

Church Production

JULY/AUG 2006

Magazine

Jeremy Camp Live Unplugged Tour

Turning a concert into a worship experience

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Audio Console**

**Maintaining a
Video Projector**

**Exploring
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Vista Lighting Console



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FROM THE EDITOR **ViewPoint**

One of the things I love about this job is the visibility it gives me into new products and technologies that might be of benefit to the Church, and frequently the ability to try them out first-hand. Since the last time I've written Viewpoint, I've become very familiar with two products that truly excite me.

The first is a piece of web-based software written specifically for churches — www.worshipplanning.com. This website is designed to facilitate the planning of a church's worship service by providing a well thought-out system for documenting what's going to happen during the service without having to email "The Document" around to those needing to provide input. Anyone with the appropriate permission level can update any service at any time — ideal for a church such as mine where the bulk of service preparation and planning happens by numerous volunteers. My church is making use of the 30-day free trial, and is getting very excited about all the problems it solves in working in a distributed, volunteer-focused environment.

Another new product that I'm excited about is the **Jands Vista lighting** console. It brings the time-line-based video-editing paradigm into the lighting world, enabling an entirely new (and intuitive) way to think about programming both theatrical and moving lights. You can read more about this console in Greg Persinger's product review on page 92, and in the Jeremy Camp tour article on page 18.

On the theme of tools useful to the church, that is what we hope and pray Church Production Magazine is to you — a useful tool, helping you to serve Christ in ever better ways. To help ensure we're hitting that mark, we are developing a reader survey designed to gather your feedback on what parts of *Church Production Magazine* are useful to you, and which parts need improvement. I encourage you to take this survey, and give us your input. We always want to improve what we're doing — but we need your help to do it. If you want to participate in the survey, and haven't seen any email from us in a while, we probably don't have your current email address on file. Please visit www.churchproduction.com, visit the **"change your address"** section of the website, and update your subscription information with your email address.

In His service,

Jim Kumorek

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On March 16th, 2006
the Jeremy Camp
Live Unplugged Tour
stopped in Lexington,
Kentucky for a concert
at Immanuel Baptist
Church. The newest
lighting console from
Jands, the Vista, was
selected for this tour.

The Vista utilizes a
time line-based
programming model
similar to video editing
applications.



JEREMY CAMP

Live Unplugged Tour

Elegant use of technology turns a concert into a worship experience

By Jim Kumorek

Lexington, Kentucky—An overcast sky on a cool pre-spring day didn't dampen the spirits of the Jeremy Camp Live Unplugged Tour crew and volunteers at Immanuel Baptist Church on March 16, 2006. At 10 AM, Camp's convoy of two tour buses and a tractor-trailer load of gear arrived at the church, welcomed by the church's 14 volunteers waiting to help with load-in and setup. Leading the technical efforts on the tour crew were Tony Fransen, lighting director, and John Van Hook doing double-duty as front-of-house (FOH) engineer and tour manager.

As with most Christian tours, for those getting off the tour buses and preparing for another day's work, the tour is much more than just putting on a show. "Jeremy [Camp] would consider the event a huge success if a lot of people show up and have their lives touched," says Fransen. "He really wants the crowd to enter into worship and have a great encounter with God. And you can tell by the end of the night if that happened, by the expressions on their faces and in the tears in their eyes."



Photography by Jim Kumorek.

BEING PREPARED FOR A TOUR

Van Hook and Fransen have many words of advice for churches desiring to host a tour. Here's a few of them for you to ponder.

