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## Proteus Excalibur™ creates elegant finale look at Expo 2020 Dubai Closing Ceremony

**LDs Travis Hagenbuch and Bob Dickinson use powerful beam moving head for symbolic impact during final tableau**

Lighting designers Travis Hagenbuch and Bob Dickinson lit the Expo 2020 Dubai Closing Ceremony and turned to Elation Professional's powerful Proteus Excalibur™ beam moving head to create a spectacular finale look that brought to a touching close the six-month Expo journey.



The Emmy-award winning designers – who also lit Expo's Opening Ceremony back in September – sought a compact, IP-rated beam light with power to project an impactful ring of light out of the Al Wasl Dome. "We were tasked with how to make it happen within the constraints we had," comments Travis Hagenbuch, who notes that the brief came from Expo 2020 Director-General Reem Al-Hashimi. "It was a

beautiful poetic moment, simple and elegant, and a fitting way to end the Expo."

### The story

The Expo story began during the Opening Ceremony when a young Emirate girl was given a ring, which unlocked a world of discovery and connection. The ring – a gold ring found years ago on an archeological dig outside of Dubai – came to symbolize connection, unity and strength, and inspired both the logo and theme of Expo 2020 'Connecting Minds and Creating the Future.'

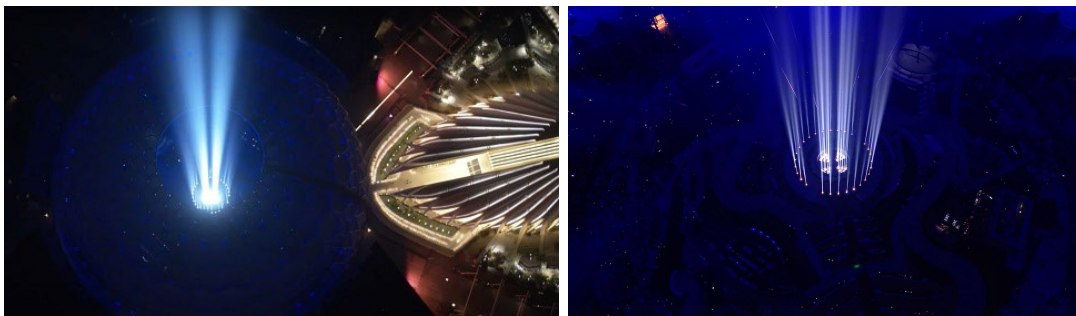
For the March 31 Closing Ceremony, the same girl, who had just spent six months at the Expo gathering information about the world, reunites with the ring, which had transformed into a

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large scenic piece that was lowered from the top of Al Wasl Dome and returned to the desert. The energy that the ring had absorbed during the Expo then emanated out from the earth and out through the center of the Al Wasl Dome as a huge shaft of light.

### Shaft of light

Hagenbuch and Dickinson began their initial spec designs in 2019 when producers FiveCurrents were awarded production of the Expo 2020 Opening and Closing Ceremonies then developed it further over the next 24 months, a period that included a year of pandemic delays. Hagenbuch comments, “The timing was actually really good because we had seen a demo of the Proteus Excalibur at PRG in Los Angeles in December 2021 and just a few weeks later got the brief about the shaft of light and the end tableau. Due to staging constraints and where the lights had to physically sit, we needed something pretty small and compact so I knew that traditional Xenon searchlights would not work. We really wanted a similar effect that a 7K Xenon might give but in a much more efficient package.” The designer says they also knew that the fixtures would potentially be rained on from a water effect in the show so an IP65 rating was needed. “As we checked all these boxes, we realized that the Excalibur would be a really good choice.”



Twenty-four Proteus Excaliburs were supplied by vendor Agora, the lighting supplier for Al Wasl Plaza, and used for the concluding moment. Recessed in a deck that rode on a stage lift that raised and lowered for different staging moments, the Excaliburs’ ultra-narrow 0.8-degree beams shot dramatically out through the opening hole of the Al Wasl Dome in the moving finale. The fixtures were also employed briefly on an emotional performance by celebrated cellist Yo-Yo Ma.

### Proteus Maximus

Also used on the ceremonies were Elation [Proteus Maximus™](#) LED moving heads – specified by Woodroffe Bassett Design (WBD) for the myriad of performances in Al Wasl Plaza. “The Maximus worked great in that environment as well,” Hagenbuch states. “Our team worked with WBD as the ring was being developed to make sure it would work for their shows and the ceremonies. It was a great choice in the end. We were all saying that had this event happened five years ago, before LED engines were this powerful, it would have been an entirely different



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experience and likely a maintenance nightmare. Maximus held up well in the desert environment.”

Expo 2020 in Dubai was clearly a cultural as well as a production success with over 24 million total visitors and a production team that captured beautifully the Closing Ceremony’s spirit of optimism and global togetherness.

#### **About Elation Professional**

Based in California with facilities in Florida and Mexico City, as well as European offices in The Netherlands, Elation designs and manufactures a comprehensive range of innovative lighting products known for its superior performance, excellent efficiency, and outstanding price:value ratio, all backed by a hard-earned reputation for Total Support. Elation also offers an advanced line of lighting control products through Obsidian Control Systems, as well as a full range of dependable specialty effects called Magmatic. Our mission has always been simple: to provide best-in-class products and service while offering the best value:performance ratio in the industry. Elation products continue to be a part of the industry’s most exciting projects across the globe. We invite you to take a closer look at [www.elationlighting.com](http://www.elationlighting.com)

For more information, contact:

#### **Elation Professional US**

6122 S. Eastern Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90040  
USA  
Tel: (866) 245-6726 (toll free)  
Tel: (323) 582-3322  
[sales@elationlighting.com](mailto:sales@elationlighting.com)  
[www.elationlighting.com](http://www.elationlighting.com)

#### **Elation Professional EU**

Junostraat 2.  
6468 EW Kerkrade  
The Netherlands  
Tel: +31 (0)45 546 85 66  
[info@elationlighting.eu](mailto:info@elationlighting.eu)  
[www.elationlighting.eu](http://www.elationlighting.eu)

#### **Elation Professional Mexico**

Av Santa Ana 30,  
Parque Industrial Lerma,  
Lerma, Mexico 52000  
Tel: +011 52 728 282 7070  
[ventas@elationlighting.com](mailto:ventas@elationlighting.com)  
[www.elationlighting.com](http://www.elationlighting.com)