

# DOUBLE ACTS



## Inside the creative team (including two production designers) and crew for Twenty One Pilots' *Clancy World Tour*

Photos & Text by: Steve Jennings

wenty One Pilots [TØP] members Tyler Joseph and Josh Dun have embarked on *The Clancy World Tour* in support of their latest release, *Clancy*. Mixing alternative rock, electro-pop, rap rock, and pop rock, these talented artists draw the audience into the performance, playing portions of the show on the GA floor surrounded by their fans. We spoke with the crew about putting on a production that has everything.

### **Tyler “Shap” Shapard, production/lighting designer**

The famous duo has a double-barreled creative team. In addition to the credits mentioned above, Shapard also acts as the tour's programmer and lighting director. He and designer Dayne deHaven have been collaborators for years, playing to each other's strengths. They founded the firm District 5 to solidify their partnership as lighting designers/show creatives and to build and mentor a team of aspiring LDs. “Our vision is to make long-lasting relationships with our clients and LDs, to support them for the long haul, not just one tour or album cycle,” Shapard says. “We enjoy getting into the nitty-gritty details and making sure we are delivering a production that propels our clients forward and supports their unique looks and sounds.”

Shapard began designing *The Clancy World Tour* last November while sitting on a beach. “I worked closely with Tyler Joseph [vocals, bass, piano] on his vision. I have tremendous respect for Tyler; I always want to make sure that every moment of the show meets his expectations. This tour is much more theatrical than any we have done before; it involves more cameras, special effects, and stage elements. The lighting portion is very much functional first and creative second, in the sense that we need fixtures in specific places to achieve the angles and coverage to properly see parts of the set.” He says the project was approached as a single entity every step of the way, from stage design to scenery, lighting, and audio. “Everything was molded to fit together seamlessly, all parts of the same whole.”

Shapard and deHaven worked closely with Joseph, Mark Eshleman (creative director with Reel Bear Media), and production manager Matt Doherty. “Of course, lighting is our primary focus, but we are also overall show creatives,” he says.

Shapard runs the show on grandMA3 hardware, using MA2 software. “We plan on moving to MA3 software in the future,” he notes. “But, due to time constraints and the

number of songs we needed to program, we thought it would be best to stick with MA2 for now. We also use Madrix [lighting control software] to map and control some of our more complex pixel effects.” Most of the show is time-coded except for front light, crowd light, and followspots, which Shapard calls manually. There are close to 9,000 time-code events in this show. Laser effects are controlled partly using Pangolin's BEYOND 5.0 software.

Solotech is the lighting vendor for the tour; Shapard credits the company's Lee Moro [senior vice president, business development] and Dave Evans [director of lighting]. “We used Solotech for *The Takeover Tour* as well as *The Icy Tour* [also featuring Twenty One Pilots] and we naturally went with them when it was time to design this.” He adds that Solotech helped acquire certain brand-new fixtures for this tour.

“As some may know, I have always had a fondness for Robe fixtures as well as GLP strobes and bar fixtures. The [Robe] MegaPointe has been a huge part of my designs for many years. This year, we decided to add a few new elements to the show. We have nine FOOTSIE 2s, 63 FORTEs, and 14 Spikie+ added to our other Robe fixtures, which include 44 MegaPointes, 90 Robe Spiders, six BMFL WashBeams, and six FORTE FS. Then 63 CHAUVET Professional STRIKE Array 2s, 22 GLP Impression X4 Bar 20s, 17 GLP Impression X4 Bar 10s, 57 GLP JDC1 strobes, 50 TMB Solaris Flare Q+ Rayzrs, and six MDG TheONE hazers. All great gear making this show come to life.”

