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THE LOCAL ISSUE

/ A THEATRE WITHIN A THEATRE
/ ENTTEC X LOTRON / EMMA HOLGATE
/ JUSTIN MYERS / GIVING LOCALS A FUTURE

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Universal Music Group Ignites Beta Bar, Sydney

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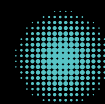
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REMEMBERING

Roger McLachlan

More than an Elite Musician



On Thursday April 17 2025, Roger McLachlan passed away from complications due to stage 4 pancreatic cancer, in the company of his wife and soulmate Desley and family. Roger had been diagnosed only eight weeks prior and chose not to make his situation public, therefore his sad passing, was a heartfelt shock to the music and allied industries. Roger was born in Riverton New Zealand on the January 15 1954, and became a musician at a very young age. He moved to Australia in 1974 to take up electric bass playing duties for the stage musical Godspell. Consequently, he established a permanent residence in Melbourne and his career escalated from there.

Roger McLachlan made an enormous contribution to our musical heritage whether a band member or first-call session musician. Over the last five decades every Australian would have experienced him musically. It could have been the lyrical introductory bass line to John Farnham's international hit 'You're the Voice', the first two Little River Band albums, Paradise the debut album by Stars, the iconic jazz fusion band Pyramid or an Australasian movie soundtrack such as Crocodile Dundee. As a musician, he was born with conviction, (tastefully) aggressive, a canny decision maker, always playing for the song, whilst companion musicians inevitably felt secure and enabled in his groove. He was one of a kind, elevating the art of electric bass playing and inspiring many by example, but also his generous personality. Whilst he was classified a Rock bass player, he excelled working in most genres. He was the

consummate bass player.

However, Roger McLachlan was much more than a unique musical talent, he was a marvellous individual. He loved his friends, and they loved him. He was open, loyal, kind and generous in both actions and attitude, and took a genuine interest in people and their opinions. He was innately curious with an abiding passion for knowledge and understanding, and his presence was felt in any gathering. He shared a wonderful relationship with his immediate family, he was proud, and enjoyed his role as father, father-in-law, grandfather, and great-grandfather. But many of us will never forget the reciprocal love Roger, and his wife Desley had for each other; they were a team in the truest sense of the word. They supported each other in their careers and all other aspects of their life together; they were complementary and inseparable.

Roger and Desley believed in the Australian Commercial and Entertainment Technology Association (ACETA), understanding the necessity for a unified industry. They both made valuable contributions to the ACETA Industry Conventions, and Roger performed the cinematography and post-production roles for ACETA's last two Archive of Excellence episodes. He also made invaluable contributions to a number of industry challenges, including the current problems associated with live sound engineering, for all of which ACETA is eternally grateful. If you wish to learn more about Roger McLachlan, he was in fact inducted into the ACETA Archive of Artistic Excellence which you can access here: www.aceta.org.au/roger-mclachlan.html

Rest in peace dear friend, and our thoughts are with Desley and family.



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HOTA Outdoor Stage Receives a Major Upgrade with VuePix Infiled High-Spec Screen Technology

The iconic cultural hub of the Gold Coast, HOTA (Home of the Arts), has recently undertaken a significant upgrade of its visual technology for their Outdoor Stage. Earlier this year, 120 VuePix Infiled AR 3.9 outdoor LED panels were delivered to the venue, enhancing its audiovisual capabilities.

As part of the handover, the VuePix Infiled team was on-site, providing comprehensive training to the enthusiastic HOTA audiovisual crew, ensuring they were fully equipped to maximise the potential of their new system.

The entire project was managed and overseen by Fredon Technology, which played a pivotal role in ensuring a seamless acquisition process. Their expertise helped deliver a complete event solution, offering HOTA the flexibility to cater to a wide range of productions and events within the vibrant cultural precinct.

"The new LED screen system is a game-changer for our outdoor stage and utilisation throughout other venues within the precinct, enhancing our ability to deliver high-quality visual experiences for audiences across all kinds of events," says Luke Garvey, Head of Audio at HOTA.

Resilient and Ready for Outdoor Elements

The VuePix Infiled AR 3.9 outdoor series is engineered specifically for high-quality outdoor

displays, delivering exceptional brightness and a vibrant visual experience, both day and night.

One of the key deciding factors in selecting this LED technology was its durability and ability to withstand variable environmental conditions on the Gold Coast. The LED screen system was also delivered with additional wind brace support, ensuring stability and resilience against strong coastal winds.

Brompton Processing - Minimising Setup Complexity

The LED system is powered by Brompton advanced processing and operating system, offering minimal setup complexity while maintaining first-class performance. Utilizing Brompton Tessera SX40 and SD processors, the system provides outstanding colour accuracy, smooth image playback and optimised performance for live productions.

This cutting-edge technology streamlines content management and allows the HOTA team to deliver stunning visuals with ease.

Flexibility and Scalability for Versatile Productions

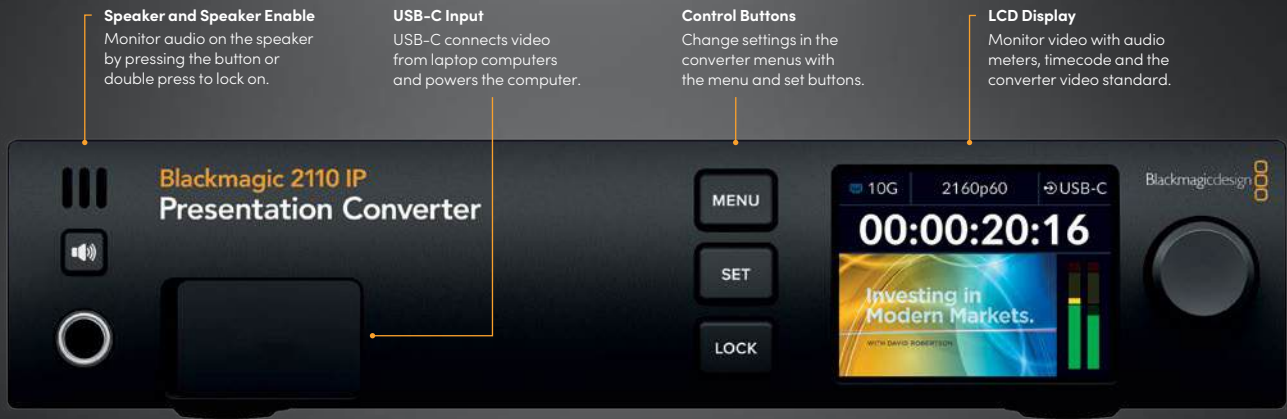
The LED screen system has been tailored to provide maximum flexibility and scalability for HOTA's outdoor stage. It offers a variable digital solution, that can be set up in endless configurations and layouts, hung or ground stacked.

This adaptability enables HOTA to accommodate a wide range of events, from concerts and theatrical performances to community festivals and corporate gatherings.

Comprehensive Training for Optimal Performance & Longevity

VuePix Infiled believe in empowering their clients with the knowledge and skills needed to maximise the potential of their LED systems.

Their comprehensive training covers every aspect of LED technology - from the screen set up and configuration, processing technology operation, to proper maintenance, ensuring the



Speaker and Speaker Enable
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USB-C connects video from laptop computers and powers the computer.

Control Buttons
Change settings in the converter menus with the menu and set buttons.

LCD Display
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HDMI 4K Input
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12G-SDI Output
Connect to equipment such as switchers, recorders or monitors.

Analog Audio Inputs
Balanced microphone inputs with support for phantom power.

Analog Audio Outputs
Balanced audio outputs for PA speakers or sound systems.

Connect computers to 12G-SDI or 2110 IP video with standards conversion!

The Blackmagic 2110 IP Presentation Converter is designed to allow presenters to connect computers and video projectors into 12G-SDI and 2110 IP video systems. The converter can connect computer video from both HDMI and USB-C inputs, but when using USB-C, the converter will power the computer. There is a standards converter on the input, so connecting any type of computer will just work!

Latest SMPTE-2110 IP Video Technology

Blackmagic 2110 IP Presentation Converter conforms to the SMPTE 2110 standard for IP video. Its RJ-45 10G Ethernet connectors let you use low cost Cat 6 cables that can also power the converter, even when charging a laptop! All SD, HD and Ultra HD standards are supported, with high frame rate Ultra HD using Blackmagic IP10 codec for data rate reduction.

Powerful Audio Connections

Blackmagic 2110 IP Presentation Converter handles all your audio needs! It has 2 XLR audio inputs for microphones that support phantom power. There's also 2 balanced XLR outputs for connecting PA speakers. Plus there's a built in audio mixer to blend audio from the HDMI/USB-C video inputs and the analog XLR inputs. There is even a speaker and headphone connection on the front panel!

Front Panel for Monitoring and Control

The front panel controls and bright color LCD allow you to see the input video and audio at all times. This is a big help when a presenter connects a new computer because it gives them confidence that the computer is working. The LCD and buttons let you access almost every single operational feature of the presentation converter including 2110 routing and standard settings.

Standards Converts Video Inputs and Outputs

The Blackmagic 2110 IP Presentation Converter has 2 standards converters with one on the HDMI/USB-C video inputs and another on the HDMI output. The video input even emulates a HiDPI monitor so you can scale the user interface independently of the video standard. Now AV staff can let presenters plug in their own laptops without video problems!

Blackmagic 2110 IP Presentation Converter
Only \$1,385



right handling, optimal performance throughout the time, and longevity of the system.

Jake Horsburgh (VuePix Product Manager) and Mike Davies (LED Screen & Digital Technology Specialist at ULA Group) were assisting with the handover of the screen. Jake spent a few days with both the HOTA and Fredon Technology AV crew, providing comprehensive training with practical sessions on setup, maintenance and troubleshooting.

In-depth training was also provided on Brompton software and hardware, ensuring that HOTA staff are well-versed in the operation of the system.

VuePix Infiled - Standing Strong at HOTA for Over a Decade

VuePix Infiled LED screens have been an integral part of HOTA's technology infrastructure for over a decade.

The first VuePix Infiled LED billboard was installed in the cultural precinct in 2014, serving as the main roadside advertising platform on Bundall Road. This iconic digital

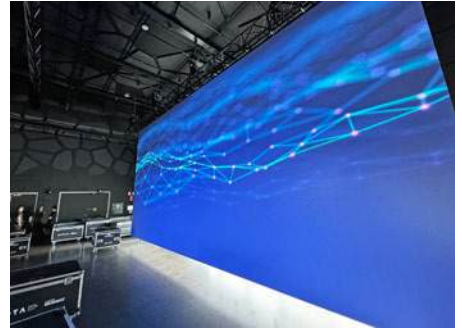
billboard has captured the attention of thousands of passersby, promoting HOTA's major events and productions. After over 10 years of service, the quirky-shaped digital billboard has recently been refurbished with high-spec LED panels, keeping pace with evolving display technology.

Inside HOTA's main building, several VuePix Infiled LED displays are also used as dynamic advertising platforms, enhancing the visitor experience within the venue.

A Strong Collaboration for Cutting-Edge Technology Solutions

This project highlights the strength of collaboration between Fredon Technology, HOTA, ULA Group and VuePix Infiled.

By working closely with their system integrators and technology partners, VuePix Infiled continue to deliver state-of-the-art solutions to iconic venues across Australia and New Zealand.





SHARPY X FRAME

SMALL IN STATURE WITH A BIG PUNCH

Adding to the family of the award-winning SHARPY fixtures, Claypaky introduces the **SHARPY X FRAME multi-function luminaire**. It takes the best features of the SHARPY line and integrates a **four-focal plane shutter system** in a **lightweight, compact fixture**. Featuring a zoom range from **2° to 52°** (up to 0.5° in beam mode), the Sharpy X Frame is powered by a **550-Watt arc lamp**, to produce extremely bright, deep and vivid colours.



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Jands Appointed Exclusive Australian Distributor for High End Systems

Jands Pty Ltd is pleased to announce its appointment as the exclusive Australian distributor for High End Systems (HES). This exciting new partnership coincides with the launch of High End Systems' next-generation Hog console range, making it the perfect time for Jands to represent HES in Australia, marking a bold new chapter for lighting professionals nationwide.

Jands Expanding Partnership with ETC

With a strong and successful relationship spanning more than 40 years, Jands has proudly represented Electronic Theatre Controls (ETC) in Australia. As High End Systems is a subsidiary of ETC, this expansion into the HES portfolio is a natural progression that further solidifies the synergy between these leading brands.

"After such a long and successful relationship between Jands and ETC, it is great to now have Jands represent High End Systems in Australia," said Desmond Yim, Sales Manager at ETC Asia. "This partnership further strengthens the ties between our companies and the market."

The Return of Hog Consoles

The team at Jands is particularly excited about the return of the iconic Hog product line; a console range with deep historical roots in the company's legacy. The original Jands Hog, a joint venture between Jands and Flying Pig Systems, launched in 1995 and quickly became a dominant force across Australia while also achieving international success.

"I am excited to once again be able to offer Hogs in Australia," said Paul Mulholland, Executive Chairman of Jands. "I still remember sitting in a pub in London with the Flying Pig Systems owners, planning the original Jands Hog. To now see the latest iteration of the product is incredibly rewarding."

Jands will provide full support and distribution for the complete range of High End Systems lighting and control products, including the new Hog consoles.

Customers are encouraged to contact their local Jands representative or their office to arrange a demonstration and experience the latest technology first-hand, ensuring they select the right tools for their venues and productions.

Change in Robe Representation in Australia

This exciting new chapter also brings a shift in Jands' representation portfolio. With the addition of High End Systems, Jands and Robe have mutually agreed that Jands will no longer represent Robe in Australia.

Following Robe's recent acquisition of LSC Control Systems, the company is now well-positioned to manage its Australian presence directly, aligning with its broader global market strategy. This transition does not affect Anolis, and Jands will continue to represent and distribute Anolis products in Australia.

"It has been an honour to represent Robe for the past eight years and to witness the company's remarkable growth and innovation under the leadership of Josef Valchar," said Paul Mulholland. "While it is sad to part ways, this change was inevitable as Robe takes full control of its presence in Australia. I wish them well in this new chapter."

As the latest generation of Hog consoles takes centre stage, Jands looks forward to empowering Australia's lighting professionals with world-class control solutions and continued excellence in customer support.

HIGH END SYSTEMS



an **ETC** Company

Now distributed by **JANDS**

LSC Control Systems Appointed Exclusive Distributor for Robe in Australia and New Zealand

LSC Control Systems is pleased to announce its appointment as the exclusive distributor for Robe lighting s.r.o. products in Australia and New Zealand, further strengthening its commitment to providing world-class lighting control solutions to the region's entertainment, events and installations markets.

"We are thrilled with this appointment" said Gary Pritchard, CEO of LSC Control Systems. "Robe's extensive range of innovative lighting fixtures is well respected around the globe. Having access to Robe's fixtures complements our recent appointment for Avolites lighting control consoles. Adding these to our own range of power and data control products means we are in the perfect position to meet any customer's needs from a simple fixture or splitter to a full turn-key solution."

This announcement follows Robe's acquisition of LSC Control Systems in March

2024, a significant step that deepens the collaboration between the two companies.

Robe's CEO Josef Valchar stated, "It made strategic, logical and practical sense for us to consolidate distribution of all Robe's rental, staging, theatrical and music orientated business and products in Australia and New Zealand into the one company that we own, aligning all of these harmoniously, both there in the region, and with our overall global vision."

The distribution agreement will be effective from July 1st, 2025.



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Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre Achieves Ultimate Versatility with L-Acoustics Kara II Professional Sound System



Located on the banks of the Shoalhaven River, two and a half hours south of Sydney, the 900-cap Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre has solidified its reputation as a premier venue in regional Australia by installing an L-Acoustics Kara II sound system. This upgrade supercharges the venue's technical offering, with a professional audio package that's rider-friendly and versatile enough to handle the entertainment centre's full array of events, from theatrical performances, dinners, and awards nights, right up to large-scale concerts.

A Decade in the Wilderness

After 13 years living with an aging PA system that was mostly bypassed by touring productions, Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre sought a solution that would deliver superior, consistent sound across all audience areas, accommodate both flat-floor and tiered seating configurations, meet the expectations of touring professionals with a rider-friendly system, and future-proof the venue's audio infrastructure for years to come. "As a multi-purpose venue, we needed a system that could handle everything from quiet theatre shows to high-energy rock concerts," says Tobes Colvin, Technical Coordinator at Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre.

Kara II For Coverage

In collaboration with Australian L-Acoustics Certified Provider Distributor, Jands and installer/integrator, The P.A. People, Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre selected an L-Acoustics Kara II system for its even coverage, clarity, and flexibility. As no

architectural plans were available, Jands conducted an extensive site survey to gather data and used L-Acoustics Soundvision sound design and mapping software to design an optimal solution.

The comprehensive L-Acoustics professional sound system includes main arrays with left and right hangs of eight Kara II loudspeakers per side, four Kara II loudspeakers as centre-fill providing seamless front coverage, and a powerful subwoofer configuration featuring three SB18 per side in cardioid configuration to minimise stage interference, plus four additional ground-stacked SB18 for extended low-end impact. The setup is complemented by two A10 Focus per side as delays ensuring full rear coverage, six X8 coaxial loudspeakers for front-row clarity, and LA4X amplified controllers delivering precise DSP control and consistent performance.

"The system is perfectly tuned to meet L-Acoustics' exacting standards," says Brendon Vitiello, Head of Audio at the venue. "Touring engineers can now plug in their desks and get to work without any concerns."

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OD303 Dynamic Vocal Microphone

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OD505 Active Dynamic Vocal Microphone

All the advantages of a dynamic mic with the tonal finesse of a condenser.



OC707 True Condenser Vocal Microphone

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The OC707 & OD505 are also available as wireless capsule versions, designed to upgrade Shure wireless systems with Austrian Audio's unrivalled sound.



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The Audience Experience

Since the installation, feedback from visiting audio professionals and touring crews has been overwhelmingly positive. The L-Acoustics system delivers a pristine, natural response that enhances performances and streamlines production workflows. "The biggest difference is in just how efficient we now are," says Colvin. "Touring crews no longer have to bring their own PAs, cutting down on setup and pack-down time significantly. It's a game-changer for us and our clients."

