



# **BAD BUNNY'S** **SUPER BOWL PARTY**



## The Super Bowl Halftime Show was a celebration of Puerto Rican culture and a call for unity

By: David Barbour

“AN

all-American triumph.” That’s how *Variety* characterized this year’s Apple Music Super Bowl Halftime Show, staged at Levi’s Stadium in Santa Clara, California, and starring the Latin music sensation Bad Bunny. The words were well-chosen:

Dogged by months of grumbling by pundits and politicians who deemed Bad Bunny not sufficiently American for the event, never mind that Puerto Rico is part of the United States, the artist and his creative team brilliantly turned the tables, offering a celebration of the island’s culture, its music, style, food, and entrepreneurial spirit. Topping it off with a blazing video display announcing, “The only thing more powerful than hate is love,” Bad Bunny ended the show with a litany of the countries of South, Central, and North America, a statement of unity that left critics thoroughly disarmed.

The spectacle featured sizzling musical performances by Lady Gaga and Ricky Martin, plenty of choreography, an actual wedding featuring a pair of Bad Bunny fans, and an army of “plant people,” surrounding the stage with lush greenery, looking for all the world like Birnam Wood coming to Dunsinane. It was an act of alchemy, converting rancor and controversy into 12 minutes of joy.

The Super Bowl Halftime Show is an entertainment event like no other, with top-flight talents bent on topping previous editions with fresh, unorthodox staging ideas. It also comes with a distinct set of challenges, including a set running time with no wiggle room, the need to get on and off the field quickly, and the all-important mandate not to damage the turf. The effort brings together the artist and creative director(s), the design team, and the battle-tested veterans who, for years, have made the shows happen. Co-production designer Julio Himede refers to this year’s edition as “Bad Bunny’s field of celebration,” which accurately sums up the crowded, upbeat spectacle unfolding at the 50-yard line. But, as always, realizing these dreams required everyone to pull together and make choices.

### Planting the seeds of the field

The show’s concept began with Bad Bunny, his creative director Harriet Cuddeford, Himede and his team at Yellow Studio, and creative director/production designer Bruce Rodgers. (This was Rodgers’ 20th year on the Super Bowl.) “The idea came from Benito,” Himede says. “He briefed us on a field with vignettes from Puerto Rican culture that would be relatable to the entire world. He said, ‘Let’s be authentic. Let’s not stylize the design. Let’s be as real as possible.’ We carried that through in our concept. We questioned every decision we made: Was it authentic?”

Meeting several times in different locations with Bad Bunny—who happened to be on tour—Himede compiled a list of elements. “The piragua cart, the coconut vendor,



Previous spread: The camera follows Bad Bunny through the field. Above: Capturing Ricky Martin's performance. Bad Bunny used a Shure SM39 headset condenser mic and Shure ADX1 bodypack transmitter. Lady Gaga (opposite) and Ricky Martin used custom-finished Sennheiser Digital 6000 handheld transmitters, white for Gaga and silver for Martin. All were on Shure PSM 1000 in-ears.

and the wedding all came out of those meetings. Benito, Harriet, and I were all involved. It was a nice sort of workshop: What if we had this or that? What if we had a wedding, with a real couple getting married on the field?"

As the ideas began to gel, Himede says Rodgers and the team at his company, Tribe Inc., got involved, "in discussions about how many carts and other things we could bring onto the field. The ground plan was a living organism for about three months; every day we changed it. Everything had an effect that we had to consider. Even the week of the Super Bowl, we were moving things around in rehearsals. It was a massive collaboration with [producing entity] Roc Nation, the NFL, and Bruce and his team." He adds, "Bruce and [scenic fabricator] All Access Productions have done this for many years; they were able to guide us and were flexible in dealing with this very ambitious design."

Each element of the design represented another aspect of island life: the vending carts, the shops, and the casita where, in arguably the show's biggest gag, Bad Bunny fell

through the roof, ending up, via an inserted film shot, in the living room of a very surprised family. One especially striking vignette featured a choreographed sequence on a series of electrical poles, an allusion to the island's well-reported power outages. "It is something that every Puerto Rican knows," Himede says. "It wasn't so much criticism as a way of highlighting how people live in Puerto Rico."

Attention was paid to the tiniest details: For example, the white plastic chairs on the Ricky Martin stage (see photo, page 40) were "Monobloc chairs, designed in the 1950s," Himede notes. "You can find them around the world, but they're very Puerto Rican. You can also find them in Guatemala, Brazil, and El Salvador. They're a universal symbol of community, of bringing people together. No matter how much money you have or your class, you've sat in those chairs."

Among the key aspects of the design, All Access reports that the casita was "custom-fabricated from the ground up on three field carts. The 24'-by-24' structure incorporated a custom-built trap door effect, as well as a Versa Star Lift,

which elevated Bad Bunny to the rooftop performance platform. The trap door's manually operated system was designed for precise trigger timing and was rated to support choreography and dancers prior to activation. Built-in safety locks and structural supports ensured stability until execution. Interior spiral stairs and functional doors were also integrated to allow talent to exit the interior."