### **Dayne deHaven, production co-designer/programmer**

“Designing with Shap is always a great experience,” deHaven says. “One thing I like most about working together is we approach things from different angles and points of view. For example, my style is a bit more theatrical; I like big, beautiful looks that make you feel the emotion of the moment, limiting hits or flashes to only when necessary. Shap, being a drummer, is much more beat-oriented and rhythmic in his approach to a song. What you get when you combine our styles are big, beautiful looks with perfectly timed hits and accents that help you feel the music in a whole new way.”

deHaven says his early collaborations with Shapard were a bit rough as they tried to combine their two styles and approaches. “Now that we have worked together for a while, we tend to mesh much more easily. Usually, we see who has an idea first, and then we run down that idea, adding to or tweaking it until we are happy. Sometimes we



Above and right: "I have always had a fondness for Robe fixtures," Shapard says. "The MegaPointe has been a huge part of my designs for many years." In addition, the rig features Robe FOOTSIE 2s, FORTEs, Spikie+ units, Spiders, BMFL WashBeams, and FORTE FS units. Other gear includes CHAUVET Professional STRIKE Array 2s; GLP Impression X4 Bar 20s, Impression X4 Bar 10s, and JDC1 strobes; TMB Solaris Flare Q+ Rayzrs; and MDG TheONE hazers.

end up scrapping the idea completely, but exploring it gives us the inspiration to find the idea we ultimately go with. Working together off and on over the last eight years, we've learned a lot from each other; the projects we do together far outshine the projects we do on our own."

Once the design was completed, deHaven and Shapard spent about four weeks in previsualization and two weeks in production rehearsals. "We programmed the 32 songs currently in the setlist and have another 10-12 time-coded," deHaven says. He notes that he especially enjoyed working with the Robe Spider and FORTE lighting fixtures. "I have used the Spider a lot and love its features and functions for a mid-sized wash. This was my first time using the FORTE and I love its speed, brightness, and gobos. In my opinion, [the FORTE] is the fastest LED moving spot fixture in its weight class. Working with brand-new fixtures like the FOOTSIE and Spikie+ was very enjoyable as well."

"We poured a lot into this tour and am proud of how everything turned out. I enjoyed working with Matt Doherty, Mark Eshleman, and Chris Schoenman for all the video content and creative elements they brought to the show."

### Adam Peck, video director

Peck has a wide range of equipment in his arsenal with most of the show being driven through the Ross Ultrix Carbonite routing system and switcher. He controls the switcher with the Ross Touch Drive, which allows him to cut between the 19 cameras at his disposal. Most of the cameras, he notes, "are from the Panasonic family, with lenses ranging from ultra-wide to 125x zoom. During the show, we have operators running three cameras with long lenses (125x zoom), one handheld operator onstage with a wide-angle lens, and a Steadicam operator roaming the stage and following the artist through the crowd. A dolly camera driven by the Ross Furio system on the downstage edge is one of the newest additions to the tour, but it has quickly become one of my favorites. We also deploy a fleet of Panasonic robotic cameras and point-of-view cameras to maximize coverage."

The video walls consist of SACO 9mm panels. The side screens, used mostly for IMAG, are 19' wide and an impressive 23' tall, creating a larger-than-life feel. "Along with the two side screens, we have the main upstage wall,



which consists of two 'smaller' (14' wide by 23' tall) outer pieces and a larger middle section that is 27' wide by 23' tall. Fully assembled, the wall spans 56' wide and 23' tall with a resolution of 1,920 by 768 physical pixels. This does not include the lower wall that spans the entire stage and the automated 'garage' doors that fly out during the show, changing the set to something new." [The production's automation is supplied by Cybermotion Rental US, featuring the company's well-known Cyberhoist II to move the lighting pods and video screens plus custom winches to help raise the production's inflatable set pieces smoothly. Jordi van Berkum, of Cybermotion, notes that the company's products require an absolute positioning (0.1mm) for complex repetitive movements to make sure they can be done flawlessly. He adds, "On this show, they have done a fantastic job to have automation, lighting, and video integrated in the show elements to the point that even some of the moves have a very good synergy with the audio beat."]

