

Kristin Sarbeck

Subject: FW: April 12, 2006 Newsletter



VENUES**today**

"The news behind the headlines"

Dear Kristin,

April 12, 2006 VOL. V, Number XII ISSN 1547-4143

Welcome to your **Venues Today** weekly e-newsletter, full of the latest live entertainment industry news. For a full calendar listing, to view archives or to subscribe to *Venues Today*, visit our Web site at www.venuestoday.com.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"The only thing that didn't go our way was the news that Wembley Stadium wasn't going to open in May. It was irritating the newspaper headlines were referring to 'Wembley gigs chaos' that had nothing to do with us." — Peter Tudor, Wembley Arena general manager, on grand reopening overshadowed by problems at another venue

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VENUE NEWS



Performance space and exterior, McKinney Performing Arts Center

HISTORIC COURTHOUSE CONVERTED INTO PERFORMANCE VENUE

After three years and \$9 million in restorations, the historic McKinney (Texas) Performing Arts Center (MPAC) has been transformed from a courthouse into an intimate venue for music and art performances, lectures, movies, offices and meetings.

The conversion of the previously vacant Collin County Courthouse was overseen by the

Texas Historical Commission, which worked with the city to ensure that remaining historic artifacts were preserved and that improvements replicated the site's history.

Architect David Chase, of ArchiTexas in Dallas, said the biggest challenge with this project was designing the venue to double as a courtroom. "We had to make sure the stage was removable and the lighting trusses could come down, which was not easy. We also restored the original witness stand, judge's bench and jury box with casters so they could be rolled into place for the courtroom," he said. "The county did not want evidence of the theater if the courtroom was in use." He said these factors didn't add to the cost of the project.

Also, since this project was a unique rehabilitation, Chase was able to take liberties with the historical landmark that he would not otherwise have been allowed to take. "We were allowed to do things we wouldn't normally do to a landmark. For example, we took a 25-foot wall section out and installed sliding doors, so the space could be used as one or two rooms. We also added partition walls for corridors and restrooms," he said.

The courthouse, designed in the French Second Empire style, was completed in 1875. The steep mansard roof was ornamented with patterned shingles, decorative cut stone and two towers tapering towards the sky. Then, in 1927, the courthouse was remodeled in the Neoclassical Revival Style, based on the use of Greek and Roman architectural forms. The towers were removed and concrete columns were added to the eastern and western building facades. Floor levels were changed, a basement and third floor were added, and the exterior was clad in buff brick.

The building remained in use until 1979, when Collin County's offices moved to the present-day courthouse on McDonald St.

Today, the 23,023-square-foot courthouse is home to several city-funded arts organizations. Working artist studios and executive suites also are available for non-profit organizations to lease.

MPAC includes a 440-seat theater in place of the courtroom. A collapsible stage is built in front of the judge's bench and witness stand, which were left intact. A conference room has the latest in audio-visual technology and other amenities including a reception hall and a small auditorium. The county's old record vault, which uses the same safe-style door, is now an art gallery, with display features and lighting. The venue features maple floors, marble wainscoting and decorative accents designed to create a warm and inviting environment. The abundance of windows throughout the building give each room natural light

Wath said the city is in discussions with a local Justice of the Peace to possibly utilize MPAC as a night court three to four times a year. "But it is not the county's intent to use the building as a courthouse," she said. Collin County is leasing the building to the City of McKinney for \$1 each year for 99 years.

Organizations involved in the restoration project included the McKinney Community Development Corporation, the City of McKinney, Collin County and several community volunteers and donors

Corporate donors for the project included Encore Wire, which donated \$70,000 in wiring; Market Street, which provided \$30,000 to furnish the catering prep area; the Ruschhaupt family, who donated \$100,000; and Mark and Sherry Tucker David, who donated \$50,000 for two pianos, music stands and funds for a performance series. Noble Hall is named for Sherry Tucker-David's mother, Marjorie Noble Tucker. The

McKinney Garden Club donated funds for landscaping and outdoor furniture. Rick Mathews, of Dallas Organ Works, installed and repaired the vintage Mighty Wurlitzer theater pipe organ. Located in the back of the courtroom theater, the instrument will be used for concerts, silent movie shows and background music.

A grand opening ceremony was held on April 1 and included a ribbon-cutting by McKinney Mayor Bill Whitfield and free guided tours for the public. According to Amy Rosenthal, head of MPAC's events and development, more than 600 people attended.

On Saturday night, a gala was held for 500 notable community members and city officials from surrounding communities, who paid \$125 each to attend the black tie event. The 1920s-themed celebration of the city's history and culture also featured a local painter-sculptor, a pianist, a singing trio and a 1920's musical revue by Eclipse Entertainment. A number of local artists also exhibited their pieces throughout the building.

Windy Krispin, a Dallas caterer, provided food for the event. Guests dined on hors d'oeuvres on all three floors, including beef tenderloin, hill country elk loin, honey black pepper chicken, a selection of domestic and imported cheeses, a mashed potato bar and vanilla ice cream sundaes. Wath estimated the total cost of the gala at \$60,000.

Rosenthal said the theater seeks artists, shows, dance troops, musicians and visual artists. "We are still working on defining our season. A new staff has recently taken over, including theater director David Taylor, formerly interim director at the Sangamon Auditorium at the University of Illinois in Springfield," she said. MPAC's marketing budget for the 2005/2006 season is \$104,000.

This month, MPAC will host cowboy poet Michael Martin Murphy on April 27 and To Kill A Mockingbird April 22, 23, 28, 29 and 30.

