

# TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR SHOW

BY JUSTINO ZOPPE

[www.QlabTutorial.com](http://www.QlabTutorial.com)

We have all experienced it, showtime is at 7:30, I get to the venue and told I can't set up till 5pm. I return 10 minutes early hoping to immediately start setting illusions, and rehearse with the crew, only to discover the venue is still being used for some other activity, like playing a movie for a packed house of 4 people! The movie of course is running overtime, so I start setting props quietly in the wings only to have the film finish 20 minutes late and now there is no crew to be found. I make a few calls and the stage crew saunters in, the good news is they used the 3hr film to make sure they are totally ready for my set up... oh wait, no they didn't. An agonizing 20 minutes go by and they are just now starting to prepare the stage, meanwhile I'm running around like a chicken with it's head cut off trying to set props, they ask me to stop and do a mic check, "No problem" except their mic is not working, it has a bad cable, so after 15 minutes of them trying to fix it, I politely give the headset back and say, "when you get the mic working let me know." The Broadcast tech now says, "let's try video," perfect! Except, what a shock, video doesn't work, of course they assume it's on my end, so they ask me to change every adapter and setting possible before they realize "oh, we had the projector on the wrong input"... it is now 6:15 A/V is finally connected, something that should have been done at 5pm when rehearsal was scheduled to start. Now it's time to program the lighting cues as fast as possible skipping over

details such as making it look good. 10 minutes until doors open, the production manager say's, "ok let's do a full run through" ... um... ok? I don't know how we could possibly rehearse a full 1hr show in 10 minutes! He responds by saying, "How are the Lighting, Sound & Broadcast operators going to know when to fire all your cues?"

Suddenly all my stress disappears because it's at that moment I say the most powerful "Show Saving" words in my vocabulary. "There are no cues to learn, because I control my own show!" The imaginary man in my head does a little dance, lol.

I'd like to say this is a story I made up, however, many of us know all too well the anguish of these rehearsal disasters which have become the norm in venues all across the industry.

Unfortunately this has become what seems like a weekly occurrence for me and my friends.

This forces entertainers to make 1 of 2 choices, #1 Sacrifice their own show by removing all the best effects, routines, lighting, and anything

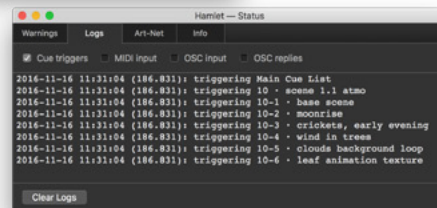
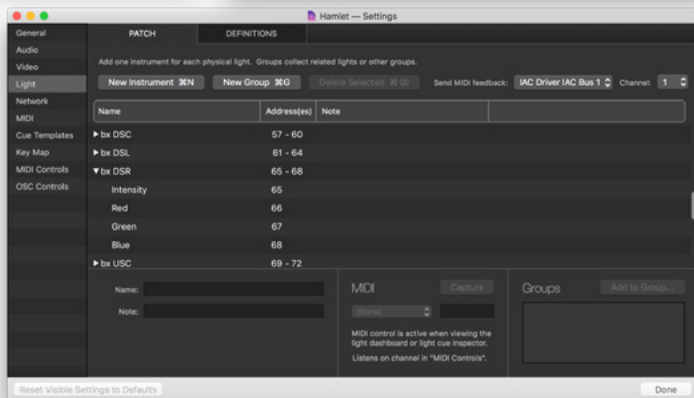
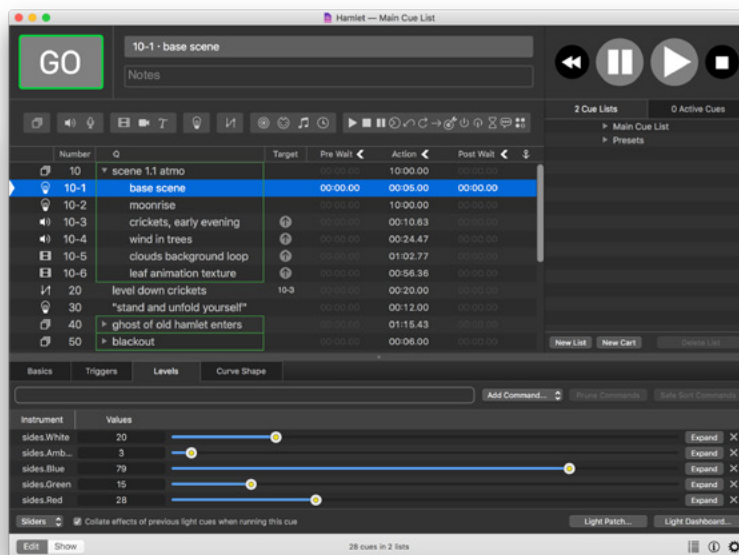
requiring someone to learn the cues. Or, #2 take your show back and get full control of every aspect of the production, making your show look like it's been rehearsed for weeks with every cue firing to the millisecond of perfection!

