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Elation Lights on Three Classic EDM Stages at 2017 Ultra Music Festival

SJ Lighting production designers for Carl Cox Megastructure and Worldwide/Midpark Stage with production by AG Production Services. The Activity uses Proteus Beam™ and Platinum 1200 Wash™ on Main Stage DJ booth

With names like Armin van Buuren, Tiesto, Carl Cox, Alesso and David Guetta consistently on the marquee, Ultra cemented its place as the world's premier electronic music festival years ago. The unparalleled production that backs the performances is just as impressive with three of the festival's classic stages - the Carl Cox Megastructure, Main Stage and Worldwide/Midpark Stage - hosting Elation lighting fixtures this year.

Carl Cox Megastructure and Worldwide/Midpark Stages

The 2017 edition of the spring equinox music celebration ran from March 24-26 with over 165,000 revelers making their way to Bayfront Park in Miami. Both the popular Carl Cox Megastructure and Worldwide/Midpark Stage Stage featured Elation gear with production design by SJ Lighting and structure and production by AG Production Services.

SJ Lighting owner Steve Lieberman created the awe-inspiring lighting design for a festival which, now in its 19th year, seemingly ran like a well-oiled machine. "In my 18-year history of working on Ultra and 10+ years as LD for the Carl Cox Megastructure, these were the best stages we've ever produced," stated Lieberman, who says he didn't lose a single light over the course of the 3-day festival. "Together with AG, who performed 110% and were absolutely flawless, we hit the bullseye."



Colour Chorus and Opti Tri 30 staples of design toolbox

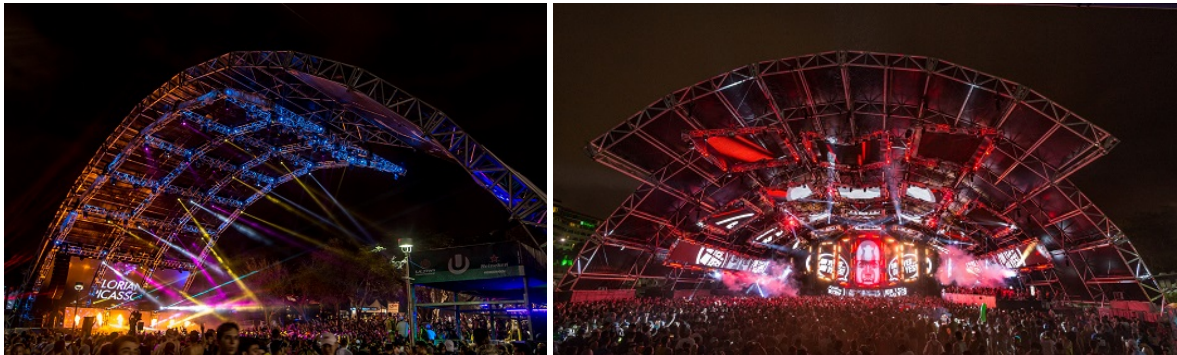
Used to highlight the mammoth truss designs on both stages were six-foot Elation Colour Chorus 72™ LED batten wash lights along with compact Opti Tri 30™ RGB PAR lights, both LED color-changing fixtures useful in emphasizing truss and structure designs in shades of warm color.

Although the Carl Cox Megastructure itself is essentially the same year to year with little latitude for

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change, Lieberman's talent for creativity ensures a fresh look each year. With some familiar elements incorporated each year, like moving truss and motion control, something the audience loves and has come to expect, this year the designer went "over the top with more of everything."

Featuring squares of motion-controlled LED screens lined with lighting and positioned above the audience, Lieberman says he used a week and a half just to sketch out the multi-tiered Carl Cox Stage design. "I wanted to get the shape, geometry, and philosophy of the stage just right," he says. "Still, it may all look good on paper but the audience doesn't experience the design if you don't tone it." With 1000 feet of truss to color, a powerful color-changing unit was needed to highlight the shape of the design and Lieberman turned to the Colour Chorus battens. "They were 100% successful in producing that effect," he said. "Both the Colour Chorus and the Opti Tri 30 are staples in our design toolbox. The Opti fits in 12" truss and makes for a clean detail aesthetically. It's efficient and easy to rig - just the perfect truss toner."



