



grandMA and Bruce Springsteen Make Magic Together

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As Bruce Springsteen and The E Street Band began the Magic tour, their first full-scale tour of the U.S. and Europe since 2002/2003, grandMA was right there with them. A.C.T. Lighting is the exclusive distributor of the grandMA in North America.

The Magic tour kicked off in Hartford, Conn. on Oct. 2, the same day the "Magic" album, Springsteen's first with The E Street band in five years, was released by Columbia Records. The band has just completed the North American leg of the tour.

For lighting designer Jeff Ravitz, it's his first tour using the grandMA although he has deployed the console on a number of one-off TV events. He characterizes the look of the Magic tour as "clean, dramatic, forceful and large scale" with the lighting design supporting the magic generated by the band itself.

"Bruce is an artist who needs very little embellishment in performance: we're aware of that," says Ravitz. "That being said, Bruce likes drama and mood, and we strive to keep pace. There are not a lot of bells and whistles. Just nine or ten people on stage who figure prominently in the show and need to get a thorough lighting treatment. Everyone is lit as opposed to some other bands. We have the really exciting musical dynamics of Bruce Springsteen's music to keep track of times 10 band members in a multitude of angles and manners. It's a complex show that comes off as very simple."

The grandMA controls a number of VARI*LITE 1000s which form the backbone of the lighting rig. "They are used to keylight each band member in quite a precise, sculpted sort of way," Ravitz explains. "Layered over them is the Morpheus FaderBeam™, which provides an overall foundation for many of the looks of the show. In addition, we have MAC 2000 Profiles and VARI*LITE 2500 spots for patterning and texture plus six Martin LittleBig lights, six Morpheus BrightBurst 2000s™ and a couple of three-inch fresnels."

He points out that the grandMA "is really called upon to do an awful lot. It's very complicated to make the show look simple; it's a huge task for our programmer, Jason Badger. As the designer, I'm in the position of asking for what I want to see, and if the programmer is able to get it for me easily and quickly, I know the board is performing efficiently. If not, I know it's bogging him down. The grandMA enabled us to move quite swiftly.

"Jason manages a lot of universes and really works the board to the max. And we've never had a control-related delay," Ravitz continues. "We initially thought we would be mixing media on the show, and the grandMA emerged as the ideal console for that. Although we aren't doing that, now, it's exciting to know the grandMA can futureproof us. It's an investment for tours to come."

"We are flattered to be specified as the console of choice on Jeff Ravitz's largest touring concert project. Jeff is such a consummate professional that the choice of the grandMA really means something to us. When you couple that with the programming magic of Jason Badger and the fact that it's all for the 'BOSS,' well, it just doesn't get any better than that," commented A.C.T. Lighting President and CEO Bob Gordon.

John Hoffman is the touring grandMA operator for Magic. Todd Ricci is the show's Lighting Director.

About A.C.T. Lighting

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