

mobile

monthly

PRODUCTION

volume 4 issue 4 2011

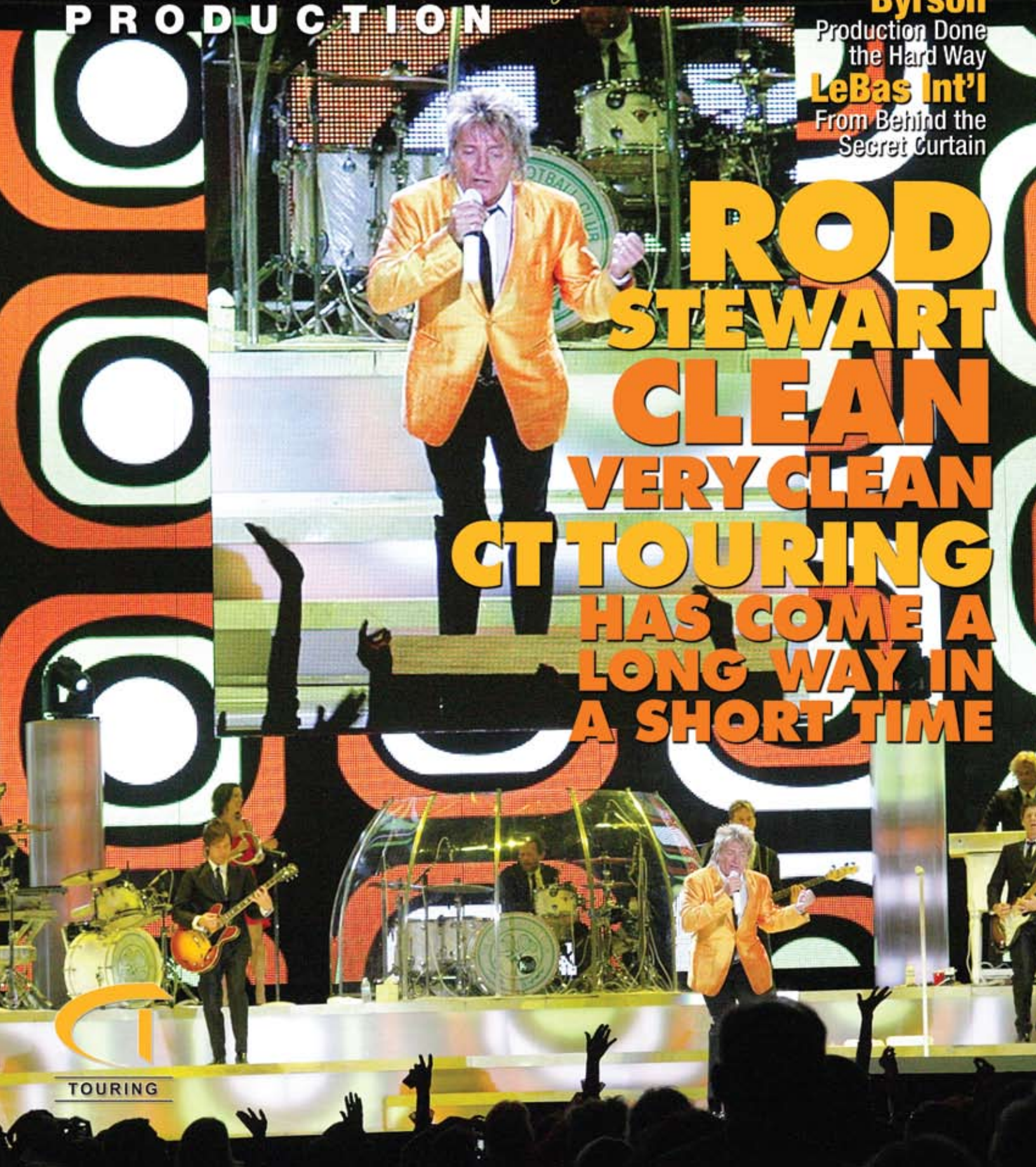
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ROD STEWART CLEAN VERY CLEAN CT TOURING HAS COME A LONG WAY IN A SHORT TIME



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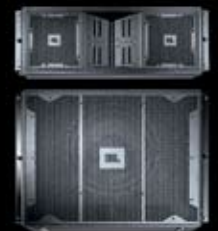
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FROM THE Publisher



In this issue we feature Rod Stewart and his *Heart & Soul* tour with gypsy-songstress Stevie Nicks. Although this tour doesn't carry that much production-wise, it has a huge look and sound. We are also proud to give you a feature on Eric Wade's video company CT Touring. A good portion of the *Heart & Soul* tour is video based, and CT has really stepped up to the plate here. Wade, with very little knowledge of the video world being that he's an audio guy by trade, has commanded a firm grip on the video touring world with a truly unique style.

Part Two of our feature on the Cavalia tour is included as well. The logistics of this thing is incredible to say the least. A beautiful production that deserves the attentions of our readers.

We also have a great piece on the current tour by the legendary Peabo Bryson. While 90 percent of our stories are on the production of the world's biggest tours, this one is very different. How do you tour with no production? This is a study of people with experience. Without it, touring like this would be a disaster for all involved.

Very soon we will announce the location of Tour Link 2012. With a new and bigger location, this promises to be our greatest event yet! Enjoy the summer touring season, and we hope to see you on the road.

Larry Smith



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Robe

ROBIN 600 LEDWASHES

for Söhne Mannheim's Tour

Leading German lighting designer Gunther Hecker used **22 Robe LEDWash 600s** as his key fixtures for the just finished Die Söhne Mannheims European tour, an opportunity seized by the band to preview material for their forthcoming new album to be released in the autumn.

Söhne Mannheims is a popular German music band with massive energy and dynamics, featuring up to 17 members (with 13 on this tour) encompassing several musical genres including rap, R 'n' B, soul, hip hop and rock all fused into a unique and very distinctive style, achieving considerable commercial and critical acclaim. It is also one of the many ongoing projects of Xavier Naidoo, one of Germany's highest profile and most prolific singer/songwriter/musicians.

Hecker's lighting design studio is based in Werne. He started his lighting career in the theatre 20 years ago, and now works on a host of cutting-edge live events, TV shows and bands - also including LD'ing the Die Fantastischen Vier and Tokio Hotel. He has designed several impressive architectural and buildings installations, and enjoys the variety of work and the opportunity of crossing-over his substantial lighting and visual skills between all these different disciplines.

He has worked with Söhne Mannheims since 1999, during which time they have grown and developed into the phenomenon they are today. He has been a Robe fan since first using the 2500 series soon after its launch in 2006.

Robe's Stage Banner was also his original idea ... Developed initially

as a custom product for a show he created for German pop singer Nena ... After which Robe thought it was such a great idea that they decided to make it a production item!

Hecker had been wanting to try out the new Robe ROBIN LEDWash 600 since its launch at the end of 2010, and when the itinerary for this Söhne Mannheims tour was revealed It presented the perfect opportunity!

The gigs varied from 200 to 6,500 capacities, and so for the smaller clubs and venues, he wanted a small, bright low power solution ... for which LEDWash 600 ticked all the boxes.

He needed his rig to be very flexible, and that's also why he chose LEDWash as the main fixture. They were all floor based for ultimate versatility and adaptability. This enabled at least some of his key fixtures to be fitted into whatever space was available onstage!

For the full size stage format, all 22 of the LEDWashes were located along the back just forward of the backline, around the sides and across the front of stage. Where there was the space, an expedient overhead rig - 6 bars of 6 PARs - and the PA was flown from a 6-legged ground support system.

Other than the LEDWashes and the PARs he used 4 x 8-lite Moles, an 2 Atomic strobes...and that was it!

The set was equally minimal - 21 panels (in full size configuration) of white canvas squares flown off the back and front trusses to add some architectural definition and depth to the stage.

So, it really was all down to the LEDWash 600s to bring the set alive visually.

With 13 people onstage to light and a two and a half hour set, it was a bold move to rely on 22 moving lights, but Hecker's experience and the huge functionality of the LEDWashes made him confident that it was the right decision.

Matching the hard driving action and massive energy of the band, a lot of the lighting looks were straightforward single and duo colour mixes - where the richness, intensity and pureness of the LEDWash palette really had impact.

With the LEDWashes located on the floor, it enabled a myriad of moody shadows to be projected onto the back wall and the upstage canvas squares and for the front line band to be crisply silhouetted, all adding to the excitement of the performance.

"It's a very good, highly cost effective product with excellent colour mixing and a great quality of light," states Hecker.

