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Elation lights pop-up venue Club Nomadic for Super Bowl LI Festivities

Unique space dressed in Elation stage and decorative lighting for pre-Super Bowl events. Proteus™ beckons visitors to venue

A club with no permanent home, Club Nomadic is a traveling venue constructed each year to support the build-up to the Super Bowl. This year, Nomadic Entertainment Group, a subsidiary of the NFL's hospitality partner On Location Experiences, assembled the club in Houston, home to Super Bowl LI. Elation Professional stage and decorative lighting was used to dress the club in color and effect for a series of pre-Super Bowl events with Elation's new IP65-rated Proteus™ moving heads used outside to beckon visitors to the venue.

Construction of the 62,500 square foot pop-up venue began on November 28th, 2016 with the live event space opening its doors on February 2nd for a series of events that included VIP performances by Bruno Mars, The Chainsmokers, Snoop Dog, Sam Hunt and Taylor Swift. For those looking to have a good time in the city ahead of the big game, the temporary venue offered all the amenities you would expect from a top install like world-class lighting and sound and a professional performance stage, not to mention tiered mezzanines where many of the 9,000 music and football fans could oversee the excitement.



When you see an artist in a venue as special as Club Nomadic, the venue itself is energizing and forms the foundation of a memorable experience. The overall creative and architectural design for the event was led by Nomadic Entertainment's Joanna Helinurm with executive production by Jack Murphy, who also serves as president of Nomadic Entertainment Group. Industry veteran Patrick Dierson of production and design firm The Activity served as Production Designer and he and his team worked in conjunction with Nomadic Entertainment to help produce everything from the site plan layout all the

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way through to final production execution within the venue. The Activity team dealt with everything from site coordination and scenic art direction to credentialing and overall production supervision among other tasks.

Hollywood searchlight effect

The first event of the week was for co-sponsorship partner EA Sports for their inaugural "EA Sports Bowl" which was followed each night of Super Bowl weekend by other co-sponsorship events, namely Pepsi's "Life Water Art After Dark" and DirecTV's "Super Saturday Night" events. The Chainsmokers, Sam Hunt, Snoop dog and Bruno Mars played shows the first two nights with Taylor Swift closing the venue down on February 4th.



Production Designer Dierson says that the Pepsi design team had approached The Activity with the request of wanting a "Hollywood searchlight effect" for the event, something Dierson already had on his radar. "What we had been struggling with at the time was the choice of unit that would be appropriate for the task," he says. "We had remembered being extremely impressed with seeing the Proteus units at LDI several months earlier and had begun the process of enquiring whether or not the production models would be available in time for this project; our main edict being that we were truly in need of an IP65

rated fixture that could handle the inevitable downpours that were to be expected in Houston during our event's timeframe. Thankfully, Elation came to our rescue with the Proteus Beams."

There was a directive from all of the co-sponsors that emphasized a dramatic visual for Club Nomadic's entryway, Dierson explains. "It was a unanimous decision that the reaction of every member of the general admission audience as they approached the site should be one of excitement and awe upon seeing the venue itself. That led to several visual elements being put in place such as projection mapping the structure's facade as well as adding projection and LED screen elements to the entryways. However, the team collectively felt that we wanted to be able to make a visual statement that could be seen from miles around to start that level of excitement in our attendees well in advance of their arrival onsite."

Proteus Beam™

A high-performance discharge lamp source solution designed to excel under any weather condition, Proteus marks Elation's entry into the IP65-rated moving light market. The Proteus Beam produces a bright and precise 2-degree beam and a dozen of the units were ultimately placed on the deck around the exterior projector stacks to form multiple clusters of sky tracking effects. "We knew that there were other beam and hybrid fixtures on the market that could produce the effect," Dierson says, "but none would be able to be trusted out in the elements without specific environmental covering. Our preference was to have a unit that wouldn't require an enclosure while still giving us the lumen

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output that we were after to compete with what would have otherwise been a xenon source fixture. The Proteus most certainly did not disappoint.”

What is worth noting is the fact that the city of Houston had a large-scale xenon-based light show running each night from the center of downtown Houston. Dierson comments, “What we weren’t prepared for was the fact that the Proteus’ beams were competing quite heavily with the lights cast over the city’s skyline. Even more impressive was the fact that Proteus’ rotating gobos were completely visible as their beams dominated the night sky.”