The 48'-by-32' Wedding Stage required eight field carts. According to All Access, it was "custom-fabricated and hand-finished to achieve a hyperrealistic appearance. Custom architectural and scenic details, including curved steps and light posts, were incorporated to read authentically on camera while remaining efficient in weight and cart configuration. The upper platform served as the setting for the wedding sequence, while four carts featured detailed New York City street facades built onto their sides."

The four power pole set pieces, the company says, "were custom-fabricated across two field carts, with the poles rising nearly 17' tall. Three poles provided aerial performance areas for acrobats, while one featured a grated performance platform for Bad Bunny. Each structure housed the necessary structural systems to safely support performers at height. Due to a height limit of 10' in the stadium tunnel, the poles were engineered to fold down and then raise into position during setup using a manual crank, allowing for fast, reliable deployment."

The classic 1970 Ford truck "was sourced, structurally reinforced, and modified to safely accommodate perform-

ers. The truck sat on the field directly; therefore, it was modified with a field cart-style base with Versa Field Stage wheels for easy transport onto the field. Steps were built into the truck bed for rooftop access, and a rechargeable lighting package was added."

All Access provided "custom curved carts that formed the base of the Ricky Martin stage. The carts were finished in painted plywood and featured integrated push bars, onstage shelving for tall grass, and soft goods covering the side faces for a clean presentation."

Despite the pressures, Himede expresses satisfaction with the process: "You're working with some of the best people in the business, who do this year to year. It's always going to be challenging. Every day, we were running behind. But we never gave up."

Getting a bit more personal, he says, "As a Latin production designer working on one of the biggest shows on Earth, with a Latin artist who wanted to be true to his culture, it was a very special opportunity for me. I was very passionate about celebrating my Latin culture. The world reacted positively to the show, and that was meaningful."

Echoing Himede's comment about authenticity, Rodgers notes that Bad Bunny's recent Puerto Rican residency had a similar vibe. "It had a casita, an end stage, and plants with places for dance and his performance." Similarly, at the Super Bowl, the star wanted "to bring everything cool about Puerto Rico to the world." Rodgers, who has worked with many Latin artists, including Ricky Martin, Marc Anthony,

Photo below: Press Association via AP Images



# SPECTACLE

and Jennifer Lopez, clearly understood the star's intentions.

Because of Bad Bunny's touring obligations, the design process took extra time, Rodgers notes: "Thanksgiving Day is our deadline to have it approved by the NFL and Roc Nation. This year, we didn't have an approval until January 1. Suddenly, we were in a pressure cooker."

The concept began with creating an enormous cornfield, spanning the football field, but, as Rodgers notes, "It's my job to make sure we can get it on the field in seven-and-a-half minutes and get it off in six." Also, he says, "We were tasked by the NFL with doing a 25-cart show." As late as December 4, Rodgers notes, the project was still in flux: "The casita was in a different place than you saw in the show. It was inland and had a different design." This version, he notes, required something in the range of 70 carts, a far bigger number than the NFL was willing to approve. Going over the ground plan one more time, Rodgers, conferring with his producers at Roc Nation, decided to introduce the idea of "grass people," performers dressed essentially like large tufts of tall greenery. Pitching the idea to Bad Bunny and his other colleagues, Rodgers says, "I said, 'This is the only way that you're going to get on the field and get this look at the current scale you want'."

Everyone was reluctant to embrace the idea, so Rodgers says, "We had Show FX and [costume designer] Monique Lauren Peters build a grass costume because we wanted to prove it to ourselves first. Then we presented it