Versatility The Key

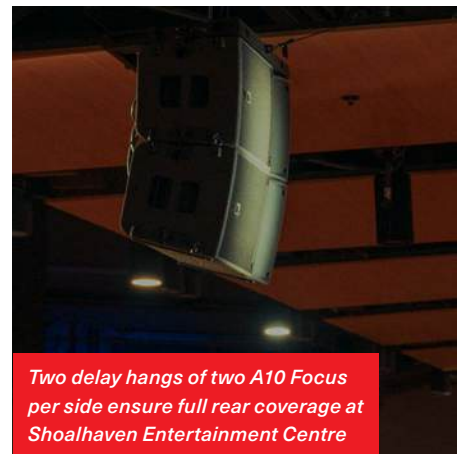
Regional Australian venues like the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre need to have 'versatility' bred into their DNA. You can routinely have a Top 40 rock band in on one evening and a preschool ballet recital the next – it's the reality and the remit of being a community facility. The new L-Acoustics Kara II loudspeaker system goes a long way to attracting top-level performers and keeping the faith with regional audiences, responding to the needs of any engagement with a top-shelf PA that offers optimal coverage, regardless of the audience configuration. Whether for a theatre production, a corporate event, or a rock concert, the Kara II system provides excellent sound quality, cementing the venue's reputation as a leader in regional entertainment.



A centre cluster of L-Acoustics Kara II and SB18



L-Acoustics Kara II provides powerful, versatile sound across the entire audience area



Two delay hangs of two A10 Focus per side ensure full rear coverage at Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre



Six L-Acoustics X8 coaxial loudspeakers provide front-row clarity



LA4X amplified controllers deliver precise DSP control and consistent performance for Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre

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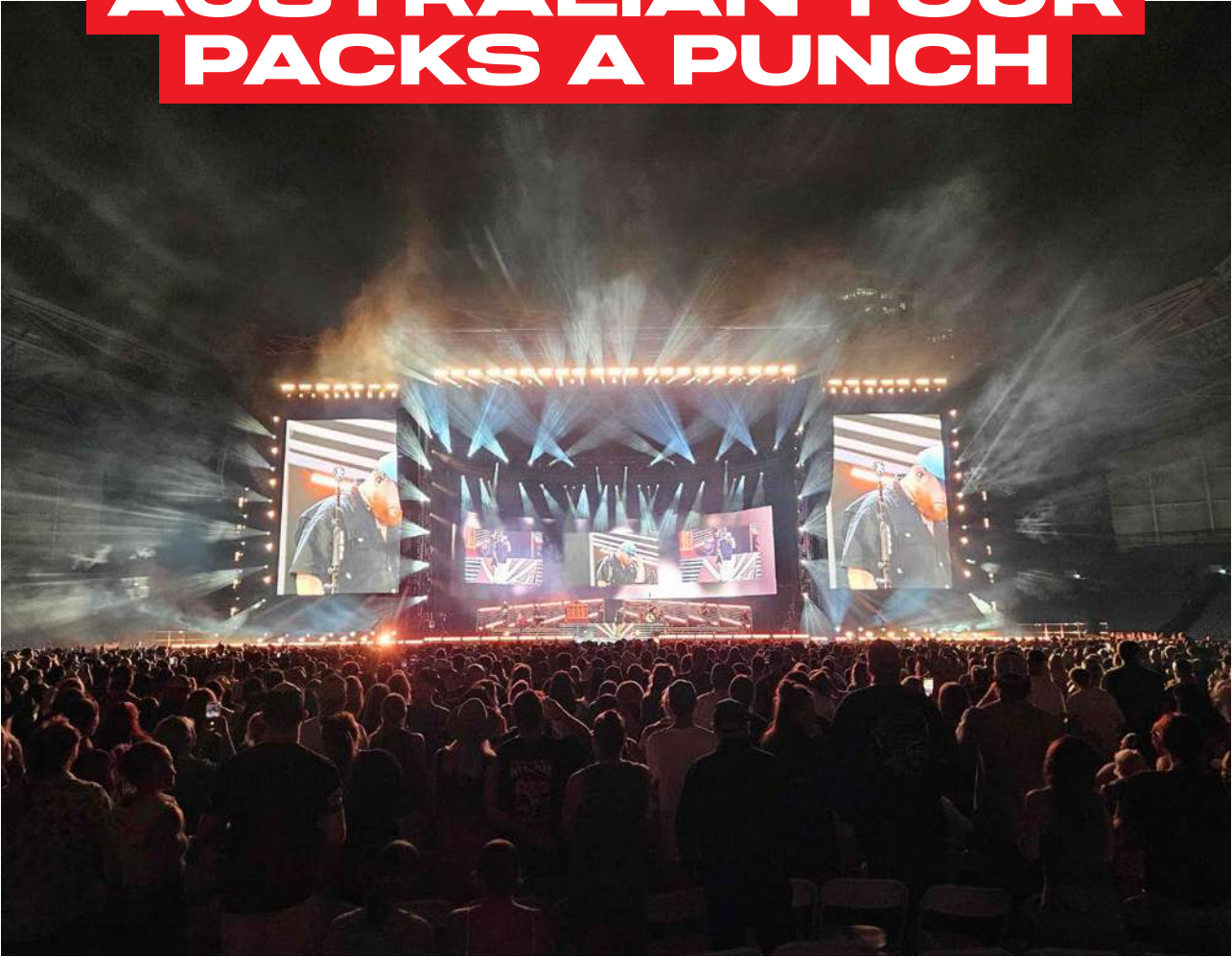
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LUKE COMBS' 4TH AUSTRALIAN TOUR PACKS A PUNCH

Photo credit: Kevin Northrup



with Ayrton lighting, MDG atmospherics and grandMA3 lighting control

Kevin Northrup, lighting designer for Luke Combs, chose an array of Ayrton fixtures, MDG theONE and Atmosphere HO foggers/hazers and grandMA3 consoles for the singer-songwriter's recent stadium tour of Australia and New Zealand.

The Winston Salem, North Carolina-based Northrup has been working with Combs since his headline arena show in Asheville in 2017 and was lighting designer for Combs's 2023 Australian arena tour. The new tour, the first for a country artist headlining a full stadium tour in Australia and New Zealand, played eight dates in January and February in Auckland, Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.

The show continued the look established by production designer Ollie Metcalfe for Combs's 2023 North American stadium tour. "We knew that looked good, would work, and fit the timeline

we had," says Northrup. "Luke likes to do really big colour looks: he's a fan of red and white and the stronger and more saturated the colour the better. He plays everything from ballads to solo acoustic to heavy-hitting honky tonk, and I try to build moments and match the energy of what he's doing while never overstepping."

Northrup had used Ayrton Khamsin, Zonda 9 FX, Perseo Beam and Domino LT fixtures on Combs's North American stadium tour. He reprised the Domino LTs for Australia, added Perseo Profiles and was excited to use Rivale Profiles for the first time after seeing them at the LDI show.

"I used the Rivalas as audience eye candy and loved them," he declares. "We had six on each of six ladders plus 20-odd on the downstage truss. Their colour mixing was an improvement over the fixtures I'd used before, and their optics were great: while not technically beam fixtures I liked how tight they got when I used them in narrow focus. They were way brighter than the fixtures we had previously, so they gave us extra fire power."

Northrup mounted two lines of 34 Perseo Profiles in an arc above the set. "They are really versatile, and I needed that here," he notes. "I used them as band down lights, audience light and for stage washes. I also pulled out 12 and dedicated them to rear follow spot action. Kind of a hallmark for Luke is having light from above that's like an arrow pointing to where he is onstage."

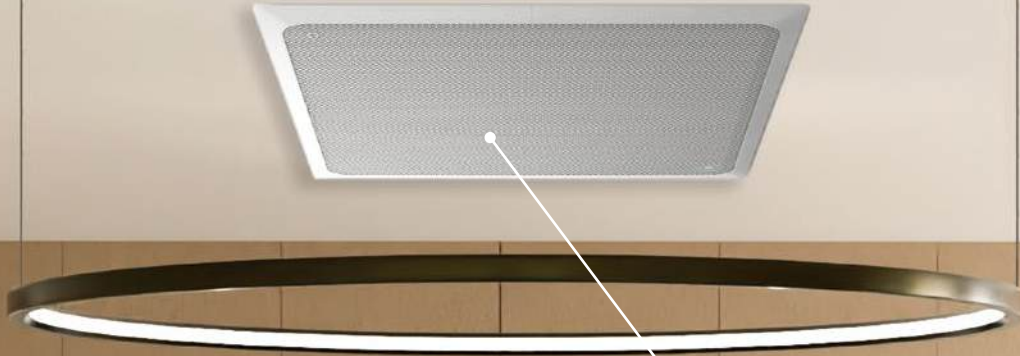
Northrup placed eight Domino LT fixtures on the floor on each side of the stage and hung eight more, six of which acted as FOH spots and two as specials on the end of the tuning fork-shaped thrust.

The New Zealand rig was slightly different with the Ayrton fixtures consisting of Domino LT spots and Rivale Profiles mounted on ladders.

The New Zealand and Australian dates all used MDG hazers. Two MDG theONE foggers/hazers were deployed in Auckland and six active Atmosphere HO haze machines in the Australian stadiums.



Experts in Unified Communication



Unified Communications brings together the latest in communication technology to seamlessly integrate all aspects of your business communications. Amber Technology's unified communications solutions can streamline collaboration, enhance productivity, and improve connectivity across your organisation. Whether you need to integrate voice, video, messaging, or conferencing, we have the tools and expertise to create a cohesive communication ecosystem tailored to your unique needs.

"MDG theONE is my go-to hazer, but they were hard to get in quantity," Northrup says of the different units used. "theONE is built well for touring and has a variable output in fog mode. I like to have a constant flowing haze and build in fog bursts with theONES."

Northrup brought a grandMA3 full-size system and two processing units from SES in the US, and added another full and a light once on site. The full-size units controlled lighting from FOH while the light served as a tech desk. An OnPC system ran as part of the follow spot process.

"grandMA3 has made good workflow improvements," says Northrup citing Multitouch Gestures, Selection Grids and Recipes. "It's so much easier to move around and get things looking the way you want."

Lighting in New Zealand was supplied by Spot-light Systems; lighting in Australia was furnished by PRG. "Things couldn't have gone better, concludes Northrup. "I was immensely happy with the Ayrton fixtures, MDG atmospherics and grandMA3 consoles."



Left to Right: Joy Yeoh, Greg Gowans, Andrew Yager, Jono Boer

Introducing Lux Imperium: A New Era in Lighting and Venue Infrastructure

Real World Group is excited to unveil Lux Imperium, a dynamic new brand set to redefine lighting, immersive experiences, and venue infrastructure. Lux Imperium integrates and builds upon the renowned capabilities, assets, and expert team formerly operating under SimpleMotion. Lighting.

Led by Jono Boer as General Manager, Lux Imperium will continue SimpleMotion. Lighting's legacy, delivering exceptional lighting solutions, engineering expertise, and innovative immersive experiences across Australia and internationally.

Lux Imperium joins Red Globe Productions under the Real World Group umbrella and complements Real World's existing technology, infrastructure and live production services, building on the synergies between brands to offer clients comprehensive solutions.

SimpleMotion is continuing to thrive independently, sharpening its focus on its core strengths in theatre and industrial automation. With renewed energy and dedication, SimpleMotion will continue to excel and innovate within these specialized markets.

"We're excited about the possibilities Lux Imperium brings to the industry," said Andrew Yager, Director of Real World Group. "By strategically realigning our resources, we are positioned to offer unmatched expertise and innovation in venue infrastructure while

enabling SimpleMotion to further enhance its renowned theatre and automation services."

"This new brand represents our commitment to driving forward the standard of service and technology in the industry," added Jono Boer, General Manager of Lux Imperium. "The expanded capability and collaboration with the Real World team will enable us to offer clients unparalleled creativity, technical excellence, and comprehensive solutions."

Lux Imperium is set to become the trusted name for advanced lighting and infrastructure solutions, committed to elevating experiences across every venue and project.

For more information or to discuss how Lux Imperium can transform your lighting and venue infrastructure, please contact them at sales@luximperium.au.

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AVAR



DiGiCo V20 Software for Quantum and SD-Range Consoles

DiGiCo's V20 software update adds several features to Quantum and SD console worksurfaces. Direct Fourier Audio integration now lets Quantum users connect their desk to the transform.engine's control network to synchronise session files and snapshots. Version 20 has added further support for Sound Devices transmitters, allowing macros to be triggered directly from the transmitter. It also adds the Mustard Source Expander (MSE), a new dynamics option to the Mustard processing strips found on Quantum consoles. This update adds DiGiCo's optional Theatre-software suite to the Quantum225, modifying how console cue lists operate, tailored specifically for theatrical applications.

Australia and New Zealand: Group Technologies
grouptechnologies.com.au +61 3 9354 9133



Blackmagic Design PYXIS 12K Camera

The PYXIS 12K is an advanced digital film camera with full frame 12K RGBW sensor in EF, PL or L-Mount models. The 36 x 24mm full frame RGBW 12K 12288 x 8040 sensor can capture in 12K, 8K or 4K at the full sensor size. It records full resolution up to 40fps or 112fps at 8K. Formats include open gate 3:2, full height 6:5 anamorphic and 9K Super 35 for creating cinematic content. All PYXIS cameras have multiple mounting and connectivity options.

Australia and New Zealand: Blackmagic Design
blackmagicdesign.com/resellers/



Ayrton Veloce Wash

Ayrton Veloce Wash is a compact moving head wash that uses an 850W LED module, calibrated at 6500K, to deliver a 40,000-lumen output. It's 12-lens optical system has a 14:1 zoom ratio, covering from 4° to 57°. Progressive CTO enables colour temperature adjustment from 2700K to 6500K and CRI is adjustable from 70 to 86. The effects section includes a 6-position rotating glass gobo wheel, a multi-layer CMY+RGB animation wheel, a beam ovaliser, an indexable rotating scrim filter, and progressive frost system. Movement of this 39kg unit is continuous, unlimited pan & tilt rotation. IP65 rated for outdoor use.

Australia: Show Technology
showtech.com.au 02 9748 1122
New Zealand: Show Technology
showtech.com.au 09 869 3293



Ayrton Stradale Profile

The Stradale Profile uses a 330W LED module, calibrated at 6500K (but adjustable down to 2700K), to deliver luminous output of 20,000lm. The 13-lens optical system offers a 13:1 zoom ratio, with a range spanning from 4° to 52°. CRI is adjustable from 70 to 86. 19 high-definition interchangeable glass gobos are arranged across two wheels - nine rotating and 10 fixed. Two frost filters are included: one soft diffusion to smooth edges without altering beam angle and a heavier diffusion filter for true wash applications. Stradale Profile is IP65 rated for outdoor use. Continuous, unlimited pan & tilt rotation complements 23.5kg weight.

Australia: Show Technology
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New Zealand: Show Technology
showtech.com.au 09 869 3293

STRADALE PROFILE

small in size, immense in power



Stradale Profile embodies the principle of perfect homothety within Ayrton's Ultimate range, standing as the first ultra-compact luminaire of the brand-new 1 Series. Following in the footsteps of Rivale, it reduces its visual footprint by 15%, achieving this through meticulous engineering and extreme miniaturisation. Every detail was optimised—streamlining the structure, refining effect modules, and minimising component size—to push integration to new limits.

Luminous Flux
20,000 lm

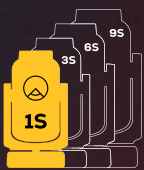
Variable CRI
70 to 86

IP Rating
IP65

Beam Aperture
4 ° to 52 °

Front Lens
140 mm

Weight
23.5 kg



AYRTON



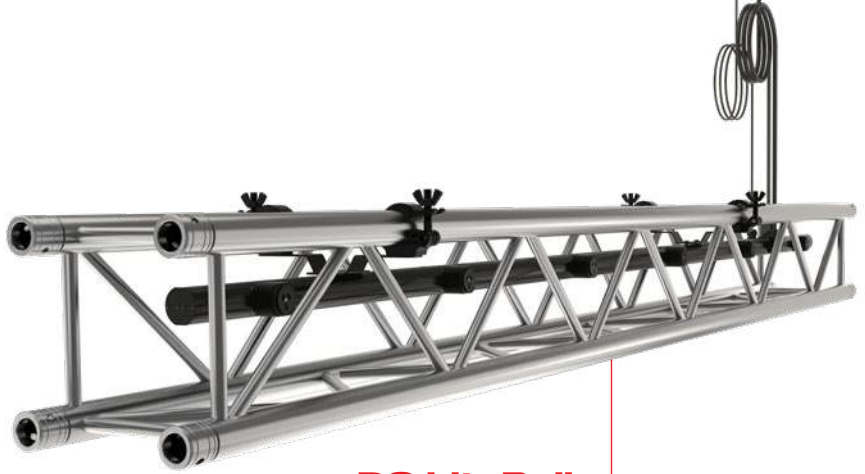
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ADJ NET 4 and NET 8 DMX-Over-Ethernet Nodes

ADJ have two new DMX-Over-Ethernet Nodes. Both units feature RJ45 Ethernet input and output ports and are compatible with standard DMX512, including RDM, as well as the Art-Net and sACN protocols. Both can be used with both line voltage and Power-over-Ethernet (PoE) systems as well as DHCP or static IP addressing. NET 4 is half 19" rack mount size and features four 5-pin DMX sockets on its rear panel. NET 8 is 19" rack mount size (1U) and offers eight 5-pin DMX sockets on its rear panel.

Australia: ULA Group
ulagroup.com 1300 852 476
New Zealand: ULA Group
ulagroup.com 09 218 6532



DQ LiteRail Integrated Lighting Bar

DQ's LiteRail integrated lighting bar has been designed for schools, studios, churches, and small theatres. Rigging, power, and data distribution are combined in one unit. Available in prewired sections up to 4m in length, the aluminium sections accept standard 50mm Ø clamps. Power and data are segregated (AS3000 compliant). Load support is 50kg point load with 500mm max cantilever.

