

ETA ENTERTAINMENT TECHNOLOGY ASIA

For The Technical And Production Professionals in Asia



LOLLAPALOOZA: TRAILBLAZING A NEW ERA OF LIGHTING DESIGN IN INDIA

JUNE 2023

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J Live's Sonic Brilliance Captivates
the Largest Spiritual Gathering of
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In a continuing theme from last month about the thriving Indian rental&staging sector, we highlight some of the most significant events held in the country recently. Lollapalooza India. For the first time, this larger-than-life festival brand finally made its way to Asian waters, with the Indian city of Mumbai selected to host what would soon become the largest

multi-genre music festival ever in Asia. Industry maverick and lighting director of Lollapalooza India, Naveen Deshpande, delves into the details of how the first Asian edition of the globally acclaimed music festival has ushered in a new wave of positive transformation for lighting design within the Indian Live Event Market. In another huge event, India's Ahmedabad hosted the 'Pujya Shri Pramukh Swami Maharaj Shatabdi Mahotsav', which is now being touted as the largest and most extravagant spiritual celebratory event ever to take place in Asia, with leading sound rental solutions provider JLive commissioning the end-to-end world-class live audio solution for the mammoth event experience. Enjoy the magazine.

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INDIA

Trailblazing a New Era of Lighting Design in India

Each of the four stages lighting design at Lollapalooza India offered seamless, homogenous and truly superior festival experience for the audience



Industry maverick and lighting director of Lollapalooza India, Naveen Deshpande, delves into the details of how the first Asian edition of the globally acclaimed music festival has ushered in new a wave of positive transformation for lighting design within the Indian Live Event Market.

What began in 1991 as a farewell tour by Perry Farrell (singer of the group Jane's Addiction) has today grown into one of the biggest and most loved multi-genre destination music festivals in the world – with its presence spread across numerous cities in multiple continents and its impact felt across cultures and

generations. Lollapalooza! ... And in 2023 for the first time ever, this larger-than-life festival brand finally made its way to Asian waters, with the Indian city of Mumbai selected to host what would soon become the largest multi-genre music festival to ever take place in Asia.

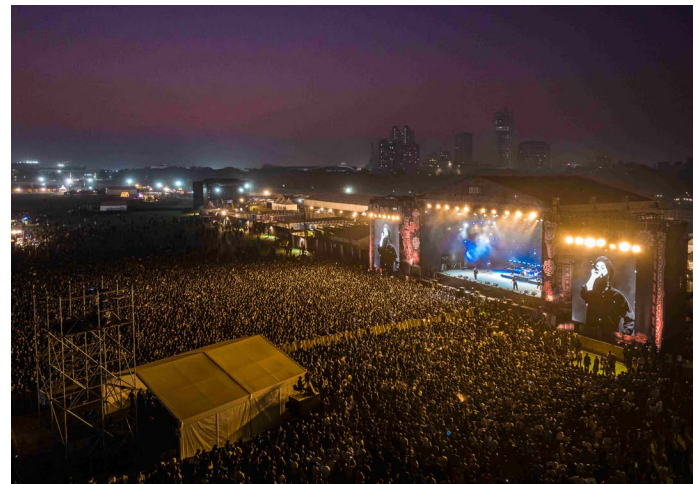
Brought to India by leading entertainment company, BookMyShow (who spearheaded the festival as promoter and co-producer). along with global producers, Perry Farrell, WME and C3 Presents; the maiden edition of Lollapalooza India was spread across 2 days and hosted world-class performers like Imagine Dragons, AP Dhillon, Diplo, Divine, Prateek Kuhad, The Wombats, and many more; as 60,000+ die-hard music fans swarmed the



four unique performance stages that were expertly set up at the famous Mahalakshmi Race Course Grounds. Audiences were treated to a true taste of what it's like to attend a globally acclaimed world-class festival – with every aspect of the festival experience curated in great detail and executed with the highest level of precision.

For example, the four performance stages namely the BUDX stage (mainstage 1), the Walkers & Co stage (mainstage 2), the Perry's stage and the NEXA stage; each enjoyed a truly encapsulating sound experience thanks to superlative expertise and top-notch gear extended by arguably four of India's top professional audio solutions providers. Sound & Light Professionals was at the heart of it all at the BUDX stage, while Sound. Com, Audio Dimensionz and Electrocraft each exuded unparalleled prowess in commissioning the Walkers & Co stage, the Perry's stage, and the NEXA stage respectively.

That being said, the one stand-out aspect of Lollapalooza India that truly coalesced it all into a seamless, homogenous and truly superior festival experience for the audience was undoubtedly the lighting design.