Now this is all possible because of two outstanding systems, Qlab Show Control and Audio Ape Remotes.

I first want to point out I do not work for either one of these companies, nor do I get paid for endorsing their products, I am a proud user of both of these systems and would never do a single show without them. Let me introduce myself, my name is Justino Zoppe, I'm a 7th generation entertainer and the first one in my family to produce and perform magic shows.

When my wife Daniela & I first started producing our own Cirque, Dance Illusion show "Extreme Vegas" we required 7 stage techs and a minimum of 2 weeks of rehearsals before we could open the show. Fast forward to winter 2019, our latest production "Illusions and Beyond" had a full cast, 5 giant LED walls, 60 moving lights, 2 spot light operators, a cast of 9 performers on stage and well over 500 cues! The show was filled with tons of effects, blizzard machines, confetti cannons, streamers, and the entire show ran completely automated with only 1 stage tech backstage! No front of house crew at all! And





that's because Qlab Show Control was firing all the lighting, sound and video cues as well as triggering curtain cues and even calling all spot light cues automatically into the wireless comms. This not only allowed us to produce a bigger production with less expenses but it enabled spot light operators and stage crew to be swapped out during the 51 show run without any rehearsals! Qlab took care of everything.

The most popular comment I get from other acts is "that wouldn't work for me because my show runs live and needs to have cues handled manually".

Well then, that is where the worlds most amazing remote system comes in... Media Monkey! It's the remote designed for Qlab by Audio Ape.

Many of you have been using the Audio Ape Remote for your iPhone or iPad for years, controlling only your audio cues. Media Monkey is slightly different, first it's more advanced than Version 1.0 which many of

you might have used, and more importantly it is USB, designed to run many apps in your computer, specifically designed to fire Qlab Cues! And this is what allows the performer on stage to now have full control over Lighting, Video, Live Cameras and of course Sound cues and overall Volume.

So many times I'm doing a show and the sound tech decides the volume is too loud and lowers it. With media monkey remote you can immediately tap your pocket and the volume is restored! What if I told you not only can you have your show run live, but actually skip full routines, add new ones, and even do impromptu close up magic with a specific lighting, live cameras and music that was never part of the original running order!

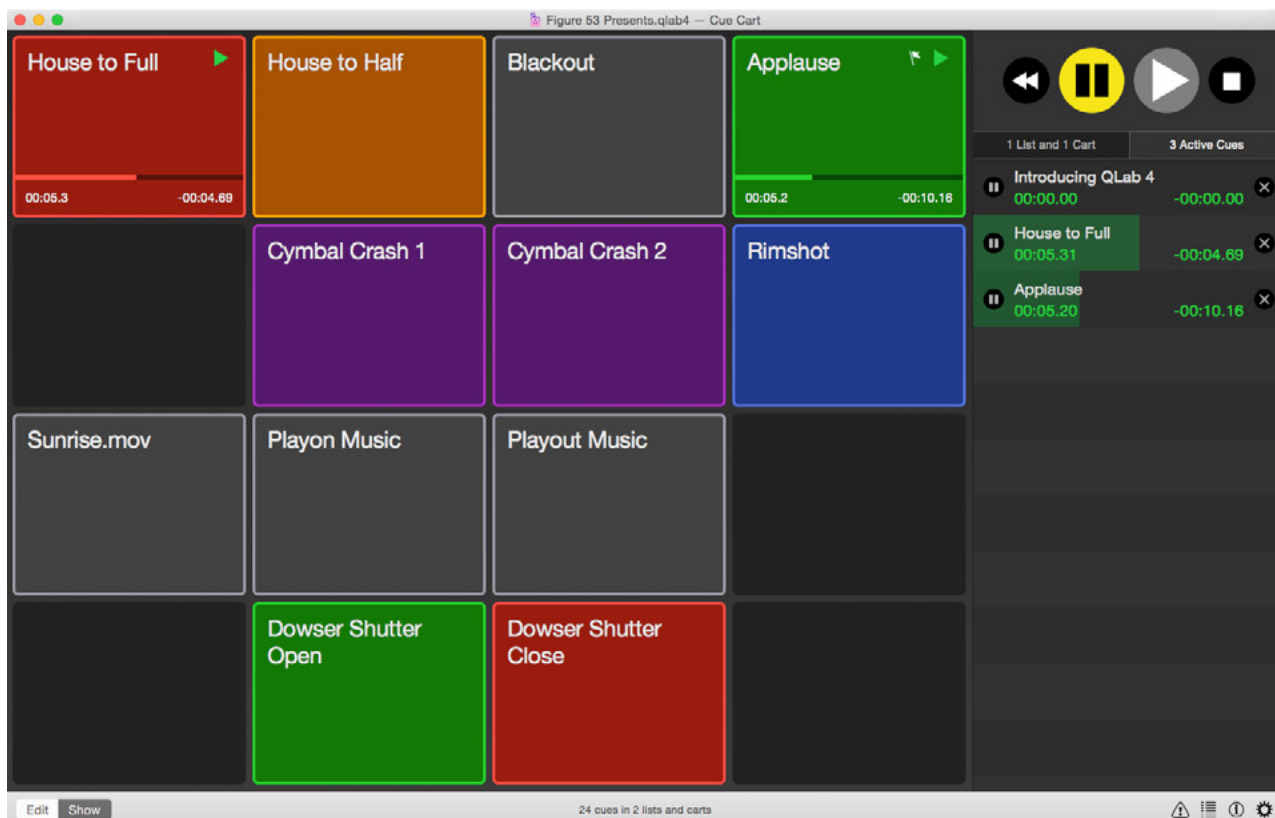
You can!