"Even though the facility is McKinney's, we want it to be available to everyone from the surrounding communities," Rosenthal said. — Lisa White

Interviewed for this story: David Chase, (214) 748-4561; Amy Rosenthal, (972) 547-2650; Tracy Wath, (972) 547-2650

Arena Square, Wembley Arena



WEMBLEY ARENA REOPENS WITH \$61 MILLION NEW LOOK

Wembley Arena hosted Madonna's "Comeback" tour in 2004, but since then, the northwest London arena has been preparing its own comeback with a \$61 million revamp that culminated in a grand re-opening on April 2.

The star attraction of the opening night was Depeche Mode, which ended its European tour — its first in four years — at Wembley Arena. Tickets were sold at around \$52.50 (U.S.). The venue is booked and managed by Live Nation.

"It was strangely emotional watching the audience come back after seeing electricians

on site for so long," said Peter Tudor, Wembley Arena general manager, who presented the band with an award to commemorate the special occasion in front of an audience of 12,400.

Tudor added: "The moment we opened the doors and the crowds walked through, a lot of people ground to a halt. The building has changed so much." Foster and Partners, together with HOK Sport designed the renovation.

The biggest transformation since Wembley Arena closed 15 months ago is that the entrance is at the opposite end, formerly a gloomy forecourt facing a disused bingo hall. Now the entrance is a new public space called Arena Square that boasts an interactive water fountain with buttons that people can press to make it dance.

In fact, the only remaining likeness to the old arena is the Art Deco portion, a protected building with a new, gleaming white façade.

Inside the venue is a 200-seat restaurant that opens three hours before each show, as well as four dedicated fast food outlets on the concourses. There are also six dedicated bars on the concourses, up from four previously. About \$524,000 worth of equipment was acquired to deliver chilled beer to the units along the concourse.

Other changes include a new capacity of 12,400 fans (up from 11,929 previously), a total of 144 toilets (up from 88 previously) and a significant rise in wheelchair use spaces (to 42 from 24 previously).

A new hospitality facility can hold up to 200 people at shows.

The parking lot has 1,600 spaces and there are plans to add more space from adjoining plots of land.

The backstage area has also received a makeover with all artist dressing rooms now having fully tiled shower cubicles and contemporary fittings. "There is now a covered surface yard backstage which means that people loading and unloading aren't so affected by freezing weather or rain," said Tudor.

To improve the building's acoustics, \$524,737 worth of TufSound acoustic paneling has just been installed on each of the four internal walls of the auditorium, reducing reverberation and creating a softer acoustic environment.

"The only thing that didn't go our way was the news that Wembley Stadium wasn't going to open in May," said Tudor, referring to the further delays announced by its neighboring venue (see story in next week's e-newsletter). "It was irritating the newspaper headlines were referring to 'Wembley gigs chaos' that had nothing to do with us."

Fortunately, the opening night was a success, and in addition, Wembley Arena was able to announce a few days later that it had sold out seven shows for Madonna in August. "That's not bad given the prices of the Madonna shows," Tudor said. Tickets for Madonna were priced \$139.95 to \$279.89.

The demographics of target audiences change constantly depending on the event or artists performing, according to Natalie Glass, commercial and marketing executive, Wembley Arena — Live Nation. "For example Apassionata [horse show, April 14-15] attracts a family-based audience, while McFly draws in the young pop listeners," she said.

Depeche Mode attracted a large number of 30- and 40-somethings as the core fan base were teenagers in the late 1980s through early 1990s.

Among the events scheduled for the Arena are:

Il Divo, April 11-12

Apassionata, April 15-16

WWE Raw & Smackdown, April 21-22

Jeff Wayne's Musical War of The Worlds, April 25

Celtic Tiger Starring Michael Flatley, April 18 & 26

Santana, May 12-13

Westlife, May 18-19

Dame Shirley Bassey, June 9

Black Eyed Peas, June 16

The Eagles, June 18

Billy Joel, July 10

Madonna, Aug. 1, 3, 9, 10, 12, 13 & 15

Johnny Mathis, Sept. 20

Andrea Bocelli, Oct. 8

Disney On Ice — The Princess Classics, Oct. 11–15 & 17–24

Tom Jones, Oct. 28

Cliff Richard, Nov. 4, 5, 7, 8 & 9

Basement Jaxx, Dec. 2

— Ali Qassim

Interviewed for this story: Peter Tudor, 00 44 208 795 8073, Natalie Glass, 00 44 20 8 585 3676

Steve Womack



FACES & PLACES: NEW SECURITY FIRM FORMED, A 'MR. AUDITORIUM' DIES, OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

Pete Kranske and **Mike Harrison** have announced the formation of **Landmark Event Staff Services Corporation**. For Kranske, it's déjà vu, having formed Contemporary Services Corporation with Damon Zumwalt more than 30 years ago. Harrison worked for CSC for a number of years, before leaving to practice law and enjoy traveling less, but when Kranske called, he was delighted to get back into the sports and entertainment business.

Kranske will serve as president and COO and headquarters will be in his hometown, Fort Collins, Colo. Harrison will work out of his home in Irvine, Calif. Both have been making the rounds of industry conferences and conventions as they also shuffle paperwork to apply for licenses in various states, much more of a chore than it was decades ago with today's Department of Homeland Security clearances. However, it's still a state by state process, Harrison said.

No clients have been secured to date, but feelers are out. Kranske said the Landmark goals are three: good service to clients, good service to their fans and good service to our employees. "We know how to start new branches," he said of the duo's expertise.

"It's a repeat," he said. "It's kind of exciting to go through all those challenges again

and hopefully the second time you don't have to work quite as hard because you're working a little smarter...The first time we started from ground level and learned by doing. That was a good way to do it. We tried only to make the mistakes once. This time, hopefully, we know where the pitfalls are and it's a matter of doing what needs to be done. But there's a lot more to do than there was in 1967, our first event, or 1972, when we incorporated."

