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## Illuminate Production Services debuts Proteus Excalibur™ on spectacular Space Needle New Year's Eve show

The Seattle Space Needle's New Year's Eve fireworks and light show is arguably the most iconic NYE celebration on the U.S. West Coast. This year, in spite of a recently upgraded lighting system, organizers called upon Illuminate Production Services (IPS) and Elation Professional products to once again illuminate the legendary NYE show.



IPS were the first worldwide to debut Elation's new [Proteus Excalibur™](#) beam moving head as part of a larger Elation lighting package and were excited for the opportunity. "We received the first 12 units in the country and put them to use two days later," said IPS President Rick Franke. "Supply chain issues caused it to be a close connection between product arrival, QC

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and deployment but Eric Loader and his team at Elation made it happen. We could not ask for a better partner.”

After two years of cancellations – high winds in 2019/20 and COVID last year – the Space Needle New Year’s Eve show was back in a big way. Illuminate Production Services was responsible for the lighting aspect of the event, again collaborating with Pyro Spectaculars, as well as fireworks designer Alberto Navarro. Rick Franke managed the lighting project and the IPS team. Caleb Franke, head of IPS’s newly established design company, Illuminate Creative Entertainment (ICE), served as lighting designer.

### **Coldest week in 30 years**

On a project of this magnitude there are always engineering and show challenges to overcome and the biggest challenge this year, according to Rick Franke, had to do with the elements. “It had snowed 6 inches the day prior to load in and the high all that week was around 25 degrees Fahrenheit. The ice and freezing temperatures were a major challenge for the crew. It actually turned out to be the coldest week in Seattle in more than 30 years.”

In other words, ideal conditions for Elation’s all-weather Proteus.



### **Proteus / Proteus Excalibur**

IPS turned to several luminaires in the award-winning Proteus line positioning Proteus Maximus™ (6), Proteus Hybrid™ (12) and Proteus Beam™ (24) fixtures at multiple positions from the top of the 605-ft structure all the way down to the ground. The 12 new Proteus Excalibur fixtures lined the Space Needle’s distinctive saucer roof and were central to the light show.

“We wanted the visual impact of a powerful beam, something that could be seen both live and on camera, and the Excalibur’s beam is huge,” said Rick Franke, who explains that the Excaliburs replaced Proteus Hybrids on the saucer, workhorse fixtures that were reallocated to



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other levels. “With the Excalibur’s wide lens [260mm] and beam expander feature they created a wider, fatter beam that could be seen better from a great distance. The speed of the fixture is great for its size and of course being IP rated was absolutely necessary.”

The 20,000-lumen Excalibur features an extremely narrow 0.8° beam that can be widened to 3.5° using an expander lens. Powered by a long-life Philips Platinum 500 FLEX lamp (550W), it houses CMY color mixing plus additional colors and offers a wide array of gobos and prism overlays.

“They paired well with the other members of the Proteus family and were definitely the exclamation point on the lighting portion of the show,” Franke said.

T-Mobile, the legacy sponsor of the Space Needle NYE show, was so impressed with the brightness and saturation of the T-Mobile signature magenta, Franke relates that they told Space Needle management, somewhat tongue in cheek, that “You could see it from Canada!” A light show prior to the New Year’s countdown allowed the lighting an exclusive stage on which to build excitement.

### **Elation IP-rated**

Other Elation fixtures used on the Space Needle NYE show included IP65-rated Paladin™ wash/strobe/blinders mounted inside the stair rail along the three sides of the Space Needle’s core (10 fixtures per side). Twelve Cuepix 16 IP™ LED matrix panels color washed the top of the saucer while 24 Dyna Drums from sister company Acclaim were used to light the core. All of the lighting for the show was designed and preprogrammed using Capture™ design software.

### **Best crew**

With an elevator that only stopped at three levels, IPS workers were often required to negotiate two sets of 960+ exposed stairs that run from top to bottom of the structure, just one obstacle of many that the IPS crew had to overcome. “This crew is the best in the business,” Franke says of his team. “They weathered the elements and pushed through for a fantastic show. Given the amount of ice, the freezing temperatures and the amount of work to do in a relatively short amount of time, they were incredible. They lead with more heart and determination than one can imagine.”

He concludes with a word of thanks. “Special thanks to Elation Professional for allowing us to debut the Excaliburs, and also a special thank you to Pyro Spectaculars of Sacramento and the Space Needle Team.”

Photo 1: Sigma Sreedharan

Photos 2-4: Alex Aslanian (IPS)



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### **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)

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