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Versatile Proteus Maximus the Fundamental Constant on Ever-Changing Mt. Joy Show

Lightswitch uses high-power LED profile as their go-to key light in fluid, kinetic tour design

Indie band Mt. Joy is bringing its dynamic live show to audiences across the U.S. on the “Hope We Have Fun Tour: Part 2,” with a lighting design from Lightswitch that is as fluid and diverse as the band’s music. Playing a central role are Elation [Proteus Maximus](#) LED profile fixtures, delivering the consistent key light that keeps the five-member band cleanly defined and naturally lit as the visual environment shifts around them.



The tour, which began in April and runs into October, marks the first collaboration between Mt. Joy and Lightswitch. The lighting design team of Ignacio “Iggy” Rosenberg, Hailey Featherstone, and John Featherstone worked closely with the band, management, Lighting Director Cory Sperry, and programmer Austin Schneider to develop a show that moves between intimate, acoustic moments and high-energy jam numbers.

“One of the things we like about working with Mt. Joy is that they are such an incredible, daring, and diverse band. They stretch everything from these beautiful, quiet, acoustic, intimate moments to full-on, blown-out jam band moments,” says Lightswitch Principal and Managing Director John Featherstone, who describes the show as having an eclectic, organic vibe. “It’s a really interesting and exciting design challenge working with a band like that because we have to make sure we have a system that breathes, that scales, that responds to all those modalities.”

Proteus Maximus: The Constant in a Changing Show

The production is built around two distinct visual acts. The first is more driven by video content displayed on a blow-through LED screen at the rear of the stage, while the second shifts toward a



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more light-focused experience. An angled, moving truss configuration adds depth and dimensionality while allowing the visual vocabulary to change between acts.

That flexibility extends to the band's set list, which is constantly evolving from show to show. The crew can receive the set list as little as 90 minutes before showtime, making adaptability an essential part of the lighting system.

For Featherstone, that versatility is precisely where the Proteus Maximus comes into play. "That's why Proteus Maximus was such a great fit for this project because it's such a versatile workhorse of a fixture," he says. "In order to have a fundamentally sound design, you need to be able to light the artist, to create mood and drama and theatrics, and you need a fixture with the feature set of Proteus Maximus."



Go-To Key Light

As part of a larger lighting package, Lightswitch uses the Proteus Maximus in a role that goes beyond the traditional followspot. The fixtures provide the production's primary key light, allowing the designers to maintain precise control and theatrical modeling of the performers during quieter moments while retaining enough output to cut through the large-scale looks to pick out the band members.

"We lean into the Proteus Maximus as our key light in a way that is fundamentally different to most shows that use followspots," Featherstone explains. "That's the role of the Proteus Maximus – they are our fundamental constant to the system because it's our go-to key light. But they do so much more than just be an incredible key light. They also provide broad washes of color, soft subtle gobo texture, and powerful beams – they are a triple threat!"

The fixtures are positioned to provide coverage from four fundamental directions, giving the designers the flexibility to sculpt the performers within the constantly changing stage picture. "A lot of Mt. Joy is about creating drama and theatre, so we're not looking for a flat type of key light," Featherstone says. "Even if it is a three-quarter backlight or sidelight, it pulls the members of the band out of the rest of the visual tableau so you can really identify the performers."

A Design Built Around Five

The five members of Mt. Joy also provided a fundamental design principle for the lighting system, as everything in the rig is base-five. The Proteus Maximus fixtures are arranged in four groups of five, providing key-light coverage for each band member from each of the four cardinal directions.



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“It’s great to work with a band that is so collaborative, where everyone has a voice, so it seemed to us appropriate to honor the base-five notion of the band throughout the rig,” Featherstone explains.

Maximizing Creative Possibilities

The truss system also plays a key role in transforming the visual environment between the show’s two acts. During the intermission, the trusses are re-trimmed, changing the rig’s appearance from its more orderly, flat-level-trim configuration into a deliberately asymmetrical arrangement.

“It looks more like a chaotic, pick-up-sticks truss – entirely different,” says Featherstone. “That gives us a different design vocabulary to lean into, with different effects we can use in the second part of the show, and just a different look.”

The kinetic design reflects Lightswitch’s pragmatic design approach to touring systems: maximizing the creative possibilities of a rig while ensuring it can adapt to the realities of a constantly changing show. “We try to wring as much value out of the system as we can,” Featherstone adds.

3G Productions supplied lighting, video, rigging, and crew for the tour. On the road, Sperry oversees the lighting system while Schneider handles programming, working closely with the Lightswitch design team and Mt. Joy’s production. Featherstone had high praise for both. “Austin and Cory are really collaborative and very talented designers themselves. They were just a delight to work with as part of our team.”

Photos: Iggy Rosenberg

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 production/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, Canada, and the Netherlands. We invite you to take a closer look at elationlighting.com

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