He predicted Landmark will sign its first client within a month and will be providing services by mid-summer. They are determining where the recruiting pools lie.

Experience is also a trademark for **Steve Womack**, the new general manager of the **Rabobank Arena, Theater & Convention Center**, Bakersfield, Calif., for SMG. Womack had been assistant general manager to Jim Foss, who left to take the head job at Glendale (Ariz.) Arena. Womack assumed his new post March 11. He also served as senior director of finance.

When Womack started at Rabobank Arena when the facility opened in 1998, it was managed by Ogden Entertainment Services, which was then bought out by SMG. That was his déjà vu. Womack's career includes several mergers and acquisitions and his viewpoint has always been from the finance department. He worked for RJR Nabisco when it was acquired by KKR for \$25 billion and he worked for ESPN-ABC, when it was bought by Disney. "Then I went to Ogden and two years later it was bought by SMG," he said.

SMG has given him a great opportunity with this move, he continued. Always in finance, though he dabbled in a little of everything as assistant GM, he now has the whole pie — booking, marketing, sales, box office, finance — to oversee. His first order of business is human resources. He's looking within to promote two people to fill his old jobs, assistant GM and director of finance, and then he'll be looking for their replacements. The change has opened up a lot of opportunity for the 35-member staff that oversees the three building complex plus the ice arena.

He's also gearing up for the arena's fourth minor league team, a new NBDL franchise, the Bakersfield Jam, which starts play in mid-November. "That's 24 more games on the schedule. We'll be even busier next year."

Michelle Swann, general manager of the Cobb Galleria Centre, Atlanta, is looking for a new managing director for the under-construction, \$145-million **Cobb Energy Performing Arts Center**, which opens in September 2007. **Wendy Riggs**, current managing director, has agreed to stay on until her replacement is found.

Riggs joined the facility from Fox Theatre nearly two years ago. Swann confirmed that she resigned for personal reason, which the local paper reported was to spend more time with her young children. She will stay on as a consultant for six months.

On a sad note, **Don Myers**, one of the founding members of the International Association of Assembly Managers [IAAM] and recipient of the IAAM's Mr. Auditorium and McElravy Awards for contributions to the industry, died April 2 in Germany at the age of 91.

Myers was manager of the **Allen County War Memorial Coliseum** from 1951-1982, which included the two years it was under construction. His 30-year record stands today. The coliseum has only had four managers in its 54-year history.

Randy Brown, the current manager who has been there 15 years now, said the funeral in Ft. Wayne was held April 6. Myers had been living in Germany with his son for the

past two years. He was brought home and the funeral procession included a drive-by at the coliseum, so the staff could come out and bid him a final farewell.

"This place conceivably wouldn't have been here if it hadn't been through the energy and talent of Don Myers," Brown said. "He was a Junior Jaycee and they coordinated the drive that lead to a referendum to get the coliseum built. He became the first manager and was so for 30 years."

IAAM recognized him "as one of the pioneers of our industry," Brown added. He managed a venue in the days the auditorium manager did it all, from driving Elvis Presley and Frank Sinatra around town to turning off the lights. "He was one of the grand old men of show biz," Brown said, a notion seconded by Roy Saunders, retired from managing the Tulsa, Okla., facilities, and a contemporary to Myers. The coliseum opened in 1952. There weren't a lot of facilities at that time, Brown noted.

"His whole career was there in that same building," Saunders said of Myers. "I had started in Topeka then moved to Utica, N.Y. and opened a new building; then went to Bakersfield and opened that new building and then came here [Tulsa] and stayed. Charlie McElravy had gotten a little irritated with me for not staying in one place for too long." Myers did stay in one place, but like Saunders, he started as manager. Few facility managers at that time worked their way up. They learned the rules from the top of the game.

Myers was quite the joker. He liked to carry around a big thick book entitled "Everything I Know About Auditorium Management," which contained only blank pages. At 80, he proudly wore a T-shirt advertising his age.

He was a IAAM District II vice president and served as budget chairman for the fledgling organization. "I helped him put together the first IAAM trade show. It was in the halls of the hotel, it wasn't even in a hotel ballroom," Saunders remembered. "American Seating was one of the first to exhibit. This would have been 1960 or so."

"When Charlie Burns took over as the first fulltime paid executive for IAAM, the association gave Don the money and tickets for a week's vacation in Hawaii for his work starting the trade show."

Myers shared another distinction with Saunders; both received both the IAAM Mr. Auditorium Award and the McElravy Award which replaced it. Saunders went on to become president of IAAM. Myers didn't want that job, though "we tried to get him to run for president. He would have made a good one," Saunders said. Myers gave back to the industry he helped fashion above and beyond his 30 year career. He is survived by a new breed of Mr. Auditorium and by two children, a son Gary and daughter, Myra. — Linda Deckard

Interviewed for this story: Steve Womack, (661) 852-7302; Michelle Swann, (770) 955-8000; Pete Kranske, (970) 481-1398; Mike Harrison, (714) 293-4248; Randy Brown, (260) 482-9502; Roy Saunders, (918) 743-6904

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BOOKINGS



HOT tickets

NICKELBACK, CHESNEY & NCAA HELP PAY THE LIGHT BILL

HOT TICKETS is a weekly summary of the top acts and ticket sales as reported to **Venues Today** e-newsletter. Following are the top 20 concerts and events, the top 5 in each seating capacity category, which took place since March 14, 2006. To submit reports, e-mail HotTickets@venuestoday.com or fax to

(714) 378-0040.