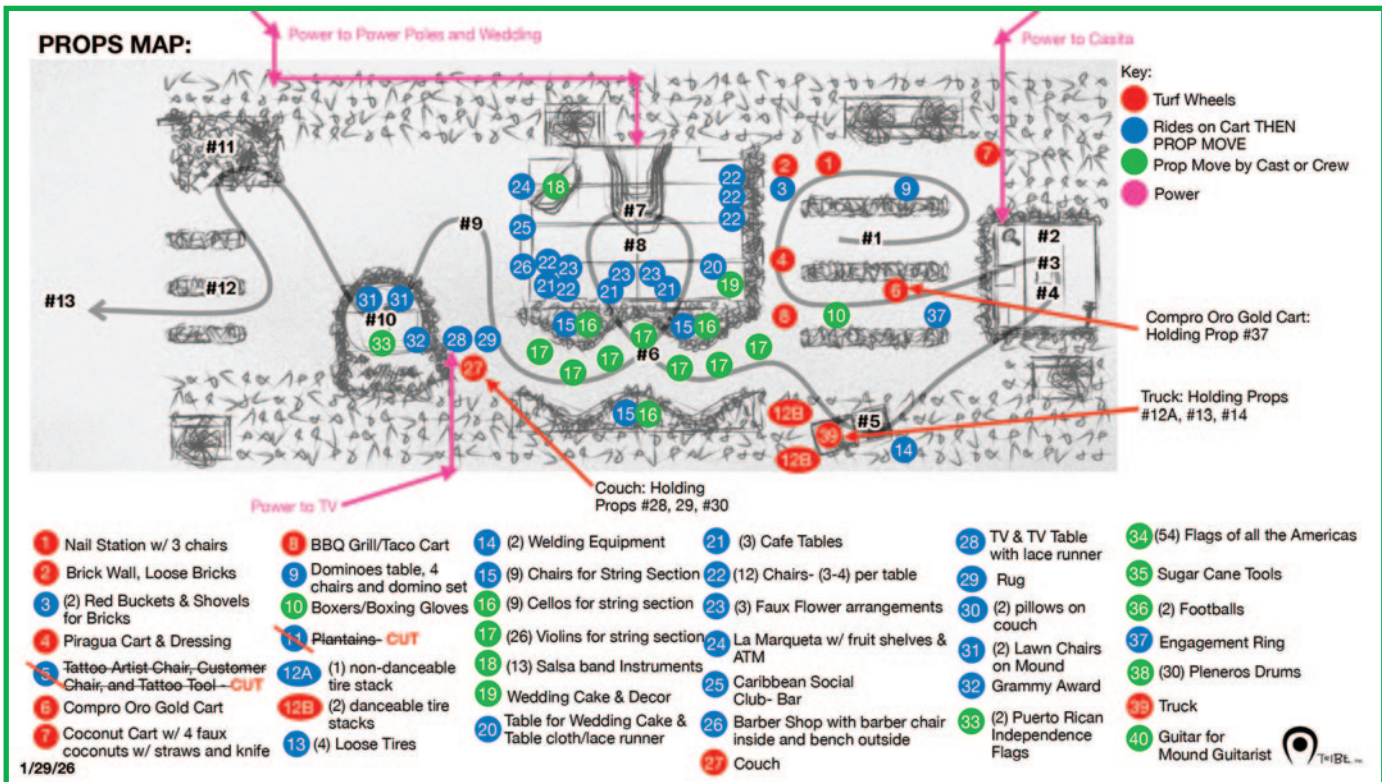
to [CEO] Desiree Perez at Roc Nation."

The idea was simple. "It was important to them to have an 8'-high wall of grass, making the set look like an island," Rodgers says. "Originally, the grass was going to be anchored into carts, which added too many to the 25 we already had. Then it dawned on me that if we could make a costume that was 3' or 4' in diameter and 8' tall, with the performers holding stalks of grass in their hands to thicken the bushiness of the costume, they could get off the field and out of the way of my carts in six minutes."

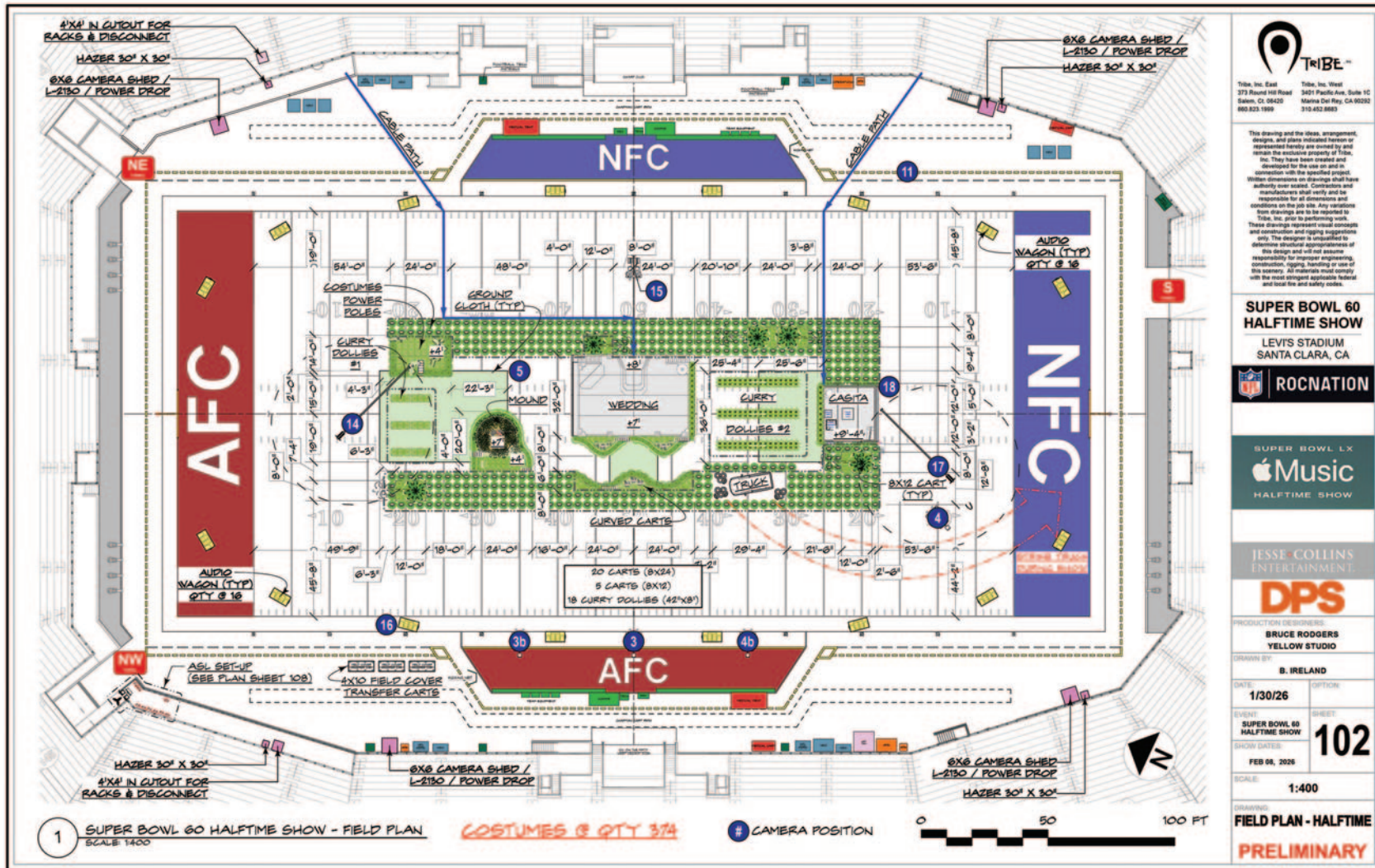
Rodgers adds he drew inspiration for the grass costumes from some of Julie Taymor and Michael Curry's designs for Broadway's *The Lion King*, adapting the idea to his own purposes. All told, 380 performers contributed to making the grass wall effect. "Monique got her hands on a thousand 3'-tall grassy stalks. The costume shop had 50 to 60 people making 450 costumes."