Nighthawk Video, the tour's video vendor, is "an incredible company to work with," Peck says. "All the gear is top-of-the-line, and their technicians and representatives are among the best in the business. Any issue that arises is quickly and personally handled by Todd LePere [account representative] and Brian Venhorst [project leader]. During

the show, James Gardner [video engineer] handles all the color correction and iris control for the cameras, which is no easy feat! I am a freelance director who has been employed directly with Twenty One Pilots since 2015. I started touring with the band as a lighting/video technician (where we all wore many hats) and grew into the director position from there. It has been incredible to see the band, and the people who make the show happen, grow and excel over the years to make the show as special as it is."

Peck is typically (and, preferably, he notes) located backstage somewhere quiet—with noise-canceling headphones and heaps of monitors. "Working with an open mic, numerous verbal cues, and enough screens to make one go cross-eyed, it is extremely beneficial to be secluded from the chaos. The show uses a blend of prerendered effects made in After Effects and Cinema 4D (by Chris Schoenman), with real-time generated effects made in Notch (by me). The prerendered media and real-time effects are handled on the Disguise media server (by Nathan Barnier), which can be programmed to run with time code or triggered on the fly. The media server also manages all inputs from the video switcher (live line cuts, cameras, graphics, etc.) and allows us to map the feeds accordingly.

## TOUR TALK

“Our main objective for each show is to tell the story and ensure every person in attendance has an amazing time—no matter where they are located. We use IMAG extensively to showcase Tyler and Josh’s movements and crowd interactions on and offstage. If the guys are doing something wild in the crowd, or performing a backflip on stage, we showcase that with as much coverage as possible. There are times when we want the IMAG to rest and let the content create a bigger picture or remove video altogether, so all attention is focused on the artist.”

### **Kenny Sellars, front-of-house engineer**

Sellars continues to use the Yamaha PM10 console. He originally chose it purely on sound quality and says he has grown to love its onboard plug-ins and overall navigation. “The flexibility of the I/O racks and sharing head amps have made it a must-have as well. This is my third year using the PM10 and I love it!”

Twenty One Pilots started using Clair Global as the sound provider in 2022; this tour is supplied by Sound Image, a Clair company. “The global network of support is just unbeatable,” Sellars notes. “No matter where I am in the world, I can get what I need. I’ve had a few instances where last-minute pop-ups have been saved by Clair being close by and ready to go.” The PA rig features Clair’s Cohesion CO12 system. “Josh [De Jong, systems engineer] and I spoke about design and implementation well before the tour started and came up with our current design. What I love about this rig is the transparency and power it offers. Also, consistency: Josh is able to give me the same sound every day and I don’t even have to think about it.”

Sellars’ front-of-house setup is minimal on the outboard side. “I use a few Bricastis for vocal and snare verbs, a Waves Livebox rig that follows snapshots, and a Live Professor rig that is static throughout the show. I utilize a [Universal Audio] UAD Octo with Live Professor for a few plug-ins that take it to the next level. When it comes to the overall sound of TØP, Tyler and I aim for new and exciting; very rarely do we go for the ‘album sound.’ The show is meant to make you feel things, from quiet moments to earth-shaking low end, we bring it all.” Sellars’ mixing style tends to be dynamic and focused on excitement. “I work to have moments grab your attention and make you feel things. The show should feel like you’re on a roller coaster with a blindfold. Right when you think it’s settling down, it throws a corkscrew at you. Don’t get me wrong: There are moments we aim for pristine but, overall, it’s the excitement I’m chasing.”

New gear additions for Sellars for this tour include Rupert Neve RMP D8s, DPA mics on the drums, and a Waves LiveBox at the front of house. “The RMPs are one of the best preamps money can buy as far as I’m concerned. They are flexible in that they are Dante-based with gain-sharing capabilities as well. The DPA mics have allowed the drums to sing with minimal effort and an extremely small footprint. Our goal is not to take away from the visual while maintaining excellent sound, and DPA gave us that. The Waves LiveBox has brought the stability of the Waves platform and the ability to use third-party VSTs together in one power-packed box. It has a built-in Dante card and a purpose-built Windows machine to run your plug-ins at super low latency on a stable platform.”