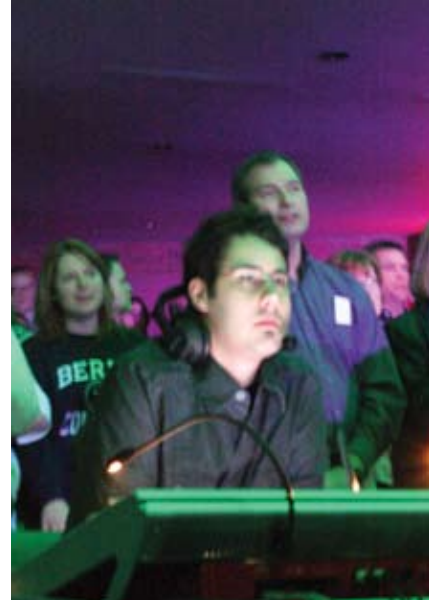
- Please, please, please read the tech rider. Don't exaggerate on what you can provide. Discuss anything that you can't provide as stated with the tour weeks before they arrive, not an hour after they unload at your church.
- Power and volunteer help is critical. Without power, there's no show. Without the volunteers, there's no show.
- Be cooperative with the crew. When the tour is at your church, it needs to be their building. Give them unfettered access, and help them as much as possible.
- Inform the promoter of "kill zones" – seats that should not be sold due to sight line issues because of the tour's loudspeaker stacks or the FOH positions they need to set up.
- When renovating or planning new construction, provide concert power disconnects close to the stage. For lighting 200-amp three-phase 208 volt power is needed; for audio 100-amp three-phase 208-volt power.
- If your church does not have the power, generators can be rented – but you must provide separate generators for lighting and audio.
- Provide close access to the stage from the truck if at all possible. Long pushes make for exhausted crews and volunteers, and tired workers make mistakes and get hurt.

However, long before the first concert, much work must take place. Tour promoters begin months in advance, contacting potential venues to see if they are able to host the tour. Once a church like Immanuel Baptist is contacted, the church staff needs to come together to determine if they can support the event.

"The biggest challenge in hosting a concert is to make sure that everyone on your staff is [on board with the event]," says David Probus, director of I-Tech [Technical Production] Ministries at Immanuel Baptist. "The first thing we do after the promoter contacts us is look at the dates and ask if we can adequately handle this event. What else is going on at the campus? What else is coming up around that timeframe?"

Probus then obtains the technical rider from the tour, and goes over it with the church's Facility Team Leader, Kevin Reitz. The technical rider is a detailed list of both technical and non-technical requirements the church must be able to fulfill as a host venue for the tour. "It's far more than just the A/V/L [audio/video/lighting] needs", says Probus. It includes security needs, catering expectations, power requirements, dressing room requirements—anything that affects the tour crew and performers while at the church.

"About a month before the tour we contact the venues to advance the show," states Fransen. At this point the tours needs are discussed with the on-staff technical director or audio personnel. Stage dimensions are discussed, as well as power availability, fire sensor information (hazers can set off fire detection systems), push distances (the distance from where the truck can part to the stage), and whether ramps are available to get onto the stage. Common problems that are encountered are too small a stage, or long pushes to get equipment from the truck



Tony Fransen, Jeremy Camp's lighting director, made excellent artistic use of the Jand's Vista lighting console and fixtures from Martin and High End to add visual beauty, augmenting the music.

to the stage. "A 400-foot push—that can ruin your day," exclaims Fransen.

For this venue, the only problem the tour encountered was the stage size – the dimensions provided by the church included the upstage choir loft, which for the purposes of the tour is unusable space. Fransen and Van Hook both encourage churches that want to host tours to create detailed drawings of their stage/platform area, clearly showing items like choir lofts, stairs and ramps, and items that can't be moved or removed from the stage (such as a pipe organ). As this tour was being hosted in primarily church venues, they came prepared for handling almost any sized platform, and they compensated for the smaller-than-anticipated stage by leaving the risers they would normally use for the string section and drums on the truck.

Load-in and setup went smoothly, with total time from load-in to the end of sound check being under five hours. The selection of gear contributed to the ease of setup.

Lighting

Fransen's enthusiasm for his art clearly comes through as our conversation turned to gear. "I've definitely found my small fixture of choice," he exclaims. "I'm using the MAC 250 Entour [automated lighting fixture built by Martin Professional]. It has so much punch, with 250-watt lamps and it runs on 120-volt power, so if you're in a situation where you can't get three-phase power, you don't have to have it. It's just an absolutely stunning fixture—they're bright, punchy, and have a very even field."

