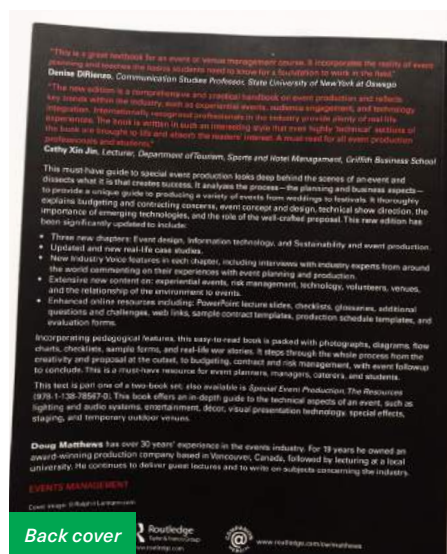
Many more topics are covered in this book. It includes interviews, anecdotes, and templates. It also includes a full list of references at the end of each chapter and a companion website with online resources from the book.

## Who is the book for

This book is for event producers, event managers, event co-ordinators, students of the industry, or anyone wishing to create or be involved in large scale special events. It covers event production from many angles, including how to make a living producing special events. "Producers can earn income either as contractors or as employees. As an employee, a producer does not have to be concerned with profit. However, as an independent contractor, there are two methods that are most often used to obtain a profit: the supplier mark-up method and the hourly fee method."

Who might also benefit from reading this book

Although the book is not written for them specifically, venue managers, production managers/co-ordinators, technical managers/directors would find a copy of this book useful. This book would also be useful for anyone involved or who would like to be involved in the pre-production planning stages.



## Who is this book not for

The book covers more of the pre-production elements of an event. It wouldn't suit technical set up crew, operators or those who show up on the day and make the whole thing happen.

## What I liked about the book

Although the book is written as a textbook, it is not an academic publication of the special events industry. The author practices what he preaches, and this is evident in the writing and the examples given. One thing I really did like was the 250 point master check list at the end.

## How I think the book could have been better

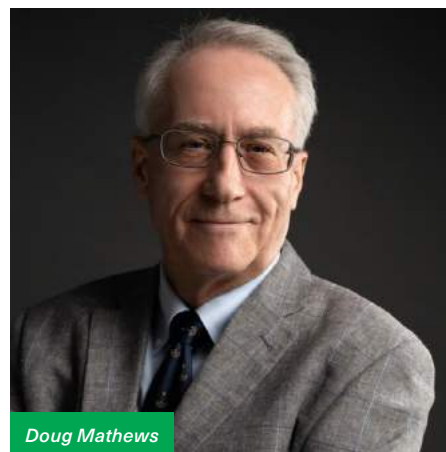
As a reference book that speaks a lot about pre-production, it would have been good to see a few more templates in the appendices. A checklist at the end of each chapter would have been good too, to really enforce the concept of 'The Process'. With that said, the ones they did have in the book were fantastic, and I would have loved to have seen more.

## Verdict

It's a textbook and reads as such. It's not a novel to be read cover to cover in a couple of sittings (although that's what I did). It works best a resource or reference book.

Regardless of what discipline you work in having, reference books on hand is a must for anyone wishing to grow, improve and stay relevant in today's ever changing environment.

This book is well organised, well written, and is a must have for any event producer, event manager, student of the industry, or anyone wishing to be an event producer or event manager.



Doug Mathews

## About the author

"A writer and award-winning special event producer based in Vancouver, Canada, Doug Mathews is the author of five textbooks on how to create special events full of emotion."

## Ratings

Readability/Structure = 7/10

Well-structured and laid out. Not too many breakout boxes but enough to keep you engaged. A tad dry for a book about creating events that evoke emotion, but it passes.

Supporting materials = 7/10

Plenty of citations for those wishing to know more. Appendices hold a wealth of information. Companion website well worth visiting. Photos relevant to text but they didn't do much on their own.

