

CX

INTEGRATION / AUDIO / LIGHTING / VIDEO / SOUND ENGINEERING

RISING Melb 2025

THE LIGHTING ISSUE

/ FOREIGNER TOUR / SINGAPORE'S ESPLANADE
/ OBSCURA QALMA / BRIGHTER DAYS FESTIVAL
/ MARTIN & VERITY SHOWCASE / PLAZA BALLROOM
/ PORSCHE MACAN REVEAL / BRISBANE SKYLINE

LIVE

Silhouette Sound
Rides the Tech Wave

NEW GEAR

Next Gen of Qu Mixers

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Working in Showbiz:
The Tossplot Syndrome

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- / Jenny Barrett in NZ
- / Backstage with John O'Brien
- / Brian Coleman: The Gaffa Tapes

RoadTest

- / Martin MAC Viper XIP
- / PROLIGHTS EclFresnel CT+M

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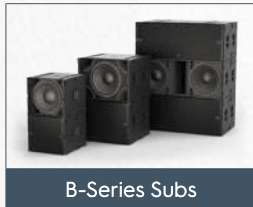
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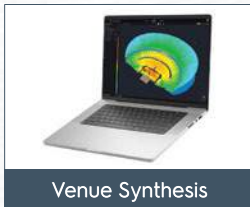
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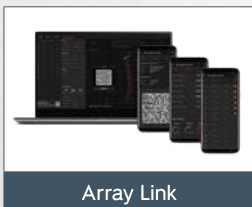
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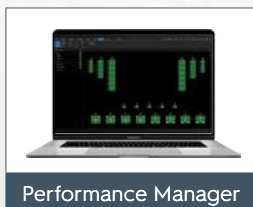
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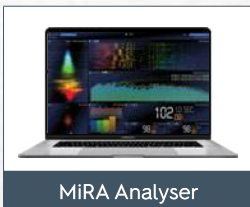
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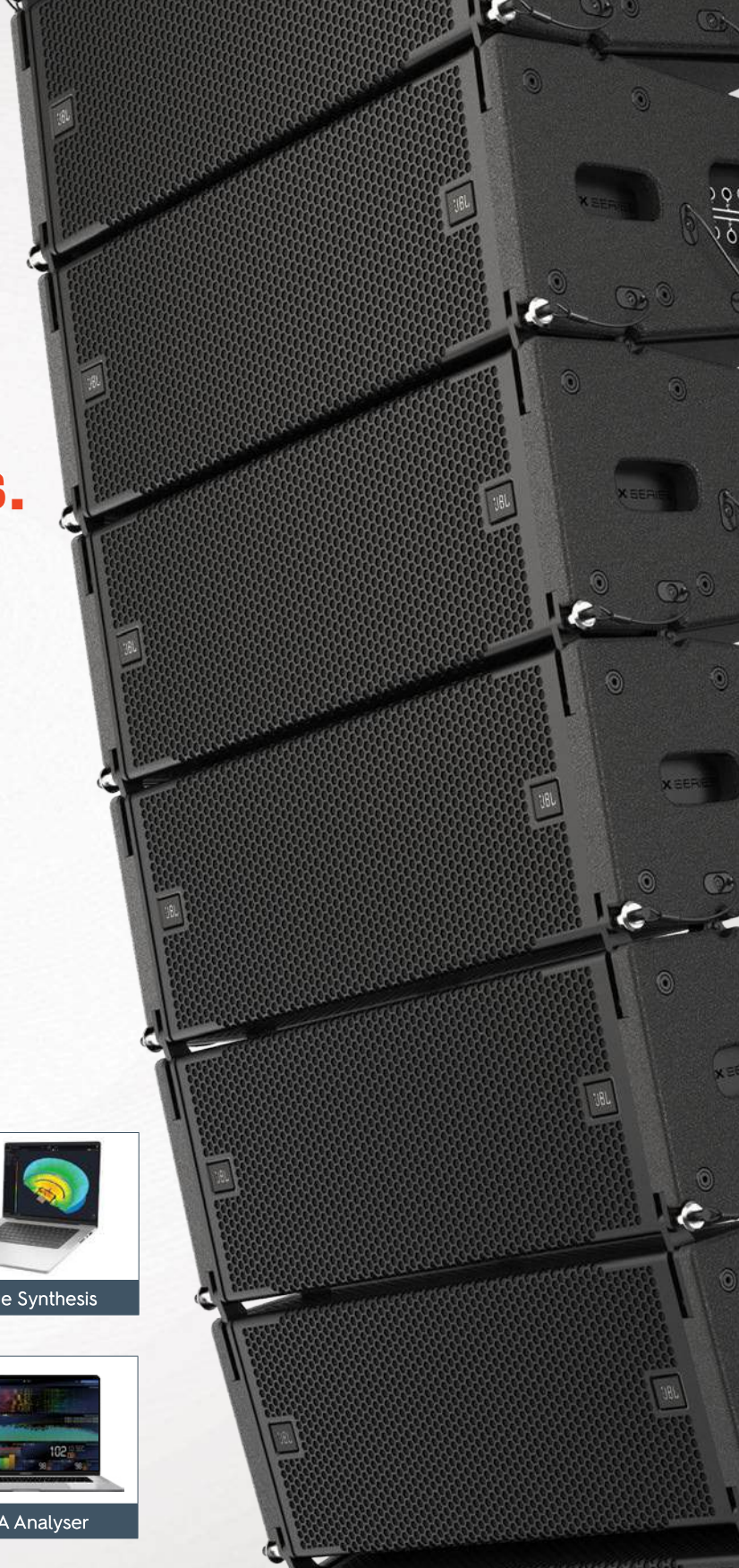
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Cover Photo – Rising 2025 - The Butterfly Who Flew Into The Rave. Photo Credit: LucyParakhina.
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d&b audiotechnik's CCL Series lands in Australia

by Jason Allen

NAS have debuted the new CCL Series compact cardioid line array from d&b audiotechnik with two listening sessions at NAS HQ in Melbourne.

Held on Tuesday 13 and Wednesday 14 May, the NAS team invited customers and engineers alike to be the first to hear the CCL8 (the smaller of the two CCL top boxes) and CCLSUB.

The CCL8 houses two 7" and two 5" woofers, plus two 1.75" high frequency drivers. With two of everything and some very clever industrial design, this means there's directivity control over the entire operating bandwidth of 62Hz to above 18kHz. It also means almost nothing comes out of the back of these speakers. This is one of the first listening tests where we've been encouraged to start listening behind the speaker.

Clocking in at a modest 209 x 593 x 355mm and weighing just 17.6kg each, it's easy to see CCL8 arrays going almost everywhere in Australia; they're small enough for almost any modest gig or install and big enough in

sound to cover larger concerts and events.

NAS had thoughtfully set up a comparative array of the now quite venerable Y Series as a comparison. While smaller in size, the CCL is totally comparable in SPL and tonality, but comes with the added advantage of the amazing rear rejection and economical footprint. You can also pair CCL with KSL and GSL arrays as fill or side hangs.

While subs don't get a lot of attention, I was very pleasantly surprised by the CCLSUB. Again, it's natively cardioid, with a 15" and a 10". Its one of the most musical subs I've ever heard, and power-wise, its punching way above its weight (literally).

In usual d&b fashion, rigging, software, control, and everything else is the same as for any other d&b product. They've even got a thoughtful chart of which of their amps, both current and legacy, that you can run CCL on. They obviously care about their customer's ROI.

The CCL system on demo at NAS is just about to head down to Tasmania to work on Dark Mofo, and another CCL system is already on its way to its new owners at Sightline Productions in Sydney. NAS are



NAS's Brand Manager Anthony Murdoch with CCL

planning a full demo tour with CCL later in 2025, most likely across September and October.

To find out when CCL will be on demo in your area, subscribe to NAS's 'Watts Up' newsletter at <https://nas.solutions/newsletter/subscribe>



Claypaky sold to EK Inc.

ARRI has announced that it has entered into a definitive agreement to sell its subsidiary Claypaky to new strategic owner EK Inc. Operating one of the most advanced lighting production and development facilities in the industry, EK Inc. offers a strong foundation for Claypaky, which is a world-renowned brand recognised globally as the provider of choice in the high-end professional entertainment lighting market.

"This decision is part of our strategic realignment as we focus more strongly on our core business," says Chris Richter, Managing Director of ARRI. "Clearly recognising Claypaky's potential, it was important to us to find a new owner who pursues next level growth based on a deep understanding of the

market and a long-term strategic vision, for both Claypaky and its customers."

"Our collaboration with ARRI has been a valuable and rewarding journey," remarks Marcus Graser, CEO of Claypaky. "We part ways with sincere appreciation, especially for the insights gained from ARRI's deep expertise in the motion picture industry, which will continue to influence our path forward. At the same time, we look forward to the opportunities new ownership brings. We are certain to benefit from EK's strong development, manufacturing, and supply chain capabilities which could open new doors in terms of new product development, scalability, and global market access."

Raymond Chen, CEO of EK Inc. adds: "The acquisition of Claypaky, along with its theatrical brand ADB, is a strategic investment that significantly enriches our portfolio. Claypaky, a nearly 50-year-old brand rooted in Italian design and globally recognised for its innovation, strengthens therefore our global presence, especially in the European market. This acquisition marks the next step in our evolution. With our combined manufacturing expertise, innovative spirit, and expanded industrial backbone, we are well-positioned to continue shaping the future of entertainment lighting worldwide."

More than just a change in ownership, the acquisition highlights all three parties' commitment to their primary markets, along with a renewed focus on innovation, operational excellence, adaptability, and long-term resilience. While details of the integration between Claypaky and EK Inc. are still to be defined, Claypaky will retain its headquarters and core competences in R&D and operations in Italy, ensuring flexibility and continued local value creation in the face of global challenges. The transaction is expected to close in the coming months, subject to customary regulatory approvals.

For more information on EK Inc. please visit eklights.com.
For more information about ARRI please visit arri.com.

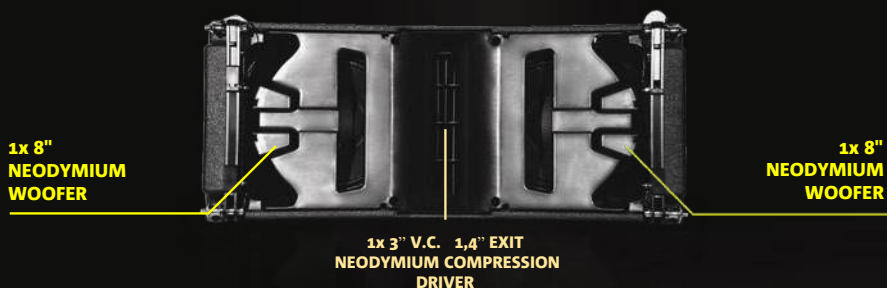
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L-Acoustics DJ's intuitive user interface allows DJs like Max Cooper, shown here at Polygon Live, to create dynamic movement, depth, and dimension without requiring extensive technical knowledge. Photo Credit: Maria Zhytnikova

L-ACOUSTICS DJ BREAKS THE STEREO BARRIER

First Complete Solution to Transform Stereo into a True Spatial Audio Experience

L-Acoustics have announced L-Acoustics DJ, a groundbreaking solution that transforms traditional stereo DJ setups into fully immersive spatial audio experiences. This comprehensive solution empowers DJs and electronic music artists to transform standard stereo content into dynamic, three-dimensional soundscapes live, all without disrupting established workflows or requiring complex technical interventions.

As audiences embrace increasingly sophisticated entertainment experiences, the potential of audio immersion in electronic music venues has remained largely untapped, with most clubs and festivals still utilising conventional stereo or quad configurations. L-Acoustics DJ unlocks this potential by making spatial audio accessible, intuitive, and immediately playable for DJs of all technical backgrounds.

"Today's audiences seek deeper, more enveloping entertainment experiences that engage all senses," says Scott Sugden, Director of Product Management, Solutions at L-Acoustics. "Our Immersive DJ Solution opens entirely new creative possibilities, allowing artists to craft three-dimensional sonic environments that transform how audiences physically and emotionally connect with their music."

Live Stem Separation and Spatial Processing

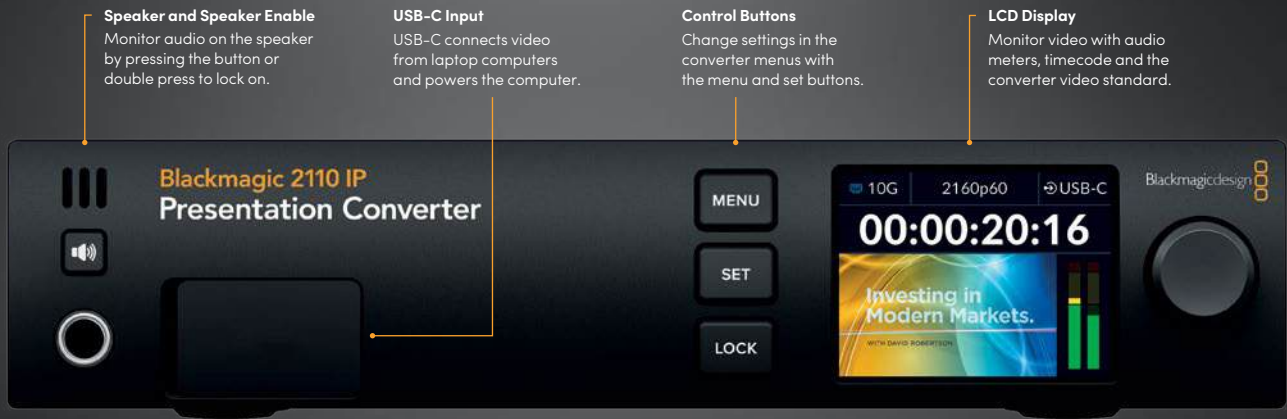
At the heart of the system is L-Acoustics proprietary Source Separate technology, a low-latency machine learning-powered technology that accurately separates stereo music into multiple discrete stems, live. Unlike other stem separators on the market, these multi-channel stems route directly into a spatial mix engine, enabling immediate positioning and movement throughout the venue.

The system integrates effortlessly with both digital and analog DJ setups, requiring no changes to existing gear or techniques. DJs can control the immersive experience themselves or work with a dedicated spatial audio engineer, offering maximum creative flexibility.

For DJs: Creative Freedom with Intuitive Control

L-Acoustics DJ delivers a comprehensive ecosystem that seamlessly combines specialised hardware, including L-Acoustics loudspeakers, amplified controllers, L-ISA Processor II, and P1 networked audio processor, with purpose-built software featuring an updated L-ISA Controller with L-Acoustics DJ App, LA Network Manager, and Soundvision. This powerful combination is supported by L-Acoustics professionals who provide design assistance and on-site system calibration to ensure optimal performance.

What truly sets this technology apart is its remarkably intuitive user interface, allowing DJs to create dynamic movement, depth, and dimension without requiring



Speaker and Speaker Enable
Monitor audio on the speaker by pressing the button or double press to lock on.

USB-C Input
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
Monitor video with audio meters, timecode and the converter video standard.



10G Ethernet
Connect to SMPTE-2110 IP video out and program return. Supports PoE++.

HDMI 4K Output
Connect to projectors, TVs or LED screens.

HDMI 4K Input
Connect to laptops or video products such as cameras.

USB-C Video Input
Connect to presenter's laptop as a second display and power the laptop.

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



extensive technical knowledge. Artists can position beats, basslines, melodies, and vocals throughout the physical space, crafting immersive audio journeys that transform ordinary performances into extraordinary multi-dimensional experiences that deeply resonate with audiences.

"Working with L-Acoustics DJ opens a whole new dimension to my performances," says Max Cooper, who performed using the solution at L-Acoustics Keynote 2025. "What I appreciate most is how it fits right into my existing setup, and immediately I can place drums, melodies, and vocals throughout the entire space in real time without needing advance preparation. Now I can have an expanded canvas for DJ sets as well as live sets, so I can create enveloping moments where the audience is completely surrounded by different elements of the track.

"I've been exploring spatial audio in my work for years, but this is the first tool I've used that provides a DJ format solution without any complex set-up or steep learning curve. Anyone can jump right in with the simple controls, so it has a wide applicability for venues and performers to get involved with the spatial audio evolution."

For Venues and Events: A Competitive Edge

L-Acoustics DJ provides venues with a crucial competitive advantage by delivering premium audio that elevates and complements their visual productions. The system transforms ordinary spaces into immersive sonic environments that captivate audiences and create lasting impressions.

"What truly sets this solution apart is how it integrates with existing DJ workflows," explains Hugo Heathcote, Business Development Consultant, Nightclubs at L-Acoustics. "We've developed a system that doesn't require DJs to learn new skills or change their performance style - it simply expands the sonic canvas they can paint on, turning the entire venue into an instrument."

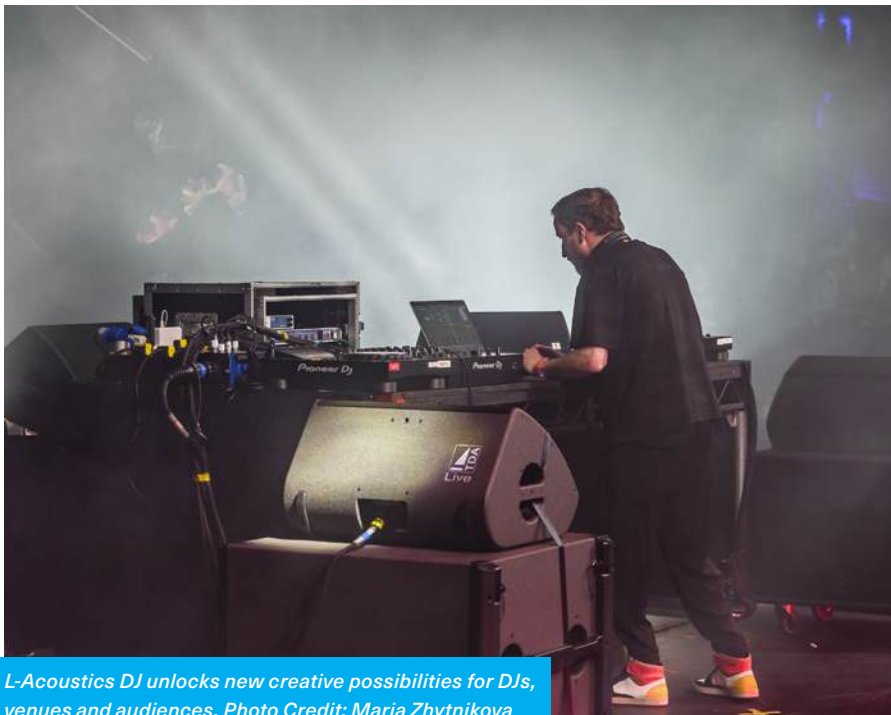
By transforming traditional stereo sound into three-dimensional audio landscapes, L-Acoustics DJ helps venues differentiate themselves while setting new standards for live music experiences.