He continues, "I also have High End Systems' Color Commands, which have great mixing capabilities allowing me to bring up some beautiful colors. I have some High End Studio Beams on the floor—they're just a little work-horse fixture and are bright as all get-out. I have some

Wybron color scrollers for my eight-way Molefays, and they're awesome—I don't take out spares because I know they'll just work."

Fransen took a risk on this tour, going for the unconventional. He points out, "I'm not using a front truss on this tour. Most LDs would kick and scream for a front truss. I decided to take a chance and did without it. So, we're using a vertical tower stage-left and stage-right with the Molefays on it for side wash, tons of up-lighting and two followspots at FOH. It's definitely a very different looking show."

A Broad Vista of Lighting...

A lighting rig is useless without a means to control it. Fransen was prime for a change while specifying equipment for the tour when he received a call from AC Lighting's Fred Mikeska, based out

of Toronto, Canada, distributor for Australia's Jands Lighting. "I flew out to Los Angeles to look at the console," Fransen states. "I was blown away by the service model of Jands, and quickly developed trust with them. They cared about my opinions and servicing us. I was blown away by these guys—then they showed me the [console]."

"They sent me a Vista console for a week," he adds, "and it's the coolest thing to use. Editing is so quick and easy – the timeline model of the desk has been so nice." Fransen comments that the console makes tweaking and fine-adjusting cues almost trivial, and programming a show takes significantly less time than on consoles typically found on tours.

"I was able to program this tour, which is a few hundred cues, very quickly. We only



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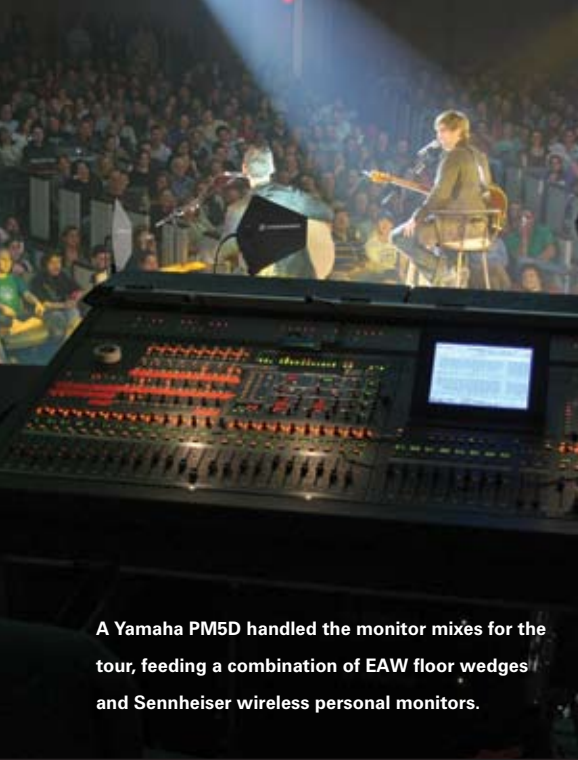
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A Yamaha PM5D handled the monitor mixes for the tour, feeding a combination of EAW floor wedges and Sennheiser wireless personal monitors.

Photo (below): Nexo Geo S line arrays filled the sanctuary of Immanuel Baptist Church with crisp, clear and full sound.



had one day of tech rehearsal to get ready, and the next day was the first show. I had to be completely ready by that show. Being able to go that fast with a console that can keep up with you is just awesome.”

When asked about its suitability for installation in a church Fransen exclaimed, “I think this would be one of the best church console’s around. The Vista has the GUI [graphical user interface], which is such an important part of programming, and Jands has made it very easy to use. Having never seen this console, my wife came in and started playing with the pen/tablet interface, and was able to start programming it without anyone telling her how to use the desk.” Combining ease of use for basic functions and the power needed for pro tours is a great combination for a church.

