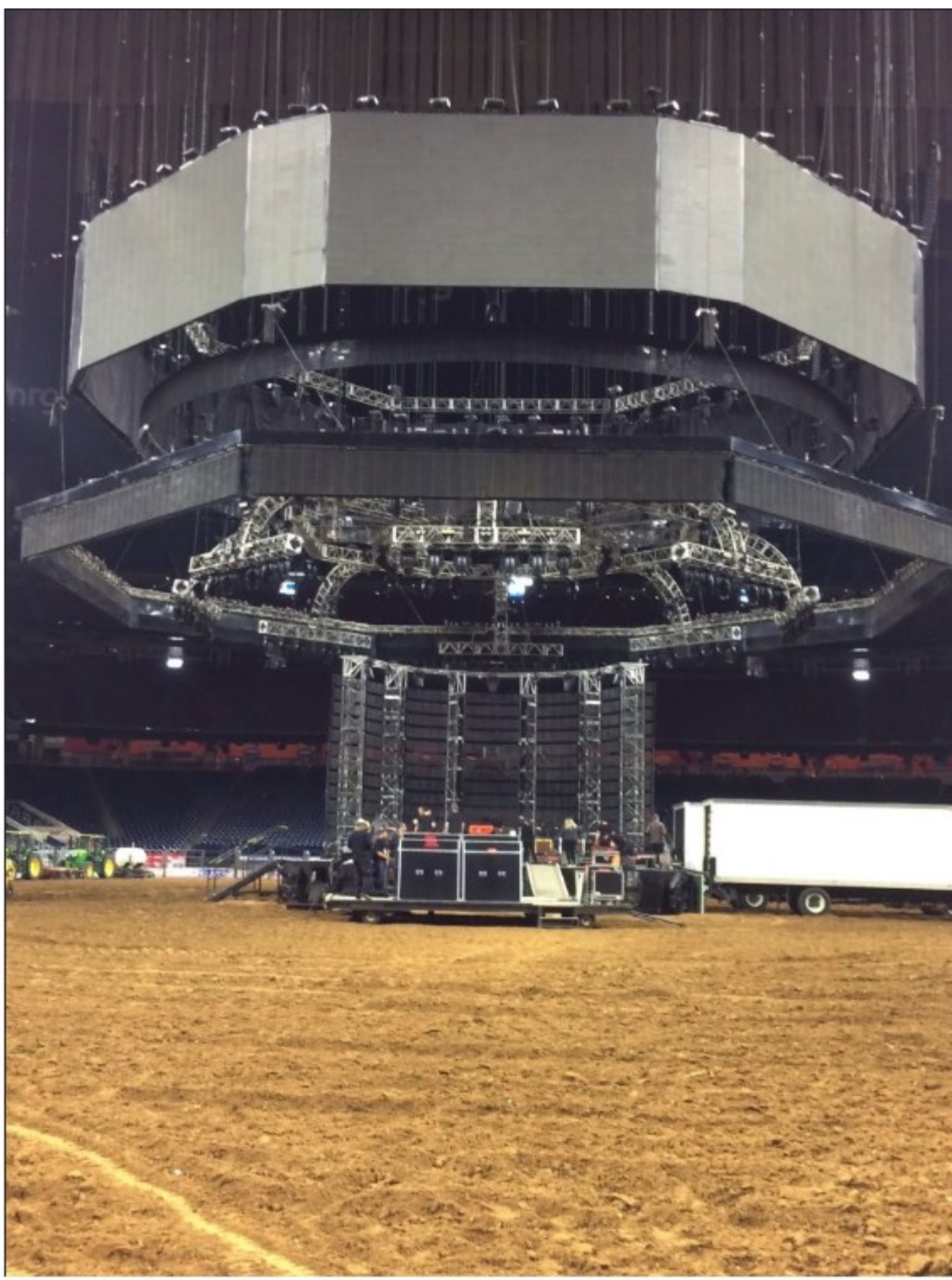


Ultra Modern Audio/Visual Technology Controls Houston's NRG Stadium



Houston, We Have Lift Off!

Sunday February 5th 2017 the stadium floor shown above hosted the New England Patriots and the Atlanta Falcons in Super Bowl LI. On Monday February 6th the stadium riggers were already assembling the monstrosity shown above. The centerpiece that would augment the world's most popular artists on a huge rotating stage in front of up to 75,000 rodeo fans at the world's largest rodeo, The Houston Livestock and Rodeo Show™. So what's the audio/visual backbone that supports not only the stadium pictured above but the huge exhibit halls adjacent to the show area?



A glimpse of the huge main control room that houses rows of engineers monitoring multiple angles throughout the huge complex

Let's start with miles of fiber optic cable running between the stadium and the state of the art technical control center located some two blocks away. As the nightly main stage performances begin the stage shown above rolls itself out into the arena from its nest some 50 yards away. A total of 21 speaker arrays are in place having been fine tuned to deliver exacting sound to both the floor level spectators and the upper level seats. The stars are already on board, it's show time. Like the giant space ship in Close Encounters of the Third Kind™ the monstrosity parks itself and the lights begin to come to life. LED blankets build a message array capable of replicating both words and graphics. One of the world's top stars walks out onto the rotating stage and Houston we have lift off. Thomas Ruffner of LD Systems shares, "It's amazing to see the stage and the arena come to life. On day one there is a concrete floor, the riggers are already at work, the very next morning there is a complete rodeo arena complete with the dirt you see on the floor now." Over in another massive building which houses the audio visual tech center, an extremely modern facility, workers scurry about on show nights making sure that the quality of the live performance is up to their standards. The technical facility itself would rival



any major television network control center with its room after room of engineers, raised floors, and server racks filled with high quality AV equipment. The man behind it all is the Managing Director of Audio Visual Presentation and Broadcast, Mr. James Davidson (shown on right). James notes, "Many of us have been in this department for over twenty years together. This level of commitment allows us to deliver a great show." Pictured on the left Malcolm Harper, President, ReelSound Productions Austin Tx.

One of technical considerations I found most interesting is the fact that the technical team stays on the look out for analog recording equipment that may not be manufactured any more. After all the rodeo has been around for 39 years and their storage vaults host some very interesting and rare footage. Imagine being able to see those shows again. Shown: Malcolm Harper, left, with visitors Jude Jarvis and Eric Jarvis. Eric is the owner of Crushpad Productions of Houston.



Sharing and Caring - Sharing and Caring - Along the winding corridors we came across a monitoring and control room filled with college audio visual students. Interns that were brought in and assigned production and over sight responsibilities for the main exhibit hall which is resident within the huge NRG Center Building. A real world application of audio visual production. This is a prime example of how the AV industry expands, through sharing and caring. What could be more befitting than a major organization such as the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ not only donating millions of dollars annually in scholarship money but opening the doors behind the scenes for new learners.

In closing - Space prohibits me from detailing everything I learned about the audio visual technology center of NRG Park but suffice it to say that a visitor comes away feeling refreshed about the convergence of modern technologies with older technologies. Additionally, the same feeling applies to the human side of the equation. These people have brought it all together - years of experience guiding youthful neophytes along the path to understanding a highly sophisticated craft in a real world setting. Now that's more than a little cool.

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ is the world's largest livestock show and rodeo. With more than 33,000 volunteers, the organization is a Section 501 (c)(3) charity that benefits youth, supports education and facilitates better