For the Audience: Deeper Emotional Connection

The impact on audiences is profound. At The Other Side in Amsterdam, which recently installed L-ISA immersive sound technology, patrons experience music they love dynamically throughout the space, creating a more engaging connection to performances. Owner Jasper Löwik notes that "for club-goers, this translates to a transformative experience where music moves around, above, and through them, making each performance uniquely engaging." The immersive soundscape ensures every detail is perceived throughout the venue, fostering a deeper emotional connection to the performance. "This innovative approach not only sets The Other Side apart from other clubs, it elevates the standard for live music experiences and the audience loves it!"

L-Acoustics DJ stands at the center of the ecosystem of Source, System and Space, unlocking new creative possibilities and offering DJs, venues and audiences a tool to create, differentiate and enjoy immersive experiences not previously possible.

L-ACOUSTICS DJ



L-Acoustics DJ unlocks new creative possibilities for DJs, venues and audiences. Photo Credit: Maria Zhytnikova



Max Cooper, shown here at Polygon Live London, performed at the L-Acoustics Keynote 2025 using L-Acoustics DJ, the first complete solution to transform stereo into a true spatial audio experience. Photo Credit: Maria Zhytnikova

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LD Systems Install Range *Now in Australia*

Fresh off their recent successes with the ICOA and DAVE G4X series, German audio purveyors, LD Systems are pleased to announce the arrival of their new install range to our fair shores, with the first units now in the country and ready for shipping

Boasting a speaker or solution for every conceivable commercial application, the new LD Systems install range features a series of products designed with ease of integration in mind, enabling users to customise their audio systems by mixing and matching components to meet specific needs.

The TICA (Tools for Integrating Commercial Audio) series of small footprint amplifiers and interfaces are in many ways the centrepiece of the range, providing intelligent and intuitive I/O solutions managed by the brand's outstanding proprietary management software, Questra.

For larger rack based and DSP applications, the brand's IPA Series offers plenty of flexibility and future proofing with its optional ethernet

and Dante expansion capabilities. Perfect for hotels, schools, houses of worship or airport type installations, the IPA Series DSP-based installation amplifiers offer four-channel, powerful class-D power amplifiers with clean, direct access to all your familiar DSP controls on the front of the unit (meaning even the junior venue manager should have no issues operating it on the fly).

In terms of peripherals, the modularity of LD Systems new CURV 500 array systems are sure to get integrator's tongues wagging, with their versatility of application and inviting pricepoint.

The modular design of the CURV 500 installation system enables individual configurations for each zone, ranging from subtle background music to dancefloor levels of SPL, all while keeping the same excellent sonic signature throughout the installation.

For more information or pricing, contact the friendly team at Link Audio today at linkaudio.com.au/ld-systems/

CURV 500



IPA Series - IPA424T



TICA Application Slider Control Room



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MAUI® i1

120 W RMS AT 8 OHMS



MAUI® i1 W

120 W RMS AT 8 OHMS



UP, UP, AND AMWAY

World-first moments, curated by Encore Event Technologies

Amway China Leadership Seminar wrapped up in Melbourne at the end of last month, with the event hosting almost 16,000 delegates, making it the largest incentive to ever be held in Australia.

Amway China's top sellers arrived from Mainland China, in waves of 2,500 to 3,000 people, each experiencing five days and four nights of business seminars, tours, and a gala dinner extravaganza curated by Encore Event Technologies at the Melbourne Showgrounds. The incentive generated \$100 million in economic impact for the state.

For Encore, the planning and delivery of the events spread over a 12-month period, from pitch in May 2024, to briefing in August, with six months to design and deliver full creative until delivery for the April 2025 events.

Between 1 and 30 April 2025, Encore delivered more than 11,000 hours of labour to curate a mammoth production, ranging from engineering to entertainment and choreography, staging, lighting, audio-visual and pyrotechnics. They drew on their in-house heavyweight creatives, production and technology experts to deliver a brand-defining set of 'moments that matter' for a truly personalised experience.

The experience started the moment delegates landed in Australia, as Encore Event Technologies staged branded welcome installations in the foyers of each of the eight

Hotels. The business and entertainment program was full to the brim, including a 2.5-hour business conference, a cocktail party accompanied by non-stop entertainment, a gala dinner featuring projections, entertainment and pyrotechnics. The events were delivered in Mandarin, with English speech translation.

The gala dinner featured a three-course dinner, catered by Dean & McPherson, serving 4.5 tonnes of beef steak and 11,000 lobsters plus 16,000 jars of branded lollies as an accompaniment to dessert.

Encore delivered over 2500msq of LED screens and 190 metres of projection surface, immersing the audience in light, soundscape and visuals. But it was the world-first 35-metre-tall hot air balloon that stole the show, lifting 30m off the ground with 3D projection mapping in time to a customised soundtrack.

The entertainment program paid homage to some of the incredible destinations Amway China has visited, tapping into the emotion and memories made in global destinations across three decades.

The show opened with Amway's flower of Total Wellness brought to life, followed by a journey



through eight continents including South-East Asia, the Middle East, Spain, Paris, NYC, LA, Las Vegas and Melbourne.

The action-packed, non-stop 15-minute opener featured top echelon artists and entertainers from Melbourne and around the world including Vietnamese dancers, Arabian belly dancers, opera singers, ballet dancers and a flash mob cast, a Flamenco guitarist, world champion Latin dancers, 40 can-can dancers, 25 dancing gents, LA Showgirls, 'Elvis', roller-skaters and BMX riders from global sensation Nitro Circus. A custom-made three-metre cube gift box shot confetti and dandelion flowers on cue, wrapping up the opening segment. Additional touches included 3D glasses,



adding an extra dimension to visuals, a commemorative programme booklet including a collectible magnet opening to reveal the program and performers' bios.

"Delivering the largest incentive event ever held in Australia was not just a milestone for Amway China - it was a defining moment for Encore," said Scott Nodsle, CEO of Encore Event Technologies APAC. "From concept to execution, we brought together creativity, precision and scale to craft an experience that was not only unforgettable, but truly world-class."

Guests will soon return home, taking the memories, energy, and spectacle of an experience filled with technological wizardry and heart-pumping entertainment.

The successful bid for the 'Festival of Amway' was a collaboration between Melbourne Royal Showgrounds, Melbourne Convention Bureau, and the Victorian State Government, which was secured in 2023, after competing in a national and international competitive bid.

Encore has a long history of delivering experiences for Amway, the direct selling business, having devised similar trips for delegations from Taiwan, Vietnam, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Russia over the past 18 years in addition to other events for international clients.



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L-Acoustics Partners with Gearsupply to Launch K1 Certified Pre-Owned Program



In a move that signals both a tactical market expansion and a long-term vision for sustainability in pro audio, L-Acoustics today announced a strategic investment in fast-growing startup Gearsupply. The announcement was made live at the L-Acoustics Keynote in London, and accompanies the launch of the L-Acoustics Certified Pre-Owned (CPO) Program, starting with its flagship K1 Line Array system.

This investment, part of Gearsupply's recently closed seed funding round, marks a new milestone for both companies. It gives L-Acoustics a scalable, trusted channel for reclaiming and reintroducing pre-owned assets into the market, while Gearsupply gains direct support from the global leader in professional loudspeaker innovation, along with increased inventory volume, exclusive certification capabilities, and enhanced buyer reach. It also enables Gearsupply to expand its marketplace offering and accelerate the development

of intelligent features that integrate with vendors' inventory systems, automatically identifying when gear is underutilised or has reached its optimal resale window.

The Certified Pre-Owned Program is the first step in a broader strategic vision for asset lifecycle management. Under the CPO umbrella, customers will have access to officially refurbished, tested, and certified L-Acoustics products, fully backed by the manufacturer. The program's success is driven in large part by the premium build quality of L-Acoustics equipment, which is renowned for its long shelf life and high residual value, making it an ideal candidate for recirculation.

"Our partnership with Gearsupply is another big step in our commitment to sustainability, circular economy, and preserving the long-term value of our clients' investment," said Hervé Guillaume, CEO of L-Acoustics Group. "We're creating an ecosystem where L-Acoustics clients and end-users have a trade-in option for used equipment"

"We're excited to give these legendary systems a second life in a way that's safe, verifiable, and affordable, especially for smaller production companies, touring acts, and venues looking to scale without compromise," said Mendel Rosenberg,

The program will feature:

- Flagship inventory, starting with the K1 line array loudspeaker and its companion K1-SB subwoofer
- Manufacturer-certified inspection, refurbishment, and testing process
- Warranty backed by L-Acoustics
- Manufacturer supervised training for new users
- Guaranteed traceability and authentication, including manufacturer serial verification
- Global support access through official L-Acoustics service and technical teams
- Fulfilled worldwide via Gearsupply Marketplace's online ordering, logistics and warehousing system

Founder of Gearsupply. "This partnership is just the beginning."

The L-Acoustics–Gearsupply partnership goes beyond resale. It's a strategic alignment that sets the groundwork for a more accessible and sustainable pro audio ecosystem.

Made in Austria



AUSTRIAN AUDIO

EVOLVING THE STANDARD

Featuring proprietary Open-Acoustics Technology, Austrian Audio's live mics deliver best-in-class handling and noise suppression, with superb feedback rejection. Designed, engineered and manufactured in Austria, the OD303, OD505 and OC707 are the perfect choice for capturing crisp, clear vocals in a range of live applications.



OD303 Dynamic Vocal Microphone

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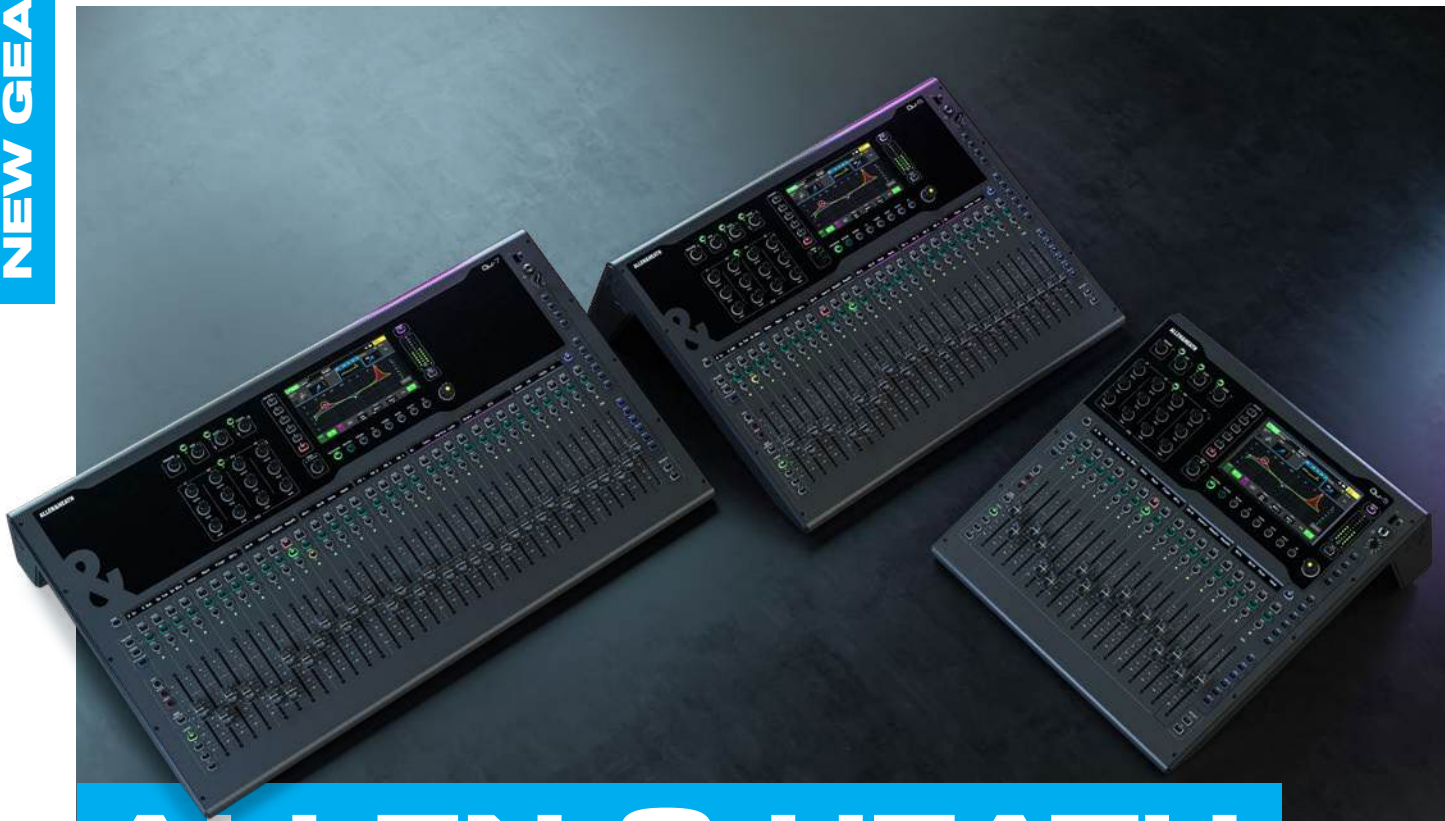
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ALLEN & HEATH ANNOUNCE NEXT GENERATION OF QU MIXERS

Allen & Heath have announced six new Qu mixers, bringing 96kHz FPGA and DEEP Processing capabilities, Dante options, and a host of workflow and hardware enhancements to the renowned digital mixing platform. The Qu-5 and Qu-7 will be available in Australia in early June, with the Qu 6 launching soon after; more updates to follow shortly.

Keith Johnson, Senior Product Manager, says, "Every aspect of the mixer has been rethought, the XCVI core, enhanced I/O capability, all the way to the screen and faders. We've completely reimaged the UI, keeping the simple layout and workflow that Qu is known and loved for."

Based on a unified platform, all new Qu mixers deliver 38 inputs (32 mono/linkable, 3 stereo), 12 mixes, 4 matrix, 6 FX engines with dedicated stereo returns, plus SLink port for

connection to the Everything I/O ecosystem of remote expanders. All models feature a 32x32 USB-C audio interface for DAW recording, 32-channel multitrack support via SD card, and simple stereo recording and playback through the USB-A port.

The range comprises three frame sizes, each available with or without integrated Dante connectivity, ensuring there is a Qu to fit every application: the compact Qu-5 and Qu-5D offer 17 faders, 16 XLR inputs and 12 XLR outputs; the Qu-6 and Qu-6D expand that to 25 faders, 24 XLR inputs and 16 XLR outputs; and the larger Qu-7 and Qu-7D provide 33 faders, 32 XLR inputs and 20 XLR outputs. The three Dante variants include an integrated 16x16 48/96kHz Dante interface.

Long praised for its approachable workflow, the Qu series continues to deliver on its "walk up and mix" ethos. The new generation expands on this with four custom fader layers, more assignable SoftKeys, and the option of flexible routing in addition to classic Qu 1:1 channel patching. The user interface has been refreshed with a focus on speed of navigation and ease of use, with key mixing functions always under your fingertips, whether that's via

the dedicated hands-on controls, or the new touchscreen.

While the new mixers retain the recognisable look and layout of the original Qu series, numerous hardware improvements deliver a modern edge. Updated mic preamps and high-performance 96kHz converters ensure pristine signal integrity from input to output. Every channel now includes a display and a chromatic meter for quick visual feedback, and the new touchscreen offers improved clarity and responsiveness.

All new Qu mixers are DEEP Processing ready, with the upcoming V1.1 firmware offering a suite of optional add-ons from the flagship dLive series, including acclaimed emulations of legendary studio compressors and preamps. In addition, Qu now features the Feedback and Gain Assistants from the CQ series to take the stress out of setup and speed up soundchecks.

Nic Beretta, Allen & Heath's Director of Product, says, "Bands and engineers will love the powerful processing, assistive tools and live capture options. It's also a super flexible, all-in-one solution for studios and broadcasting applications, and AV integrators have been demanding a Dante-enabled Qu."

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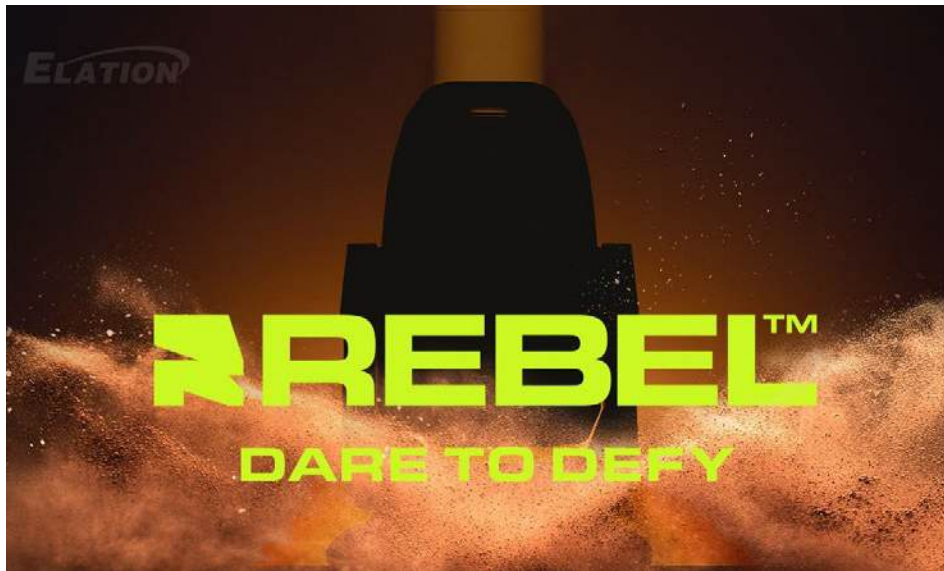
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EAW NT206L Loudspeaker

NT206L is a compact, self-powered line array loudspeaker. It features two 6.5-inch low-frequency drivers with 2-inch voice coils and a 1.75-inch high-frequency driver, driven by 1500 watts of onboard power. Users can choose between four horizontal coverage profiles through hand-operated field adjustments. Each box outputs up to 139dB across its 65-20kHz range. The enclosures are constructed of wood and metal, weighing 14.5kg per unit. They include a comprehensive assortment of compatible accessories for transport, stacking, pole mounting and rigging.



