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## IPS supports drama of “The Thorn” with powerful visuals from Elation Professional

Illuminate Production Services (IPS) plays an integral role in creating the visual magic that is “The Thorn” and again this year enhanced the drama using a large package of Elation Professional lighting. Lighting Designer Caleb Franke of IPS uses the dynamic lighting to help sculpt the inspiring story while wowing audiences with a variety of visual effects.



### Passion of the Christ meets Cirque du Soleil

“The Thorn” is a modern day Passion play, a theatrical depiction of the life and death of Jesus, yet with a modern touch. The immersive theatrical show combines modern dance, music, martial arts, aerial acrobatics, and emotionally powerful performances, with state-of-the-art lighting and visuals. The play is known for its stunning visual effects and has been staged yearly since 1998. The current 10-city tour launched on March 1 in Loveland, Colorado, and ends on April 8 in Miami.

This year, IPS provided audio, video, lighting, staging and special FX for “The Thorn,” their 10<sup>th</sup> year working with this incredible theatrical production. IPS Vice President of Design & Operations, Caleb Franke, served as lead lighting designer on the project. He comments, “This show is often affectionately described as ‘Passion of the Christ meets Cirque du Soleil’ so it’s truly a theatrical journey filled with moments ranging widely from subtle to celebratory. The Elation fixtures we use give us the dynamic range we need to help tell the story.” Elation has featured in IPS’s visual design for the show for many years.

**A better experience**

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“The Thorn” has toured in churches for nearly a decade but this year the production has made a significant jump and moved to performing arts centers and arenas. According to Caleb, the move has made many aspects of the show more consistent and efficient. “In the past, because church venues vary so much in design and layout, we were redesigning and deploying new custom solutions for the show every week. This took a lot of time and creative solutions to accommodate. Now that we are in larger open spaces, we’ve reduced many of these challenges. Keeping a similar design from venue to venue translates into faster load-in and load-out, a more prepared crew and cast, and most importantly, a universally better experience for attendees.”



### **Versatility**

Designed to be inspirational and motivating, visually stunning beams, color-changing scenes with pattern projection, and changing background graphics add an extra element of visual drama and intensity to the production that both wows and engages the audience. “The rig is versatile and has the ability to do ‘big’ heavy gobo and beam looks with lots of energy like in the Battle or Heaven scene, but we can also tone things down for beautiful, dramatic looks like when Jesus is entering Jerusalem, or when Jesus is on trial by Pilot in the Mob scene,” Caleb shares. “That versatility is also key in the Resurrection scene. There are some fantastic subtle theatrical looks in the beginning, but then when Jesus rises, there are a lot of beams and the rig just explodes with energy!”

### **Design staples and lighting additions**

Used to flood the stage in color and break-up textures, as well as provide striking mid-air beam looks were a variety of lights in Elation’s [Fuze](#), [Proteus](#), [Rayzor](#) and [SixPar](#) series along with other luminaires. Many have been staples of previous productions but new to this year’s rig are [Fuze MAX Profiles™](#), which Caleb calls fantastic fixtures. “Because The Thorn is now touring in large theaters and arenas, we needed more power and the Fuze MAX was the right tool for the job! These fixtures replaced the Artiste DaVinci moving heads that have served the tour for a few years. The Fuze MAX Profiles serve as the primary stage profiles, but also back light, side fill, and even feature somewhat in the floor package.” Another Fuze series light that Caleb singles out is the [Fuze Wash FR™](#), an automated LED Fresnel fixture with framing that is used

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as the primary followspot fixture. “What a fantastic fixture! We love the softness of the edges and the great color temperature control.”



A host of Proteus series lights are used in the production including Proteus Maximus™, Proteus Lucius™, Proteus Hybrid™, and Proteus Rayzor 760™. “The Proteus Maximus are used as the primary profile front light fixtures as well as the downstage center light that we call the ‘cross light’” Caleb states. “This light makes the cross scenes and anything central and downstage pop and look incredible!”

### **Lighting enhancement**

Passion plays lend themselves to creative use of haze and fog effects as an important aspect of atmosphere creation, as well as providing a midair projection canopy for light beams. For “The Thorn,” a pair of [Therma Tour 800™](#) hazers from Magmatic effects provide an exceptionally fine, long-lasting atmospheric haze. Capable of creating a fine particulate that hangs in the air for long periods, the Therma Tour 800 excels at enhancing light beams and mid-air effects for higher impact visuals.

### **“The Thorn” film**

In order to reach an even wider audience, “The Thorn” was filmed for the first time, playing in theatres across the U.S. in early March. IPS played a role in the filming, handling lighting design and providing audio, video, lighting, staging and special FX. “Many of the Elation fixtures used in the live show were used in the film and were integral in creating the cinematic look and feel of the film,” Caleb said. “We use Elation fixtures for our video lighting every day. The results are always stunning and highly praised by our client partners.”

Elation gear:

12 x Fuze MAX Profile™

6 x Fuze Wash Z350™

1 x Fuze Wash FR™

6 x Proteus Maximus™



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6 x Proteus Lucius™  
8 x Proteus Hybrid™  
15 x Proteus Rayzor 760™  
8 x Rayzor 760™  
8 x Rayzor 360™  
8 x Platinum HFX™  
14 x Platinum Beam Extreme™  
8 x SixPar 100™  
4 x SixPar 200™  
6 x Cuepix 16 IP™  
8 x Protron 3K™  
161 x EPT6 IP™  
2 x Magmatic Therma Tour 800™

Lighting Designer: Caleb Franke  
Lead Production Manager: Rick Franke  
Lighting Tech and Lighting Operator: Creighton Stack  
Lead Tour Rigger: Joshua Gerstenberg  
Led Video Wall Tech and Show Control: Bryce Adams  
A1 and Production Manager: Joe Bettis

Photos 1, 3, 6: Jeffrey Miller  
Photos 2, 4, 5: Creighton Stack

#### **About Illuminate Production Services, Inc.**

Headquartered in California with East Coast offices in Florida, Illuminate Production Services, Inc. is a privately owned rental, live event production, touring, and equipment sales and installation company. Founded in 2006 by Rick and Sherece Franke with a passion to serve and the philosophy of "small enough to care and big enough to serve," Illuminate has seen steady growth and developed a nationwide presence as a respected full service production company. [www.lightingIPS.com](http://www.lightingIPS.com), 855-GOTO-IPS

#### **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:



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