Speaking of working with Shepard, deHaven says, “What you get when you combine our styles are big, beautiful looks with perfectly timed hits and accents that help you feel the music in a whole new way.”



The video walls consist of SACO 9mm panels, supplied by Nighthawk Video. The prerendered media and real-time effects are handled on the Disguise media server, which can be programmed to run with time code or triggered on the fly.

This will be Sellars' eighth year with TØP; there aren't many surprises for him anymore...or so he thought: "These guys never cease to amaze me with what they come up with. We've got the typical Tyler in front of the PA for half the show, we've got multiple drum kits in the audience (three, to be exact) and there's audience participation as well as playing bass in the crowd. We do it all. And somehow, with the help of everyone on the team, we pull it off. There's truly something special about working with this camp. The band pushes us to new limits every time we go out. I never walk away without learning something. We push the boundaries of technology and art on a constant basis. Also, I can't say enough about our audio team, the support from [Sound Image], and our production office crew. This tour will be one for the books! Everyone should see it!"

### **Cliff Skinner, monitor engineer**

Skinner runs monitors on the Yamaha Rivage PM5 control surface with a DSP-R10 engine. "During COVID, Kenny Sellars and I had the opportunity to compare the Rivage side by side with an Avid S6L and a DiGiCo surface and we both concluded that we liked the workflow and sound quality of the Rivage the most. We also share inputs—no

split used—so being on the same family of consoles helps a lot." Skinner also has 48 channels of Rupert Neve RMP-D8 preamps for all drums and instrument inputs. "We have a big mix of Dante and TWINLANE inputs hitting both consoles. Kenny and I also rely heavily on Bitfocus Companion to do external OSC control of the console. Through this, I use a stream deck to mute and unmute different vocal mics and switch to a backup mic as needed for both monitors and front of house. Keeping the vocal mics directly going through Dante into the system, I'm able to change which active mic is being used without having to rely on comms during the show."

Skinner is a longtime user of Yamaha digital consoles, from the O1V-96 to the PM5D, PM1D, M7CL, and CL and QL lines. "I like how user-friendly they are and how familiar they feel across all models—now with their close relationship with Neve and all the emulations they are able to do. If I had to do an entire in-the-box show, it would be with the Yamaha Rivage. Its built-in plug-ins and effects are the best in the industry, in my opinion." He previously used F6 (externally in Waves) for Joseph's vocal and a few instruments; the week they were prepping equipment before starting rehearsals, Yamaha released an update that



The special effects, including the stunning pyro seen above, were supplied by Image SFX.

included EQ6. “Tyler’s vocal chain is now entirely in the box and the EQ6 has been a great new addition to the console with the update coming out at the perfect time.”

Skinner uses Waves and Live Professor minimally, saying Waves is mostly using Smack Attack Transient Shaper to help with drums, and Live Professor lets him run the same effects that Joseph and Dun use in the studio. “Effects are mostly Soundtoys, and in Waves using Smack Attack.”

Skinner was already working for Twenty One Pilots when the band moved to Clair Global. “After the album cycle ended in 2022, I was living near Lititz, Pennsylvania, and had the opportunity to start working with Clair Global in operations in their Lititz office. I have done other tours in 2023 and early 2024 for Clair. When Twenty One Pilots called again and asked me to return as monitor engineer, I was happy to accept, still maintaining my relationship with Clair and doing some operations work remotely.”