Decorative and stage lighting

Baz Halpin of Silent House designed an extremely versatile lighting rig that was utilized across all three nights with various floor lighting and video packages augmenting each of the artists. Baz and his team at Silent House were the designers of the stage production with freelance LD Bryan Klunder, who often works with Silent House on projects, serving as lighting designer for broadcast and the stage shows. Production support was handled by Joe Sanchez and his team at 1826. Eric Marchwinski, part of the 1826 production team, was Visual Technical Supervisor for the event. They primarily worked with DirecTV’s broadcast team who were tasked with the taping of Taylor Swift’s performance on DirecTV’s Super Saturday Night as well as EA Sport’s talent, Snoop Dogg, Sam Hunt, and The Chainsmokers. Lighting gear for Club Nomadic was supplied by Light Action and VER.



Elation Colour Chorus 12™ LED battens, Level Q7™ LED Par lights, Volt Q5™ rechargeable LED uplights and Platinum FLX™ hybrid moving heads were dispersed around the club to give color to the entire venue. Elation ZCL 360 Bar™ LED moving batten effects with 360° continuous rotation were used on stage to light all of the shows except for Taylor Swift. The stage featured a large video wall and Klunder used the ZCL 360 Bars as the main stage light on The Chainsmokers, the first act to play, to break up the video. “We used two lines of ZCL 360 Bars on stage for The Chainsmokers to give depth to the look,” he explained. “The other artists liked the look so well that they decided to use it on their shows as well.”

Klunder, who is also a director of photography, designs to broadcast and is therefore concerned with how he can make a show look good for broadcast. “With a big backdrop video screen you risk the look being similar for each act so the ZCL’s were good to mix it up,” he said, stating that he also changed up the look by covering parts of the LED screen at times or by moving forms around, etc. “I liked the flexibility of the ZCL fixture; it was user-friendly and punchy, and it has great color and movement.”



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Year of planning

Although the venue itself only hosted events in the few days leading up to the Super Bowl, planning a pop-up venue of this size and caliber is a monstrous job with the inevitable hurdles to overcome.

“When you begin planning an event of this magnitude a year in advance you are inevitably posed with various challenges throughout the course of the journey and those challenges don’t stop until the last piece of steel is removed from the property,” Dierson comments. “It’s safe to say that the scope of work for both myself and The Activity team went slightly beyond that of the role of a traditional production design team. This was all preceded by a year of planning with the various co-sponsorship teams to help bring their various creative directions to life for their respective event nights.”

Worlds of construction and entertainment

The most unusual aspect of the production though, Dierson says, was the venue itself. “This was truly a temporary mobile venue that was full-blown construction.” Nomadic Entertainment’s Michael Lamprides oversaw the general contracting of the build and handled everything from the excavation of the site all the way through TPA permitting with the host city. The Activity worked closely with Michael during the various construction phases to give input from the viewpoint of entertainment production.”

Given that the worlds of construction and entertainment production are extremely different and have very different language, Dierson says that this part of the process was critical. “The teams needed to take into account issues such as trucking egress, various types of pavement needs, cable troughs, loading doors, production build spaces for changeovers, security fencing, and a host of other elements that the live entertainment world tends to take for granted while the construction world has very often not had to take into account prior to being involved in an event such as this one.”

In the end, the final piece of steel was removed from the Club Nomadic site on February 28th, 2017 with planning for 2018’s event having already started a week earlier.

About Elation Professional

Elation Professional is one of the world’s leading lighting and visual solutions providers and is the global brand of Elation Lighting. Founded in 1992 and headquartered in Los Angeles, with European sales, distribution and support based in The Netherlands, Elation designs and manufactures a comprehensive range of innovative yet affordable lighting and video products that are distributed through a global network of dealers and distributors. Made up of a spirited team of dedicated personnel, Elation is setting new efficiency and performance standards in Platinum lamp and LED technology and is acknowledged for a comprehensive commitment to Total Support. As a company in expansion with a presence in a growing variety of market segments, chances are you’ve experienced Elation lighting at a concert, special event, TV, theater, late night venue, House of Worship, theme park, cruise ship, exhibition, architectural space or elsewhere. For more information, please visit www.elationlighting.com

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