The **Hot Tickets** this week as reported to **Venues Today**:

15,001 or More Seats

1) *Gross Sales:* \$3,602,400; *Event:* National Collegiate Athletic Association First and Second Round Men's Tournament; *Venue:* **Wachovia Complex, Philadelphia**; *Attendance:* 60,150; *Ticket Range:* \$60; *Promoter:* NCAA; *Dates:* March 17-19; *No. of Shows:* 3

2) *Gross Sales:* \$3,373,380; *Event:* National Collegiate Athletic Association Division 1 Men's Basketball First and Second Round Games; *Venue:* **The Palace of Auburn Hills (Mich.)**; *Attendance:* 56,223; *Ticket Range:* \$60; *Promoter:* Palace Sports & Entertainment; *Dates:* March 17-19; *No. of Shows:* 3

3) *Gross Sales:* \$1,710,882; *Event:* Kenny Chesney; *Venue:* **Xcel Energy Center Arena, St. Paul, Minn.**; *Attendance:* 28,480; *Ticket Range:* \$64.25-\$54.25; *Promoter:* AEG Live, G.A.M.E Inc., The Messina Group; *Dates:* April 7-8; *No. of Shows:* 2

4) *Gross Sales:* \$1,502,919; *Event:* Kenny Chesney; *Venue:* **Qwest Center Omaha**

(Neb.); Attendance: 26,192; Ticket Range: \$64.50-\$54.50; Promoter: AEG Live, TBA Entertainment, The Messina Group; Dates: April 5-6; No. of Shows: 2

5) *Gross Sales: \$1,175,643; Event: Coldplay; Venue: **Continental Airlines Arena, East Rutherford, N.J.**; Attendance: 17,934; Ticket Range: \$173.25-\$38.50; Promoter: Live Nation; Dates: March 25; No. of Shows: 1*

10,001 - 15,000 Seats

1) *Gross Sales: \$511,166; Event: Kenny Chesney; Venue: **United Spirit Arena, Lubbock, Texas**; Attendance: 9,752; Ticket Range: \$63.50-\$53.50; Promoter: AEG Live, The Messina Group; Dates: March 30; No. of Shows: 1*

2) *Gross Sales: \$371,111; Event: Nickelback; Venue: **Verizon Wireless Arena, Manchester, N.H.**; Attendance: 9,490; Ticket Range: \$42.50-\$39.50; Promoter: AEG Live, Concerts West, Fastlane Concerts, The Messina Group; Dates: March 30; No. of Shows: 1*

3) *Gross Sales: \$364,388; Event: Nickelback; Venue: **Charleston (W.Va.) Civic Center**; Attendance: 9,440; Ticket Range: \$39.50; Promoter: AEG Live, Concerts West, Fastlane Concerts, The Messina Group; Dates: March 26; No. of Shows: 1*

4) *Gross Sales: \$328,522; Event: Nickelback; Venue: **Wachovia Arena at Casey Plaza, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.**; Attendance: 8,795; Ticket Range: \$39.50; Promoter: AEG Live, Concerts West, Fastlane Concerts, The Messina Group; Dates: March 28; No. of Shows: 1*

5) *Gross Sales: \$311,655; Event: Nickelback; Venue: **Roanoke (Va.) Civic Center**; Attendance: 8,423; Ticket Range: \$39.50; Promoter: AEG Live, Concerts West, Fastlane Concerts, The Messina Group; Dates: March 21; No. of Shows: 1*

5,001 - 10,000 Seats

1) *Gross Sales: \$2,386,386; Event: Madea Goes To Jail; Venue: **The Liacouras Center, Philadelphia**; Attendance: 49,563; Ticket Range: \$64-\$51; Promoter: Art Primus; Dates: March 15-26; No. of Shows: 12*

2) *Gross Sales: \$1,332,260; Event: David Gilmour; Venue: **Radio City Music Hall, New York**; Attendance: 11,920; Ticket Range: \$150-\$60; Promoter: CPI, Metropolitan Talent Presents, Radio City Entertainment; Dates: April 4-5; No. of Shows: 2*

3) *Gross Sales: \$664,870; Event: Black Eyed Peas; Venue: **Gibson Amphitheatre at Universal CityWalk, Universal City, Calif.**; Attendance: 12,042; Ticket Range: \$65-\$35; Promoter: Grass Roots Productions, House of Blues Concerts, Suave Entertainment; Dates: March 28-29; No. of Shows: 2*

4) *Gross Sales: \$495,531; Event: Larry The Cable Guy; Venue: **Sovereign Center, Reading, Pa.**; Attendance: 11,869; Ticket Range: \$41.75; Promoter: Outback Concerts; Dates: March 30-31; No. of Shows: 2*

5) *Gross Sales: \$486,245; Event: Juan Gabriel; Venue: **Theater at Madison Square Garden, New York**; Attendance: 5,424; Ticket Range: \$150-\$60; Promoter: Cardenas Marketing Network; Dates: March 31; No. of Shows: 1*

5,000 or Fewer Seats

1) *Gross Sales:* \$6,589,638; *Event:* The Lion King; *Venue:* **Civic Center of Greater Des Moines (Iowa)**; *Attendance:* 112,592 *Ticket Range:* \$125-\$22.50; *Promoter:* In-House; *Dates:* March 3-April 9 *No. of Shows:* 45

2) *Gross Sales:* \$2,110,060; *Event:* Mamma Mia; *Venue:* **Temple Hoyne Buell Theatre, Denver**; *Attendance:* 36,067; *Ticket Range:* \$70-\$25; *Promoter:* Denver Center Attractions; *Dates:* March 14-26; *No. of Shows:* 16