Relevance = 8/10

Foundations and fundamentals of special event production are largely the same in Australia and in North America. Once you start diving into specifics and technicalities of subjects like contract law, OH&S and taxation you start to get a few discrepancies, which is to be expected.

Usefulness = 9/10

A great resource to have handy for future reference.

Value for money = 6/10

Whilst a great book and still largely relevant, it is an eight-year-old paperback book with just over 250 pages selling at over \$100. It's also the first book of a two part series.

Overall  
37/50 = 4 Stars



# ROBE ROBIN SPIKIE



The Robe Robin Spikie is a small, feature packed LED moving head wash/beam. It is powered by a 60W RGBW light source capable of producing 1150 lumens.

The light itself draws 100W, a relatively small amount. For comparison, the Martin Mac 101 draws 123W and has significantly less features than the Spikie. It is powered using a Neutrix True-Con cable with an in and a through, meaning you can daisy chain them for both data and power, saving in cable as well as set up time all while creating a neater set up.

## The light construction

It is a small compact light. It weighs 7.3kg and uses only one clamp, making it very quick

and easy to hang almost anywhere at any orientation. Setting it on the floor is just as easy. You can also hang them close together too if you wish and the head is quite compact. The Spikie measures 408mm x 277mm x 147mm, its small size giving many options and to where and how to use them.

It's also a good-looking fixture. The case has been very well designed and put together. Some real thought has been put into how the fixture itself should look, giving it a real high end feel despite being a small light. Although this doesn't affect how it performs, it does count for something when you consider that a light this size will likely be a lot closer to the audience.

## Optics, Colour, and Brightness

The Robin Spikie outputs 1150 Lumens. Not the brightest in its class, but definitely not the dullest either. Both additive (RGBW – Red, Green, Blue, White) and subtractive (CMY

– Cyan, Magenta, Yellow) colour mixing is available. It features a variable CTO from 2700K through 8000K. It has a virtual colour wheel on board with 66 preset colours to choose from. One thing to note is that the open white does have a purple hue to it. This can be balanced out at the expense of output.

## Features

One of the main features of the light is its infinite pan and infinite tilt. With a zoom range of 4° - 28° it translates to a 7:1 zoom ratio. The front lens has a 110mm diameter which makes for a tight beam. It features a 3-facet circular rotating prism.

LED life expectancy is 50 000 hours. If you run them non-stop, 24 hours a day they should run for 2,083 days or about 5 years and 8 months. If you used them for 10 hours at a time you should get 5,000 gigs out of them, in theory.

Even though it can be opened up with a screwdriver, the Spikie features no user serviceable parts. Simply keep the air filters clean, keep it away from excessive dust, vibration, and moisture and keep the front lens clean. You can attempt to make repairs yourself if you like, though not recommended.

## The Specs

### Source

Light source: 60W RGBW LED

### Optical system

High-efficiency zoom optical system, ratio 7:1

Zoom range: 4° - 28°

Fixture total lumen output:  
1,150 lm (integrating sphere)  
920 lm (goniophotometer)

Light output: 9.270 lx @ 5m

### Dynamic Effects and Features

Colour mixing mode RGBW or CMY

Variable CTO: 2.700K - 8.000K

Virtual Colour Wheel: with 66 preset swatches

Tungsten lamp effect at whites: 2.700 K and 3.200 K (red shift and thermal delay)

Colour rainbow effect with variable speed

MCFE™ - Multi-Coloured Flower Effects

Prism: 3-facet circular rotating prism

Shutter: Electronic with variable speed strobe (max.20 flashes per second)

### Movement

Pan movement range 540° with continuous rotation control

Tilt movement range 360° with continuous rotation control



## Application

The Robe Spikie is a good light that does a lot of things really well. What will make or break it in any particular application is how it is used and what it is used with. It can be used as beams in a nightclub or venue with a lot of smoke and a lower roof. It can be used as an eye candy feature when used en-masse on a TV gig. They can be used in large numbers to frame a LED wall on a corporate show.