Australia and New Zealand: DQ
dq.com.au +61 2 9649 2266



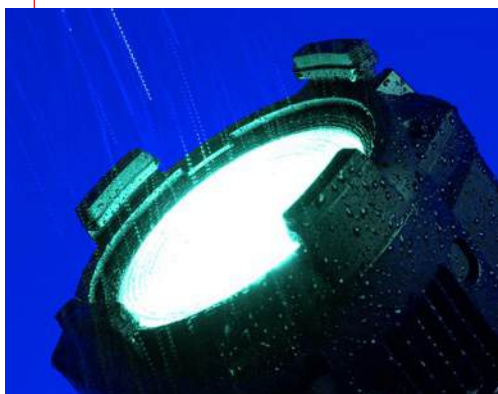
NEW GEAR



Elation KL PAR IP COMPACT

KL PAR IP COMPACT is a full-spectrum LED PAR fixture. It uses a 150W 6000K RGBMA LED engine with 16-bit CCT adjustments possible from 2,400K-8,500K. It includes a 6.25" gel frame and multiple field-replaceable lenses (10°, 22°, 30°, 55°). Broadcast optimised with dim-to-warm and redshift emulation, CMY emulation, green/magenta shift, and a virtual gel library. High CRI (94.9) and TLCI (95) add to this. Colour shift correction, white balance matching and LED refresh rate round out the studio friendly features.

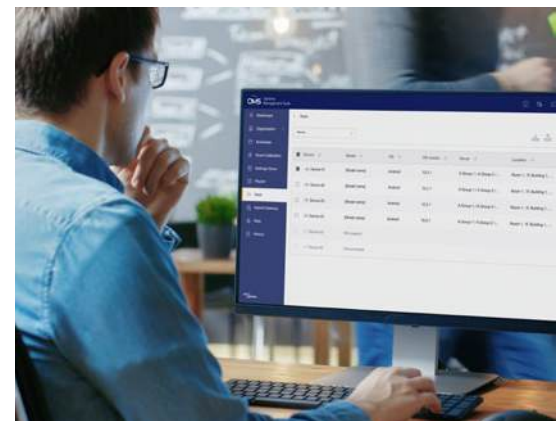
Australia: ULA Group
ulagroup.com 1300 852 476
New Zealand: ULA Group
ulagroup.com 09 218 6532



Elation KL CORE IP

The KL CORE IP uses a 400W RGBMA LED engine to output over 15,000 lumens. This configurable, broadcast-quality LED source can be adapted as an ellipsoidal, Fresnel or moonlight by using different lenses. KL CORE IP has fully variable 16-bit colour temperature adjustment from 2400K - 8500K, along with dim-to-warm and redshift emulation. Colour is generated with CMY emulation, green/magenta shift, and a virtual gel library. Broadcast is well suited with a high CRI of 94.9 and TLCI of 95, fully variable 16bit CCT control, and remotely adjustable LED refresh frequency. IP65 rating keeps out dust and water.

Australia: ULA Group
ulagroup.com 1300 852 476
New Zealand: ULA Group
ulagroup.com 09 218 6532



Optoma Management Suite (OMS)

The latest version of the Optoma Management Suite (OMS), paired with the Hyve Smart Connector (OCH100), enables easy integration and control of displays from various brands. New features include optimised user configuration, multi-administrator mode, and 12 templates for digital signage. This update introduces the Emergency Broadcast Function, which allows real-time message transmission to all connected display devices. Display software updates can now be scheduled remotely, and OMS enhances security by locking I/O ports, preventing unauthorized users from modifying system settings.

Australia: Amber Technology
ambertech.com.au 1800 251 367
New Zealand: Amber Technology
amber.co.nz 0800 4 AMBER



Martin Exterior Projection Pro Compact

Martin's new outdoor image projector is designed for a diverse range of architectural, façade, and landscape applications. It's compact, lightweight and constructed for the outdoors. Built-in zoom system adjusts from 15° to 45° and outputs 4,400 lumen across the range. Control available via Magnetic switch, DMX, RDM, and stand-alone programming with Martin Companion.

*Australia: Show Technology
showtech.com.au 02 9748 1122
New Zealand: Show Technology
showtech.com.au 09 869 3293*



ETC Hog lighting control consoles

Hog lighting consoles from ETC have a new range available. Four models include the Tour Hog console, with 24-inch articulating display, dual 12.5-inch dashboard screens, motorized RGB-backlit keys, and faders optimised for touring shows; Stage Hog, similar to the Tour Hog but without provided monitor; Flex Hog, designed for smaller, more intimate productions or backstage setups; and the Gig Hog programming wing, which offers multiple setup scenarios. When paired with Hog PC, the Gig Hog unlocks 12 universes of control directly. This major hardware release coincides with the release of Hog version 5.0 software, which is cross-compatible with v4 files.

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NEW GEAR

OmegaTech Stage Box Product Line

OmegaTech has added two new members to its 'Stage Box' product line. Stage Box Strip (SBS) is designed for compact, neat installations on camera tripods, stage legs or in front of house setups. SBS features four outlets which can be ordered as GPO, TrueCon or PowerCon. Stage Box Strip-Loop Thru (SBS-L) allows for greater input options including TrueCon, PowerCon, Socapex and CeeForm and features 6 outlets. Both units feature standard hydraulic/magnetic breaker (depending on configuration).

Australia and New Zealand:
 OmegaTech omegatech.com.au
 1800 066 342

Obsidian ONYX Lighting Control

Obsidian's NS8 and NS8 IP Ethernet switches are designed for show-critical lighting, sound, and video control. Although designed for lighting data distribution, the NS8 and NS8 IP are ideal for audio networks using the Dante protocol. NETRON NS8 is a compact network switch featuring eight gigabit ports and PoE/PoE+ support. NETRON NS8 IP is an IP66 version. Obsidian offers a complete line of NX consoles, wings, and USB interfaces for professional lighting control, such as the NX1 and NX2, both compact yet full-featured lighting consoles.

Australia: ULA Group ulagroup.com 1300 852 476
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SYNTHONY IN THE DOMAIN 2025

BIGGER AND BETTER

The Global Productions Partners & SYNTHONY love affair continues

The Manuka Doctor Phuel Synthony Festival in Auckland Domain has just set a record for NZ's largest one day event, this year with a sellout crowd of 41,000.

The concept of fusing a dance party, an orchestra, and anthems has been carefully nurtured by Duco Events since the inaugural event at Auckland Town Hall back in 2017, enjoyed by just 2,500. From Synthony in the Snow in Queenstown, to new year festival sets, to Australian tours, to opening the Las Vegas Grand Prix, the Synthony brand is building global momentum. Behind the scenes throughout the journey has been Global Production Partners, committed to transferring the learnings from every iteration of Synthony to make the next one even better.

The Event

This year's Synthony in the Domain kicked off the afternoon with Dick Johnson, Example, Ladi6 and Th' Dudes. Kora got the sunset slot, with Finnish DJ Darude warming everyone up for Synthony No.6. Auckland Philharmonia, conducted by Sarah-Grace Williams, and guest artists including P Digsss, Emily Williams, Nate Dousand, Sam Allen, Kings, Lewis McCallum, Nyree Huyser, Tiki Taane, Cyril and Masha Mnjoyan proceeded to smash out banger

after banger. Ranging from the mid-90's Robert Miles 'Children' and The Bucketheads 'The Bomb' to the more recent 'Baddadan' by Chase Status and then throwing in the New Zealand Youth Choir accompanying Sub Focus 'Solar System', you can understand the broad generational appeal of the Synthony model. Building to Calvin Harris' 2014 hit 'Blame', David Guerra's 'Titanium' and Lewis McCallum's sax accompaniment to 'Where's Your Head At', the show crescendoed with a Darude encore of 'Sandstorm' and a Basement Jaxx set rounding off the evening.

The Production

To make it all happen, Duco's Event Director Nicky Rawhiti works closely with Jason Steel, GPP's Creative Lead, who has personally been involved with Synthony since the 2017 break out show. "We sit down with Duco and reflect on what we can improve after every show, and last year we felt strongly that the Synthony audience comes to see and appreciate the artists, not just clever visuals. Jason took that and built on the

success of last year's show to achieve a much cleaner look with more punter and orchestra integration," explains MJ van Lingen, Production Manager. A 30 to 40 percent increase in the production budget was testament to the client's commitment to the brief. The client also felt that the two-hour set in 2024 was too long for the orchestra, and the run time for Synthony No6 was reduced to 90 minutes.

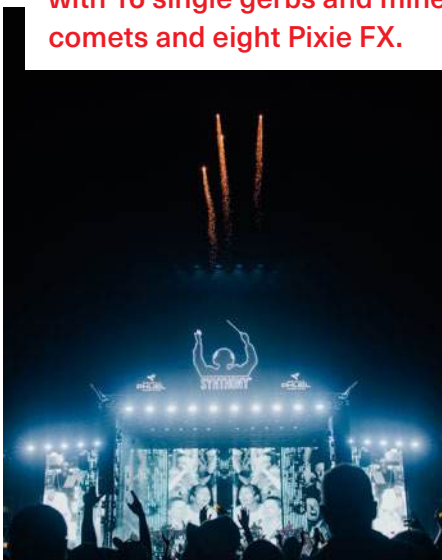
To achieve a more polished look and feel, GPP increased the screen size from 308sqm to 411sqm and hid the seams and the legs of the stage to achieve a larger LED. They focused more lighting on the crowds and used Notch with more live IMAG and Follow-Me to capture both the crowd experience and the artist interaction downstage, "We used the same tech but in a smarter way and in larger quantities. We really went back to our dance party roots but the content was much crisper and defined, with simpler shapes and textures. The result was a lot harder hitting and more impactful. We were really pleased, as was our client."

With just two days to pack in and a full rehearsal only the evening prior, more time spent on pre-viz and in team meetings with the client finessing the workflow ensured that the additional investment and artist/crowd focus paid off. MJ's highlights were the thirty piece youth choir and Basement Jaxx sharing the stage with Darude, "The choreography and using Follow-Me was pivotal to capture those moments and enable the crowd to feel involved."

The additional budget also saw the PA system level up to include the latest L-Acoustics K1 and K2 speaker systems and monitors, "Using the latest technology meant that we could use more delays and ensure greater diversity across the audience. We wanted to be able to reproduce the full range of sound, all the elements of the orchestra, no matter where you were in the crowd."



Pyrotechnics also got a boost, with 16 single gerbs and mines, 18 comets and eight Pixie FX.



Lighting/Visuals

Fixtures

Moving Lights
 Viper Performance Extended: 24
 Domino LT Extended: 6
 Eurus S Extended: 24
 Perseo Extended: 32
 Sharpy Vector: 20
 Mini-B Basic: 20
 Aquabeam 400W LL: 48
 Aura PXL: 24
 XiP Basic: 24
 Fusion Bar 6 Ch: 27
 PXL Bar 16: 40
 RGB LED Bar 1M 16 Pixel: 74+
 Strike M 97 Channel: 40

Effects & Hazers

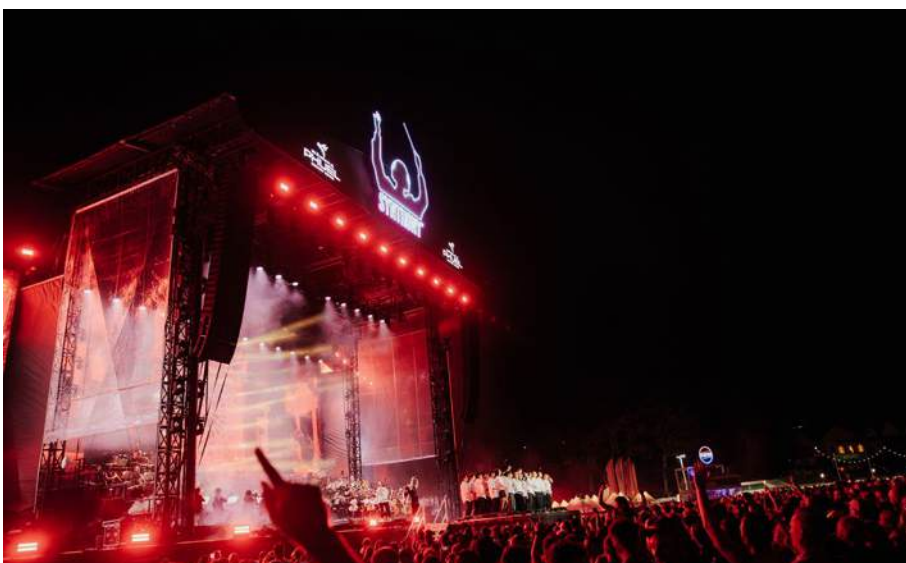
Atmosphere APS: 2
 ATMe: 2
 Unique Hazer: 6

Managed by:

Lighting/Visuals: Andrew Naysmith
 Lasers: Joe Pearson
 Follow-Me: Jack Hooper

Suppliers

Stage by StagesetNZ

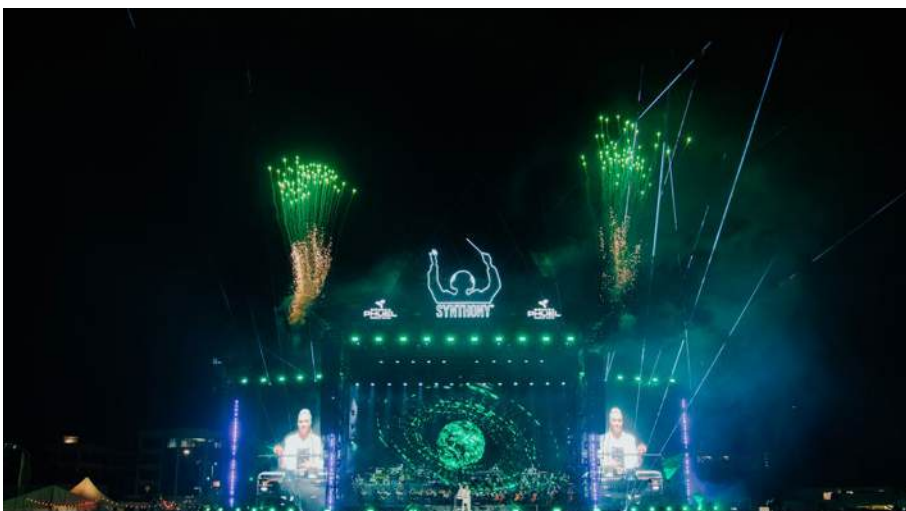


Audio

Main PA - 12 K1, 4 K2 side
 Side hangs - 14 K2 per side
 2x GA Delay towers - 12 VDOSC, 4 SB28
 2x VIP Delay towers - 4x K1SB, 8 K2 hangs
 Ground subs - 16x KS28, 24x SB28
 FOH - DiGiCo SD5
 MONs - DiGiCo 338 both consoles on
 Optocore loop with 2x SD racks. 112
 channel input count

Managed by:

FOH Engineer: Bjarne Hemmingsen
 Monitor Engineer: Heath Clapperton
 Playback Engineer: Jacob Collins





Taking Synthony Global

Another motivator for the clean look was to capture video for marketing. Already announced, Synthony No.1 is heading to the legendary Brooklyn Mirage for their first-ever U.S. show in August, with more details to come on Australian and European tours later in the year.

GPP are excited to be involved, "The core production team and artists will travel overseas, and we'll work with local orchestras and a local conductor. It will be an amazing opportunity."

New Zealand won't miss out either, with a new take Full Metal Orchestra doing what Synthony has done to dance anthems to rock classics at

Auckland's Spark Arena.

This comes on top of GPP's other imminent commitments which include the operational side of the New Zealand Sail Grand Prix in Auckland, the New Zealand Red Bull Trolley Grand Prix, and the Halberg Awards, New Zealand's premier sports award night.



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THE TECHNICAL SUPERIORITY OF RAW TALENT

by Andy Stewart



If you think great mixing is all about the latest tech, think again. It's not the best console or high-end mic collection that elevates your mixes to greatness, but rather the musicians delivering their sublime performances of well-crafted and arranged songs. Receive that talent down the Cat5 or copper cable and you're already in the home straight!

I've been mixing a tonne of music over the last few months, both live and in the studio, and I'm currently 'match fit', as I like to describe it. When I get this way, one thing becomes crystal clear to me: that great performances and raw talent are fundamental to the success of my role as a mix engineer. Bad performances, mediocre song arrangements and poor sonic choices on stage, meanwhile... well, they're much harder to pull together.

Particularly when a bunch of bands are lumped together at a festival, it becomes excruciatingly obvious from front-of-house who's spent more time on makeup and clothing than practice and song craft. The ones that hit the stage thinking it's all about posing or the right colour guitar are no match for those who've honed their craft musically, or who possess clear, attention-grabbing raw talent. When these musicians are contrasted side-by-side on stage, the comparison can be downright embarrassing. And it's no coincidence which

bands are the easiest and most satisfying to mix – raw musical talent and great musicianship win out every time.

As technology's relentless advancement continues to impose itself on almost every aspect of our audio productions it's easy to forget that performances of talented people are what count most in music, not technology. A better EQ, a slightly more nuanced multi-band compressor, a better DAW, a new mic or a fancier reverb algorithm are all fantastic tools to have at one's fingertips. But these are no match for simply lifting a fader on a brilliant musical performance.

I've mixed at least four standout acts in the last three weeks alone, all of them local artists, along with at least twice that number, both local or international, that were in one way or another exceedingly difficult to pull together off stage. The exceptional performances, each and every time, unquestionably made my good mixes great, which is why, when people approach me after a gig to congratulate me on the sound, my response is essentially the same each time: "When you have musicians on stage performing like that, my job's easy... and exceedingly pleasurable."

And I'm being sincere when I say that, not bashful. Nothing is more astounding to me than direct involvement with great songwriting, musicianship and raw talent. I never grow tired of it, even if I've been mixing for 14 hours straight, or every day for months.

Some of these recent acts have been older, others younger, some very young indeed. Without exception, each of them has had

a brilliance that's shone off stage like a supernova. In many cases – and these are the ones I find the most fascinating – the artists themselves have seemed scarcely aware of their own talent. I love that, and I think most music fans lucky enough to witness it do too.