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Elation REBEL PROFILE

Elation's new REBEL PROFILE is a compact LED profile with IP65 rating. The 500W white LED engine outputs up to 22,000 lumens. CMY colour mixing, variable CTO, and a 7-position colour wheel with high CRI (80/90) and UV provide the colour options. Dynamic effects come from a rotating and fixed gobo wheel, full animation wheel, dual prisms, dual frosts, and high-speed iris. The fixture's framing system allows for full blackout shutter cuts, with a wide zoom range of 3.5° to 51°.

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DPA N-Series Digital Wireless Microphone System

DPA Microphones' N-Series Digital Wireless Microphone System is a fully digital, true diversity wideband solution. N-Series operates in the 470–870MHz range, with each unit providing users 400MHz of flexibility and ease of use. The 2024 Vocal Microphone, designed specifically with the N-Series in mind, complements the wireless receiver and bodypack transmitters. N-Series wireless system comes with the DPA Audio Controller, a software solution that allows remote control and monitoring via either PC or Mac. N-Series also offers AES256 encryption for privacy.

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PROTEUS BRUTUS FS from Elation is a purpose built version of their LED BRUTUS wash light optimised for medium- to long-throw followspot applications. The PROTEUS BRUTUS FS features a removable IP66-rated camera housing, allowing users to attach commonly used POE or SDI cameras. It can be operated manually with removable handles or controlled remotely through various automated tracking systems on the market. The 1200W LED engine emits up to 16,000 lux (1,470 fc) of centre intensity at 20 meters, with selectable long throw and ultra-long throw beam modes. CMY colour mixing and variable CTO allow smooth colour blending, with CRI adjustable from 70 to 90. Zoom range is 3° to 35°. Five rotating, indexable gobos are included for texture projection.

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**NEW
GEAR**



**Chauvet DJ EVE F-160ZQ
160W RGBWW LED Fresnel**

EVE F-160ZQ from Chauvet DJ is a full-colour 160W RGBWW LED Fresnel. Zoom range is adjustable from 16° to 61°. Pre-set colour temperature ranges can be selected or mixed from 2800K to 8000k. Unit has high PWM rate for flicker-free operation, suitable for on-camera use. D-Fi USB compatibility is included for wireless master/slave or DMX control. Power is via powerCON®-compatible power input/output connections. Package includes barn doors and gel frame.

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**Chauvet DJ EVE E-160ZQ
160W RGBWW LED Profile**

EVE E-160ZQ from Chauvet DJ is a full-colour 160W RGBWW LED Profile. It uses the same LED engine as the Fresnel. Pre-set colour temperature ranges can be selected or mixed from 2800K to 8000K. Unit has high PWM rate for flicker-free operation, suitable for on-camera use. D-Fi USB compatibility is included for wireless master/slave or DMX control. Power is via powerCON-compatible power input/output connections. Profile specific features are adjustable 4-blade framing system for beam shaping and metal and glass gobo holders.

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L-Acoustics Ultra-Compact LA1.16i Amplified Controller

The LA1.16i, L-Acoustics' ultra-compact 1RU 16-channel amplified controller, is specifically engineered for the installation market such as hospitality venues, retail environments, cultural spaces, and residential installations. The LA1.16i also works well for front-fill and delay systems in theaters and performing arts centers, distributed background music systems in restaurants, hotels, and retail spaces, L-ISA spatial audio and Ambiance active acoustics installations. Onboard is L-SMART, L-Acoustics' patented power management technology, to match real-time power delivery to the needs of the loudspeaker system. LA1.16i supports Milan-AVB and AES67 audio network protocols with seamless redundancy, alongside AES/EBU and analog inputs.

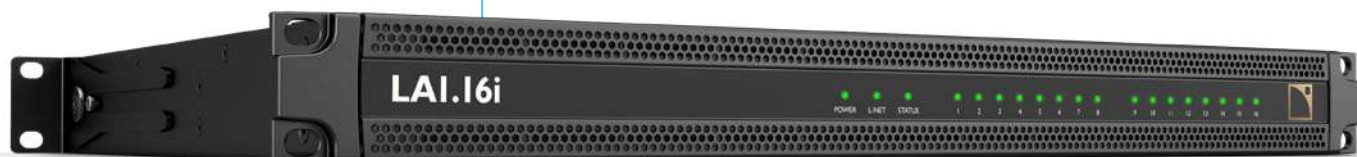
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ETC Mk2 Paradigm Architectural Control Processors

ETC's updated Mk2 versions of their Paradigm Architectural Control Processors come in several form factors. New for ETC is a DIN rail mount version, the P-ACP-D, providing power and data for up to 63 stations. The Small variant now comes with an L-shaped voltage barrier (DIN14-L). ETC's full-sized Paradigm Architectural Control Processor is the P-ACP-E. It has the same channel count in a form factor fit for the ERn and DRd enclosures.

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Q-SYS' new Full Stack AV Platform comprises Designer Software v10, three new Core processors, VisionSuite Accelerator software and hardware, enhanced design tools, and upgraded reporting capabilities for Q-SYS Reflect. Q-SYS Core 24f's integrated control engine manages 2 x DSPs, heaps of internal and external I/O, and support for 96 peripherals. X Class Server Cores are Server Core X10, with 3x the processing power of the Core 24f, supporting 256 x 256 network I/O and 64 AEC processors, and Server Core X20r, which doubles the DSP power of the Core X10, with 384 x 384 network I/O, 128 AEC processors, and enterprise-class features like redundant, hot-swappable power supplies. VisionSuite AI Accelerator and Smarter Design Tools are new software suites, supported by Q-SYS VSA-100 VisionSuite AI Accelerator, a native Q-SYS device built to power advanced automation. Q-SYS Reflect is a cloud-based remote monitoring and management solution for Q-SYS systems. Q-SYS Designer Software v10 supports all the other new releases and includes extra device support and a new software development workflow for UI/UX creation.



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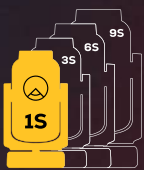
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MIXING THE LIGHT FANTASTIC

**Dad joke No.1: How many audio engineers does it take to change a lightbulb?
Answer: Audio engineers don't change light bulbs... they don't do lighting. Actually,
that's not true. Mix engineers most definitely do lighting, though often don't realise it.**

Sound and lighting have more in common than some of us would like to admit, and this issue I want to explore the overlap between the two art forms and illustrate how every mix engineer might benefit from this 'power of sight' that lighting professionals take for granted.

When it comes to audio mixing, contemplating your sonic palette from the point of view of 'light and shade,' 'bright and dark' or even colour can provide you with mixing insights beyond what your advanced hearing alone can conjure. Adding this advanced skill to your auditory toolkit – that of being able to 'visualise' sound – can sometimes be the difference between a fair mix outcome and a brilliant or inspired one.

Being able to 'see' a mix is something many mix engineers (including yours truly) claim to be able to do, but in truth, this so-called vision is more accurately a broad collection of concepts that we thoughtlessly lump together as 'visualisation'. Not everyone is capable of 'seeing' a mix, nor does every mix require that kind of perspective, and just to be clear, no-one is ingesting sound rays with their eyeballs here. It's not actually about that at all...we're not literally lighting a stage or a set, although metaphorically at least, we're coming close. But before I convince you that I've lost my mind here, let me explain.

This 'vision' takes several forms, and I'll try to list them here under simple subcategories, so we don't spiral into the realm of nonsense and clap-trap. I don't want to come across as a Tarot Reader or Reiki Master. This topic is as important as learning how to use a compressor or place a microphone.

Sound As An Image

Most multitrack audio sessions, particularly those involving songs in particular, can sometimes literally conjure an image in a mix engineer's head, derived from either the sound of the music, its attitude or even its subject matter (lyrics). It's a trigger of the imagination

brought on by the music. But the triggered vision of the mix engineer is valid nonetheless.

If you're one of this crazy breed, the most important first step to developing this sense of 'vision' is learning to embrace its power and value, by thinking deeply about how it can inform the various tones, sounds, volumes, colours and shades of your mix. Now is certainly not the time to belittle your own vision by dismissing it as B.S. or some form of advanced delusion. It's not... this is your mind engaging with the music and triggering a unique response that can potentially inform you of how you might treat an individual element, or indeed a whole mix. It can be a direct path to a personalised sonic palette that no textbook can explain, let alone teach. The vision in your head is there for the taking if you want it. Learning how to turn this 'sight' into a brilliant mix takes time and patience, but it starts with the first step: acknowledging its validity.

Your triggered vision might, for example, be that of an Australian landscape, conjured by the lyrics, prompting you to make the mix bright and colourful, or dark and menacing... literally. The overall tone might come across as bright, with bold features, or contrastingly dark and brooding, with only one or two dramatic highlights. Bright things might appear super clear and detailed with the background remaining deep and dark by contrast, making the mix 'look' cinematic.

Whichever direction you take your mix, if you're lucky enough to have an image in your head of what your soundstage 'looks' like, you have a solid foundation on which to build your sounds, reaffirming the vision in your head. As I've said before, we all possess a giant library in our heads of visual spaces we've encountered throughout our lifetimes, including what each one of them sounds like. We have a good sense of how the physical world around us sounds, as do most humans, irrespective of whether they're also audio engineers. When

we get good at matching what something sounds like with what something looks like – which film mixers are expert at – our mixes come alive visually, and immediately become more convincing to the listener.

Light As A Tonal Metaphor

But for most people, this vision (or 'sightedness,' as my old mate and author, Greg Day, might describe it) doesn't literally take the form of a visual image of let's say, a bright and colourful landscape or a dark and menacing ocean (to describe a couple of obvious ones), but rather as a flow of visual metaphors, some conscious, others semi-conscious.

For example, a mix may not look to you like a physical place – or indeed look like anything in particular – but it may nevertheless be heard as one, particularly as your mix advances.

A song may contain a large cohort of sounds, some of which might seem naturally bright and dominant, others dark and brooding and so on, and it's in developing the skill of being able to describe these elements visually with adjectives like 'distant and foggy,' or 'faint and elusive' that puts you on the path to visualising your mix rather than simply listening to it.

These visual metaphors can inform you about where a sound might be placed in your mix, its volume and tone, and what might be required in terms of effects to create the illusion of its physical whereabouts in the soundstage. This 'sightedness' can make a huge difference in navigating the mix, particularly with things like delays and reverbs. When there's a physical purpose to how these types of effects might behave rather than merely an arbitrary, or spontaneous one, your mix can sometimes become far more vivid, transparent and deep. I'm convinced that people who drown in a mass of reverb when they mix, or who complain that their reverbs make everything too 'wet' and indistinct, generally have little or no capacity to visualise their mixes. Their

reverbs thus lack purpose, or logic, and are seen more like the tail of a kite than an occupied space. For these people, developing an ability to visualise a mix is crucially important if they ever hope to improve the quality of their work.

So forget talking to yourself in kilohertz for a while and instead let these sorts of expressions sink into your contemplations while mixing.

Ask yourself: what would 'distant and foggy' or 'faint and elusive' sound like if you were to ascribe these attributes to a Gretsch second-tier guitar part that was playing chords and occasional riffs in a slow indie-pop ballad. Would this description infer a curtailed top-end tone, and perhaps a rolled off bottom-end too, be low in the mix, with a dark, long reverb that has no pre-delay... a mid-left panning position with an even darker slap off against the other side of the soundstage? Maybe.

Now would be the time to try that to see if it triggers an image in your head; a sense of where the sound is coming from in physical space. If all these effects do little or nothing to help convince you of the guitar's physical whereabouts then there's every chance the effects are only making matters worse by adding chaos and confusion, rather than creating illusion. Conversely, if adding them suddenly allows you to 'see' the Gretsch in the space, then you're definitely onto something.

And how would that then sound with a

bright, clear, and detailed main vocal placed proudly in front of it and a pair of wide-panned acoustic guitars 20 metres either side of the vocal. A good start perhaps? Now let's imagine the whole mix floating in a foggy moonlit landscape? How do we make fog, with nought but sound – no lights or smoke machine? A very long reverb perhaps, with echoes in it... experimentation is the key. Your task tonight: how to make fog with sound...

Lighting a Soundstage In Your Mind

Another form of 'lighting with sound' is more literally about creating pools of light, movement, shadows and colour etc with the various elements of your mix.

This might involve placing musical elements literally like a band on a stage, creating separation between them with panning and tone. A drum kit might be made narrower in this context; the overheads panned only 30% left and right rather than 100%. Big guitars might be panned 90% or even 100% left and right and be highlighted with relatively bright tones and dark echoes opposite.

By contrast the bass might be deep and dark, a broody synth pad might be rolled off in the tops, fed into a big, dull reverb that features nothing above 800Hz. The idea of this basic sonic concept is to find a way to create sonic contrast: light against dark, highlights against shadow (to borrow terms from our lighting

brethren again), to generating sonic spotlights, as it were, on the featured elements by placing them in a dark context.

It's like imagining a long exposure on a camera that can produce rich contrast and depth of field, as opposed to flash photography, which generally exposes everything to one crude light source, destroying most of the beautiful contrast in the process.

Finding ways to exaggerate the highlights of your mix with volume, tone and effects, by contextualising these elements with dimly lit, darker elements adds depth and contrast that will produce far superior three-dimensionality in your mixes. After all, your mix elements are not democratic processes whereby every sound should be given equal value – one sound, one vote. Good mixes never do that! Mixing that way – and believe me, lots of people do it – is the equivalent of flash photography, or turning on the house lights. Disastrous.

I could go on for days about this but I'm out of room. If you would like me to expand on this topic next issue, don't hesitate to drop me a line.

Til then, enjoy your mixing. And look before you leap...

Andy Stewart owns and operates [The Mill in the hills of Bass Coast Shire, Victoria](#), and he's also the new [Editorial Director of Mutech Media](#). Check it out here: [mutech.media](#) or contact Andy directly via: andy@mutech.media.


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How Spark created an immersive IRL experience for Kiwi gamers



SPARK PLAYS THE GAME

The Mission

In September 2024, Spark Game Arena Live took over Auckland's Spark Arena, reimagining gaming festivals as a fully immersive, live-action experience. More than just a showcase, it was a game in itself; one where every attendee became a player.

The event marked a major move for Spark Game Arena, a brand platform created to represent Spark's push into gaming. "We needed something to represent Spark's contribution to gaming as the provider of the network that people game on," says Spark's Ally Young.

The idea came from a stalled collaboration. "We wanted to be part of another event, and when that didn't go ahead, we thought; why don't we do it ourselves?" That decision set the wheels in motion for an event built around real-world interactivity, where RFID technology, live data tracking, and narrative design converged to turn every attendee into an active participant.

The Players

Spark may have initiated the mission, but it took a tightly coordinated alliance to bring Spark Game Arena Live to life. ColensoBBDO served as the creative agency, crafting the visual identity, messaging, and overall narrative that shaped how Spark would interact with the gaming

audience. Event agency Spur took on the production brief, overseeing logistics and on-site delivery, while Satellite Media built the Mission Hub app, a digital companion that tracked player points, progress and the unfolding in-game storyline of 'Killabyte'.

GPP (Global Production Partners) delivered technical design across the arena, while Let's Play Live brought deep eSports experience as Spark's gaming partner. PHD New Zealand rounded out the team with strategic media planning that supported the campaign from day one.

Ally Young who led the project for Spark reflects, "Without a gaming background, I wasn't weighed down by legacy perceptions or Spark's past experience in the gaming space. I came in with a blank perspective and focused on getting the job done. The rest of the team were all gamers, I relied on them heavily as my experts."

Into the Arena

For one day only, Spark Arena was transformed into a real-world playground for gamers. From the moment they entered, attendees were absorbed into a multi-layered environment where every action counted. RFID wristbands, called Exabands, became weapons, touchpoints became gameplay, and the Mission Hub mobile app served as the player's dashboard, tracking

experience points (XP), side quests, and the unfolding narrative of a digital threat lurking within the venue.

Attendees found themselves recruited into D.A.R.T. - the Data Anomaly Response Team - and faced with a choice: walk through the visual experience or opt into the game and become part of the story. From scanning sponsor activations and buying food, to spectating eSports matches and visiting gaming booths, every interaction earned 'Damage' against the festival's antagonist, Byte, part of a broader in-venue quest experience.

"Everything was part of the game," says Ally. "If people were visiting a sponsor's area, they would scan and earn Damage. If they bought a hot dog, they'd earn Damage."

The day was split into two sessions: a family-friendly run from 9am to 2pm, followed by an R16 session from 3pm to 9pm. "It worked really well for our sponsors," Ally explains. "Red Bull didn't want to provide samples in the under-16 session, and the later session let us include more mature content."

Anchoring the morning schedule was the Rise Cup, a national Fortnite tournament with over \$250,000 in prizes - the biggest of its kind ever held in New Zealand. "It gave local gamers a world-class platform. Something they'd normally have to travel overseas for."

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The Side Quest: Killabyte

Every great game has a side quest. Layered beneath the surface of Spark Game Arena Live was a continuous, venue-wide experience called Killabyte, an underlying boss fight narrative threaded through the day's experience.

Designed by Colenso, the game drew inspiration from a Spark-era icon - the Nokia 3310's Snake game. That familiar digital serpent was reimagined as 'Byte', a mischievous glitch trying to pull the festival offline and drag players back to the era of black-and-white pixels.

Every attendee had the option to play. On arrival, they were handed an RFID wristband that let them scan in at various touchpoints around the arena - activations, food stalls, viewing areas - earning 'Damage points' against Byte. "We called it a side quest," says Ally. "You could dip in and out, and it worked alongside the rest of the event."