3) *Gross Sales:* \$1,052,968; *Event:* Little Women; *Venue:* **Broward Center For The Performing Arts, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.**; *Attendance:* 19,459; *Ticket Range:* \$68-\$20; *Promoter:* In-House, Live Nation; *Dates:* March 14-26; *No. of Shows:* 16

4) *Gross Sales:* \$430,674; *Event:* R. Kelly; *Venue:* **James L. Knight Center, Miami**; *Attendance:* 7,238; *Ticket Range:* \$65-\$45; *Promoter:* Fantasma; *Dates:* March 23-24; *No. of Shows:* 2

5) *Gross Sales:* \$414,671; *Event:* Lord of the Dance; *Venue:* **Fox Theatre, Atlanta**; *Attendance:* 8,960; *Ticket Range:* \$51.50-\$41.50; *Promoter:* BACI Entertainment; *Dates:* March 24-26; *No. of Shows:* 4
Compiled by Kristin Sarbeck, HotTickets@venuestoday.com

2006 tour logo



DEF LEPPARD & JOURNEY SHARE STAGE & BACKSTAGE ON TOUR

Coordinating the crews and entourages of two headliners is the challenge facing the workers behind the scenes of the upcoming co-headlining U.S. shed tour by Def Leppard and Journey. The outing, promoted by Live Nation, kicks off on June 23 in Camden, N.J., at the Tweeter Center and is slated to wrap up on Aug. 31 at the White River Amphitheater in Seattle.

The outing comes just six months after legendary British metallers Leppard wrapped their previous tour.

Arthur Kemish, working his first tour as production manager for Leppard, said that while much remains up in the air, what he does know is that each band will give their fans a distinctive, electrifying show. "We're still in the planning stage, but we know that people will see two totally separate shows, but one great show," he said. "The look proposed for the Journey stage is distinct and when we take the stage it will be a totally different design." That's courtesy of rolling sets, which will find Journey's setup rolling back after their opening slot as the Leppard pieces are rolling on in their place. Kemish isn't sure yet how long the changeover will take, but he will, of course, try to make the switch as quickly as possible.

Leppard will use at least seven 53-foot semis to haul their gear, including the sound system, merchandise, risers, lighting rigs, video equipment and the backline. There will be at least two more semis for Journey's gear, as well as almost a dozen buses for the

band's crew.

The plan is to begin the set-up for each show at 8 a.m. and to get Leppard off stage after their sound check by 4:30 p.m., at which point their set will push back and the Journey set will be pushed forward to let the Bay Area-band do their sound check. Kemish said his crew will consist of four techs on the backline and a local crew that could range from eight to 10 on the changeover. At stage call in the morning, he expects to have around two dozen local hands on site to set up, including four loaders. He hasn't figured out how many riggers will be working the show yet. Load in should take four or five hours and tear down will typically begin before Leppard finishes its set and will likely take between two and two and a half-hours, he said.

Though Kemish hasn't worked with Leppard in the past — his resume includes stints with Shania Twain and Metallica — he said the band's show looks "huge" from the drawings he's working from. "There's nothing brand new that no one's used before," he said of the lights and sound equipment. "But we will use it well." The groups will share a lighting and a V-DOSC sound rig, provided by Premier Global Productions and Sound Image, respectively, but each will have their own sound engineer and lighting designer. It has not yet been decided what kind of video screens will flank the stage.

One of Journey's tour managers, John "JT" Toomey, said the band's entourage includes the five musicians, himself, plus an assistant road manager and a bag handler, in addition to nine people in the crew party and five drivers for the band's five buses. Merchandise for Journey will be handled by FEA, which is the band's exclusive merchandiser, while Bravado will be handling merch for Leppard.

"What you're really looking at is a marriage of two separate entities who are coming together for the summer," said Toomey. "You're marrying the two band's crews and everything else, without eliminating anything, really. The only real difference is the merchandise, which means instead of just ours, you'll have two bands' worth of merch, which is more choices for the fans."

The tour's headline sponsor is VH1 Classic and tickets range from around \$25 to \$75.

Journey production manager Jay Schmit said the size of the tour is about average for two bands of this size, but that the lights and the quality of the sound system will give it a high impact. Because Journey never wants to repeat what it has done before, he said the band's setup will feature some new elements. "Last year we had a large and successful tour by ourselves with a large five-truck production," he said. "I can't say now what will set the two bands' sets apart, but you will definitely see two distinctly different looks."

Journey designers are fabricating new risers for the drum kit and piano to give the stage a new look for the tour. "We've slowly been walking away from everything that's been around for a long time," Schmit said. "The last thing remaining from the old days of Journey is Jonathan [Cain's] piano, which he's had since 1981."

Journey grossed \$8.4 million in 40 Shows in 2005, according to VT's Hot Tickets database. Def Leppard grossed \$17.8 million for 62 shows with 29 of those co-headlined by Bryan Adams. — Gil Kaufman

Interviewed for this story: John Toomey, (707) 481-3129; Arthur Kemish, (407) 496-4310; Jay Schmit, (707) 433-2968

MARKETING



Cleveland Convention Center rooms available for movie shoots

CLEVELAND OFFERS AGING CONVENTION CENTER TO FILM INDUSTRY

To attract more film and commercial producers to the city, Cleveland is offering companies free use of space in the Cleveland Convention Center, Mayor Frank Jackson and Chris Carmody, president of the Greater Cleveland Film Commission, announced last week.

The filmmakers will pay nothing for space that is not previously booked for conventions or meetings. The production companies will pick up the cost of expenses over and above day-to-day expenses, such as the cost of after-hours security (5 p.m. to 9 a.m.) if they're working overnight, and also the cost of an electrician for additional power needs.

