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Trey Anastasio Rocks Out with Robe at Red Rocks

Products Involved

Spiider® **Spikie®**

Red Rocks Amphitheatre in Colorado is one of the most iconic concert venues in the world. Everyone loves playing at this unique setting with its special ambience ... and for a recent Trey Anastasio Band (TAB) gig, LD Marc Janowitz used Robe BMFL Spots to highlight the magnificent rock formation at the back of the stage.

Marc is currently on tour with the artist with whom he's worked since 2012. It is the third TAB tour that he has designed, and this time, the design brief was to break everything right down to basics and take a pure-lighting approach with no video, scenic or backdrops. The touring lighting package also had to fit into a 15ft trailer towed behind the bus and dovetail into a 'top' package being supplied by the local promoters at each venue. So Marc looked for small, light and bright fixtures and chose 25 x Robe Spikies and 13 x Spiiders. These are positioned on nine 3-runged lighting ladders flown from the upstage truss at different heights, creating a chevron shape across the back of the stage to provide a dynamic background element to the stage.

Each ladder is rigged with two Spikies (one on the top and one on the bottom rung) and a Spiider in the middle rung. The remaining Spikies are on the floor clamped to C-stands and mimicking the shape of the chevron above.

Marc has worked with various different Robe fixtures for many years on a variety of projects and knows they are "roadworthy and full of good features", and previous TAB designs have featured MMX Spots as the workhorse profiles.

The Spikie was new to him and the intention was to use them as sculptural beams and for texturing the performance space... while occupying very little space in the truck.

The Spiiders were also new, picked for their hybrid functionality, a light he could use as a solid wash / beam with a face that looks interesting in its own right.

With this in mind, the map-ability of the Spiider pixels made it an ideal choice! Not having video visuals, Marc felt that the Spiiders could potentially bridge that gap as a visual & kinetic centerpiece.

He liked the connection between the Spikie and Spiider via the Spiider's center LED, describing it as the "icing on the cake that managed to take several well-chosen moments in the show way over the top!"

For Red Rocks the BMFL Spots were specifically chosen over other hard-edged fixtures for their intensity, their wide zoom and the "almost infinite" amount of beam and color combinations available to create eye-catching high-impact beam effects. They were positioned in a row on the ground about 30' from the upstage rock formations.

Marc knew from previous experience that he could drop in any color, heavy saturation levels, overlay multiple gobos and animation disks, zoom all the way out and STILL have enough light to "make those rocks really stand out as a visual element!"

The dramatic rock formation is dominated by a majestic tilted disc-shaped rock that sits behind the stage, with a massive vertical rock angled outwards from stage right and several angled outcrops angled outwards to stage left forming a cradle utilized as a 9,500 capacity seated area.

It's an absolutely breathtaking natural environment ... that completely dispenses with the need for a stage set!

Like many, Marc really enjoys working there. "You feel so close to the sky" he commented, adding that although you can see the Denver skyline from the top of the bowl, you can also feel totally absorbed in the desert and appreciate the beauty of the desolation.

"Each time I work there it's like the aesthetic is magnetically pulled towards the surroundings ... so I really try and bring this amazing setting into the show."

Apart from integrating the scenery into the performance, it was webcast live, which required additional attention to lighting levels and balancing to ensure the cameras had plenty of options and substance to work with.

The general vibe of the TAB show lighting is to present a unique look for each song. With 'less is more' to the fore as "the music tells the story" said Marc. The key was to keep the focus on the artist and musicians, supporting them & their environment with lighting ...

Marc is using a Hog 4 full Boar for control on the road, and the lighting kit is being supplied by VER. There's a special cooperation going on with monitor engineer Mark "Bruno" Bradley who allows the lighting department to place a side light in his space each day!

Chase Nichols is the lighting systems tech and all the technicals are being coordinated on the road by production manager, Paul "PI" Ingwerson.

Photo Credit: Tobin Voggeser, ASK Media Productions