Killabyte was more than a leaderboard gimmick. Around 30 minutes into each session, the arena lights dimmed and Byte appeared on the overhead screens, briefly taking over the space. These programmed moments kept the in-game story front of mind and helped anchor the sense of collective participation. Players could track their progress via the Mission Hub app, and those who explored further found hidden Byte scales to scan, unlocking extra points and deeper narrative threads.



Power-Ups and Player HUDs

While the gameplay concept came from Spark and Colenso, it was GPP who translated that vision into physical space. From the moment attendees walked in, LED walls, lighting sequences, and screen content wrapped the arena in the visual language of a live-action video game.

GPP were tasked with designing and delivering the audiovisual backbone of the experience, including broadcast infrastructure, LED layouts and the all-important show flow. Their work enabled not just Byte's arena takeovers, but also the seamless integration of the Rise Cup tournament across physical and digital channels.

The result was a production that felt part eSports broadcast, part immersive theatre - high-spec, responsive, and built to scale with audience behaviour. From syncing RFID-triggered animations to managing stage transitions between tournament play and Killabyte encounters, the AV team played a pivotal role in holding the event's hybrid format together.

Final Score

By the time the final leaderboard lit up, Spark Game Arena Live had done more than deliver a gaming festival, it had sparked international attention. With over 20,000 RFID scans logged, 4.5 million 'Damage points' dealt to Byte, and hours of active engagement per player, the gamified format proved a hit with both attendees and the wider gaming community.

For Ally, the impact was immediate and unexpected, "During the event, the CEO of the NZ eSports Federation told me he was getting messages from other federations asking, 'What's happening in New Zealand right now?' It went global very quickly."

That buzz was underpinned by a technically smooth run, even in the face of interference. The Fortnite Rise Cup tournament survived nine separate DDoS attempts in three hours. Spark's network security team repelled every one of them.

Across the day, engagement with the Killabyte experience far exceeded expectations. The average player spent 13 minutes in the Mission Hub, while top participants stayed active for over 90 minutes. Byte's final defeat, announced through synchronised lighting, audio and screens, was met with a crowd-wide celebration.

Boss Level

Behind the spectacle, Ally's team was faced with the challenge of convincing big sponsors to buy into something unproven. For Spark, the biggest hurdle wasn't technical, it was trust. "We were asking them to trust us based on a pitch deck," says Ally. "But they did, which was amazing."

It wasn't just sponsors that needed convincing. Winning over the gaming community presented a different kind of resistance. "Gamers are naturally sceptical of big brands," she notes. "They've seen companies try and fail to enter the space before, so we knew we had to earn their respect."





Spark's answer was to build the event around the audience, not the brand. By designing every element - from RFID gameplay to the Fortnite Rise Cup - with the player experience in mind, they positioned themselves as enablers, not intruders.

And it paid off. "They showed up. They played. And they left buzzing. That's when we knew we'd done it right."

Continue? Yes/No

For Spark, the success of Game Arena Live was about more than just event day metrics. It was about making a statement; that Aotearoa's gaming scene deserves global-grade experiences, built locally and tailored to the players who make up nearly 80% of the population. "We wanted people to feel like they were part of the global gaming community. And we saw that happen right here."

The impact was personal, too. "Walking in and seeing everything come to life, watching kids pull their curious parents around, totally immersed, that was huge for me," Ally reflects.

As for what's next, the appetite is there but Spark is keeping quiet for now. Whether Spark continues as lead or plays support next time, one thing is clear: what started as a one-off pitch turned into a blueprint for what gaming festivals could look like in Aotearoa.

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29



Night Trade. Photo Credit: Tamarah Scott

RISING 2025

This June, Rising Festival returns to transform Melbourne's CBD. Over 12 nights, the festival will stage 65 events featuring 327 artists, 15 new commissions and nine world premieres. The program spans a vast spectrum of content, styles of theatre and – perhaps most distinctly – venues. All united by a shared goal of creating a palpable Rising presence in the city, which, despite the program's size, is no small feat. "It's a loud city with a lot going on," says Rising's Head of Event Design, Matthew Adey. "The biggest challenge logistically is trying to make sure we can get as many sites as possible visually noticed throughout the festival."

The earliest iteration of Rising ran in 2022 – after a false start that was Covid-cancelled in '21 – and included a festival hub at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl. "A huge site with a strong architectural presence", it was a difficult venue to make a mark on. They moved from SMMB to the St Paul's Cathedral car park – "we went from a huge amount of space to not enough" – before landing at Howey Place in the CBD. Positioned behind Melbourne Town Hall at an intersection of laneways and flanked by both the Capitol and Max Watts' theatres, 'Night Trade' runs over the entire festival featuring permanent installations and various performances. "The whole precinct gets involved," says Adey. "We take up several shop fronts with different installations."

First step to transforming Howey Place was to consider how it is experienced on a regular basis and how to subvert that. Adey will be turning off all existing lighting and using bumped in fixtures to saturate spaces and create ambience. In festivals past he has relied more on décor, which required bumping in and out at both ends of the day. Truss with fixtures can remain in the air for the duration of the festival. Night Trade will also feature a series of one metre by half metre screens. A

fully connected installation of video content that has been created using TouchDesigner and Blender video software. The screens are the ROE Visual Vanish, which Adey describes as "an incredible piece of technology that I cannot get enough of." He praises their light weight, brightness, transparency and numerous possible configurations, including curves.

While Adey is making use of current and new technology, with grandMA3 consoles for control and even using AI tools to grab images he can then manipulate in TouchDesigner, like any good craftsman, he doesn't discount the classics. "I'm using a lot more golden tungsten style lighting to bring back a bit of warmth and being very specific about that." One of the stages at Night Trade will feature tungsten lamps exclusively. Combined with a gold curtain, Adey describes it as an "holistic installation."

The festival also hosts numerous shows, homegrown and international, that come with existing designers and preconceived designs. But a remounted show is not to be mistaken as an easier endeavour for the team. With limited access to the city's traditional theatres

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Night Trade. Photo Credit: Mandy Wu



Night Trade. Photo Credit: Remi Chauvin



Night Trade. Photo Credit: Tamarah Scott

– due to the size of the program and also the timelines that commercial theatres run to – Rising’s production manager, Mikkel Mynster, is tasked with creating performance spaces in non-conventional venues, “it’s easily the most challenging part of the job,” he says.

One example is Mickey by Brooke Stamp, which was last performed at Carriageworks in Sydney as part of LiveWorks festival. During Rising it will be performed at Buxton Contemporary gallery space. The lighting design is simple with four ARRI SkyPanel lights for colour saturation and a couple of PAR cans to fill in side light, but even still it has presented challenges in the new venue. There are pillars intruding in the performance space and the ceiling is lower than at Carriageworks, although luckily it does have rigging points. “We’re going to hang some scaff pipes to rig lights on,” says Mynster. “Use floor stands for speakers. Try to keep it as light touch as possible.” Mynster says that both artists who will be performing in Buxton Contemporary – the other being another dance-performance hybrid, The Butterfly



The Butterfly Who Flew Into The Rave. Photo Credit: Jinki Cambroner



The Butterfly Who Flew Into The Rave. Photo Credit: Jinki Cambroner



The Butterfly Who Flew Into The Rave. Photo Credit: Mark Gambino

Who Flew into the Rave – are very open to the idea of not being in a theatre.

This gets to the real art of Mynster’s job, beyond hiring gear and booking venues – negotiating with artists. “What is the idea you’re trying to communicate, how do we communicate that idea in this different context. What is important about your work and what is less important.” This task is even more gargantuan when you consider the range of companies and artists Mynster is working with. “We have shows coming from all over the world and from different stratas of theatre. Budget theatre where designs are led by scraping together whatever equipment



The Butterfly Who Flew Into The Rave. Photo Credit: Lucy Parakhina



Photo Credit: Lucy Parakhina

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POV

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This range in programming is one reason Mynster says it is hard to spot trends in what gear designers are using, although he notes that he is seeing a lot more LED than when the festival started. As our conversation progresses, however, I think I spot a trend – screens.

One of Mynster’s highlights for the festival is POV – a live docu-drama being staged at Art Centre Melbourne’s newest venue, The Show Room. “It makes great use of a small amount of technology,” says Mynster. “There are four TV monitors that get used as part of the show.” Another highlight is a production of Hamlet by Peruvian theatre company,

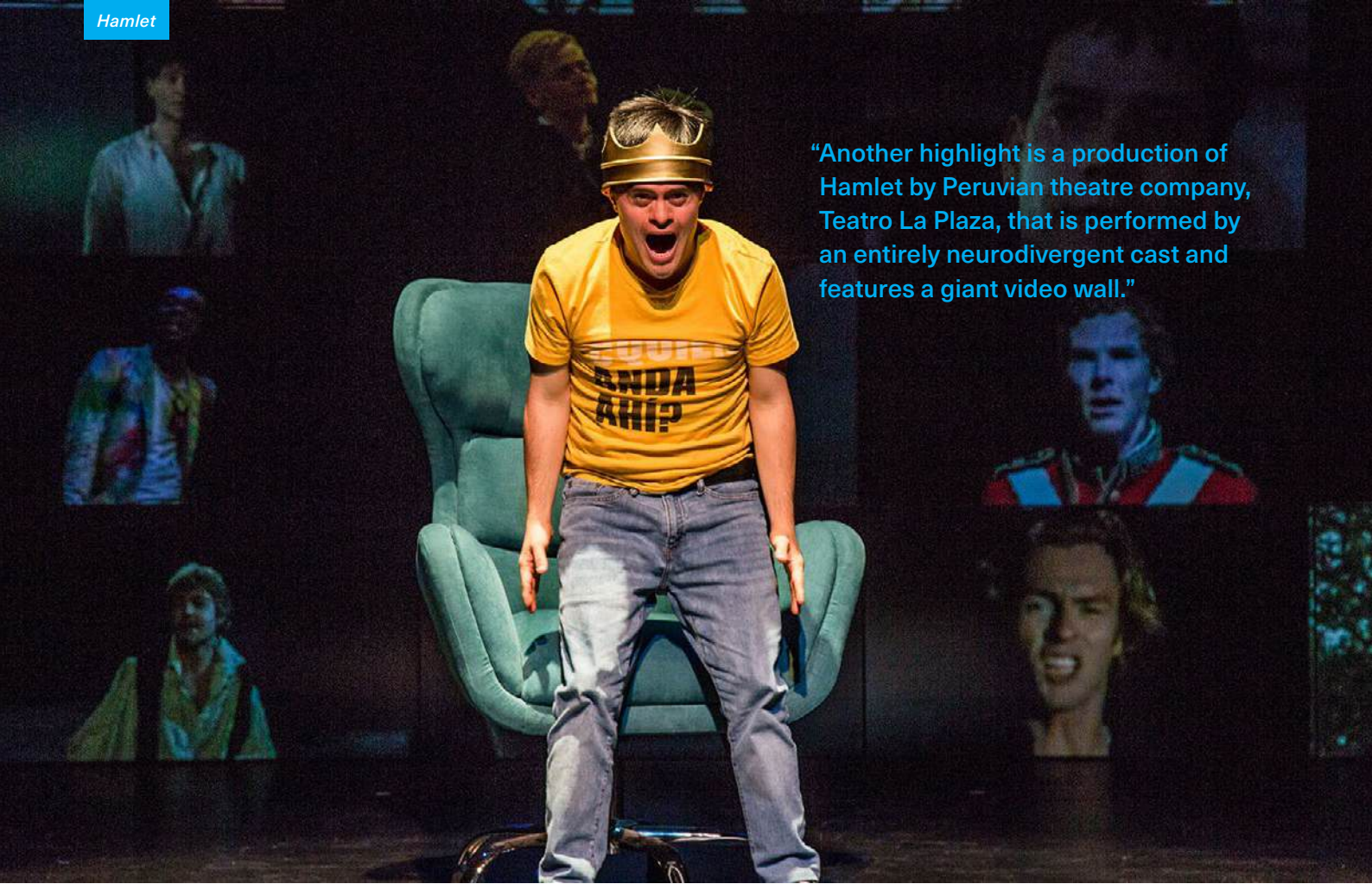


POV



POV

Hamlet



“Another highlight is a production of Hamlet by Peruvian theatre company, Teatro La Plaza, that is performed by an entirely neurodivergent cast and features a giant video wall.”



Day Tripper, Yasiin Bey. Photo Credit: Remi Chauvin

Teatro La Plaza, that is performed by an entirely neurodivergent cast and features a giant video wall.

Adey's highlight, in addition to Night Trade, is Day Tripper. A festival within the festival that

runs day and night at Melbourne Town Hall featuring live music, DJs and contemporary dance. Using similar tools and design principals that he has for Night Trade, he uses the opportunity working with different artists to explore technology and create production

designs that respond to Melbourne Town Hall.

Whether Adey will succeed in taking over Town Hall or the city at large remains to be seen, but there is no doubt that Rising will be noticed.

Rising runs from 04 – 15 June.




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AVOLITES CREATES THE SYNERGY FOR FOREIGNER TOUR

Lighting designer Benjamin Moffitt has been working for legendary US rock band Foreigner for the last two years and has been a lighting professional for 40 years. For around 20 years of that period, he has been using Avolites for his lighting control.

Foreigner, founded in 1976, is one of the best-selling bands in the world and has been extremely active recently, taking to the road for 'farewell' tours through 2022, 2023 and 2024, interspersed with very successful Las Vegas residencies at The Venetian in 2023 and 24, as well as some co-headliner tours. Dates are currently booked for 2025 and into 2026, when they will celebrate an incredible 50th anniversary!

Some performances have seen original members rock up to join and play with the current lineup, notably original lead vocalist Lou Gramm, who was one of

six founding members starting out in 1976, together with guitarist Mick Jones, drummer Dennis Elliot, keyboardist Al Greenwood, bassist Ed Gagliardi and multi-instrumentalist Ian McDonald.

Benjamin describes himself as "always an Avo Sapphire guy" when it comes to his control system and console of choice, and most recently has been appreciating the power, flexibility and simplicity of the Sapphire combined with the Titan software.

Now he is also starting to lean towards Avo's D9 after a couple of uses and is

currently putting a T3 controlled rig together for some fly dates. "The new encoders are just as great as those on all my other desks," he noted.

When video was introduced to Foreigner's stage set in 2023 during their Venetian residency of that year, in the form of a large upstage LED screen with extensive LED strips delineating the set, Benjamin decided to use Avo's AI servers.

He'd first utilised AI servers for video content on his own custom video servers for 3 Doors Down tours in 2021 and 22, but

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for Foreigner expanded the system by also using Synergy for mapping the set lighting LED strips.

Synergy – Avo’s proprietary protocol that unites lighting and video seamlessly into one user interface – enabled pixel-mapping of the LED strips and easy control of these together with approximately 200 lighting fixtures via the Sapphire console.

The lighting rig contains products from several brands, complete with a floor package and some striking custom pods on the deck, fabricated by rental vendor Premier Global.



Stylistically, Foreigner is a no-nonsense BIG rock show aesthetic, so lighting embraces this with all the attitude, balls, and brashness you would expect, plus plenty of drama for any slower power ballad moments, all run by Benjamin on his Avolites Sapphire.

Creatively, he was careful to ensure that the video effects were well-blended and complementary to the lighting and musical material, so the band felt comfortable with having this new and exciting visual element to the stage presentation.

Benjamin owns two Sapphire consoles himself.

One is used as a previz board and is permanently stationed in his studio; the other is usually on the road with him. He also purchased a third and donated it to the Pipestone Performing Arts Center in Pipestone, Minnesota.

This is where he grew up, and so he has always tried to give back to the community there. His sister Reggina 'Moffitt' Gorter runs a non-profit music school and directs many plays at the theatre.

Years ago, Benjamin helped the theatre buy a 2010 Avolites Pearl Rolacue and when time allowed, he would go in and give the rig a clean. About a year after the Pearl arrived, lightning struck – literally – and a power surge killed the Pearl! So HELLYEAH, the band he was with at the time, sold them their old Pearl Expert for almost nothing, and 13 years later that console was at the end of its run and needed replacing.

In 2024, Benjamin installed the Sapphire Touch plus modern lighting which allowed the theatre to benefit from a dynamic and contemporary lighting system.

Benjamin had started using Avolites originally back in the days of the classic Pearl 'Rolacue' desk which then morphed into the Pearl 2004, 2008 and Pearl Expert versions, then onto Sapphire and has "not looked back" since.

"I like the sliders and the faders on the Sapphire; I am really not a knobs guy!" Benjamin adds that despite that statement, he is now getting into using the Avolites D9 which does have a few rotary encoders on the top and right-hand side.

He also appreciates the Sapphire's small footprint and the neat and tidy two screens-wide set up and work interface.

Benjamin thinks that Titan software "makes everything super-simple and logical to grab the lights and program them to do what you want without having to navigate vast, complex, and potentially confusing menu systems." He loves that visualisation program Capture is fully integrated into the Avolites console software.

His own style of operating lighting and visuals is very hands-on and ideally suited to the Avolites platform, succinctly summed up with the comment, "I want to feel like I am running lights not looking at timecode."

He is really enjoying this block of work with Foreigner and relished the two sets of Vegas residencies, noting that the Venetian's venue staff and tech crew, led by production manager Scott Ava and head of lighting, Justin Miller, were a joy to work with.

Foreigner goes back into The Venetian in March 2026, complete with an orchestra, to kick off the 50th Anniversary Tour which is expected to run through 2026 and into 2027.

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SINGAPORE'S ESPLANADE

Theatres on the Bay Invests in Robe

Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay, one of Singapore's most prestigious performing arts centres, a high-profile producing and receiving house and one of the busiest arts centres in the world, has recently invested in 170 Robe moving lights and LED products as part of its technical infrastructure upgrade across venues.

Delivered by Robe's Asia Pacific office, the Robe equipment includes PAINTE & ESPRITE Fresnel and Profile moving lights, FOOTSIE LED footlights and T32 Slim Cyc lights, all of which join the lighting inventory which encompasses a range of lighting brands to cover various requirements.

"These new Robe products contribute to the diversity of our lighting resources," commented Esplanade's Head of Lighting, Technical Production, Heryadi Yusof (Yadi).

The purchase was the culmination of a collaboration between Robe Asia Pacific and the Robe R&D and production teams in the Czech Republic, especially with the development of the PAINTE Fresnel.