The Worldwide/Midpark Stage featured a clean, polished design with beam heavy looks lining big video panels in a checkerboard pattern, a design Lieberman calls "simple but appropriate." Besides the color from the Colour Chorus and Opti Tri 30 fixtures, the designer needed something with enough power and output to work alongside dedicated beam fixtures. "We used the Platinum Spot 35 and it really held its own," he says. "It has great gobos and color rendering and an output that stands up next to beam lights."

Proteus and Platinum 1200 Wash on Main Stage

Elation was proud to have the new IP65-rated Proteus Beam™ as well as the Platinum 1200 Wash™ on the Main Stage DJ booth floor package at this year's Ultra. Production design and artist technical management for the Main Stage was by The Activity (Lead Project Manager Josh Spodick) with lighting supply by Solotech (Crew Chief David Bergeron).

The Activity worked with UMF Creative Director Richard Milstein and Production Director Ray Steinman to help bring their overall creative vision to life. "One of the trickiest parts of the design on any of these events always seems to be the DJ booth itself," stated The Activity's Patrick Dierson. "When you've got such a massive amount of production surrounding it, it's easy to have the DJ booth get lost visually and thus it requires something special to help it make a visual statement. We had recently utilized the Proteus Beam units on a Super Bowl related event and were really struck by

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how powerful they were. In realizing that we would be faced with both budget and physical space constraints, we wanted to populate the booth with something that would gain us the most visual bang for the buck and Proteus units were ultimately chosen for the job with Platinum 1200 Washes adding eye candy to the overall layout.”

With massive amounts of fog and smoke used on the Main Stage coupled with the natural atmospheric humidity of the host city, the Proteus beams emanating from the DJ booth could be seen for miles around. The beams also cut through the intense amount of light output produced from the Main Stage’s video panels.



The Platinum 1200 Wash fixtures – LED color wash moving heads with (19) 65W RGBW LEDs – were chosen with two specific roles in mind. Dierson explains, “Firstly, we wanted to add some point-source effects to the booth so that it would ultimately have a combination of aerial beam effects, video, and lighting LED. Secondly, we knew that there would be moments of guest artists and DJs themselves that would jump out of the booth to work the crowd from the downstage edge directly in front and having some ‘shin kicker’ wash units in that area of the stage would prove to be extremely useful for everyone. The units did not disappoint. Not only did they produce a fantastic amount of wash light output for just that latter task but their built-in effects were extremely well received for the former task of having those point-source effects shooting right out at the crowd.”

Weathering the storm

When working in Miami for several weeks, severe downpours are inevitable and this year was no exception. Both the Proteus and Platinum units weathered the storm, according to Dierson. “Clearly, we were not the least bit concerned with the Proteus units in the rain given their IP-65 rating but the Solotech crew did take special care with the Platinum 1200 Washes,” he states. “That being said, you’re only as fast as your current location so there were times in which the Washes did get a fair dumping upon before anyone could get the plastic bags out so it was good to see that they could be subjected to some abuse and still keep going once the rains subsided.”

This year marked The Activity’s eighth year of involvement with the festival, many of those working with Solotech. “Their level of service is exceptional to say the least,” Dierson concludes. “There were over eight hundred lighting units populated across the entire Main Stage space this year which is actually far fewer than years past. The sheer act of physically getting to the units for maintenance is a tricky endeavor at best and the Solotech crew members are just machines when it comes to keeping the entire rig working to the fullest extent. Their great attitude and smiling faces every day is just a bonus for us.”



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Photos: Adam Kaplan, ASK Media Productions Inc.

About Elation Professional

Elation Professional is one of the world's leading lighting and visual solutions providers and is the global brand of Elation Lighting. Founded in 1992 and headquartered in Los Angeles, with European sales, distribution and support based in The Netherlands, Elation designs and manufactures a comprehensive range of innovative yet affordable lighting and video products that are distributed through a global network of dealers and distributors. Made up of a spirited team of dedicated personnel, Elation is setting new efficiency and performance standards in Platinum lamp and LED technology and is acknowledged for a comprehensive commitment to Total Support. As a company in expansion with a presence in a growing variety of market segments, chances are you've experienced Elation lighting at a concert, special event, TV, theater, late night venue, House of Worship, theme park, cruise ship, exhibition, architectural space or elsewhere. For more information, please visit www.elationlighting.com

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