The sugar cane fields that made such an impact in the show were deployed on dollies. "We called them 'Curry dollies,' because Michael gave us the idea for them," Rodgers says. Adding it up, he says, "We ended up with 22 carts and 18 dollies to make the pathways at the beginning of the show, when Benito is seen moving through the sugar cane field."

According to All Access, "The curved grass carts rolled in on four custom 8'-by-24' field carts, providing tall grass accents downstage from the Wedding Stage. There were five scenic palm tree carts dispersed around the set, each



"It was a very prop-heavy show," Rodgers notes. "Lily, our art director and also my daughter, made a map that she and the prop team and stage managers could understand, because there were props spread out over the entire design."



**TRIBE™**  
 Tribe, Inc. East 373 Round Hill Road Salem, CT 06420 860.823.1999  
 Tribe, Inc. West 3401 Pacific Ave, Suite 10 Marina Del Rey, CA 90292 310.452.8893

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**SUPER BOWL 60 HALFTIME SHOW**  
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**DPS**

PRODUCTION DESIGNER  
**BRUCE RODGERS**  
 YELLOW STUDIO

DRAWN BY  
**B. IRELAND**

DATE	1/30/26	VERSION	
SHEET		SHEET	102
SHOW DATES	FEB 06, 2026	SCALE	1:400

**FIELD PLAN - HALFTIME**  
**PRELIMINARY**

Rodgers' layout shows the location of each performing area and, in green along the exterior, the positions of the "grass people," performers dressed essentially like large tufts of tall greenery.

12' by 8' with one palm tree that hinged down for transport and storage. Extra greenery rolled in on 4' by 8' carts, including 12 sugar cane carts and six tall grass carts, dispersed around the set. The overall set footprint measured more than 192' by 75', all loaded onto 22 trucks and rolling in on 24 custom field carts and 18 smaller 4'-by-8' carts."

Rehearsals proved challenging, in part because Levi's Stadium is a natural-grass field and the NFL is understandably very protective of its turf. "They cover the whole field in thick vinyl," Rodgers says, "and between the vinyl and the grass is EnkaMat, a crinkly, cushiony plastic. It's there so we can roll our heavy carts, and dancers can dance on the field. We were never able to rehearse without that tarp, which slowed us down. We were loading in at nine minutes and loading out at eight, which caused a lot of nervousness on my side. So, during rehearsals, we managed to take three carts out of the set design. Everything worked out on gameday, without the tarp; we had a very speedy installation."

Because of the time crunch, several other scenic companies got involved in addition to All Access. "The Bad

Bunny team introduced us to Lennon, a company based out of Los Angeles," Rodgers says. "They were tasked with tackling the grasses. Show FX handled the Ricky Martin mound with all the banana plants and palm trees." Unusually, he adds, "It was a very prop-heavy show. Lily, our art director and also my daughter, made a map that she and the prop team and stage managers could understand, because there were props spread out over the entire design. In the beginning, with the piragua cart, the fingernail cart, and the guy with the jewelry case, it was choreographed so that as soon as they were done being on camera, they were sent through the grasses and back out the south tunnel, letting us strike everything. That gave us a fighting chance to strike the bigger scenery at the end of the show. The Ford truck was struck early and sent through the south tunnel, too." (See the prop map on page 42.)