Yadi added that all the fixtures were selected "based on their ability to meet our evaluation criteria, with specific considerations given to optical performance, control capabilities, and suitability for multiple production demands."

Each fixture type was also chosen based on how they could enhance Esplanade's overall flexibility and ability to offer a diversity of staging configurations.

The Robe products have been allocated across different venues within Esplanade, including the 1,600-seat Concert Hall and 2,000-seat Theatre, which are housed under two uniquely designed dome structures fitted with double-glazed glass ceilings and aluminium sunshades.

The other performance spaces include the Concourse, DBS Foundation Outdoor Theatre and Recital Studio, plus a Rehearsal Studio that can also be utilised for entertainment and events.

Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay is a busy and lively venue with a year-round schedule of approximately 4,000 arts performances and activities embracing a vibrant mix of cultures, languages and genres including dance, music, theatre, and more.

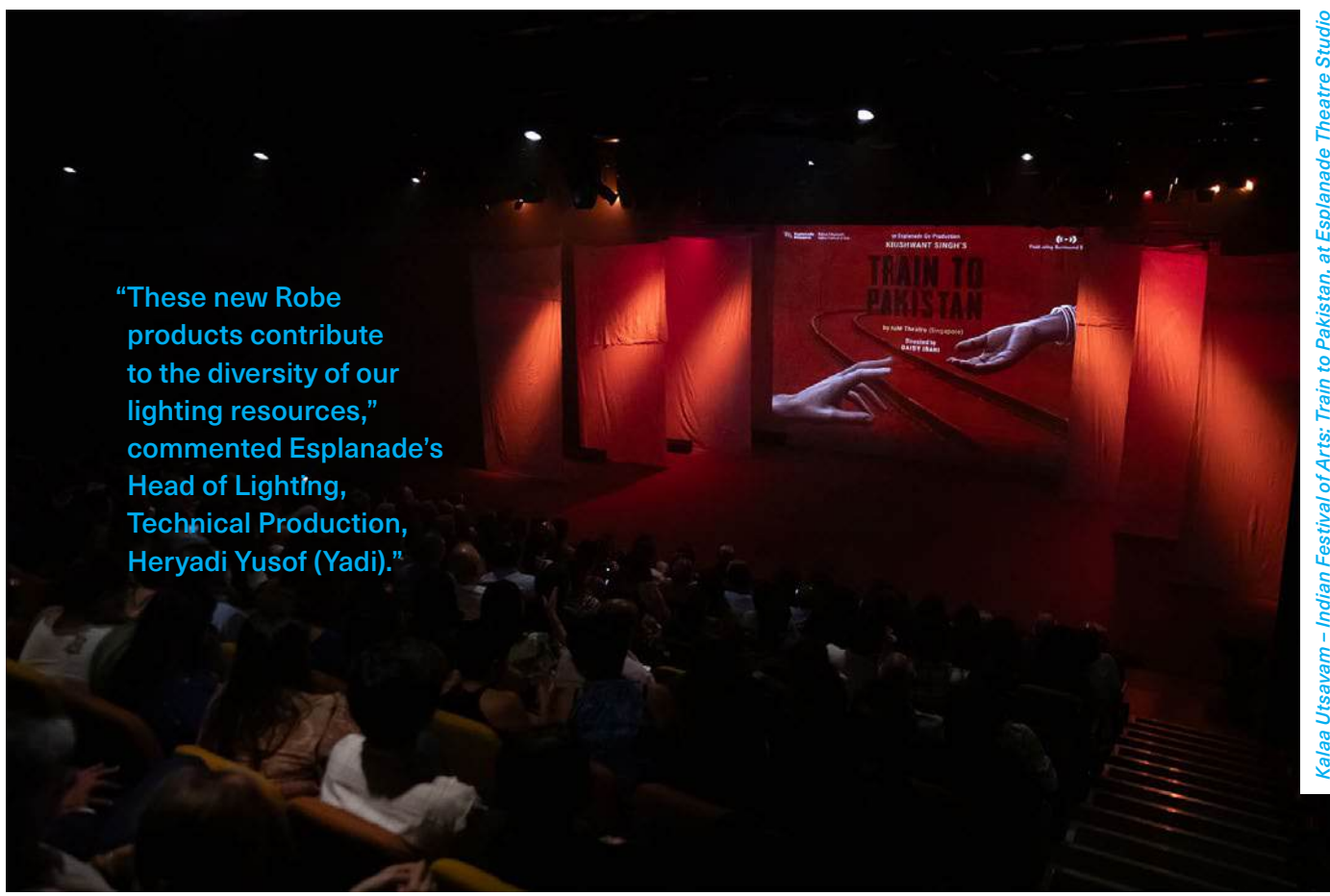
As Head of Lighting, Yadi is a key part of the technical production team. He's worked with the organisation for 23 years, overseeing the planning, implementation, and maintenance of lighting systems to support the various programmes and performances.

Yadi has been a lighting industry professional for 30 years, having worked on a wide range of performance and technical production projects. He and his lighting crew team made the decision to pick these specific Robe products after a thorough tender evaluation process.

The final selection was based on many core factors, including cost and performance efficiencies, versatility, and how well the fixtures address the breadth of the venue's technical requirements.

The evaluation assessment also considered how easily and efficiently the new luminaires would integrate with the existing lighting infrastructure.

Both PAINTE and ESPRITE feature Robe's trailblazing TE (TRANSFERABLE ENGINE) technology which allows LED engines to be replaced or swapped out – in approximately five to seven minutes – for another or an engine with different characteristics appropriate to the application. This can significantly increase the lifespan of the fixtures.



“These new Robe products contribute to the diversity of our lighting resources,” commented Esplanade’s Head of Lighting, Technical Production, Heryadi Yusof (Yadi).”

The FOOTSIE2 is a cool product taking foot lighting to new levels, while the T32 Cyc Slims are low-laying, easily inter-connectable and populated with powerful RGBBAL multi-chip LEDs that generate high light levels. They also faithfully reproduce the rich full-spectrum colours and tints favoured by LDs worldwide.

Robe Asia Pacific is also based in Singapore. Solid, reliable technical support was another “key consideration” for Yadi and the team when making this decision, as this underpins

continued operational efficiency and minimises potential downtime.

Robe Asia Pacific’s Jens Poehlker commented, “This collaboration of various Robe teams across the globe has been extraordinary in order to meet the Esplanade team’s exact requirements for a Fresnel, aware that meeting expectations and deadlines would be a challenge.

“It was all extremely tight from the get-go, and I was delighted to receive the green light from our CEO Josef Valchar.”

“After that, getting the nod of approval from Yadi and his team was the next objective. The clarity and attention to detail in their specifications were very helpful, and of course, huge applause to Robe’s Product Management and R&D team working with Ondrej Hegar, Tomas Andrys and Tomas Malina to make all of this happen.”

“Finally, a big ‘Thank You’ to Yadi, Ismahadie and the whole Esplanade team for their trust and for adding the PAINTE Fresnels to their 170 Robe fixtures.”

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Obscura Qalma bring darkness to light with ENTTEC EMU

The fusion of heavy music and high-impact lighting has never been more seamless, or more electrifying

Obscura Qalma, a rising force in the European extreme metal scene, is setting a new benchmark for immersive live shows thanks to ENTTEC's EMU sound-to-light software and new EMU hardware interface, designed and manufactured in Melbourne, Australia.

Hailing from Venice, Italy, this blackened death metal trio has taken full creative control of their stage presence, delivering performances that don't just sound brutal: they look devastating.

Their latest single, Hexed Katharsis, captures the raw power of their live setup, as seen in the newly released official video, filmed during their ambitious Rites of Transcendence European Tour. With shows spanning 2024 and into 2025, this tour has seen Obscura Qalma ignite stages across the continent. Behind the scenes, EMU was there for every pulse, strobe, and haze-drenched beat.

What sets Obscura Qalma apart isn't just their genre-defying sound (influenced by bands such as Behemoth and Septicflesh, as well as their own orchestral leanings), but their commitment to building every aspect of the show themselves. That includes the lights.

Lighting by musicians, for musicians

At the heart of the band's visual identity is frontman Leopoldo "Sirius" Santoro: vocalist, guitarist, composer, and, yes, also lighting programmer.

"In extreme metal, atmosphere is everything," he says. "I started programming our light shows back in 2022. I had to dive into the world of lighting, which, while sharing some similarities with music, is a completely different language."

Sirius picked up his new skills quickly by watching YouTube tutorials, observing lighting techs, and relentless rehearsal room experimentation. "Now it's become a fundamental part of our show, just like the music."

Enter EMU...

Like many artists, Sirius played around with other lighting control programs before discovering EMU, ENTTEC's intuitive, robust, and VST-compatible DMX software.

"EMU was my first contact with ENTTEC. I had tried other software before, but none of them were stable. I needed something I could trust 100% to run our show. I found that stability and reliability in EMU."

Obscura Qalma's setup is both compact and powerful. Seven PARs, two strobes, two moving heads, a hazer, and a fog machine, all precisely controlled through a single DMX universe. Each fixture is individually addressed, allowing the band to scale and adapt to different venue sizes. Whether they're using their own rig or plugging into house systems at festivals and clubs, their show goes with them, flawless and consistent.

Even more exciting, Sirius says they're now designing and integrating custom fixtures to further elevate their performance. "We're pushing the boundaries even further."

Plug in, step up!

Recently, the band upgraded from an ENTTEC DMX USB Pro to the dedicated EMU hardware interface, and the benefits were immediate.

"The footswitch feature is a game changer," Sirius explains. "Pre-programming the entire show can sometimes make things feel a bit rigid. Plus, unexpected situations often arise; a smaller venue, fog machine issues, whatever. Having a footswitch gives us more freedom."

With the simple tap of a foot, the band can flick between scenes in real time, maintaining a fluid performance while keeping the audience immersed in the experience. It's the kind of flexibility that transforms a good show into a great one, and lets musicians stay in the moment, even when things don't go exactly to plan.

Reliability under pressure

When you're on stage handling vocals, guitar riffs, and an entire lighting rig, you need tools that won't let you down.

"What I appreciate the most about EMU is how lightweight, efficient, and, above all, stable it is," says Sirius. "There's always that feeling that something might go wrong. With EMU, I don't



Obscura Qalma. L-R: Res, Sirius, Theo

feel that anxiety. I'm calm and fully focused on the audience, knowing that the lightshow behind me will support and enhance the performance."

For a genre that thrives on intensity and theatricality, having a reliable lighting system isn't just a bonus, it's essential. With EMU, Obscura Qalma has found their perfect match.

Inspiration for the underground

"I've been an ENTTEC fan for a while," Sirius adds, "... and I truly hope that what we've been doing with EMU will inspire other bands like ours to craft more immersive and captivating shows — and help them stand out in a music scene that demands more and more professionalism to break through."

In a world where standing out is everything, Obscura Qalma shows how lighting technology, when placed in the right hands, becomes an instrument of its own.

Leopoldo Sirius Santoro. Photo Credit: Massimo Dri



Leopoldo Sirius Santoro



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ACME LIGHTS UP SMILES



AT BRIGHTER DAYS FESTIVAL

Once again, a group of Victoria's production companies joined forces to support the much-loved Brighter Days Festival 2025, a vibrant fundraiser held annually over the March Labour Day weekend at Pioneer Park in Bright, Victoria.

Cautech, Austage Events, Peninsula Production Services, and Lock and Light came together to deliver a spectacular production for the event, which is organised entirely by a passionate team of volunteers. The festival raises awareness and funds for Epidermolysis Bullosa (EB) - a rare and debilitating skin condition.

This year's festival featured an impressive lineup of musical talent, including Casey Barnes, The Black Sorrows, Thirsty Merc, The Screaming Eagles, and many more.

The full Acme lighting rig included 20 ICARUS 320 wash lights, 16 Willow 200 Spots, 6 Energy Spot Pro fixtures, 24 Acme BL100 Ultra IP PARs, and eight Eyeflash Blinders. These were complemented by two DJ Power H3 Hazers and managed via a ChamSys Stadium Connect console.

Lighting design was led by Cautech, with Tony Lamplough, Simon Pentz, and James Christie operating the console. Jesse Connelly served as the Lighting Designer for The Screaming Eagles' performance.

The Brighter Days Story

Founded in 2012, Brighter Days began as a grassroots effort to support children's charities. It all started when musicians Matt Powell, John Nixon, and Steve Dundon played a backyard awareness gig for Epidermolysis Bullosa. There, they met young sufferers Eliza and Tilly. Deeply moved by their stories, the trio knew they had to do more.

Meanwhile, their motorcycle-riding friend Jim Henwood was also rallying support.

Close friends Rob and Kylie Trewin had tragically lost their son Cooper to Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC), while another local mate, Jason Reid, was navigating the heartbreaking journey of having a critically ill child.

Inspired to make a meaningful impact, they banded together with fellow motorcycle and car enthusiasts to create a unique fundraising event - BIKES, CARS, MUSIC - and the Brighter Days Foundation was born.

Now in its 12th year, the Brighter Days Festival has grown into a major three-day family fundraising event. Over the years, the Foundation has proudly donated more than \$4.4 million to its supported charities, funding vital care for EB sufferers and supporting groundbreaking research into cures for both EB and SUDC.

The charities supported include:

DEBRA Australia (Dystrophic Epidermolysis Bullosa Research Association), Cooper Trewin Foundation, and CurEB Research Foundation.

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Martin Professional and Verity Studios Deliver Breakthrough Drone and Lighting Showcase

Martin Mac Aura Raven XIP

Martin Professional, a HARMAN Professional Solutions brand and a global leader in entertainment and architectural lighting, collaborated with Verity Studios, the leading provider of indoor drone show systems for live events, for a dynamic three-day customer showcase at the HARMAN Experience Center in Northridge, California. Held in April, the event revealed how autonomous drones and advanced lighting can operate as a single, unified show experience.

The centerpiece was a choreographed performance of Verity's Lucie micro drones, equipped with powerful LEDs, flying in sync with Martin's newest lighting fixture releases, including the MAC Aura Raven XIP. With its high-resolution aura effects and bold beam presence, the MAC Aura Raven XIP provided a rich visual counterpart to the drones' motion and light patterns.

"We built the show with the MAC Aura Raven XIP as the lead performer," said Brandon Robbins, Regional Sales Manager for North America, Martin Professional. "The real magic came from knowing when to let the drones take focus, and when to let the lighting drive the moment. It felt like the two were playing together."

"The Raven's pixelated aura lets us create movement and beam effects that

complement the drones in real time. At times, we'd isolate beams to echo the drones' flight path—it was like handing off the visual lead, back and forth."

Verity showcased both the current and next-gen Lucie platforms, equipped with the company's signature point light and the new Mini Beam payload, which provide a free-floating beam light that is no longer anchored to physical elements. This mobility and freedom from physical constraints for a stage lighting beam is a groundbreaking first, offering unprecedented creative options to stage and lighting designers. Weighing just 56 to 62 grams and fully engineered in Switzerland, the Lucie drones fly for up to five minutes and are built from the ground up for professional, safety-critical environments.

"We wanted to come together to create something unified - and highlight the strengths of both new products," said Steve Maassen, Head of Live Events, Verity Studios. "Typical drone demos happen in dark rooms, but in real-world productions - whether it's touring or theater - drones need to integrate with lighting in meaningful, artistic ways. That's what we set out to do here. The MAC Aura Raven XIP became a character of its own, with unique looks that complemented the drones beautifully. This event was about pushing that integration and finding the moments where lighting and choreography connect."

Alongside the Raven, Martin's VDO Sceptron XB provided a vibrant, pixel-driven structure that enhanced the drone choreography. Additional fixtures included the MAC Aura XIP, MAC ONE, Exterior

Linear Pro, Exterior Wash Pro, and Exterior Projection Compact, forming a full ecosystem of motion-ready lighting.

"We first worked with Verity in 2018, and when I saw their next-gen drones - and knowing we just launched the Raven at LDI - it felt like the perfect time to reunite," said Greg Jones, Manager, National & Strategic Accounts, North America Lighting, Martin Professional. "This wasn't about showing drones alone. We wanted to demonstrate how they integrate into a real-world environment - lighting, staging, video. It was a complete show system, not just a technology demo."

The response from industry professionals who attended the event underscored the impact of the collaboration. "The way the lighting and motion were tied to the soundtrack really told a story," said Glen Brodersen, Senior Technical Director at Sight & Sound Theatres. "It's a great example of how light and movement can support emotion and narrative."



Scan to watch the Martin Professional and Verity Studios collaboration come to life.



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Melbourne's historic Plaza Ballroom lighting goes LED

Built in 1929 and meticulously restored in the 1990s, the Plaza Ballroom is renowned for its opulent Spanish Rococo design, featuring a grand staircase, high ceilings, intricate plasterwork, red carpets, blue silk windows, and spectacular chandeliers. As part of the heritage-listed Regent Theatre, the ballroom presents a unique blend of architectural and theatrical lighting challenges, demanding both subtle ambient coverage and bold performance-grade illumination.



The venue is now utilising state-of-the-art Infinity and Showtec fixtures from Highlite International thanks to the comprehensive lighting overhaul supplied by Clearlight Shows. The upgrade enhances the venue's flexibility, energy efficiency, and visual impact, while carefully preserving its architectural heritage. Having worked closely with Marriner Group for many years, Clearlight Shows was invited to deliver a solution tailored to the venue's specific needs. "Colour accuracy, flicker-free performance, and warmer colour temperatures are crucial in a space like this, especially for live events and broadcasts," said

John McKissock, founder of Clearlight Shows. "We brought in Infinity and Showtec fixtures for the venue team to evaluate, and they were immediately impressed." After a decade-long search for viable LED replacements, including years of trialling fixtures with insufficient output or unsuitable colour profiles, the venue finally found a breakthrough with Highlite's advanced product lines. Key to the decision was the ability to reuse existing Selecon SPX lens stock with Infinity TS260C7 Profile Engines, thanks to lens adapters, freeing up budget for a more comprehensive upgrade.



L-R: Production Manager Janet Huang, Technical Director Mark Allan, Production Manager Michael Taylor, and Production Electrics Grady Xanthos

One pivotal discovery was the Showtec Performer Profile Zoom 150 Q6 RGBACL. "We were sceptical at first, relying only on spec sheets," noted Production Managers Michael Taylor and Janet Huang, "but once it was rigged, the performance blew us away. After an extended trial, we committed to a full redesign of our lighting system, moving away from our traditional Fresnel and PC-based rig to a more focused, profile-driven approach."

