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The Venue at Thunder Valley wows opening weekend audiences with state-of-the-art Elation rig supplied by SP&L

For its opening weekend in mid-February, The Venue at Thunder Valley Resort Casino debuted in a big way with sold-out shows by big-name acts the Eagles, Bruno Mars, and Santana. Located in Lincoln, California, just northeast of Sacramento, the resort's recently constructed \$125 million, 4,500-seat entertainment venue boasts state-of-the-art entertainment technology including over 300 Elation Professional lights supplied and installed by Sacramento Production & Lighting (SP&L).



Dion Cook, President/CEO at SP&L, has collaborated with the casino for the past eleven years to equip the resort's former outdoor performance stage with cutting-edge lighting. For the new 150,000 square foot indoor venue that has replaced the outdoor amphitheater, Cook specified a modern, flexible lighting package based around Elation's Artiste series fixtures. "I wanted the horsepower to be able to integrate with any tour that comes in and the flexibility to handle softer theatrical color palette needs," said Cook.

Working with casino staff, architects, and theatrical consultants, SP&L was responsible for providing all the theatrical lighting, house lighting controls, material/pit lift, drapery, automated rigging, trussing, and hoists. Cook designed the soco panels and network patch bays to allow traveling acts a very flexible and easy environment to integrate tour rigs into the house system.

Over 300 Elation lights

The newly opened venue has over 300 Elation lights at its disposal including new [Artiste Monet™](#), [Artiste Rembrandt™](#), [Proteus Rayzor Blade L/S™](#), [Arena Zoom Q7 IP™](#), [CW](#)

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[Profile HP™](#) and [DTW Blinder 700 IP™](#) fixtures. The new lighting joins other Elation lights that SP&L has brought forward through the years including Platinum FLX™, Platinum Wash ZFX Pro™, Platinum 1200 Wash™, Platinum Beam 5R Extreme™, Cuepix Blinder WW4™, Protron Eclipse™, Protron 3K LED strobe™, and ACL 360i™ fixtures.



Venue support

SP&L is directly involved with the acts that play at the venue each weekend via lighting tech and stagehand labor. Working closely with in-house Production Manager Scott Prentice, SP&L limits the design to four or five fixture types across the 300 feet of flown truss with a few different versions of floor light packages available that visiting LDs can easily tap into. Cook, who acts as house lighting designer, switches the house rig design every few months to keep the look fresh and interesting for the audience and acts.

The Santana performance on February 19, which concluded the three shows held over Presidents' Day Weekend, demonstrated well the strong collaboration between artist and the venue. Having a long-standing relationship with Michael Ledesma, Santana's lighting designer, Cook collaborated with him to recreate Santana's touring rig as accurately as possible, ensuring that the musician could seamlessly deliver his renowned performance.

Long relationship

Cook has been utilizing Elation products for many years and he emphasizes that, although important, the quality of the product is not his main concern. Instead, the most crucial factor for him is the strong relationship he has developed with the company over time. Cook attributes his initial decision to use Elation to John Lopez, who was his sales representative at the time, many years ago. He has since been impressed by the exceptional service and support provided by the entire Elation team. Cook says he appreciates knowing that he can rely on their support, even when he is in a remote location late on a Sunday night, as he has personally experienced in the past.

The Venue operates as a touring shed for A-list performers, but with no bad seats in the house the intimate space is also set up to bring in Broadway quality shows, comedians, and other crowd-pleasing acts. A full slate of shows are booked at The Venue for 2023 with musical talent and comedians including Sarah Silverman, Bryan Adams, The Black Crowes, Ringo Starr and many more.



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Photos 2, 3, 5: Steve Jennings

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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