

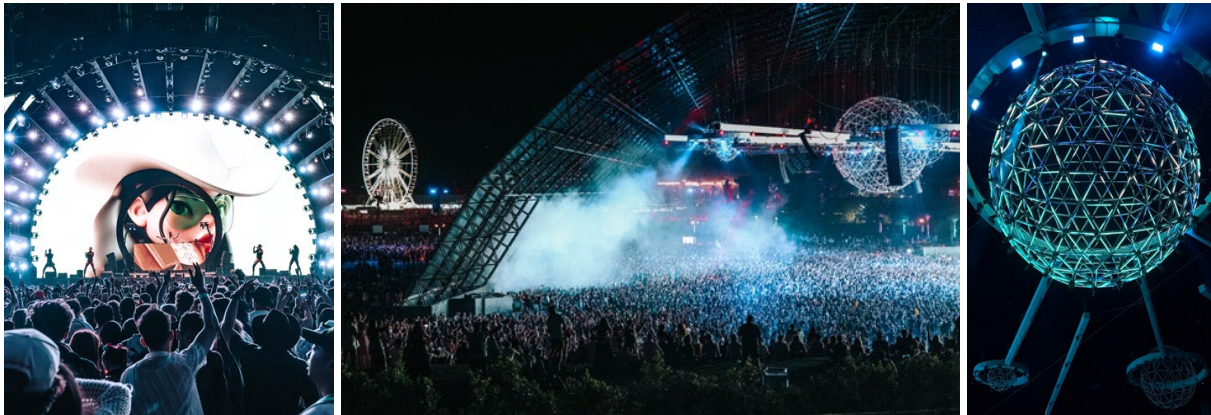
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22-May-2024

1300+ Elation lights dazzle Coachella 2024

Revamped Sahara Tent features over 950 Elation luminaires with production and lighting design by Production Design Works

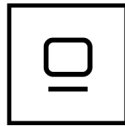
Elation lighting has long been a staple of Coachella shows, and this year's edition of Southern California's premier music festival was no exception, with the event awash in cutting-edge Elation lighting technology. The newly revamped Sahara Tent, an iconic anchor of the festival's electrifying atmosphere, was adorned with over 950 Elation lights, while Elation gear also graced the Main Stage, Quasar Stage, and Outdoor Theatre.



Coachella delivered yet another diverse and eclectic experience across two weekends in April, featuring 147 acts across eight stages. Todd Roberts, of Production Design Works, spearheaded the production and lighting design for the Sahara Tent, incorporating a myriad of Elation lighting fixtures supplied by Aspect Lighting.

Cornerstone of Coachella

Roberts is a Coachella production original, having worked the festival since its inception. Shifting from the Outdoor Theatre Stage to the Sahara Tent three years ago, this was the first year working with the festival's new structure. The Sahara Tent underwent a significant makeover for the 2024 festival, featuring a fresh aesthetic, new infrastructure and new location. Festival organizers Goldenvoice constructed a steel-based structure from the ground up, expanding its dimensions to 40 feet wider than its predecessor, now measuring 400 ft by 410 ft, and towering nearly 100 feet tall. The expansive design allows for greater versatility in production elements, with each of the structure's 16 ribs capable of supporting substantial loads.



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Creative yet functional design

Typically, there are one or two headline acts each day in Coachella's Sahara Tent. However, this year, there were four acts deserving of headliner status every day, which, coupled with an extensive amount of gear brought in by numerous artists, made for a formidable workload for Roberts and his team. Tasked with designing a rig that would cater to the diverse needs of 25-30 different lighting designers each weekend, Roberts says that "with a mix of hip-hop and EDM artists, you try to design something that works for everyone while still being creative. The Sahara Tent has never just been a performance stage but demands a creative design with creative production elements. It's a balance. You have to design something that looks cool and unique but it also needs to be functional for the variety of acts and meet the needs of the festival."

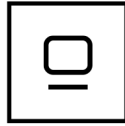


In addition to managing a new structure, Roberts had to contend with the large number of acts bringing in their own equipment. This necessitated close collaboration with artists to accommodate their unique requirements, which kept him occupied throughout the festival. With tight changeover times of as little as ten to fifteen minutes between acts, not to mention dealing with a number of up-and-comers not yet schooled in the art of an efficient changeover, every second was precious.