### Special effects

Pyrotecnico designed and executed the pyrotechnics and special effects for multiple live broadcast moments throughout the event. In its sixth consecutive year at the

event, the company supported Green Day's opening ceremony performance, the National Anthem, player entrances, the halftime show, and the trophy celebration. The halftime show represented the most extensive pyrotechnic scope Pyrotecnico has executed in those six years, making it one of the largest halftime displays in recent event history. The production utilized colored smoke and pyrotechnics, culminating in a large-scale finale designed to visually reinforce the performance's energy.

The technical scope of work included: a crew of 50-plus in-house experts, including designers, project managers, safety leads, and technicians from across the country; pyrotechnics positioned at 384 positions throughout the stadium and field; equipment and pyrotechnics transported by two semi-trucks and one box truck; 9,800 theatrical pyrotechnics, including colored smoke; and pyro digital control utilized for the half time event. All effects were executed in accordance with league, venue, and broadcast requirements, with extensive testing and rehearsal to ensure consistency and reliability during live moments.

Bob Ross, chief operating officer at Pyrotecnico and the effects consultant on the production, notes that the pyro was designed to support Bad Bunny's vision. "Even by Super Bowl standards, the scale of this year's halftime effects was significant," he adds. "The goal was to take the energy already happening on the field and carry it through the final moments. In the finale, elements like the illuminated Puerto Rican flags were timed with the music and performers to help make the closing moments extremely dynamic."

### Golden hour lighting

This year's edition was notable for unfolding largely in broad daylight. "We have done 'daylight' shows before, but they are rarely conceived as such," says the halftime show's longtime lighting designer Al Gurdon. "We pray for delays in the second quarter so that we can have the show at the latest and darkest possible time." However, he admits, "This time, the setting, the show flow, and the stage design all steered me toward embracing the daylight. In fact, we added to it and tried to maintain it as real ambient light levels were falling rapidly at show time."

Setting the tone, Gurdon adds, "The show started with a short film, shot sometime approaching sunset, in the sugar cane fields of Puerto Rico, and cut directly to those same sugar cane fields a second later in the stadium. So that was a clear indication that we had to at least start in 'daylight,' whatever time we were actually shooting the show. As our previz and rehearsal process developed, we decided that much of the show worked with a daylight or early-evening look, and that as the narrative unfolded, it would work well to compress the time frame and work toward a darker state at the end of the performance."

However, he notes, "Two factors were working in oppo-

sition to each other. The stadium has no roof, but the sugar cane set was very tall, and the characters spent a lot of time within it. So, ambient skylight was our friend. I also realized immediately that conventional keying with followspots or moving lights would be severely compromised by the fact that we had no overhead rig, and the sugar cane surrounded much of the action."

Therefore, he says, "For the first time in a halftime show, I prioritized handheld panel lights as a solution for keying both the artist and the people he interacted with along the way. It was really the only way of doing it." This innovation created new challenges, however: "These operators couldn't just rock up on the day and stand next to the camera. They needed to be present and 'in the way' at all of the off-site rehearsals so that they could work with the Steadicam operators to be in exactly the right place at the right time, and cast and crew knew to factor them into movement and choreography."

Regarding the overall lighting look, Gurdon says, "For many years, we have used field lighting carts in various configurations to get closer into the action and add dynamic impact into the back of the shot. It was clear to me from the start that carts would not work with the sugar cane towering above them. Also, what would they be for? I didn't want a show with beams. I can't imagine how they would have added positively to the naturalistic setting. So that led us to no carts and no smoke. We had scenic practicals within the set carts, as well as a few [ACME Lighting] Pixel Line IPs for effects on two of the rooftops. Apart from these and the panel lights, everything else was in permanently rigged positions in the stadium. The logistical implications for that were pretty significant: Much less could go wrong in the hectic eight minutes of setup time. The stadium rig was used either for keying or for solid accenting of the music."

Ironically, the designer says, "Given that we wanted to start the show in daylight, for once, we were keen for the show not to start too late and be too dark. We took many measurements of the sports lights at various intensity levels, and of the level of ambient daylight within the time period we expected to operate. Working backward from our guess at the maximum ambient level—the earlier the show started, the higher the figure—we were able to determine how much we needed to top up the daylight with the sports lighting, and also to manage that as the ambient level dropped, by pushing in more of the sports lighting if we needed it."

"It was a fascinating and challenging process, and it was very rewarding when it worked," he concludes.

"Aesthetically, I really liked the higher-key approach, which seemed to give the show a 'golden hour' sort of quality. It also helped the picture quality, working at higher levels than normal, giving us loads of latitude within the parameters of the cameras and lenses, and a refreshingly 'clean' look."



