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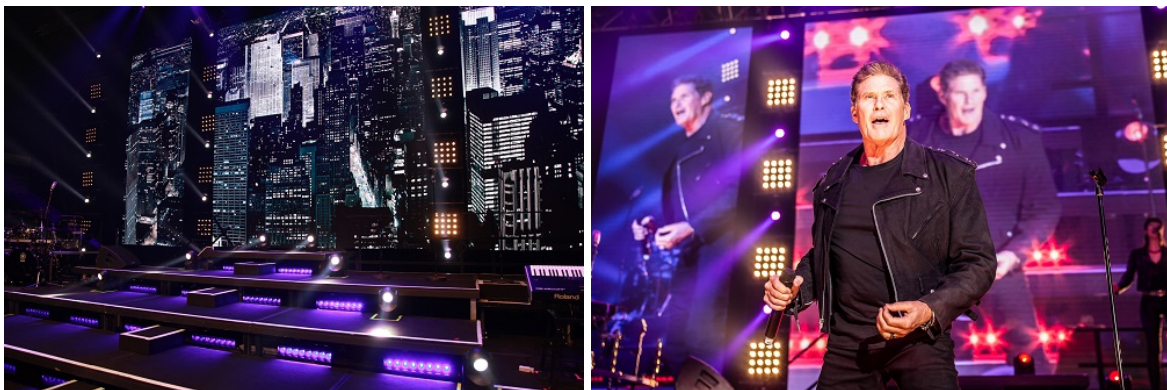
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David Hasselhoff Tours Germany and Austria with Elation Lighting

Martin Kames handles full production on *Baywatch* star's "30 Years Looking For Freedom" tour

Former *Baywatch* and *Knight Rider* star David Hasselhoff is big in Germany and Austria. The reasons are many but generally stems from a famous 1989 New Year's Eve performance at Brandenburg Gate just after the Berlin Wall came down. Hasselhoff recently toured the two countries on his "30 Years Looking For Freedom" tour with a lighting rig that included effects from Elation Professional Chorus Line 8™ and Lumina Matrix™ fixtures.

Audio, video and lighting for the tour, which ran April 11th to May 4th, was by Austrian-based rental and production company MartinKames.com with lighting design by company owner Martin Kames, who developed a special rapport with the television and music star.



Kames landed the job after sending Hasselhoff a 20-minute video in which he presented his company and his design ideas. "It took me half a year to finally reach him directly but after he saw the video he immediately called me and told me I'm on board so my perseverance paid off," he explains. "It was a very unique experience to work with a movie star. He had a totally different approach and way of seeing things."

Chorus Line stairs

Hasselhoff was very involved in the planning, according to Kames, and had some ambitious ideas for the tour. "He had constantly new ideas and it was my job to put them together into something realistic and unique," he said. One of those ideas was a set of on-stage steps that the designer lined with rows of Chorus Line 8 LED pixel bars. "The staircase was the main and most essential part of the stage design and the Chorus Line 8s were essential for unique light beneath all of the steps," Kames states. "We made custom-built mounting frames underneath each riser so they could still rotate, which gave us the chance to use a variety of great looking effects. The most popular look was the famous *Knight Rider* red Kitt Scanner effect that we simulated using the Chorus Line stairs."

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The Chorus Line 8 pixel bar houses eight 40W RGBW LEDs, includes motorized zoom optics and lets designers position the unit dynamically during a show via a 220° tilt motor function.

The show used two live cameras for IMAG and it was essential to have a TV studio-like look to the set with lots of light and no black holes. “We filmed the whole show on the very last day of the tour and the result was amazing,” the designer says. “It was also great to have a closed zoom on the Chorus Lines and tilt them around as an effect. We used a pixelmapping grid on our light desk to generate even more spectacular effects with the steps, for example a rainbow wave over the steps. People loved it... David loved it.”



Video and lighting complement

Kames’ energetic and powerful design supported a wealth of video, which was central to the show. Three LED screens – 50sqm of 4mm LED wall total – showed archival footage from Hasselhoff’s life and celebrity career, as well as the live shots. “They wanted one big LED screen behind the band but I convinced David and his musical director Marcus Barone that multiple screens with lighting placed between each screen would be more interesting and modern. They didn’t believe me at first but ended up loving the result. I think we found a very cool compromise between video, live content, lighting and the actual performers on stage.”

Kames placed vertical columns of white-light Lumina Matrix LED 4 x 4 matrix panels each side of the stage and between the LED screens. “It is always important to me to find a good mix between lighting and video,” he says. “For one song I created three colored vertical stripes of lights and had the three LED walls in the same colors so it looked very planned and matched perfectly.” All the video and live cuts were programmed into the light show from the light desk, which was controlled by Kames.

“Looking for Freedom”

Kames says his favorite part of the show was when Hasselhoff sang “Looking for Freedom,” the song he sang on New Year’s Eve 1989 at Brandenburg Gate. He comments: “He started in the dark with his blinking jacket from 1989 and you could just see these legendary old-school blinking lights on all the LED walls in different sizes and focus sets due to the different cameras. It made a very unique and artsy look. Then when the song started, I switched the middle screen to the actual live



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shot from 1989 when he was standing at Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, singing that song in the same outfit with that jacket. On the two LED walls left and right you could see David singing live on stage in the exact same outfit and you could hardly tell the difference who was who.”

The designer concludes by sharing a few anecdotes from his unique experience working with Hasselhoff. “At first I was kind of intimidated but after a few shows it turned out that I was not just his LD but also a type of director who gave him instructions at sound check. We became so familiar with each other that I started to make jokes with him. One day I projected the KITT Scanner from inside the car onto the LED wall but only made it blink when David was talking. He realized the joke after a few minutes and was very amused. He also had his legendary blinking jacket from the 80s on tour but unfortunately it was broken and had been for the last 10 years. We managed to fix it and presented it to him at sound check with big entrance music and an epic walk through the venue. He really loved it and used it for the show, which was amazing.”

Elation Equipment:

36 x Chorus Line 8™

30 x Lumina Matrix™

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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