



# MOSTACK

*The North London rapper concludes a successful tour of venues across the UK and Ireland, with two headline shows at Brixton Academy. TPI’s Jacob Waite tracks down the visual team behind the artist’s biggest shows to date...*

Following the success of the North London artist’s debut album – *Stacko* – and consequent tour of academy venues across the UK and Ireland, the MoStack production team went back to the drawing board to devise two technologically advanced headline shows at Brixton Academy.

TPI sat down with creative specialists, Mandylights and recent winners of The Des Fallon Video Visionary Award at the TPI Awards 2020, More Eyes, to reflect on the landmark undertaking.

Leading the camp was TPI Awards Tour Manager of the Year, Trevor Williams of Tour Music Live – the production management firm behind urban music royalty: Stormzy, Wretch 32, Stefflon Don, Dave and Hamzaa. Following a similar trajectory to the aforementioned artists, MoStack’s tour required enforcement from a loyal band of suppliers and creatives in

Mandylights, More Eyes, Lights Control Rigging, Major Tom / Colonel Tom and KB Trucking.

Mandylights was brought in to oversee the full creative production design and onsite execution for the project, with Lighting Designer, Tom Edwards dealing with the programming and show delivery. Mandylights provided a show producer who, in this case, was Steve Bewley, who worked closely with visual vendor, Lights Control Rigging to fit all the pieces together and was also responsible for the show calling and delivery.

He explained the importance of working with familiar faces in the field. “We definitely have a great working relationship with Lights Control Rigging,” he commented. “It’s hugely important to use companies we know and work well with. After all, it’s a combined effort to produce a show from






  
 #liquidinspiration

Depence<sup>2</sup>

 Multimedia

SHOW CONTROL & VISUALIZATION

- » Stage Lighting
- » Special FX & Laser
- » Fountain Simulation
- » Architecture & Landscape

WWW.DEPENCE.COM



the ground up.” During the performance, the artist was always the main focal point, with two huge curved LED screens wrapped around an elevated platform upstage. Not to mention a giant ego riser became his playground during the show.

“We needed a strong identity to the show that was IMAG heavy as Mo was the main focal point to the 4,500-strong crowd in Brixton,” commented Edwards.

Bewley continued: “We started sketching the design at our Newcastle office before putting it in to Depence 2, which helped us visualise the confetti, pyro and CO<sup>2</sup> effectively to show the client exactly how the show was going to look. We then expanded the show file to suit the one-off design, which then went in to our previs suite for a week before the show to ensure everything was ready for show number one.”

Bewley explained that the team had been involved in a lot of shows at Brixton Academy. He said: “We know how far we can push the rigging capabilities and how to get the most out of the venue, yet remain within the space and budget restrictions – not to mention being installed twice.”

Using their knowledge of the space, the team pushed the parameters of the venue to the limit. “We love the challenge and always enjoy producing shows in Brixton Academy,” Edwards reflected. “Especially when it’s an important milestone in the artist’s career.”

The LD pointed out GLP JDC1 and Robe LEDBeam 150 fixtures as the perfect combination of “stunning” looks, strong enough to punch through the vast amount of video to give the show plenty of stunning moments. “Robe BMFL Robospots were used to light Mo and others onstage,” Edwards recalled. “We used the advanced points in Brixton to be able to cut upstage under the video screens. Being able to control these from the console gave the show the precision it required.”

An overhead array of 64 Martin by Harman MAC Auras were among the punchy looks, offering a huge amount of different effects and chases. “Having the entire show on timecode made a huge difference in accenting every snare and hit on this genre,” he said. The only issue the designers encountered was the time they had to load the sheer amount of production

in, update and prepare for the show within 24 hours. “There were a lot of moving parts to this show that required a lot of ends to meet at the right time,” Bewley recounted.

“Production Box by LCR provided production management on the Brixton show days to ensure people were in the right place at the right time throughout the load in. The stage build and video screen build were the longest parts of the load in.”

With two sold-out shows at Brixton Academy, the larger production made for a dynamic screen design, which meant more scope for creative visuals and live camera mixing.

Brought on board by Mandylights was More Eyes. “It is crucial to have a solid team with big productions,” More Eyes’ Pete Thornton said. “It’s reassuring to work on a show with trusted fellow professionals that you know will deliver a fantastic show. It allows everyone to focus on what they are good at and not have to worry about the other elements of the show.”

