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DCLighting keeps it fresh on The Kelly Clarkson Show with versatile Elation lighting

Los Angeles-based DCLighting has been successfully lighting The Kelly Clarkson Show since its debut in 2019 and was recognized for Outstanding Lighting Direction with a Daytime Emmy Award in 2020 and in 2022. DCLighting founder and Lighting Designer Darren Langer is understandably proud of his team, who have lit over 600 musical performances on the show to date.

For the show's fourth season, which first aired on September 12, 2022, Darren and his team are keeping the lighting looks fresh using a rig of Elation [DARTZ 360™](#) narrow-beam LED moving heads, [SixBar 1000™](#) linear LED bars and [Cuepix 16 IP™](#) LED matrix panels.



The Kelly Clarkson Show

Produced by NBCUniversal Syndication Studios and taped at Universal City in Los Angeles, The Kelly Clarkson Show is an American daytime television variety talk show hosted by American singer Kelly Clarkson. More than a simple sit-down talk show, the program is dynamic with games, demos, interviews, outdoor shoots, and a host of musical performances. The show has earned numerous Daytime Emmy Awards over its 3+ seasons.

DCLighting handles all the visuals for the show including design and programming, and built a lighting system that can adapt to the diversity of performances and the needs of a multiple-camera setup. "The Kelly Clarkson Show was an opportunity to show the level of lighting design we were capable of, and an opportunity to craft a vibrant and versatile design," Langer commented.

Every performance its own unique look

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Clarkson opens each show with a performance—called a Kellyyoke—usually accompanied by her band from a barn-like studio that is a reflection of her country roots. The show often includes an additional performance by a guest artist. Two shows are recorded per day—three to four days a week—so many weeks see eight performances by Clarkson plus guest artist performances from acts like The Backstreet Boys, Jewell, The Black Keys, and Panic! at the Disco. Some days see three performances.

“The goal has been to give every single performance its own unique look,” Langer says, adding that if the rig has the same layout, they are sure to change the color scheme, focuses, etc. so not a single performance is identical. “We keep it fresh and push the limits every day.” The designer says they have lit 600+ performances in their run with the show.



Team effort

Kellyyokes are full-blown performances that Langer designs for weekly, working closely with Kelly Clarkson’s musical director Jason Halbert. Langer’s team then completes the programming and executes the design prior to rehearsals. “It’s a real team effort from the lighting design to Gaffer Andy Anderson and Lead Tech Andrew Gonzales, who execute the design, to Lighting Directors/programmers Felix Peralta and Kyle Rusk, to spot operators, and electricians. There is a lot involved.” DCLighting VP Production Kirsty Robson coordinates the gear logistics, and keeps track of the lighting budget to help afford the different looks.

At a moment’s notice

Often working weekends to prepare for the week of shooting, the DCLighting team will sometimes arrive at the studio to find that Clarkson has turned a song into an acoustic number or changed songs entirely. “Sometimes we need to pivot at a moment’s notice,” Langer says. “A 100-cue song might need to change to a single look and we’ll need to adjust. We’re flexible and there to accommodate them so we have to be prepared for anything.”

DARTZ versatility

It is DCLighting’s first season using the DARTZ 360 on the show, an LED moving head with 3-degree aperture that Darren says he first saw on a show in Las Vegas. “We wanted a compact, discreet light that could fit in a little space, something beamy and fast that wouldn’t bust the

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budget and the DARTZ fit the bill perfectly. They are versatile and give us a lot of impact without being in the way.”

With so many unique looks to produce weekly, the designer accesses the fixture’s complete feature set of RGB colors, gobos, prisms, frost, continuous pan/tilt rotation and more, and uses them from positions on the floor and flown on raked overhead trusses. He adds that because of their lightweight, they are able to use them at a variety of different angles in order to get the best look for camera. “We get particular and creative on how we use them for the camera shots. We point them at the proper angles for camera to get the most impact out of them.”

**SixBar / Cuepix**

Additional to the rig are SixBar 1000 linear LED bars used to define the shape of the trusses but are also used for eye candy looks. Additional SixBars are mounted to a back wall. “We’ll use them horizontally or vertically, whatever we can to make it unique for every performance,” Langer says. A background wall of Cuepix 16 IP LED matrix panels provide a eye-catching color changing pixel backdrop and are often used behind guitarist Jaco Caraco’s platform with 8 DARTZ projecting beams from beneath.

The Kelly Clarkson Show has been a success on nearly all fronts since debuting and Langer says they’ve gotten a lot of positive comments on the lighting “and that’s because we give 110%. It’s about teamwork and I’m fortunate to have surrounded myself with the best in the business,” he concludes.

Designer: Darren Langer
Lighting Director/Gaffer: Andy Anderson
Lighting Director /Programmer: Felix Peralta
Lighting Director/Programmer: Kyle Rusk
Lead Tech: Andrew Gonzales
Best Boy: Chris Nelson
Electric: Kyle Schweitzer
DCLighting VP Production: Kirsty Robson



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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

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