The final rig supplied by Clearlight includes:

- Infinity Furion S201 Spot moving heads
- Infinity iW-1941 RGBW Wash lights with zoom
- Infinity TF260C7 7-colour Fresnels
- Infinity TS260C7 Profile Engines
- Showtec Performer Profile Zoom 150 Q6 RGBACL
- Showtec Phantom 1220 Zoombars
- Showtec ACT Par 200 W RGBAL spots

This combination delivers precise, versatile lighting with dramatically reduced power consumption and lower maintenance costs.

"The Furion range in particular impresses with its smooth movement and high brightness", adds John McKissock. "Designers are now specifically asking for Infinity by name, which speaks volumes about how well these fixtures are performing in the Australian market."

"We're proud to work with Clearlight so closely" the Plaza Ballroom team concluded. "Their attention to detail and service has been exceptional over the years and the Highlite product range is an impressive asset to their already extensive theatrical and architectural solutions."

www.clearlight.com.au



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ASTERA FOR PORSCHE MACAN ELECTRIC REVEAL

Sean Shay, creative director at Sound Image, a Clair Global Brand, reached for Astera Hyperion and Titan Tubes to help imagine a spectacular and dramatic piece of light art highlighting a 'hero car' for the launch of the Porsche Macan Electric car presented by Porsche San Francisco at their showroom in the city's downtown Design District.

Sean used 20 Astera Hyperion tubes rigged at different heights and angles in a fan shape behind the car coupled with Titan Tubes underneath the vehicle to enhance the depth and dimension of the space.

As the car was revealed, a series of 'sparkling' kinetic pixel-chases created by video content running through the Hyperions and bouncing off the polished bodywork gave the impression of rapid speed and movement, enabling impressed guests to enjoy a truly WOW moment.

"I wanted to match the style, elegance and innovation of the occasion with a memorable lighting installation," Sean explained, after he and his production team were asked to light the project by Riley Sims, the West Coast marketing lead for Porsche, for whom they had worked on previous successful projects, some also involving Astera products.

"For the aesthetics to work as I envisioned, I needed a fully wireless solution," stated Sean, explaining that his starting point was taking a deep dive into the Porsche style guide and an extensive recce at the dealership.

He was struck by a large curved window, architecture which inspired this unique look fusing a runway fashion show with a futuristic journey. "I immediately thought of straight neon lines as a basic structural framework but obviously wanted a light source that could also be hugely flexible and dynamic."

Effectively, he wanted straight lines that could also shift, re-shape and appear to make the car move, and that is where he thought Astera.

The Hyperions were a perfect length and were meticulously positioned behind the car, rigged using a combination of monofilament and magnetic hooks secured and tensioned via a steel beam in the roof just in front of the window, and two vertical beams on either side of where the car was parked. A couple of additional tubes were clamped magnetically to the vertical steels.

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This out-of-the-box method worked a treat.

When dark and with the Tubes illuminated, the monofilament was nearly invisible, so they appeared to be floating in thin air upstage of the car.

The flickering effects – created running video content through the Hyperions – were also reflected in the glass window, which, combined with the luminescent glow coming from the Titans underneath, further ramped up the impact.

As the presenter built up to the reveal, Sean ran the movement chases, and once revealed, this slid into a more subtle 'standby' effect so the exclusive invited audience could marvel over the Macan Electric without distraction.

Sean blends beauty with purpose, and as Sound Image's full-service Event Productions division expands, he uses Astera extensively on his creative projects.

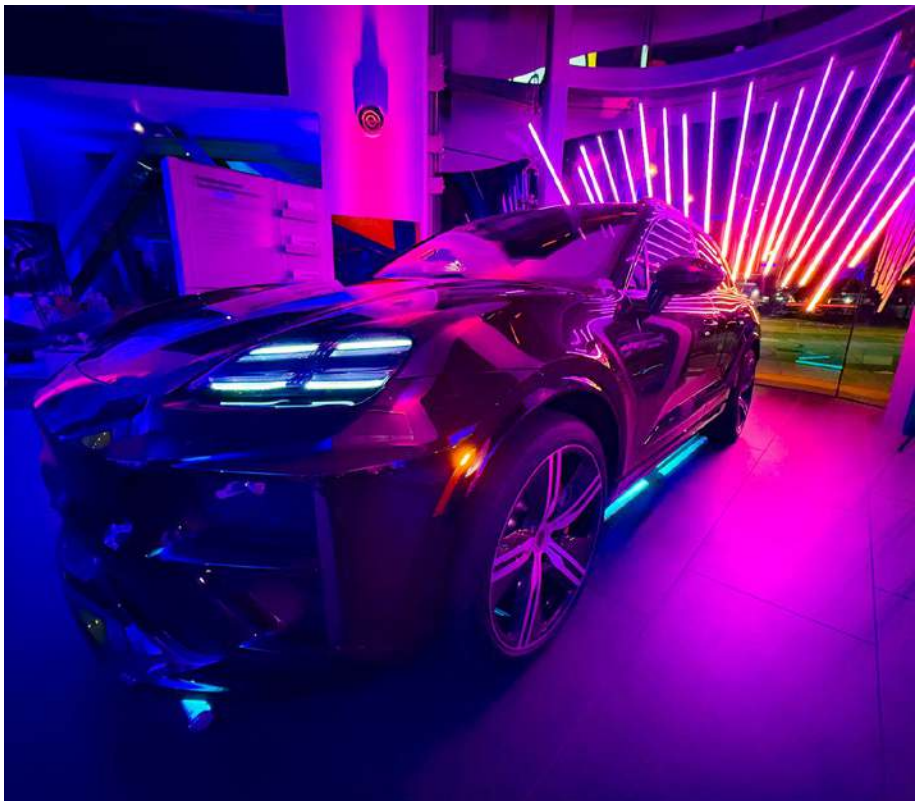
"Reliable battery-powered products are fantastic tools, and Astera has become a 'no-brainer' for me on so many occasions, especially when lighting site-specific special events like this," he noted.

He also appreciates Astera's excellent quality of light and the refined colour control thanks to the Titan LED engine.

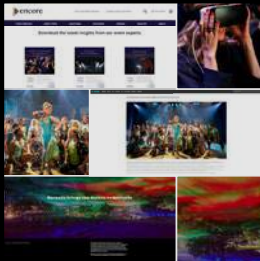
Before Astera's Tubes were popular, he worked extensively using fluorescents and gel sleeves, but that world now seems a long time ago, as Astera has become a go-to over the last five years.

He is also a big fan of Astera's AX9 PowerPAR, which has been "hugely helpful" for the realisation of many designs, which like Astera, are constantly innovating in their use of light to enhance stories and experiences for their clients.

Creativity was a big element of the evening's theming for the Porsche Macan Electric event which featured fabulous music by violinist Rose, live painting by artist Ed and a stunning on-site gallery of Porsche related works by artist Beau Robinson, all complemented with Sean's beautiful lighting scheme helping evoke the buzz and energy of a cool and visually interesting environment.



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Innovative lighting installation *transforms* Brisbane skyline

Located in Brisbane's CBD, Queen's Wharf is a \$3.6bn premier entertainment and hospitality precinct, elevating Brisbane as a leading tourism, leisure, and entertainment destination. The new development showcases one of the largest façade lighting installations in the country, with immersive light and sound experiences created using an innovative video lighting system from Pharos Architectural Controls.

The Queen's Wharf development has transformed Brisbane's river edge area into an unmissable destination. At its heart is The Star Brisbane, an imposing structure that houses a selection of the city's grandest luxury hotels alongside restaurants, bars and retail spaces. Featuring an impressive façade, Queen's Wharf illuminates Brisbane's ever-evolving skyline as darkness falls.

Integrated solutions provider bluebottle was appointed to deliver the façade's light show by supplying and commissioning the required solutions. Having worked with Pharos Architectural Controls on a number of successful projects, the bluebottle team knew they would be the ideal partner for Queen's Wharf.

To bring the illuminated façade from vision to reality, bluebottle partnered with Perigon Electrical to supply and commission a 250-universe Pharos Designer VLC (Video Lighting Controller). With a capacity exceeding 120,000 DMX channels, the VLC controls 4,000 Phillips UNI bar fixtures in a spectacular light show which brings the skyline to life every evening, offering entertainment and bedazzlement.

The Pharos Designer VLC is an extremely capable and cost-effective architectural lighting control solution for large LED pixel arrays; for building façades such as Queen's Wharf as well as bridges, and presentation walls. The VLC makes it simple to play video content across any array, either from locally stored HD media files or a live video input source. It also offers a range of creative, generative effects and the versatility of powerful show control and integration features.

Tony Symms, Regional Sales Manager for Asia Pacific at Pharos Architectural Controls said: "We were thrilled to be part of this project, illuminating an iconic part of Brisbane with Pharos technology. It was an exciting challenge to work on one of the largest façade installations in the country, transforming the area into a dynamic light and video display for thousands to enjoy each night."

Lighting solutions provider, bluebottle, added: "The VLC from Pharos was the ideal control system to meet the unique needs and huge scale of this project. With its ability to programme both lighting and video content across this extremely large pixel array, while

maintaining the highest levels of reliability and robustness, this was exactly what was needed to illuminate Queen's Wharf.

"The intuitive technology also gave us the ability to set colours and scenes which highlight national days and occasions which is an important part of this project. Only the VLC from Pharos delivered everything we needed and gave the client an easy-to-use solution, without going over budget."

The construction of the Queen's Wharf development is one of the largest projects ever undertaken in Queensland. It represents nearly 10% of the CBD, demonstrating the huge footprint it encompasses. The precinct has transformed what was once an underused area into a vibrant and stunning destination, blending contemporary architecture with beautifully restored heritage buildings.

Project Credits:

Solutions Provider:
bluebottle

Contractors:
Perigon Electrical

Lighting Controls:
Pharos Architectural Controls



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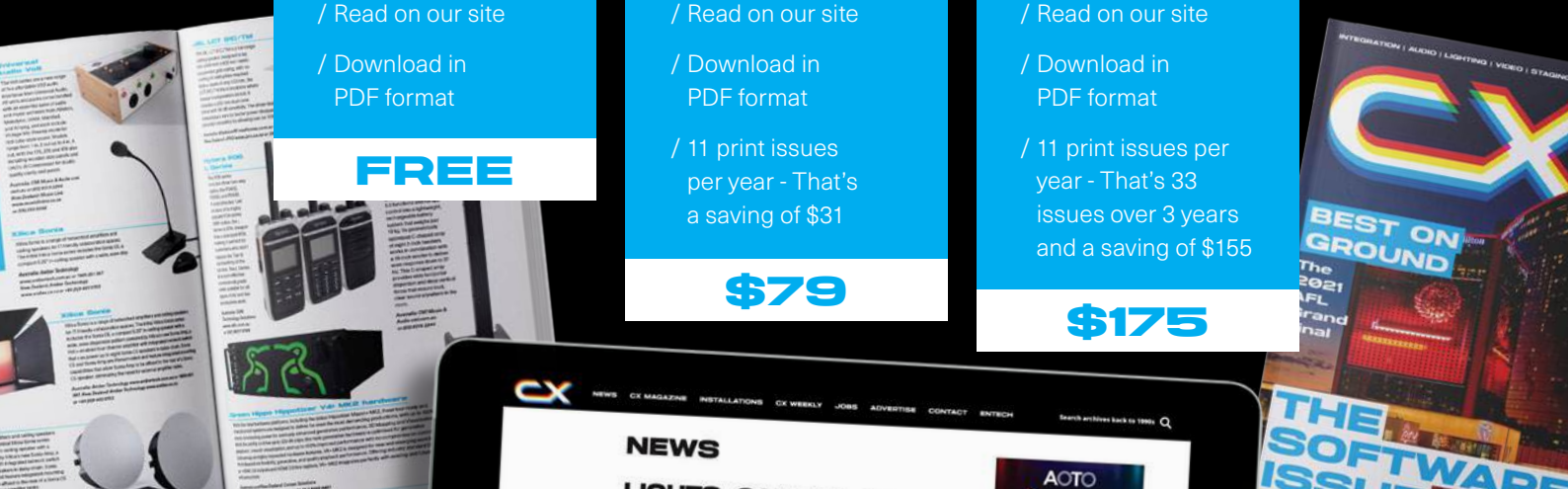
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WORKING IN SHOWBIZ

THE TOSSPOT SYNDROME

One of the confounding things about our irregular shift work is not just the feast or famine – showdays mean busy, no work means zero – but also that we are forced into ‘instant’ teams. My final day in live production started great, I was the production manager at an outdoor concert. I met the PA crew, lighties and then the stage guy. But wait – he was just delivering the gear. The actual stage tech was running late.

When he arrived, he was utterly obnoxious. I asked him to sign off the Workplace Health and Safety Plan, “why would I sign YOUR plan?” he snarled. I explain we are on a council gig; we are all signing the plan. He scribbles with an angry flourish and turns away.

Guy was beyond painful, demanded catering knowing we didn’t have any, spoke down about the production company whom I represented, and attempted to make my life difficult all day. I fed him, out of my own pocket, since it looked like he had zero supplies with him.

We got through. Afterwards I called the backline mob to report him. They were aghast; “you should have called us on the day so we could replace him”. But it would not have been practical. It was my job to deal with him, which I did. In the 1980s it would have been a binary transaction: be obnoxious, get a punch in the snout. We don’t do that now.

A show is a team game and we have to work together as best we can, so be ready to deal with all kinds of personalities. The cretinous tosspots are still out there occasionally, and it can help to better understand why. Generally, they can’t be that way all the time, or they won’t get a gig. Chances are something bad has come their way.

I did a Fringe Festival in 2023 where the stage manager was very hard to handle – brittle, demanding, shouty, and borderline unreasonable. With the benefit of age and experience I was fine, but eventually after three weeks things came to a head when she stopped my soundcheck to yell at me because it was too loud! You never, ever interrupt a soundcheck with artists on stage in that way.

She got reported to management.

I did a casual gig in 2023 and made a mistake on the mic patch, we were under crazy pressure to set up for a soundcheck. I realised

that channels 1 – 25 were patched right, but I had dropped two, so 26 – 43 were out. I reported to the artist’s sound guy, who freaked out and started yelling at us! My colleague decided to repatch at the stage patch bay rather than the drop boxes on stage, and mistook the drop box numbering which threw the problem further out.

The short story is I didn’t get invited back for more work at that venue, I guess someone needed to blame someone, and after all, it was my mistake! That’s the hard and fast nature of our industry. You will get yelled at. It isn’t personal. You may get blackballed.

Another memorable venue from 2022 was where the Production Manager was also the house lighting tech, and he seemed to find it necessary to pull all-nighters programming on the grandMA. Which made him irrational through fatigue. Or possibly drugs. He was just plain unprofessional, making last minute demands which should have been sorted hours or days earlier.

My best advice? Handle things as best you can, be prepared to rationally detail any problem to those up the chain, and be prepared to walk away if nothing is to be done. Life is too short to endure toxic workplaces.

Next month: **Getting a job**

Sometimes it all gets too much...



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SILHOUETTE SOUND RIDES THE TECH WAVE

VuePix Infiled at Bonsoy Gold Coast Pro 2025



From May 3 to 13, the world's top surfers and elite wildcards took to the waves at the Bonsoy Gold Coast Pro 2025, a headline event proudly presented by WSL and GWM. Originally set for Snapper Rocks, the comp made a last-minute switch to Burleigh Heads due to a recent cyclone reshaping the coastline. But nothing could stop the surf - or the show.

Enter Silhouette Sound, who dove head first into the action, delivering a next-level production that matched the energy of the surf with immersive visuals, slick tech, and vibey activation zones scattered across the Surf Pro village.

Epic Production from Dawn Patrol to Sundown Sound

Helmed by Managing Director Andrew Johnston, the Silhouette Sound crew braved ten days of wild weather and non-stop action. Rain or shine, their setup never missed a beat. Crowds cheered from the sand and hillside as legends like Steph Gilmore, Mick Fanning, and Joel Parkinson tore through the frothing Burleigh waves, backed by a cutting-edge AV experience that kept hearts pounding.

VuePix Infiled LED Screens: Catching Every Ride, Every Time

A total of eight VuePix Infiled LED displays lit up the Surf Pro precinct, bringing every carve, cutback, and clean barrel into full view. No matter where you stood, the screens had you covered.

The main digital canvas - a 6m x 3m stunner perched on the Burleigh hillside - served up front-row views of all the action. Perfectly placed for both fans on the slope and the pros relaxing at the athlete lounge above, the screen beamed crisp visuals even under the blazing sun, switching to sponsor content during lay days.

At the bustling Stone & Wood Bar and the Bonsoy Viewing Deck, slick 4m x 2m LED walls added serious wow factor, letting fans catch every wave without jostling for the perfect angle.

When the Stage Turns from Ocean to Electric

By night, the Main Stage transformed into a full-blown festival zone. A vibrant 6m x 3m VuePix Infiled screen anchored the setup, broadcasting the day's highlights and backing a killer live music lineup. Acts like Bad Dreams, Babe Rainbow, and Spiderbait kept the vibes

high - capped off by a show-stopping jam featuring Steph Gilmore trading surfboard for electric guitar.

Lighting it all up were 8 ACME Geist fixtures and 8 ACME Sandane IP66 Washes, run seamlessly via a Chamsys MagicQ 250

Stadium Console.

VIP Vibes and Immersive Activations

In the VIP zone, twin 2m x 1m screens rolled out a visual welcome for special guests,

while the Boost Activation Zone buzzed with energy, powered by a bold 2m x 3m LED wall.

Over at the Merch Precinct, a towering 6m x 3m screen turned heads and stopped foot traffic with high-impact visuals.

All screens within the precinct ran flawlessly, driven by NovaStar VX600 and TB6 processors, ensuring maximum reliability and ultra-smooth playback.

Bigger. Better. Bolder.

"I want to thank the team at WSL for trusting us with such a high-profile event," said Andrew Johnston, MD of Silhouette Sound. "It was a huge team effort. Massive props to Scottie, Jordan, Tom, Joel, and Jason - you guys crushed it. Shout-out to our event partners Boost and Bonsoy, and all the legends on the ground crew."

