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January 2010 Issue - Features

Train Spotting

Written by Morgan Loven



Train on tour

The tour for Train has been rolling across America with lighting and video gear provided by LMG. Lighting designer Matt Mills and tour manager Thomas O'Keefe co-designed the rig, then handed it off to lighting director Shawn Seithel.

Video has played a key role in the production. Along with three DL.3s from Barco/High End Systems and video gear used for I-Mag, LMG account rep Craig Mitchell noted that custom video racks were built to help the band and that the band could constantly update the video content while out on the road.

"We built a custom DMX-controlled video switching rack," Mitchell said, noting that it helped Seithel choose video feeds from lipstick cameras and internal DL.3 cameras for the projection screens. "It also included a DVR for video clip playback and was triggered via DMX presets on the grandMA console as well," Mitchell added. "The whole system worked quite well, and we ended up adding a small video monitor at FOH so Shawn could preview the camera shots before selecting it, as the video rack ended up living backstage."

Except for "Hey Soul Sister," which was designed by Brian Jarvis, Mills designed the original video content. This was updated on a regular basis with fresh imagery of the band at each of the tour stops. Seithel would edit the video before show, and after the band approved it, he would upload it to the DL.3s, which he then controlled through one of his two grandMA consoles.

The rig also included seven Vari-Lite VLX LED fixtures, which Seithel credited for being "bright and fast," with optics that combined the output before it exited the light. "All you see when you look at the lens on the front of the light is the color you intend the people to see," Seithel said.

In addition to the DL.3s and VLXs, Seithel used six Martin MAC 700 Profiles and 11 Philips Color Kinetics Color Blast 12s on stage. All the fixtures except the DL3s were on custom-built stands provided by LMG to keep the stage looking clean.

The tour had a week of pre-production prep at LMG's facilities in Orlando. "Craig Mitchell's support during the tour was great," Seithel said. "Boz and all the guys in the lighting department were awesome too. If I needed anything on the road, it was there the same day if possible, or at the latest, the very next day."

Along with Train, LMG has recently supported tours Avril Lavigne (2008), Rob Thomas (2009) and Ray LaMontagne (2009).



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