According to All Access, the classic 1970 Ford truck “was sourced, structurally reinforced, and modified to safely accommodate performers. The truck sat on the field directly; therefore, it was modified with a field cart-style base with Versa Field Stage wheels for easy transport onto the field. Steps were built into the truck bed for rooftop access, and a rechargeable lighting package was added.”

Running the numbers, the rig included 228 GLP JDC Burst 1s, 124 Vari-Lite VL3600 LT Profiles, 48 Robe iFORTE LTX units, 48 TMB Solaris Flares, 34 ACME Lighting Pixel Line IPs, 32 Elation PROTEUS MAXIMUS units, 14 Astera Titan Tubes, 12 GLP Impression X4S units, 12 ACME Lighting Pixel Line 500 IPs, 11 PRG Best Boy Ground Control Long Throws, and three Litepanels Gemini 1x1s. Control was by three MA Lighting grandMA3 full-size consoles, run by Super Bowl veterans Eric Marchwinski and Mark Humphrey.

Ben Green, of 22 Degrees, who served as lighting director, echoes many of Gurdon’s points, saying, “The daylight was very helpful. We were supporting the show with light, not just putting on a light show, which is an easy trap to fall into. It was not a show about beams in the sky. It was about helping Bad Bunny tell his story in 12 minutes.”

The show’s scale and the fact of daylight, Green adds, dictated many of the gear choices. “We were working with broad paintbrushes, relying on large arrays of the units, so we could do larger gestures.” Thus, he and Gurdon relied

“on a lot of long-throw cannons, trying to lift certain areas and make them brighter, even in the daylight. We were also pleased with the JDC Burst, which we hadn’t used before. It is substantially brighter than the JDC1, and it is IP-rated, which was nice since we were outside.” The JDC Bursts were hung on the 200 and 500 levels of the stadium; the most obvious aspect of the lighting design, they added considerable punch and pace to the action. “We added the Musco field lighting system into our toolbox as well,” Green says. “We used it for effects, for example, in ‘El Apagón’ while Bad Bunny was climbing on the power pole.” Amplifying Gurdon, he adds, “Also, because we were rehearsing at night, we needed to create the base ambient daylight level. We took several readings from 4:30 to 5:30pm on the days leading up to the show and adjusted the Musco stadium lighting accordingly to give us a base light level close to our estimated showtime. These lights were on during the show, but at a much lower level.”

Regarding the rest of the rig, Green says the VL3600 LTs were “used in groups to highlight areas.” The iFORTE



Meeting several times in different locations with Bad Bunny—who happened to be on tour—Himede compiled a list of elements. “The piragua cart, the coconut vendor, the wedding all came out of those meetings,” he says. “Benito, Harriet, and I were all involved. It was a nice sort of workshop: What if we had this or that? What if we had a wedding, with a real couple getting married on the field?”

LTX units “were on the roof of the press area, which is probably the longest throw in the stadium. While the show was in-the-round, these were on the press side of the stadium, where most of the cameras are, requiring a lot of horsepower.” The PROTEUS MAXIMUS units, he adds, are a longtime favorite. “We had them in Tampa in 2021 [when The Weeknd starred], and they were the brightest thing we had.” He adds, wryly, “This year, they were definitely the dimmest thing we had.” It’s a sign of how fast the industry is moving these days.

PixMob was once again on hand, although Green notes that the LED wristbands were activated by the company’s dedicated control system, not linked to the MA3s. The show featured PixMob’s nine-LED daylight-visible badge worn by over 68,000 fans in the crowd. It is the company’s brightest product to date. Combined with its “Human Video Screen” MVT controller technology, the activation enabled fully synchronized video effects even under dusk conditions. This was PixMob’s eighth halftime show, its seventh in a row.

Even with the daylight, Green says the show was heavily cued, “where we could add to the dynamic. The cueing was more about moving the light from here to there as Bad Bunny moved around. If the show had a stage in the center with an artist or band, you’d spend a lot more time cueing to one spot. In this case, our cueing was helping advance the story by pulling focus.”

This year’s show was programmed primarily by Mark Humphrey, with support from Eric Marchwinski. Marchwinski says the show “did not want to be a concert; this was more of a music video in how the creative was developed. It wanted to be a natural and realistic environment. Rehearsals at night were a challenge. As both Ben and Al mention, we took a fairly scientific approach to embracing the daylight and variability of the show time.

“We found out that the average level of ambient light at the show’s expected time of day was 150fc. We metered the stadium lights to provide this base for our rehearsals, and we designed the show on top of that. We were putting another 100fc on top of that 150fc base, bringing us to a

nominal level of 250fc, a level we don't typically work at." We're very fortunate that Musco has recently installed a new stadium lighting system. These LED fixtures allowed control and were also very high CRI with a natural color temperature of 5200. Since this was acting as our base, we chose a white balance of 5,200K for the show

The day of the show, Marchwinski says, "About 30 seconds before the start of the performance, we turned off all the lighting, including the stadium lights, and took an in-the-moment ambient reading. We were at a level higher than we rehearsed at, so we lowered the houselights' base level. We ended up doing the show at the perfect time, right around 5:15 or 5:20, so by the time we got to 5:30, it was a lot darker, and we increased the base level of the stadium lights for the final third of the performance to maintain our exposure."