I'll mention a few names directly here, given that this issue of CX is the 'Local' issue. Normally I'm loathe to name names, but in this case they're well worth mentioning, if for no other reason than to get people out to see them. It's a crying shame when brilliant Australian musicians play to half-empty venues, meanwhile down the road 100,000 punters are prepared to re-mortgage their house and navigate a hailstorm to see Tay Tay at the 'G'. Each to their own of course, but I'm convinced people think our home-grown talent is inferior somehow. It's not. It's just fundamentally undervalued... and in many cases, unknown.

What's also fascinating about my recent experience of local artists is that it can't just be coincidence. I'm not somehow lucky enough to be mixing all the best acts in the country right now. It proves to me that great talent is everywhere! So if you're one of those people in our industry who goes around bemoaning the lack of musical talent in Australia, try going to a local gig once in a while rather than staying at home and spinning a record from 40 years ago. Great music is everywhere, always has been, and there's something out there for everyone, no matter how obscure, refined or specific your tastes. You just have to find it.

Naming Names

One of the acts I mixed recently is someone I've worked with before. Queenie is her stage name. This young woman is a highly skilled, outrageously talented, fantastic sounding singer who blows away audiences with her extraordinary range, power and stage presence. She's a modern-day rocker with all the talent required to rise to great heights, and on stage she is so good it's breathtaking. She sang into Shure's new Nexadyne 8/C handheld dynamic mic at the gig (which I've been field testing)... and the combination of her incredible voice and this new, well-balanced, crystal clear dynamic delivered a truly breathtaking outcome that day.

Go see Queenie; you won't be disappointed.

The next day I mixed The Counterfeit, who were playing the music of Ennio Morricone. This band were fantastic, bringing to life on stage the iconic music of the legendary Italian composer in a sophisticated and sensitive way. The band weren't cheesy or trite or clichéd – though that was the risk – they were brilliant, and the audience was repeatedly brought to tears, as I might add, was I. Dunno what it was about that band or that music, but they were deeply moving at times. The fun part of the gig from my perspective was that I was given carte blanche (by me) to mix with some huge, over-the-top reverbs... the spaghetti western horns and whistles were suitably drenched! If you see The Counterfeit around the traps, go see them.

Another act called Ozone Street, a local band from Southern Victoria, have a remarkable young guitarist named Archie Leggett, who is an outstanding talent on blues lead guitar. If he keeps playing into his 30s and 40s, I suspect he'll have quite the reputation by then. He's a rare talent, incredibly gifted on his instrument, and nonchalant, almost dismissive of his abilities. Remember that name! He's fantastic.

Three other acts of note that I mixed in quick succession, all of whom are remarkable performers, were: Loretta Miller, one of Australia's best female vocalists who always plays with great musicians around her. She sang up a storm and performed brilliantly, as usual, but to too few, which was a real pity. Georgia Fields and her string quartet played sublimely. Some of the members of this all-female outfit are members of the MSO, and that was clear from their performance – remarkable. Finally there was Hussy Hicks, another all-female band made up of brilliant players; well known in certain circles for their high-energy performances, and yet another example of an Australian band whose raw talent and musicianship far exceeds the size of the audience that witness them. Julz Parker is an amazing talent on guitar in that band, and Leesa Gentz is a phenomenon on the mic. The rhythm section absolutely rocks as well. If you're bored and Hussy Hicks are playing at a venue near you, get off the couch and go!

Last mention: I mixed a gig a couple of weeks ago now featuring the duo of Kevin Welch and Heath Cullen, who were both also singing

into the pair of recent test mics I've had with me: the Shure Nexadyne 8/Cs. Kevin's strictly speaking an Oklahoma-raised, dyed-in-the-wool American, but he's lived here for some time now, and is well worth going to see if you like mature, heartfelt songwriting and sublime singing craft. Heath is Australian, and another great guitar player (the list seems long at this point!) Kevin is a very experienced singer/songwriter, with several awards under his belt. His voice through the Nexadyne 8/C was beautifully detailed and clear, which gave the mixes that night a special intimacy in the smaller venue.

So from my perspective in this crazy industry of ours, there is no drought of musicality, only the one outside the studio in the surrounding paddocks. Australian music is healthy, and awash with talent despite the disgraceful lack of support from the industry around it. I can hardly keep up with the endless stream of great musicians I've encountered over this summer alone, and I'm hopeful that at least some of them will appear on some upcoming recording projects I'll be working on throughout the year ahead.

I can't help but be enthralled by great songs and performers – they're the lifeblood of the music industry. Without them we might as well pack it all in and go home!

Andy Stewart owns and operates The Mill in the hills of Bass Coast Shire, Victoria, and he's also the Editorial Director of mutech.media




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A THEATRE WITHIN A THEATRE

Foundation Theatres unveils
the Foundry Theatre

Foundation Theatres have officially unveiled their newest venue, the Foundry Theatre, located within the Sydney Lyric. This innovative space is the end result of a \$12 million investment and the reimaging of an underutilised backstage area. While the concept of a 'theatre within a theatre' is relatively rare in Australia, it's more commonly seen overseas.

Foundation Theatres is an Australian-owned theatre owner, operator, and production investor. Headquartered in Sydney, the company acquired the Capitol Theatre in 2009, followed by the Lyric Theatre in 2011, which was subsequently renamed the Sydney Lyric under its new ownership.

Some of the main specifications of Foundry Theatre, at a glance

Width 15.39m

Length 15.9m

Max Trim Height 8.0m

Max Flown Weight 6 Tonne

Seated Capacity 360

Standing Capacity 630

The Foundry Theatre's name draws inspiration from a traditional foundry - a space of transformation, innovation and creation. Construction began in May 2024 and was completed in early 2025, with the theatre officially opening its doors to audiences in February 2025 with a number of concerts by Tim Minchin. Although construction was completed in a relatively short timeframe, the journey to bring this venue to life spanned over 14 years. The vision for a second theatre within the Sydney Lyric was conceived in 2011, when Foundation Theatres originally acquired the Lyric Theatre and initiated its rebranding as the Sydney Lyric.

Many unsuccessful attempts were made over the years. With each effort, valuable lessons were learned, refined and reapplied. These cumulative experiences ultimately led to the successful creation of a theatre within a theatre – an ambitious and technically complex achievement that speaks volumes to Foundation Theatres persistence, innovation and vision.

Originally designed to accommodate repertory opera, the Lyric Theatre, as it was first known, was built with advanced technical capabilities. The venue features generous wing space and a rear stage area equal in size to the main stage, enabling seamless set changes. This design allowed one set to be stored upstage while another was in use, facilitating smooth transitions between productions. Despite its original design, the venue has not operated in a repertory format since its opening in 1995. Over the past 30 years, it has consistently functioned as a commercial venue, typically hosting one resident production at a time.

Today, Foundation Theatres has the capability to host two independent productions simultaneously; one in the Sydney Lyric and another in the Foundry Theatre. Through meticulous planning and collaboration with acoustic and structural engineering experts, the venues have been designed to operate without any noise or vibration transfer between them.

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The Sydney Lyric stage and the Foundry Theatre are structurally independent, each supported by its own set of columns. This separation ensures full acoustic isolation. Background sound levels in the Foundry Theatre measure just 35dB during performances in the Sydney Lyric. This is equivalent to the ambient noise produced by the venue's air conditioning systems.

Foundry Theatre is a flexible performance space that can operate in multiple modes and has seating for a variety of performance types across floor and balcony levels. Foundry

Theatre is two levels and features an upper seating bank, lower seating bank and floor seats. The lower seating bank can be moved and packed away, it is a modular set up and can accommodate thrust seating as well as proscenium style. The flat floor performance space is also versatile enough to allow for it to be used as a thoroughfare to the Sydney Lyric and can be used for storage too. It has its own laundry, dressing rooms and backstage space.

We caught up with Paul Rigby, Chief Operating Officer (COO) at Foundation Theatres for a tour and a chat.



Here is just some of the technical equipment available in house at the Foundry Theatre

Lighting

1 x ChamSys QuickQ 30 console

8 x ETC Source 4 26 deg Lustr LED Profiles

6 x Acme XA-400 Spot Pro

17 x Acme Icarus 320 RGBW wash lights

Audio PA

4 x Meyer Sound UPA-1P speakers (Left & Right)

4 x Meyer Sound UPA-2P speakers (Centre Array)

2 x Meyer Sound PSW-2 sub speakers

2 x Meyer Sound UPA-1P speakers (Side Fill)

4 x Meyer Sound UPM-2 speakers (Front Fill)

2 x Yamaha PX3 Amplifiers (Front Fill)

1 x Allen & Heath SQ6 Mixer

2 x dbx Venu360 Drive Rack

Staging

22 x 2000mm x 1000mm GT stage decks

4 x 1000mm x 1000mm GT stage decks

Rigging

1 x SRS Rigging 24 way hoist controller w/ remote

18 x 500KG Motors with Broadweigh load cells

2 x 500KG motors

2 x 12m 400mm 5 Chord CLS truss – Stage area

2 x 3m 400mm 5 Chord CLS truss – Side Trusses

1 x 12m 300mm Tri Truss – FOH

All venue truss is black



KH: What inspired the 'theatre within a theatre' concept?

PR: We've been keen to build a theatre in the rear stage since purchasing the venue in 2011. The main challenge was maintaining unimpeded access to the main stage, as all loading goes through the rear stage. We also struggled with how to bring patrons into a space never intended for public use. In March 2023, it all came together; we developed a concept where the stage and seating could be entirely removed when required for loading. We also rethought the patron journey, turning what was once a limitation into a unique and immersive entry experience.

KH: What inspired the patron entry?

PR: We flipped the traditional model. Patrons use the Sydney Lyric's foyers, bars, and box office, then enter Foundry Theatre via a series of corridors and spaces. The aim is to shift their perspective from the bright buzz of the main foyer into a quieter, more focused environment that builds anticipation. We see this transition as a key part of the Foundry Theatre experience.

KH: Why did you decide to kit the venue out, as opposed to having it as a 'black box'?

PR: It's about making the space accessible and production-ready from day one.

KH: What was the biggest challenge during construction?

PR: Without a doubt, building a theatre while major productions like & Juliet and Hamilton were running eight shows a week. Our builders worked across almost every backstage area. It was a balancing act, and we're so grateful to the production teams for their understanding during such a complex process.

KH: What are you most excited about now that the Foundry Theatre is up and running?

Seeing people use it in ways we hadn't imagined. We designed the venue to be as flexible as possible, so each production can reshape it into something new. That's what the name Foundry is all about; melting things down and creating something fresh each time.

KH: What do you consider to be the highlight of the venue?

PR: The acoustic isolation. It's extraordinary. Foundry Theatre is separated from the Sydney Lyric stage by just one metre - literally to the millimetre - and yet there's no sound transfer. That level of engineering precision is something we're incredibly proud of.

Foundry Theatre has its own inventory of brand-new technical equipment. It is a very well kitted out venue and features a versatile lighting system, audio system, and rigging set up. The smaller details have been taken care of on the technical side. The top trim height is a generous 8m. The air con and other services sit well above that. Black truss has been used instead of silver. Masking has been done properly. There is ample space to store roadcases and other equipment. Considerations have been made for cable runs and cable management, power is easily accessible. Logistically it is a very easy venue to move gear in and out of. A true testament to the level of planning that has taken place to get this off the ground.

Operated by a team with vast experience in live entertainment, the venue is quickly establishing itself as a valuable addition to the city's cultural landscape. Since opening it has seen strong interest and is heavily booked for the remainder of the year.

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From Regional NSW to Victorian Trainee of the Year

Emma Holgate



When Emma Holgate was a kid, she volunteered as a roadie for her Dad, who was the town DJ. She'd help him set up his portable PA and modest lighting rig for local gigs like her school's disco, which she thought was pretty cool. Moving to Melbourne and a career in production was her dream when she finished high school, but without contacts or money it felt like just that – a dream. She started working in education and was considering continuing to pursue that path. "I had a yarn with a friend who had recently graduated from VCA as a theatremaker," explains Emma. "She said, why don't you just see what's out there?" Emma Googled 'sound technician work Melbourne' and that's how she stumbled on Arts Centre Melbourne's traineeship program.

Art Centre Melbourne's RTO intakes at least three individuals each year, assigned a specific discipline – Sound, Lighting or Staging – to partake in paid, on-the-job training in addition to classroom time and mentorship with industry leaders. Successful participants graduate with a Certificate III in Live Production and Technical Services and, hopefully, with their foot well and truly in the door of the industry. It is a dream opportunity for beginning a career in theatre – one that I was also lucky enough to be given – but for this reason it is a competitive application process, with well over a hundred applicants in any given year.

Emma was confident with how her interview went, but looking around the room at all the other hopefuls she knew it was still a long shot. Luckily, for both Emma and Arts Centre Melbourne, she was successful.

Overall, Emma describes her experience in the traineeship as positive; "There was no expectation that I was secretly very good at the job already. Everyone understood that I was coming in pretty fresh." While the jump from being in a classroom to doing shifts felt like a big leap, Emma believes learning from people currently doing the job is best practice. Not only does it mean you're learning the most up-to-date gear and methodologies, it also presents opportunities to learn alongside more senior technicians when new practices come in.

One of the first gigs Emma worked on was the Australian Ballet's season of Don Quixote. There was little expectation she would be doing much more than shadowing. By the time the Australian Ballet returned for their season of Swan Lake, Emma was working solo on the floor. "I realised I knew what I was doing, and if everyone else was fine for me to do it, I was fine to have a go."

One of the reasons Arts Centre Melbourne is a great place to cut your teeth is the diversity of shows it presents. Working on the ballet provided training on a large-scale production and taught Emma the importance of building good relationships with other departments, but some of Emma's highlights were working on smaller shows. "I enjoyed working on Share House: the Musical. That was the first show I was the head radio tech on. It was up to me to set up the whole system. It was a pretty small cast and a small creative team so while sometimes a radio mic tech can be separate from everyone, on a smaller show you feel like you're all working together."

By the end of the year, Murray Johnston, Senior Manager in Technical Training and Development at ACM, asked Emma if she would be willing to speak at the Victorian Skills Authority, a government body dedicated to vocational training. Emma was there to share her experience and advocate for on-the-job training. At that point she had finished the official traineeship and quickly had offers of

work come up. The VSA told Emma and Murray about the Victorian Training Awards, and at their suggestion, Emma threw her hat in to be considered.

Emma was one of three finalists chosen for the awards and was invited to a ceremony at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. It was a high production value event with a full sound system and lighting rig, four projection screens, a performance up top of the show and even people riding roller-skates between the tables. Emma had no idea until her name was called out that she had won Victorian Trainee of the Year. She was automatically entered into the National Training Awards that were held in Canberra and in which she came runner-up.

The awards offered various professional development opportunities and networking events. The recognition and resulting coverage meant organisations were able to put a face to the name, but more so a name to the face of the person they had already been working alongside at Arts Centre Melbourne.

It no doubt opened doors for Emma, many of which she has stepped through. She remains casually employed at ACM in the Sound and Vision department. She is a Project Officer on Deadly Creatives, a program run by the Melbourne Theatre Company that connects young First Nations theatremakers with opportunities and which Emma describes as "building a group of people that help contribute to self-determined theatre." As a part of this role Emma is producing upcoming

performances of Peggy Sue & Wiran's Dream - A Double Bill. This production is a part of YIRRAMBOI, a ten day First Nations-led arts festival in which Emma will also be lighting designer on the production, Three Blak Ravers, at the Beckett Theatre. Emma was recently contracted to work with BlakDance on Bunyi Bumi which premiered as part of the AsiaTOPA festival and now has an ongoing remote role as their production coordinator. She is a part of Ilbijerri Theatre's BlackStage program and has just been announced as one of Melbourne Theatre Company's 2025-26 Future Creatives participants, where she will have the opportunity to assist and be mentored by established sound and lighting designers.

Her current roles present a number of different paths Emma could take in the industry and for now she is happy with this; "I feel like even though I'm juggling a few things, they're all a little bit different and there's transferable skills. Sometimes information I have for one role ends up being helpful for another"

The awards and subsequent recognition have allowed Emma opportunities to speak of her experience, but she is conscious she wants to have her own career before she focusses too much on mentoring other people. It's not uncommon for Emma to be the only woman on a shift she is working, more common to be the only woman of colour, and even more common the only First Nations person. Emma knows diversifying the industry involves more than simply hiring people from various

backgrounds; "There's a lot of work that needs to be done to make the environments better for those people once they're in. If I'm saying 'young women and women of colour come work in this industry' it would be disingenuous for me not to acknowledge that sometimes men will tell me that I don't know how to do my job. If I'm going to be an advocate for gaining diversity in the industry, I need to do some of the work to make sure things get better."

I can confidently say that our industry is better for having Emma Holgate in it.





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ENTTEC x LOTRON

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A local partnership has helped usher in a new era for an iconic Melbourne venue

ENTTEC is an Australian lighting software, controls, and fixtures manufacturer founded 25 years ago and still headquartered in Melbourne today. While we operate all over the globe with offices in the UK, US, Dubai and China, we always understand the importance of local partnerships.

A core difference between a successful project and one that turns out just 'okay' happens when all parties involved strive for the same level of commitment to quality.

While we engineer our products to perform as best as we possibly can, unless they're installed with a similar degree of care and attention, achieving the optimal end result is no guarantee.

This is why at each of ENTTEC's international bases, there are select local electricians and installers that we always recommend to our clients for their projects because we know the importance and value of using a tried and tested company.

When it comes to projects throughout Victoria, working with Melbourne-based Lotron Electrical as a brand partner has always been a pleasure.

Take a look at the meticulous planning, preparation and execution of Lotron's installation of pixel dots at St Kilda's iconic Prince Bandroom.

Since the 1950s, the Prince has been Melbourne's heartbeat for live music, hosting legends from Nick Cave and Midnight Oil to Billie Eilish and Glass Animals. It's more than just a venue - it's a living testament to the city's vibrant musical heritage.