Space will be available for film company offices and storage space, in addition to use of the convention center floor for indoor shooting.

According to Michael House, Mayor Jackson's press secretary, Cleveland is looking to expand its filming opportunities. "We looked at other cities that made these offers and it has been beneficial attracting movie business," he said.

Cleveland is one of three cities that have offered this incentive to filmmakers. Philadelphia used its convention center for fee-free filming in the mid 1990s before it was demolished early last year. The city is now developing a new free-use facility for this purpose. Austin, Texas, turned its small airport over to the Austin Film Society in 2000 for fee-free production space and subsequently attracted eight feature films. "This was dramatic because, at the time, Texas didn't have significant tax incentives for film production," Carmody said.

While the Cleveland Convention Center's aging space is only booked 5 percent of the year by meeting and convention bookers, Carmody said it can work for filmmaking because the four major exhibit halls are underground, making them both light and sound proof. These areas also have 17-, 28- and 32-foot-high-ceilings and open space that is easily configured for temporary sound stages.

The convention center also has 22 meeting rooms that can be converted to office space, storage space and wardrobe areas. Measuring from 800 to 6,600 square feet, these rooms are equipped with phone and high-speed Internet access. The venue also offers loading docks, a 300-car parking garage and a two-story kitchen capable of handling up to 7,000 meals per day, accommodating large film crews.

Filming permits are granted on the third floor of the convention center. Obstruction permits are \$25 and special permits for things such as pyrotechnics are \$60.

The venue's proximity to the downtown area, including hotels and restaurants, is five minutes. It's a 15-minute drive from Cleveland's Hopkins International Airport.

The Cleveland Film Commission offers other incentives to filmmakers, including free flights, hotel and ground transportation during development and scouting phases, a 50 percent rebate against the Cuyahoga County sales tax, a production discount program with participating vendors, and no hotel tax after 30 days of consecutive stay.

Carmody left last Thursday for Hollywood to begin pitching the new deal to film executives there. So far, "Spider-Man 3" will take advantage of the convention center when it comes to town later this month, though it is not expected to do any indoor shooting in Cleveland. "Spiderman is the first big production shooting here, though we've accommodated smaller productions for office space, wardrobe and prop storage, extras casting, and interior set building. The Cinemax 'MOW Proximity' with Rob Lowe used the Center," he said.

In terms of numbers of shows, Carmody said he would like to see six features a week filmed at the convention center. "This is entirely possible because we have done other things to make Cleveland attractive to producers. We have a bill in the state legislature, which is largely modeled after Louisiana's investor tax credits," he said. Senate Bill 155 is sponsored by Sen. Patricia Clancy, a Republican from Cincinnati. The bill gives investors tax credits for films that are shot mostly in Ohio. SB 155 will give individual investors a 15 percent tax credit on their income taxes for a film budgeted at \$8 million or less, and a 20 percent credit for films budgeted over \$8 million.

About 65 percent of motion picture budgets are spent on hospitality and other purchases, while the remaining 35 percent of most motion picture budgets is spent on local payroll, providing jobs to Cleveland electricians, carpenters, painters, stagehands and many other union positions. The U.S. Department of Labor has projected that jobs in the motion picture sector will grow 31 percent over a 10-year period — nearly twice the rate of any other job sector in the United States.

House said the main goal of offering the fee-free venue is to give filmmakers another incentive to consider Cleveland as a movie or commercial site. "When they choose Cleveland as a site to shoot movies, filmmakers have the opportunity to utilize a first-class facility at no cost," House said. — Lisa White

Interviewed for this article: Chris Carmody, (216) 623-3910; Michael House, (216) 644-4011

Button on Red Hot Chili Peppers Web site



TICKETMASTER & ITUNES TEAM UP FOR CHILI PEPPERS ON-SALE

In a rare collaboration, the Red Hot Chili Peppers's label (Warner Bros. Records), the iTunes music store and Ticketmaster have gotten together to launch the new two-disc "Stadium Arcadium" album in conjunction with the tour with a unique promotional spin.

In a deal that began on April 4, both the album and tickets for the tour were made

available in an exclusive pre-sale on the iTunes Music Store. Fans who pre-order the album on iTunes will receive an e-mail with a code that they can use at Ticketmaster.com starting May 9 to purchase concert tickets before they go on sale to the general public on May 13. Final tour dates and venues for the tour have not yet been announced.

On May 9, fans who pre-order the album will also receive an exclusive audio interview with the band, a video chronicling the making of "Dani California" and a full-color digital booklet.

The album was for sale for \$19.90 as a pre-order (which included an immediate download of the album's first single, "Dani California"), and it will be available for download when the record hits shops on May 9.

The presale program is the second experiment in what Ticketmaster spokeswoman Bonnie Poindexter said is likely to be a growth area for the ticketing giant. The first, a September 2005 pre-sale for Depeche Mode, was a big success, paving the way for the Chili Peppers deal (both bands are signed to Warner Bros.-affiliated labels).

"We're a natural fit for these types of promotions," said Poindexter. "The fan is looking for all things for the band they like and Ticketmaster is bringing the ticketing element, as well as our marketing and distribution reach, iTunes is bringing the digital downloads platform and the band is bringing the music. It's a natural fit that gives the consumer all things Red Hot Chili Peppers."

Poindexter predicted that Ticketmaster will be doing "a lot more" of these pre-sales, as it also expands into more fan club ticketing as well. (See April 2006 *Venues Today*, "Ace of Clubs" story.)