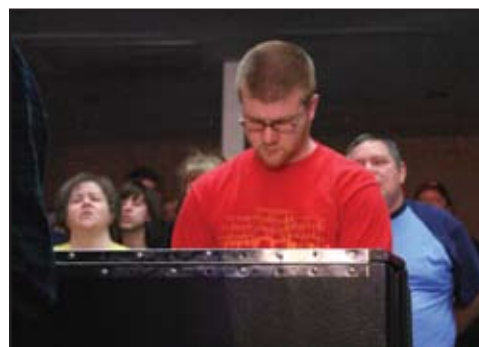
Throughout the show, the lighting was spectacular. Fransen’s artistry at using the haze as a canvas, painting outstanding pictures that always enhanced the the music and brought a taste of what heaven must look like into the sanctuary. During Camp’s “Walk By Faith” song, the MAC 250s moved off of Camp and rose heaven-wards as the chorus was sung, enhancing the point that we need to live with out eyes focused on Christ. The lighting was elegant, tasteful, and immensely effective, augmenting the emotion of the song without trying to steal the show.

Audio

Van Hook, the tour manager and FOH audio engineer, while more subdued in conversation is clearly just as passionate about his audio work. Upon entering the sanctuary, the Nexo Geo S line array loudspeakers that Van Hook had selected jumped out immediately for their diminutive size. But these small boxes, coupled with Camco amplifiers designed to complement the speakers, generated an outstanding, crisp and highly intelligible sound. EAW SB1000 subwoofers delivered substantial bass, with two cabinets being quite adequate for this “unplugged” tour. Van Hook comments, “The Nexos are also great because they can be flown from a Genie tower,” eliminating the need for the venue to have adequate structural steel in place to fly the array, or having to bring in truss and chain motors for the task.

Van Hook chose his favorite digital audio console, the Yamaha PM5D, for running monitors, and a Yamaha DM2000 was employed at FOH. PreSonus DigiMAX LT preamps were employed for the microphone inputs, and Van Hook uses a PreSonus Eureka channel strip for Camp’s lead vocal to get some of that analog warmth that all-digital processing often lacks.

Van Hook uses a Sennheiser 3000 series wireless mic system for Camp’s vocal, with the SKM-5000 handheld transmitter united with a Neumann KK 105 S head. “It’s a very nice mic,” Van Hook states. Sennheiser wireless in-ear monitoring systems were used by the majority of the performers, with EAW SM-155 wedges for some of the performers. “They’re a little harsh”, Van Hook comments, but were employed as the best compromise between budget and need.



John Van Hook, tour manager and FOH engineer, used a Yamaha DM2000 console at FOH to drive the Nexo Geo S line array and EAW subwoofers, providing almost CD-quality clarity to the live audio.

One challenge Van Hook faced in this venue was the wide sanctuary seating area. The Nexo boxes have a 90-degree horizontal coverage pattern, which meant some seats were outside of the expected coverage area. However, even when standing far off to the sides, the audio quality and clarity was quite good.

While SPL levels were strong, delivering what you'd expect from a concert, the quality of sound throughout the spectrum was extraordinary. The high-mids, often the frequency range that can be harsh and painful, were smooth and pleasant on the ear. Kudos to Van Hook for his delivery of a thoroughly worshipful, distraction-free audio experience.

So, was the evening a success, by Camp's definition? Judge for yourself:



Jim Kumorek is managing editor of Church Production and Worship Facilities magazines.

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COMPANY: Jands (distributed in the US by AC Lighting)
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 QUICK-LINK: (416) 255-9494
 URL: www.jandsvista.com

COMPANY: Martin
 PRODUCT: MAC 250 Entour automated fixture
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 URL: www.martin.com

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Jands Vista

T2 Lighting Console

If you have ever read any of my past Church Production articles you know I like to develop a good lead-in to my subject. With the Jands Vista lighting console however I am forced to get straight to the point because of the limited amount of space I have to highlight its unique features.

With the Vista the Jands design team has taken a whole different approach to lighting control by integrating time-line editing into the Vista console (think iMovie, Final Cut Pro, or Pro-Tools) as well as a graphical interface that uses a graphics pen (think Wacom graphics tablet) to give you control of all of your lighting parameters.