In just one month, Lloyd Gibbs and his team at Lotron Electrical transformed the venue's ceiling from a blank canvas into an immersive space where light and sound collide, amplifying every beat and electrifying the atmosphere.

Starting with precise line tracing, 3,072 ENTTEC Smart PXL 60 LED dots were installed, each carefully fastened for maximum impact.

Powered by eight OCTO controllers and brought to life with ENTTEC's industry-leading ELM LED mapping software, the result is a bold, ever-changing spectacle that moves with the music and keeps the crowd coming back for more.

Lotron's professionalism was key to the success of this project. Their millimetre-perfect straight lines and even grid spacing resulted in a feature that looks flawless from every direction.

The same was true when it came to the dedication of the venue owners in this case.

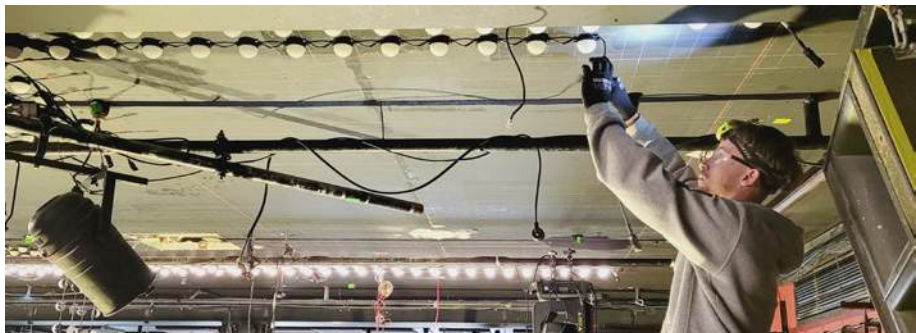
They even had an existing fire sprinkler moved ever-so-slightly at no small expense just so that its position wouldn't impact on the perfect geometry of the LED grid. The confidence they formed by observing the ENTTEC-Lotron partnership made doing so an easy decision – they could see that if something was worth doing, it was going to be worth doing properly.

With all parties involved working seamlessly together, this was a great example of true teamwork in action. The better the team, the better the result. And that's why with a local installation partner like Lotron, ENTTEC can ensure that the end clients will receive the outcome, plus the ongoing technical support, of their dreams.

So, if you have a forthcoming lighting adventure on the cards, don't hesitate to get in touch with ENTTEC here in Melbourne. We'll be more than happy to guide you towards some professional local tradespeople and tech companies that we know you can trust for your project. You'll be glad you did!

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Prince Bandroom. Photo Credit: Giulio Lavenuta



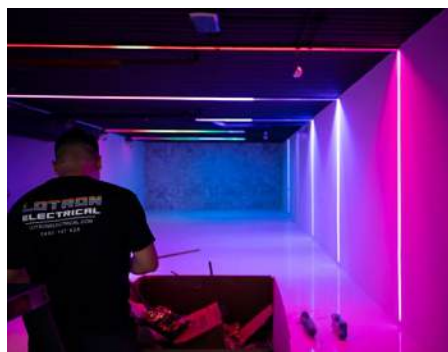
Prince Bandroom. Photo Credit: Giulio Lavenuta



Nic Moreau of ENTTEC



Lloyd Gibbs of Lotron





Premier Sound and Lighting's

Justin Myers

From hanging out with sound guys learning the ropes, to owner/operator of a successful production company; passion, persistence and progression are a recurring theme in this showcase of local tech legend Justin Myers, from Toowoomba, Queensland's Premier Sound and Lighting. Nestled in the Darling Downs region of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba may not be boasting the largest of populations with 179,000 people, but it is home to a beloved production company that has serviced the audio visual needs of its community for over 20 years.

Every story has its humble beginnings and Justin's journey is no exception. From playing in bands at school, setting up school PAs and the progression to working for production companies as the proverbial 'shitkicker', Justin's passion for all things audio culminated into one simple life changing epiphany; "I want to do that." Over 20 years later, 'that' has morphed into a full production company, one piece of gear at a time.

Justin recounts the evolution of his love of audio, paying his dues with local sound guys, before eventually picking up his own gigs with bands and promoters. Like many aspiring beginners, there was no personal inventory to utilise, so hiring out gear from production companies and keeping a regular job on

the side laid the foundation for what was to become. And become it did!

Despite not intentionally setting out to start a production company, the slow accumulation of gear organically led to an inventory that required less outside hiring. "I would buy an old clapped-out PA, then get money and buy more sound desks, to now owning top-tier equipment," Justin recalls. Premier Sound and Lighting is now the fully grown offspring from these embryonic beginnings, with many feathers in its progressive bow.

With Justin at the helm wearing a myriad of hats, alongside a dozen contractors, Premier Sound and Lighting offers AV and party hire, full event production, sales, and Toowoomba's

only rehearsal studio. The many years of accumulating gear has paid off with the top-tier audio equipment now being the only calibre of its type in Toowoomba. When pressed for what this top-tier equipment entails, the resounding theme is all things Adamson. After a distributor's loan of an Adamson PA for a month-long test drive, Justin was sold. His inventory now boasts a plethora of Adamson PA; line arrays, point source boxes, subs and Lab Gruppen amps, along with mid-level JBL and Turbosound speakers. Being a distributor himself now through CMI, Australis, Eventec, Showtools and NAS, Justin is always keen to direct the buyer towards his love for Adamson, noting its amazing sound quality and ability to hold its sales value.

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A top-tier sound desk is also on the cards for the future after selling his Midas Pro 2, while it was still possible to get money for it. His inventory currently includes plenty of mid-level Allen and Heath SQ range of consoles, along with mid-level lighting and vision equipment which nicely round out his full production services.

So where are these services provided? Being the premier choice in name and reputation for this regional city, it's inevitable that the repertoire of events are many and varied. Alongside concerts, music festivals, community and corporate events, Justin notes interesting standouts like Chinchilla's Melon Festival, The Birdsville Races, rodeos, B&S balls and Motorfest, a recent car burnout event where all the AV bells and whistles were employed. Among the most memorable and

biggest to date however is Woodford Folk Festival where he began six years ago with one stage, to now doing production for three stages.

As anyone in this industry can also relate, a certain pandemic five years ago threw a giant destructive spanner in the works, requiring a lot of pivoting and recalibrating. Justin's recollection of this grim period however was more fortuitous than doomsday. "Since the hiring out of equipment came to a screeching halt, it was all used to deck out the rehearsal studio with vision mixers and cameras to broadcast live concerts every weekend." Whilst not a financial goldmine, he notes it kept everyone relatively sane. Coming out of lockdowns, Woodford Folk Festival then came back as a scaled down event over a three-month period, renamed Bushtime Festival.

Being the sole provider for these weeklong events for three months ensured Premier's financial survival, servicing the two stages.

Coming out of the last few turbulent years has clearly not deterred Justin's passion for what he does. When questioned about what drives him, his love of mixing bands, setting up PAs and optimising the sound to the room and situation are quickly noted. Working for himself alongside other people passionate about the industry is also a highlight. Every job has its downsides, however. Just don't mention big load outs! Apparently three hours into load outs often triggers an existential crisis in this sound guy. Troubleshooting AV disasters, the possible other downside. Especially those that include sound desks deciding "I'm not going to sound desk anymore."



Alongside having the only top-tier audio in Toowoomba, Premier also offers the only rehearsal studio frequented regularly by the many local musicians. Forget four white walls with fluorescent lights, this is one space that “looks good and sounds good,” according to Justin. A space that nearly ceased to exist after the ceiling collapsed in 2022 due to torrential rain. Thanks to the local music community however, a Go Fund Me to save the studio was successful in keeping Toowoomba’s only rehearsal studio running, much to the delight of local musicians and home garages everywhere.

With over 20 years now under his belt and a business that appears to be thriving, Justin is very candid about what lies ahead, and it doesn’t include expanding. Go better, not bigger would be the most succinct way to summarise his future plans. “Going up to the next level is a lot more money. Every bit of gear has to be top-tier,” he explains. The goal instead is to replace older speakers, get more top-tier foldback speakers, a new top-tier sound desk and improve the light show. He also hesitantly acknowledges the astronomical amount he’s spent on Adamson over the years unconvincingly declaring, “I don’t need more speakers.” Apparently, there’s a home driveway still patiently waiting to be built...

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LOCAL FACILITY GIVING LOCALS A FUTURE

by John O'Brien



**You want to be a roadie?
First off, why? Because...
reasons. OK, we crew are all
a little different so you might
just fit in. Where to start?**

Getting your greasy mitts on some quality performance equipment is hard when you are bottom of the food chain. Even getting in on that chain can be difficult. The music biz can be cliquy, and a little insular to boot. The easiest way to get your foot into any closed-door operation like this is to know someone on the inside. That isn't always possible.

Do you stand at stage doors and annoy everyone passing until they either let you in or get you locked up? Is your spare time spent on school productions, valiantly hacking through yet another iteration of 'Oklahoma' ... using decades old analog gear barely held together by rust, dust and age-hardened gaffer tape? Have you set up a home studio or small

DJ rig, taught by YouTube and sourced from online markets?

Another option is to hope that government bodies team up and provide opportunities that allow you to learn about live performance. Which is what the youngsters of the Strathbogies Shire currently benefit from.

The Opportunity

Back in 2011, then Victorian government's Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) awarded a grant to the Shire for a portable pop-up trailer that would allow local youth to put on shows. This was done under the Music Equipment Grants Program.

Contractors tailored a purpose-built 8x4 trailer to store equipment, transport it to shows and act as a DJ booth or FoH compound. It's pretty much a gig-on-wheels and can be configured to have everything required for a show. It has reinforced spigots welded to each corner

to mount speakers, an accessible ramp for loading, and is pre-wired with internal outlets for 240VAC, USB and lighting. It is built country-tough (and needs to be with the condition of rural roads). I've seen a lot of different rigs over the years and this is easily one of the most flexibly configured yet sturdy versions.

It has a portable generator for when the local power is out of reach or unreliable. There is room inside for enough tech gear, backline, marquees and miscellanea to stage all manner of shows.

The Method

FReeZA has long been a co-sponsor of this initiative (with our local version titled Ictetranauts). This youth development program is an offshoot of The Push, a not-for-profit charity that has been supporting youth events across Australia for nearly four decades. They continue to support the Shire with regular equipment upgrades, staging assistance and links to industry mentors. It also funds and

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2x Samson Auro 12" self powered mid/highs

3x EAW powered wedges

Control:

12 input Soundcraft mixing desk EFX 12

Behringer X32 digital mixer or Behringer XR18 Digital Mixer

Misc:

Pioneer DJ XDJ-RX3

3x passive DI

Table

Rug

Marquee

Backline:

5 Piece Pearl (Crash, Ride, Hi-Hat)

Remo Emperor Clear and Pinstripe Clear 10" 12" 16" + 14" coated Ambassador skins

1x Cajon

3x Fender acoustic guitars

2x Waldron bass guitars

2x Synthesisers

4x Djembes

2x Tabla

encourages 20-30 shows per year, giving increased experience for everyone involved.

While backers get their goals met, the kids are the real winners. They get to learn about audio, lighting, stage management and all the other jobs or tasks that go with putting on a show. If they play or sing, they get an outlet to practice. It is telling that almost all roles in these events are performed by these youth. Hands-on experience is invaluable for both personal and professional development.

Having such a facility on hand was but a dream when I was a teen. My suburban schooling had nothing so fancy. We had a passionate music teacher but that was about it. Euroa, where this

trailer lives, also has a brilliant music teacher in Nick Lester at Euroa Secondary College. An accomplished, gigging saxophonist in his own right, he has been instrumental in encouraging the current purple patch of local musos.

Big props go to Youth Development Officer, Nett Walton, who has tirelessly supported oncoming generations of local performers, artists and techs for decades, organising funding, opportunities and shows. With her devoted partner Andie Guerin, they have mentored dozens upon dozens of the new breed, teaching them all the ins and outs of how to conduct shows. I doffs me hat to these three, fine role models that they are.





The Application

Our local Thursday community pizza evenings just finished for summer, and we engaged the trailer and some local bands for our final night's entertainment. FReeZA covered costs for performers and techs. Yes, the kids get paid to setup and packdown too - just like in real roadie life!

Beyond running one power lead to stageside, I did nothing techy on the night. The performers setup the gear, mixed each other and packed down at the end of the night. All I had to do was MC. What a pleasure.

Four discrete acts played but they were different combinations of the six musicians there on the night. Jeremiah Johnston setup

the PA with assistance from Angus Rowe, then started with a solo set. Alina Lester and Tyler Kipping followed with a sweet duet before (a hastily hacked together version of) Ungraded hit the stage. Two of their regular members couldn't make it on the night but Tyler stood in to play guitar opposite Sonny Lester and sang through a good set anyway. Angus set a fearsome beat on the kit.

We finished off the night with a rockin set from The Viceroy's band (winners of Rockfest 2023). Fronted by Jeremiah, with Tyler's drumming in lockstep with Grace Whitney on bass, this lineup is very, very good. They've got some great songs, good stage presence and gel as a tight unit musically.

I got so much delight in seeing the joy of all the parents, punters and performers involved. Of the six musicians, I've watched five grow up since they were tiny. I've been good friends with their parents and now become friends direct with them. Fine adults they will all become and great musicians and techs they already are.

These kids are the future. Judging by the intelligence, ability and passion that they showed as performers, technicians and human beings, we are in extremely good hands.

They got that way in no small part due to this PA trailer and its backers.



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Actuators for Motorised Platforms

Photo Credit: @jessgleeson



UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP IGNITES AT BETA BAR

Ignite is an annual event that highlights new talent from Universal Music Group, presenting their exceptional new acts to a broader audience. This year, Olivia Dean, Sebastian Schub, and Sienna Spiro performed in Sydney at an exclusive event attended by a select group of guests.

Jay Productions & Events recognised that this prestigious event was an ideal fit for its new Martin MAC Aura XIP moving head wash light, featuring a radical aura filament effect and complete pixel control with video mapping capabilities that can be applied to the beam, aura, or both.

"Before purchase, we came to realise that we required a reliable and bright IP-rated wash light," explained Phillip Dearle, General Manager. "After tedious research, we decided on Martin's MAC Aura XIP and purchased 32 units."

"The most outstanding feature for us was its impressive size-to-light output ratio. Despite its compact and lightweight design, it has delivered exceptional performance. The balance of efficiency and output has made it a game-changer in our inventory."



Photo Credit: @jessgleeson



Photo Credit: @jessicamcdonald.co

Sometimes it all gets too much...



The *Support Act Wellbeing Helpline* is a free, confidential counselling service that is available to anyone working in Australian music who needs to talk to someone about any aspect of their wellbeing.



THE SUPPORT ACT WELLBEING HELPLINE IS MADE POSSIBLE WITH THE SUPPORT OF:





Photo Credit: @jessgleeson

Since Jay Productions & Events' acquisition, they have been consistently in use. Their performance has been outstanding, delivering reliability and efficiency without any issues.

"We have been thoroughly impressed and are excited to continue using them even more in the future," added Phillip. "It perfectly filled a gap in our inventory for a mid-range fixture - something we had been missing for quite some time. Until now, we didn't have a moving wash that was IP-rated, and this addition has significantly enhanced our capabilities. It has given us greater flexibility and confidence, especially for outdoor and weather-sensitive applications."

Due to the MAC Aura XIP's integration with Martin's P3 System Controller and its seamless

compatibility with the Martin VDO Sceptron build, it has become an essential part of Jay Productions & Events' inventory. This level of integration enhances the overall visual cohesion, allowing for more dynamic and creative designs with minimal effort.

The Ignite event was held at the intimate Beta Bar in Sydney, where you can get close to the act. Lighting designer Ziggy Ziegler was tasked with creating his magic after receiving a brief from Universal Music and the creative mind of Natalie Vincini.

A wall of colour and beams, mixed with rock and roll blinders, along with a canopy of LED lights, formed part of the initial design brief for the stage. It had to be capable of producing rock and pop music looks, filling the frame

for camera shots and creating Instagram moments while maintaining an intimate, small-venue feel. A later adjustment to the brief called for limited periodic use of colour, and the majority of the looks to have a tungsten live rock feel as the base.

The MAC Aura XIP were to be multi-purpose lights, with four songs each for three bands, performed with minimal sound checks and no rehearsal or plotting time; they had to be very flexible and quick to program. So they had to be beams, wash, floods, strobes, blinders, and be small, light and easy to rig on a pipe and truss arrangement in a hurry. 20 Martin MAC Aura XIP were rigged on upright truss and pipe behind the band from floor level to four metres in the air.