He also used a lot of white light. Several songs were lit solely in different colour temperature whites - emphasizing the seriously raw, edgy harshness of the music - and an effect that can only have been achieved so easily using the LEDWash 600 with its range of "real" whites from 2700 - 8000°K.

All lighting equipment for the Söhne Mannheims tour was supplied out of Satis & Fy's Werne office, including the Road Hog console that Hecker used to run the show. He worked alongside his two crew - Hanna List and Ralph Hackstedt.

Die Söhne Mannheims will be embarking on a full German arena tour in November following the release of the new album. Hecker already has an elaborate set design planned which will involve lots more LED Washes and other Robe fixtures. ◊

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Le Bas International: From Behind the Secret Curtain

Along with his cofounders, Tracey Deakin formed Le Bas International in 1990. Deakin's connection with the aircraft and music industries originated in the late 1970s via renowned producer Gerry Bron of Bronze records. Per Deakin, "Gerry has a particular love of music – especially British." Gerry has represented high profile names such as Juicy Lucy, Richard Barnes, Colosseum, Osibisa, Paladin, Manfred Mann's Earth Band, Vertigo Refugee, The Real Kids, Sally Oldfield, Motörhead, The Damned, Girlschool and Hawkwind.

Throughout the years Deakin has continued to participate and assist in many phases of the music industry. Now almost three decades later, Le Bas International has successfully arranged aircraft charters for some of the world's leading musical artists and groups, renowned composers and even complete philharmonic orchestras. This energetic and knowledgeable private air charter firm continues to assist with domestic and international tours for some of the biggest pop, classic rock, alternative, jazz, contemporary and classic R&B, hip-hop, rap and theatrical performers and bands.

Deakin was invited to attend Tour Link 2011, in Scottsdale, Arizona by Larry Smith of Tour Guide Publications/Tour Link and remarkable travel entrepreneur Nick Gold. The 2011 event was a tremendous success, beating all previous attendance levels with over 480 of the world's musical muscle being in attendance. Even at first glance, it was abundantly clear the venue held considerable possibilities for communicating with a much wider musical management audience.



Larry Smith: Tour Link was founded 13 years ago as successor to the former Performance Summit Conference. The event has been revived with more focus on produc-

tion transportation, personnel services, manufacturing and hotels to address a glaring void in the industry and to target issues pertinent to the mobile production industry.

The conference is a three-day event culminating in the annual Top Dog Awards Show. The event is as relevant to regional production companies as it is to the larger national and global touring companies. Young up-and-coming tour personnel have the opportunity to mix with the established tour and production managers and vendors. It also affords them the venue to meet with producers in a relaxed atmosphere. The Tour Link format combines panel sessions, discussion groups, workshops and displays with evening functions designed to encourage relationship building, dialogue and the simple pleasure of renewing old friendships and making new acquaintances. As Larry so eloquently says, "The success of this conference over the years is due to the simple fact that people have a very good time doing good business."



*Celebrating
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Tracey Deakin



Nick Gold:

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for three months or three years rely on Entertainment Travel to ensure privacy, safety and accuracy for their arrangements. In addition, Entertainment Travel's expertise extends to actors, VIPs and athletes (often traveling with staff and families), moving them around the world for public appearances, events and private vacations. Today, Gold continues to manage the company with his affable, hands-on style, a rarity in most industries these days. While some agencies count a few entertainers among their clients, Entertainment Travel serves only the entertainment industry.

Le Bas International: Now 21 years on, Le Bas International looks back on the considerable knowledge garnered from their first music entertainment event; providing flight services to Pink Floyd and their *The Division Bell* release. This was the fourteenth and last studio album created by the English progressive rock group. It was released in the United Kingdom by EMI Records in March of 1994, and in the US by Columbia Records in April of that year.

The tour supporting the album featured even more impressive special effects than the previous one in 1989, including two custom designed airships. Three stages leapfrogged around the US and Europe, each 180 feet (55 m) long and featuring a 130 foot (40 m) arch resembling the Hollywood Bowl. All in all, the tour required 700 tons of steel carried by 53 articulated trucks, a crew of 161 and an initial investment of US \$4 million plus US \$25 million of running costs just to stage. This tour played to 5.5 million people in 68 cities and each concert gathered an average 45,000 audience. At the end of the year, the *Division Bell Tour* was announced as the biggest, most successful tour ever, with a worldwide gross of over £150 million, or about US \$250 million. In the US alone, it grossed \$103.5 million from 59 concerts.

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RN Entertainment: Home of the Superstar Coach

BY HANK BORDOWITZ

We all know that the headline performers aren't like everyone else. They require a little more TLC than most. That's why the crew rides on the crew bus and the headliners ride on the star bus. If that star bus has a theme to it, more than likely it comes from RN Entertainment.

"All of our buses are pretty much theme coaches," says Bobby Baiardi, manager of RN Entertainment. "That's how we started. We bought our first bus, and it had a theme to it. We liked it. We specialize mainly in star busses. That's our forte."

Lately Maurice White, Phillip Bailey and the rest of Earth Wind and Fire have taken out RN's newest coach, the nine bunk and full bedroom "Rodeo." Weird Al Yankovich is traveling on comfy leather couches in the "Mardi Gras" bus, and Lauren Hill has hit the road in RN's six bunk "Taco" coach, with its private bedroom and shower. RN's "Sunshine" bus even has a bathtub.

"That is what we call a superstar bus," Baiardi proudly says of "Sunshine". "That particular bus has a dishwasher, wine cooler, full size refrigerator, ice maker, all the comforts of home. All our busses have range tops and microwave or convection ovens."

Founded in 2004 by Robert Nolan, RN originally worked out of Lake Charles, Louisiana. Baiardi has been with RN from the beginning, initially driving around bands like intergalactic metal warriors GWAR. Soon after he developed a company presence in Nashville. "Initially I moved to Nashville to fill the manager's spot," he says. "We went there to reestablish who we were, what we were, and what we provide to Nashville based companies. As a driver, I had worked with nearly all the compa-

nies, and I was starting to book the busses."

After better establishing themselves with the touring business through their Nashville sojourn, RN moved to larger quarters in Florida. "It made sense to come down to Florida," Biaidi says. "We already had a building down here with plenty of office space, places to put the busses, and work bays. It seemed like the thing to do."

Catering to the luxury needs of superstar clients doesn't come cheap. Baiardi estimates that each of their star coaches costs between three quarters of a million and a million dollars. The shells come from the factory and get shipped to Nick Audino at Superior Coaches. "They do pretty much all of our interior work," says Baiardi. "He does a fantastic job. I can't give them enough props. Those guys are on the ball."

"We give them a little bit of room to explore," he adds. "We give them the name of the bus and what kind of theme we want to do and pick out the interior colors. On this last bus, I picked out everything from the tile floor to the taps, the leather and the counter tops."

Of course, it's one thing buying a superstar coach, however it's another thing keeping it at that level. This is a point of pride for RN Entertainment. "We are meticulous about our maintenance. If there's any kind of ques-

Mardi Gras star bus



Find more photos of RN
Entertainment's luxury
themed star buses at
rnentertainment.net

tionable issue, we replace it. Instantly. Our computer guy can find a part anywhere in the country and get it delivered overnight. If you're stuck in the middle of nowhere and need batteries, this guy is good. He'd find the closest place that sells batteries, buy them and have the store deliver them right to you in the parking lot. Our hallmarks are service, cleanliness of our busses, and all out smooth rides."

"The driver is responsible for the cleanliness of the bus while he's out on the road. The driver will get the artist safely from point A to point B. When everybody is off the bus, so nobody gets disturbed, the driver will go through and take out the garbage and wipe it down, mop the floors. That kind of stuff."

While coaches with unique decorations, flat screen TVs, real crystal and china and all the other amenities sell the service, the drivers are the key and core of any transportation company. At RN, Baiardi *reckons* that the company's least experienced driver has 15 years of driving under his belt. "The drivers are the heart of what we do," he says. "They're some of the best in the business. I can't say enough good things about them, really. They're very resourceful, and they're willing to help people out who are stuck by the side of the road or at the shows. They're all very well educated in how things work."

