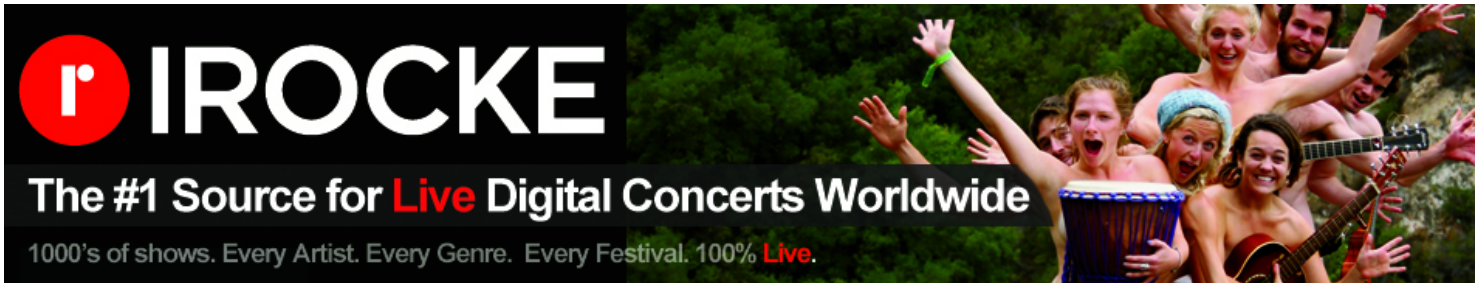


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Latest News | Imagine Dragons show at Allstate Sugar Bowl will feature “hundreds of thousands” of cameras

Posted by Mark McDermott on December 28, 2013

No comments



Imagine Dragons, who headline the AllState Sugar Bowl Fan Fest Jan. 1.

The Imagine Dragons live streaming concert at the Allstate Sugar Bowl’s Fan Fest in New Orleans will feature the state-of-the-art production values we have come to expect as the art of live streaming itself has advanced to the world’s biggest stages — and make no mistake, this is a stage that millions of people will be viewing on January 1.

Six cameras will bring Imagine Dragons performance more intimately to more people than would have been possible at virtually any time previously in music history. But those six cameras, manned by the crew from perhaps live streaming’s most decorated production crew — director Marc Scarpa and his Simply New production team — are just the beginning.

“We’ll have six cameras for this show,” Scarpa said in an interview this week. “But theoretically, we’ll have hundreds of thousands of cameras. Six video cameras on site, but hopefully — possibly — millions of cameras.”

The Fan Fest is going to utilize Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook as part of the live concert experience like never before: throughout the show, photographs, tweets, and comments from fans — both at the venue, and worldwide — will be featured on a Jumbotron above the stage.

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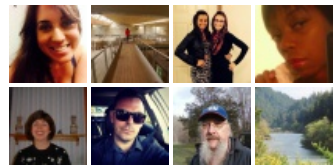
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“There are 10,000 kids coming to the show,” Scarpa said. “Every one has a camera. My goal is to have everyone take a picture and have it go out via Instagram. A select few will end up as part of the show — and that is just in the venue. Then there’s all the kids at home watching, participating in this thing — all those kids taking pictures, providing tweets, and then all their friends joining in the experience...”

“I’ll tell you January 2 how many cameras we’ll have at this show.”



Producer and director Marc Scarpa

Scarpa has waged a long, empowering war against the conventional notion of an audience. What he seeks are participants, a goal in service of creating a more enlivening experience for everyone — artists and audience alike.

“in talking about a live environment, go backstage and ask any live musician or any Broadway actor if audience participation — meaning, in most cases, that element of applause, clapping, screaming or howling — impacts how they perform,” Scarpa said. “And they will tell you they get high off the audience. So if that audience is truly engaged, even in a passive storytelling experience, they definitely feed off the participation in and the appreciation of what they do. The more the audience appreciates them, the more the performer tends to give.”

Scarpa has been utilizing live streaming for the live concert experience longer than anyone.

Ahead of the curve doesn’t begin to describe the arc of his career: he was involved in the very first use of streaming technology on a mass scale with both SimTV and CNET (a tech start-up at the time) in 1995. And then, in 1996, Scarpa was the man behind the very first live stream concert in history, the Tibetan Freedom Concert. The concert was attended by 100,000 people and had 36,000 online participants globally — many in Internet cafes organized around the event — thus validating the Internet as a two-way broadcast platform.

From time he was a 10 year old kid in 1979 going online when most people didn’t even know the Internet existed, this has always been the key to Scarpa’s fascination — the fact that the Internet is potentially a two-way experience. Combining this capacity with his passion for music (he downloaded his first track, Devo’s “Whip It”, as a 12 year old in 1981, when Napster’s eventual founder Sean Fanning was a year old), Scarpa was among the first to understand that music’s future was inextricably linked to live streaming.

“Live streaming gives you, first of all, a two way medium,” he said. “In fact, right now a lot of it is just a one way experience — anyone can take a picture or a video and put it on the Internet and have it be one way. But streaming in a way that makes it participatory, something that people can collaborate with, participate in, share, and be a part of...It takes on a whole new paradigm. It’s not something any other medium can do.”

Scarpa has been at the forefront every step along the way in live streaming’s advancement. The Woodstock 99 concert created a new benchmark as a participatory event, as it streamed live for 64 hours and attracted 2.4 million viewers online, making history as it overshadowed both a shorter TV broadcast that attracted only 240,000 and the 200,000 physical concertgoers (Notably, Scarpa utilized photographers at the event, sharing online thousands of photos from concert attendees). He produced and directed the first presidential webcast, a townhall event with President Bill Clinton, also in 1999. And by 2006 he produced and directed an early social media foray into live stream concerts, MySpaceLive.

Imagine Dragons’ Allstate Sugar Bowl concert, then, can be seen as both another step up the ladder and an indication of what the future will bring.

“Now you’ve got a rock stadium full of kids in real time and pictures from people around the world who participating in this show having a visual conversation with each other,” Scarpa said. “That is just a very simple level of engagement, but you can go much higher.”

In the not-too distant future — that is, by this summer, Scarpa predicts — you will see “a lot of sentiment around the social conversation.” That is, data derived from social media at concerts will be used more and more to create the show itself. “We’ll read the data and analyze it to determine people’s moods, then take data and intersect it with thing on site — like maybe lighting, or sound, or special effects, or other things,” he said. “In essence, the audience can contribute to the actual show itself in a variety of ways. So it becomes a cyclical effect — action, reaction, action, reaction, action, proaction. Once people know they are a part of the show, they tend to want to contribute to the show.”

“It’ll be a lot more integration with the live performance and online collaboration moving forward. There’s no getting away from it. It’s definitely happening, and will continue to evolve. There’s all kinds of things we can do.”

The Allstate Sugar Bowl Fan Fest concert, featuring Imagine Dragons, will be live streamed via AllstateFanFest.com and [Facebook.com/Allstate](https://www.facebook.com/Allstate) beginning at 4:15 PST on Jan. 1 (you can also find the stream on IROCKE, of course).

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