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GRANDMAS TURN OUT FOR THEIR FIRST HOUSTON LIVESTOCK SHOW & RODEO

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Yee-haw! It's rodeo time in Texas, and the grandMA made its debut at the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo where two consoles were used to control the main and perimeter lighting rigs for star turns by leading performers. **A.C.T Lighting** is the exclusive distributor of the grandMA in North America.

The Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo, held February 27-March 18 at Reliant Park, has benefited the youth of Texas since 1932. Over one million tickets were sold last year for rodeo and concert performances by star entertainers who appear nightly after the rodeo events conclude.

"What's unique about this show is that you're dealing with 20 performing artists in 20 days," notes LD Systems' John Dickson, who handled all the overhead stage lighting. "And that means 20 different lighting designers. They don't run the board; they give you ideas to translate. The challenge is coming up with different

looks using exactly the same rig every night.

"The grandMA is really fluid, and its timecode is totally cool," he continues. "Two shows were done to timecode: the National Anthem and a multimedia presentation honoring the volunteers and featuring a brief history of the rodeo. The grandMAs took the timecode feed better than any other system I've used. While it's my first year using the grandMA, I can't imagine going back to another desk. The grandMA's playback is so much more powerful, and the executor buttons put everything at your fingertips for doing bumps, flashes and strobes."

The main rig, programmed by Dickson, featured 24 Vari*Lite VL 3000 Spots, 24 High End System Studio Command 1200 Washes, 20 Coemar ParLite LEDs, five HES Studio Color 575s, and four HES Studio Spot 575s. The grandMAs and lighting equipment were supplied by LD Systems.

Matt Mills, who controlled the perimeter rig for audience lighting, says the show "went great" with the grandMA. Using the console's Group Masters "made it very easy to control the intensities on the fly," he reports. For example, "If the Syncrolights were blasting out the look I had created, I could just pull the Group Master back to fix it," he explains. "I also put several different bump looks on the executor buttons so at any moment I could jump right in with the beat of a song."



In addition, Mills tapped the Speed Master function of the console for gate chases. "This worked great because of the 'learn' function," he says. "I could set the rate by just tapping along to the beat of the song and then let it ride."

The grandMA's Effects Engine also proved helpful. "It was very easy to make huge movement effects simply by focusing all my lights at the stage then running a circle effect and adjusting the size and speed of the effect," Mills notes.

The perimeter rig, programmed by Mills, consisted of 36 Syncrolight 7Ks, 42 HES Cyberlight Turbos, and 16 HES Intellabeams.

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