This seems to work for RN. Over the next couple of years, they plan to add three new coaches, including the one Baiardi mentioned. Yet for all the luxury in the actual coaches, he wants people to recognize that the promise of RN Entertainment is service. "We're proving ourselves every day to be straightforward and honest. We go out of our way to make sure everyone who's riding that bus gets what they need." Needs including a nice bed, dinner on china, chilled wine, and leather sofas. Everyone should have these kinds of needs filled! ☺

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It doesn't take too many glances at the feature stories in *mobile Production monthly* to understand that we pay attention to shows based upon four primary criteria. First there is design theory; what was the idea behind the design? Within the design theory is technology and the technique through which said technology is applied. Third is logistical management. A good study of logistical management is *The Wall*. In 1980 when Pink Floyd took *The Wall* out the first time, it was too big and unwieldy to travel. By contrast, the current incarnation of *The Wall* that Roger Waters has out is more technologically involved but travels with relative ease compared to *The Wall* Version 1.0. The lesson being that you can have the coolest show on earth, but if it can't travel it's still a failure.

Once the issues of design theory, technology, technique and logistics have been examined, it all comes down to the last and most important question; can you pull it off? You have a great design. You have state-of-the-art technology that is perfectly applied to the project and it's packaged for ease, speed and safety. Now, can you execute it? Does the show work?

For us to accurately conduct this study we have to look at shows that possess a certain level of production mass. At this level and above, we can do a proper observation of the afore mentioned criteria. Below that level of production there simply isn't enough to talk about. As the chief writer for our publication, I am blessed that both our Managing Director Chris Cogswell and our Publisher Larry Smith give me an enormous amount of leeway when deciding what events I will cover, and I do so based very strictly and faithfully upon the factors I've described.

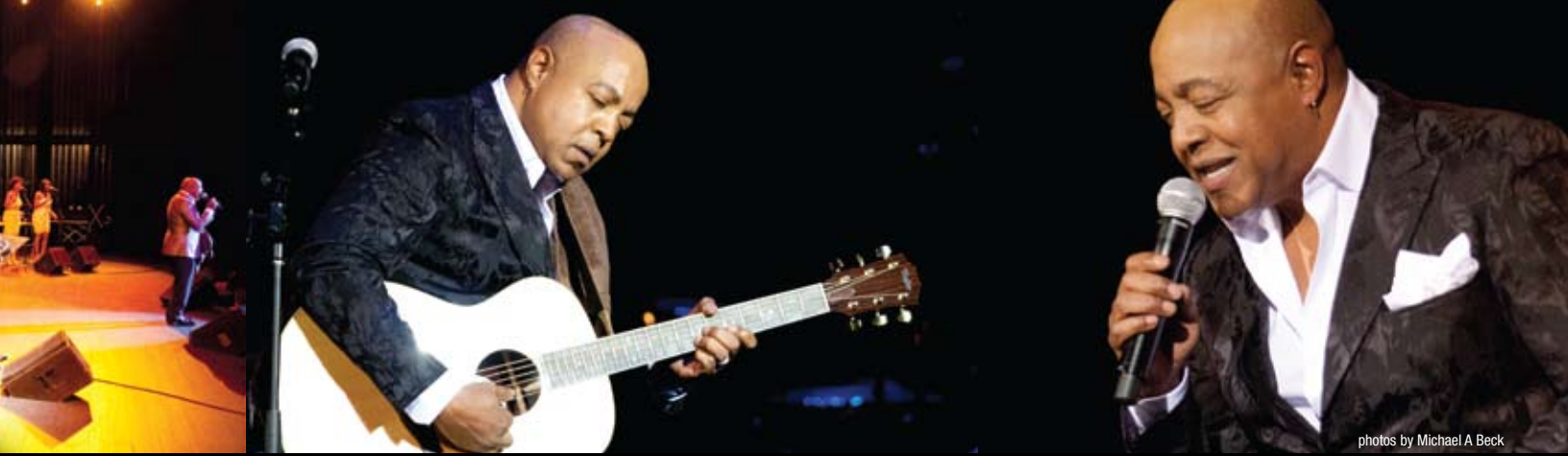
The problem with this admittedly myopic approach is it doesn't shine the slightest bit of light on the largest part of the mobile entertainment industry. Big shows that play in sheds, arenas and stadiums may get all the ink and air time, but they only represent a tiny portion of the live music being played around the world.

My older brother Billy has worked stadiums, arenas, sheds, theatres and bars. Currently he's the lighting designer for Peabo Bryson. So when Peabo played the Ferst Theatre on the campus of Georgia Tech, I went down to say hi to Billy and other friends on the production team and take a few shots of the show. What started out to be a friendly visit became a review of the travails and joys of traveling without production.

The biggest problem one experiences when traveling without production is that it's like a box of chocolates, "You never know what you're gonna get." Granted, as U2 Stage Manager Rocko Reedy says, "You get what you advance, but you can't advance experience or intelligence. You can't deal with people on the ground like they're idiots or your slaves. They're your coworkers." On the other hand, there are times when you do your advance work and the person on the other end simply isn't being honest about answering your questions to get the gig. One classic example of that was when Peabo Byron's Production Manager/Monitor Engineer Jid O'Brien showed up to a gig on the steps of the courthouse in Baltimore. "I called for 11 mixes on stage, and the guy supplying the audio gear only had an 8 mix console when I showed up." Explained O'Brien, "I said you've got my plot, and you've got my tech list, so when were you going to tell me about this? The man just looked at me and literally couldn't say a word. He just looked back at me with an expression that said he's either going to kill me or he's going to figure out something to do. Of course I came up with an idea, but I was not real happy to say the least. That was the worst and the last time something like that ever crept up on me."

As was stated earlier, brother Billy (Beck) is Peabo's LD and has had to learn to live with less. "Think of the arena show as an envelope in which every possible production element can be contained," he challenges. "If you've worked at that level enough you've seen everything in that bag. So when you look at a smaller bag it's impossible to be surprised. A couple weeks before 9/11, I was on a tour boat in the Hudson River with four par 56s to work with. I set a look, pulled the gel, and went up on deck and smoked a cigarette. Sometimes that's how it goes. You have to be adept at improvisation and that comes from a great deal from experience. Younger people can do that if they have enough conceptual faculty, but the real premium is experience. The more you've done the better you are at knowing what to look for in these situations, and you can then play the bounce."





A Day with Peabo Bryson & Company

PRODUCTION DONE THE HARD WAY

BY MICHAEL A. BECK

In the six years I've been writing for mPm, I've written a couple of op-ed pieces, which occur in the first person by nature. However, I try to avoid writing anything else in that style because I find that the objective distance provided by a second party account aids in the effort of walking the razors edge between presenting bare facts and offering a subjective critique of the events I cover. It also keeps me ever mindful of the fact that the exercise of my writing is to benefit our readers with useful information and not my ego. That being said, the piece you are about to read has been written in the first person because it involves a point of pride for me. Since the late 70s I have enjoyed the shared experience of working in this business (in one fashion or another) with two of my brothers, Billy and Bryan. What you are about to read involves Billy and the fine people he works with as they put forth a great show. I trust you will excuse this minor indulgence, but try to understand what I am doing here.



Peabo Bryson CREW



Mark Archibald - FOH Engineer, Cornel Culver - Stage Manager, Jid O'Brien - Production Manager/ Monitor Engineer, Billy Beck - Lighting Designer

One variable of the equation is absolute accuracy in the way the requirements of the show are (or are not) met regarding the rider. Far too often the production has to settle for what the promoter deems to be "close enough." The unfortunate result of this is a smorgasbord of lighting, audio and backline gear. O'Brien explained the backline dilemma, "You can stick to the rider without deviation and the promoter could decide that the cost is too high and pull the gig. The cost of backline gear is not going to be as expensive in Topeka as it will be in L.A. In L.A. you're paying for the convenience of being able to get exactly what you want whereas in Topeka an MPC-3000 can be hard to come by."

Another factor that is a given on an arena show but is not available to smaller productions is uniform stage parameters. Paul McCartney carries his own stage where Bob Seger uses a promoter provided stage. Either way both productions roll in knowing exactly how much acreage they'll be working on. Not so much

with a show like Peabo Bryson's. As is the case with lights and sound, you get what you get and make it work. When the stage falls short of what can comfortably accommodate nine people it could start to be a bit like a knife fight in a phone booth if the crew aren't getting along.

In the case of Peabo Bryson's crew, the blessing of being an adult bunch of experienced professionals pays heavy dividends. Stage Manager Cornel Culver spoke to that issue, "We try to make everyone's life easy. We keep in close contact with each other to make everything run as smooth as we can make it, and for the most part we're pretty good at it."

This is a theme that runs through the entire team from Peabo all the way to the crew. "The pros are that no matter how bad it gets it's still an easy day. We're not humping gear," says O'Brien. "Most of us have been here for a really long time, and it really is a family attitude. I get to see Billy and the guys, and we get

to do a show all at the same time." Billy has the same affect, "One of the things we pride ourselves on with this crew is our ability to improvise. We don't fight. We've all grown way past that. We're into making the day as easy as possible, and we're all good enough to do that. I'm happy as hell to be running with these guys. They're all great."