Pair them up with lights of a similar size and brightness and they will work well. Put them up against some of the full-size wash/ beam lights out there they will end up being washed out and largely ineffective, at least as part of the backbone of a lighting rig.

Although marketed as a wash/beam fixture, the 4 degree beam seems much more useful as a beam than the 28 degree wash. A number closer to 50 degrees seems more suitable when it comes to wash lights, especially with a light as bright as this one.

## Control and Programming

The Robe Spikie is available in 2 DMX modes; 21 channel and 27 channel. It takes 5 pin DMX input and output, and features an LCD (not LED) display with 4 buttons (Next, Previous, Enter, Escape). It can be run in stand-alone mode. Stand-alone mode also features three editable programs, perfect for high traffic areas such as entry foyers and other areas where the light needs to perform but running DMX is not an option.

Pan and tilt resolution is 16 bit and zoom, RGBW and CMY colour control can be 8 bit or 16 bit.

Wireless DMX is also an option too via the external Robe Wireless CRMX-LB100 module. This module is equipped with the Lumen Radio CRMX module and antenna. CRMX module operates on the 2.4 GHz band.

## Verdict

Robe have built a name for themselves in the industry as a manufacturer of feature packed,

good-looking, high-quality lighting products that are well built and age well. Despite being a small light with a cheaper price tag, the Robin Spikie lives up to its manufacturer's reputation.

At its size and price point it packs a lot of features. The compromise however seems to be light output. I feel as though it could be brighter; something like a 125W RGBWW would give many more options as to how to spec them. However, you may be looking at a bigger, heavier, more expensive light. Approximately four times brighter than the Spikie is the Robe Super Spikie with a 250W RGBW LED engine and gobos.

Weighing up the pros and cons, the trick to getting the most out of the Robe Spikie will all come down to how you spec the light for the space you are in. It's all relative and it also depends what other lights you are using it with.

Product Info: [www.robe.cz](http://www.robe.cz)

Distributor Australia and New Zealand: [jands.com.au](http://jands.com.au)





# VIDEOVERSE

## THE ULTIMATE META

Hey, welcome to CX game review corner. The video in video games is essential to the medium, so today we are taking a look at Videoverse from Kinmoku Games.

In short, it is a game about gaming and the online communities that form around it. Its main theme seems to be exploring the relationships with other people via online forums about a game (or topic) that they all love. It also explores the whole nature of online communication and the nurturing that those communities require to prosper.

It hits a particularly sweet note for me on several levels. When I started gaming 25 years ago, the internet was underway yet still not widespread. The graphical style of Videoverse perfectly mirrors the visual experience of that time, where it is set. The awkward nature of BBS type boards put me off back then, but now they feel kind of nostalgic. This game has nerd-stalgia in abundance.

Although I didn't enjoy the gaming boards of that era, I did get sucked into mountain bike forums in a big way. So much so that I ended up moderating one for a couple of years. I got more than a few flashbacks to this time while playing Videoverse.

### "bringing fans together"

And this is where the meta further overlaps the real world for me. As a still regular gamer, I am

an active member of several Discord servers. Discord is an instant messaging and VoIP social platform and performs cultural functions much like BBS and web forums of yore (the core foundation of Videoverse). The platform is strong in gaming communities, but widely used for other pursuits too.

One in particular - The Ursa Ryan Discord - is a daily hangout for me, where we talk all sorts of stuff around Civilisation 6. The folks there feel like friends, and we regularly get on to all sorts of non-game related topics and discussions as well. I am learning heaps from it.

Best of all, it's incredibly civil. With 10,000+ members, it could easily devolve into a festering snakepit of keyboard warrior trolling but it is kept on track by two main things:

1. good mods, who quickly but firmly keep a lid on any contentious stuff, and
2. the channel owner, @UrsaRyan, sets a good example in all his interactions with members. As the fish rots from the head, so does it fertilise from there.

