disguise powers Six60 concert tour as pandemic restrictions ease in New Zealand

Thanks to New Zealand's prompt and successful response to the pandemic, live events were able to resume in the country at full capacity from late 2020. Among the first artists to benefit from this was local pop band Six60 who played a six-date tour in January and February 2021 as well as the first-ever concert at Auckland's Eden Park National Stadium in April the same year.

This case study showcases how disguise gx 2 and solo media servers united creatives in different continents in pre-production, helping develop immersive IMAG looks and pilot the shows in real-time.

At a glance

To highlight the natural chemistry between band members, Los Angeles-based design studio <u>Human Person</u> decided to approach the show's IMAG (image magnification) and video content as cohesive, complementary elements. Every song featured IMAG footage, so finding unique and creative ways to unify that with animations was a key goal for the team.

In order to achieve this, typical IMAG window overlays had to be avoided in favour of more natural compositions, and incorporating UV Pass technology. The team used <u>Notch</u> to recolour and retexture footage, until it looked like part of the animation itself.

The challenge

Human Person, brought in their long time collaborator <u>Dark Matter</u> to bring their vision to life with disguise and Notch. One of the main challenges was developing a pipeline to allow Ryan Sheppard from Dark Matter to work remotely from Toronto, Canada for a show held live in New Zealand.

To span the distance, the pre-existing workflow was essentially cloned for both the on-site rehearsal crew and Dark Matter's Sheppard, responsible for Notch design and disguise programming. An identical disguise gx 2 setup in Toronto allowed projects and Notch files to be built and tested before uploading them to New Zealand where the team downloaded and tested them on-site.

The remote desktop software, <u>Parsec</u>, originally developed for remote streaming and playing video games, had an important role. Its ultra-low latency was critical for the team that was programming, collaborating and testing with disguise. Notch files also had many parameters exposed, which allowed the look and feel to be fine-tuned and matched to the lighting or any last-minute content updates.

The challenge

Another challenge was incorporating animated IMAG into both pre-rendered 3D and 2D content. A UV Pass content workflow allowed Human Person to render a custom pass of the animated content that tracked and masked areas for live camera footage.

This was then cut into the timecode edits for each song fully immersing the IMAG footage within the pre-rendered 3D worlds and creating a very unique and memorable look for the entire LED canvas. The same approach was followed for the 2D hand drawn-style content, which likely saved countless hours of keyframing on site.

The solution

The GPU in [disguise gx 2](#) allowed Human Person and Dark Matter to create immersive IMAG looks through the use of UV Pass content, Alembic files and Notch graphics. The team also relied heavily on the availability and consistency of disguise hardware worldwide to unite Human Person in New Zealand with Ryan Sheppard in Toronto.

Responding to live adjustments

Although a standard touring configuration would have placed the servers behind the LED wall, Human Person felt that having full visibility of the entire production was critical for responding to live adjustments in the set, such as areas where the band went off timecode or manual MIDI control was needed over the content and IMAG feeds. They obtained several [disguise solo](#) servers from [Big Picture NZ](#) and easily added a dedicated director setup, which allowed the show to be piloted in real-time from FOH.

Project updates were made quickly through feed mappings within the disguise software to accommodate the changing size of the LED wall from venue to venue.

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This was one of our first opportunities to really do a deep dive into our video approach, particularly in terms of our use of IMAG footage. We developed an entire pipeline to handle UV Pass content, a new approach for animated content that allows us to seamlessly embed live footage into pre-rendered video content. The final product felt really unique with the live show footage harmoniously woven into all of our animations.

Ben Dalgleish, Designer at Human Person

The results

The show relied on dozens of parallel video and Notch layers as well as an intricate web of servers during show time. The need to react in real-time to what was happening on stage and the ability to perform to the standards required for the 6K+ resolution of the LED screen made the disguise platform the ideal solution.

Thanks to the flexibility and reliability of disguise, as well as that of remote streaming software, the team behind the show was able to overcome the distance and achieve a cohesive production, proving the future of live entertainment is no longer limited to physical proximity.

Success

9,000 miles
bridged from Toronto to New Zealand in pre-pro

+30,000
concert audiences for six-date tour

+50,000
concert audience at Eden Park

The five-piece pop group made world news for performing to more than 50,000 people at the Auckland rugby stadium, making it the biggest live show to take place anywhere in the post-pandemic world at the time.

The group resume touring in September 2021 with plans to end the year touring around Europe.

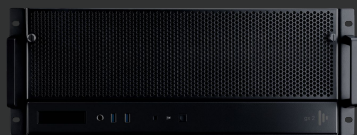# disguise equipment used

Designer software
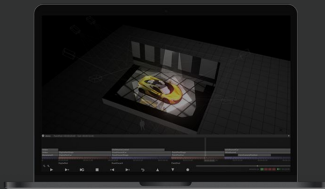
Designer is the ultimate software to visualise, design, and sequence projects at every stage, from concept all the way through to showtime.
Find out more.

gx 2

gx 2 pushes responsive content to new heights, with up to two 4K outputs, or 8 HD outputs so you can see your most complex designs in gloriously high-res.
Find out more.

solo

Compact and powerful, the solo brings the power of disguise to smaller-scale productions and experiences.
Find out more.

In partnership with:

Creative Direction, Stage Design, Lighting Design, Visual Content/Design: Human Person
disguise Programming, Notch Design, Media Servers: Dark Matter
Show/Lighting Designer: Ben Dalgleish
Show/Visual Designer: Ian Valentine
disguise Programmer/Notch Designer: Ryan Sheppard
Animation: Ian Valentine, Ash Smith, Robert Wallace, Alex Ness, Ombra, Lee Gingold,
Gabe Damast, Stephen Hedges
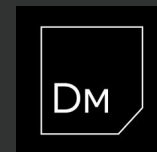Editor: Matt Cummer
Art Director: Frances Waite
Production Manager: Leon Dalton
Lighting Director: Jade Frasey
Playback: Jimmy Mac
Video and Photography: Matt Clode
Film Photos: Ian Jorgensen

disguise

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