This could all sound like rationalizing the fact that they're not working the big shows, but it's simply not true. Larry Boster spent 18 years as the lighting designer for Brooks and Dunn and is currently out running the lighting console for Bob Seger. He has an interesting view of working like Peabo's crew does. "I'm sure Billy spends a lot more time programming because he's seeing a different system every day. That's how it was when I was out with Dan Fogelberg. We didn't have production. It takes more talent to light a show with a bunch of par cans than it does to go in with a rig full of movers. I'm proud of that work I did with Fogelberg, and I'd definitely take another gig like that."

It had been a long time since I'd seen a show full of nothing but conventional lighting gear. While I love what designers like Mark Brickman, Bruce Rodgers, Bob Peterson, Larry Boster and of course Roy Bennett do with the combination of enormous talent and budget, I had forgotten how good a conventional rig can look in the hands of a true artisan. I'm not saying that because the designer I'm talking about in this piece is my brother. There are more guys doing this level of work than there are lighting the big stage in the Staples Center. If you don't believe me just have a look at the Pollstar listings for any city.

Essentially, Billy's job is the same as Roy Bennett's in that he has to light the money and show what the music looks like as stage managers Cornel Culver and Rocko Reedy (U2 among others) are both faced with the task of creating a functioning workspace within which their artists can perform. Jid O'Brien has the same job as John 'Grubby' Callis (Paul McCartney), which is to make sure the people in that workspace can hear what they're doing.

continued on 34

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photos by Michael A Beck



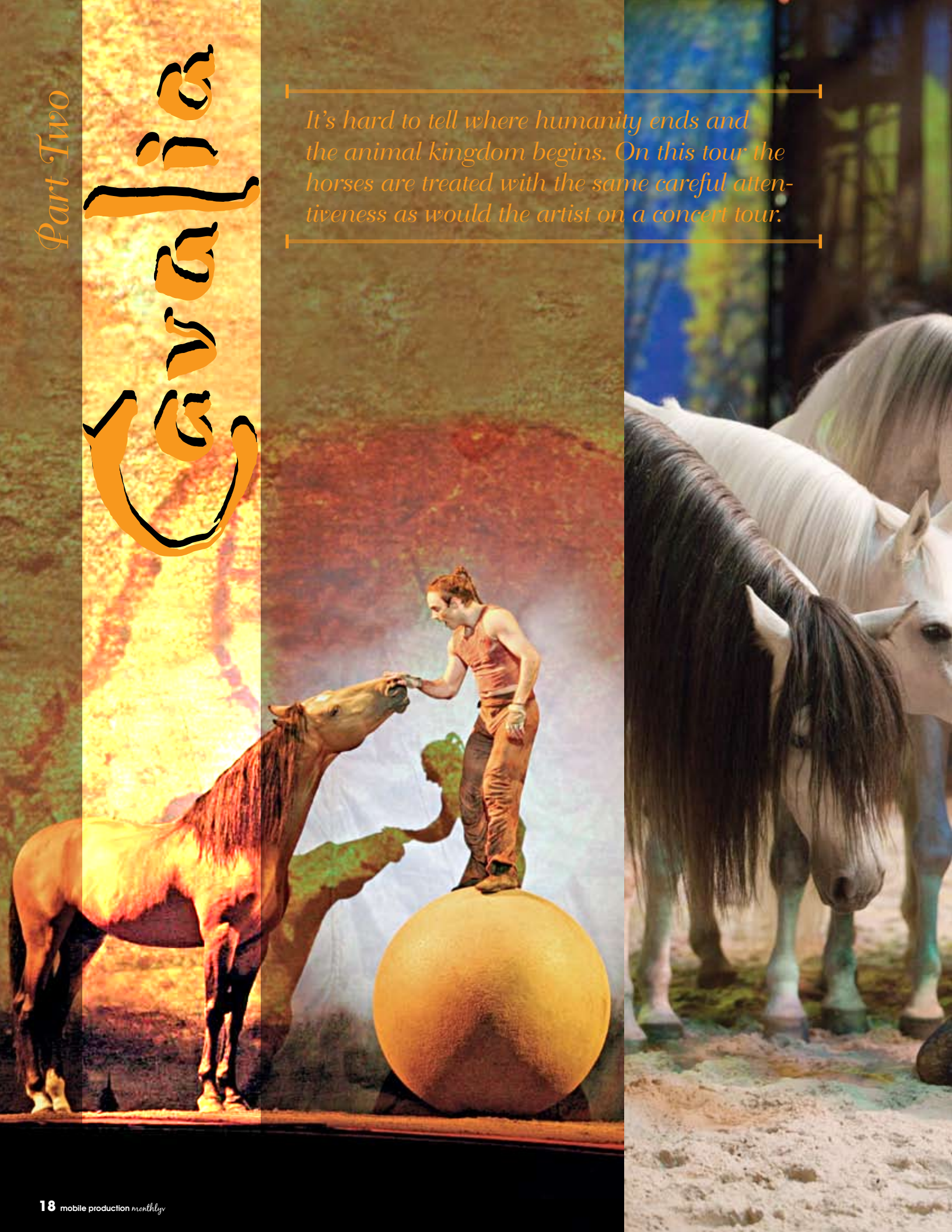
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Cevalier

It's hard to tell where humanity ends and the animal kingdom begins. On this tour the horses are treated with the same careful attentiveness as would the artist on a concert tour.



A large photograph on the left side of the page shows a woman with blonde hair, wearing a light-colored, off-the-shoulder costume with a long, patterned skirt, kneeling on the ground. She is gently touching the nose of a white horse. Several other horses, including a dark brown one, are standing around her. The background is a blurred forest scene.

So You Say You Know What Touring Is Like Eh? *Part Two*

BY MICHAEL A. BECK

The duration from the last day in a city opening night and the next location is 12 days. However, the action really starts a month out when the advance team pulls into town with the tents. Except for Waite and a few other key personnel, the advance crew is not full time members of the road contingent. They fly in specifically for the move. When the last show con-

cludes, everyone goes to bed like any other show night. “We’ve found that if we let the crew get a good night’s sleep and start fresh in the morning we get a lot more out of them than if we start right after the show and work through the night,” said Waite.



Operations Director - Richie Waite

However, there is a team that works through that night that is headed up by the tour welder Richard Murillo. This crew clears out all outside flooring and fencing and anything else that might impede the smooth flow of work and machinery the next day when the tear down begins.

As with any touring show there is a need for local crew, but not all the positions on the load-out are such that they have to be filled by a crew company such as Crew One or I.A.T.S.I. For that work local temp agencies are called in.

The main tent utilizes 75,000 square feet of canvas and requires roughly 50 people to get it erected. Most of the production elements of the show fly off of a 100' x 90' mother grid that's rigged off of the tent's four huge masts as well as a center point that is a four way bridal that comes off of the cupolas of the masts. More precisely, the bridal points attach to a rod that hangs down below each cupola. That is a serious distinction to make because that manner of attachment is what keeps the rig from swaying in the event a high wind might cause the tent itself to move.



Cavalria



The lighting truss is dead-hung off of the mother grid at 22 points. Once the truss is in the air everything that happens in the air is under-hung off of genies lifts, and there is a substantial amount of gear that goes up into that system.

The rig contains nine Christie 15K projectors, which hit a scrim that wraps around the entire upstage wall of the show, which is basically half of the tent. There are also six Christie 10Ks that are used for other displays around the room.

The majority of the lighting is conventional with the bulk of that being 150 pars (18 par bars and 42 individual units) located around the room for production, house lighting and utility purposes. There are also lekos used for stationary spots. Finally, there are 80 Martin automated fixtures (Mac 2K Washes, Mac 2K Profiles and Mac 600s). The design also included ColorBlasts for set lighting as well as FOH lighting.

There are several lines of soft goods including an Austrian drape. The show also has a set element made up of diamond shaped pieces func-

The main tent utilizes 75,000 square feet of canvas and requires roughly 50 people to get it erected

tioning like drapes that fly off of three separate trusses, which gives it the ability to present remarkable depth of field. The rig also contains a water screen and rigging for acrobatic performers who either attach from the stage or descend in from the air.