### "bleeping every bloop"

Meanwhile, back in the narrative driven virtual world of Videoverse, you are encouraged to support the mods and other members, mirroring my own real-world experiences of these environments. One thing that kept standing out is the astute use of notifications, bells, likes and hates that are so much part of the devious emotional hooks behind modern social media platforms. Press X for dopamine hit ... ahhhhhhh.

It also taps into other primal areas of the brain, asking you to choose empathy, indifference or malice. The paths offered apparently differ depending on 'how nice or not' you roleplay the game and options change contingent on what you have previously done. It's simple but smart, hitting on similar nerve centres that the algorithms of today are so adept at targeting.

The main protagonist is a fifteen-year-old boy, discovering their way in the world, with a burgeoning love interest in another board member. As a fifty-something who had zero electronica at that age, it is a little hard to relate directly, but the concept of 'finding your sweet spot' online is something that we all now deal with every day. I'm glad I didn't have to negotiate that at the same time as teenage hormones and awkwardness, like kids of today must.

There is strong sense of playing with both meta and metaphorical aspects of gaming and developer Lucy Blundell has done a great job of integrating this into a teen romance. Both the game and its characters work toward, if not breaking, at least redefining the fourth wall between developers, players and companies.

This is neither my usual nor preferred genre but, for less than the cost of three takeaway coffees, it was a fun few hours. It's pretty easy to get the hang of, mechanics wise, although I got occasionally frustrated trying to work out what the game wanted me to do next. Some actions felt very like the 'gaming the algorithm' that goes on in real life (irl) to bump subscriber and viewer numbers.



It is hardly a graphic card torturing bling fest and the pseudo 8bit style suits the content beautifully. It should play on pretty much any computer. The ethereally sad music sets a slightly melancholy tone and the 'notification bells' are just as triggering as the 'real' ones that puncture our daily peace irl. It took about 10 hours to play through, but I was critiquing and analysing as I went, so 6-8 hours is probably more reasonable for a casual player.

### "loading every letter"

The ending wasn't quite what I was expecting, so I went back a save and retried the final section, selecting slightly different options, and the finale also changed to suit. Now I feel the pull to dive back in again and play through with another slant, just see what would happen.

This game is a very clever look at how our instinctive emotions are targeted and triggered by online platforms. That it does so in the gamer community cosmos appeals to someone like me who daily inhabits these spaces, but its broader message is universal: play nice and be good and this will get you happiness and rewards.

The game of life isn't always so kind. My broken old man body needs pills to start the day. Playing through Videoverse made me wonder more than once if the Matrix producers had slipped a red or blue one into my breakfast each day. Just where is the boundary between physical and virtual reality? Perhaps I should jump on Discord and talk about it.

<https://kinmoku.it.ch.io/videoverse>  
<https://www.gamesbykinmoku.com/>



by Brian Coleman



Matt Herr, Elton John's Sound Engineer

# Notes on an Interview

## Snippets from the archives of a bygone era

Successful interviews have long been considered the Holy Grail of journalism, especially in the music industry. The archaic art of penning notes for the print media required visually clear, concise, organised and structured notes that were easy to transcribe. Given that I can barely read my own writing I could never have accurately documented interviews without a tape or digital recorder for face-to-face interviews, or a telephone interface for recording landline conversations onto a DAW. But I do know a senior journalist who only takes longhand notes during her interviews, consistently eschewing any form of taped or digital recording.

As fate ordained it, at age 15 I attended shorthand and typing classes two nights per week at the behest of the NSW Government Railways. These classes were mandated for junior clerks who were always typing something, but very few of us had any use for shorthand. I could never explain my fixation with typing, which saw me banging away at my desk during lunch breaks to the chagrin of the senior clerical workers around me who craved peace and quiet whilst they sat eating their sandwiches and drinking tea.