This deal helps Ticketmaster make a more direct connection in getting tickets into the hands of the "right fan at the right time," Poindexter said, which benefits the promoters, venues and label, while helping to establish Ticketmaster's role as more than a ticket company. "We bring a lot of distribution to the table, but we're also getting involved in a lot of fan club ticket initiatives and music service initiatives," she said. "We keep looking at our resources and when people like iTunes and promoter clients come to us, they're looking to do a lot of new things, so we have to keep adding elements. We're moving from being a transaction service provider to being a marketing arm for our clients."

The collaboration began with iTunes' long-standing effort to get the elusive Red Hot Chili Peppers catalog in a digital form. The band's music had not been available for download before the announcement of the current deal and iTunes Vice President Eddy Cue said that when Apple secured the deal for the new Chili Peppers double album as well as the band's back catalog, the next priority was to think of other unique opportunities for the audience. Though he couldn't remember whether Warner Bros. came to iTunes at first with the Ticketmaster idea or vice versa, the collaboration on the Depeche Mode deal was successful enough that the Chili Peppers ticket scheme was a natural.

"This is the biggest double album we've done since launching iTunes and it's so unique that we said, 'Let's take advantage of all the different things available to us,'" Cue said. "Number one, you can pre-order, then when you pre-order you immediately get the single and other content and then we added the band's videos, so all of a sudden you have a double album with all these great features. Then we said, 'With as huge of a fan base as the Red Hot Chili Peppers have, and with them going on tour soon, we have an opportunity to do something with tickets for the fan base.'"

Cue said iTunes looked at the whole package and saw something that was compelling and revolutionary, marking the first time all this digital and tour-related content had been offered in one place at one time. "Our financial piece is that we're selling the album to the fan base and giving them access to buy tickets sooner than everyone else," Cue said. Early numbers are good, but Cue said it was too early to say whether the album/ticket package would become a standardized way of doing business for the world's leading download store. "We continue to expand our offerings so to the extent that we can give more to the customer, that's great," he said. — Gil Kaufman
Interviewed for this story: Bonnie Poindexter (310) 360-2321; Eddy Cue (408) 974-1972

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CONCESSIONS

Centerplate carving chef interacting with customer



CATERING LEADS FOOD SALES AT NCAA BASKETBALL PLAYOFFS

Concessions sales at the sold-out NCAA championship game on April 3 at the RCA Dome, Indianapolis, were a slam dunk.

Centerplate spokeswoman Gael Doar said the company does not release grosses or per caps, but said that the numbers did meet the company's expectations for the three games. Because the final game between the Florida Gators and UCLA Bruins did not begin until after 9:20 p.m., well after dinner, Centerplate expected beverage sales to predominate, but Doar said they were "very pleased that the percentage of food sales was higher" than they expected.

The night's two best-selling food items were soft pretzels (8,500 units) and nachos (7,000 units) and, as usual, bottled water sales were brisk, with 35,000 units moved. Coming in behind in beverage sales was a 32 oz. souvenir soda cup (20,000 units) and a 20 oz. souvenir soda cup (15,000 units).

Making transactions easier at the game was the first implementation at the Dome of 40 wireless credit card machines, which helped lines move more quickly. Due to the configuration of the bleachers, the venue was subject to areas of dead space, which Centerplate used to set up a carving station. Demand was high for the hand carved prime rib sandwiches on fresh Ciabatta Bread (\$6) and a similar turkey sandwich. "We have found that these action stations are very popular because the guest likes to interact with the chef as he/she prepares the sandwich in front of their eyes," Doar said. There were a total of 200 points of sale during the game.

One of the surprises, according to John Stockholm, general manager for Centerplate at the Indianapolis Convention Center/RCA Dome, was the strength of catering sales. "They were higher than we expected," said Stockholm. "We have a convention center attached to the Dome, which we're lucky to have because this year the NCAA had some sponsor parties attached to the game and there was one behind the bleacher seats and this year they tried a Tournament Club for the first time where they sold a whole [ticket/food] package themselves."

The Dome operated more than 100 suites for the game as well as two large areas for the press, all with catered food. There, attendees munched on the likes of griddled Indiana Corn Cakes served with such toppings as smoked barbecue chicken, smoked salmon and braised cinnamon apples, as well as a potato pancake action station with assorted toppings, a Red Chile seared sea scallop topped with a small scoop of green chile corn, and crustacean strudel featuring shrimp, lobster and fresh tarragon and morels wrapped in puff pastry.

"One of the things we're focused on is raising the bar on our suites menus," said Doar. "We have a culinary leadership team made up of chefs in various areas around the country looking to provide food that is very fresh and has a particular appeal for the region. The packages we offered in the suites this year were different or better than what we may have had in the past."

Because there are no beer sales at Final Four games, Stockholm said some of the areas that would normally be used to sell beer were converted to snack and other beverage sales. — Gil Kaufman

Interviewed for this story: John Stockholm, (317) 262-2183; Gael Doar, (203) 975-5941

SHORT TAKES

SMG RENEWS ANCHORAGE CONTRACTS, ADDS A VENUE

SMG and the Anchorage (Alaska) Convention and Visitors' Bureau have renewed the contract which has SMG managing the William A. Egan Civic and Convention Center there. The three-year deal runs through 2008 and allows for extensions through 2010. SMG was also awarded pre-opening services and management of the new Anchorage Convention Center, which is projected to open in the fall of 2008. The Egan Center is Alaska's largest convention and banquet facility and offers over 45,000 square feet of meeting, exhibit, and pre function spaces. Construction for the new Anchorage Convention Center will begin this spring and will be triple the size of the existing facility and will feature a 50,000-square-foot exhibit hall, a 26,000-square-foot banquet hall and 11,000 square feet of flexible meeting space. This state-of-the-art facility will also offer full audio-visual services, heated sidewalks and in-house catering. Greg Spears manages the Egan Center for SMG.