"Huge thanks to VuePix Infiled and ULA Group - from the spec and supply of the LED tech to the ongoing support, they've been rock solid. Investing in this kind of tech only works when you've got a partner that backs you all the way. Thanks to their training and support, our crew delivered an unforgettable show. The screens didn't miss a beat - and neither did we," concludes Andrew.





At last, we have the update to the Martin MAC Viper, the Martin MAC Viper XIP. It's the long-awaited successor to the Martin MAC Viper family, which was for a long time the industry standard for large high end moving head all-in-one performers. This is a true workhorse.

The Martin MAC Viper XIP comes from Martin as they look to reinvent their model offerings, which are based on previous top-selling releases. We have recently seen the MAC One replace the MAC 101, as well as the Aura XIP and Aura PXL replace the Aura XB. It is proving to be a very successful formula for Martin.

There would have been a lot of pressure on the development team to get this one right. Although the previous model was the industry standard for many years, there was much more involved than just putting in an LED engine. Moving light technology and taste has come a long way since 2014.

The most notable upgrades on the surface are that it has an LED engine, a more modern design, and it's IP rated. Dig a little deeper though, and you will find much more.

Construction

The MAC Viper XIP is IP54 rated, like most of the other newer offerings from Martin. At 37kg, it's a two person lift. The MAC Viper XIP is of a very similar size to the original MAC Viper. The move to keep it the same size as the original makes it really easy to dust off an old lighting plan and just spec the newer model. It works well with a production company or a venue who can do a straight swap to the newer fixture. Very smart move, considering they could have made it much bigger or much smaller if they really wanted to.

Martin have built a reputation for making moving lights that are easy to repair and service. Typically, the modules are easy to remove for cleaning or replacement, the wiring makes sense, and there are not an excessive amount of screws in awkward locations. Martin claim that the MAC Viper XIP is very user friendly when it comes to tech and repairs.

Optics, Colour and Brightness

It has a 760W LED engine outputting an impressive 28,000 lumens. The light engine featured in the Martin Viper XIP is a proprietary system focussed on giving uniform lumen output across the entire zoom range.

The zoom range is very impressive; 1:9 zoom ratio (5.7° - 51° zoom range). It projects really well. When zoomed out it gives a smooth, even wash. It has a 150mm frontal lens which helps it throw a healthy, strong beam.

Intensity also increases when you drop a gobo in. Typically we see light intensity decrease in other lights. Martin have called it 'light recycling', enabling 25% additional output when inserting gobos. In a nutshell, the idea is that the coating on the LEDs are made of a more reflective material, allowing more light to pass through, even after it has bounced off the back of the gobo.

The MAC Viper XIP has CMY subtractive colour mixing, the same as the Viper before it. It projects a good range of saturated colours. On the back of the colour recycling with the gobos and the adaption to maintain intensity across the zoom range, it would have been interesting to test the output levels at different colours.

It draws 1040W of power, meaning you could get two to a 10 amp circuit. To me, it seems thirsty for an LED fixture. Consider too that the old Viper Profile drew 1225W of power and it was driven by a discharge lamp.

It features a warmer than usual 5,800K native colour temperature. The white point is on the black body curve without any green or magenta shift which gives a much truer open white.

Comparison of the size and brightness of the MAC Viper XIP vs MAC Viper Profile

MAC Viper XIP:	MAC Viper Profile:
28,000 Lumens	26,000 Lumens
9:1 zoom ratio	1:4 zoom ratio
150mm front lens	140mm front lens
Length: 594 mm	Length: 566 mm
Height: 776 mm	Height: 748 mm
Width: 479 mm	Width: 472 mm
Weight: 37.0 kg	Weight: 37.2 kg

NFC stands for Near Field Communication. It allows electronic devices to talk to each other at close range. One of the most common examples of NFC that we would use on a regular basis would be the 'tap and go' feature on credit cards. Smart watches and smart phones have this feature too.

Applications and Features

It features two rotating gobo wheels which include seven interchangeable gobos + open, gobo animation wheel, indexing, and continuous rotation with variable angle. It also has framing, two frosts and a four-facet prism. It has variable colour temperature control ranging from 2,000K all the way up to 12,850K as well as green magenta shift control.

The details have been well-handled and the subtle tweaks speak volumes to what has gone into this light. It features a bunch of pre-programmed effects which is definitely handy and can significantly cut down on programming time. It can be video mapped too.

It features the most robust and refined feature set that Martin have ever produced. While infinite pan and tilt would have been nice, 540° pan and 268° tilt is still very solid.

The MAC Viper XIP is a quiet light for its size, but can be made even quieter still by being run in quiet mode. The trade off for this, though, is light output. With that in mind, just about any space or application that is concerned about fan noise from a light most likely does not need to use all 28,000 lumens the MAC Viper XIP has on tap.

In some of the newer Martin fixtures, they have a DMX mode that emulates the model which it supersedes. It would have been nice to have this with the MAC Viper though I do acknowledge that it would have been tricky because of things such as gobo options.

Control and Programming

The Viper XIP has a relatively small DMX footprint for a light with such a large feature set. There are three DMX modes, Basic (54 channels), Extended (64 channels), and Ludicrous Mode (70 channels). Some of the newer, smaller Martin fixtures have modes

which take hundreds of DMX channels. Like just about every single high end moving light, it can be controlled via 5-pin DMX and Ethernet.

The 16-bit controllable parameters include: dimming, colour mixing, colour temperature, gobo rotation, framing, iris, prism rotation, animation wheel rotation, zoom, focus, pan and tilt. As you go through and muck around with the parameters you start to see what really sets this light apart from its competition. There is a level of refinement and smoothness you get when you rotate the gobo or iris in and out. Shine the light onto a wall, use the shutter and the focus to shape the beam to match a door, save the preset and then recall it. It lands on a dime each time. It's very impressive.

The pan and tilt motors have been designed with remote followspot systems in mind. The MAC Viper XIP integrates well with most common automated followspot systems.

The MAC Viper XIP uses NFC technology for quick setup via the dedicated Martin app (still in development at this stage). It is also compatible with the most popular control protocols, including DMX, Wireless DMX via plug in module, Art-Net, sACN and Martin P3.

Verdict

This is not a cheap light - but you get what you pay for.

The hero of the MAC Viper XIP is its overall level of quality and refinement; it's how smoothly the shutter blades move, how refined the focus is, how seamless the colour transitions are, and how precisely it can recall its presets.

These may not be obvious to the average punter, but those that know lights will appreciate the years of research and development that has gone into the MAC Viper XIP. It figures to be top of its class for many years to come.

Product Info: MAC Viper XIP

Distributor Australia and New Zealand: www.showtech.com.au

The Specs

760W proprietary LED light engine

55 x 20W white LEDs

Light engine luminous output: 56,000 lumens

Fixture luminous output: 28,000 lumens

Peak luminous intensity: 2.4 Mcd

CCT: 5800K (+/- 250K)

150mm front Lens

1:9 zoom range (5.7° - 51° field angle)

High resolution projection system

0 - 100% continuous dimming and strobe effects

Choice of four dimming curves

CMY colour mixing

Colour temperature control (5,800 - 2,850K)

Colour wheel with 5 x dichroic filters, including Spectral Enhancement Filter

Rotating gobo wheel 1 includes 7 interchangeable gobos + open

Rotating gobo wheel 2 includes 7 interchangeable gobos + open

Gobo animation wheel, indexing, continuous rotation with variable angle

2 x Frost (fade in), light and heavy

4-facet prism

Iris

Zoom

Focus with auto tracking

Extended framing module with individual +/- 30° across entire beam and +/- 83° rotation

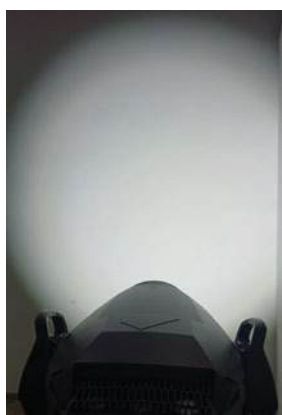
Pan: 540°, Tilt: 268°

P3 videomapping of fixture colour and/or intensity (6 segments)

Pre-programmed effects:
Two ranges of pre-programmed FX

Green Magenta shift control

Virtual CTC control (2,000 – 12,850K)



A lot has changed in lighting over the last 30 years, but Fresnels are still in high demand for any application where high quality soft sources of front light are required.



PROLIGHTS ECL FRESNEL CT+M

As we have moved over to LED technology, initially we have seen a slower uptake for LED Fresnels when compared to LED profiles or pars. Part of the reason could be that when compared to the pars and profiles, the quality of the light source is much more important.

PROLIGHTS have released a range of different size LED Fresnels, with the EclFresnel CT+M designed to sit between their 1K and the 2K Fresnel. It is an LED Fresnel with the focal point being the optical quality of the light source; an LED Fresnel that is good enough for TV.

Construction

It weighs 9.9kg and has dimensions of 338mm(W) x 573mm(H) x 428mm(D). It is smaller than your equivalent non-LED model. It has a built-in menu on the side, and can be used in stand-alone mode as well as with 5-pin DMX.

The light draws 350W of power; not bad for a light that has been designed to sit in between a 1K and a 2K Fresnel for output. You could almost get three of these for the same power footprint as a regular 1K Fresnel.

The yoke is moveable and has been set up so that it can be hung off a single clamp and can be used with a spigot on a stand.

Optics, Colour and Brightness

The main selling point of the light is the optics. It uses a custom RGBAMC 350W LED array which consists of Red, Blue, Green, Amber, Mint and Cyan, but not all in equal amounts. It gives high precision reproduction of the white spectrum as well as an extensive range of rich colours. With enough patience and fine tuning, you could create just about any colour possible with light. It boasts a CRI of 97, one of the highest we have ever seen. A lot of emphasis has been placed on the precision and tunability of white light.

It has green and magenta white shifting, great for lighting skin tones to camera. It has tuneable colour temperature ranging from 1,800K through to 20,000K. As for brightness, it is designed to sit somewhere between a 1K and a 2K Fresnel with about a 10,000 lumen output.

The lens is eight inches in diameter, the same size as a PAR64 for those familiar.

It has a zoom range of 9° – 81°, so a 9:1 ratio. Zoom is operated manually on the fixture, not on the desk or the onboard control panel. It features an eight-leaf barn door (one leaf top, one leaf bottom and three either side) which absorbs more light than it reflects, which is a good thing when trying to shape the light. It has an option for six different dimming curves, a big deal when getting intensity changes just right is a priority.

Applications and Features

It is not a feature-heavy light. The only automated features are the colour and the intensity. You position the light manually as well as focus and use the barn doors. The main features are the light engine, the quality of the colours it reproduces, and how well you can fine tune the light.

The 350W LED engine seems to be a popular size and seems to find itself being used in a lot of mid-size venues, as well as in film and TV.

You would use the EclFresnel CT+M anywhere that required high quality soft light. Ideally you would use it for TV or film purposes as that is what it has been designed for, but you can use it to light a theatre show, in a corporate venue, and it would be at home in the inventory of a production company.

Control and Programming

The only console controllable features are the colour and the intensity. The positioning, focus and barn doors are done manually. This may seem a little limiting as it will dictate where you can hang it and what you can use it for, but I think the trade-off is well worthwhile.

Designing the light this way means that there are no motors or automated moving parts. Not only will this reduce maintenance requirements, it will also reduce the amount of heat that it gives off, as well as the amount of noise it makes during operation. A huge plus in situations where excess heat and noise can be an issue.

It may not sound like you have automated control over much, but the amount of control you have over the colour is impressive. You can tweak and fine tune the colour to your heart's content. With enough patience, you could probably make any shade of any colour possible with LED light.

It is compatible with wireless DMX. It can also be run off an external battery, meaning you could run it without cables.

Verdict

This is a fantastic light.

The Fresnel is a personal favourite; traffic lights would have Fresnel lenses if I had my way! It's always great to see manufacturers trying to improve them and adapt them for modern day high-end use. PROLiGHTS have approached this with a different LED array with an emphasis on reproducing true and accurate colours, and extra emphasis on white.

The feature list is not as flashy as some of the other newer lights on the market, and it's not jam packed with features and gizmos. What it has is superior optical quality and anyone who is after an LED Fresnel that is good enough for TV should check out the PROLiGHTS Eclipse Fresnel range.

Product Info: www.prolights.it/en/

Distributor Australia and New Zealand:
<https://www.showtech.com.au>

The Specs

Source: 350W six colour LED

Luminous flux: (9.4°) 3,867lm - (80.8°) 9827 @4,000K

Lux: (9.4°) 5,706 lx - (80.8°) 451lx @5m @4,000K

CRI: 97 @3,200K; 96.8 @5,600K

Zoom range: 9.4° - 80.8° manual

Lens diameter: 8" / 200mm / 0.31"

Lens type: Fresnel glass lens with AR coating

Colour control: XY, CCT, Gel with Source Emulation, Tungsten emulation, HSI, User preset


CCT: Linear CCT adjustment from 1,850K - 20,000K

Control Protocols: DMX512, RDM, CRMX

Dimensions (WxHxD): 338x573x428mm

Weight: 9.9kg





Shaping Light Through A Lens

Creating || Capturing

Two of my favourite passions revolve around light – making it and capturing it. Each end of that spectrum is focussed through lenses, glassware highly polished and precision shaped to manipulate a beam of light in a desired direction or shape. Reflected, refracted, refreshed on the way from the source to your eyeball.

Stage Lighting

I'm very glad I got into stage lighting. Loud noise had ruined my nascent mixing career. With earplugs offsetting further aural damage, I got to dig into my creative visual side while keeping my joy for live music.

As LD, I got to play with shapes and colours. Shapes of individual beams, shapes from multiple beams, shape combined from shadows, general stageset design or room limitations. These I understood. And control of these shapes was enhanced by lenses.

Colours were a revelation for me. I'd known the obvious differences between red, green and blue but the shades, hues and variations available beyond that simple palette were literal eye openers to me. I started garish and bold but added nuance and subtlety as my skillset evolved.

Over this time, I delved into colour theory and the emotions that can be invoked with different hues or combinations. I observed the natural world. I studied the artificial world. I watched how combinations of colour and intensity affected me and others in real life. These observations merged into lighting design decisions that gave me much more depth than the 'red, blue, congo, FLASH' all too common for my taste.

Colour adds incredible dimension to the dynamic tension of angles, intensity and shades in a space. Accentuating the artist(e) is the primary goal of stage illumination but there are infinite ways to go about this.

The one dimension that I never got to play with much was movement. My LD career was last century, when moving lights were only for the very top acts. Wiggly mirror fixtures were the best that I could ever afford and they were a pain to program on desks of the time. It sure looks fun designing and operating light shows with the variety and capability of gear now available.

Movement back then had to come from old school visual trickery. Using all three dimensions of a nominally rectangular stage to convey motion required some swift and adept use of the flash button and fixtures in opposing locations (try a blinder in each corner, onstage and flown, then set a chase sequence to move the light-source in circles around the stage volume).

Regardless of the age or capabilities of your lighting fixtures, operating them to stay in time with the performance (or stage manager's cues) is critical to making the difference between 'looked ok' and 'wow - the visuals were awesome'. Time-queued triggers and

theatre stacks can lock this in but running in busking mode requires understanding your fixture response well enough to allow for pre-queuing. There is an artform in doing this well.

Architectural Lighting

This deep understanding of illuminating a space came in handy when we built our house. I didn't want to look at any fixtures that were not pieces of art in their own right when switched off. I also like the quality of reflected versus direct light.

We added over 90m of LED strips on the upper side of the bottom edge of the exposed RSJs that support our roof. The strips themselves are hidden but their wizardry happens by reflecting light off the adjacent beam, ceiling or wall. The effect is magical and even better than I envisaged. It's all in warm white (~2800K) apart from some specific task lighting using cool white (~5000K).

I also paid special consideration to natural light and how it would play throughout the space. Window openings are carefully calibrated for both thermal performance and light ingress. We spent a long time modelling this in 3D before committing to a final design.



