03-July-2025

# LD Alec Morris Harnesses Obsidian NX2 for Steve Hackett DVD Shoot at Royal Albert Hall

Lighting designer and operator Alec Morris of Anthrolight Productions turned to Obsidian Control Systems' powerful **NX2** lighting console for one of the most high-profile shows of his career: the filming of *The Lamb Stands Up Live at the Royal Albert Hall*, a concert DVD by legendary guitarist and former Genesis member Steve Hackett. The sold-out performance, captured in October 2024, is set for release on July 11, 2025.

Morris, who has been lighting Hackett's shows since the Foxtrot at 50 tour in 2023, has a long history with the Obsidian platform, dating back to his early days designing on Martin LightJockey and M-Series consoles. His transition to Obsidian came naturally after Elation acquired the console line.
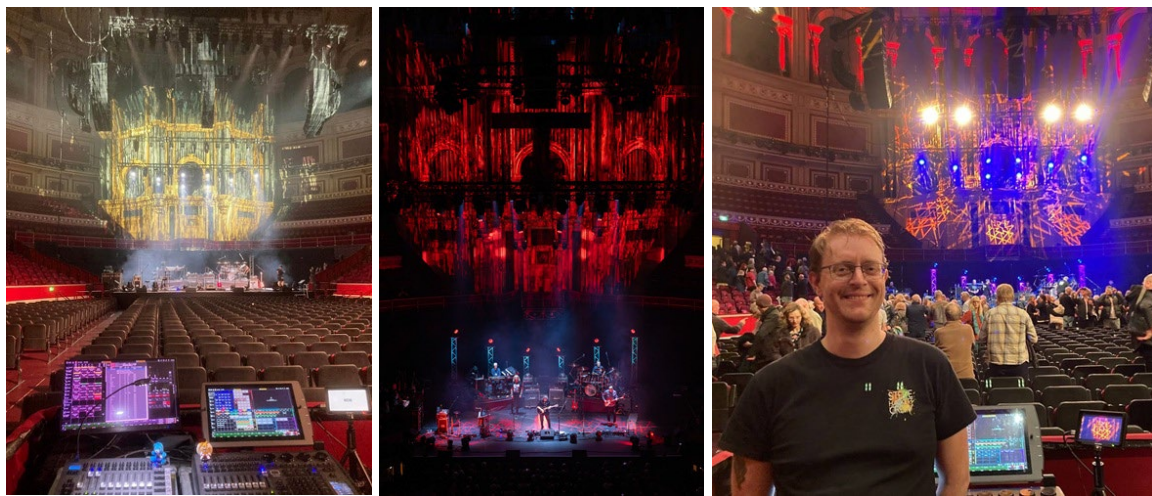


The Royal Albert Hall performance marked a significant step up in scale and complexity, both technically and emotionally. "It was the biggest show of my career so far," Morris shared. "It was my first time working in Royal Albert Hall – such an iconic venue – and being a film shoot with cameras, guest musicians, and extra moving lights that required longer programming time, there was definitely some pressure. There was only one shot to get everything right."

Morris swapped out his touring NX1 for the more powerful Obsidian NX2 to meet the expanded technical demands, citing the need for increased processing capacity and DMX universe support. "The in-house rig alone took up 24 universes, and our production added another 7," Morris explained. "That's why I chose the NX2—it can process 64 universes internally, which gave me the scale I needed."

The show, the final stop on a fall 2024 UK tour, featured a rig composed of 60 touring fixtures and 40 venue-provided lights, along with extensive audience and venue lighting. Alec ran both the in-

house and production rigs, totaling around 100 fixtures, all coordinated using a consistent show file refined throughout the tour. Overseeing the operation were Tour Director Brian Coles and Tour Manager Adrian Holmes.

"It was easy to edit as it was already a pre-existing show," he said. "Adding in extra fixtures where needed, making any edits, cloning fixtures or swapping fixtures, it's really easy to do."

