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Elation Lighting in Action at Phoenix Comicon

Superhero and comic book lovers of all sorts met June 5-8 at Phoenix Comicon, a comic book and multigenre entertainment convention held annually in Phoenix, Arizona. Event production company Endless Entertainment used a bevy of Elation equipment to light the general session room, hotel ballrooms and other rooms for parties, interactive events, contests and after-hours events.

Endless Entertainment

Phoenix Comicon, which takes place at the Phoenix Convention Center, started as more of a comic book and science fiction/fantasy convention but has expanded over the years to include a larger range of pop culture elements with many events taking place at downtown hotels. The event is growing each year with the 2014 convention setting an attendance record.

Endless Entertainment was Phoenix Comicon's partner in all audiovisual and entertainment services for the entire event with Endless Entertainment's Will Curran, Eileen Wells and Andrew Latimer handling lighting and show design for the event.



"We create experiences for our clients and use Elation lighting to help make our vision a reality," states Will Curran, President of Endless Entertainment. "It's our goal to create an engaging and memorable experience for everyone involved, both the client and the attendees. This year we upped the ante a bit and took the vision to the next level." This year's Phoenix Comicon was Endless Entertainment's second running, and their second using Elation gear, which they supply from their own in-house stock.

General Session Room

The convention's 4000-seat general session room is where the superstars of the Phoenix Comicon world are featured. This year the room played host to celebrity comic panels that included comic book legend



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Stan Lee (Spider-Man, the Hulk, Iron Man, X-Men), Adam West (Batman), Burt Ward (Robin), Julie Newmar (Catwoman), actors Bruce Campbell and Danny Glover, and more. The room included a 50' x 24' stage and a rigged truss structure with an array of spots, beams, Pars, lekos with custom gobos, and more.

"Here we used Elation Opti Tri Pars to up- and downlight a backdrop of off-white, two-foot wide square tiles that produced the Pow! that made it undeniably our stage look," Curran says, explaining that the lighting was often used to match what the author or guest speaker was reading or presenting. "Comic books is a genre that lends itself to lots of color and the Opti Par's ability to color match and duplicate the color spectrum is excellent. Purple is a particularly hard color to get but the Opti Par does it well. The 12 fixtures provided ample coverage of the 50' wide by 16' tall backdrop and enabled a variety of colors and fades to be utilized to keep a fresh touch for each panel and presentation. Our team was able to create a stunning visual backdrop – a fitting touch for the level of talent that could be found in the room."

Sheraton Hotel, Valley of the Sun Ballroom

The Sheraton Hotel's Valley of the Sun Ballroom in downtown Phoenix hosted a variety of events and parties, including the popular Doctor Who-themed 'Party Like a Time Lord' fest, the Geek Prom, and the Zombie Beauty Pageant, all of which were lit with Elation Opti Tri Pars and Platinum Spot 15R Pro moving heads.

The first night of the convention featured the Zombie Beauty Pageant, where spirits of the dead paraded down a 40' runway that extended from the stage. Endless Entertainment had some concerns about the ability to fully cover the runway considering there was neither the budget nor the space to set a front-wash rig. "The Platinum Spot 15R Pro's color correction and wide zoom features allowed us to get an even side-wash all the way across the runway and on the stage," Endless Entertainment's Andrew Latimer states. "Additionally, we were able to close the zoom up tight on the runway and utilize the Opti Tri Pars for color, as well as our video engineer utilizing Modul8 visuals, to embrace the Zombie theme for each pageant contestant during the talent portion and create a post-apocalyptic feel. Although we were limited to only utilizing side-light as the stage wash, the Elation equipment exceeded our visions (and even pre-vis renderings!).

"Throughout the entirety of Phoenix Comicon, we were incredibly happy with the ability of the Opti Tri Pars and Platinum Spot 15R Pros to create an even, smooth, and warm stage wash during the breakout panels and spotlight sessions, and then immediately afterwards run full-out for 4 straight hours in a party environment."