The aforementioned scrim plays a great roll in the production. From the front it served as a cyc that they hit with the nine 15K projectors. Because the show centers on the performance of horses that may or may not be the picture of cooperation on any given night, the music is provided by a live band. This is so that if the horses get unruly the band can improvise until the show gets back on the tracks. The band plays in a loft built upstage center behind the scrim.

The loft is a noticeably no frills environment. Yet at various times during the show, block-outs are designed into the video content and the band members are lit from within the loft so they can be seen as part of the video content.

There is a walk space that is roughly eight feet wide behind the scrim. The back wall of this tunnel is draped in black. During one very powerful part of the show the performers, dressed in white, slowly ride in on white horses from upstage center below the band loft and walk around behind the scrim to entrance points downstage right and left. While they are coming through the tunnel they are down lit in what looked to be a no color blue. Portions of the back wall of the tunnel are lined with large white tree limbs that are lit in the same color. As this is happening there is a projection of a moonlit forest on the face of the scrim. The effect is absolutely stunning.

The audio portion of the show is fairly straight forward from an FOH perspective. The PA is an L-ACOUSTICS system controlled by Yamaha-M7CL. A Yamaha-PM5D is used to mix monitors, but because of the limited space in the band loft, the monitor console has to live underneath the loft. The monitor engineer is able to keep track of the band members via talkback mics at each musician's position. Each musician has a video monitor at their position so they can visually follow the show because they each have cues.

When *mPm* covers a concert, we are able to restrict our writing to the aspects of the show that comes into the venue with the tour. That narrows down the target areas of the production itself, but this production is its *own* venue, which means that every part of the entire experience is a legitimate target of conversation. The details seem to go off in endless directions. Every department of the tour must have at least one person who is EMS trained. This is so that critical attention can be applied to an injury patient until true EMS teams can arrive on site.

The logistics of moving the show have to be carefully choreographed around the horses as loud heavy equipment could spook them. Once they are off site, they are taken to a horse farm that was selected as part of the advance process for R&R during the majority of the 12 days between shows.

Tour accounting takes place on site until the move starts when it is then handed off to the Cavalia home office. The HR office as well as all other administrative channels stay up and running all the time.

Because this show is self promoted, one of the busiest people on the tour is the tour publicist Bradley Grill. The PR job is headed up by the company PR office in Montreal. Grill walked us through the process. “When we go on sale in a market we choose a PR firm that we use to launch the campaign in print as well as on television. We do a mass press release in the market and Normand does interviews; all of this takes place about a month before we open.”



Dominique Valcour/Director of Equestrian & Artistic Operations, Chantal St-Cyr/Box Office Director, Duncan Fisher/Tour Director, Benoit Robitaille/Public Service Director, Jean-François Robichaud/Tour Services Director, Jocelyn Langelier/Technical Director



Christine Jutras Archambault/Tour Services Coordinator, Veronique Laferriere/Tour Services Ass't, Jean-François Robichaud/Tour Services Director



Back: Gonzalo Soldi – Video Operator, Pierre Berault, Alexandre Gagnon/Lighting Tech, Veronique Calve – Carpenter, Sebastian Lefebvre – Head Carpenter, Sylvain Leblanc – Head Sound, Alexandre Dion-Proulx – Sound Tech *Front:* Guillaume Provençal – Carpenter, Gabriel Rivard-Proulx – Rigger, Michel Rivard – Lighting Tech, Claude Houle – Technical Coordinator



Back: Marc Soulié/Farrier, Dominique Malo/Groom, Gisèle Lémans/Groom, Sylvie Hébert/Groom, Stéphan Gagné/Groom, Back Row: Mauricio Zaconeta/Groom, Kutbergen Kozugulov/Groom, Benoit Gauvin/Groom, Martin Poirier/Groom, Maria Marcopoulous – Ass't Veterinary Tech

Once the show is underway, the marketing office moves on to the planning for upcoming cities, and Grill takes over the day-to-day PR chores and does the advance work for the next city. Additionally, the show runs several promotional events which are managed by Guillaume Paquette.

When the show was in Atlanta in 2009, two abused colts came to the attention of the tour. The horses were rescued and nursed back to health and eventually a part was written into the opening and closing of the show. As the horses grow up, they are moved to the Cavalia stables in Canada. There they become a part of a herd of close to 100 horses that they were replaced by with new rescues, which is a process that is

now a part of the Cavalia experience.

Because of the self-sufficient nature of the show, everything takes place in tents and truck trailers that have been converted into offices, kitchens workshops and even wardrobe closets. While words like “big top” are used and many of the people come from traditional circus backgrounds, the members of this production are quick to correct the use of the word “circus” when applied to Cavalia. Indeed it is more like a sit down theatrical performance than a circus.

However, there is one area where this is very similar to the more traditional circus cultural, it's the dedication to this tour more as of a lifestyle continued on 34

Cavalria



Anatolie Sandu/Choreographer, Joëlle St-Germain/Back Stage Mgr, Dominique Valcour - Director of Equestrian & Artistic Operations, Annick Gouaillier/Stage Mgr, Alain Gauthier/Acrobatic Coach, Grégory Molina, Jean-Maurice De Roubaix/Equestrian Back Stage Mgr, Sylvain Gagnon/Musical Director



William Romano/Ass't VIP Chef, Pierre Yves Caisse/Ass't Chef, Sonia Ouellet/Ass't Chef, Stéphane Grenon/Chef



Bradley Grill/Publicist, Guillaume Packet/Promotions



Nickolaus Winn/Site Mgr, Michel Hebert/Site Tech, Alain Laliberté/Assistant Electrician, Emilie Hudon/Logistic & Technical Ass't, Christopher Gower/Head Electrician



Kitchen

Chef - Stéphane Grenon

Ass't Chefs: Pierre-Yves Caisse, William Charles Romano - VIP, Sonia Ouellette

Logistics

Operations Director - Richie Waite

Head Electrician - Christopher Gower

Ass't Electrician - Alain Laliberté

Logistic and Technical Assistant - Emilie Hudon

Welder - Richard Murillo

Site Mgr- Nickolaus Winn

Site Techs - Michel Hebert, Deric Copeland, Felipe Morales

Marketing

Publicist - Bradley Grill

Promotions - Guillaume Paquette

Tour Services

Tour Services Director - Jean-Francois Robichaud

Pre Production & Permits Coordinator - Anne-Laurence Dubois

Tour Services Coordinator - Christine Jutras Archambault

IT Technician - Jean Sebastien Theberge

Tour Services Assistant - Veronique Laferriere

Artistic

Director of Equestrian & Artistic Operations - Dominique Valcour

Stage Mgr - Annick Gouaillier

Back Stage Mgr - Joëlle St-Germain

Equestrian Back Stage Mgr - Jean-Maurice de Roubaix

Physical Therapist - Dave Dannels

Wardrobe Supervisor - Catherine Mireault

Wardrobe Ass'ts - Callie Colleen Ryan, Colette Joy Ellis

Stables

Equestrian Trainer - Grégory Molina

Stables Coordinator - Julie Breton

Veterinary Technician - Pascale Bérubé

Ass't Veterinary Technician - Maria Marcopoulos

Farrier - Marc Soulié

Grooms: Stéphane Gagné, Sylvie Hébert, Benoit Gauvin,

Dominique Evelynne Malo, Gabrielle Ferland-Dionne,

Gisèle Lémans, Kutbergen Kozugulov, Louis Trudel, Martin

Poirier, Mauricio Zaconeta, Michael Harbuck, Rémy

Paquet, Stephanie Evans

Technical

Technical Director - Jocelyn Langelier

Technical Coordinator - Claude Houle

Head Sound - Sylvain Leblanc

Sound Technician - Alexandre Dion-Proulx

Head Rigger - Hans Winn

Rigger - Gabriel Rivard-Proulx

Head Carpenter Sebastian Lefebvre

Carpenters: Guillaume Provencal, Veronique Calve

Lighting Technicians: Alexandre Gagnon, Michel Rivard

Video Operator - Gonzalo Soldi

Personnel

President & Artistic Director Normand Latourelle

Tour Director Duncan Fisher

Performers

Artists: Anatolie Sandu, Andréanne Nadeau, Anthony Pinte, Carey Hackett, Chad Dyson, Dosbergen Kozugolov, Elise Verdoncq, Faïçal Moulid, Fairland Ferguson, Irina Donos, Jean-Philippe Diotte, Jennifer Lécuyer, Julien Beaugnon, Katherine Cox, Kristelle Diotte, Lahcen Ahchoune, Laura Beaubry, Marianella Michaud, Maxim Panteleenko, Mohamed Ahchoune, Nouredin Barhihi, Octavian Druta, Omar El Ouazi, Sébastien Chanteloup, Spencer Litwack, Sylvia Zerbini, Tatiana Daviaud, Thomas Aubron, Music Director - Sylvain Gagnon
Musicians: Anne-Louise Gilbert, Jonathan Ménard, Marc-André Drouin, Mary-Pier Guilbault, Raphaël d'Amours

