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Photo Credit: Theo Cox



SEAL WORLD TOUR



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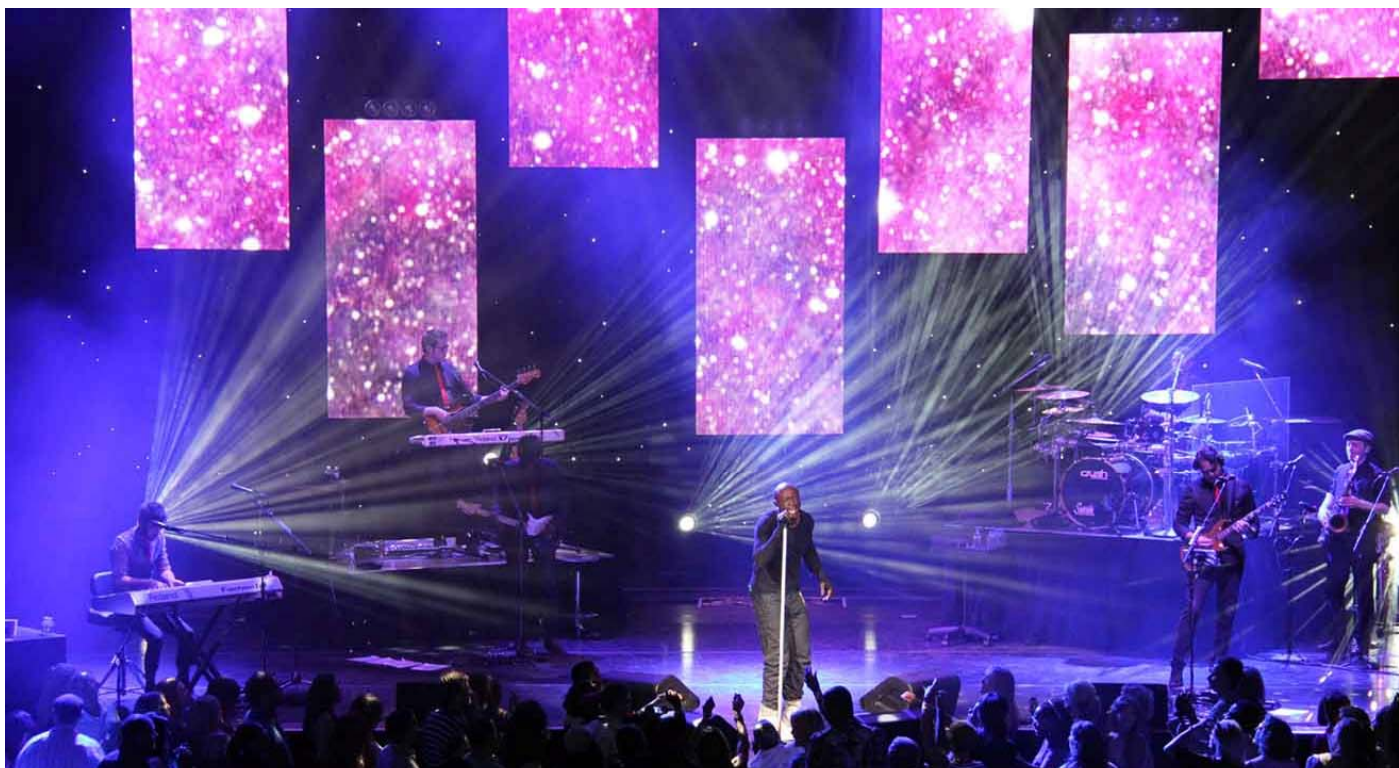
Theo Cox Creates Stunning Visual Design For Seal World Tour



Australia: Lighting designer Theo Cox's visual scheme for the current Seal world tour brings a fresh innovative approach, mixing the mediums of lighting, video and automation into a stunning asymmetric swirl of drama, suggestion and energy.

The design has proved extremely popular, and won much industry acclaim as the tour completed its first Australian and US legs. UK based Cox first worked with the multi-award winning musician/singer/songwriter Seal in summer 2011, and was then approached to create a design concept for the upcoming 'Soul 2' tour. Given a largely open brief for the design, it had to be adaptable to a variety of different venue sizes, ultimately tourable and use kit that could be sourced worldwide as well as fitting into an expedient truck pack! Evoking a clean, elegant and dynamically different look onstage was at the very core of the design. The only set onstage is a pair of risers, and so the stage architecture is defined by seven movable pods, each fitted with a 135cm by 270cm portrait-orientated video screen. A single **Clay Paky Sharpy** is rigged to the bottom of each pod, with 2 **Martin Atomic** strobes and colour scrollers on the rear of the frame assembly, and a 4-lite Mole at the top.

Before the tour commenced, Cox persuaded the band to re-work their stage layout so the drums were now off-centre. This avoided the often distracting conventional set up with the drum kit positioned immediately behind the main artist, and allowed better use of the central screens. They then started work on creating and sourcing new video content for the tour, run from a Catalyst media server, and researched the best screen options to support the pod design and desired look and feel of the performance space. For Australia they used the **Flyer 12** - its lightweight transparent surfaces were an ideal low-weight solution, and perfect for allowing the full impact of lights when blasting through from behind. The pods move into different positions throughout the show, adding a stunning new dynamic and extra depth to the visuals. Songs without video also benefit as the position of the screens also determines the position of the lights mounted on them. ▶



They utilised a Kinesys automation system with Vector control in Australia, changing to a ShowRig winch system with Navigator control for the US tour. The winch system

provides many benefits including fast, smooth running, reduced noise and rig time and taking up less truck space. They were able to fully integrate both Catalyst and Navigator systems so the media server constantly received positional information from the winch system. The screens were able to run continuous wave motion effects whilst displaying a coherent image – like seeing through moving windows to a large screen behind. The rear truss also moves – flying in to fill the gap when the screens are in their lower positions. The video clips are triggered by a mixture of time-code and manual cues, run either directly from the Catalyst or cued from Cox's **Road Hog Full Boar** lighting console. Lighting is based around a hub of **VL 3000 Spots** and **VL 3500 Washes**, with **VL 2500 Washes** for key lighting and kickers, and **VL 2500 Spots** for back lighting. Cox's lighting 'base concepts' included having individual moving back and key lights for each of the eight band members, and plenty of scope for 'flash and bang' interest.

For maximum flexibility and time efficiency, the rig was also designed so no manual focusing was necessary. Powerful spot and wash moving lights were required as the

primary moving sources, with minimal floor based 'clutter'. Having a handful of movers, strobes and generics at his disposal on automated pods was also one of the original intentions, allowing 'moving moving lights' and serious asymmetry. Cleverly evading the potential 'cheese factor', Cox incorporated both an **LED Starcloth** and a spectacular 32" mirror ball into the design, the latter dropping in on another winch from the mid truss during 'I'll Be Around' and at several other strategic points in the show.

Lighting, rigging and automation equipment was supplied by **Chameleon** in Australia, with video by **Big Picture**. Working alongside Cox on Seal's international touring crew was Lighting Crew Chief Tony Fagan and production manager J. Chris Lantz, ably assisted by Andy Neitzert. Cox sums up, "This was a great opportunity to design a beautiful, vibrant show for an artist I respect a lot, and I am extremely pleased with the result".

For more info about Theo Cox, visit: www.theocox.com or contact theo@theocox.com