Marchwinski notes that the integration of the panel light operators was an interesting challenge. "It sounds somewhat simple, yet when you consider the physical choreography of the camera operator, an AC, and our panel light operator, all within a very small space, it becomes complex rather quickly. Which side of the camera do we want the light on? How do we stay out of the shot? How do we fit through these alleyways with all this scenery and people? How do you preset one here and hide another one there, and then they run away? "We fortunately had two days at an off-site rehearsal to work with the camera and choreography team and were able to arrive at the full rehearsals with the panel lights already integrated into the show. The creative provided some unique challenges, and the use of panel lights was a new but very interesting approach for this show."

Overall, Green says, "I think we kept the show looking consistent from beginning to end, so you could focus on the story being told, and not think how dark it was getting. The amount of light in the stadium went from 300fc to under 100 from the beginning of the half to the end. There was a pretty dramatic light shift happening, and we worked to soften that in the interest of telling the story."

### Capturing the Latin sound

Game and entertainment audio was, as usual, handled by ATK Audiotek, overseen by engineer-in-charge Kirk Powell, who has worked on the event for almost three decades. "The event is broken down into two parts: the game audio—commentary, sideline interviews, spoken-word announcements—and the entertainment elements, including all musical performances," Powell notes. "Essentially, we were working with two separate packages: the game audio used the house system, and the entertainment audio called for a bigger, portable, concert-grade cart system that could be moved onto and removed from the field easily."

Systems engineer Johnny Keirle says, "We spent a lot of time trying to find a solution that would really work in

this unique environment, but we obviously faced some design limitations due to the nature of the roofless venue. The result was impressive, sounding bigger than most people expected."

Keirle's L-Acoustics loudspeaker-based design featured 18 cart positions around the field, each housing two KS28 subs, two K1SB subs, and either four or five boxes of K2s, all powered by LA12X amplified controllers running AVB Milan.

Powell notes that ATK deployed L-Acoustics boxes on carts for *Snoop Dogg's Holiday Halftime Party*, captured on Christmas Day and now streaming on Netflix. "It was nice to have that experience in our back pocket," he says. "Moving into the Super Bowl, we were technically ready for how the L-Acoustics gear works. Then it was just a matter of dealing with the other stuff: Where can we put amp racks? How do we get our cable to the field?"

"I pushed to have extra amplified controllers so that the system could run more efficiently," Keirle says. "One of the challenges of working with a ground-based cart system is managing the high d-ratio of the shortest distance to the longest throw distance. With a typical stadium system, throw distances are usually around 60m [197'] to the furthest seat and 30m [98.4'] to the shortest, but by contrast, with a ground-based system, we're throwing as short as 6m [19.6'] to the closest seat and [306.8'] to the furthest. Having those additional amps and more processing granularity was important for this year's design."

The ground-based cart system was easily and rapidly moved. In this instance, eight ATK "quad leaders" and a 100-strong crew maneuvered the carts in groups of five. "We secured our ideal cart positions, but as football is the main event, there is a priority to protect the grass," Keirle notes.

This level of secrecy also means the audio team gets very little time to make any noise during rehearsals, especially in an open-air environment such as Levi's Stadium. "I design to what I think will be a good target, with a certain amount of low-end, low-end extension, and contour, [dynamic changes in frequency, amplitude, and phase]. But the design still needs to work for the pre-game entertainment speeches," Keirle adds.

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Powell relied on Focusrite RedNet D64R MADI bridge units to connect the consoles and the broadcast trucks. They were chosen for their high channel capacity and the ability to convert sample rates between different audio

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systems at a multitrack level. “The production truck runs on a separate clock since it isn’t in use all day,” Powell says. “The D64R allows me to keep my system’s clock separate from the production truck’s, particularly when they finish up after halftime. As they start packing up, I prefer not to stay synced to their clock to prevent any pre-

backup, Guessard and Pesa each had an additional console set up in mirror mode for redundancy. As in previous years, ATK prepped the system in its home office in Valencia, testing the system before shipment to Santa Clara.

Stuckey reports that Bad Bunny used a Shure SM39 headset condenser mic and Shure ADX1 bodypack



One especially striking vignette featured a choreographed sequence on a series of electrical poles, an allusion to the island’s well-reported power outages. “It is something that every Puerto Rican knows,” Himeida says. “It wasn’t so much criticism as a way of highlighting how people live in Puerto Rico.”

mature shutdowns.”

Dave Natale and Alex Guessard were at the front of house for entertainment mixing on DiGiCo Quantum 338 consoles, with monitor engineers Tom Pesa and Chris Daniels (on DiGiCo SD5s, and Cameron Stuckey working with Professional Wireless Systems on wireless audio. As a

transmitter. Lady Gaga and Ricky Martin used custom-finished Sennheiser Digital 6000 handheld transmitters, white for Gaga and silver for Martin. All were on Shure PSM 1000 in-ears.