Contact: Joanna Armandi, (215) 592-6620

MADONNA SETS "CONFESSIONS" TOUR DATES

After mounting 2004's highest-grossing tour, Madonna will hit the road again this summer, playing arenas in the U.S. and Canada, and stadiums, arenas and outdoor festivals in Europe and Japan in late summer. The tour, promoted by Levitation, will kick off on May 21 at the Forum in Los Angeles, according to Arthur Fogel, president of Levitation company The Next Adventure. The tour is being directed by the singer's longtime collaborator Jamie King with music direction by Stuart Price, with costumes designed by famed designer Jean Paul Gaultier. Rehearsals are currently taking place at an undisclosed location in Los Angeles. While The Next Adventure's Susan Rosenberg said the show's production elements are still coming together, current Madonna Fan Club Icon members were allowed to purchase two tickets to the North American show of their choice on a pre-sale basis April 4-6 at \$65-\$350. The tour will be preceded by Madonna's first ever festival appearance at the Coachella Festival on April 30 in Indio, Calif. The dates for the Japanese leg have not yet been announced.

Dates for Madonna's Confessions tour:

North America:

May 21, Inglewood, Calif., The Forum
May 27, Las Vegas, MGM Grand Garden Arena
May 30, San Jose, Calif., HP Pavilion
June 5, Fresno, Calif., Save Mart Center
June 8, Phoenix, Glendale Arena
June 14, Chicago, United Center
June 21, Montreal, Bell Centre
June 25, Hartford, Conn., Civic Centre
June 28-29, New York, Madison Square Garden
July 6, Boston, TD Banknorth Garden
July 12, Philadelphia, Wachovia Center
July 16, Atlantic City, N.J., Boardwalk Hall
July 22, Miami, AmericanAirlines Arena

Europe:

July 30, Cardiff, U.K., Millennium Stadium
Aug. 1 & 3, London, Wembley Arena
Aug. 6, Rome, Olympic Stadium
Aug. 20, Dusseldorf, Germany, LTU Arena
Aug. 22, Hannover, Germany, AWD Arena
Aug. 24, Horsens (Denmark), Forum Horsens Outdoor
Aug. 27-28, Paris, Bercy Stadium
Sept. 3, Amsterdam Arena
Contact: Susan Rosenberg (416) 960-7620

RFP GOES OUT FOR INDIANAPOLIS CONVENTION CENTER

The Indiana Stadium and Convention Building Authority has started looking for architects, engineers and urban planners to help plan, design and build an expansion to the Indiana Convention Center in Downtown Indianapolis with proposals due May 3. Construction is scheduled to begin in Spring 2008 after the demolition of the RCA Dome and it will open in fall 2010. State building authority officials have \$275 million to spend on the project. The authority is spending an additional \$675 million on the new Lucas Oil Stadium, which will house the Indianapolis Colts, Final Four tournaments and conventions.

Contact: <http://www.in.gov/iscba/contractors/>

SIENA COLLEGE BASKETBALL STAYS AT PEPSI ARENA

Siena College and Pepsi Arena officials announced a four-year extension to their agreement, making the downtown Albany facility the home for Siena men's basketball through 2010. The men's basketball program at Siena has been playing games in the arena since its opening in 1990, and made its full-time move prior to the 1997-1998 season nine years ago. This past season, the Siena men's team played its 150th game at the Arena and drew its millionth fan.

Contact: (518) 487-2085

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Centerplate – Dir. Client Svcs/GM, San Jose Convention Center

Centerplate is seeking applications for qualified management candidates for this unique and challenging position. This individual is responsible for all aspects of the proper presentation of Client Services and Food & Beverage operations within SJCC. Interested candidates should submit a resume and cover letter to dennis.cullinane@centerplate.com. We are an equal opportunity employer.

[E-mail dennis.cullinane@centerplate.com to submit your resume](mailto:dennis.cullinane@centerplate.com)

Georgia Dome, Atlanta - Assistant General Manager

Do you have the ability to see and understand the big picture but can focus like a laser on details? Do you have the ability to inspire others to achieve excellence? Please apply for the position of Assistant General Manager of the Georgia Dome. Click on www.gwccajobs.com. Deadline is April 27th.

[Click on www.gwccajobs.com](http://www.gwccajobs.com)

Overland Park (Kansas) Convention Center - Director of Event Services

Global Spectrum seeks a skilled, detailed and customer service focused individual for the position of Director of Event Services for the Overland Park Convention Center. Click below to apply or for more information. The Overland Park Convention Center and Global Spectrum maintain a drug-free work place. EOE

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Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre, Atlanta - Managing Director

CEPAC, currently under construction, will feature a 2,750 seat main theater & a 10,000 sq. ft. ballroom. The Managing Director will oversee all aspects of the Centre's operations including: admin, development of mktg & communications materials, artistic programming and production, facility staffing, training, maintenance, and development. Req 10 yrs, PAC senior mgt experience. CEPAC/HR, 2 Galleria Pkwy, Atlanta 30339; fax 770-989-5080.

To submit news or information to **Venues Today** contact:

Linda Deckard, Publisher, Editor-in-chief
(714) 378-5400
linda@venuestoday.com

Natasha Emmons, Managing Editor
(714) 378-5400
natasha@venuestoday.com

For advertising information, contact:
Sue Nichols, Eastern Region
(615) 662-0252
sue@venuestoday.com

Pauline Davis, Central Region
(615) 356-0398
pauline@venuestoday.com

April Stroud, Western Region
(714) 378-5400 ext. 23
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