Some 20 years later in the '80s I saw my first computer on display behind roped barriers at a Dick Smith store. I became mesmerised by the fact that it featured the exact same QWERTY keyboard as a conventional typewriter. In

somewhat of a trance, I entered the roped zone and began touch-typing at speed. Then, noticing a large audience had mistaken me for some sort of computer programmer, I made a hurried exit. The 100-year-old QWERTY keyboard had made its transition into the digital world, and although there were several clunky portable analogue tape recorders on the market, it would be many years before the digital pocket recorder would emerge in mainstream use.

In 2003, whilst reporting for Broadcast Engineering News magazine at the height of the digital revolution, I blundered into purchasing an analogue microcassette pocket recorder for my first broadcast interview, which was with Peter Gough who was the



Sony Digital Voice Recorder

retiring Chief Operating Officer of WIN Television. We were only a few minutes into the interview, discussing how he had steered WIN Television from the days of monochrome television into the digital age, when the microcassette recorder shut down with a very loud click. Gough stopped mid-sentence and an embarrassing pause ensued while



Bryan Woiwod, Touring Stage Manager, Disney on Ice

concert at Bimbaden Estate Winery, Hunter Valley, where access to the bio box that housed the concert technicians had been sealed off by security. As I prowled the exterior, I noticed an audio engineer tweaking knobs on the mixing console.

"Hi, I'm reporting for CX Magazine on the technicians for the show. Can I have a photo?" This was George Wehrin, Meat Loaf's sound engineer of 22 years. We chatted briefly before he invited me into the bio box to take his picture. George was one of the nicest guys I've ever met on an international tour. He took my details and rang me a couple of days later from the Sydney Entertainment Centre during load-in and he took the time to give me a comprehensive interview, which I dubbed onto a DAW via a telephone interface. The article is available in the CX archives (CX65 Nov 2011).

I knew my stalking the bio box technique would need a little more refining for the next concert. So, prior to the December 2011 Elton John concert at Hope Estate winery, also in the Hunter, I took to the Internet to see who would be mixing sound. Matt Herr came up as Elton John's FOH sound engineer. Knowing that at any given time several technicians can be milling in the bio box, including the lighting techs, systems engineers and crew from the support band, I studied several photos of Herr to impregnate his image into my brain.

The Elton John concert had some of the strictest security I had ever experienced. Despite having a photo pass, I was stopped at the gate where they wanted to confiscate my SLR camera and lenses. I had to call Elton John's Australian Publicist, Bruce Pollack, to escort me into the venue. He took me to a roped area outside the photo pit where I was told to remain under his watchful eye with the other photographers until the commencement of the performance; and I was denied permission to walk to the bio box to interview the technicians.

the dissident little pocket recorder sat silently, as if protesting the impending demise of analogue tape.

Sony was soon to release a range of IC digital Notetakers, and I became the proud owner of the ICD-PX820 digital voice recorder with 2GB built-in flash memory and 535 hours of MP3 recording time that could be dumped via USB onto a computer.

Concert technicians rarely have time for on-the-spot interviews but there are exceptions. Nonetheless, the little Sony digital voice recorder was always useful in grabbing a few sound bites, a phone number and other contact details for an interview at a later time. Sometimes I'd corner a technician who had a few spare moments before a show, but I still had much to learn about setting up integral interviews at concerts.

The most powerful weapon in anyone's bag of tricks is the photo pass, which will open a lot of doors for interviews; it's not quite the Wayne's World backstage pass with access to all areas,

but it's a start. Photo passes aren't easy to get. You have to be authorised by the print media or other media organisation you represent, along with signing a couple of waivers. But even with that little photo pass ID swinging off its lanyard, plus a sticker usually adhered to your jacket, there is no guarantee that either talent or technician will talk to you.

