



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Doug Adams Discusses the Effects for Metallica's Death Magnetic World Tour

Doug Adams Interviewed: Metallica:

1- When you were young what would you tell your parents you wanted to do?

When I was a kid, I wanted to become a professional soccer player. I was also very heavy into martial arts. That's where I was going and focused in on that. My problem was I had broken a few bones several times and did some damage to my knee and my career in athletics was over around the age of 16. I had taken up music at the age of 12 and began playing in bands and doing small gigs through high school. I progressed and began playing at clubs by the age of 17. I always wrote my own stuff and it started to get serious at the age of 18. At that point in my career, I started touring and was signed to a record label with a band out of Los Angeles. One of the guys was out of Ottawa so on my downtime I spent many moments in time there. At that time, Gordon Hyndford who was our Lighting Director asked me to come and hang out with the crew. Gordon who was only 15 at the time introduced me to the guys at PSL (Professional Sound & Lighting) which had a small pyrotechnics division called Pyrotek. After doing a number of shows during my downtime, Gordon asked me to shoot some pyro cues as he was honest with his inability to hit the cues in time. I enjoyed the lighting but with my musical experience and timing I became the guy pushing the button. As time went on, I would go back to touring and during down time worked with PSL on lighting and pyro but really became fond of the pyro aspect.

2- How many years has it now been that you have worked with Metallica? You had for many years worked alongside and toured the world with them. After stepping away, do you ever miss the road and the touring life?

It's been 15 years now that I have worked alongside with Metallica. Do I miss the road? I don't miss the road at all. I don't miss the touring buses, I don't miss the catering, I don't miss the 7:00 AM load in and 2:00 AM load outs and getting 5 hours of sleep if you're lucky.

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3- If I asked Doug Adams that same question 15 years ago what would he say?

Loved It. Absolutely loved it!

4- Going into your design for the current Death Magnetic Tour, what inspired the idea of including lasers into the show?

That was Peter Mensch, Metallica's Manager. He wanted something different for the band and wanted to introduce lasers for the tour of their eighth studio album, *St. Anger*. It was the wrong type of laser technology at that time. What we attempted to accomplish wasn't really achievable based on the laser technology that was available. They were asking for logos and graphics without scrims so we projected on the ceilings which wouldn't come out clean and also get somewhat lost with lighting. The subs were vibrating so much that our tables could not sustain their alignment. It didn't last very long as we went through so many problems. So when Peter approached me again this time asking for lasers and whether there was a technology change, I responded "absolutely"! We had just the lasers for it, the air-cooled diode lasers.

5- Can you define your design of the lasers for "That was Just Your Life"? Tell me your game plan as to how you intended to design the laser effects?

I was working on specific tracks that I thought would work well for the band. However, John Broderick (Lighting Designer) approached me and explained that he wanted me to do lasers that would fill the arena for one song, for the whole song with minimal lighting and it was going to open the show. So no pressure...

6- 7+ minutes typically is a long act for a laser display, would you agree? Why did it work so well in this case?

Absolutely, it worked well because I did a number of time-cue changes and different looks. We were able to go very wide with the coffins in the arena as the stage is set up in the round. I had the lasers in the coffins outside the stage area doing a long throw. I had the lasers in the coffins above the stage really focused on the guys and boarding them. I really followed the whole feel of the music and tried to think where the guys were going to be and what they were going to be doing during certain parts. I tried to either silhouette them with the lasers or add accents around the mike stands where they were going to be. It's hard to tell where James is going to be at any given time so I had to have them all sequenced as James had the flexibility to go to any of the eight mike stands on the stage. He wanted to be able to have the flexibility to just do anything at any given time, any night, so we had to make it happen.

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7- What things did you find difficult to accomplish?

It's the 20th anniversary for *And Justice for All*, I was expecting a monstrous war scene for *One*. Going into the demos, I programmed a heavy full-on design for the band. There was a smoke issue with James. He really wanted us to try and produce the effects without emitting smoke. We were very limited with what we could do and had to become very creative. That brought us to the gas effects; we encompassed our Dragons, colored fire, and war flame effects on the deck which creates a low lying after-burn look. I did a very asymmetrical design with the Dragons and war flames. The color flames are hidden between the amps; the Dragons and war flames are all recessed beneath the grills under the stage so you don't see anything at all.

8- What safety measures do you have to account for the effect designs, and how do you orchestrate the safety measures to the band.

With the lasers, I terminate everything. I hit the down stage edges where I have the mirrors, I terminate around Lars and his drum kit and on the amp-line which is in the center. Nothing actually physically beam-wise or anything with intensity hits the band. That said, the laser part was actually easy, the hard part was the pyro end of it as always. I always have effects all over the place, in the grating, in the round and it's asymmetrical. I do a layout of the safe zones for the band; every microphone is a safe zone. The closest effect is eight feet back from the microphone so it doesn't matter if they are standing at the microphone at any time; if any pyro goes off they are always safe. I also had some spots that Kirk or Robert can drift and go to on the stage by Lars or the downstage edge. This is all done through rehearsals. I mark the zones with an "X" with their name, the pyro cue and song. James is never a problem, Robert is overly concerned which is good for me and I really focus on Kirk the most as he wonders quite a bit. As Reid Schult-Derne, our touring shooter, comes in for me the band can become a little uneasy. As we make this transition, I do this with anybody I work with; I circle the band during the rehearsals in the pit. I get their attention and ensure they see me before the cue and I point to their locations. We work on this so by the end of rehearsals everyone is comfortable and on the same page. If for any reason there is something out of line, we stick to our rule of thumb "when in doubt, leave it out".

9- With the current technology you use lasers that are a diode state, low power consumption, full color, high wattage output, with endless mounting capabilities. What, if any, expectations do you have for lasers in the entertainment world to take it to the next level?

I absolutely have expectations for laser technology advancements. I expect there to be holographic effects. It exists out there right now but you still need a foil screen

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and bounce reflection. It's not true holography. I want it to become true holography projection that is 360 degrees. Something that you can stand right beside and walk around that is life-sized. It will get there, no question.

10- As an entrepreneur, what keeps you up at night? When you constantly strive to make all our projects as great as they can be, constantly evolving, constantly refining, etc. can you ever go to sleep satisfied that what you've been working on is done? Is it ever done—or is it just “as far as you can take it today”.

There are times that we get requests for effects that we have and are told by clients how they want them to be utilized. When you know the effect can be so much more, it is difficult to see the creativity aspect of the design come short of its potential. I have what I want in my mind and what it should look like. I do stay up many nights thinking about what's next, what I can do that's going to blow everybody's mind, and when it doesn't do it, that can cause frustration. So I'm always thinking how we can step it up, change things up and be the innovator and not the imitator.

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