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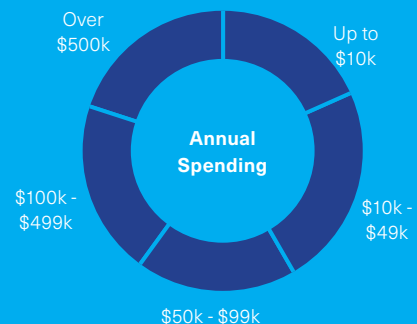
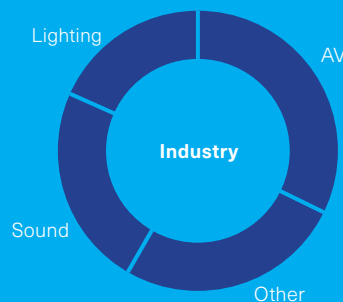
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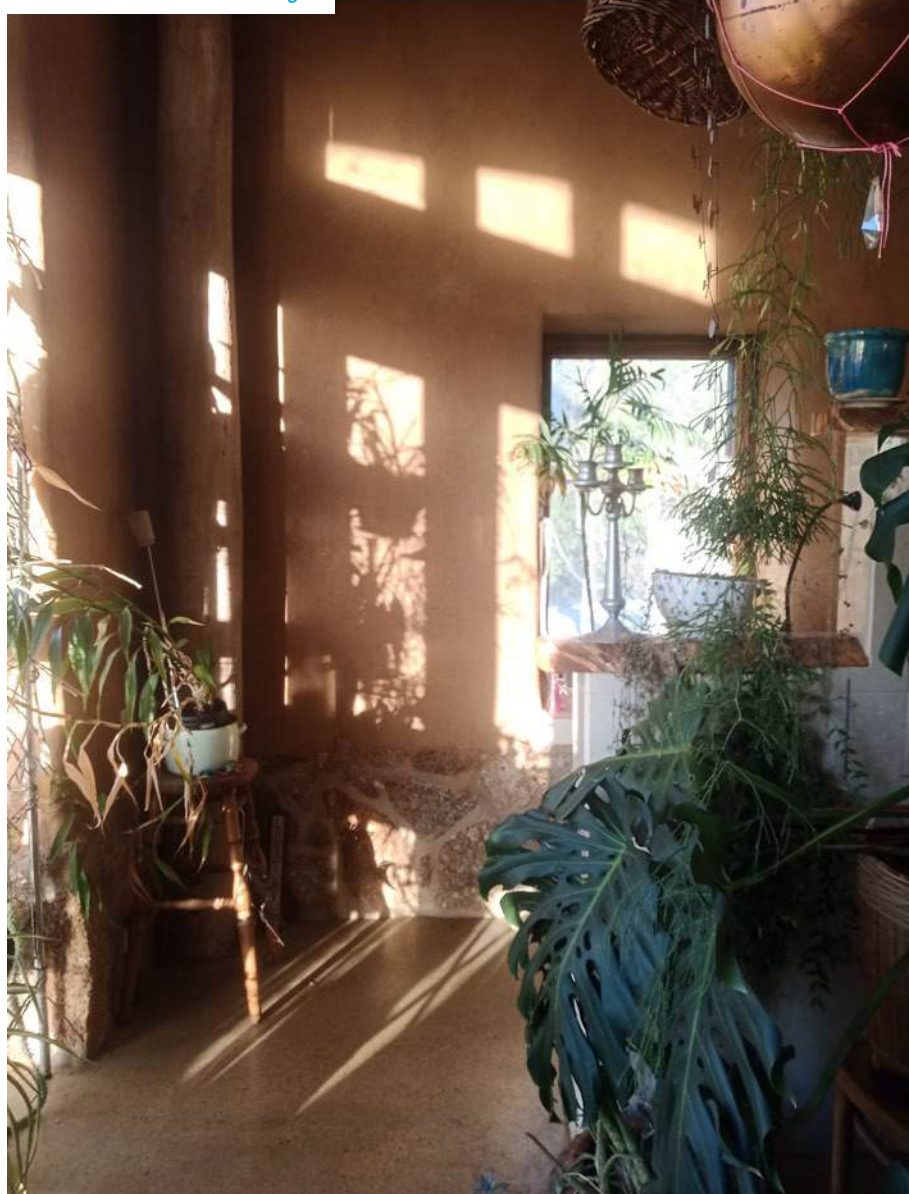
We've since strategically placed numerous glass objects around the house where they can catch the sunlight at different times of day and year. There are always random shadows, reflections or sparkles from these tchotchkes appearing on the walls and ceiling. It is quite enchanting and again way beyond expectations.

Quality of Light

Apart from technical aspects of getting angles, intensity and chroma correct, there are certain feels to consider. Whether producing or capturing light, understanding its emotional qualities counts as much as its scientific quantities.

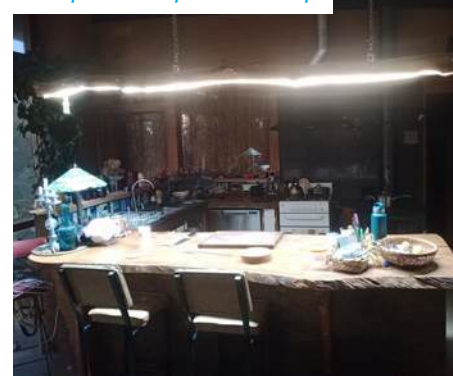
Early LED stagelights were weak in output intensity and had poor colour control. Fortunately, recent LED fixtures have addressed these issues. How bright doesn't even come down to budget - there are some mighty powerful units going relatively cheaply. The real gain has been in colour control and implementation. Manufacturers now understand and take into account colour temperature and colour rendering index (CRI) when designing fixtures. This is a boon for matching the real world with the digital. Looking good on the recording is as important as looking good at the event these days.

Bathroom afternoon autumn light



This real world - watching nature cast its light in ever changing patterns - leads to pondering the quality of light. Just yesterday, I noticed the dust behind my car while driving down a dirt road in the afternoon. The light plays a certain way in the dusty haze, only to be blown away in the next breeze, an ephemeral instance of beauty and wonder. I stopped to capture it but the fleeting moment was already gone so in my memory alone it waits.

Task specific lump of wood lamp



Bathroom at night





Photography and Other Such Lenses

Also analog last century was photography. An ongoing hobby since childhood, it might seem a great match for a touring LD. But heavy 35mm cameras were a pain to take on the road, phones mostly still wired to walls and I enjoyed being in the moment more than recording it. The shame is I have little photographic evidence of my light shows. The beauty is that I have similarly brief records of my shameless behaviours at the time.

Plus, I have always preferred photographing with natural or available light. Flashes, fills or even diffusers are not in the kit. Par cans looked good on stage but crap on film.

I now require prescription glasses to read anything. Phone, book, screen, whatever

- it's all a blur without intricately crafted goggles and their incredible lenses. My once wonderfully sharp visual universe has developed a gaussian filter across all focal planes. Corrective measures like multifocals only go so far. I often find myself physically leaning in or out to get a usable focus.

Fortunately, none of this impedes my photography. My Sony A7R 111 digital camera is an awesome camera on many levels. The standout feature for me is the Electronic View Finder, which provides a preview of the image on a tiny little OLED screen and has adjustable focus on the eyepiece, allowing me to compensate for failing vision and see a crystal-clear reproduction of what the sensor is capturing. This alone has reinvigorated my relationship with the camera.

For a visually oriented person, feeble eyesight

is a big issue. Smoke and mirrors can confuse the senses for so long but quality lenses are the salvation. Better glass equals higher quality photons and you get to see the whole picture, not just a blurry impression. Clarity is important onstage and off.

You can shape the light of your life as you want to see it. Just how clear depends on what you keep in focus.

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Abbey Road Solid State Logic ORIGIN 32-channel analogue console

Snippets from the archives of a bygone era

The emergence of solid-state audio consoles in the late 1960s is often overlooked in the fog of the ongoing conjectural analogue/digital wars, despite the fact that these analogue consoles replaced vacuum tube-based consoles. Sound engineers at EMI, particularly Geoff Emerick, who used the solid-state EMI TG12345 on The Beatles' Abbey Road album, expressed concern about the loss of warmth and harmonic distortion when compared to the previous tube-driven REDD consoles. Unlike present-day arguments about the warmth of analogue as opposed to the alleged harshness of digital, this was a solid-state versus vacuum tube contention in a totally analogue domain.

Not only do discussions about the pros and cons of analogue and digital equipment become confused with differences between solid-state and vacuum tube equipment, but analogue storage gets thrown into the mix with the analogue signal, and they are two different entities. And when analogue signals and digital files coalesce, does the whole argument become paradoxical?

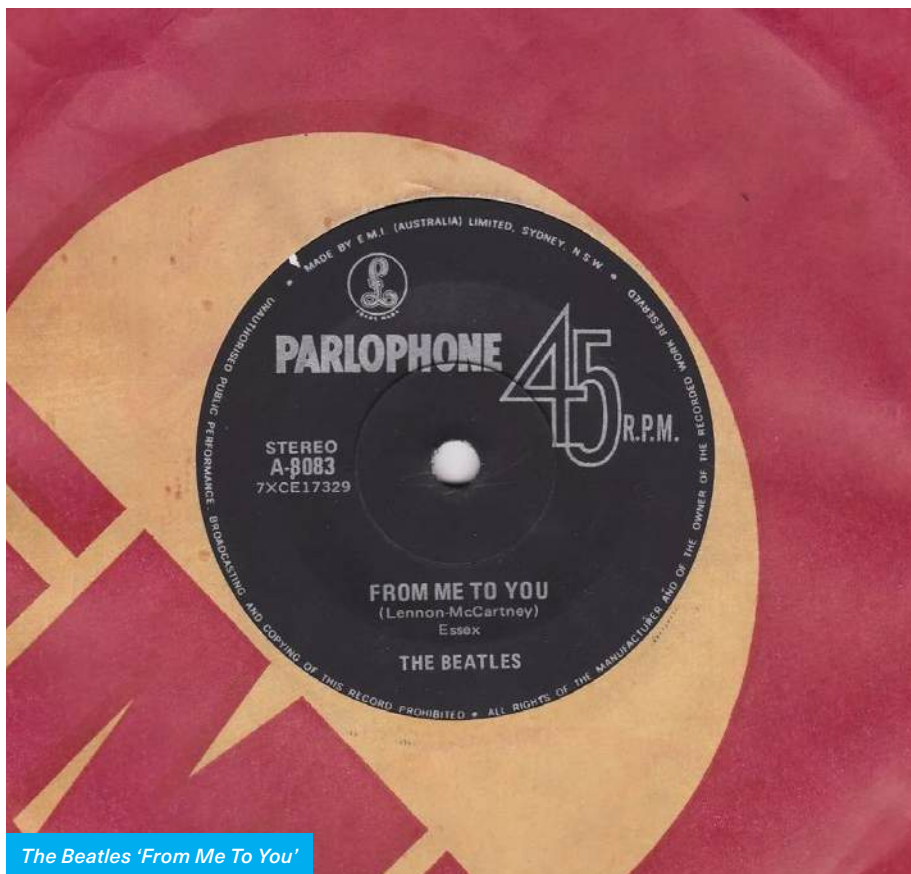
Those of us who worked in pro audio in the 70s, 80s, and 90s were more than comfortable with analogue mixers and outboard equipment. This was the solid-state era, and few of us were locked into archaic equipment for nostalgia's sake, especially when new and exciting developments were emerging. We sought out mixers with better-sounding microphone

preamplifiers and EQ, and especially those that had more headroom so we weren't red-lighting at the input stage whenever there was a solid attack signal.

I heard my first 45 rpm vinyl recording of The Beatles in 1963, and I was elated. My uncle played From Me To You, and the flip side, Thank You Girl, on my grandmother's valve radiogram. Today, 'back to the future' enthusiasts can walk into a consumer electronics store and buy solid-state record turntables and new vinyl pressings of The Beatles' albums. But it's a different listening experience from the sound waves that radiated from my grandmother's vacuum tube radiogram with its heated valves and ageing components that also generated a musty,

smoky odour that permeated through the grill cloth. However, a different experience doesn't suggest any superiority, and I am as faithful to vinyl recordings as I am to the ice chest that my grandmother had prior to the mainstream use of refrigerators or the washboard and hand-cranked wringer she used for washing clothes.

The vinyl record renaissance is approaching its 20th year, and although their solid band of aficionados swear that vinyl is superior to digital media, it seems these fans are more motivated by the touchy-feely and nostalgic experience than any evidence of technical superiority. Cassette tapes are also on the comeback trail, with spurious claims being made about their supremacy. These, in their day, were never purchased because of their



The Beatles 'From Me To You'



Old hand wringer and washboard

high-calibre audio quality, nor were they a cut above vinyl; more so, it was their portability, their ability to be played in car cassette radios and in Sony Walkmans, and also their ability to copy and share material. But the little cassettes were problematic, often playing out of sync and very often jamming, and the universal remedy for this not-so-revered media was a lot of banging and turning the cogs with a pencil to free them up.

I once owned a Tascam 234 Syncaset 4-track rack-mount cassette recorder, which I connected to an audio patch bay. There was a lot of patching and bouncing down tracks, which created audio losses, and cassette tape

wasn't the best format to start with. It defies logic to think that I would swap my multitrack DAW (digital audio workstation) for a 4-track cassette dinosaur, especially when Tascam has moved into the digital age with its digital consoles and recorder players.

Vinyl records still have an RIAA equalisation curve that was introduced in the 1950s to improve sound quality, reduce groove damage, and make room for the required space on the record. In the cutting process, the bass frequencies have to be reduced by 20dB and the high frequencies boosted by 20dB. The phono signal is extremely low level, and in addition to equalising the bass and

high frequencies back to their original level, the signal has to be boosted by the phono preamplifier some 40-60dB to line level so it can be processed by the amplifier.

Even from the 1960s onwards, these phono preamplifiers were solid-state, and most mainstream domestic turntables suffered from limitations and introduced noise, hiss, and phase errors. There was also 'wow' and 'flutter' on vinyl records, which referred to speed variations during playback, causing pitch fluctuations. 'Wow' described slow, gradual pitch variations, while 'flutter' represented more rapid changes. Then there were variations in the turntable mechanics, and

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Vacuum tube record player

not everyone had the budget for an SME tone arm or a turntable with an expensive external phono preamplifier.

Apart from the dust and scratches, vinyl's failings went largely unnoticed by mainstream users and listeners, and these shortcomings differed according to the type of turntable the record was played on. My first guitar teacher advised me to tune my guitar to any vinyl record that I played along with, or I would be out of tune because playback variances altered the pitch of the original recording, and he was right. Similarly, cassette tapes invariably played out of sync.

CDs were the digital successor to tape and vinyl, but they were also problematic and subject to scratches and smudges, and they often skipped or repeated tracks, and because of these annoyances and interruptions, they were subsequently banned as playback media at some performance concerts like eisteddfods, so the performers had to fall back on cassette tapes. In the late 90s and into the 2000s, I used a digital Sony MDS-E58 MiniDisc recorder/player for these events and for my own shows, and I still hold the minidisc in high esteem. Unfortunately, the emergence of the MP3 brought about its demise. A more serious renaissance of physical media for me would be the minidisc, not vinyl or cassette tape.

All vocal audio originates as analogue, and digital audio has to be converted back to analogue before we can hear it through speakers or headphones. Analogue audio can be a natural representation of the original

waveform, but its basic storage mediums of tape and vinyl, especially for the domestic market, have been problematic and bulky with the need to be driven mechanically. Even in tape's purest form in the recording studio, it was an expensive commodity. Digital files solved this problem.

So, is there a legitimate analogue versus digital argument that can be rationally debated, or is the argument analogous to the quantum physics argument of a superposition, which is the phenomenon where an object has the potential to occupy different states, which can change when observed or measured?

The Beatles' early recordings at EMI's Abbey Road studio in 1963 were engineered by Norman Smith via a tube-driven REDD console and an EMI BTR 3 twin-track tape recorder; the instruments were recorded on one track and the vocals on the other, and the two tracks were mixed down to mono. In making digital masters of The Beatles' records, both George and Giles Martin took great care to preserve the analogue sound of those recordings while they were using digital devices, including Pro Tools workstations operating at 24-bit 192kHz resolution and Prism A-D converters. Striving to preserve the integrity of an analogue recording using digital tools does suggest that it sits in a superposition when stored on a digital file.

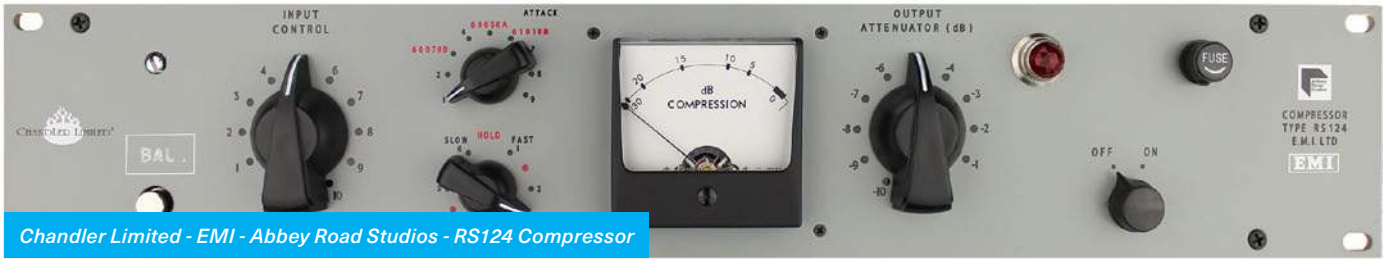
Perhaps suggesting an analogue/digital superposition is a better argument than Schrödinger's Cat, the thought experiment suggested by Erwin Schrödinger in 1935 to



Tascam Syncassette

disprove that subatomic particles can exist simultaneously in multiple states. The virtual experiment conceptualised a cat in a box with a radioactive substance and the probability of the radioactive substance becoming active and killing the cat. Schrödinger proposed that, according to quantum physics, until observed, it could not be known if the radioactive substance was active or not, and therefore he satirically proposed the paradox that, until observed, the cat could also be in both states, alive and dead.

The digital process is the manipulation and storage of both digital and original analogue sources, and it seems that is akin to Abbey Road's philosophy because when they moved into their Angel Studios in Islington in 2021, they installed a Solid State Logic ORIGIN 32-channel analogue mixing console with an SSL UF8 Advanced DAW Controller. Abbey Road also sidechains a Chandler Limited RS124 analogue compressor to the SSL console for use when required, and Abbey Road still utilises an array of analogue microphones, including the Neumann U87Ai, Neumann U47, AKG C414, and even Coles 4038 and Royer 121 ribbon microphones. So, if a totally analogue recording is digitised and sits on digital media, doesn't it exist in both states until it is played and audibly observed as analogue with both its digital and analogue components?







Chandler Limited - EMI - Abbey Road Studios - RS124 Compressor



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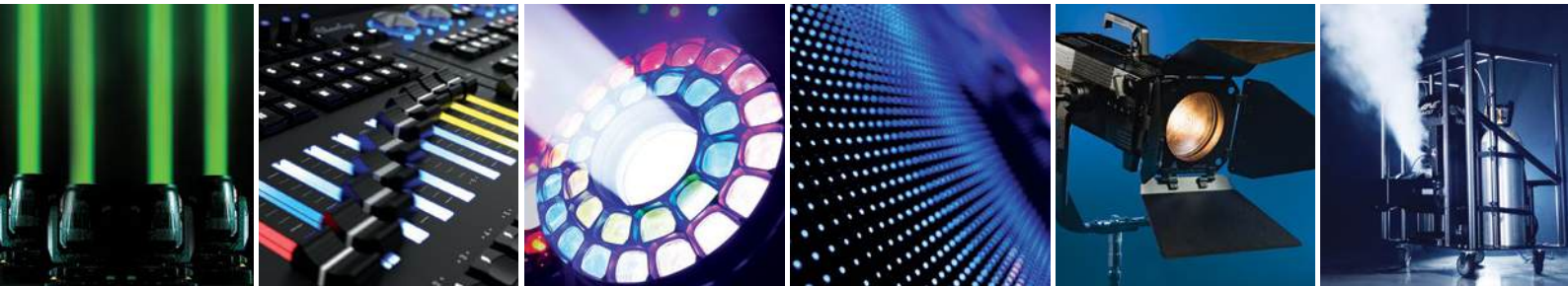
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