As the story goes, there was a lively and vocal group within the Jands company that felt the level of technical knowledge required to run the average moving light console on the market had grown to the point where most people could no longer walk up to a console and intuitively program the lights. Instead, a complex series of numbers and button presses were required to create even a basic lighting look. The Jands team felt there had to be a better way.

After much research and discussion they decided to break lighting cues up into components and place them on a timeline like you would in non-linear video or audio editing systems. If you want to shift part of the cue around, all you would do is slide the part of the cue you want to change to a different place in the timeline and your edit would be complete. With the vision laid out the Jands Vista console was born.

Having heard about this console I thought that the concept was very intriguing, especially since I have a good grasp of the timeline editing concept from my own use of audio and video editing software. Of course, seeing is believing, and when A.C. Lighting, the North American distributor for Jands, gave me a chance to demo and review the console I jumped at the chance.

First I was skeptical that I would like the pen screen interface, which is a Wacom Cintiq tablet display built into the console, but after a few minutes of working with the pen screen you get a feel for it and you find that it is very

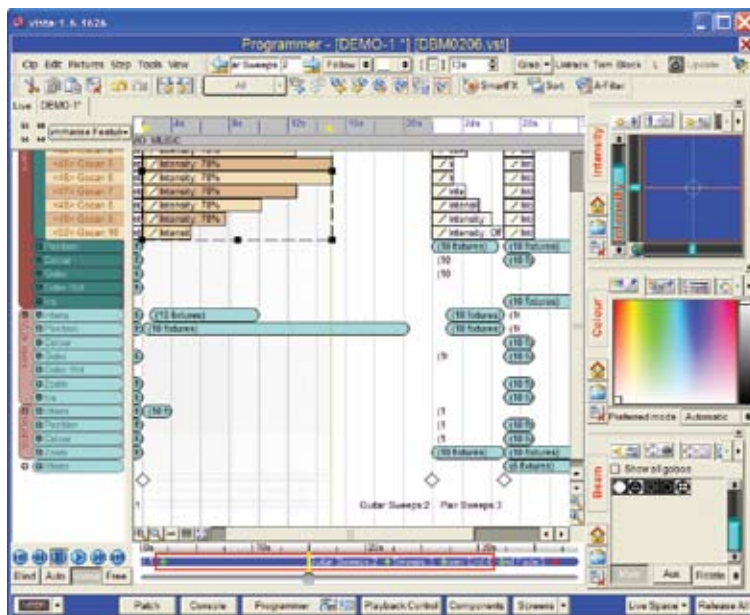


intuitive. So with the pen firmly in hand, I moved on to patching in some fixtures.

Patching, which is usually a confusing proposition on most consoles, was a breeze on the Vista, using its extensive generic fixture model library. Patching was also made easy as it is a drag and drop operation. If you should need to move the starting address of a fixture to a different location you just grab it with the pen and drag it to where you want it. If you need to access a different universe of DMX all it takes is a pen click on the proper universes tab to select the universe and then drag your fixture to the correct starting address.

Another feature of the generic fixture model library is that it allows you to program with one type of fixture and then later substitute a different fixture into that programming. Once you tell the Vista what the new fixture type is it will attempt to match the functions of the substitute fixture as closely as possible with the original fixture. This means the console will automatically find the closest match for color, gobo, and other beam parameters. Although you are not assured of a perfect match and some updating will have to be done, it beats having to start from scratch. This is a great feature if you rent fixtures for a special program or event to add to your existing fixture inventory.

Once patched, fixtures show up as icons in your programmer window. Here you can graphically arrange your fixtures in a variety of ways. For example, you can have all of your moving lights on a page or a layout, and all of your conventional lights in another layout, and all of your lights in yet a third layout. What you look



The Vista lighting console is unique in applying a time-line paradigm to lighting cues, allowing the user to easily visualize timings and sequences.

at when you are programming depends on what layout you have selected. Layouts are changed via a pull down menu and are virtually limitless.