Photo Credit: @jessicamcdonald.co

Photo Credit: @jessicamcdonald.co

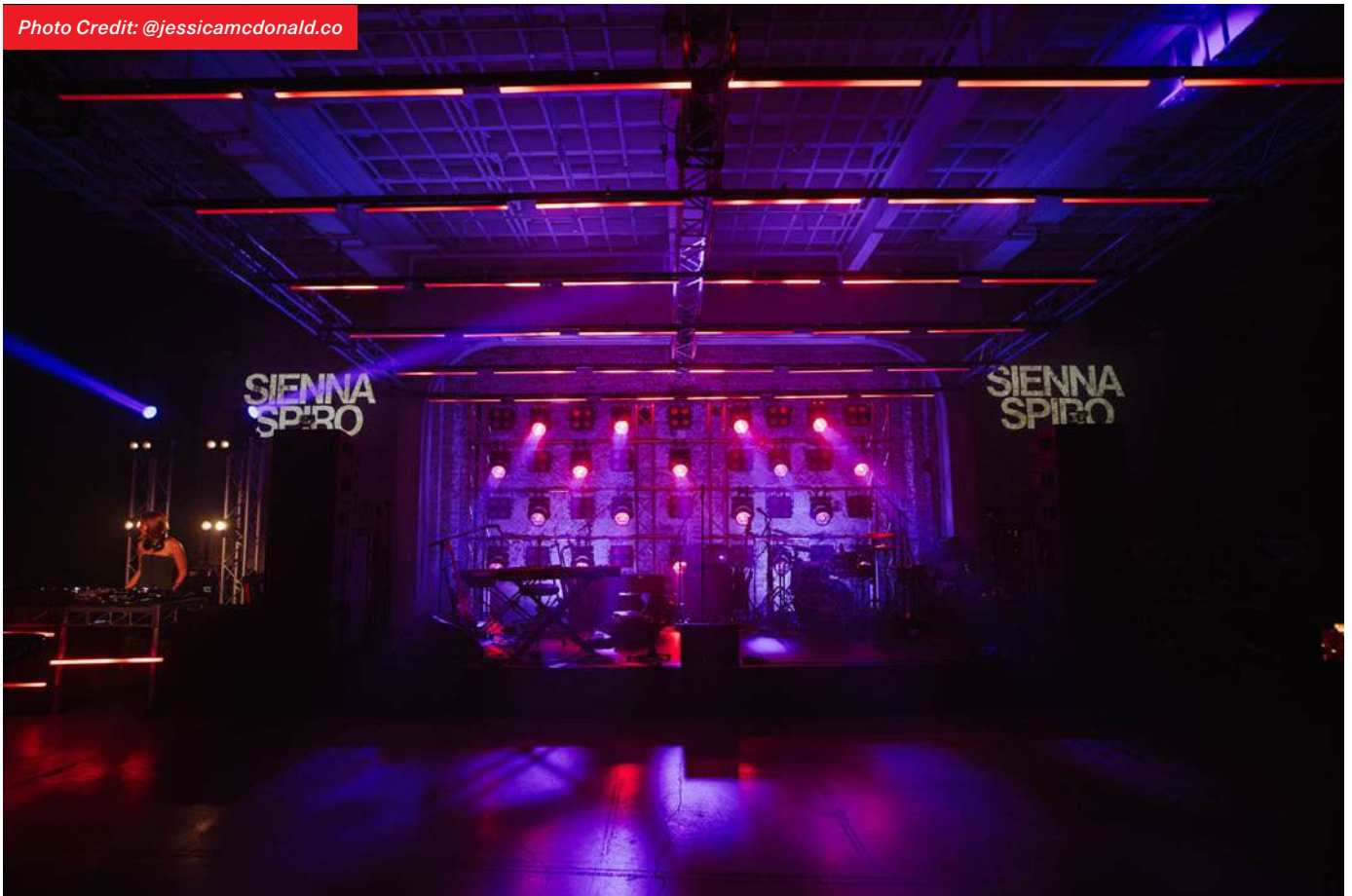


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"The ability to pixelmap them whilst still using them as a regular wash light and beam light was great," commented Ziggy. "They are small, light, have nice dimming and can zoom wide or be very narrow beams. They strobe well and are reliable. The flower aura effect is fabulous eye candy. I can get a lot of looks out of them, no matter how many I have."

At times, the MAC Aura XIPs were regular wash lights or beam lights; however, during some songs, Ziggy wanted to use video content across them or just across the aura filament effect part of the light. Initially, he asked Jay Productions to create a map of the aura filament and then of the actual Aura LEDs in Resolume, using numerous geometric pattern videos to produce effects. These were either very smooth and soft movements or frenetic, fast-paced scenes.

"Using about four layers on Resolume, this worked a treat," remarked Ziggy. "Jay Productions created a console switch macro to switch between Resolume to map them or run them as direct lights with the ability to switch this live during the show."

The lighting design also contained 20 four-way LED blenders rigged behind the band and 42 Martin VDO Scepter LED strips mounted to a long pipe running above the stage, forming a canopy that covered both the stage and the audience. This was also pixel-mapped in Resolume, so the exact effects in the MAC Aura XIP ran through the VDO Scepter.



DiGiCo is brat

Charli XCX's Brat Album was the sound of 2024. She has been making music for well over a decade, but this year has seen a massive explosion in her popularity. The album dominated the charts, dictating the colour and the vibe of the year. The Brat Tour started in July 2024 and continues throughout 2025 with dates all over the world. Charli commands the stage, with only occasional guests and minimal set pieces, so all eyes are on her for the entire performance. To ensure complete reliability and crystal-clear sound throughout the tour, Front of House engineer Mat Collis and Barry Tymms, monitor engineer have chosen to rely upon the rock-solid DiGiCo SD12-96 at the monitor position and Quantum 338 at front of house, both supplied by Eighth Day Sound.

"The Quantum 338's ease of use and bright screens are a welcome upgrade and perfect over the summer for outdoor concerts," Collis says. "When we are traveling the world, the availability of a DiGiCo makes a huge difference too. These practicalities, coupled with all the routing options and fantastically clean sound, but with the option of adding colour if I want to, makes the Quantum 338 the perfect choice for me."

Collis has worked with Charli XCX for 13 years and has only missed a handful of shows in

that time, so he is completely in tune with what is needed to deliver a great show. At the front of house position there are 32 channels of playback arriving via MAD1 to an Orange Box, DiGiCo's bi-directional audio format conversion unit. The Orange Box uses DMI cards to create audio paths across any interface and has dual power supplies for added security.

"In addition to the audio needed for the show, we also have timecode and an internal BLDS (Buffer Loop Detection Signal) for redundant

switching," he explains. "We also have analogue back-up signals, talkback for the sound team and for Charli if she needs it. The increased channel count on the Quantum 338 is useful; even with a vocal and track gig, you can quickly rack up the channel count, especially when you take the effects returns and duplicated inputs into account."

Charli XCX garners a lot of media interest, so additional feeds for broadcast, recordings, or social media are often required. Additional channels are also needed for guest artists.



With the high channel count, Collis really appreciates the three banks of faders available on the surface of the Quantum 338.

“I tend to send broadcast stems from the stage rack, but occasionally it’s just a left and right instrumental, with Charli’s vocal separated, or a direct MADI split,” he recalls. “Having pretty much all your channels in front of you is great and the Macros are really powerful; there are so many handy things you can utilise them for. I also love the Snapshot function, using it to lift levels during the chorus or switch tracks on and off.”

At monitors, Barry (Baz) Tymms’ SD12-96 has 96 channels at 48kHz or 96kHz and benefits from 155 Dynamic EQ processors that can be assigned to any input or output channel. The master section offers 16 graphic EQs, 12 digital effects, and up to 12 control groups. The main show is entirely to track, with guest artists, such as Lorde, Yung Lean and Addison Rae

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making surprise appearances to perform hugely popular remixes. Special guests also perform solo throughout the tour, something that kept things exciting for the audience and Tymms, as he continues.

"I started with Charli XCX for the latest run of UK Arena shows, so I've been with the tour just a few months," he says. "I use loads of Snapshots during the shows and when we have guest singers, I have additional Snapshots that I can incorporate for the extra checks we need. I love the two screens on the SD12-96 and the number of macros is really handy, especially on a small surface. It is a real favourite of mine and it's always available all over the world."

It is not just the clarity of workflow, fantastic sound and availability that keep Collis and Tymms coming back to DiGiCo. The support of Eighth Day and DiGiCo is a huge help for them on tour.

"I've only had to contact the team a few times and any issues have always been very quickly resolved," Collis notes. Tymms concurs. "Everyone is always really helpful if you ever need anything," he concludes. "It's great to know that we have that support behind us, although the reliability of the consoles means we don't often need to use it."



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Mamma Mia, Follow-Me Again!

The dynamic production of Mamma Mia! The Party in Rotterdam has set a new standard for live theatre, with the Follow-Me Track-iT system at the heart of its lighting design.

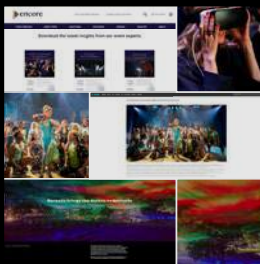
Mamma Mia! The Party is an immersive theatrical show that combines the magic of Mamma Mia! - the successful theatre production - with a unique dining experience. Set in a vibrant Greek taverna with the entire venue being used as the set, the show invites audiences to become part of the action, interacting with the cast and enjoying a meal while the story unfolds around them. With lively performances, iconic ABBA music, and a mix of comedy and drama, Mamma Mia! The Party creates an unforgettable, high-energy environment that blurs the line between audience and performers.

The Follow-Me Track-iT system was chosen for its ability to accurately track the performers through the venue, adjusting lighting automatically and replacing the need for manual follow-spots. The system combines RF tags worn by performers and strategically placed anchors to provide real-time positioning data, and its capabilities perfectly aligned with the vision of industry legend Patrick Woodroffe.

"We needed a robust system that could handle the complexity of this show, with its constant movement of cast members across the audience and stage," says Woodroffe. "The Follow-Me Track-iT system provides exactly that, allowing us to use multiple or individual lighting units in a way that would have been impossible with conventional follow-spotting. Its precision and responsiveness has been crucial in keeping the lights on target, no matter how unpredictable the action gets."

Woodroffe also highlights the system's adaptability: "One of the standout features of the Follow-Me Track-iT system is its ability to integrate seamlessly into any lighting rig, no matter how complicated. The system gives us more creative flexibility and ensures that no matter where the action goes, the lighting remains as dynamic as the performance itself. It's truly a game-changer for shows that push the limits of live lighting."

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Marc Van der Wel, Managing Director at Follow-Me, expresses his enthusiasm at the Follow-Me Track-iT system being chosen and used by Patrick and his team. "It's an honour to see Follow-Me Track-iT in action on such a dynamic show. Mamma Mia! The Party is an exceptional example of how automated tracking can be used in a busy, interactive performance," he says. "The system's ability to provide precise and real-time tracking, even in a high-speed environment, is exactly what shows like this need to deliver on their creative vision."

The production's lighting team worked under Technical Direction of Jeroen Frijters, along with Alex Marshall as Associate Designer, Greg Iannarilli as Show Operator, and Jasper van Eyck as System Tech, with Pascal Schutijser serving as the main Lighting Systems Tech for the show.

"As well as the flexibility and reliability of Follow-Me that Patrick refers to, Follow-Me again and again delivers on its renown reputation of supplying fantastic support," concludes Frijters. "This is a hugely

important distinguishing factor in our industry."

The system was supplied by Events Light, which ensured that the installation and technical setup of the Follow-Me Track-iT system met the specific demands of the production. The result of their teamwork is a flawless integration of lighting and automation that enhances the immersive experience of Mamma Mia! The Party in Rotterdam.





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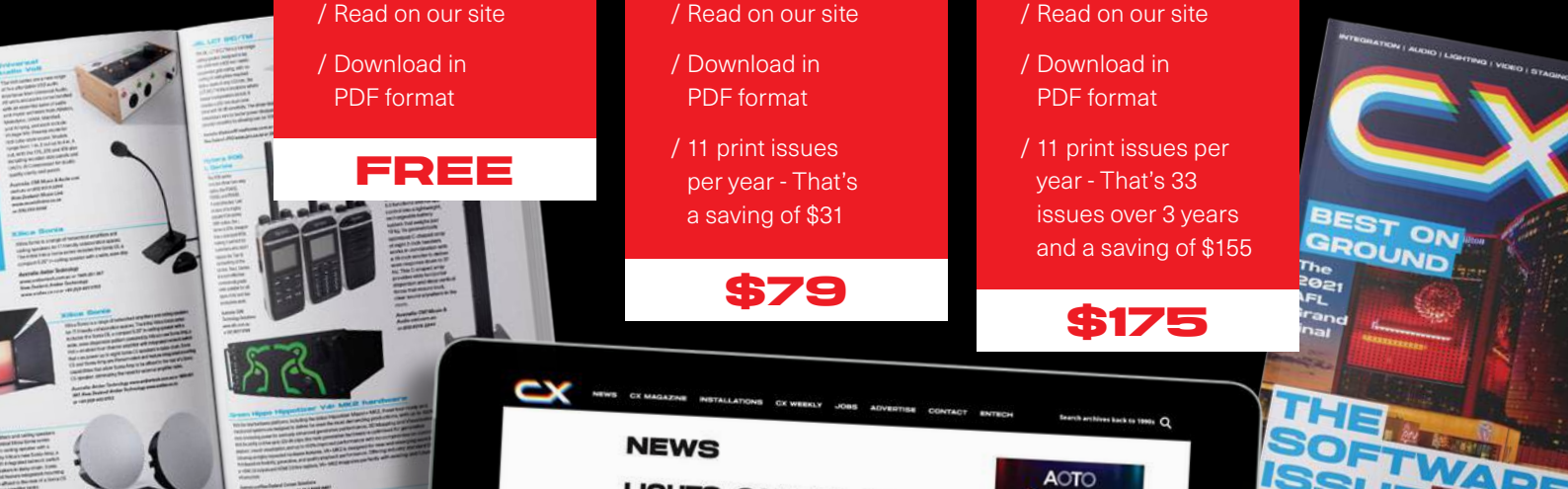
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Costa Cruises Rocks Sanremo with Huge iBOLT show



Aligning a special seven night cruise with the finale of the world-famous Sanremo Music Festival - which chooses Italy's Eurovision pick each year - Costa Cruises and Carnival Maritime commissioned a massive lighting installation aboard its Costa Toscana ship which was moored approximately one kilometre out of Sanremo's harbour for the Saturday night music extravaganza.

This super-sized piece of light art involved 60 Robe iBOLTS.

iBOLT is currently the Czech manufacturer's most powerful high-impact laser-source searchlight-style fixture, and was overseen by Roberto Iavarone, entertainment superintendent for the Costa fleet, who coordinates all things related to entertainment and technical production aboard the various Costa line's vessels.

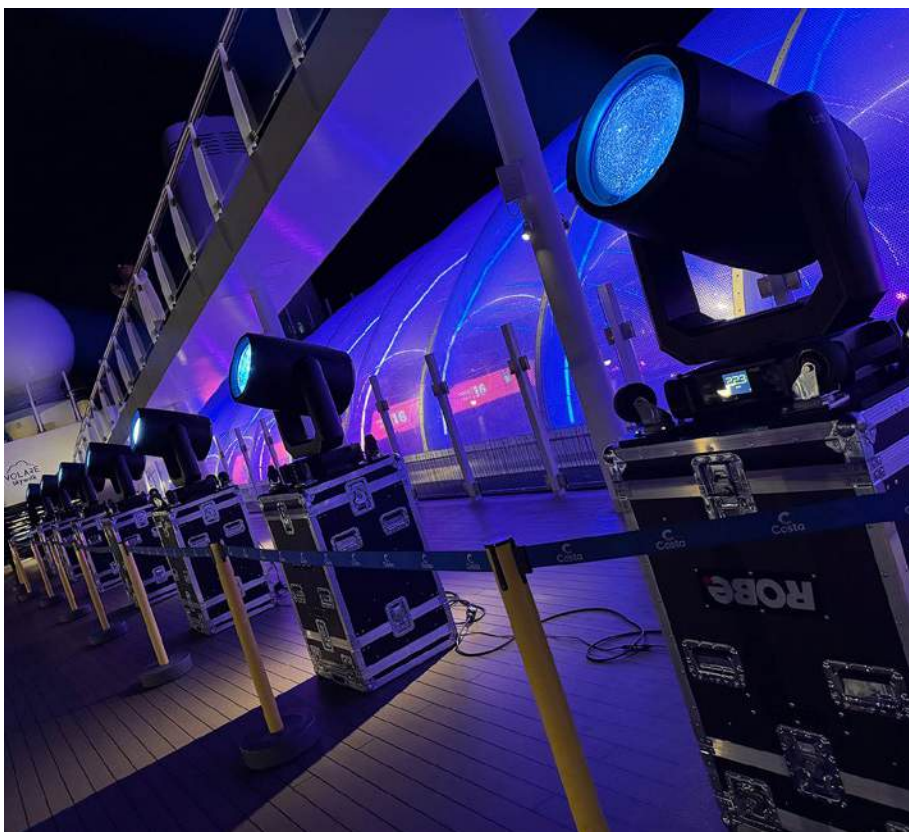
"We had initially wanted to do this monumental

style of lightshow for the 2024 event," Roberto explained, "but it was not possible to amass the right equipment in the time available, so we did a show, but this year the goal was to go HUGE," so the 337 metre long and 72 metre high vessel – currently the largest in the Costa fleet – was clearly visible from the shore.

In addition to the lightshow, a special entertainment programme was scheduled in the onboard Colosseo venue featuring special guests Planet Funk playing, with elements

of their show streamed to the main Sanremo Festival ESC selection broadcast live to the Teatro Ariston venue in Sanremo.

Wanting to ensure they presented the most awesome onboard lightshow this year, the iBOLT installation was the brainchild of a collab between lighting designers Amedeo Orfei and Davide Trentacoste of Fix Advanced Entertainment Solution, Roberto, and Costa Cruises' entertainment technical operations director, Paolo Campanelli.



iBOLTS were chosen by Paolo, Roberto and Amedeo as the brightest, best and most appropriate luminaires on the market to achieve the look they wanted.

The challenge was amassing enough iBOLTS! For this, RM Multimedia's sales director Ermanno Tontini assisted in connecting them with several rental companies in Italy who owned iBOLTS.

The iBOLTS were all positioned along Deck 18 of the Costa Toscana which is one of the upper decks, with the control and programming position below on Deck 9, plus some additional flood and wash lights rigged on Deck 8 and at the base of the ship's funnel to up-light and illuminate the harbour side of the vessel. The installation was completed by integrator Videlio HMS.

"The results were truly amazing," commented Roberto. The super-bright iBOLT beams blasted up into the night sky visible for many kilometres. "We certainly achieved our goal of being clearly seen from all along the shoreline, and the lightshow generated LOTS of social media chatter, photos and engagement, all of which had a great impact and buzz," he concluded.

"We certainly achieved our goal of being clearly seen from all along the shoreline, and the lightshow generated LOTS of social media chatter, photos and engagement, all of which had a great impact and buzz."





Some other Robe fixtures were also used in the Colosseo lighting rig for Planet Funk's performance, rented in as requested by the TV crew, and Robe moving lights also feature in various different entertainment spaces onboard the Costa Toscana.

The ship is an Excellence-class vessel, built in 2021 and is currently the ninth largest cruise ship worldwide. It can accommodate 6,554 passengers and 1,645 crew.