The built-in wireless EWDMX feature on the Platinum Spot 15R Pro was very helpful as it allowed Endless Entertainment's lighting engineer to be in an FOH position (typically not possible due to restrictions on cables and cable ramps in walkways/doorways) and saved at least an hour on setup time versus having to run cable to each individual fixture. "We were able to drop a single line down each truss totem from the Platinum 15Rs to the ADJ Flat Par QWH12X fixtures and Opti Tri Pars. It performed flawlessly throughout the weekend with not so much as a single data hiccup," Latimer states.



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Renaissance Hotel, Grand Ballroom

The Renaissance Hotel's Grand Ballroom was the signature party room throughout Phoenix Comicon and featured a near non-stop run of entertainers, DJs, and theme parties such as the Minecraft Block Party, One Man Star Wars Trilogy, and Steampunk Ball. Here Endless Entertainment used Elation Opti Tri Pars, and Platinum Spot 5R Pro and Platinum Beam 5R Pro moving heads to create the energy of a club atmosphere that made attendees forget they were in a ballroom.

"As with the Sheraton Ballroom, we found the Platinum series to be incredibly versatile beyond what we would typically expect from a moving fixture at this price point," Latimer comments. "We expect the Elation products to perform well for the theme parties, as they have an immense feature set both on the movers and on the Opti Tri pars that gives us a wide palette of beam and color effects to match every busking situation. What surprised us all though was the excellent performance of the Platinum Spot 5R Pro fixtures and Opti Tri Pars at creating truly theatrical-quality wash both on stage and in the center of the truss structure out over the crowd."

Because of the nature of Phoenix Comicon, Endless Entertainment doesn't get the chance to advance every single performance with the respective entertainers, so their goal is to come up with a flexible, creative, and stunning setup that can handle anything they throw at it. "Even then, we did not expect to have a Steampunk performance troupe set up their props in the center of the dance floor under the truss structure," Latimer explains. "However, with just a couple minutes of programming we were able to achieve a truly stunning look for this set out in the audience space, and then immediately hit the existing stage-wash cue and go right back to the performers on stage without a moments delay."

Again, the wireless EWDMX saved at least an hour on setup in the Grand Ballroom and allowed the truss to have a very clean appearance. "All 16 moving heads synced quickly and performed throughout the weekend admirably without a single data issue," Latimer said. "We were able to take the DMX out straight into the Opti Tri Pars and the other LED fixtures, negating the need to have DMX cables running across the dance floor up to the truss."

Renaissance Hotel, Pueblo Room

The Renaissance's mid-size Pueblo Room featured karaoke, bands, and other live performers while serving as a more relaxed and intimate party room. Here Elation Opti Tri Pars running on set colors and sound-active mode were used for events like the Captain's Cantina, One Night Only Rhythm & Blues Cosplay Mixer, and more. Two crew members from Endless Entertainment were able to set up 8 Opti Tri Pars in the room and get a desired rich red color in a matter of minutes for the first night, and then subsequently perform occasional changes as the events needed. "The simple addition of these 8 LED fixtures transformed the room from a sterile fluorescent white ballroom with no windows or other remarkable features into a glowing nightclub feel without taking up valuable time from the stagehands on site," Latimer says.

Sheraton Hotel, Oculus Lounge



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Finally, at the Browncoat's Jamboree at the Sheraton Oculus Lounge, Elation Opti Tri Pars demonstrated their ease of use and reliability via a quick set up and flawless operation in 100-degree heat. The Oculus Lounge is an outdoor patio that looks out onto downtown Phoenix and the Phoenix Convention Center from the second floor of the Sheraton Hotel. Its major feature is a large oculus in the ceiling that gazes up to the night sky. Opti Tri Pars were able to wash the patio in rich tones while accenting the oculus and drawing attention to this uniquely aesthetic feature of the space.

General Session Room

Lighting Engineer: Matthew Berg

Event Manager: Matt Walker

Sheraton Hotel, Valley of the Sun Ballroom

Lighting Engineer: James Simpson

Event Manager: Chris Converse

Renaissance Hotel, Grand Ballroom

Lighting Engineer: Cullen Noon / Michael Morse

Event Manager: Danny Fancher

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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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