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Elation Smarty™ ideal fit on Alter Bridge US tour

LD Joshua Light sought a compact hybrid and found it in the Smarty Hybrid. Bandit Lites supplies

American rock band Alter Bridge wrapped up a 4-week tour of U.S. cities in late February with lighting designer Joshua Light directing a Bandit Lites-supplied lighting system that included Elation's mini yet multi-functional Smarty Hybrid™ moving head.

Light adopted key aspects of a design created by the late Joe Eager for the band's 2019 European tour, a large 5-truck show that included profile and beam fixtures. For the US tour's trimmed setup however (the band has always been more popular in Europe), Light needed a more compact package and combining fixture types in a single hybrid fixture was the way to go.



"I was looking for something that could replace the profile and beam fixtures of the earlier tour," Light said, "a hybrid light that could handle all the work of those two fixtures yet didn't have the hotspot that other hybrids on the market have. My original fixture choice was too large to ride in the truss so Bandit suggested the Smarty's, which are a more compact fixture. I took a look at the specs and decided to give them a go."

Small, lightweight and fast, yet with good power at 11,000 lumens, the CMY Smarty's spot/beam/wash capabilities with zoom ability in all three modes makes for a versatile unit. "The main requirement was to get beam and profile looks out of the same fixture," Light explains. "As I got to playing with them at Bandit, I discovered I could get a lot of nice eye candy looks out of them so I ended up flipping them into the audience a lot to get some cool profile looks that weren't just pure backlight." The ability to create those eye-candy looks was a key visual boost to the design as LED video was cut from the spec after the European tour.

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Working from four 10-foot truss towers with additional Smartys on the floor across the backline and on the drum riser, Light utilized the fixture's multiple modes with quick transitions between gobos, beams or frost wash looks to keep the looks dynamic.

"There were a couple of moments where I went from backlight with the frost in to flipping over to a gobo with clean focus, or switched from gobo breakups to beam looks," he said. "When I went from a gobo look to a beam look it faded out nice and smooth, which I was impressed with." To keep things fresh, Light accessed other features of the fixture like the multi-facet prisms. "I did some of the audience looks with the prism in, which kept it pretty without being quite as intense as the gobos and added to the variety of looks."

The LD says that along with its compact size and multi-functionality, the Smarty was also a good fit for the budget. "It was a happy coincidence that all those factors came together and I ended up with a fixture that I really enjoyed. I was totally happy with them."

Touring in support of their latest album "Walk The Sky", Alter Bridge is very much a rock band yet play a melodic, riff-oriented style that also incorporates subtler, slower elements. The variety in tempo gave Light the opportunity to vary the design from more aggressive looks to mood-setting atmospheres while focusing on transitions between moments. He shares one of his favorite looks from the song Isolation. "There is a slower part where I put beams in that are vertical with a slow dim chase across them then for the chorus, using the same fixture, I had one of the vertical gobos spinning. Usually you would do that with two different fixtures. It was nice to be able to use the Smarty and treat it as two different light systems." The Smarty Hybrid fixtures worked in the rig with other moving head effects, LED washlights, and hybrid strobes.



Alter Bridge has plans to take the same rig back out on the road in May with European dates following that.



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Photos: Chuck Brueckmann (@chuckbrueckmann, @janusmusicgmt)

About Elation Professional

Based in California with facilities in Florida and Mexico City, as well as European offices in The Netherlands, Elation designs and manufactures a comprehensive range of innovative lighting and video products known for its superior performance, excellent efficiency, and outstanding price:value ratio, all backed by a hard-earned reputation for Total Support. Through nearly three decades of intelligent lighting development, our mission has always been simple: to provide best-in-class products and service while offering the best value:performance ratio in the industry, helping show designers and producers achieve their vision. From discharge to LED, intelligent to conventional, Elation products continue to be a part of the industry's most exciting projects across the globe and our list of references is always growing. We invite you to take a closer look at www.elationlighting.com

For more information, contact:

Elation Professional US

6122 S. Eastern Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90040
USA
Tel: (866) 245-6726 (toll free)
Tel: (323) 582-3322
sales@elationlighting.com
www.elationlighting.com

Elation Professional EU

Junostraat 2.
6468 EW Kerkrade
The Netherlands
Tel: +31 (0)45 546 85 66
info@elationlighting.eu
www.elationlighting.eu

Elation Professional Mexico

Av Santa Ana 30,
Parque Industrial Lerma,
Lerma, Mexico 52000
Tel: +011 52 728 282 7070
ventas@elationlighting.com
www.elationlighting.com