Front: Pascale Bérubé/Veterinary Tech, Stephanie Evans/Groom, Gabrielle Ferland-Dionne/Groom, Rémy Paquet/Groom, Louis Trudel/Groom, Michael Harbuck/Groom *Back:* Julie Breton/Stables Coordinator

Accountings

Daphne Mollenthiel, Stephanie St-Amant

Box Office

Box Office Director - Chantal St-Cyr

Box Office Supervisors: Aimée Michaud-Morin, Gabrielle Lanois, Meave Tracy

Public Services

Public Service Director - Benoit Robitaille

Public Service Coordinator - Moïra Melançon

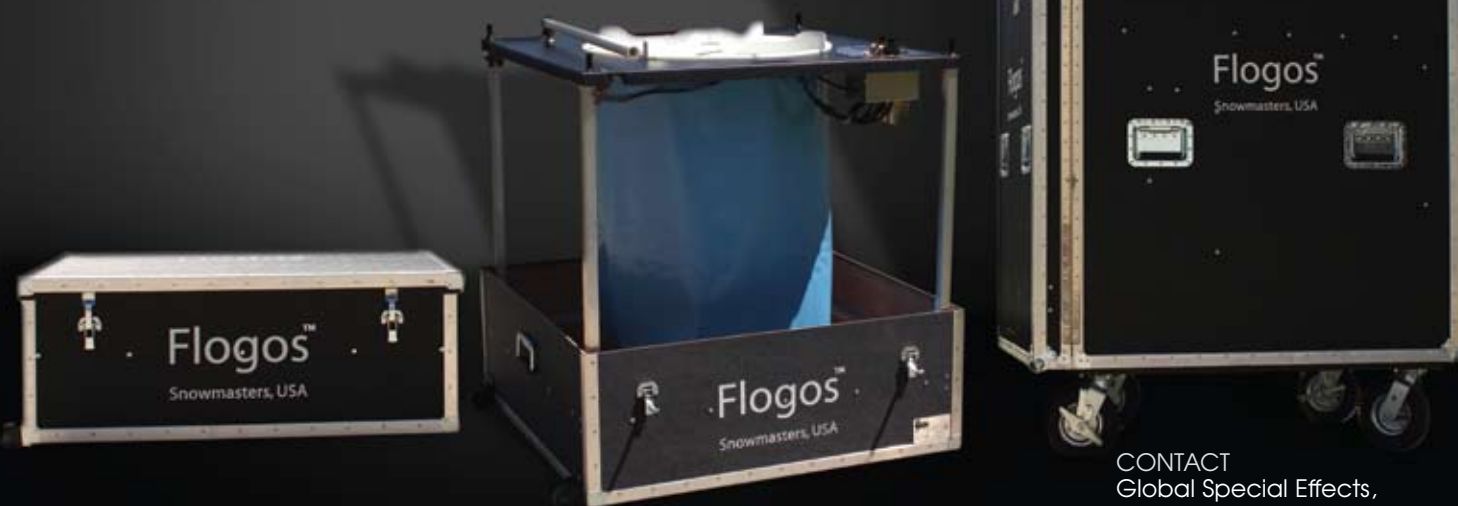
Inventory Supervisor - Patrick Ratté

Big Top Supervisor - Hugo Alves Simoes

VIP Supervisor - Michelle Winn

FOH Supervisors: Gabrielle Rousseau, Caroline Gleason

SnowMasters Special Effects Flogos-Lite Portable Series



CONTACT
Global Special Effects,
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How Exciting! From a 350 pound plus (24" size)/400 pound plus (36" size), 6 foot plus tall road case to a 70 pound and above suitcase-sized machine, at 13" tall in transport configuration, and 36" in height when fully set up, with the same capabilities, the newly designed Flogos-Lite is lightweight, portable, and more innovative than before. It is a fraction of the size of the original machine, making it easy to transport, move, and setup; it can now be operational in less than 2 minutes.

Performance-wise, Flogos-Lite is faster with dryer Flogos that float longer. It is designed by SnowMasters, now known as Global Special Effects, Inc., and is easily shipped via freight; Flogos-Lite can be conveniently transported in a mini-van or pickup truck.

Flogos-Lite is more affordable to a larger audience to buy or rent. It is available in 24" and 36" variations, similar to previous model. It houses a built-in automatic timer to fly the floating clouds at different intervals or turn the machine on or off. When set up in its

transporting or mobile configuration, it can be pulled by one person like a large piece of luggage.

Flogos-Lite is lightweight and can be easily stored, transported, and setup on stage, indoors or outdoors, and is a great addition to enhance any lighting designs, cryo, pyro, or other special effects; small size makes it great for touring bands too. Lighting and music becomes even more alive with floating logos or symbols flying simultaneously. 



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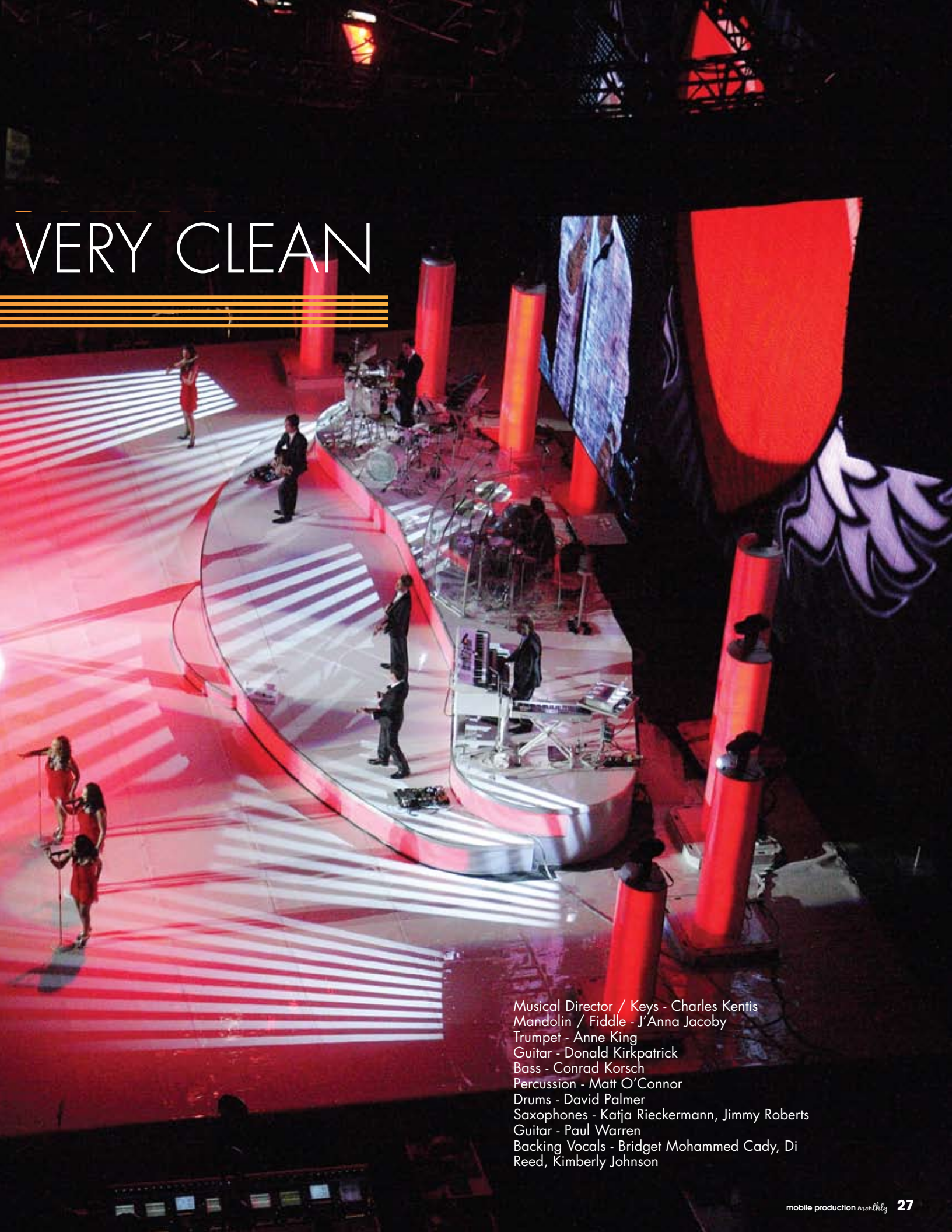
BY MICHAEL A. BECK