The show was primarily cue-based, but with significant live busking elements, including flash bumps, strobes, and submasters, all executed manually without timecode or click track. "Some songs had really tricky timing," Morris noted. "Having fast access to banks and faders was critical."
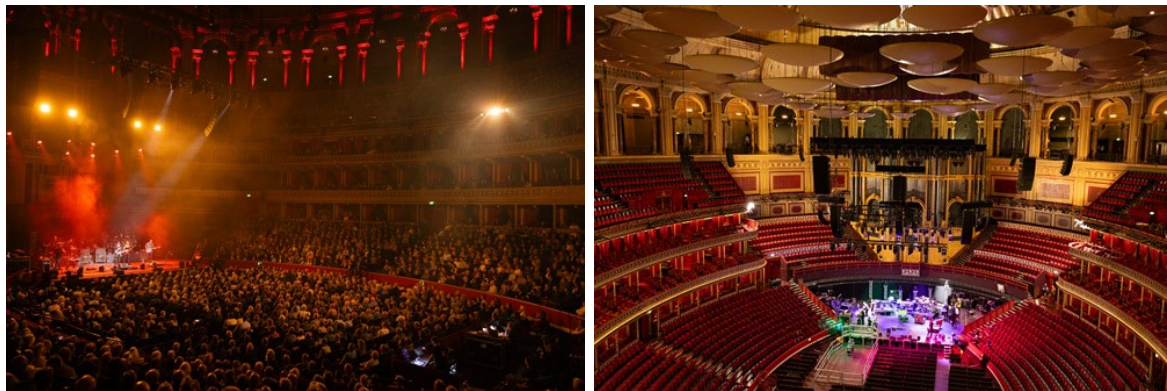


Morris also took advantage of Obsidian's **DyLOS** pixel composer, using it creatively across a few subtle and upfront positions to enhance the visuals. "I find it so easy to use. Compared to other consoles, DyLOS is easy to set up and easy to get what I want. Even when it's just an intensity effect or a color effect, rather than using a lot of time trying to figure out how to use an effects engine, I just throw it in DyLOS and I can do it in seconds. It's a real time saver."

Going into bigger venues like the Royal Albert Hall, the designer said having the additional pixelmap and DyLOS zones was nice. "Sometimes I need three or four DyLOS zones whereas the NX1 only offers two. I used the NX2 mostly because of scale and needed that extra processing power and the slightly bigger license."

Supporting his workflow, Morris also deployed Obsidian's **NXP** playback wing for additional motorized fader banks and the NXK keypad, creating a modular and flexible setup. "I needed the additional faders the NXP offers but also with the 8-Universe licensing it gave me eitht physical DMX outputs total. The **NXK** gives you that tactile feel that really speeds things up."

Morris adds that both the NXP and NXK are handy when preprogramming or editing on the move. "You can take it on the bus or hotel room, plug it into your laptop, and away you go. Having a physical touchpad really speeds things up."

The tour's control infrastructure featured Morris's custom-built DMX rack with **NETRON EN12** Ethernet to DMX gateways and **NETRON DMX10-5** splitters—a setup he described as "absolutely solid" throughout the European leg.

Throughout the process, Morris credited the support of Chris Walker at Live Technology, Elation/Obsidian's UK distributor, for keeping his Obsidian needs fully met. Tour lighting equipment was supplied by Siyan.

Reflecting on the experience, Morris said, "It felt surreal doing a show at Royal Albert Hall. I felt like a kid walking into a room full of adults—but everything came together beautifully."

Steve Hackett continues his global tour in 2025, with upcoming shows in Japan this July, followed by stops in Italy, the US, and Canada through the fall. More info at https://hackettsongs.com/

Photos 2, 4, 5: DianaSeifert.com

**About Obsidian Control Systems**
Obsidian Control Systems is an accessible line of advanced yet intuitive lighting control products for professionals. Refined by passion, Obsidian Control Systems combines over 30 years of experience developing professional entertainment lighting control solutions for automated and theatrical lighting fixtures. Obsidian lighting control software and hardware are easy to use and accessible to every level of user, whether a novice programmer or a designer at the highest level. All Obsidian lighting control systems run innovative ONYX™ lighting control software, a powerful yet easy-to-learn platform for hardware consoles and PC systems. Obsidian Control Systems also offers a complete line of NETRON™ data distribution products. Obsidian products are distributed exclusively by Elation worldwide and are available in various sizes to accommodate any scale and budget. Visit the Obsidian Control Systems website at www.obsidiancontrol.com to learn more.

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