On the remote are 5 simple buttons, Volume Up, Volume Down, Go, Move Up, and Move Down, pretty simple, however, there are 3 additional buttons which can be fired by holding down one of three buttons for 3

seconds. If you hold the Go button for 3 seconds all cues will gently fade out and stop, allowing you to do any number of things, like restart, skip the trick, etc. Holding down the Move Up or Move Down buttons fires one of two possible Hotkey cues, which could be assigned to anything you wish in Media Monkey. In my case I assigned the key to a live camera routine where I can immediately stop all cues, fade in a live camera, play background music and go to a specific lighting cue, all by pressing 1 button! The programming possibilities are nearly endless, it's just deciding what you want to use it for.

I am often asked about the signals range? I can safely say its amazing!

For example, at the end of my shows I go to the lobby to do a Meet & Greet but I have a cue which must fire after the Cruise Director finishes his talk, on his last word I can activate that cue from the lobby using the remote. The most impressive Media Monkey example, for me, happens while performing on Disney Cruise lines. As I begin my show in what's called the Mod Lift, basically like the elevator pit on other ships, except it's 20 times faster



and has a ceiling that opens mere seconds before you appear. This means I fire my first cue to start the show 15' under the stage beneath an 8" thick floor! And Media Monkey has never failed.

Not only do I use the remote in my large production shows, but I find it even more beneficial for my smaller one man comedy magic shows, which again, puts me in complete control.

Another included add-on to this remote system is the free app called "Lab Monkey," a remote viewer for iPhone, iPod or iPad, which displays your Qlab; cue list, next cue, time before the cue is completed and many other features in giant bold letters that can be seen from across the stage. In my case I bought a large iPad Pro which sits right in front of the monitor, giving me a huge 10" screen allowing me to see my show cues, running order, and a clock, great for certain acts who tend to run overtime, (which never happens to me "cough cough" ha ha!)

You can add notes, for instance, you want to thank the host or sponsor of your event and don't want to forget their names, you type that on the cue list reminding you live on stage. I often use it to help advertise my next event, I just add the information to the notes of the cue, and with a simple glance at my iPad I don't miss a beat. You can even have your assistant type something backstage and see it live on stage... hmmm, which opens a few fun possibilities!

I keep the tiny remote (about the size of a Key Fob) in my right pocket, using double sided tape to keep it from sliding around so it's exactly where I want, the exact distance my index finger ends up when hooking my thumb into my pocket, in this position I can simply press buttons through the outside of my pants, easily feeling the correct button due to the layout. A little trick I use is glueing a bead to the center button creating a protruding bump which can easily be felt through your pants, even jeans.

The possibilities are endless, if you've never used Qlab before you might feel a bit lost, well this is where I come in. Okay, fine, there is a catch! lol

I've created a website called Qlab Tutorial where I teach everything you need to know about using Qlab for your shows, along with the hardware needed. There are over 2hrs of FREE (that's right Free) online tutorial videos. You can learn every step necessary to program your own shows; from basic play, loop and fade out cues, advanced programming and using Qlab to automatically call all your own spot light cues using a cheap battery bluetooth speaker!

And, I'm adding new videos and series every month! Numerous great tips and tricks, so check out the site to start learning today.

If you are stuck or don't want the hassle of programming then I offer One-on-One consults and can even program your entire show for you and teach you how to run it.

Links to both a free download of QLab software and Audio Ape can be found on my website at: [www.QlabTutorial.com](http://www.QlabTutorial.com)

It's time to take control of your show! With Qlab Show control and Audio Ape Remotes the possibilities are endless!

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