Rod Stewart's career has worn many faces over the years. However, his most recent and recognizable image is that of the classic crooner who can still bring rock 'n' roll to round out the show. Therefore, that is the look that controls his live performances today. It all starts with a very clean white stage reminiscent of the variety shows of the 60s and 70s. This ultra-clean look has been the rule for Stewart's tours for several years except for one. Tour Production Manager Lars Brogaard explained, "We tried doing a dirty look with amps all over the stage so that it looked like a big rock band. That was the look for the first half of the show, and then we changed over to the clean big band look for the second half. That was the only time. Normally white and clean is what we are."

photos by Michael A. Beck



VERY CLEAN



Musical Director / Keys - Charles Kentis
Mandolin / Fiddle - J'Anna Jacoby
Trumpet - Anne King
Guitar - Donald Kirkpatrick
Bass - Conrad Korsch
Percussion - Matt O'Connor
Drums - David Palmer
Saxophones - Katja Rieckermann, Jimmy Roberts
Guitar - Paul Warren
Backing Vocals - Bridget Mohammed Cady, Di
Reed, Kimberly Johnson

Because there are no gags in the show, the production is able to utilize a promoter stage and cover it with white marley. The 64' x 56' stage had a bi-level riser that spread across 40 feet of the upstage center portion of the stage. The riser was flanked by four columns on either side. The vertical surfaces of the riser and the columns were internally lit with Barco MiTRIX.

Although the main idea of the white set was to achieve the afore mentioned clean look, the beneficial side effect was that it worked as a huge reflector that allowed Lighting Designer Mark Payne to get a lot more mileage out of an admittedly Spartan lighting rig. Payne said, "I have to justify every light, but I've been with Rod for the better part of 20 years, on and off. It took me a while to work out what was going on, but now it's quite straight forward. I get exactly what I need, and I only need so much."

Driven by that philosophy, the lighting system was made up of 22 VL3000 Spots, 25 VL3500 Washes, 8 VL6Cs, 36 Par 64s, 8 Par 36s and two truss spots (Lycian StarkLite). While this may not seem like much gear, the result of the judicious application of the system was incredibly smooth lighting across the stage. Of course the fact that the show took place on a 3,584 square feet reflector didn't hurt matters. "Quite often there are some focuses where Rod is in the center of the stage, and I won't put the light directly on him," explained Payne. "I'll hit the deck next to him and let it bounce up at him." The result is beautifully balanced light, which is handy because the most prominent part of the production (apart from Rod Stewart) is video.

Video is a relatively new aspect of the Rod Stewart live experience. Prior to seven or eight years ago he wasn't even interested in color within the show. Brogaard told us, "He wanted it white and full-on all the time, but he started going to the theatre a lot and came to accept that some color can be good for the show." Finally on this tour, Stewart decided that he'd like to have a backdrop of New York City with functioning "city lights."

Brogaard said he could go one better and thus was born the video aspect of this show. The main display is a massive wall of 18 mil video product called Flyer 18 that spanned the backline of the stage and reached from the stage to the lighting rig. Downstage of the big wall was a smaller vertical highlight panel composed of a higher resolution Flyer 12 referred to on the tour as the "portrait screen." As is the case with just about every show the system is full HD from cameras to output. The video rig was provided by South Carolina based CT Touring.

Apart from the word 'clean' the only word that can address this show is classic. Every song in the set had a classic feel whether it was one of the old standards that have marked Rod Stewart's career for years, the rocking tunes from the 70s, or the timeless Uptown Train. That starts with the performance of Stewart and his incredible band and runs down through the execution of every aspect of the tour, all the way out to the constantly (and tragically) ignored truck and bus drivers.

When we cover a show of any kind, we try to get as deeply into the design theory of the show as possible, and the only way to do that is to interview as many members of the design process, starting with set and lighting designers. In this case everything was driven by the set design and logic would demand that we talk to the set designer. Sadly that could not happen because this set was designed by the late and deeply missed Ian Knight who passed away in 2010.

During his career Knight designed for the likes of The Rolling Stones, Jimi Hendrix, The Doors, Elton John, Led Zeppelin, Genesis and Wings. He provided art direction and lighting design for Led Zeppelin's film *The Song Remains the Same* in 1976, in which he also appeared, and of course he designed this current tour for Rod Stewart for whom he had applied his craft on countless projects over the years. Those who knew him well miss his friendship dearly. Those of us who didn't know him personally will miss his eye.

For now we can enjoy the work he did to give this tour a look that can only be described as classic and clean...very clean. 🍷





photos by Michael A Beck

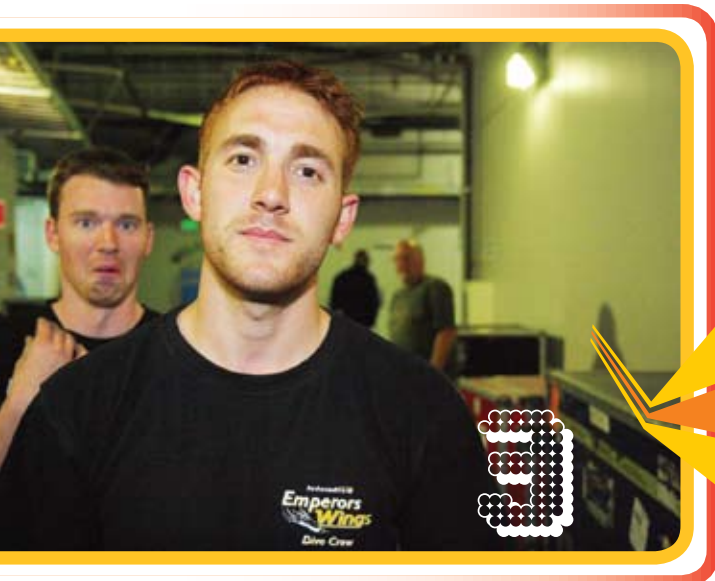




Tour Production Manager
Lars Brogaard
Band & Crew Tour Manager
Nicole Kuhns
Rod Party Tour Manager
Peter Mackay
Sound Engineer
Lars Brogaard
Production TM/Teleprompter
Patrick Logue
Tour Accountant
Sunil Sinha
Lighting Director
Mark Payne
Stage Manager
Mikkel Brogaard
Monitor Engineers
Sven Jorgensen, David Bryson
Guitar Technicians
Gavin Blowers & Doug Forsdick

Keyboard Technician
John Talbot
Drums & Percussion Technician
Matt O'Connor
Riggers
Pete Rayel, Richard Wythes
Carpenters
Gary Jacobe, Steve Gomes,
Jim McGuigan
Wardrobe
Tiffany Henry
Video Director
Charlie Harris
Video Engineer
Willis Spencer
LED screen
Luis Castillo, Christopher
Bennett, Bo O'Brien
Sound Crew
Kasper Brogaard, David
Vinnicombe, Jack Dunnett,
Mark Willett, David Klann,
Josh Schmitz

Lighting Crew
Thomas Bider, Michael Merle,
William Settle
Catering Staff
Angus Mackinnon, Jolene
Collins, Sean Leitch, Trevor
Bantin, Kelvyn Mckenzie,
Scott Findley
Truck Drivers
Mark Beasley, Annabelle
Bowman-Shaw, Tom Deinema,
Glenn Hoffman, John Pyle,
Chris Olson, Dennis Brunkin,
Gil Martin
Bus Drivers
Joe Mooney, Lyman Cantrell,
Doyle Andrews, Tom Blauvelt,
Brian Brown, Tim Kiest
Personal Assistant to Mr. Stewart
Luka Scheurer
Trainer
Gary O'Connor



photos by Michael A Beck

Personnel pictured above:

- 1:** Luis Castillo – LED Wall Tech, Christopher Bennett – LED Wall Tech, Eric Wallace, Willis Spencer – Video Engineer, Charlie Harris – Video Director, Bo O'Brien – LED Wall Tech
2: Thomas Bider – Lighting Tech, Lighting Director – Mark Payne, William Settle – Lighting Tech, Michael Merle – Lighting Tech
3: Jack Dunnett – Audio Technician
4: Sven Jorgensen – Monitor Engineer, David Vinniecombe – Sound Tech, Jack Dunnett – Sound Tech, Mark Willett, David Klann – Sound Tech
5: John Talbot – Keyboard Tech, Steve Gomes – Carpenter, Gary Jacobe – Carpenter, Jim McGuigan "The Irishman on tour" – Carpenter
6: Raymond Jacobs - Bus Driver, Frierson Mitchener – Senators Coaches, John Aiken – Senators Coaches