“Frequency coordination was done by the NFL event frequency coordinators,” Stuckey says. “Professional

Wireless Systems worked closely with Stu Albert and his team, in addition to Loren Sherman and Henry Cohen, of CP Communications. The antenna system used for stadium-wide coverage of the halftime show, opening ceremonies, game presentation, pre-game performances, referees, and trophy ceremony was engineered by PWS.”

He adds, “Each Super Bowl requires the PWS team to evaluate the RF system from first principles. And the first of the first is that no sightlines for any seat can be intruded. The referee mic needs to work goal line to goal line, and IEMs need to work on the ground and two stories up a utility pole. This is my ninth Super Bowl, and the halftime show has gone through a style change from a televised concert to more of a live music video. It’s no longer drums and instruments upstage and the artist downstage center, all facing all the cameras. We now anticipate that halftime will be performed inside a set piece and at multiple heights to a Steadicam on the move. And I wouldn’t have it any other way. It’s a thrill to have the artists push the limits of what we can do every year.”

Led by Matt Campisi, of ATK Versacom, ATK’s comms brand, the team deployed site-wide communications entailing intercom systems for the halftime show, NFL broadcast executives, full stadium control, and the production team. The crew also looked after the tailgate area outside the stadium, filled with TV network and music-mixing trucks.

Riedel worked with ATK to obtain additional frequencies, creating more space for the plethora of wireless intercoms. Campisi says, “With that in place and working in an open-air stadium, it made a great outing for our wireless technology, which is always the most challenging part of a comms system. This year, we provided over 100 matrix panels, 150 Riedel Bolero wireless intercoms, 44 Bolero antennas, and 60 hardwire belt packs.”

Like many of his colleagues, Powell notes the show’s time pressures this year. “Just getting approval on where to run cable caused delays, because anything on that grass had to be approved. It was very, very, very strict, understandably. I understand that the field is everything. The last thing we want is to have a player step into a divot that was caused by us and break an ankle. We worked really hard with the grounds crew guys to reach a common agreement, and they’ve always been our allies. From day one, they helped us design our original speaker carts. They gave us all kinds of great guidance. ATK has always made an effort to include those guys in every step of the process. They did everything they could to work with us, and the result was really good.”

Next year’s Super Bowl will be February 14 at SoFi Stadium, last held there in 2022. 📶

## Apple Music Super Bowl Halftime Show

Executive Producers: Roc Nation Diversified Production Services Jesse Collins Entertainment Rimas Entertainment Shawn Carter Desiree Perez Roger Goodell Noah Assad Dave Meyers	Costume Designer: Monique Peters	Line Producers: Chelsea Gonnering John Kilgore
Producer: Benito Antonio Martinez Ocasio Jana Fleishman Darren Pfeffer	Lead Art Director: Shelley Rodgers	Operations Director: Carly Vaknin
Supervising Producer: Jody Kolozsvari	Art Director: Lily Rodgers	Senior Production Manager: Erin Harding
Director: Hamish Hamilton	CAD Design: Brian Ireland	Production Mgrs.: Max Chester Dani DiMeglio
Choreographer: Charm La'Donna	Creative Producers: Lou Alencar Cory FitzGerald Tiffany Olsen	Staging Supervisors: Tony Hauser Cap Spence
Associate Director: Cameron Whitelaw	Art Dept. Assts.: Regan Eastland Andrew Frey	Staging Coordinators: Scott Chase Aaron Chawla Kelly Coffey Doug Cook Rob Cray Graeme Lagden George McPhearson
DP: Dylan Sanford	Lead Stage Mgr: Gary Natoli	Field Team Prod. Mgrs.: Bryan Ransom Holly Silber
EVP, NFL Events: Peter O'Reilly	Stage Mgrs.: Alexis Brusig Jeffrey Gitter Harvey Levine Donna Parker Tammy Raab Jackie Stathis Kristen Patterson "KP" Terry Karen Tasch Weiss Zachary Figures	FTM Coordinator: Roma Ramchandani
SVP, NFL Events: Jon Barker	Field Creative Producer: Kristen Patterson "KP" Terry	Special Projects Mgr: PixMob: Liz Hart
NFL Field Operations: Nick Pappas	Technical Director: Benjamin Coxon	Special Projects PixMob: Nora Brown
Creative Director/ Production Designer: Bruce Rodgers	Lighting Designer: Al Gurdon	Costume Supervisor: Devon Patterson
Creative Director: Harriet Cuddeford	Lighting Directors: Ben Green Harry Forster	Vendors: All Access ATK Audiotek PixMob PRG Pyrotecnico Show FX
Yellow Studio Production Designer: Julio Himede	LDs/Programmers: Eric Marchwinski Mark Humphrey	
Yellow Studio Designers: Connor Munion Nicola Filler Assoulin	Head Rigger: Carsten Weiss	