Waves eMotion LV1 Classic console chosen for Pitbull show at NASCAR's Daytona 500 broadcast



Front of House engineer and producer John Buitrago relies on the Waves eMotion LV1 Classic for Pitbull show at NASCAR's Daytona 500 broadcast

Delivering a seamless and polished audio experience for one of the biggest motorsport events in the world, front-of-house engineer and producer John Buitrago (Karol G, Don Toliver, J Balvin, Lil Durk) relied on the Waves eMotion LV1 Classic console to mix the broadcast of Pitbull's pre-race show at Daytona 500, NASCAR's annual Cup Series season-opener at Daytona International Speedway in Florida, for the Daytona 500 broadcast. Using the LV1 Classic not only showcased the console's pristine sound quality, but also its unparalleled ability to adapt to the unique demands of fast-paced live events.

Reflecting on the event, Buitrago shared, "I was invited to be part of the show by Will Madera, who is FOH engineer and head of the live audio team for Pitbull. We both agreed that LV1 Classic, which we consider to be best in the industry sound-wise, would be the right desk for the job. We knew that having Waves Signature Preamps and integrated Waves processors onboard the desk made a huge difference to the Daytona 500 broadcast. I had all the necessary tools I needed to enhance and protect the audio stream, ensuring it was clean, dynamic, and broadcast-ready."

"The LV1 Classic provides so many smart tools specifically designed for live broadcasting," he continues, "allowing me to manage loudness, fine-tune dynamics, and maintain consistency across all elements in real time. In an event as massive as the Daytona 500, having this level of control and reliability isn't just a luxury, it's

essential for delivering top-tier audio to an audience that expects nothing less."

"What truly sets the Waves eMotion LV1 Classic apart," he explained, "is its exceptional headroom and smart tools. It provided exceptional clarity and consistency, making it easy to shape the mix with precision, while maintaining transparency and depth, perfect for a high-stakes broadcast."

He continues, "Given the unique circumstances of the Daytona 500 broadcast, having a powerful yet compact mixing system had a significant impact. The ability to set up quickly and efficiently without compromising sound quality was invaluable. Additionally, its seamless integration with Waves plugins gave me full control over dynamics and processing in real time, allowing me to adapt effortlessly to the live environment. This customisable workflow also ensured that I could navigate everything intuitively, making the entire process streamlined and stress-free."

This integration of Waves plugins added another layer of control and creativity to Buitrago's operation: "To name just a few, my five essential plugins in this production were the SSL E-Channel for EQ, which is an integral part of my workflow and something I apply to every single channel. The SSL G-Master Buss Compressor is another must-have, always on my master bus, delivering that cohesive mix glue that holds everything together beautifully. For multiband compression, the F6 Floating-Band Dynamic EQ remains my go-to plugin. It adds the perfect finishing touch to my subgroups, skillfully controlling dynamic frequencies. When it comes to vocals, nothing beats the C6 Multiband Compressor; it is still my number one choice for vocals. Its fast response and tonal transparency make vocals cut through the mix beautifully. I even use two of them on my vocal track. Finally, the Abbey Road TG Mastering Chain plugin from Waves is a game-changer. For live shows, its real-time mastering capabilities elevate the final mix to an entirely new level."

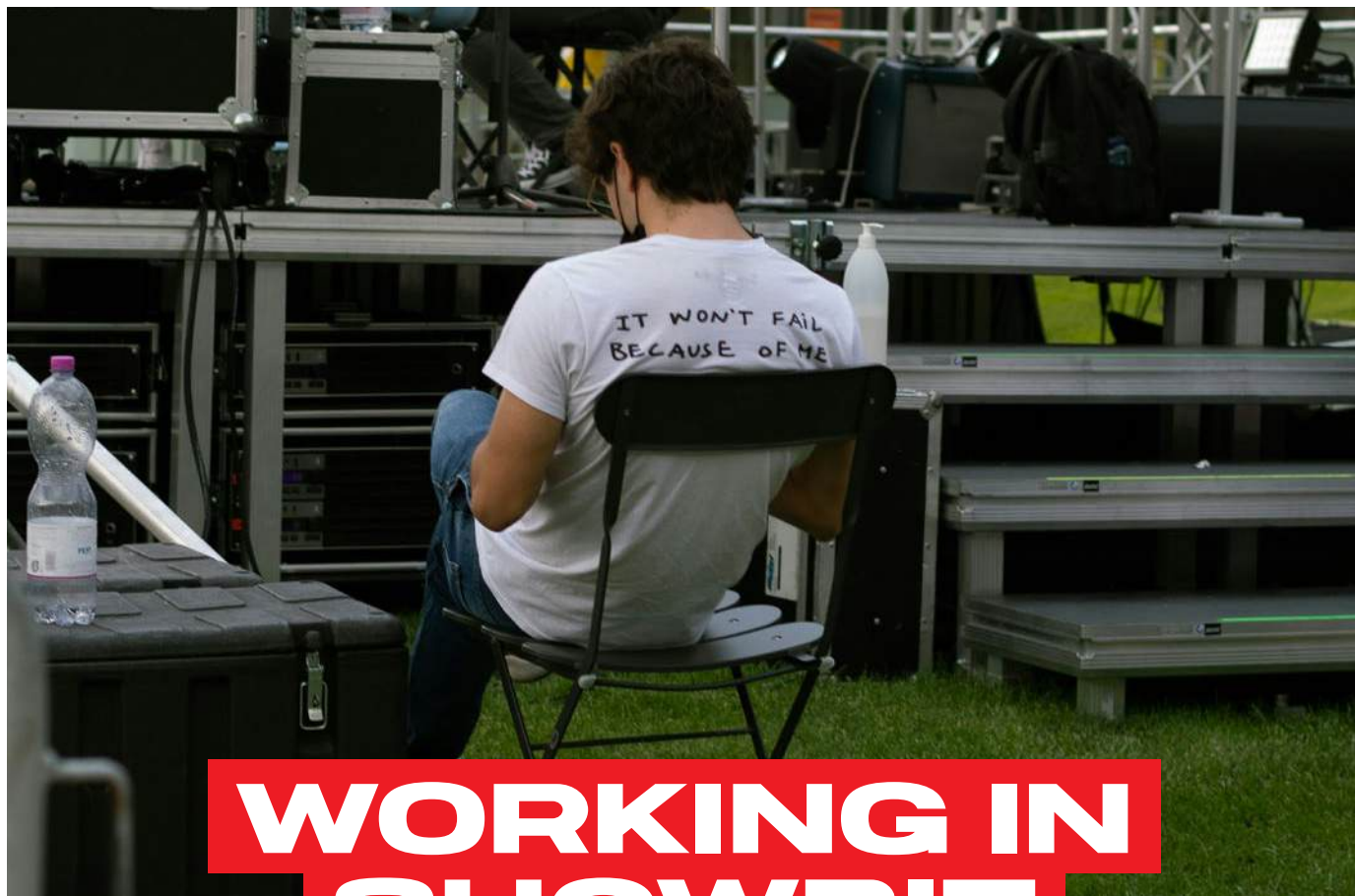
"In a high-pressure live broadcast like the

Daytona 500," he explains, "having an intuitive control interface is essential. The LV1 Classic Console made my workflow incredibly effective because I always knew exactly where to go without wasting time searching for controls. When every second counts, the last thing you want is to struggle with finding a quick access function. The LV1's intuitive layout and design enabled me to make precise adjustments instantly, ensuring everything remained fluid and seamless. That level of reliability and speed is exactly what you need in a fast-paced live environment."

The broadcast wasn't without its challenges. Working within the intense heat and the confined space of a small truck added pressure to an already demanding task. He notes, "The LV1 Classic's portability was a major asset considering the tight space we had to operate from. Its compact design fit perfectly without compromising power, making setup quick and the workflow streamlined, even under logistical constraints. Despite the challenging conditions, the LV1 delivered flawlessly, giving us full control over the mix while keeping everything smooth and efficient."

"When building my show files for this event," he adds, "I had the privilege of collaborating again with Will Madera, whose expertise was pivotal in crafting Pitbull's FOH mix. His contributions were instrumental in shaping the show's sonic impact, and he is now overseeing the transition of Pitbull's live production to the LV1 Classic for the rest of 2025."

Ultimately, it was the console's reliability and intuitive design that gave Buitrago the confidence to deliver under pressure. He remarks, "I felt completely relaxed and confident knowing that the Waves eMotion LV1 Classic console was in control of such an important event. Its reliability and pristine sound quality allowed me to focus on the mix without stress, ensuring a flawless and polished broadcast. The seamless workflow and intuitive interface made it effortless to manage every detail, letting the console do what it does best: deliver exceptional sound."



WORKING IN SHOWBIZ

HOW TO PREPARE YOURSELF

Whichever way you start you'll need to get prepared BEFORE you start. The reality is you will be on your feet most of the day, so start with that. Go buy some steel capped boots, preferably second hand. Then put them on and start walking.

At the start you'll probably do bump in and or bump out, each for between four and six hours so get yourself up to 8,000 steps a day at the start. Walk and keep walking around your 'hood. Once the feet start to settle into the boots, make sure the boots look 'used' and not new. Turning up with brand new boots will mark you as a newbie which also means you may be considered a 'noob'. Don't be one of those!

Next, put on a black T-shirt, sunscreen and hat and start walking under a hot sun. Take water with Hydrolyte and drink plenty of it. Buy an instant cold towel that reacts with water and cools off as it dries you. Just make it damp, wave it through the air, and stuff it under your hat. All of the above kept me vertical and functional through a heatwave, working in a hot tent. The young lighting dude didn't make it; he got heat stroke.

When you get to work on the show, as well as the bump in and out, you'll need to be able to do up to 20,000 steps a day. By then you will be physically fit. Then you need to work on remaining that way.

It amazes me to see most crew arrive without food or water! I got through some very tough show days because I carried more than enough food. I'd see crew at around five hours in, looking for food to buy. More often than not, that ends up being the wrong food. You need 'fuel' and the harder you work, the more you need. Healthy snacks, a full meal, and energy food. It takes time and effort to prepare but the alternative could be failure.

Failure

It's an ugly word, and an even worse threat to your wellbeing. I've tasted and eaten the occasional plate of failure. Three divorces, a couple of business closures, cancer and bankruptcy have all visited me. Don't be like Julius Grafton.

We all make mistakes, and if we learn from them, we are better for it. That means working hard on owning your mistakes. One of my mistakes in recent years was around losing control of myself. One contributed to a business loss that was probably worth

around a million dollars. The scenario was a partnership where a third-party protagonist schemed up a Machiavellian plan that relied on provoking me – it worked. I used a lot of nouns and verbs giving my partner what I considered was an accurate character assessment. My life lesson? Never EVER go into a partnership with someone who has a semi-retired attack dog lawyer as a spouse!

While it is really easy to foresee certain categories of failure, others come around a blind corner to ambush you. Another endless source of amazement to me is how little we tech crew workshop failure! I reprogrammed my brain using pilot training, where they totally punch into you the life and death difference between memorising checklists and not. "There are old pilots, and bold pilots", my instructor told me. "But there are no old, bold pilots!"

Do two things early and frequently. Ask questions, and workshop failure and redundancy. But do these things carefully and in a considerate manner. Don't ask unnecessary questions or rabbit on. You'll get downgraded and in a career that is often day to day, you probably won't get counselled or warned. It'll just be less work, with you pondering why. And that is failure.



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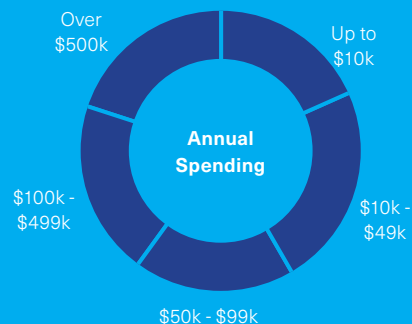
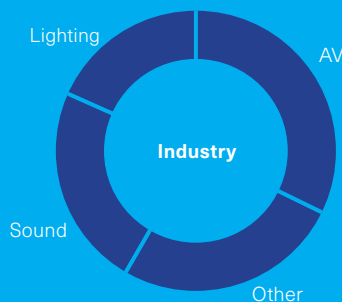
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OBSIDIAN



The Obsidian ONYX is a platform of lighting consoles and accessories designed for small to medium size set ups. For those familiar, it has the same look and feel as the old Martin M2GO.

Familiarity is a good thing, especially when it comes to lighting consoles. It was a good move by the Obsidian brand to stick with a well-known and well-liked layout and modernise it to suit today's gigs.

Dutch-owned lighting company Obsidian Control Systems combines over 25 years of experience developing professional entertainment lighting control solutions for automated and theatrical lighting fixtures. Products are designed and maintained by lighting professionals offering a wide range of lighting controllers, including excellent entry level options.

Meet (some of) the family:

NX1: Essentially the main control surface in the modular set up of the ONYX platform. It has the full feature set and ONYX operating system in a more compact footprint. The NX1 includes a high-brightness 10.1" HD multi-touch screen. It also has four assignable parameter encoders, 10 full motorized playbacks with four freely assignable buttons plus an extra playback and function key hybrid array. One additional touch monitor is supported for even more direct access at anytime.

NX K: The NX K is a USB powered control surface for ONYX and works with the NX1. It features the full keypad and command section of the larger consoles in the ONYX range. It also has four encoder wheels.

NX P: The NX P is a motorised fader wing for ONYX. The NX P replicates the layout and all functionality of the NX1. Multiple NX P wings can be connected to an ONYX console.

All three of these can be run together to form one larger console which can output eight Universes. They all connect together using a magnetic alignment system. This means no broken clips, no tools required and a neat, presentable finish.

In a nutshell, what we have here is the main control surface (NX1) which can be further expanded by adding an NX K, NX P and/or an external monitor.

Construction

They are all well-built. Although lightweight, they don't feel like they would easily break. That said, whenever you buy a console, you should buy a roadcase for it - this is no different.

All three components are the same length (298.5mm) and the same height (71mm). The NX1 is 636mm wide and weighs 8.1kg. The NX P is 373mm wide and weighs 4.5kg. The NX K is 160mm wide and weighs 1.4kg.

It's not an overwhelming console to look at. The slimmer, longer design might help with that. The flatter, wider faders have always been a favourite. It makes them easier to locate during a show when the operator might be an AV operator looking after vision, sound, and lighting, as opposed to just a lighting operator. With the NX K attached, you can get eight DMX outputs, as well as outlets for desk lights.

Applications and Features

This desk is perfect for running any small to medium size set up. The advantage of the modular style set up is that you can set up only what you need to set up. If you were running a simple show, which may just be a static look or a stage wash, you could just use the NX1. If you needed to do something a little more programming or playback heavy, you simply add the NX K and NX P accordingly.

ONYX

NX1
NX P
NX K



The Specs

NX1

10.1" Full HD multi touch screen, 1x external touch display

ONYX Essential license (eight Universes)

10x 60mm motorised playback faders, each with four function-assignable buttons

10x customisable playback or multi-function keys

Playback Select button

Master Go section with Go, Pause, Snap and Release

Four digital rotary encoders with push function and status LED for fixture parameter control

Virtual Keypad control

250GB NVMe M.2 storage drive

Supports Windows USB touchscreens

4x DMX/RDM Universe In/Out: 5-pin locking XLR

Network: 1x Gigabit RJ45 Ethernet for Art-Net, sACN and ONYX X-Net

NX K

Full ONYX keypad and command section

Four encoders with push and LED feedback

ONYX Nova+ license (four Universes + MIDI/OSC/Timecode support)

USB powered

1x USB-B 2.0 input

NX P

ONYX Nova+ license (4 Universes + MIDI/OSC/Timecode support)

10x 60mm motorized playback faders, each with four function-assignable buttons

10x customisable playback or multi-function keys

Playback Select button

Master Go section with Go, Pause, Snap and Release

4x DMX/RDM Universe In/Out: 5-pin locking XLR

1x USB-B 2.0 input

The ONYX has flexible DMX output, which is available via USB, Art-Net, sACN, and integrated DMX ports.

The biggest limitation with the desk is that it can only output eight Universes of DMX. Then again, if you were running a show with more than eight Universes worth of lights, you would likely be looking at using a full size lighting console anyway.

Control and Programming

It's a very short learning curve for anyone familiar with the M2GO. Otherwise, it's not the quickest console to learn, but not rocket science either. With a few reps, it becomes an easy console to use and control. It may sound obvious, but is also worth stating, that you would need a proper operator to get the most out of this console, especially when it comes to programming and plotting.

The fixture libraries provided by Obsidian are really helpful and accurate. They are always being updated too.

The ONYX 2D View is its own onboard visualiser. It gives live feedback of intensity, colour and position for immediate visual confirmation or to pre-program while on the go. This is a very understated feature of the desk and would normally be reserved for a much larger, more expensive, high-end lighting desk.

This console range features everything from

basic stage wash up/stage wash down kind of lighting through to timecode. It can also be managed via a calendar system which makes it perfect for architectural or install set ups, as well as live shows.

Help and Support

Obsidian is a specialist lighting company, run by a team of seasoned lighting professionals. I ventured into their online documentation and found a useful help section with information and tutorials angled towards the novice user, as well as the more technical topics such as timecode and visualisation.

There is also an active online user forum with answers being given from the development team as well as end-users. The active user forum speaks volumes as to how often these consoles are being used. They also have a 24/7 support phone line that is staffed 365 days a year.

Verdict

Straight up: if you are a fan of the Martin M2GO, you will be a fan of the Obsidian ONYX range. It's a great desk.

Product Info: obsidiancontrol.com

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International man of (little) mystery

On my umpteenth trip out of the country for work, I was hanging out in New Jersey at Crestron's international HQ. I was in a round table with then VP of Engineering (and later CTO), Fred Bargetzi (RIP) and several other overseas representatives. He asked what I thought about an iteration of a particular new product design. It's shit. It won't sell in our market. That was my gut felt reply.