Two of India's most prominent lighting service providers in Star Dimensions Inda Pvt Ltd and Stage Engage were brought on-board to commission the extensive lighting rig for the four stages; with each stage spotlighting an intricate lighting rig comprising an eclectic mix of hundreds of world-class high-performance fixtures from industry leader brands like Clay Paky, Elation, Martin, ACME, Showtech, and Smoke Factory. The BUDX stage and Walkers & Co stage were adorned with close to 250 different lighting elements each, while the Perry's stage and NEXA stage were outfitted with close to 200



fixtures and 150 fixtures respectively; as each stage was equipped with two units of the industry leading grandMA3 full-size lighting control console to deliver impeccable control and achieve flawless designs.

Despite the extensive scale, the lighting design at each stage exuded a unique sense of individuality while also being perfectly synchronous and kindred with the overall vibe of the event – a feat that has rarely been witnessed in India for an event of this magnitude. And the sublime amalgamation of this kind of experience undoubtedly involved countless hours of meticulous planning, in addition to an unbridled passion for excellence, and perhaps most importantly, an unparalleled level of expertise in lighting design that stands second to none.

With a clear vision of the kind of immersive experience that needed to be achieved, the festival organizers sought the expert guidance of one of India’s leading lighting designers – Naveen Deshpande and his team at Ground Control. And within no time at all, Naveen was officially on board as the designated lighting director of Lollapalooza India.

“In July 2022, I got a call from Vincent Samuel (Greenstone Entertainment) for a meeting at the



BookMyShow office to discuss the first draft of the festival plan with the entire commercial team at BMS and Greenstone Entertainment. After hearing them out I had absolutely no doubt in my mind about coming on board; and honestly, I was even more excited to have my team at Ground Control be part of such a prestigious festival. Considering Ground Control’s knowledge in working with various genres within the independent music space already, we were given a free hand on the design right from the get-go. And I remember Kenneth Lobo (BMS) and Vincent walking out of the room with me as they told me how Ground Control were the first partners to be



roped in on this project. When I look back at it all, I am proud to say that it was one of the most professionally, tastefully and passionately done festivals in the country, and I think the key was all the meticulous pre-planning that happened many months prior to the show thanks to Vincent's vision," shares Naveen.

Naveen explains that the planning stages for the project began several months prior to the festival date itself, with the Ground Control team submitting the lighting plots almost 4 months in advance – once again a feat unheard of within the Indian live event scene. And the first step of it all involved locking in the right kind of festival inventory that would do justice to all the stages and the various genres being performed at each of the stages.

As Naveen informs, "Through our initial few meetings, we took genres of every stage as our starting point for the design; and with internal feedbacks and a few tweaks we presented the festival plot to the team. We were certain about using branded fixtures only which would help us ensure that every lighting designer would have a 3D access to pre-visualize the rig and come prepared. This in turn would mean that they'd spend the least amount of time on site getting acclimatized to the set-up, which obviously would help the show run much smoother. This is exactly why we chose to incorporate global leader

brands such as Clay Paky, Elation, Robe, ACME and of course MA Lighting; thus matching international standards across the entire lighting spectrum."

The planning and execution methodologies deployed by for this project, according to Naveen, was unlike any other ever attempted in India. The Ground Control team collated all the data concerning measurements and schematics of the venue etc, and used this to create a base design to understand the basic layout at each stage. The team tried different trussing plans while accounting for various rigging options and LED Wall placements; and also studied the weight restrictions at each stage to finally narrow down on the perfect combination of fixtures that were ideal for each of the individual lighting rigs, keeping in mind the genres that each stage would host and also the overall theme of the festival. The base design layouts were then mapped in 3D to test run the rig; and after considering vital inputs from the programming team, the plots were finalized and final design was created. These designs were then forwarded to the organizers for approval; following which they were shared with the teams at Star Dimensions and Stage Engage to study and subsequently detail an efficient and neat cabling schematic for the set-up on-site. Once the teams at Star Dimensions and Stage Engage submitted their cabling plans, the Ground



Control team used the cumulative information to zero-in on the final DMX data sheet. Following this, the data sheets were fed into a house show file with 3D data – and all the details of this file were double-checked before it was sent out to all the travelling lighting designers and the organizers etc to reconfirm if all the fixtures appeared and worked correctly and as per the plot on the 3D file.

