

Ford in the foliage

In late summer, the Ford Motor Company hosted a charity event, *Revin' With Ford*. Headed up by producer and LD Rick Stuart of Southfield, MI-based Carpenter Communications, it took place in trendy downtown Birmingham, MI, and spanned four specific areas (both indoor and outdoor) and more than 400,000 sq. ft. (36,000 sq. m).

Shain Park featured multilevel lighting, from High End Systems Studio Colors, ETC Source Fours, and conventional PARs, and Coemar CF 1200 wash lights and CF 1200 HEs—all strapped to trees—and festive, truck-oriented vignettes. In an adjacent parking lot, two 210'x60' pole tents (64x18m) featured a variety of food, and vehicles from every division of Ford. The tents were separated by a 75'x120' dance floor (23x37m) and a performance stage.

Moving through the park, patrons could view both vintage and concept Ford trucks in four distinct settings: surfing, construction, 60s hippie, and biker scenes. "I wanted to create scenes and tones with light, set, and sound—this wasn't an auto show and I wasn't necessarily showcasing the vehicles,"

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Stuart explains. For the biker scene, Stuart used Lee 789 (Blood Red) exclusively in the PARs, explosive-looking fire pattern gobos in the CF 1200 HEs, and a smoke effect to create a sinister, surreal look. In the 60s scene, he used Lee 228 (Brushed Silk) and a fire pattern, slowly rotating gobos in eight CF 1200 HEs to create a friendly and warm campfire glow effect interspersed with psychedelic-looking patterns. "The silk keeps the light smooth and even along the vehicle sides with a short throw, while the gobos produced a nice, subtle effect," Stuart explains.

For the surfer scene, Stuart brought in two tons of sand. "I needed a place to project onto—we were talking about using a Pani projector, but the only place we had to hang anything was in the trees." Although the trees worked for the lighting instruments, the angle was too steep for a projector. Instead, Stuart went a simpler route and used rotating gobos in the CF 1200 HEs. "I've created a water look before using

two instruments with gobos working together—we used slow counter-spinning wave patterns, blue and blue-green, projected onto the sand and it really gave you the impression of rippling water, even in daylight."

In the construction scene, Stuart avoided conventional fixtures. "I illuminated the scene with 500 and 1,000W quartz construction lights that I put all over—what else would you do on a construction scene? You don't see PAR cans at a construction site."

Moving from the casual, festival-like atmosphere of the park, the mood inside the tents was more formal and upscale. Stuart started off matching the cars with their logos, which gently spun above the audience on the interior of the tent, as well as pools of light around the vehicles themselves. "I illuminated each car with PARs and then put a colored halo around it with the Studio Colors, which matched the color of the car," the LD reports. He relied on the same basic instruments that he used in the park, all of which were provided by Westsun of Troy, MI.

Stuart, along with park programmer/ME Justin Juriga and tent programmer/

ME Kevin Cassidy, had to deal with the usual challenges of finding suitable mounting locations in unconventional venues. To solve his problem in the pole tents, Stuart designed a trapeze platform that worked with the tent pole to mount the units. "We had the 12 platforms fabricated for this event," Stuart notes. The platforms, which measured 7'x4'x4', took five to 10 minutes to put up and could adjust to fit on any size tent pole, from 3" on up. "We've basically taken the tent pole hanging structure to the next step. I've had these fabricated in aluminum, which has a high strength-to-weight ratio, and made them relatively large—there's 60' of hangable space on each of these platforms. It's almost like having a 30' piece of truss up there. The platforms are safe, sturdy, and can hold substantial weight.

"I got a lot of support from Westsun Detroit general manager Mike Lilley and his staff, who were there from the beginning," Stuart says, closing with the words every industrials designer likes to hear. "We've been invited back by Ford to do something even bigger next year."

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At a Ford charity event, themed vignettes in a park were illuminated with Coemar CF 1200 wash lights and HEs (top). In the hospitality tents (left), LD Rick Stuart of Carpenter Communications haloed the cars with PARs and High End Studio Colors affixed to custom-designed trapeze platforms (above) instead of truss.