He took initial offence until I qualified my statement. Americans love faux finishes. Australians, as a rule, do not. This amplifier he was showing had a great sound, good tech specs and would fit their broader product ecosystem well. The main volume knob was large and took pride of place in the centre of the unit. It looked like a serious bit of kit and would have a price tag to suit. All was good until I twiddled said knob and it immediately felt of cheap, lightweight plastic - it had no physical heft to it. Artificial metallic finish and all. I explained that this was a problem for our consumer base back home. Fortunately, some of the Euro crew backed me up. We then had a fascinating conversation on cultural differences between countries and continents.

Fitting in to the place where you belong

In your home country, it is relatively easy to fit in. As you grow up, you learn and understand the traditions, the conventions, the variations and ways of going about daily existence. Unless you are part of a fringe or marginalised subset, you follow the dominant paradigms and win the game of life. Health and geo-political tragedies notwithstanding.

Not too long ago, we read the newspapers, watched the evening news and maybe caught some radio while commuting. These inputs helped us form our understanding of the outside world. A weekly pub session or sporting outing would fill in the rest. Uncle Shane would upend it all at family gatherings. That was about as worldly as we got.

Now, we have addictive Q-holes, self-important podcaster influencers and cat memes lined up in our pocket. Even as we do our best to stay informed, all our free time becomes one endless scroll in futility, desperately seeking dopamine but ultimately ending up with frustration, confusion and a sense of despair.

We are living in an untamed sociological experiment, running in real time, the algorithmically driven cesspool trapping us in polarised silos, harvesting our data and preferences in lieu of blood.

The dub-dub-dub of connectivity started with caring and sharing. It has since devolved to exploiting and shaming, shouting and blaming for clicks. It needn't be so.

The internet has brought us many great things, from Facetimeing your family overseas to instant knowledge of international events, from generational memes to bitcoins. But its major impact has been reducing the distance between everyone on the planet. For better or worse.

Commingling

By crossing old geographical barriers at light speed, we have reduced the impediment of long held social and cultural constraints. This comes at a cost. It is those very institutions that suffer. The homogenisation of cultures has been underway since ships started sailing the ocean. The pace of this consolidation has steadily increased of late and it scares me that our ubiquitous "yeah, nah" might soon get replaced by "I'd like to thank my Mom," or some

other crap that has filtered into our increasingly less unique customs.

To abet monoculture, incessant globalisation of world trade movements has accelerated the intermixture of products. Traditions and society are following only just behind. How many young antipodeans, Europeans or Africans use US based phrases in their daily banter? USA has done a sterling job of pushing its folklore to all corners of the world. Bluey, Kylie and Randy Feltface cannot combat that hegemony on their own.

Fashion and design are equally victims of a globally homogenised society. Looking at real estate ads, it is hard to tell one country from another. All the houses look the same as trends converge on the bland, to blend inoffensively with what little local colour is left.

It's not all gloom

On the upside, sharing DAW files in real time with collaborators on the other side of the world is awesome for audio partnerships. Access to the sum of human knowledge in your pocket may not make you one swipe away from enlightenment, but it is pretty handy for finding out about stuff.

Exchanging pre-vis files and pre-production ideas without having to be in the same room is a breakthrough for touring companies working across borders. Remote working is not just for corporate types trying to find a pathway through pandemic distancing.



Crestron world headquarters is in Rockleigh, New Jersey

Video conferencing has broken down a lot of physical and time barriers. Now, that meeting with HQ in the intro would happen over the internet and we would miss out on the nuances of interaction that occur in person. My product statement would likely go down like a lead balloon without the ability to sense the mood change upon uttering it. VC shortens distance but removes nuance.

As a rural resident, telehealth has saved me innumerable hours in transit to and from medicos. Although I don't see how remote dentistry or surgery could work without some serious improvement in robots.

New World Order

Crestron never did add a proper metal volume knob to that amp and I never managed to sell many because of that. Later models had design cues more acceptable to Euro/Oceanic sensibilities and did much better numbers with the international contingent.

Unfortunately, Fred passed too young a few years ago to MND. I miss him. He was smart, personable, humble and very good at his job. "A bloody good sort" in Oz parlance. Our minor differences were cultural, yet we put those aside to concentrate on our commonalities. My off-handed Australian bluntness clashed with his thinner-skinned US dryness, but he respected that I could both understand and stand up for my market. He would have made for a brilliant President.

Instead, the one that we have inherited is wreaking havoc on the world order, and we are seeing a real time reset of international interactions. Conventions are mere suggestions when there is no accepted rule book.

Maybe one good side effect of the current ructions might be every nation, every culture, every subgroup promoting and strengthening its individuality rather than conforming to the soul-less, characterless norm that globalisation has encouraged.



Fred Bargetzi

Are you concerned about your mate's mental health?

FACT: Most Australian tech crew and roadies have attempted or considered suicide¹!

Support those around you and register for free mental health training



www.entertainmentassist.org.au

Supporting the mental health of Australian entertainment industry workers

¹Passion, Pride, Pitfalls Dec 2014

MOTHER'S LITTLE HELPER



Illustration by Matthew Johnstone for the book *I Had a Black Dog*

Snippets from the archives of a bygone era

I tend to avoid scrutinising the numerous health warning posters on the waiting room walls of my local medical centre or those plastered around my doctor's surgery that suggest I may have one or more of their advertised ailments. However, one notice that caught my eye recently listed several medications that the surgery now refuses to prescribe because of their potential risks of dependency and misuse. This lit a wry smile on my face because two of those medications were regularly prescribed to me at various times in some of my darker days of the last millennium.

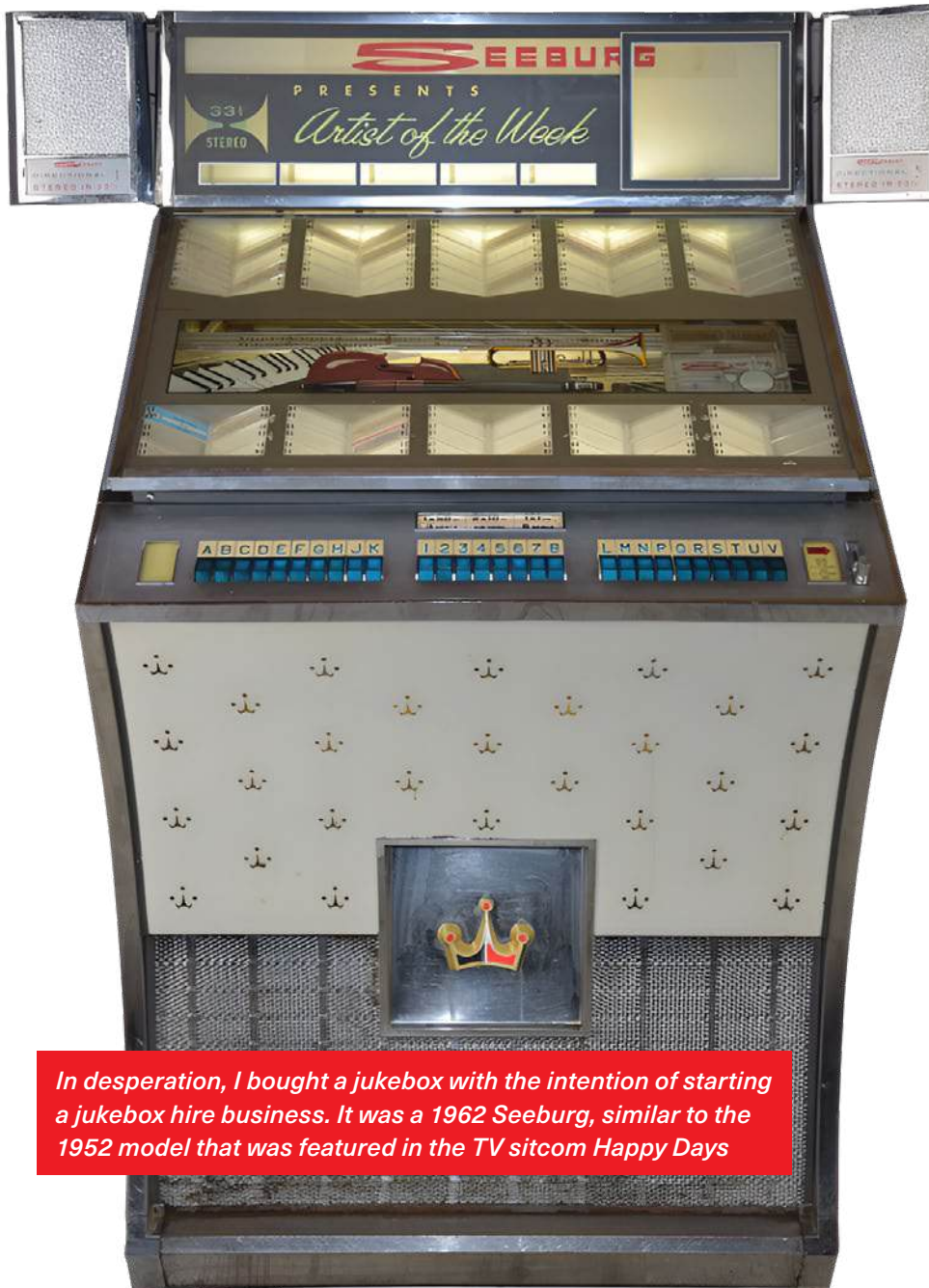
Some musicians, technicians, and industry professionals turn to drugs and alcohol to cope with the pressures of the industry, while others indulge because they are alienated from it or have not achieved certain goals. This discrepancy can often cue the black dog to amble into your life. Fortunately, it was never in my DNA to progress to the harder illicit drugs, but there were always prescription drugs and, of course, alcohol.

The 60s and 70s were gripped by the psychedelic and recreational drugs era; it was also a time when I read a lot of music and news magazines that were awash with articles about drug addiction, lives lost, and bad acid trips. One article detailed the experience of a teenager who, after experimenting with LSD, believed he was an orange, and after suffering the illusion of fleeing the fruit bowl, spent some time in hiding to avoid being eaten. The clincher for me was hearing a firsthand account from a friend, who told me about his acid trip at a discotheque. He related how an argument with a bartender became illusory when the bartender transfigured into a gorilla and chased him out of the venue and into the street, where buildings melted and flowed into

the gutters. That was enough to convince me never to touch the stuff!

In one of my earlier band stints, some of the members would drop acid, but I'd never learn about it until long after the gig. It wasn't that I was a clean and sober goody two-shoes, but the band knew I wasn't into microdoses, speed, or any of the opiates. There was a gig at the legendary Bondi Astra (now a retirement village), where we had indulged in a session before the first set, and during the performance, the second guitarist was actually playing a different song to the rest of us. Alcohol was always in the mix, and once after attending one of Sydney's annual Rocks Pub Crawls, the entire band was so inebriated that when we performed at our regular gig, the cacophony that emanated from the stage was barely intelligible as music.

In my last rock band, Main Earth, which performed up until 1981, not one member of the group used any sort of stimulant apart from a few beers during the breaks. There was one booking, however, where the band thought that a gig at the Enfield Boulevard Hotel was so important that they came to my house, where I was bedridden with the flu, and dragged me



Mother's little helper

out of bed to do the gig. I was the lead singer, but my throat was so sore I could barely talk. It was a cold wintry night, so I wrapped a scarf around my neck, bought a bottle of port wine from the bottle shop, and drank the entire contents during the show. The band members and our faithful band of followers said it was my best performance ever. I decided to keep the scarf in the act, but I abandoned the port.

Performing on stage, mixing front of house, installing equipment, and entertainment management generally kept me happy, but returning from working overseas for four years and seeing the decline of pub rock in Australia in the late 80s, I found myself out of work and alienated from the industry. In desperation, I bought a jukebox with the intention of starting a jukebox hire business. It was a 1962 Seeburg, similar to the 1952 model that was featured in the TV sitcom *Happy Days*. The jukebox became a prized possession that propelled me into a kind of 60s nostalgia, and I totally restocked it with brand new 60s records, which were repressed 45 RPM singles that I purchased from a store called Discontinued Records. Not surprisingly, they were mostly Motown and other soul artists' recordings.

After hiring the jukebox out on only two occasions, I pulled the plug, owing to the misuse by drunken punters who dropped cigarette ash and spilt beer onto it. Additionally, it was a heavy beast that I had to load in and out of a van and move around with a fridge trolley. These weren't happy days for me, and unlike Manila's bar and nightclub scene,

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I found Sydney entertainment venues were about as entertaining as an airport departure terminal. So I mostly stayed at home on weekends, often lazing around listening to the sounds of the Supremes, Marvin Gaye, James Brown, Otis Redding, etcetera on my jukebox while indulging in beer and dry martinis.

One of my all-time comic heroes, Jackie Gleason, once told Johnny Carson in an interview, "I'm not advocating that everybody should drink; it just worked for me." It was a bit like that with me; however, to deal with anxiety and depression issues at the time, a doctor prescribed benzodiazepines - mother's little helper. The first of these had side effects, so I was then prescribed a milder version.

Eventually, I wanted to ditch the pills, so another doctor recommended hypnotherapy, and I was given a referral to a professional. I poured my heart out to this guy, and after a pregnant pause, he said, "Well, you're not mad!" He then said I should see a hypnotherapist, and I said, "I thought you were one!" He said, "No, I'm a psychiatrist." He then wrote me a referral to a professor of psychiatry who specialised in hypnotherapy. The sessions included hypnosis and self-hypnosis, and also a novelty session of hypnotic anaesthesia, where he inserted and clipped a safety pin to the back of my hand to prove that control of the mind could even overcome pain. I still use the self-hypnosis technique today, mostly to get to sleep at night.

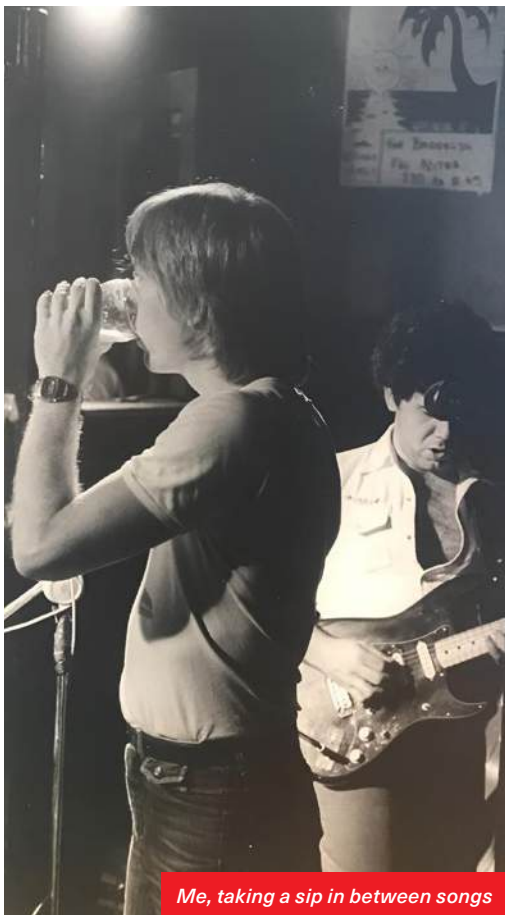
However, that's not where the story ends. At the turn of the century, I booked an airline ticket to Manila to be with my wife, who had been ill. I don't fly well at the best of times; in

fact, I have an intense hatred of everything associated with air travel. I despise the long lines at the terminals, the indignant customs and immigration officials, and the pretentiousness of the flight attendants, who seem to dignify serving tasteless food and lukewarm beer to wearisome passengers, intermingled with dishing out vomit bags and contending with drunken behaviour while being bounced around in the confines of a grandiose tin can. So, I asked my doctor for something to help me sleep on the flight, and once again I was in possession of mother's little helper.

I arrived at the airport early after dropping a couple of pills; however, the flight was delayed, and I spent the time drinking beer in the VIP lounge. My last memory was that of boarding the plane, which was half empty, and bedding down on three vacant seats in the centre row. My next memory was of someone

knocking loudly on the aeroplane's toilet door, demanding that I open it. I was confused and couldn't even remember how I got there. When I opened the door, there, standing in the empty aeroplane, was a Filipino security guard. I had slept for the entire 8-hour flight and had no idea how long I'd been in the can. The security guard told me to get my cabin luggage and hand him my passport. I felt a kind of déjà vu as I had been detained and grilled at Ho Chi Minh airport some years before. However, I wasn't being detained; I was being ushered through customs and immigration by the security guard, who then located my hotel transfer vehicle and bid me a fine farewell. What a nice guy! Needless to say, I have never since bothered with mother's little helper.

**The term mother's little helper, although not invented by The Rolling Stones, was popularised by their 1965 hit single of the same name.*



Me, taking a sip in between songs



"I'm not advocating that everybody should drink; it just worked for me." Jackie Gleason







Bondi Astra Hotel



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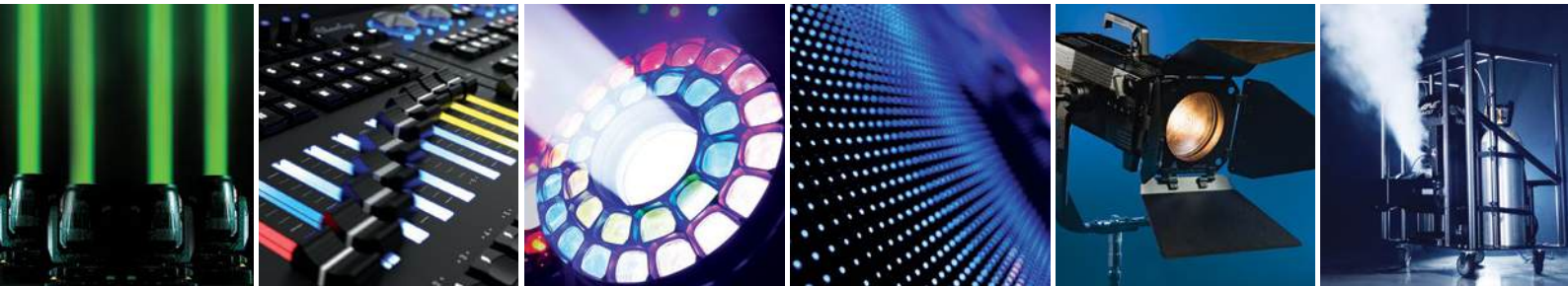
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