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Dave Matthews Band Elevates Summer Tour with Elation Lighting

Dave Matthews Band (DMB) took their signature live show on the road this past summer, delighting fans across North America with their deep catalog of eclectic hits and jam numbers. Wrapped in August, the tour featured a large Elation lighting package, including PROTEUS, PULSE, and SÖL series luminaires, part of an artfully-designed production that helped reinforce the band's status as a must-see touring act.



Production design was led by Fenton Williams, who has been with the band since its beginning in 1991, with Williams and Aaron Stinebrink handling lighting design on this latest tour. Stinebrink, who has worked with Dave Matthews Band since 2002, also handled lighting programming.

The tour featured 36 [PULSE BAR S](#), 21 [PULSE BAR L](#), 18 [SÖL I BLINDER](#), 12 [PROTEUS RAYZOR 1960](#), 22 [PROTEUS RAYZOR BLADE L](#), and 17 CHORUS LINE 16, all provided by TMS of Omaha, Nebraska, who have supported DMB for over two decades.

A New-Look Design

The tour introduced a fresh visual design concept. “We tested it out in Cancun on a Dave Matthews and Tim Reynolds festival that they have been doing for a number of years now,” Stinebrink explained. “We loved the overall layout and structure and really dialed in the overall design once we decided to bring that into the summer DMB tour. That’s when we started making some dynamic additions that really made the design pop.”

Stinebrink noted that Williams aimed for a smooth, curved aesthetic, void of a lot of straight lines. “We wanted to find fixtures that would help reinforce that thought and accentuate the curves.



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Being a more free-flowing act, we generally like to accent the designs with a number of effect fixtures.”

This year, the PULSE BAR S/L and RAYZOR BLADE became central to the design’s impact. “The PULSE BARs and RAYZOR BLADEs really took the design to the next level,” Stinebrink comments. “The integrated strobe LEDs in those fixtures really set them apart and made for dynamic looks.”



Organic Design, Dynamic Looks

One of the unique challenges of DMB shows, Stinebrink shares, is the unpredictability of the set list. “We don’t get a set list until an hour before the show, so a bit of inhibiting and busking occurs at the early stages of the show to build and progress on.” Both the PULSE BAR and RAYZOR BLADE proved to be effective impromptu luminaires. “Due to not knowing the set list, it definitely creates a more organic design and playback.”

Star of the Show

Stinebrink says the most dynamic looks came from adding depth and dimension to the automated half-circle trusses, with PULSE BARs rigged along the top of each truss that automated during the show. “We used the RGB strobe channel like LED tape, which mimics the actual LED tape that was on the bottom of the half circles. It gave such dimension to the system as well as getting various RGB bar effects and strobe effects out of that system of fixtures. I think they were truly the star of the show.”

The IP65-rated PULSE BAR linear strobe and effect light are available in 50 cm or 100 cm lengths with both sizes used to better refine the design. Equipped with RGB+CW LEDs and featuring zone control, they include a large library of RGB and CW strobe effects, as well as variable dimmer modes and curves.

Versatile Lighting Backed by Advanced Networking

Aluminum reflectors were added to the ultra-compact SÖL I BLINDERs via Bowens mounts for the shows. The multipurpose fixture features full-spectrum RGBLAW color, over 8,000 lumens, and versatile mounting options. The rig also included NETRON NS8 IP network switches from Obsidian Control Systems used for reliable signal distribution across the system.



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Crew and Vendor Excellence

Stinebrink concludes by emphasizing the crucial role of the crew and TMS. "They really went above and beyond to make the design come to life," he said. "Without them none of this could happen, so a heartfelt 'Thank You' to everyone behind the scenes."

Dave Matthews Band's summer tour demonstrated not only the band's enduring appeal as a must-see live act but also the power of a well-designed, cutting-edge lighting rig to support the concert experience.



Crew list:

Production Designer: Fenton Williams

Lighting Designer: Fenton Williams, Aaron Stinebrink

Lighting Programmer: Aaron Stinebrink

Production Manager: Anthony Giordano

Lighting Crew Chief: Josh Albright

Lighting Crew: Jerry Woiderski, Bodie Tureson, Chris Tsuji, Jerry Kaiser, Bob Chaize, Holden Fershee

Rigger: Aaron Alfaro

Stage Manager: Henry Luniewski

Photos: Sanjay Suchak

About Elation

At Elation, we collaborate with leading professionals in the lighting industry to help bring extraordinary experiences to life. As a designer and manufacturer of a wide range of high-performance entertainment lighting products, we're proud to be a trusted partner to top lighting professionals and rental houses around the world. Our commitment to quality, innovation, and creative solutions has made us a go-to resource in the industry. We also offer an advanced line of lighting control products through Obsidian Control Systems, and a full range of dependable specialty effects called Magmatic. Elation serves clients worldwide through offices in Los Angeles, Mexico City, and the Netherlands. We invite you to take a closer look at elationlighting.com



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