“Tyler and Josh’s vocal mics are Shure Axient Digital— all handhelds, ADX2 with KSM9 HS capsules, and, for

backline all ADX1. We are using everything along with [the Shure Diversity] ShowLink [audio access point] to get the control and reliability we need [given] how much Tyler and Josh move around the arena. Our biggest challenge is how much they move around. For Tyler, we need to cover the entire arena, including the upper bowl. For Josh, we need to cover the entire lower bowl. This was the big reason for using ShowLink with Axient and the big reason why we chose the Wisycom in-ear system. We use an RF-over-fiber system for both transmit (ears) and receive (mics/backline). This allows me and Tom Gardner, my RF tech, to have six mixes of ears and all RF mics and belt packs to be used anywhere in the arena. We use the Wisycom MFL-TTRR and RRTT to get the RF out to the front of house, where we have four Omni antennas to extend our range.”


Skinner chose Wisycom MTK-982 transmitters with MPR50 belt packs, a new development for the band. “Tyler and Josh are very happy with them. The RF performance is great, and the audio is the flattest frequency response I’ve experienced in wireless IEMs yet. We have been using 64 Audio A12t IEMs for the past two years and are happy with them as well. When I started mixing for Tyler and Josh, they were on different IEMs from different manufacturers. It has been really good to find a brand they both like and are comfortable using. The team at 64 Audio has been super to work with.

“Tyler and Josh have the full vision of what they are trying to achieve onstage, and they are very good at communicating it with us. We are surrounded by like-minded people who are all very good at what they do and happy to be here. We had a lot of time and communication about the ideas we wanted to achieve on this tour, and we were able to collectively deliver what we all believe to be a very good product. One week into the shows, Kenny and I were talking about how we wouldn’t really want to change anything.”

### Josh De Jong, systems engineer

“Kenny and I discussed the initial PA design to come up with a base system, then, on a day-to-day basis, I adapt the system to suit the venue,” De Jong says. “While the show isn’t overly loud, the style of music has heavy bass drops; this was a major consideration in the system design, to provide even sub coverage while preserving the impact.

“Kenny and I really like the Clair Cohesion system,” he continues. “It consists of 18 Cohesion CO12 (main hangs per side), nine Cohesion CP218 II (flown subs), 16 Cohesion CO12 (side hangs), 16 Cohesion CO10 (rear hangs), 14 Cohesion CP218 IIs in a seven-zone arc array (floor subs), four Cohesion CF28s (in front of the stage), and four Cohesion CF10s (for the sides of stage). For tuning the PA, Kenny supplied me with a reference trace that I have loaded into [Rational Acoustics’] Smaart as a target curve; each day, I match the system to that curve. From there, we run some playback to listen to the show’s content. A key part of tuning this system has been keeping things consistent by working to keep PA positions and trim heights the same, which makes tuning a simpler process.”

*The Clancy World Tour* continues through November 26; a second leg, covering South America and Europe, begins in Bogotá, Colombia, and concludes with two shows at London’s O2 Arena on May 13 and 14. 

### Twenty One Pilot’s *Clancy World Tour*

#### Production Crew:

Production/Lighting Designer: Tyler “Shap” Shapard  
Programmer/Lighting Director: Tyler “Shap” Shapard  
Production Co-designer/Programmer: Dayne DeHaven  
Video Director: Adam Peck  
Video Engineer: James Gardner  
Creative Director: Mark Eshleman  
SFX Designer: Nick Arnold  
FOH Engineer: Kenny Sellars  
Monitor Engineer: Cliff Skinner  
Systems Engineer: Josh De Jong  
Tour Manager: Jake “JJ” Johnson  
Production Manager: Matt Doherty  
Production Coordinator: Sonja Stevenson  
Production Assistant: Gillian Miller  
Stage Manager: Larry Barcello

#### Production Companies:

Lighting: Solotech  
Video Gear: Nighthawk Video  
Video Content: Chris Schoenman  
Creative Direction: Reel Bear Media  
Staging/Rigging: All Access/Solotech  
Automation: Cyber Motion  
Lasers, Pyro, Cyro: Image SFX  
Props: AirWorks  
Sound Company: Clair Global