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Dave Matthews Band Gets Away From the World with BMFLs

Products Involved

BMFL™ Spot

Lighting and visuals designer Fenton Williams and co-LD / programmer Aaron Stinebrink again collaborated to produce a stunning production design – incorporating lighting, set and video – for the current Dave Matthews Band (DMB) U.S. summer tour.

For the first time, they specified Robe's BMFL Spot fixtures, 22 of which are being supplied by the tour's lighting vendor, Theatrical Media Services (TMS) from Omaha, Nebraska.

The band is well known for their long annual summer tours and unique sets featuring involved improvisations of their songs – always played differently – accompanied by eye-catching visuals and lightshows, an aesthetic that has been carefully crafted by Fenton since he started working with the band in the early 1990s.

Fenton and Aaron developed the design together, often drawing on architecture and art for inspiration as they build a visual stage concept.

This is the first tour design for which they have used Robe products. It comes after using various Robe moving lights on one-offs in recent years, and enjoying the support and interest that Robe Lighting Inc. has taken in their work.

Both designers saw Robe's BMFL Spot at LDI last year, shortly after the worldwide launch.

They were pleased to find the BMFL has several of the features – such as the dual animation wheel – that had really impressed them on the MMX Spot. "We really feel this sets this fixture apart from others on the market," explained Aaron.

Obviously the additional power and brightness of the BMFL was a huge bonus ... so 22 units were chosen for this tour.

Eight BMFL Spots are hung on two lighting trusses far above the main lighting rig, positioned so they can shoot directly through the main lighting rig, which adds considerable depth and resonance to the whole stage environment.

Another six are on one of the downstage trusses to light the set for the acoustic portion of the show.

The set comprises a series of geometric shapes wrapped in ceiling tin and was constructed by Omaha based Acass who proposed this material.

Stinebrink said "Ceiling tin wrap really brought depth and texture to the set, and these elements are accented brilliantly by the numerous visual effects produced by the BMFLs."

Lighting the set was a major reason they specified BMFL Spots as they needed a unit that could deliver crisp, clear and dynamic effects, gobo looks and texturing which would completely change its appearance.

These same set fixtures are also turned round to highlight the audience, and the other eight BMFL Spots are on the floor, blasting through a dramatic layer of mega-brightness from the back.

"This was our first opportunity to use these fixtures thoroughly, and we have really appreciated the quality of the light, the output and its many versatile features," stated Aaron.

Fenton is running the show on a grandMA 2 full size with a light for backup.

Fenton's company, Filament Productions from Charlottesville, Virginia, created the custom video content which is played back from a Hippotizer media server and the Filament team is also supplying LED screens, cameras and PPU for the IMAG relay.

Joining Fenton on the road are TMS lighting crew chief Pete Franks, lighting programmer and technician Tyler Packett and lighting technicians Jerry Kaiser, Bob Chaize and Josh Light.

Photo Credit: Adam Kaplan