Special Thanks to the following:

Walter Rührig and AKG Microphones, John and Helen Meyer and Meyer Sound, James Gordon and DiGiCo, DW Drums, GMS Drums, Latin Percussion, Paiste, Pro Mark, Sabian, Vic Firth, JMI Products of England, Guitar Fetish.com, Yamaha Saxophone, Alternate Mode, Remo and Native Instruments. Thomas Stadelman, Alison Graham, Ian Roberts

CLEAN, VERY
CLEAN

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Jeremy Joseph, Tanya Davis, Emily Theobald, Ben Rawling • *Live Nation Merchandise European Division*

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Personal Management

Arnold Stiefel - Stiefel Entertainment

Management Production Coordinator

Lotus Donovan

Management Assistant

Zoe Karatzaferis

Business Management

Lester Knispel, Kristi Lloyd • *Boulevard Management*

Legal Representation

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Ian Knight • *Ian Knight Production Services*

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Lighting

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Video Imaging

Danny Nolan, Tito Sabatini • *duo2.tv*

Dick Carruthers • *Cheese & Film Video, Ltd.*

Video / LED Screen

Eric Wade • *CT Touring*

Travel Agent

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HAS COME A LONG WAY IN A SHORT TIME

BY MICHAEL A. BECK

The most obvious new addition to the production set of this year's Rod Stewart tour is the massive video display. As is described in the feature story of this issue, video content was a serious departure from the normally austere 'white' look of what has been the norm with Stewart's tours for so long. The company providing the video gear is South Carolina based CT Touring.

Twenty-five years ago Creative Technologies opened its doors in London providing production services for live events and broadcast projects. By 2007, the company had a massive client list and things were going great. However, there was an elephant in the room that wasn't being addressed – concert touring. Up to this point, Creative Technologies' client base was primarily in the area of corporate production.

Because concert touring wasn't the core of what Creative Technologies was doing, there was much work being left on the table. In 2007, Eric Wade came into the picture based on work he'd done in concert production. Wade knew his way around that

particular yard and this seemed to be the perfect time for Creative Technologies to take the concert production plunge in earnest. Thus was born CT Touring.

Based out of South Carolina, Wade wasted no time getting the new concert touring arm of the company up and running. The first touring client was Rod Stewart and soon after that came Miley Cyrus, Taylor Swift, Moody Blues and Usher among many others.

This story is not unlike many others in that the time came to branch out and go after new markets and hopefully success is the reward for hard work. Where the tale deviates from just about everything else is that Wade was a complete neophyte in the field. "I had absolutely no experience in video production of any kind," he recalls. "I had worked with a sound company, and I had a lot of really good contacts in the business by the time we brought CT on-line."

Having worked in a variety of industries outside of the entertainment world including oil and gas, Wade had a strong entrepreneurial background which gave him the *chutzpah* to walk onto the field of big league concert touring video without having ever played one inning in the minors. However, having spent time in the audio end of touring, he got the feeling that things could be done a little differently on the video end of the production. "I saw some shortcomings in the video industry that I thought we could improve on," Wade explained. "They had to deal mainly with the kind and amount of attention that companies apply to their clients."

Because Creative Technologies was focused so heavily on its corporate work, it had not built up its concert chops. Conversely, Wade continued on 34



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When FOH Engineer Mark Archibald covers a room for Peabo Byron, he does it with no less careful attention than does Mickey Beck (no relation) for Josh Groban.

One of the many differences between large and small productions is the smaller the crew, the more dependent the crew members are upon one another. In *The Art of War* Sun Tzu writes that an army is most deadly when it is in the death zone wherein they can only win the battle or die. While this is nothing like a life or death situation, the principle holds true. Back in the 80s there was a truly great guy who worked for R.A. Roth named Steve Dunaway who said, "I don't do sound, you don't do lights, we do shows."

Next time you have a chance go out and see a show that you know isn't carrying production, carefully watch how they "do shows."



Cavalia continued from 22

than a vocation. As lifestyles go this one is not for the faint of heart. Although the turnover rate on the crew is roughly 60 percent of the 40 percent who have stuck it out, it's a dedication that is rarely seen anywhere else in the entertainment world. It's hard to tell where humanity ends and the animal kingdom begins. On this tour the horses are treated with the same careful attentiveness as would the artist on a concert tour.

Cavalia was the last thing that we were expecting to cover. However, as *mPm* is always looking to find new forms of production to examine, we were excited about the prospect of visiting something this far out of the norm from what we normally do. We thank Duncan Fisher and the rest of his team for the opportunity to visit this show and for their uncommon hospitality.

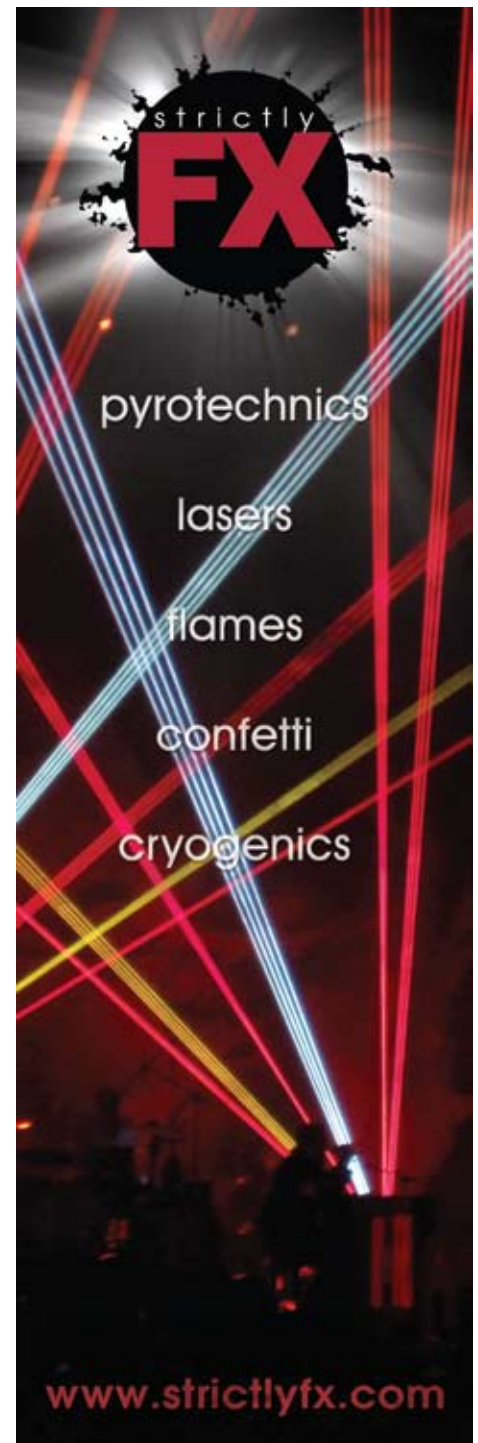
Whether you know anything about horses or not, this is not a show to be missed. Keep an eye out for it to come close to you. Cavalia 2 is currently in the rehearsal stage.

may not have had working knowledge of video gear and the theory of video production, but he had a well honed understanding of the delicately nuanced ethos of the culture of concert touring. Creative Technologies had deep pockets and a warehouse full of gear while Wade had the contacts needed to put Creative's resources to work. Suddenly everyone turned around and the elephant in the room had been replaced with a whole new client list and bags of brand new dollar bills.

Wade was off and running. Soon enough, CT Touring was so deeply into the concert touring milieu that it had needs for gear that Creative would not have necessarily purchased for its corporate production inventory. That didn't matter because by now CT was making its own money, at least to the point where it now had the purchasing power to lay in the gear needed to do the job it was brought into the world for.

While CT Touring still functions under the umbrella of Creative Technologies, it does so with a long and somewhat loosely tied tether. That arrangement allows Wade to operate his business as he feels he should with the resources he has in-house, but when he needs more equipment he can count on Creative Technologies to cover the gap.

Now, CT Touring boasts an ever-expanding and fully integrated inventory of full HD equipment. With the development of Flyer 18 and Flyer 12 video product, which is mounted on frames designed and manufactured by Tait Towers, the sights set on an even higher resolution product to be released in the near future. CT Touring is in every way the genuine article.



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The updated 2009 J4500 conversion shell shown with 2 optional slide-outs.

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