

US band Tedeschi Trucks tour with Hippotizer-driven LED
battens

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USA - Floridian rockers Tedeschi Trucks' summer 2023 tour staging was dominated by soaring horizontal LED battens which displayed pixels of video content, driven by Hippotizer Karst+ MK2 Media Servers. The battens were interspersed with LED fixtures to create a dazzling series of audience blinders, colour and sweeping effects to set the scene for the band's brand of American blues rock.

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The lighting design and programming was delivered to the tour by Infinitus Vox, headed by Tony Caporale, who used a Hippotizer Karst+ MK2's NDI feed to his Depence R3 pre-viz software. This meant that during pre-production, he could view all of the lighting and video design together, before controlling the Media Server via a grandMA3 console.

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“Since pixel mapping was the main focus here, the Karst+ MK2 was the right Hippotizer for the job,” says Caporale. “It offers flexibility – I’ve used this machine on heavily timecoded shows to doing a good old fashioned rock show like this one without timecode. I’m comfortable with it in many situations we face in production.”

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For a show requiring large amounts of video content displayed via LED battens, Caporale took advantage of the Hippotizer PixelMapper feature, which was designed to bring creative video to lighting fixtures. The content was created by Danny Clarke from Gateway Studios and Production Services, as well as stock content manipulated for the creative design of the show by Caporale.

“I discovered a lot of ways to blend the pixel mapped content with the existing programming in the Pixel Lines, which was quite fun,” he says. “If I left PixelMapper engaged but layers at 0, the original programming would play nicely. Then, I had the option to blend the pixel mapped content with the DMX programming but assigning the layers to a temp fader on the MA3 to allow seamless blending between the two. This preserved the colours to match the rest of the other lighting fixture programming. If I wanted the pixel map to full take over dmx programming I would push the temp fader on the MA3 to full and would match the exact content.”

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One date on the tour saw Tedeschi Trucks play the famous Red Rocks Amphitheatre in Colorado, where 303 magazine's review said that "the show was pure spectacle, colours dancing across the rocks while some of the most talented musicians alive sent souls soaring over the horizon."

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“The Karst+ MK2 gave me flexible usage for the LED battens where I could program them via DMX and also use PixelMapper,” Caporale continues. “Since this is a jam band and there are extensions to the music, using PixelMapper allowed me to use fresh creative looks in the bars so it wouldn’t get stale. In addition, Hippotizer’s Fade On Layer feature has been a favorite since it has been released. I love the resources it saves and keeps things smooth.”

Caporale says one of his favourite moments in the show was when he programmed thin symmetrical content following through the RGBW pixels in conjunction with a DMX chase through the atomic portion of the LED battens. “The variables I had with the lights made it so fun,” he says.