On the other hand, the execution of the working plan was every bit as meticulous, as Naveen confirms the teams at Star Dimensions and Stage Engage respectively ensured that every last detail including aspects like IP addresses for console, Artnet, NPU's and complete addressing of fixtures remained absolutely the same as the final approved plans. Naveen details, "We had a fantastic on ground team who really planned swift rigging on site giving us a spare day for pre-programming which worked out great for us as every LD was able to check their show files very swiftly. We did thorough checks with the house show file and ensured every piece of data that was shared was accurate before we did an official handover. Even during the festival itself, we had a representative from Ground Control and from Star Dimension or Stage Engage at each stage to assist every guest lighting designer. I was personally present at the BUDX stage along with my colleague Ramanuj Deka, while my other colleagues Satvinder Singh, Akshay Khubchandani and Ajay Teja capably

handled the Walkers & Co, Perry's and NEXA stages respectively. All in all, the set-up at each of the stages looked absolutely fantastic and was duly appreciated even by the headliners. We did not need to make any changes to the rig except for a few headliners where we had to add couple of additional fixtures as part of their floor packages."

As unprecedented as it may seem, it appears that the crew members did not face any major challenge during the course of the festival, as Naveen attributes this to the detailed planning and execution, coupled with exceptional collaborative communication between the various teams that allowed for an extremely smooth event experience. He shares that perhaps the only minor hiccup that happened during the festival involved the need to change a fixture that was atop a 20ft vertical truss pillar, which was expertly handled by the efficient team at Star Dimensions. Moreover, he is of the belief that Lollapalooza India was so efficient and effective in every aspect of its preparation and on-ground commissioning, that it has potentially ushered in a new era of lighting design within the country.

"It was quite phenomenal to see fixtures clearly even in day light, and the fact that we used the lighting rig to its full capacity to create absolutely mesmerizing designs even for the day acts is a testimony to the unbelievable level of planning, co-ordination, and collaborative

expertise that we've all invested in Lollapalooza India. By the end of the festival, we had many travelling lighting designers thank us for all the information that was shared with them well before the show, as it evidently eased their pre-production work. In many ways, Lollapalooza India stands as a true trend-setter; and the festival has certainly kicked up expectations and standards several notches higher. Personally, we at Ground Control have already started implementing these working methodologies across all our shows. The suppliers who we work with on a regular basis have already got a hang of things and the process of rigging to programming has become much more efficient. At the same time, we've also been fortunate to work with forward thinking event companies and production heads who understand the kind of value we bring to the table. In fact, many of the shows that we've been a part of in the past 6 months or so, exude a unique design identity – be it Lollapalooza, Prateek Kuhad's 'The Way that Lover's Do' tour or the very recent Cinematic Orchestra Tour – they're all at par with the very best in international standards" Naveen states confidently.

Hot off the heels of a super-successful 1st edition of the festival, the organizers wasted no time in announcing the return of Lollapalooza India in 2024; with the promise of a more vibrant and bespoke experience set in-store for the audience. And unsurprisingly enough, Naveen and his team at Ground Control have already been confirmed to retain their working roles for the 2024 edition; which brings with it a good deal of excitement with the possibility of witnessing something new and innovative at the festival next year. And Naveen too affirms preparations for the 2024 edition of Lollapalooza India have already begun; as he affords a sneak peek into it, teasing, "We are particularly excited to bring 'follow spot trackers' for the next edition of Lollapalooza India. We are yet to do our R&D on it, but we aim to implement it in the 2024 edition. I am also excited to see a lot of our local suppliers upgrading their gear, and to be honest, there are some interesting fixtures that are being discussed. If it aligns with our designs at any of the festivals or artists we work with, we would be totally excited to use them on our rigs."

Ground Control

Main Stage 1 (BUDX)

- Clay Paky X Frame:- 40*
- Clay Paky Mythos- 16*
- Elation FLX :- 30*
- Clay Paky Bee Eye K25:- 24*
- Martin Mac Quantum Wash:- 20*
- Clay Paky Tamboura- 20*
- Nova 4 way Blinder- 24*
- Martin Atomic 3000- 18*
- Generic RGBW Par- 40*
- Smoke Factory Haze- 4*

Main Stage 2 (Walkers and Co)

- Elation SBX Pro - 54*
- Martin Quantum Wash- 36*
- Clay Paky Bee Eye K20- 24*
- Showtech Sunstrips MKII- 20*
- Nova 4 way Blinders- 20*
- Clay Paky Tamboura- 32*
- Martin Mac Aura XB- 50*
- Smoke Factory Haze - 4*

Perry's Stage

- ACME Libra BSW- 48*
- Elation 5R Beams- 12*
- Martin Mac Aura XB- 24*
- Acme Dotline 180- 12*
- Generic RGBW Par- 28*
- ACME 2 way Molefay- 24*
- ACME Ginanp Strobe- 20*
- Martin Atomic 3000- 16*
- Smoke Factory Haze- 4*

Nexa Stage

- Clay Paky Mythos- 32*
- Elation FLX - 24*
- Martin Quantum Wash- 24*
- Nova Single Eye Molefays- 48*
- Martin Atomic 300 LED- 20*
- Smoke Factory Haze- 4*

grandMA3 full size (Master) + grandMA3 full size (slave) on all stages