Dynamic spheres

Beginning with sketches last October, Roberts and Benjamin Van Brande developed four distinct designs for consideration by Goldenvoice management. Ultimately, they selected a design centered around a series of geodesic spheres with rings connected to a large center sphere by finger trusses, all complemented by an array of Elation lighting fixtures. The design resembled a solar system of dynamic planets hovering above festival-goers, creating an immersive and captivating visual experience.

Each node of the large center sphere, outlined in linear LED battens, contained an Elation [DARTZ 360](#) narrow beam moving head, with many of the 500+ SixPar LED Par lights used in the design populating the smaller spheres and rings. On the connecting truss fingers, which Roberts



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adorned in signature white fabric, [Smarty MAX](#) provided high-output illumination with SixPars placed inside each truss finger as truss warmers to light up the fabric.

On stage

On stage, at the center of a large wing-shaped video wall that served as a vibrant backdrop, sat a DJ booth framed by arched domes, a design element that Roberts says is one of his favorites. “I wanted to create a completely immersive space over the stage play area with a lot of light fixtures that enclosed the space,” he said. “I’ve always liked arched domes and when we lined them front and back with [Proteus Lucius](#) fixtures, they really came alive and played a key role in the on-stage look.” Mid-stage finger trusses hosted more Smarty MAX and ground-supported towers each side of the arches housed more fixtures. Additional SixPars on two surrounds on each side of the video screens were used as audience blinders while [Paladin Panel](#) and Cuepix Blinder WW2 fixtures added color and punch to the design.

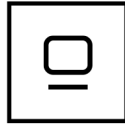


Challenge met

Coachella posed a number of unique challenges this year, yet Roberts and his team adapted, collaborating closely with artists and their unique requirements and ensuring that the production met the festival's exacting standards. Even when the new structure build ran right up to festival load-in, which meant they had to deal with added amounts of dirt blown about by the Coachella Valley's notorious winds, they held up well and the gear too.

As usual, the Sahara Tent was a vortex of festival energy, drawing huge crowds throughout both weekends. Roberts' design was met with universal praise and also integrated tastefully with other artist's scenic, for example when John Summit's team added a diamond over the stage which contrasted well with the roundness of the spheres. Roberts praises his team at Production Design Works for a job well done, with special acknowledgement to Benjamin Van Brande for his excellent work on CAD drawings, renderings and other design elements.

Elation on other stages



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Elation gear also played a prominent role across other stages at Coachella. 4Wall provided nearly 200 Elation fixtures to the Coachella Main Stage, including Fuze MAX Profile, DTW Blinder, SixPar 300, and Proteus Maximus. The Quasar Stage, also 4-Wall supplied, featured 130 Elation fixtures, including the Proton Eclipse, SixBar 1000, and the DTW Blinder. Finally, the Outdoor Theatre, where SLX Productions provided lighting fixtures for Jon Batiste's show, featured Proteus Rayzor Blade, Proteus Brutus, and Paladin Panel.

Crew:

Colin Johnson: Project Manager
Joel Mammen: FOH Tech
Rafa Avila: Master Electrician
Justen Laughlin: Electrician
Josh Vasquez: Electrician
David Dibb: Network
Brandon Rosales: FOH Tech Scepton Guru
Khang Nguyen: Scepton Tech
Andy Steinhauer: Head Rigger
Cody Armstrong: Assistant Rigger
Maui Sumeo: Assistant Rigger
Rob Edginton: Assistant Rigger
Hamish Dunkley: Rigging Electrics

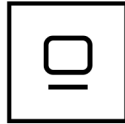
Sahara Tent:

120 x DARTZ 360
159 x Smarty MAX
46 x Proteus Lucius
72 x Paladin Panel
320 x SixPar 200
180 x SixPar 100
59 x Cuepix Blinder WW2

Photos courtesy Goldenvoice and Production Design Works

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 the world over. 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, as well as a full range of dependable specialty effects called Magmatic. We invite you to take a closer look at www.elationlighting.com



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