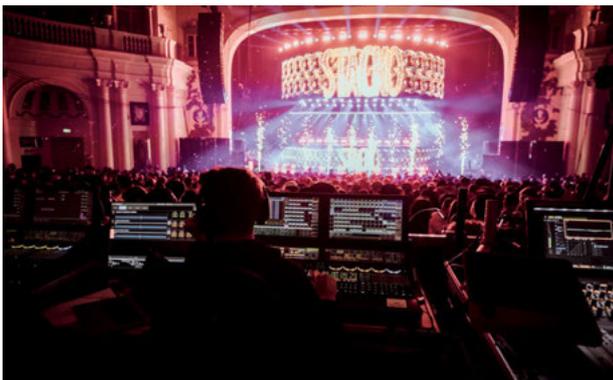
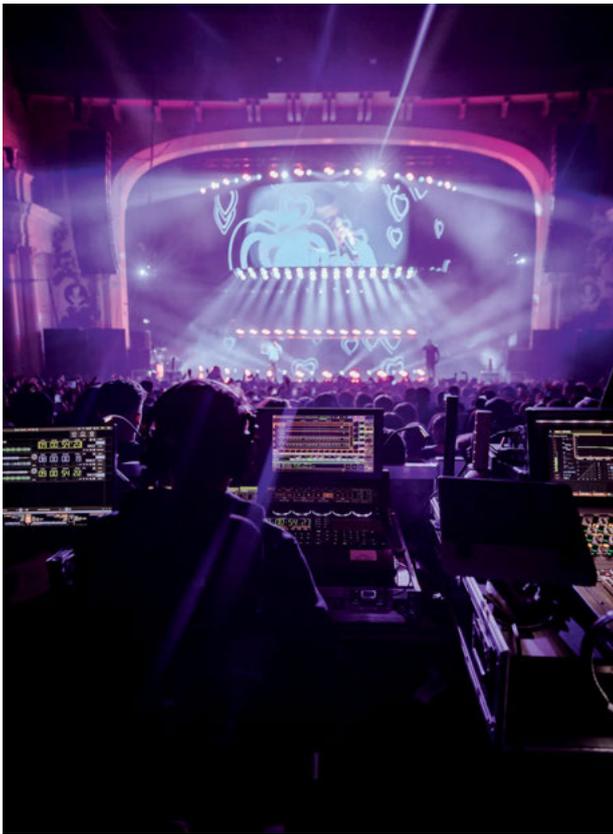
More Eyes’ Matt Sharp oversaw the content creation and animation, while Thornton took charge of the video editing, programming, mapping, live camera effects in Resolume and live VJ playback for both shows.

Mandylights shared its initial stage design, screen specs and a few loose ideas regarding the style of content to the AV specialist. More Eyes then came back with a mood board detailing concepts that would work well within the production timeline.

Thornton acknowledged: “Quite often we have a mix of content consisting of 3D animation, motion graphics, animated images and live camera feeds with real-time effects being applied – either with Notch or in Resolume.”

The More Eyes team was trusted to put its own stamp on the visuals. Thornton said: “Once we’ve programmed our show file, we’ll go back through it all track-by-track with Mandylights and tweak the colour schemes, finalise some overlay graphics and sound reactive elements to make sure the lighting and visuals are as synced as possible.”

The artist and management had one primary request, which was to design and create an animated 3D version of MoStack’s bracelet. For this,



More Eyes worked with Tom Wall and Satoko Wall from BlinkinLab to develop and animate various versions of the bracelet.

Taking the physical screen size and shape into consideration, the animations were made to scroll around the stage in multiple positions and layouts.

“The bracelet was custom built specifically for the curved screen and looked fantastic on the split screen setup,” Sharp commented. “The bracelet animations were dotted throughout the show, allowing us to create a real identity – particularly between songs and during the moments MoStack was talking to the crowd.”

During points of the show, a visual feast of lighting, visuals, cameras and pyro hit in sync to illustrate the well-crafted stage design. Thornton explained: “Quite often you get ropey camera feeds that are badly lit or badly operated, but these were on point. The extra-wide screen meant we had to vignette a lot of the camera feeds, which actually worked brilliantly and allowed us to create some lovely compositions, merging the live effects with different backgrounds.” In summary, Thornton shared: “It was a great show to work on. I wouldn’t be surprised to see MoStack selling out bigger shows in the future.”

TPI

*Photos courtesy of Mandylights*  
[www.mostack.co](http://www.mostack.co)  
[www.tourmusiclive.com](http://www.tourmusiclive.com)  
[www.mandylights.com](http://www.mandylights.com)  
[www.moreeyes.co.uk](http://www.moreeyes.co.uk)

# SolaPix

Wash light – with an Edge



Get your Pix fix  
[highend.com/solapix](http://highend.com/solapix)



[etconnect.com](http://etconnect.com)

HIGH END SYSTEMS



an ETC Company

[highend.com](http://highend.com)