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Lightswitch ENLIGHTEN Michigan's Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park with Elation

Upstaging partner with renowned design group on new, dazzling holiday lighting experience

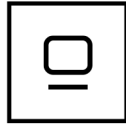
This past holiday season, lighting design group Lightswitch, and production house Upstaging, collaborated on a new holiday lighting experience at the Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Impressed by the magical lighting Lightswitch had created for *Illumination: Tree Lights* at the Morton Arboretum in Lisle, Illinois—one of the nation's most cherished light displays which has featured Elation lighting since 2016—Meijer Gardens sought the same level of quality and entrusted Lightswitch to design something spectacular and unique to their space.



The creative team delivered an art- and nature-inspired display of experiences, many of them interactive, that delighted visitors from November 27 to January 4. Creative direction, lighting design, and programming were all spearheaded by Lightswitch, with Upstaging providing key project support. Upstaging supplied and installed the lighting units, designed and fabricated many of the interactive control elements, and oversaw the power and data networks.

Authentic and Diverse

The Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park is known for its world-class sculpture collection and nature-focused experience. Having hosted a simple light show for years that lacked integration



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with the sculptures, Lightswitch reinterpreted the space, blending lighting with sculpture in a cohesive and more immersive experience.

"ENLIGHTEN is more than just a light show; it is a physical and experiential representation of Frederik Meijer Gardens' commitment to art, nature, and community," said John Featherstone, Co-Creative Director on the project and Principal at Lightswitch. "We approached ENLIGHTEN like a series of rooms inside the experience, ensuring every environment responded to the aesthetic of the particular work of art, creating something that felt both authentic and diverse."

SÖL I Blinder

Following in-person meetings at the Upstaging campus to review lighting fixtures and several site visits to Meijer Gardens, a range of Elation products were selected for the project. Ryan Brenesen took on the role of Upstaging project manager, with Upstaging's extensive inventory of outdoor-rated fixtures and custom fabrication capabilities at his disposal.

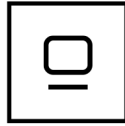
Ryan, who knows Elation's IP product line well from years of experience working with the fixtures, pushed to get Elation's IP65-rated [SÖL I BLINDER](#) for the project. The SÖL I BLINDER, a single-cell light with 250W RGBLAW LED, was used to light several key areas of *ENLIGHTEN*, including sculptural pieces, many of them interactive and music-based.



Aria

At *Aria*, a 42-foot-tall sculpture by Alexander Liberman suggestive of musical notes, a custom keyboard designed by Lightswitch and fabricated by Upstaging allowed visitors to interact with the sculpture. By pressing a series of buttons, visitors could trigger both light and sound, allowing them to 'play' the sculpture as a musical instrument. SÖL fixtures were used to illuminate the piece and to light other walking path sculptures.

Collin Mulligan, Designer at Lightswitch and Co-Creative Director on the project, praised the Elation lighting's good color temperature control—particularly that of the SÖL (1800K-8500K). "It enabled us to effectively find the best white light for each sculpture. The quality of the light out of them is great," he said, noting that they went with the SÖL blinder lens this year but that next year they'll use the Fresnel lens for a little more control.



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Waterfall and Amphitheater

Elsewhere in the experience, **PROTEUS MAXIMUS** LED profile fixtures added texture to the waterfall area, creating a fusion of light, nature and water that transformed the space into a magical experience and proved a visitor favorite. In the amphitheater, in a reversal of roles, visitors crossed the stage while a symphony of PROTEUS MAXIMUS, synchronized to music, occupied the audience seating area. SÖL I BLINDERS were also used to highlight the back of the amphitheater, adding depth to the installation.

Neuron

Interactive elements were key to the success of ENLIGHTEN. At *Neuron*, a sculpture by artist Roxy Paine that simultaneously calls to mind a neuron and a root ball, Lightswitch created two interactive stations that allowed guests to manipulate the lighting around the piece through hand gestures. Upstaging fabricated internally-lit LED pieces shaped like a mitten and snowflake, which visitors could use to control the color and intensity of **SIXBAR 1000 IP** batten lights placed beneath the sculpture. Elation **SEVEN PAR 7IP** lights were also used at *Neuron*, located further out to light the sculpture. Additional SEVEN PAR 7IP were used for tree uplighting around the experience to reveal the natural beauty of the tree branches.

NETRON EN6 IP Ethernet to DMX gateways from Obsidian Control Systems were used to drive the LEDs and reportedly had no trouble in the cold and snowy conditions. All told, the installation featured over 1,000 lights, 1,000 LED sources, and hundreds of meters of LED tape.

“Working with Lightswitch to bring this vision to life was a tremendous experience,” concluded Ryan Brencisen, who has a history of successful cooperation with the design group. “We also have a long history of using Elation IP-rated fixtures and they again performed outstanding on this project.”

A breathtaking blend of art, nature, and lighting, ENLIGHTEN debuted as the Midwest’s newest must-see holiday lighting display. Earning glowing reviews from both the client and the public, the installation was hailed as the talk of the town and stands as another successful collaboration for Lightswitch and Upstaging.

Credits:

Co-Creative Designers: John Featherstone, Collin Mulligan

Lighting Designer: Hailey Featherstone

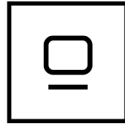
Assistant Lighting Designer: Mark Villa

Lighting Programmer: Connor Sullivan, So Midwest

Laser Programmer: Dustin Derry, Stone Wolf

Lighting Technicians: Chris Baldwin, Steven Hiben

Upstaging:



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Account/Project Manager: Ryan Breneisen
Lighting Crew Chief: Myranda Risley
Lighting Technicians: Isabel Hafner, Hanna Carraher, Parker Szelag, Andozhelli "Angel" Akhmedov, Connall Haldeman, Joshua "Cuddles" Wilson, Christopher "Chris" Moore II, Kennedy Nichols, Abigail Taylor, Jeffrey Stout, Kathryn Verheyden, Kaleb Pozzi

Elation Gear:
86 x SÖL I Blinder
23 x SEVEN PAR 7IP
19 x PROTEUS MAXIMUS
20 x SIXBAR 1000 IP
NETRON EN6 IP

Photos: Connor Sullivan

About Elation

At Elation, we represent the elite in the lighting industry. We design and manufacture a comprehensive range of best-in-class entertainment lighting products valued by production/rental houses and lighting designers worldwide. Our dedication to extraordinary quality and creative solutions has established us as the go-to choice for professionals. With a storied legacy of brilliance, our influence extends from iconic stages to cutting-edge studios across the globe. We also offer an advanced line of lighting control products through Obsidian Control Systems, and a full range of dependable specialty effects called Magmatic. We invite you to take a closer look at www.elationlighting.com and elation.global

For more information, contact:

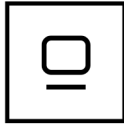
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