In a layout, individual fixtures can be placed in any order and in any place on the screen allowing you to set up whatever layout makes the most logical sense to you. I really liked this feature as it gives a high level of customization, and if multiple people run the same show you can save multiple layouts, customizing them for each operator.

The fixture icons also give feedback as to the intensity, color, gobo, and position of the fixtures. I found this to be useful as I could do the bulk of my basic programming offline on a PC and then use the console with the lights for touch up and final tweaking, speeding up programming in the venue.

Once you have the Vista patched and your layouts created, you are ready to program. You do this by opening up a new blank clip, (think video or audio clip) which is somewhat equivalent to a cue stack in other consoles and begin to manipulate your lighting fixtures.

The process of building lighting looks on the Vista is not much different than any other moving light console. You set up your focus positions, intensity, color, gobo, and any other parameters that your lighting fixture has and save it as a step in the clip. However, from this point, the way that you edit parameters on the Vista deviates from every other lighting console that I have ever used.

Once you have saved a step, it shows up in the timeline view of the clip. Here you can use the pen to highlight various parameters of the step, allowing you to drag and drop them wherever you want

“What sets the Vista apart from any other moving light console is that editing is so fast and easy.”

them. For example, if you want the color to change before your lights move, you could drag the color information to the beginning of your clip and the position information toward the end of your clip and when your clip plays back the color would change before your lights would move.

You can also drag fixtures to where you want them to come on or move within a step in your timeline, easily “fanning” the fade in or the movement of the fixtures. Because all of this is done on the clip’s timeline, editing these features can take less than a minute — unlike doing the same thing on traditional consoles where it takes much longer and a lot of button punching to program the sequence.

As you would expect from a sophisticated console, you can have multiple steps in a clip and steps can automatically follow the step in front of it or wait for you to execute the next step manually, changeable for each step.

I am just scratching the surface with the Vista’s editing capabilities, but I can tell you that with the graphical interface, the timeline, the drag and drop features, and the common shortcut keys, the Vista has a very easy to use and powerful clip editor that allows you to create and customize your lighting looks quickly and easily. For me, what sets the Vista apart from any other moving light console is that editing is so fast and easy.

For playback the Vista T2 has 15 playbacks with 10 Intensity faders and bump buttons and one “super playback” which gives you go, pause, back, skip functions

and additional time features. Of course all of these playbacks can be customized to play any clip or set of clips you want in any order.

The Vista also sports three encoder wheels for adjusting functions such as Pan, Tilt, Intensity, Gobo, Gobo Rotation and the like. It also has 12 function keys that can be set up to be additional playbacks or preset buttons or other console functions.

Other nice features in the console include an MP3 player that allows you to play the music you are programming to and mark key transition points in the song. When you do this the Vista generates steps of appropriate length for you to program to. It also allows you to hear your music as you program.

A couple of things I didn’t like about the console were the modifier buttons, which seemed flimsy to me. Every time I used them I felt like I was going to pop them off, but users of the console have assured me that this is not the case and that they hold up well under heavy everyday use. I also didn’t like that the Grandmaster was a rotary dial instead of a linear fader. Call me old fashioned but I like to slide and not twist. Both of these are merely minor issues.

Overall I was very impressed by the console. The timeline editing and the console’s drag-and-drop approach made it easy to master the console basics with minimal instruction.

The average technically minded church volunteer could grasp the concepts of

basic programming and operation of the console quickly and easily and would be comfortable using the console. This would be especially true if they have had any experience with a timeline based video or audio editing program.

The Vista comes in a wide range of versions, from the PC-based Vista PC (\$899), to the reviewed Vista T2 (\$26,000), up through the T4 (\$33,894).

I would recommend giving serious consideration to this console if you are looking at making a moving light console purchase. Head over to www.jandsvista.com and download the PC demo or contact A.C. Lighting for the name of a dealer in your area that can provide you with a demo.

Greg Persinger is a principal consultant with Design 2020 Church Media Consultants. He can be reached at greg@design2020.com.



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