Numerous telephone calls and emails that included lots of begging and pleading got me full access to the 2011 Disney on Ice concert at Acer Arena, Sydney Olympic Park, where I was the only photographic journalist there, and given full access to all the technicians and management. My little Sony Notetaker was running hot recording interviews with the audio and lighting engineers, the sound effects technician, carpenters, the Stage Manager and the Company Manager. Coincidentally, the next day was the combined SMPTE and Entech exhibitions in Sydney where the Notetaker was again kept busy with on-the-spot interviews.

It wasn't so easy at the October 2011 Meat Loaf

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After pleading with Pollack on the grounds that if I didn't get a technical interview I wouldn't have a story, he replied, "They won't talk to you anyway." Of course, he knew that the bio box entrance was guarded by security.

"Ok, how about if I promise that I'll just politely ask once, and if I'm denied I'll come straight back?"

"Ok, but you're wasting your time," he added bluntly.

I didn't go anywhere near security at the front of the bio box. Instead, I skirted the perimeter looking for a match to my memorised image of Matt Herr, eventually spotting him through the side curtains. I knew from years of working in the industry that people are always bringing technicians paraphernalia ranging from equipment and messages to coffee, and I had my prop, which was a copy of CX Magazine in my backpack.

**"Hey, Matty," I cheekily called out waiving the CX copy, "I've got your magazine."**

Matt Herr came over and accepted my offering. As he glanced at the magazine I added, "I'm covering the concert technicians for CX Magazine. Can I get a photo?" He gave me a wry smile and then invited me into the bio box for the shot, and I was also able to roll my Sony

Notetaker for a few audio grabs. Matt Herr was another of the nice guys I've met in the industry, and he gave me his contact details for a future interview, which transpired a few days later (CX67 Feb. 2012).

Over the past decade I've just about worn out the anecdote about being shunned by Rod Stewart's Danish-born sound engineer, Lars Brogaard, at the 2012 Hope Estate concert. Here, pit photography was banned, and I was

restricted to the bio box accompanied by a security guard for the entire concert. Although shooting from the soundboard is not ideal for concert photography, it positioned me only a few metres from Stewart's sound engineer. Prior to the commencement of the show the security guard allowed me to approach him to ask for a photograph and contacts for a later interview. "No," was Brogaard's one word reply to both the photograph and the interview.



1962 Philips Dictaphone



George Wehrlin Meat Loaf's Sound Engineer

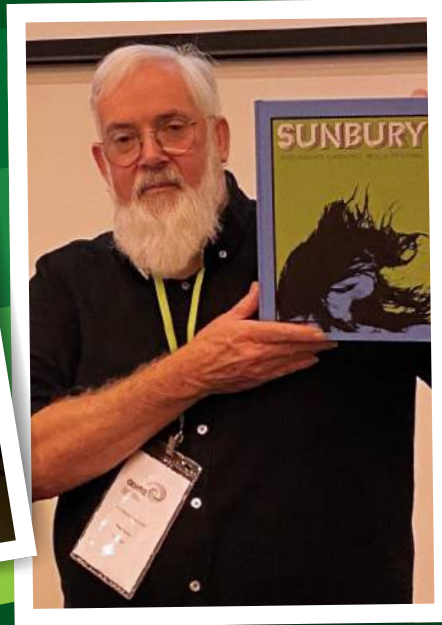
# The ACETA Archive of Excellence<sup>©</sup>

## Interviews and Inducts three Industry Legends



### Phil Manning

The Australian Blues Music Hall of Fame Icon. Sixty years of music and still going strong.



### Peter Evans

Presents Sunbury '72 Behind the Scenes. The location, logistics, equipment, artists & much more.



### Michael Barabasz

Founder of Lorantz Audio. Awarded Services to the Industry for designing, engineering & manufacturing loudspeaker technology of the highest quality for over sixty years.

You can watch the interviews of these three industry powerhouses in full, by visiting the ACETA website.

[www.aceta.org.au/archiveofexcellence](http://www.aceta.org.au/archiveofexcellence)

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